

GENERAL MANAGEMENT PROJECT  
ON  
**A REPORT ON POST PANDEMIC WORKPLACE**

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES (2019-2021)  
(UNDER UNIVERSITY OF MUMBAI)



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**CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL**

This is to certify that the Project titled “**A Report on Post Pandemic Workplace**” is successfully completed by **Pooja Subhash Botalji** during semester IV, in partial fulfilment of Master's degree in Management Studies recognized by the University of Mumbai for the academic year 2019-2021

This project work is original and has not been submitted earlier for the award of any degree of any other University/Institution.

Name of the Guide: Dr. Betty Sibil

Date:

Signature of the Guide

## **DECLARATION**

**I, Pooja Subhash Botalji**, student of **Pillai Institute of Management Studies and Research**, New Panvel, hereby declare that I have completed the General Management Project on “**A Report on Post Pandemic Workplace**” under the guidance of Dr. Betty Sibil

No part of this report has been submitted for any degree, diploma, and title of recognition before, I also confirm that the report is only prepared for my academic requirement and not for any other purpose.

Name of the Student: Pooja Subhash Botalji

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Signature of the Student

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I have great pleasure in giving my sincere thanks to those who have contributed their valuable time in helping me to achieve successful completion of my project work. I would like to thank our college, Director, for his continuous support.

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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

### **1.1 Introduction of the Topic**

The outbreak of COVID-19 is considered the pandemic of the 21st century. Every country in the world has been impacted by this outbreak and it is expected that it will have some permanent or long-lasting changes in our life. In December 2019 first case of novel coronavirus was reported in Wuhan City, China and from there, this virus has spread across 219 countries. In India, this virus infected 10.7 million people and caused the deaths of 153 thousand. These numbers are still increasing at an alarming rate. One of the ways to stop the spread of the virus was to restrict the social activity and maintain the social distancing and hence many countries implemented strict lockdown for an indefinite period. India was one of such countries and on 23 March 2020 government of India ordered a nationwide lockdown for 21 days and enforced strict rules and regulations to prevent the spread of the virus. This lockdown got extended for two months causing restrictions on the movement of around 1.3 billion population. This crisis completely stopped the functioning of the nation, every business activity across all industries was completely stopped and had some serious repercussions on businesses around the world. In overnight companies had to shut down their operations and move to digital platforms and technologies to conduct their business. Organizations and employees are the ones who got most affected by this pandemic, many HR policies, work environment, and work practices and even work preferences of employees had changed. Company tried surviving during this crisis by relying heavily on technologies and work from home mode. Work from home is just one change that employees experienced during this pandemic out of many other changes. Before the pandemic work from home option was not practice at wide, this option was mostly used by the employees working in the IT sector and other executive employees but due to the surge of coronavirus, all of a sudden work from home became new normal. Companies that were reluctant to work from home got forced by the pandemic to implement work from home options for their employees. The health risk was not the only risk that came with this pandemic, as the businesses shift from secure office environment to the work from home, challenges of cybercrime and cybersecurity increased there was a significant increase in the cybercrime's cases during the covid-19 and again employees and organizations struggled and got trapped in the middle of this issue. Above mention are some of the changes that employees and organizations faced, other changes are layoffs of the employees, social distancing, rise of new terminologies such as virtual leadership and virtual teams. Though the world is now recovering from this crisis still the situation is uncertain and hence many organizations has still chosen to

keep work from home option available for their employees and has implemented some of the best practices to support their employees in this crisis. The paradigm shift had taken place in the way we work so if organizations and managers do not focus on it then it can impact the productivity of the employees and hence the present study on Post Pandemic Workplace has done intending to know the emergent changes in work practices and work environment that employees had observed during this pandemic.

## **1.2 Research Problem**

A crisis like Covid-19 causes short-term and long-term impacts specifically on human capital. Employees across the world faced many problems during this period. Work from home was a new concept to many employees. Some employees had the required resources for this but some did not. Many companies laid off the employees whereas others reduced the salary and in between all these employee needs were not taken into the consideration. Pandemic had caused the implementation of various new HR policies and practices. Employees are exposed to various new emerging changes and regulations and hence making this transition smooth for the employees is the responsibility of companies as they are at the center of this challenge. New work environment, work practices, and HR policies were forced on the employees. Though the world is now recovering from this crisis still the situation is uncertain. Many of the organizations had chosen to still keep work from home option available for their employees whereas many other organizations had resumed their daily business activities but in this, both situations' employees needs and new work preferences are not taken into consideration.

Some of the problem face by every Industry due to Covid-19 are as follows

- Decrease level of motivation among employees
- Adverse effect on employees physical and mental health
- Employees' reluctance towards new HR policies and work practices.
- Organizations' negligence towards employees leading to unsatisfactions among the employee population.

Hence the present research study on Post Pandemic Workplace tries to understand the needs of the working population, what support they need from their companies to work more productively, and whether work from home and work from office is suitable for them, also this study tries to find the new work practices that had emerged during the pandemic and how organizations can help their employees in this crisis.

### **1.3 Need of Study**

Covid-19 has impacted every aspect of our life and it has been a very significant and traumatic experience. Major changes such as this cause short and long-term changes in our lives and one such change, we all are experiencing is the major shift in the way we work. All of a sudden work from home became new normal, there was a shift in the major HR policies and practices, and in the middle of all these changes employees struggled. During this time some of the organizations paid very little attention to the employee's needs though the world is recovering from this trauma it is expected that these changes will last longer and hence organizations need to understand how they can make this situation more suitable for their employees, how they can keep alive employees working spirit and what they can do to fulfil their needs.

### **1.4 Aim of the Study**

The covid-19 changed the workplace abruptly and this caused organizations to change the way they worked. This research aims to gain an understanding of the emerging work practices and work environment following the study of the working population's work preference in this crisis and what majors' organizations have taken to help their employees during covid-19. The survey is conducted to fulfil the aim of the study.

### **1.5 Objectives of the Study**

To study the emergent change in work practices and work environment.

To study post pandemic work preferences of employees.

To study best practices for supporting employees during Covid-19.

### **1.6 Scope of the Study**

The study focuses to understand the effect of covid-19 on the workplace. This research study attempts to understand the challenges faced by employees and organizations during the pandemic and for this purpose, constructive research is done. This research studies the emergent changes in work practices and work environment such as work from home changed HR policies and suddenly changed work environment along with the best HR practices that organizations have implemented to support their employees in this pandemic. This study also strives to find what are the work preference of employee's post-pandemic and what additional support they need from their employer during this crisis. The duration of the study was two months. The data collection method for the study is based on primary and secondary data



collected from various research papers, surveys, and articles. A survey is conducted on the working population mainly leaving in an urban region.

### **1.7 Limitations of the Study**

Post-Pandemic Workplace is a vast topic to research on, as the period allotted for this research study was only two months it was not sufficient. Due to time constraints the sample size was kept minimum, the response was collected only from 80 respondents and as convenience along with snowball sampling method was used the respondent's population is diverse may be thus research do not find any association between demographics and work preferences. Another obstacle faced during this research was due to pandemic, Due to the non-availability of the industry-specific or company-specific data this study focuses on the struggles and work preferences of employees irrespective of which industry or company they work in. As this study covers only the basic aspect of Post Pandemic Workplace Further study is required to find out how exactly the changes in the workplace caused by a pandemic is affecting employees and their productivity and as the diverse population is involved further industry-specific or company-specific study can be carried out.

## Chapter 2: Review of Literature

**Harvard Business School research on the topic 'COVID-19 and the Workplace: Implications, Issues, and Insights for Future Research and Action' and published the report in 2020.** According to the research, Covid-19 has dramatically changed the way we work and this has forced us to restructure many businesses. The impact of the pandemic has affected one group of employees more than the other e.g., based on their gender, age, race, ethnicity, or personality. Thus, companies now should focus on implementing new training and development methodology, performance appraisal systems, and HR policies and procedures. The study also recommends that for successful handling of this crisis employers need to look back in history to find some parallels between the current crisis and previous crisis.

**Dr. Meenakshi Pandey researched the subject 'Post Covid-19 World- A Paradigm Shift at Workplace and published the report in August 2020.** The data for this research is collected from the telephonic interview and observation methods whereas secondary data is collected from reviewing various research papers and articles. According to research though work from home seems easy it's not, it is demanding and requires that employees focus more on their work schedule and hence study recommends that there should be a visible line between work from home and office work. Work from home increases laziness and improper time management leads to offset work obligations hence in such cases the role of HR managers changes as they have to connect with their employees from the grass route and this can be done by adopting new technology for managing and improving employees' skills also new methods and ideas are required to connect with the lower profile employees.

**Tabrez Ahmad researched the topic Corona Virus Pandemic and Work from Home: Challenges of Cybercrimes and Cybersecurity and published the report in April 2020.** The study found people working from home require knowledge and awareness about phishing scams as only 42% of endpoints are unprotected. Cybercrime causes not only huge loss of revenue but also the damage and destruction of data, the research also recommends various tips which people can follow to prevent themselves from cybercrime.

**Dr. Jolly Sahni researched 'Impact of COVID-19 on Employee Behaviour: Stress and Coping Mechanism During WFH (Work from Home) Among Service Industry Employees' and published the report in October 2020.** The method of data collection was the semi-structured interview conducted with 23 people. According to this study, the stress level in the pandemic has increased due to the fear of the unknown, communication issues,

technology-related issues, incompatible timing preferences, lack of clarity & direction, and interruption during WFH. During the study, it is also found that private entities are doing a better job in giving support to the employees than government entities. The study also states that the support which companies had provided during the pandemic is not

sufficient and hence the author recommends that a strong social network is needed at the workplace which can help employees to cope with their stress level.

**William S. Shaw Chris J. Main Patricia A. Findley Alex Collie Vicki L. Kristman Douglas P. Gross** researched the topic '**Opening the Workplace After COVID-19: What Lessons Can be Learned from Return-to-Work Research?**' and published the report on **19th June 2020**. This research studies the impact of Covid-19 on the worker, workplace, and societal factors. According to the research, the pandemic had challenged many of our existing practices, and reopening of the workplace will be more challenging as to whether or not the employee will accept the changes. The study recommends that for the successful opening of the workplace during a pandemic organization need to form policies and procedures which will show flexibility to individual worker needs.

**Mahmud Hamid, Dr. Sazali Abdul Wahab, Asma Ul Hosna, Mohammad Waliul Hasanat, and Mohammed Kamruzzaman** researched '**Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) and Employees' Reaction to Changes on Employee Performance of Bangladesh**' and published the report in **August 2020**. A cross-sectional study was conducted through an online survey and researchers collected 199 responses and 82 suggestions from both males and females the research found that covid-19 has changed employees' reaction which is negative and this changed behaviour is acting as a barrier to their performance.

## Chapter 3: Research Methodology

### 3.1 Research Design

#### 3.1.1 Type of Research

Quantitative research was done for the fulfilment of the objectives. This type of method helps to investigate data and to carry out the data analysis.

#### 3.1.2 Research Method

Primary and Secondary type of research is done for the fulfilment of the objectives.

#### 3.1.3 Population of the Study

A diverse group of people working in different companies and industries have participated in the study.

#### 3.1.4 Data Collection Method

For the primary data collection quantitative method was used this involves the use of a wide variety of basic and applied research questions on to the population to reach the result and conclusion. An online survey has conducted a total of 12 questions were asked to the working population to understand the work preferences of employees and various research papers were studied for the collection of data related to the emerging changes in work practices, and best practices implemented by organizations during a pandemic to help their employees.

### 3.2 Sampling Design

The sampling design was a combination of two techniques carefully chosen keeping in mind the pandemic situation.

#### 3.2.1 Sample of the Study

A total of 80 respondents were involved in the survey and the target group of the study was the working population specifically working in Mumbai region.

#### 3.2.2 Sampling Technique

It's a combination of Convenience sampling and Snowball sampling.

## Chapter – 4 Data Representation and Data Analysis

For the primary data collection survey was conducted. Convenience & snowball sampling methods were used. A total of 80 respondents gave their response to the 12 questions asked which was related to the Post-Pandemic Workplace. The information collected with the help of a structured questionnaire was statistically analysed. Simple statistical tools and techniques were used such as pie charts, bar charts, and Chi-Square analysis for the easy understanding of the result.

### Emergent Changes in Work Practices and Work Environment.

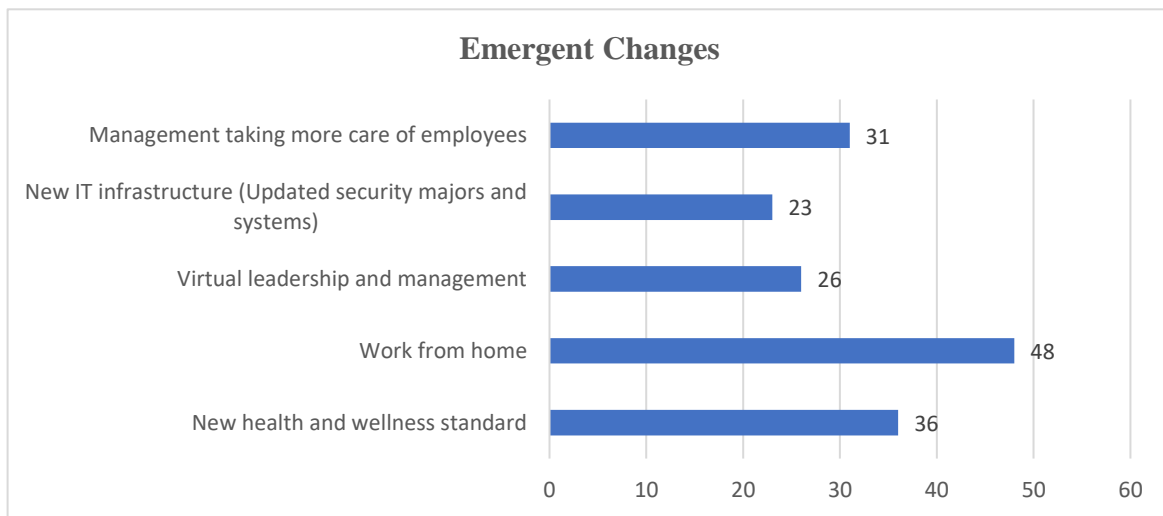


Chart – I Emergent Changes in Workplace and Work Practices

- **New Health and Wellness Standard**

One of the major changes that have occurred in the workplace specifically due to pandemic is the new health and wellness standard. To prevent the spread of the virus suddenly team meetings changed to virtual meetings, seating in isolation, constantly wearing a mask, using sanitizer, avoiding team lunch and dinners, cleaning of office premises more often and so the list goes on. All these changes occurred very suddenly in the workplace and thus everything was new to every employee of the organization. Even though now due to new develop vaccine we can expect some bright future but still these policies and wellness standards are going to be with us for some more time now.

- **Work from Home**

Another biggest change that has happened due to the pandemic is that it has encouraged the organization to adapt the work from home option. Before pandemic work from home option used to available to only senior executive persons but this pandemic has proved that

work from home can be done though it has its drawbacks if properly managed then work from home can become our future. This pandemic has also helped organizations to understand what can be and cannot be done outside of the organization so depending on this new learning companies now can create more reliable work from home policy and structure for their employees to work more productively and conveniently.

- **New Culture**

This pandemic has forced companies to take more emotional care of their employees and this has boosted the creation of a new more transparent, open and nurturing work environment for employees. Also, during pandemic employees have learned to work virtually with their teammates and thus employees are now more supportive understanding and more collaborative towards their team.

- **Virtual Leadership**

Virtual leadership is nothing but leadership where teams are managed via a remote working environment. Though the main objective of the virtual leadership remains the same which is to motivate and encourage employees to achieve their goals but specifically during pandemic leadership strategy has immensely changed as this pandemic has forced employees to suddenly adapt to new technology, system, rules, and regulations thus now virtual leadership focuses more on empathy. As leaders cannot have a conversation with employees in person and cannot check on employees as the same way in company leaders do, thus the leader communicates with employees, and the way leader have written and oral communication with employees matters a lot hence it is important when leaders are communicating with employees, they sound more empathetic and understanding and thus virtual leadership focuses more on to have open and transparent communication with employees to increase the employee's motivation, accountability, and productivity.

- **New IT Infrastructure**

This pandemic has taught employees to build a learning mindset and this has prepared them to be adaptive to the changing work environment. The quick adaption of technology was at the center of the change that happened due to Covid- 19. Employees suddenly started relying more on technology, new systems to do their work and thus it has also made one thing clear that employees need reskilling and upskilling of their skills this will help employees to move smoothly from one part of work to another thus employers now give more preference to young generations.

- **Cybercrimes**

In the wake of the pandemic world shift to technology which help them to complete their work but this has led to another problem is the increased cases of cybercrime. Companies now are more equipped to face the issue of cybercrime, now companies can implement more reliable IT system which will allow employees to work from home and at the same time protect the security of companies' data, now employees are also more aware of the potential cybercrime and threats that can happen and precautions they can take to prevent themselves from one.

### **Post Pandemic Work Preferences of Employees**

As pandemic has affected every aspect of our life and has changed everything the workplace is no exception. After the pandemic lot of changes had occurred in the way we work thus this research study is done with the intent to understand the work preferences of the working population after the Covid pandemic. The survey showed that out of **80 respondents 55.1%** of the population feel that the work from home option which was a major change during the pandemic is a **blessing** for them whereas **44.9%** of the population feel that work from home is a **burden** and it's not a suitable option for them. Though the major population considers work from home a blessing, still if the company gives employees choice to choose between work from home and work from office **66.7% of respondents choose work from office** option and only **33.3% of respondents choose work from home** option. **18 respondents** had said that though work from home is a blessing for them still they will choose the work from office option if given a choice. **This shows that the negative side of work from home is stopping employees from choosing it.**

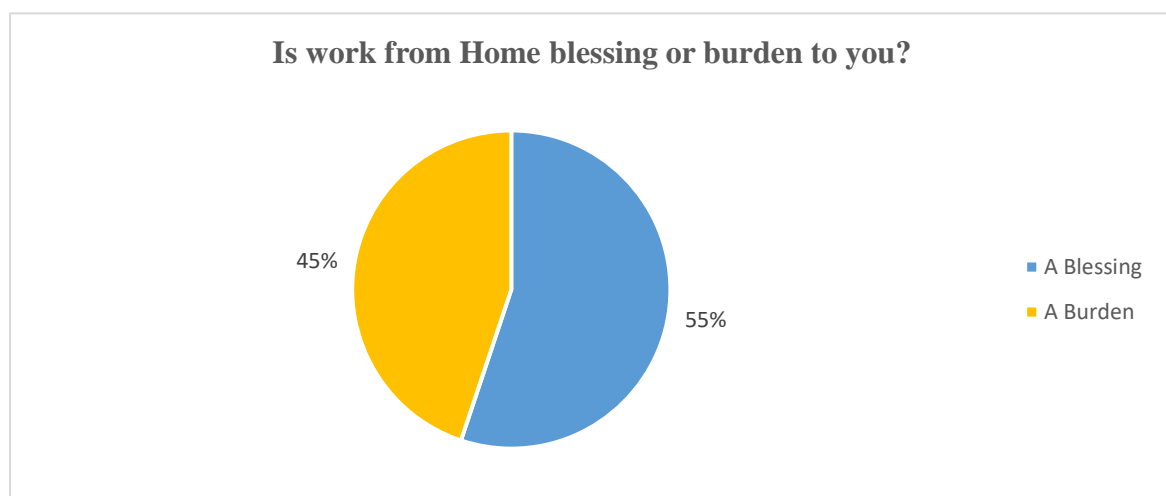


Chart – II Opinion about Work from Home

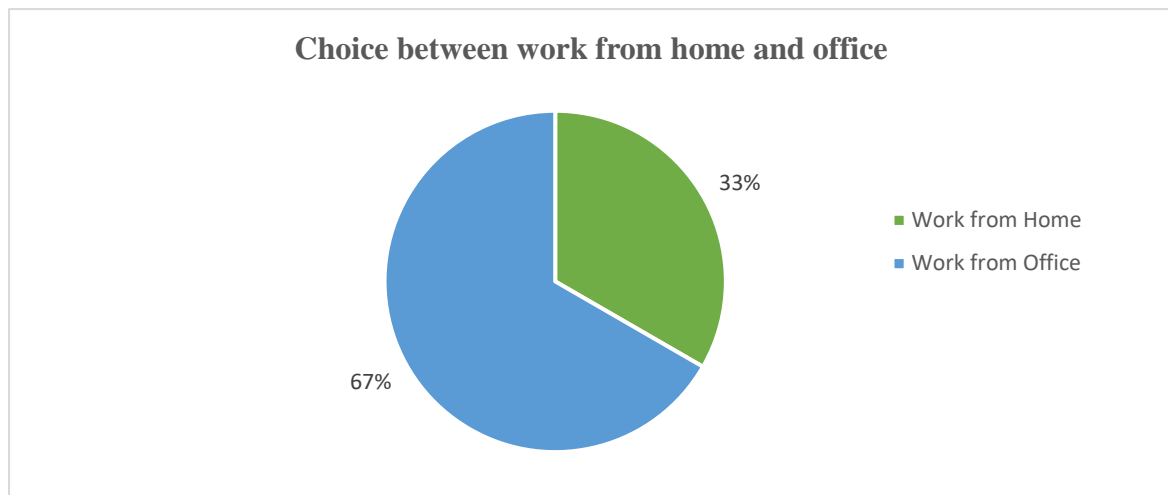


Chart – III Work Preference

### Benefits of Work from Home

Respondents who prefer **working from home** are **33%**. And according to respondents the benefits of working from home are as follows.

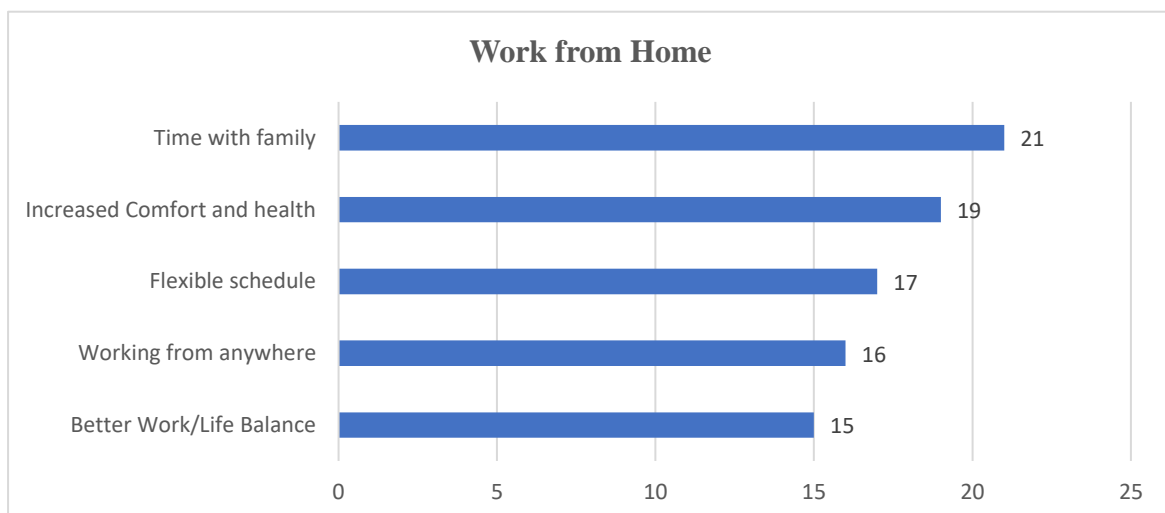


Chart – IV Benefits of Work from Home

- Time with Family**

The leading benefit of working from home is getting to spend quality time with family. **Out of 80 respondents, 80.8%** of respondents said that due to working from they get to spend time with their family members. The long working hour and hectic work life have caused employees to spend more time in the office and less at home with their loved ones thus work from home option is more preferable because employees get to stay at home with their family specifically in the wake of a pandemic.



- **Increased Comfort & Health**

Out of **80 respondents**, **73.1 %** of employees prefer work from home because it allows them to take more care of their health and also increases their comfort zone. Uncertainty about health has increased in the pandemic along with the discomfort. Constantly using masks, gloves, and sanitizer for keeping ourselves safe from the virus has increased the discomfort for many of us and thus this is a second major benefit of work from home.

- **Flexible Schedule**

Working from the office does not allow employees to have a flexible schedule, employees have to complete their work in their fixed working hours and thus it is not flexible for many of the employees. **65.4% of respondents** prefer the work from home option because it allows them to have more control over their work schedule, throughout the day employees can complete their work according to their comfort and can take a rest break when they want.

- **Working from Anywhere**

Another major advantage of working from home is an employee can work from anywhere, they can work while traveling, from their native place or any other place which they travel to this again allows the employee to maintain work-life balance and hence **61.5% of respondents** prefer work from home option due to this benefit.

- **Better Work - Life Balance**

All the above mention benefits allow employees to maintain a positive work-life balance as it allows them to start and end their day according to their comfort as long as the employee completes their assigned task in the given time frame, they hold some control over their work-life and thus **57.7% of the population** wants to choose work from home option if given choice by their employer.

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## Disadvantages of Work from Home

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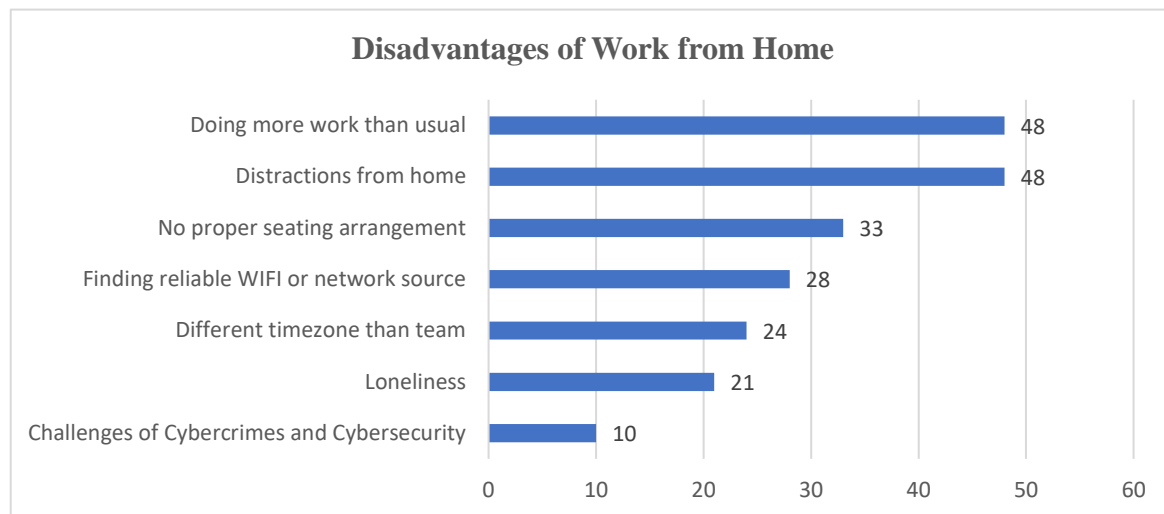


Chart – V Disadvantages of Work from Home

- **Doing More Work**

**60% of respondents** believe that they have done extra work during the work from home. Since employees work schedule becomes little flexible due to working from home thus there is a possibility that they may have to be available throughout the day. Leaders and managers bombard employees with extra work and expect them to complete it as they think that employees are free most of the time of the day and thus it leads to the situation where employees work more than daily hours.

- **Distractions from Home**

According to the **60% of respondent's** distractions from the home is a second major cause for them to not choose work from home option. Distractions make it harder for employees to pay attention to the work and thus cause more irritation and frustration.

- **Lack of Resources**

Lack of proper seating arrangement. Finding a reliable Wi-Fi network or source of the internet are some of the basic problems faced by the employees during work from home. Not having proper seating arrangement can lead to health issues and having a very unreliable network can be very frustrating for employees as their whole work depends on it thus **41.3% and 30% of respondents respectively have faced this problem.**

- **Different Time Zone and Loneliness**

It is highly possible that employees' time zone may not match with their team members and thus lead to miscommunication and mismanagement between the team. For **30% and 26.3% of respondent's** different time zone of teams and loneliness respectively are the main two reasons for not opting to work from home.

- **Challenges of Cybercrime and Cybersecurity**

During the pandemic, cybercrime has increased substantially and thus cybersecurity has become a very important area. **12.5% of respondents** think that cybersecurity is the reason behind not choosing work from home.

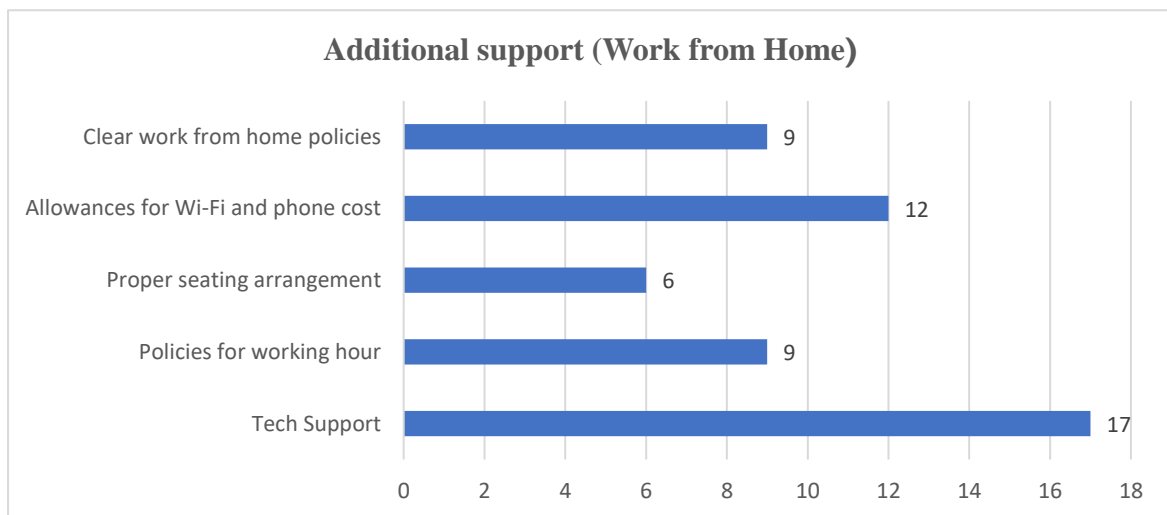


Chart – VI Support Employee want to Work More Productively from Home

To work more productively form home **65.4% of employees** need tech support, **34.6%** want policies on working hour, **32.1%** want home office set up, **46.2% of respondents** want allowances for Wi-Fi and phone cost and **34.6%** want clear work from home policies from their company to work more hassle free.

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## Benefits of Work from Office

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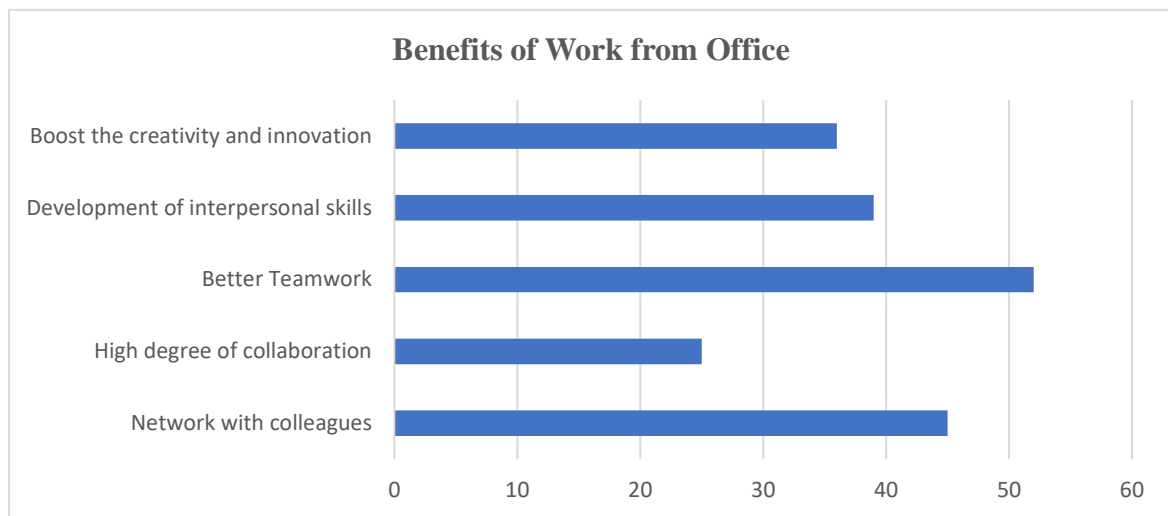


Chart VII – Benefits of Work from Office

- **Networking with Colleagues**

Employees get the opportunity to know people and form a professional relationship with them. It's always good to form a network and as one of the major disadvantages of work from home is loneliness thus most of the employees prefer working from the office as it makes them feel more involved with their surrounding and colleagues and work and thus **56.3% of respondents** prefer work form office instead of work from home.

- **High degree of Collaboration & Better Team Work**

A high degree of collaboration means better team work and better team work leads to more productive work and thus **31.3% of respondents** and **65% of respondents** prefer work from as it allows them to and their team to be more collaborative and maintain better team work respectively.

- **Development of Interpersonal Skill**

Communicating face to face with seniors and other employees helps employees to understand how they should behave and communicate with people in the corporate world. As we are surrounded by people in the workplace, we become more aware and alert about how we communicate, present ourselves, and how we behave thus it leads to the development of interpersonal skills, and thus out of 80 respondents, **48.8% prefer work from the office.**

- **Boost the Creativity and Innovation**

One of the most important benefits of work from the office is brainstorming which helps to build new ideas and expand new knowledge. This enables employees to learn new methods, techniques, and approaches to solve the problem. It also helps to change the way we look at a particular problem and solve it and because of this **45% of respondents** like working from the office.

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### Disadvantage of Work from Office

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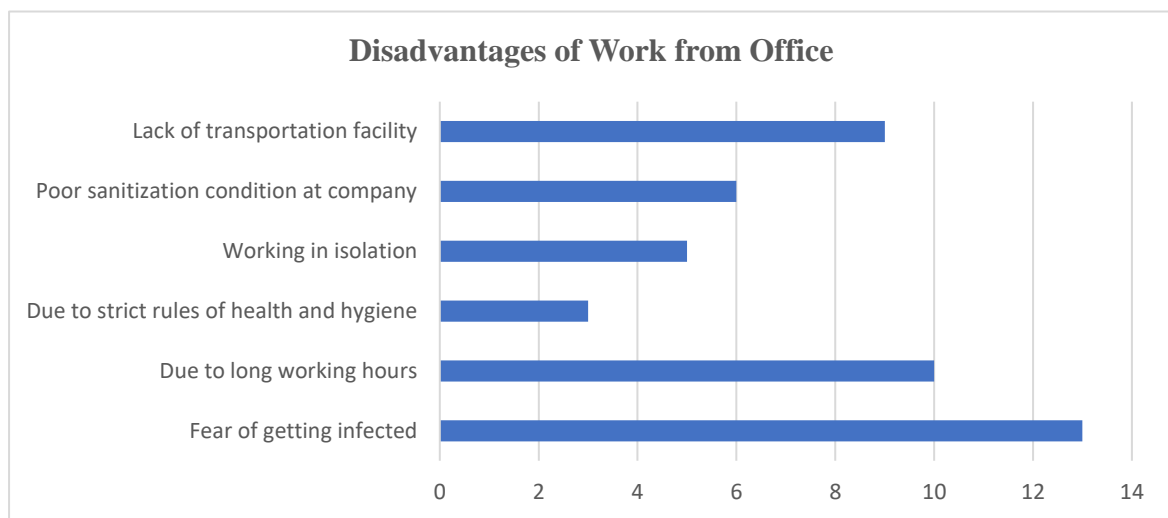


Chart VIII – Disadvantage of Work from Office

- **Fear of Getting Infected**

Out of 80 respondents, **50% of employees** believe that working from the office during this uncertain time is very risky and they might get infected and thus they are avoiding work from the office.

- **Long Working Hours**

Specifically, in pandemic due to cost-cutting, many companies had laid off many employees and due to this existing employee had to extend their working hours and thus 38.5% of employees prefer work from home over work from the office.

- **Strict Rules of Health and Hygiene and Working in Isolation**

Due to pandemic employees are required to follow very strict rules of hygiene to prevent the spread of the virus but this is what employees find very uncomfortable like working in isolation is the particular rule that most employees find very difficult to follow and thus

**11.5% of employees and 19.2% don't want to work from office due to these respective reasons.**

- **Organization Not Taking Care of Employees**

Though most of the organizations are following the Covid guideline to prevent the spread of virus still many organizations are not doing so, **23.1% of respondents** avoid working from office because their organization **is not maintaining proper sanitization** also during the pandemic most of the organization have **not given transportation** services to the employees, **34.6% of employees** prefer work from home due to this reason.

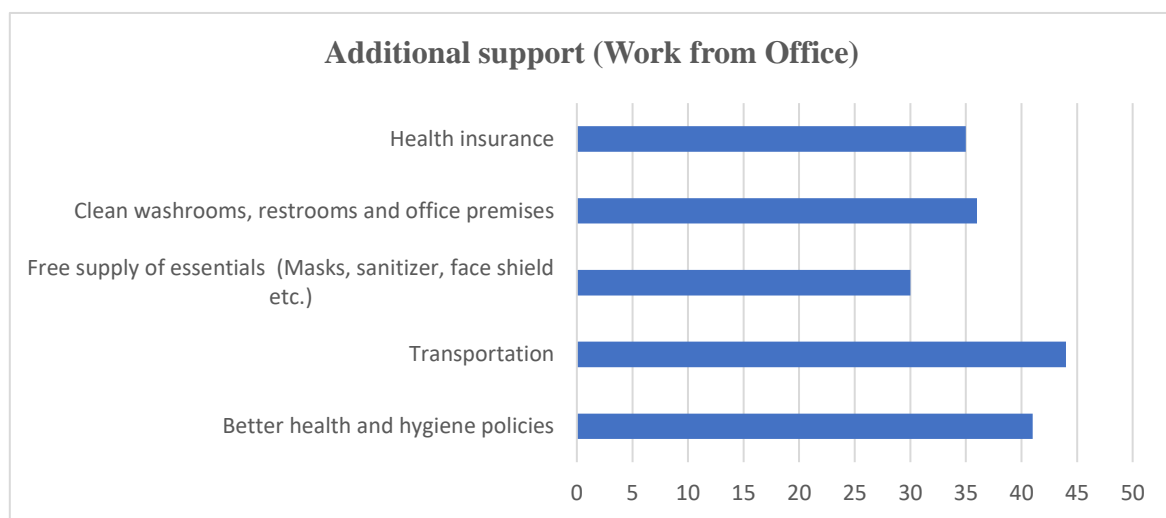


Chart – IX Support Employee want to Work More Productively from Office

To work more productively form office **43.8%** of employees need health insurance, **45%** want Clean washrooms, restrooms and office premise's, **37.5%** want free supply of essentials like sanitizer, face shield and mask, **55%** of respondents want transportation facility, and **51.2%** want better health and hygiene policies from their company to work more hassle free.

## Data Analysis

The research attempts to find the association between demographic variables (Gender and Age) and Work Preferences. The study is based on the quantitative approach. The collected data were subjected to Statistical Analysis. Inferential Statistic tool, Chi-Square was used to determine if there is any association present between these variables.

### Result of Chi-Square Test

#### Association between Demographic Variable and Work Preference.

##### 1. Gender and Work Preference.

Observed Frequencies			
Work Preferences			
Gender	Work from Home	Work from Office	Total
Female	20	36	56
Male	6	18	24
Total	26	54	80

Expected Frequencies			
Work Preferences			
Gender	Work from Home	Work from Office	Total
Female	18	38	56
Male	8	16	24
Total	26	54	80

Table I – Association between Gender and Work Preference

### Hypothesis

**H<sub>0</sub> – There is no association between Gender and Work Preference.**

**H<sub>1</sub> – There is association between Gender and Work Preference.**

**5% Level of Significance- 0.05**

**Chi- Square calculated value- 0.348443**

**Interpretation- Null hypothesis is not rejected.**

To identify whether there is any relation present between gender and work preference Chi-Square analysis was carried out. Table- I show that out of 80 respondents 56% of respondents were female while 24% were male. The calculated Chi-Square value was tested against a 5% level of significance. As the calculated value is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is not rejected hence we can state there is no association between gender and work preference. Hence there is a possibility that work preference does not depend on gender of respondents.

## 2. Age and Work Preference

Observed Frequencies			
Work Preferences			
Gender	Work from Home	Work from Office	Total
18-30	23	48	71
30 & above	3	6	9
Total	26	54	80

Expected Frequencies			
Work Preferences			
Gender	Work from Home	Work from Office	Total
18-30	23.075	47.925	71
30 & above	2.925	6.075	9
Total	26	52	80

Table – II Association between Age and Work Preference

### Hypothesis

**H0 – There is no association between Age and Work Preference.**

**H1 – There is association between Age and Work Preference.**

**5% Level of Significance- 0.05**

**Chi- Square calculated value- 0.954818**

**Interpretation- Null hypothesis is not rejected.**



To identify whether there is any relation present between age and work preference Chi-Square analysis was carried out. Table- II show that out of 80 respondents 71% of respondents were between 18-30 age while 9% were 30 and above. The calculated Chi-Square value was tested against a 5% level of significance. As the calculated value is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is not rejected hence we can state there is no association between age and work preference. Hence there is a possibility that work preference does not depend on age of respondents.

### **Best Practices to Support Employees**

To give some relief to the employees and to keep their motivation up many organizations have implemented very creative practices that have helped their employees to be more productive and positive during the crisis. Following are some of the examples of such practices.

- **T.E.A Check-In**

For supporting employee's well-being and mental health during pandemic Google introduced a very creative program named T.E.A check-in. T.E.A check-in stands for Thoughts, Energy, and Attention this simple activity enable employees to identify and focus on their stress points, check on their energy level, and reframe the mindset by paying attention to the things which allowed them to do the best of their abilities for that day. This simple technique helps employees to be more mindful and thus reduces the chances of burnout.

- **Work Detachment**

This is another practice implemented by Google. This practice encouraged employees to take some time out of their work and get completely detached from their work or daily schedule. This allowed employees to maintain a clear separation between work and personal life thus they can maintain a positive work-life balance and they hold the power to choose when to be working and when not.

- **Return to Workplace Playbook**

IBM published a Return to Workplace Playbook which described all the guidelines not only to employees but also to the clients and customers. Globally consistent guidelines were formed, this allowed them to apply one standard across the company. This playbook described every bit of information that employees needed to know starting from workplace

preparation, rules and workplace procedure to be followed by employees, and a readiness checklist thus this playbook helped to reduce the ambiguity and fear, among employees before going to the company after the pandemic.

- **Zero Trust**

During the pandemic, we have seen increased cases of cybercrime and thus protecting companies' data, fully embrace work from home, and protecting the workforce Microsoft implemented the Zero Trust policy. This system considers that everything behind the system is a breach and it's not safe so regardless of who gives access or request access this system allows the company to "Never Trust, Always Verify" thus every access request is encrypted before authorization.

- **Home Office**

Twitter helped their employees to set up the home office by giving reimbursements towards their home office set up. This helps employees immensely as their work-home needs are met. The company also took feedback from their employees and extended the list of items on the home office set up such as desks, chairs, and even cushions too.

## Chapter – 5 Result and Discussion of the Study

- Data collected from the primary research shows that the pandemic has changed the workplace immensely, new health policies, work from home, virtual team and leadership, new IT infrastructure and cybercrime are some of the major changes that have happened during the pandemic. Working population's opinion towards the work from home shows that 55% of employees prefer work from home a blessing and 45% consider it as burden.
- Though a greater number of respondents consider work from home blessing still 67.5% of respondents want to keep working from the office and 32.5% from home if the company gives them choice between these two options.
- According to 80.8% of respondents one of the top benefits of working from home is that they get time to spend with their family, increased comfort and health is the second major reason and total 73.1% agree to it, 65.4% prefer work from home due to flexible schedule and working from anywhere and better work-life balance are other benefits of work from home and 61.5% and 57.7% agree to it.
- 60% of employees do not prefer work from home due to the distraction of the home which does not allow them to focus on their daily tasks and also 60% of respondents out of 80 believe that during work from home they do more work than usual and thus work from home is not a desirable option for respondents.
- As working from the office allows employees to maintain a good synergy between teams thus 65% of employees prefer work from the office. Getting to connect with colleagues, high collaboration, increased creativity, and innovation are some of the other reasons.
- 50% of respondents are not ready to go to the office because they are afraid of getting infected. Other reasons are poor sanitization at the workplace, working in isolation, strict rules of hygiene, and lack of transportation facility from the company.
- Chi-square analysis was done to find the relation between Gender, Age and Work-Preference and it showed that there is no association between demographic variables (Gender, Age) and Work-Preference of respondents.
- Data collected from secondary sources about the best practices implemented by organizations were studied. These practices are best suited to boost employees' morale and motivation and most importantly their productivity during the pandemic. It is possible to help employees and keep their motivation alive in a crisis like a pandemic and for that purpose, companies can implement very easy methods and techniques to help employees to be more productive.

## **Chapter – 6 Recommendations and Suggestions**

The outcome of this research suggests a certain area that needs attention, which will enable organizations to form policies and make decisions that will help to effectively implement the new emerging policies and practices which are arising due to pandemic. This study tries to understand the work preference of the working population between work from home and work from the office, emerging policies and practices, and this study also mentions some examples by which organizations can help their employees during this crisis. Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic lot of changes had occurred in employees life suddenly work from home became the new norm, policy framework of organizations changed and all these changes were very sudden and new to the employees thus many employees found it very hard and had suffered a lot during this transition and thus to understand what employees want and how we can help them in the crisis like this organizations needs to adopt some of the flexible policies, form more flexible work structure for employees and make the work environment more motivating to them.

Providing employees assistance for the home office set up, forming work from home policies, making work from home safer by implementing the best security system, boosting wellness programs, and so on. These are some of the steps that organizations can take, this will not only help to make an easy transition for employees but can also help to increase their motivation and productivity. Due to certain limitations, this research study is conducted within a short span hence it contains only the basics of the Post-Pandemic Workplace also, as a convenience and snowball sampling method was used the respondent's population is diverse and it is kept minimum maybe because of this, the research study could not find any relation between demographic variables which are age, gender, and work preferences hence further study is needed on a larger population with different sampling technique to check whether any relation between these two variables exists or not. Further industry-specific study or company-specific study can be done to see whether employees' work preferences change across a wide range of industries and companies. There is also a need to do an extensive research study on this topic, as innovative ideas are needed which will help and motivate the employee to talk about their problems with more confidence it will also improve the existing policies of organizations and will increase the employee productivity and motivation.

## Chapter – 7 Conclusion

- Based on the findings from the analysis of survey data and secondary data, the following conclusions can be drawn in the context of the objectives of this research study. This research study is heavily dependent on secondary research and the opinions of respondents collected via survey.
- Pandemic has caused very long-lasting changes in the organization's policy framework, environment, and also on the employees, thus in the wake of the pandemic, we can see the major changes happening such as organizations moving to the work from home, virtual leadership, establishment of new culture in the organization, increased threat of cybersecurity, etc.
- From the collected data we can say that though work from home is considered a blessing by many employees still a major chunk of the population chooses work from the office over working from home. We can say that though work from home offers more flexibility to the employees yet it is not being implemented well by companies or companies that lack work from home policies and thus employees choose work from the office.
- Benefits and disadvantages of work from home and work from office shows that both the option have their pros and cons and thus not one option is good or best than one another thus the effectiveness of the work from home and office depends on employee and organization.
- We can conclude from chi-square analysis that there is no association present between work preferences of employees and their gender and age.
- Finally, it is possible to understand the work preferences of employees and make necessary policies and work environments according to their needs. And for this companies can implement very simple techniques and methods like T.E.A check-in, Home Office, Work Detachment, Return to workplace playbook, and finally Zero Trust policies. All these changes are needed in today's workplace as time is changing the employees, needs, their wants and source of motivation are also changing and thus to keep employees motivated, productive and to make their work-life more manageable during a crisis like this companies need to take some proactive steps.
- If we fail to implement the new way of working according to the need of employees then in the coming future the employee capital will be suffering from a major problem. Addressing this emerging problem is now our crucial responsibility and to do so more research and innovative idea is needed.

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## Appendices

- Gender
  - ☐ Female
  - ☐ Male
  - ☐ Other
- Age
  - ☐ 18-30
  - ☐ 30-40
  - ☐ 40-50
  - ☐ 50 and above
- At what designation do you work, please mention?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What changes you have observed in your workplace and work practices
  - ☐ New health and wellness standard
  - ☐ Layoff of employees
  - ☐ Management taking more care of employees
  - ☐ Change in infrastructure for maintaining social distancing
  - ☐ Work from home
  - ☐ Virtual teams
  - ☐ Virtual leadership and management
  - ☐ Change in policy framework
  - ☐ New IT infrastructure (Updated security majors and systems)
- Is working from home a blessing or a burden to you?
  - ☐ A blessing
  - ☐ A burden
- If given a choice what will you prefer?
  - ☐ Working from home
  - ☐ Working from office

- What are the top benefits of working from home?
  - ☐ Flexible schedule
  - ☐ Time with family
  - ☐ Working from anywhere
  - ☐ Better Work/Life Balance
  - ☐ Increased Comfort and health
- Why you do not prefer working from the office
  - ☐ Fear of getting infected
  - ☐ Due to long working hours
  - ☐ Due to strict rules of health and hygiene
  - ☐ Working in isolation
  - ☐ Poor sanitization condition at company
  - ☐ Company not providing transportation facility in pandemic
- What additional support you need from your company to continue working from home
  - ☐ Equipment and tech support from company
  - ☐ Policies for working hours
  - ☐ Proper seating arrangement
  - ☐ Allowances for Wi-Fi and phone cost
  - ☐ Clear work from home policies
- What are the top benefits of working from office?
  - ☐ Network with colleagues
  - ☐ High degree of collaboration
  - ☐ Better Teamwork
  - ☐ Development of interpersonal skills
  - ☐ Boost the creativity and innovation
- What are the struggles you faced while working from home?
  - ☐ Loneliness
  - ☐ Distractions from home
  - ☐ Different time zone than team
  - ☐ Finding reliable WIFI or network source
  - ☐ Doing more work than usual
  - ☐ Challenges of Cybercrimes and Cybersecurity
  - ☐ No proper setting arrangement\
- What additional support you need from your company to continue working from the office
  - ☐ Better health and hygiene policies
  - ☐ Transportation
  - ☐ Free supply of essentials (Masks, sanitizer, face shield etc.)
  - ☐ Clean washrooms, restrooms and office premises
  - ☐ Health insurance