

An empirical study on productivity and motivation of employees during the pandemic

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ABSTRACT:

Productivity and motivation play an important role in flourishing of the company in the market. When the Corona Virus started spreading, work from office has been shifted to work from home and now it has become the new normal for everyone. Work from home was applicable since many years in many multi-national companies but now the scenario has completely changed and every company has adopted it. In this digital era, the companies need to understand the employee's perspective so that the level of job satisfaction can increase and they can be loyal to the company. Work from home has its own advantages and disadvantages but it has surely provided flexibility to the working hours of the employees. Work from home has given the leverage to the employees but also made difficult for a HR to satisfy the employees so that they can give their best to the company. The several factors like communication, decision making, training, weekend activity and work environment changed the working of the employees and stirred their daily schedules. The paper aims to find out the various factors which affects the productivity and motivation of employees and what they are expecting from the company when they are working from home. The data was collected with an unstructured questionnaire from 156 respondents through convenience sampling. Overall, the result was that the employees are happy and convinced while working from home. The paper will be beneficial for all the companies to know about their employee's productivity and motivation level when they are working from home.

Key words: *Work from home, productivity, motivation, employees.*

INTRODUCTION

Job satisfaction is the important parameter which is attracting the employees. When the Corona Virus started spreading, people adopted work from home and now internet has become the need of the hour. As the digitalization is increasing rapidly and the updated technologies are giving the new shape in the mind-set of each and every employee, therefore every employee is searching for the job which is providing work from home because it gives flexibility in the working hours of the employees. Many employees lost their job due to COVID-19 but now the companies are searching for the candidates who can easily adapt with the changes as per the scenario and also who can put their best while working from home.

Work from home has its own advantages and disadvantages and it is not new for multi-national companies. Previously many of the multi-national companies allow work from home for some days and their employees were adapted to it. But now every company has adopted it and in the initial stage it was very difficult for the employees to cope up with the technology. But as the time passed and employees started practising to do work from home, now it's the time that employees are more productive while working in home as they get flexibility and also, they started enjoying their work. Work from home has given employees a golden chance to work anywhere in India and many of the part-time jobs' ideas were highly promoted through it like network and affiliate marketing.

Motivation and Productivity are the factors which should be extremely high in an employee so that the company can flourish in the market. Motivation is the reason by which people love to work in the company. It is a process that triggers our mind to work extra for the company. Productivity is something which measures the performance of employees. There are different performance measure tools adopted by different companies through which they can have a quarterly check on the working of the employees. Work from home has made it difficult for the HR to provide the exact level of motivation to the employees when they use to do work from office. Also, it is difficult for the employees to be productive as there are many factors which affect the employees when they work from home.

In the coming future work from home will be the new normal and some companies may be permanently making an option to do work from home in case when the company wants to retain the skilled, experienced and potential employee and the employee doesn't want to migrate from his/her home town. There are many factors which came into existence and employees want that the company should consider it while measuring their productivity. Also, the HR needs to find unique ways so that the employee gives their best and stay motivated to work for the company. So, in this paper some factors are considered through which we get to know about the productivity and motivation of employees when they work from home.

Literature Review

Productivity

Productivity is very crucial for any company. The fluctuation of productivity is also a major problem and which is directly related to the income level of employees (Daim et al. [24] and Barhite [29]). Productivity can be improved if the employee is self – satisfied and happy Daim et al. [24] and Barhite [29]. Their research also says that the employee gets extra time with their close ones which results in good results, that is, the employee's productivity is increased when he/she is working from home.

Motivation

Motivation is that force which triggers the mind and ability to do any work (Daim et al. [24] and Barhite [29]). It is the psychological process which gives the employee the power to be loyal for the company and to be self-satisfied (Ilgen and Klein, 1988). Motivation is something which enables the employees to do extra or put some effort for the company which they didn't wish to do and also it is the crucial factor for any organization (Lawler (1973)).

Communication

Communication plays an important role when the employees are working. It is not just about the formal communication but also the employee missing chit chats during breaks which means less amount of socialization can lead to decrease in productivity of employees (Daim et al. [24] and Barhite [29]). Their research also says that informal communication can lead to stress, complexity and miscommunication among employees. But on the contrary, virtual communication is challenging so employees can have a work-life balance and can have extra time for their friends and family (Janssen, 2017).

Decision Making

Decision making plays a complex role for any organization. Some employees want that their decision should matter the organization or they should contribute to the organization whereas some employees are not even interested in giving their contribution to the organization. So, this plays a mixed factor as it varies from individual to individual but in today's scenario, employees feel that they should be given an opportunity to tell their views and to be an active employee in the organization (Daim et al. and Barhite).

Training of Employees

The training of employees is observed to be the most supreme factor when it comes to work from home. When the pandemic got started the first thing which employees got is the training to do work from home so that the productivity should not get hamper. Training affects the productivity and motivation of employees if not properly given from time to time. A trained employee can do the work more sincerely, practically and systematically and is having more loyalty towards the organization (Ilgen and Klein, 1988).

Weekend Activity

Weekend activity is a prime factor when employees are working from home. Every employee needs some fun or change in their lives which can be provided with the help of weekend activity. It increases the motivational level of employees which result in increasing of productivity and also it keeps them more satisfied, engaged and committed to their work which results in profitability of the organization (Daim et al. and Barhite).

Work Environment

Work environment plays a moderate role when it comes to work from home. The employees are having a satisfactory time to balance between their work and family. The psychological pressure of the work is reduced in work from home as employees are having extra time to put extra efforts to their work and to give time to their close ones. The employees are more motivated and preferring to continue to do work from home (Daim et al. and Barhite).

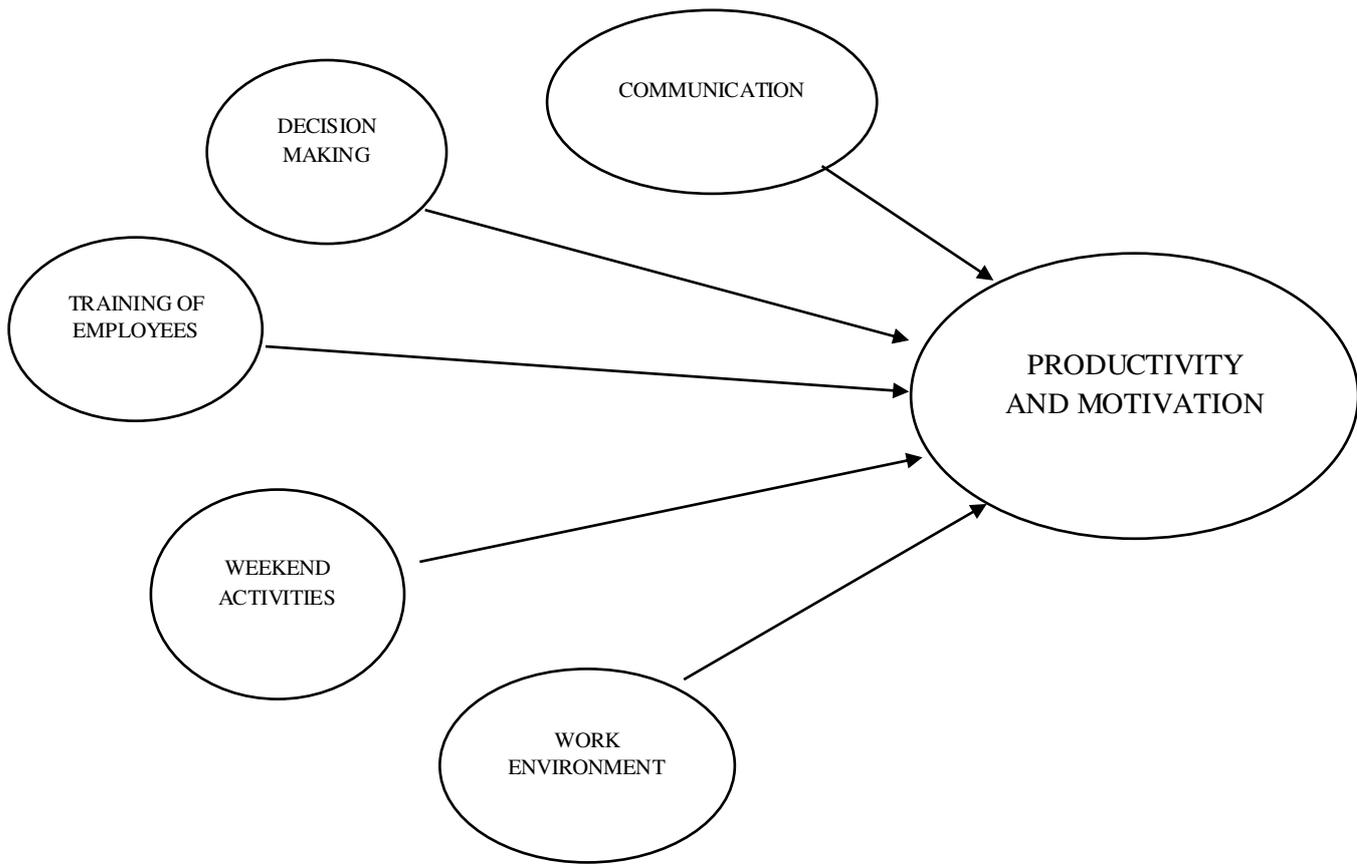
RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The study was conducted to know the perception of the employees who has adopted work from home as a new normal. Following are the objectives of the study:

- ❖ To measure the productivity of the employees when working from home.
- ❖ To measure the motivation level of the employees while working from home.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Based on literature review, following Conceptual Framework was framed for research



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Scale Development

Structured Questionnaire was used for the purpose of research. Scales used for the formation of constructs were adopted from previous related studies. Questionnaire was divided into 2 parts. The first part covered the demographic profile of the employees whereas the second one was related to factors affecting the productivity and motivation of employees when they work from home. The factors were measured on five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. Pilot testing of the questionnaire was done on 56 employees before proceeding for the further research. The results 56 employees were acceptable. Hence, researcher proceeded for the further research.

Sampling Design

The study was conducted in Chhattisgarh. Sampling technique used for this study is Random Sampling. The population for the research was the respondents who were working and adopted work from home as the new normal. The data was collected from 164 employees out of which 156 were used for further purpose.

Respondent's Profile

Respondent Characteristics	Number	Percentage (%)
Gender		
· Male	79	51 %
· Female	77	49 %
Age		
· 15 – 25	101	64 %
· 25 – 35	42	27 %
· 35 – 45	9	6 %
· 45 – 55	4	3 %
Educational Qualification		
· Graduation	70	45 %
· Post – Graduation	73	47 %
· Post – Graduation & Above	13	8 %
Marital Status		
· Married	27	17 %
· Unmarried	129	83 %
Monthly Income		
· Less than 10,000	40	26 %
· 11,000 – 20,000	31	20 %
· 21,000 – 30,000	39	25 %
· 31,000 – 40,000	20	13 %
· More than 41,000	26	16 %

Table1: Demographic profile of respondents

- It states that 51% of the employees are male and 49% of the employees are female.
- The factor of age states that 64% of the employees lies between the age of 15 - 25, 27% of the employees lies between the age of 25 - 35, 6% of the employees lies between the age of 35 - 45 and 3% of the employees lies between the age of 45 - 55.

- 45% of respondents are graduates, 47% post-graduates and remaining 8% did their post - graduation and above.
- 17% of the employees are married while rest are unmarried.
- The factor of monthly income states that 26% of the employees are having less than 10,000 income, 20% of the employees are having the income between 11,000 - 20,000, 25% of the employees are having the income between 21,000 - 30,000, 13% of the employees are having the income between 31,000 - 40,000 and 16% of the employees are having more than 41,000 as their monthly income.

ITEMS DELETED

In a way to improve the model fit for the Productivity and Motivation of Employees, few indicators were loaded to the construct which were not supposed to represent and some residual covariance of the representing constructs were released. The questionnaire consisted of 25 items and scale to retain those items was 23.

DATA ANALYSIS

Construct reliability

The degree to which the measure of construct is dependable or consistent is said to be reliability. Cronbach's alpha is used to check reliability. As suggested by Nunnally,1978, if the score is 0.7 is said to be a good indicator of construct reliability. As shown in Table 2, the value of all the variables are more than .7 resulting a high internal consistency.

Table2: Reliability of Scale

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha
Communication	0.847
Decision Making	0.781
Productivity & Motivation	0.856
Training of employees	0.841
Weekend Activity	0.831
Work Environment	0.715

Assessment of Validity

Construct validity

Construct validity is the degree to which a size sufficiently exemplifies the basic construct that it is supposed to measure. This was evaluated with the help of factor loadings. PLS measurement model was used to carry out the testing. Hair et al., (2006) in his studies reported that the value of factor loading is 0.50 or higher, is the acceptable benchmarks for construct validity. From table 3, it can be depicted that all the constructs are above 0.60 leaving one behind, which indicated a good and higher construct validity.

Table 3: Factor loading

	Comm	DM	PM	Train	WA	Work
Comm1	0.816					
Comm2	0.84					
Comm3	0.839					
Comm4	0.814					
DM1		0.806				
DM2		0.812				
DM3		0.804				
DM4		0.68				
PM1			0.745			
PM2			0.816			
PM3			0.833			
PM4			0.802			
PM5			0.784			
Train1				0.908		
Train2				0.911		
Train3				0.862		
Train4				0.571		

WA1					0.686	
WA2					0.873	
WA3					0.885	
WA4					0.79	
Work1						-0.038
Work2						-0.035
Work3						0.909
Work4						0.793

(Comm- Communication; DM- Decision Making; PM- Productivity & Motivation; Train- Training of employees; WA- Weekend Activity; Work- Work Environment)

CONVERGENT VALIDITY

It implies to the proximity with which a measure correlates to the construct. To check the this, following metrics have been used: -

- AVE: The average variance extracted percentage should be .50 or higher ((Hair et al, 2007). As shown in Table 4, the values of are greater than 0.5 leaving one behind, hence meeting the standards.
- Internal consistency values (Cronbach's Alpha) and the Composite Reliability (CR) were also observed. CA values above 0.60 and 0.70 are considered to be good and CR values of 0.70 and 0.90 are considered satisfactory (Hair et al., 2014).

Table 5: CONVERGENT VALIDITY

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted
Communication	0.847	0.848	0.897	0.685
Decision Making	0.781	0.79	0.859	0.605
Productivity & Motivation	0.856	0.86	0.897	0.635
Training of employees	0.841	0.91	0.892	0.681

Weekend Activity	0.831	0.89	0.885	0.66
Work Environment	0.715	0.49	0.51	0.364

DISCRIMINANT VALIDITY

It is the level to which a construct is actually different from other constructs. High discriminating validity thus establishes proof that a construct is distinctive and does not capture some other occurrences (Hair et al., 2007).

As shown in Table 6, the values of all the constructs are higher and hence supporting the discriminant validity based on studies of Fornell and Larcker (1981).

Table 6: Fornell and Larcker

	Communication	Decision Making	Productivity & Motivation	Training of Employees	Weekend Activity	Work Environment
Communication	0.827					
Decision Making	0.535	0.778				
Productivity & Motivation	0.376	0.432	0.797			
Training of employees	0.578	0.413	0.418	0.825		
Weekend Activity	0.318	0.463	0.303	0.459	0.812	
Work Environment	0.535	0.36	0.495	0.466	0.344	0.603

HYPOTHESIS TESTING

Table 7: Regression Analysis

	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	t- Statistics	P-values	Adjusted	Result
Comm -> PM_	-0.054	-0.047	0.107	0.5	0.617	0.317	Accepted
DM -> PM_	0.264	0.272	0.091	2.889	0.004		Rejected
Train -> PM_	0.181	0.181	0.096	1.879	0.061		Accepted
WA_ -> PM_	-0.004	-0.001	0.081	0.052	0.985		Accepted
Work__ -> PM_	0.346	0.328	0.0165	2.091	0.037		Rejected

Table 7 shows the impact of various factors affecting the productivity and motivation of employees when they work from home. The association between independent variable and dependent variable was done using the Bootstrap summary.

H1: There is significant impact of communication of employees towards their productivity and motivation when they work from home.

The table indicates that the p value is >0.05 (p value- 0.617, t value – 0.5) resulting in acceptance of null hypothesis. Which implements that communication is important in keeping or increasing the productivity and motivation of employees as reported in studies by Daim et al.and Barhite.

H2: There is no significant impact of Decision making of employees towards their productivity and motivation when they work from home.

From the table the p value is $<.05$ (p value- 0.004, t value – 2.889) resulting in rejection of null hypothesis. Which implements that decision making is not a factor which affects the productivity and motivation of employees in an organization.

H3: There is significant impact of training of employees towards their productivity and motivation when they work from home.

The table indicates that the p value is >0.05 (p value- 0.061, t value – 1.879) resulting in acceptance of null hypothesis. Which concludes that training is valuable in increasing the productivity and motivation of employees in an organization. It is the most crucial factor as through training itself, employees can enhance their skills which results in increasing their motivational level and when the employees are satisfied, they are loyal to the company which means their productivity will be increased.

H4: There is significant impact of conducting weekend activities for employees towards their productivity and motivation when they work from home.

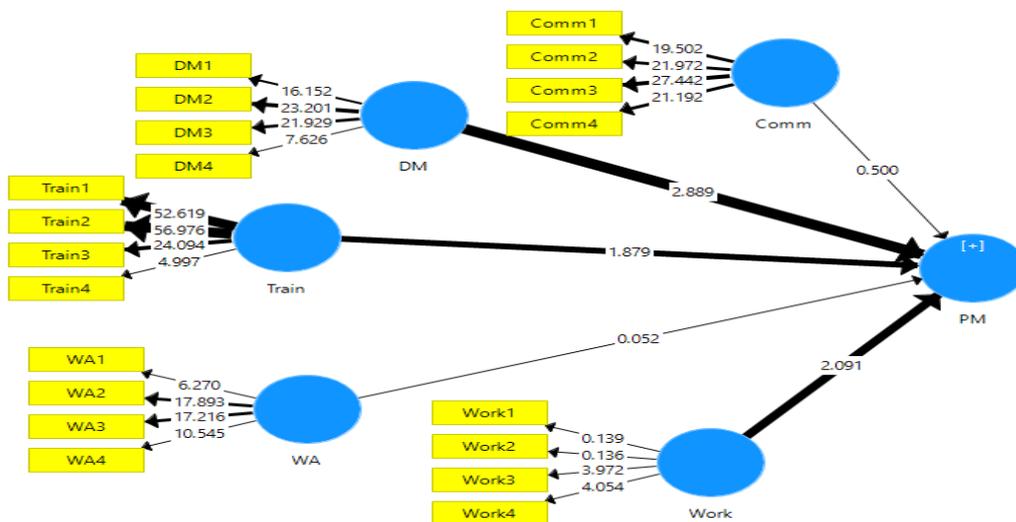
The table indicates that the p value is >0.05 (p value- 0.985, t value – 0.052) resulting in acceptance of null hypothesis. This indicates that conducting weekend activities for employees enhance their motivation and productivity because the change an employee always needs some fun and change from their routine work.

H5: There is no significant impact of work environment on employees towards their productivity and motivation when they work from home.

The table indicates that the p value is <0.05 (p value- 0.037, t value – 2.091) resulting in rejection of null hypothesis. This means that the work environment is not a factor which affects the productivity and motivation of employees as they can give extra time to their close ones and they feel more flexibility in working when they work from home.

PATH ANALYSIS

Path analysis was carried out with the help of Smart PLS Software to find out the impact of various factors on productivity and motivation of employees.



CONCLUSION

With the impact of digitalization, internet has become the need for everyone and after spreading of Corona Virus, work from home has become the new normal for all the employees. When employees were in the initial stages of working from home, they didn't know that this new change will make them happier and more satisfied and they will be preferring work from home instead of work from office. This study focusses to understand the various factors impacting the productivity and motivation of employees when they accepted working from home. The result of the study, reveals that communication, training and weekend activity have a significant effect on the productivity and motivation of employees. Moreover, this study reveals that employees started enjoying work from home and they want to continue it further in their respective organization. Another finding was that the decision making and work environment has no impact towards the productivity and motivation of employees as now employees have extra time for their close ones and they are experiencing work – life balance through work from home.

Implication of the Study

This study implies that the employee's productivity is increased when they are working from home and they are highly motivated as now they have flexibility in their working hours. This study can be used by companies to understand their employees needs and demands and their perspective towards the new normal. The HR should come up with new ideas and the top management should implement the new policies and strategies to make the employees satisfied and loyal towards the organization.

LIMITATIONS

The study was confined to the city of Raipur itself. The results were drawn based on limited factors which the researcher came across through literature review. There are many other factors which were not taken into consideration and it can be used for analysis in future research.

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Biographies

Drishti Tibrewala



An extrovert, self-motivated and creative girl with full of positive vibes having a passion of learning and experimenting new things in varied fields. A person who loves to travel and want to experience different adventures in her journey. A girl who cannot sit idle and every time seeking for some new opportunities and extra fun in her life. Apart from these, a blogger who express her feelings or thoughts in the form of poems with the world and like to be perfect in her work.