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By Abdullah Al Mashruk, Nazmus Saif & Tahsin Reza Nushin
Jahangirnagar University

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Research limitations: The research is conducted in only two sectors with a few employees. There is scope to expand the research base.

Practical Implications: The research could bring out the negative factors from work from home, which organisations can seek to resolve to give a better work-life balance to their employees. We also suggested that a hybrid modality in these two sectors can provide employees with a better work-life balance.

Keywords: work from home, work-life balance, impacts, telecommunications, fast-moving consumer goods.

I. Introduction

With the novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic having hit people all over the world, society has been beset with a variety of issues and challenges involving work, leisure, essential travel etc. It has had an immense impact on the world's economic state due to putting a stop to economic activities for an extended period. While there was much anticipation and several warnings, particularly those in the public health field, the transition was difficult. It needed preparation, training, and facilitation. COVID-19 was identified in 2019 as a virus that transmits to humans through respiratory droplets and hence is considered to spread through close contact with other people. Many business organisations have inclined towards work from home policies to prevent this and save economic activities from being idle for prolonged periods. In some countries, work from home was already in existence. However, several countries, such as Bangladesh, quickly adapted to this shift in work environment dynamics. In some countries, the government enforces the work from home policy. In others, businesses took the first step toward it to keep business operations running.

Bangladesh has a vast, dense population being a lower-middle-income country. When the pandemic broke out, like other countries, Bangladesh was forced to take preventative measures such as travel bans, country lockdown, remote work initiatives and social isolation. The sudden standstill in all sectors dealt a severe blow to the economy and devastated the lives of numerous people. Organisations were forced to introduce work from policies to revive the economy. Although work from home is anything but a new concept in foreign countries, Bangladesh companies found it a step further when enforced during the pandemic. However, many companies enthusiastically adopted this new work policy. BRAC was the first organisation in Bangladesh to implement a work from home policy for its head office, which had 2000+ employees. Others followed its steps, and Bangladesh's working environment lifted to a new level. The CEO of Shanta Asset Management claims that they successfully adopted work from the home policy, being a research-based and focus oriented company. On the other hand, the CEO of Renata Limited claims that even though the work from home policy enabled them to avoid traffic, they still did not enjoy working from home. The MD of Berger Paints Bangladesh Limited termed working from home as a new experience and a challenge because of work and home responsibilities intertwining. According to the CEO of Omera Fuels, the flexibility and distraction-free atmosphere offered by work from the

Author α σ ρ: IBA, Jahangirnagar University.
e-mails: animmashruk70@gmail.com, saif.nazmus.2108@gmail.com, trnushin@gmail.com

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home policy were enjoyable. We can rightfully say that different companies perceived work from home approaches differently and strived to adapt (Karmaker, 2020).

Knowing that many companies in Bangladesh actively adopted the work from the home policy during the months of the pandemic, it is natural to be curious about the aftermath of adopting these policies and how they would affect work-life balance and employee preferences post-pandemic stage. The two selected sectors for this study are the telecommunications and the fast-moving consumer goods sectors. Telecommunication companies operate by a band of engineers, salespeople, customer service people, and installers. Besides this, most of the functions of a telecommunication company are based on technologies, including servers, networks, etc. Therefore, it is natural that these companies would be inclined toward work from home policies during the pandemic to keep themselves functional. On the other hand, even though fast-moving consumer goods companies operate factories and maintain supply and distribution channels, they still employ many people in research, management, and marketing positions. These jobs were shifted to home offices during the pandemic to prevent contamination. These professionals from the mentioned two sectors could be interviewed, providing insight into the work dynamics during the pandemic. Companies have strived to adapt to new working policies during the pandemic in their ways.

All that being said, working from home substantially affects employee life and preference, the variables being productivity, motivation, work-life balance, etc. The study aims to understand whether work from home is as good as we think it to be. The paper will explore the potential positive and negative impacts of working from home. The main issue of the effect will be the work-life balance of employees. Finally, the paper will also establish the work policy that employees believe gives them the best work-life balance.

II. Literature Review

Working from home is a burning topic in the current business world. Its benefits are vast, and its impacts are far-reaching. The study explores the impact of work from home (WFH) on the work-life balance of professionals working in two of the most active business sectors- Telecommunications and Fast-Moving Consumer Goods, focusing on maintaining work-life balance.

Because of the desire for distant working environments, teleworking became popular in the early 1990s. Although work for home has existed in the operational policies of business organisations, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought it into the spotlight in recent years as a means of adapting to the changes in the work-life dynamics of the socially isolated workforce. Many scholars have explored topics centring on this widely-used working policy of working from home. It is a hot topic in today's business world because of its diverse scopes and benefits.

Work from home is the idea that encompasses a wide range of working methods, including information and communication technologies (ICTs) and a place other than a traditional office. Work from home can have a beneficial or harmful influence on an employee's work-life balance. Because work-life balance has a unique standard, namely a return to one's life values and priorities, this might have a variety of outcomes. For some people, working from home, for example, can improve the quality of their family ties. On the other hand, working from home might exacerbate the blurring of work-family boundaries, making it more difficult to keep work and family time distinct (Putri & Amran, 2021).

Work-life balance is a comprehensive notion that entails establishing suitable priorities between work (career and ambition) and life (happiness, leisure, family, and spiritual growth) on the one hand and work (career and industry) on the other. As a result, a company that incorporates work-life balance into its employee work system can assist employees in achieving a level of balance between work and personal life outside of work, for employees to achieve self-motivation and welfare that allows them to perform various roles effectively and efficiently at work and home (Putri & Amran, 2021).

There are many studies by researchers and scholars focusing on work from home and various aspects related to it and its impacts. Most studies focus on how work from home policies influence employee job satisfaction and expectations. This study compared whether this work policy impairs or improves job satisfaction and work-life balance. The methods applied to conduct this study consist of personal attributes, job features, skills, and employment properties assessed singly and in combination as blocks of impacts on job satisfaction and work-life balance. The slightest angle regression is used to choose the variables (Bellmann & Hübler, 2020).

Some other articles focused on measuring job satisfaction between work-life balance and work stress. The various benefits of teleworking or remote working, such as increased job performance, lessening of work-family imbalance, reducing stress levels, and decreasing turnover intentions, have been explored, which are possible under support from peers and managerial levels. These studies have also identified the perceived side effects of working from home. Social isolation, reduction in motivation, and inability to establish boundaries between work and personal life are prime side effects. This study was conducted using a quantitative approach (Irawanto et al., 2021).

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Another primary focus of working from home-related topics is its implication in the lives of working women. These studies highlight how the sudden change in work environment dynamics has affected the female employee segment during the pandemic. They focused on how the female working population has encountered working from home policy and the issues they face in balancing their responsibilities. Women are perceived to have more duties in the home than their male counterparts. Various statistical procedures such as reliability and validity checking, multiple regression analysis, ANOVA, and hypothesis testing were used to assess the data collected from a sample of women engaged in different sectors (Basak, 2021).

The existing research and studies have focused on the scope of working from home, the challenges faced in implementing this policy, and the benefits and drawbacks. Work from home impacts productivity and employee motivation and satisfaction, work-life balance, etc. The studies have focused on women's challenges in job sectors that play a dual role in life.

Most scholars have explored the relation of work from home to employee benefits and organisation goals alignment in the western business setup, which is, in fact, rich in structure, technologies, opportunities, and resources. However, few papers on how this policy is implemented and perceived as useful in semi-developed and underdeveloped countries with various limitations and obstacles. Even the existing studies are observed to focus mainly on the female population of the workforce, who are considered for their responsibilities at home, which are thought to be affected by working from home. The male respondent samples are small and cannot be expected to provide an accurate picture. Moreover, the impacts of work from home should vary from sector to sector, provided that organisations' business functions differsignificantly across industries.

In light of the above information, this study has been conducted to explore the impact of work from home on the work-life balance of professionals from the telecommunication sector and fast-moving consumer goods sector of Bangladesh and to understand further which kind of working policy is preferable based on their experiences.

III. Methods

a) *Research Design*

The paper follows an exploratory qualitative research approach employing a multiple case study design (Eisenhardt, 1989; K. M. EISENHARDT & M. E. GRAEBNER, 2007)) to understand the impacts of work from the home policy on work-life balance. The qualitative study helps to explore different real-life problems and phenomena and gain relevant insight from non-numerical data. We adopted qualitative research to understand the participant's real-life experiences related to the topic. We adopted a multiple cases study approach as numerous case study allows us to investigate various aspects of a phenomenon that may be difficult to achieve in a single case study (Cruzes et al., 2015). We used 06 case studies in total in this research. The selection of the cases was subjected to the following criteria: a) working in a telecommunication or FMCG based company; b) having experienced work from home in their work tenure.

b) *Data Collection*

We collected material through a semi-structured interview. The semi-structured interview is efficient if researchers want to know each person's individual thoughts (Adams, 2015). It is precisely the case for our multi-case study approach. We collected data from 06 respondents who have directly experienced work from home in their own company and working tenure. For confidentiality purposes, participants were given the initials R1, R2, R3, R4, R5 & R6. As shown in Table 1, the participants spanned equally across both the telecommunications and FMCG sectors. We have a healthy distribution of gender among the participants. The participants are selected from diversified roles. We also picked up participants from 06 different companies. We conducted a single interview for each participant. The discussions ranged from 15 minutes to 45 minutes depending on how the interviews progressed, and the interviews were conducted through phone calls, online audio calls and in-person interviews. Interviews were conducted in Bengali. All discussions, with permission, were recorded with audio and then verbally transcribed. We developed an interview questionnaire to guide us through the process focusing on the following aspects: a) Work from home related; b) work-life balance related; c) Specific situation based & d) Preference of work policy.

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Table 1: Profile of respondents

Initials	Gender	Age	Marital Status	No. of children	Presence of elderly at home	Working sector	Working Title
R1	Female	26	Unmarried	0	1	Telecommunications	Management Trainee
R2	Male	27	Unmarried	0	0	FMCG	Territory Manager
R3	Female	25	Unmarried	0	0	FMCG	Territory Manager
R4	Male	33	Married	1	0	FMCG	Brand Manager
R5	Male	26	Unmarried	0	0	Telecommunications	Management Trainee
R6	Female	27	Married	0	0	Telecommunications	Senior Executive

c) Data Analysis

All the qualitative data from the interviews were transcribed verbatim. We generated three critical themes under which we wanted to sum up our findings and results. The themes are: a) Positive impacts of WFH on work-life balance; b) Negative impacts of WFH on work-life balance; c) Preference of work policy. We took supporting quotations from individual cases and matched them under these themes. We then summarised the findings by analysing each patient's themes and supporting evidence.

IV. Case Studies

a) Case I

Our first case study is of a female working as a management trainee at Banglalink. She has been working here for about oneyear and three months. Ever since the start of her work, she started working on WFH based work policy as COVID 19 protocols were still enacted in Banglalink in 2021. She has gone through a mix of work from the home, office, and now a hybrid policy throughout her tenure. So, our first case respondent has a clear idea of every type of work policy followed.

Our first respondent, R1, said that WFH is better in instances when time is not lost due to traffic. In many cases, she saved up time and enjoyed the additional free time that gave her a better balance between work and life situations. However, R1 thought that working from home usually gets boring and monotonous. While working from offices, R1 gets to interact with many people. It's not all work at the office, so it is easy to cheer oneself up. But in work from home situations, R1 mentions that she is all by herself, and she procrastinates and ends up finishing the day's work late behind the fixed time. While working from home, as R1 mentioned, there is a lack of discipline in terms of work routine. So, if you have work from 9 AM, you usually end up sleeping late, wake up just before 9 AM and work with a sluggish feeling which continues throughout the day. It is also easier to get feedback on work and solve problems quickly while working from the office than working from home.

According to R1, it is good that WFH gets himself closely with the family, but there are problems. She thinks that presence has to be ensured on both ends- family & office, which is tough. So, even though she is in her comfort zone, managing both ends becomes difficult and hampers her balance. Focus is often distorted while working from home due to disruptions. Moreover, R1 believes the work pressure during the WFH period is more and deadlines are usually not met easily.

Overall, R1 prefers a hybrid policy where one can get the best of both options. R1 thinks the current flexible hybrid policy that Bangla link is running is very suitable for her in managing her work-life balance and will prefer this policy.

b) Case II

R2 is a Territory Sales Manager working for Reckitt-Benckiser Bangladesh. He has been working for the company for one year and five months. Before being a TM (Sales), he was a Junior Territory Manager. As a TM (Sales), his work is mainly conducted outdoors. As such, there have been very few opportunities for remote work. Additionally, RB does not have WFH as a part of its HR policy for territory managers. R2 had WFH for about three months in the past two years. In the beginning, he had experienced technical difficulties due to not being familiar with remote working processes. However, he adapted to the process within a week.

During the WFH period, he worked on a priority basis. He had enough time to conduct his business during the day. However, there were mandatory market visits for him. For him, the benefits of WFH include being

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able to relax in his home during the day and taking care of his chores. However, WFH also increased his overall workload. During the times of WFH, he did not have any fixed office deadline. As such, the workload put his work-life balance into jeopardy. Lack of technical support while working from home is another issue, as IT development is not readily available in areas outside the capital.

Another problem he faced from remote working was the breakdown of personal communication. His job requires him to communicate with a large group of people routinely. During the remote working period, the communication switched to phone conversations. As a result, it became more difficult for him to communicate and ensure that people worked adequately.

Overall, from his experience, R2 preferred hybrid working as the preferable option. However, as he said, "Outdoor works have very little to do with WFH."

c) Case III

R3 is a Territory Manager working for Unilever Bangladesh. She has been working for Unilever Bangladesh for three months at this point. She worked for DHL as an intern for seven months before joining Unilever as a Territory Manager. She has been accustomed to remote working due to her prior working experience with DHL. WFH did not pose a challenge to her as she could adapt to the new circumstances. However, there is no WFH guideline in the policy of Unilever. However, Unilever offers its take on remote working. It is called an Agile leave.

The distinction between WFH and Agile leave is that WFH means being present in office activities in a stable environment. In contrast, employees need only be present for the required tasks in Agile leave. In Agile leave, R3 can work from anywhere she wants, given that she is available for contact. It allows her to work while travelling or outside of the home. Compared to regular WFH, it is possible to be on vacation and continue working. However, since it is not exactly a vacation, she would have to work while travelling or in different places. Despite the prospect of working during the break, since Agile leave is not a vacation, she has more time to enjoy her annual leave. For R3, Agile leave introduces the prospect of working from the place of her own choice without incurring penalties at her position. Freedom and flexibility are indeed critical points for her.

For R3, the problem with remote working is that she cannot correctly enjoy her time as she might have to attend to company business at any given time. However, she also feels that remote working allows her to rest and take care of personal tasks. If she were to work from the office, she would not have the opportunity to do so.

Finally, based on her experience with remote working, she is happy with the policy of Unilever. According to her, Agile leave is essential for cases when you must be present elsewhere but cannot take a vacation.

d) Case IV

R4 is a brand manager for Arla Bangladesh. At the start of the pandemic, he was working for Unilever Bangladesh. He had about eight months of WFH in total in the last two years. When the pandemic started, he too had to adapt to the remote working process. He mostly found the process to be easy to understand. However, he felt that Bangladesh does not have the technological advancement needed to work remotely efficiently. He can also take WFH, as it is optional in Arla.

From his experience, he felt that WFH is advantageous and should be made available to working people. As most office work can be done remotely, coming to the office only serves as a hassle for people like brand managers. R4 also has a young child at home. During WFH, he felt he could be a better part of her life due to his presence at home. However, as he explained, WFH becomes tedious for professional communication. R4 mainly felt that arranging meetings instead of meeting in person for simple tasks increases workload. As for workload, WFH has led to more work thanin pre-pandemic times. It comes from company expectations that employees would be available at a moment's notice because they stay at home. For R4, work-life balance means that he will not be asked to conduct work once his daily work hours are over. In WFH, it becomes difficult to maintain.

R4 believes that a hybrid working environment is preferable for most professionals, mainly since very little fieldwork exists.

e) Case V

This case study involved a male working at Robi. He started his career following the work from the home module. Recently he has started working from the office, for which he seemed eager.

R5 faced difficulty adjusting to a new work environment entirely in the online module. He did not know different terms; he did not know the work properly. He mentioned that it would not have been that difficult to adjust to the position if it had been in an office environment.

He enjoyed working from home because he got to be with his family. Time is vital, and he liked that WFH saved time lost due to traffic. He even revealed a unique insight mentioning that WFH meetings had a fixed schedule followed diligently, while office meetings take up time as people were involved in chit chat.

R5 mentioned that working from home, he could not represent himself and his work correctly. Now that he is working in an office, people notice him and his work, which is a big motivational and morale boost. He also thinks that the communication gap increases during WFH, and applying emotional intelligence to

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understand other people and their feelings are often complicated.

Like other respondents, R5 also felt no barrier in work time, personal time, and even weekends or workdays. This made him think that the work pressure was extensive. To him,work-life balance is working at his own will. That is thevalueof flexibility above all.

Finally, he preached his preference for hybrid modality quite a few times and thinks it serves a much better work-life balance.

f) Case VI

Our last respondent, R6, was a married female working at Grameenphone as a senior executive. She has been handling office work, MBA studies and family like a champion. She said she had experienced work from home modality for almost two years.

She liked the WFH modality only because it could save time, and she did not have to waste time in traffic jams. Other than that, she does not seem WFH renders that much value. Judging solely based on work, she expressed that she does not like working from home. She thinks that work gets done quickly in the office.

She had been working from the office for quite sometime before the pandemic. When asked about the convenience of shifting to this new work modality, she said it was very inconvenient, difficult and stressful to jump shift to this new modality. She did not know properly what to do and how to do things, which was troublesome.

She expressed that one of the opposing sides of WFH is solving tech-related issues. Solving these issues becomes quite extremely difficult. She also saidthat those meetings took up too much time. You have to call a discussion while working from home to know one thing. On the other hand, you can efficiently resolve a matter in a few minutes while you are in the office.

She opined that the work stress was enormous in WFH conditions. She recalled one incident when she had to manage her COVID affected mother, her whole family, and her work simultaneously, and she expressed how stressful it was.

Grameenphone maintains a policy called "Work-life integration". This gives people the flexibility to work and meet deadlines at their own pace. People can respond to personal needs during office time if needed due to this policy. R6 answered that she liked this policy and it helps her achieve a good work-life balance in her life

V. Research Result

This study aims to understand the impact of work from home policy and the preference for the work policy. All the interview responses are transcribed in the form of their actual quotations. These supporting quotations will be matched under three different themes to formulate the results. Key findings will group matching quotes under one umbrella. Here we present an analytical table for the three different themes.

Theme 1: Positive Impacts of WFH on work-life balance

Table 2: Analytical table for positive impacts

Key findings	Supporting Quote Example
Staying close to family is a plus point.	*"You get the sense of comfort that you are staying with your family and can see them all time. While working from the office, this is usually not the case" (Case I)*
	"I have been able to be a part of my daughter's life" (Case IV)
	"I could talk to my sister whenever I wanted to" (Case V)
Getting free time can help give you a good balance	*"Sometimes you can save up a lot of free time when you have individual tasks and tasks that usually do not depend on other people's feedback" (Case I)*
	"Time lost due to travelling was saved" (Case VI)
	"Using the free time, I have been able to finish my chores around the house and improve my living conditions." (Case II)
	"You can give time to a few of your side projects or passion projects in case you can manage the work well." (Case I)

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	"While in office, you get to be at many places, attend many programs. This is absent in the WFH period, and it saves time." (Case I)
	"You can be present from Cox's Bazar. That way you can enjoy more from life while not taking a vacation." (Case III)
Getting good focus can be managed while working from home, considering there are fewer distractions	*"Focus in many cases is a lot easier in my personal space. In the office, there are a lot of people in the same place, which is not the case at home." (Case I)*

Theme 2: Negative Impacts of WFH on work-life balance

Table 3: Analytical table for negative impacts

Key findings	Supporting Quote Example
Working from home does not mean having a fresh mind all the time.	*"WFH can get very boring and monotonous at times. While in office, you get people around you with whom you can talk and cheer yourself up" (Case I)*
	"Lethargic feeling continues to exist throughout the day when working from home" (Case I)
Distractions are easy to pop up, and managing expectations on both ends easily disrupt work-life balance and mental peace.	*"WFH comes with a lot of distractions which can easily disrupt your focus" (Case I)*
	"You have to be present on both ends. At the same time, you have to do your office tasks while also being mindful of your home activities." (Case I)
	"It is not possible to be ever-present, but people expect you to do so" (Case I)
Solving problems is complex while working from home,which takes up time.	*"It is easier to get feedback and solve problems quickly while working in an office" (Case I)*
	"In the office, there are people around you who can help with your work even if you cannot reach your manager directly" (Case V)
	"In WFH, you have to set meetings even for the simplest things. In the physical office, you can just walk up to your colleague and discuss the matter with him. This is a big problem." (Case IV)
Working from home has caused the understanding that people can easily do more work as people are at home. This is destroying the work-life balance of most professionals.	*"Usually, when working from home, your work finishes late. Deadlines are tough to meet. Simultaneous meetings take up a lot of time whereas in the office those meetings can be done quickly in 15 minutes or so" (Case I)*
	"I believe the work pressure while working from home is much more." (Case VI)
	"While working from the office, my work pressure and work are evident, and everyone can see what I am dealing with. So, people quickly get the idea about my workload, and I don't get much pressure." (Case V)
	"There is no fixed time for my work. I had to be present throughout the day at any given time." (Case II)
	"While working from home, there is no barrier between work and your personal affairs, even between weekends and weekdays" (Case V)
	"WFH is like working throughout the day" (Case VI)

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Representing one's hard work iscomplex, and it affects performance	*"I could not properly represent myself and my work while working from home" (Case V)*
	Now that I am working in an office, people are seeing my work and giving much value to my work" (Case V)
The communication gap increased, resulting in lost time and productivity and hampering the work-life balance.	*"Communication gap increases during WFH modality" (Case V)*
	"Applying emotional intelligence to understand other person and their feelings and talking to them accordingly becomes difficult while working from home" (Case V)

Theme 3: Preference for work policy

Table 4: Analytical table for work policy preference

Key findings	Supporting Quote Example
People like the hybrid option much better than the other two options.	"*Hybrid work policy takes the pros from both works from home and work from office" (Case I)*
	"*You can enjoy working around people in the office while also managing days when you have less work and just simply work from home" (Case I)*
	"Mixing WFH with a physical office seems to be the best way. I can complete most of my work from home. We have that technology. I will only need to come to the office for product testing and corporate events." (Case IV)
Hybrid is being followed primarily on many companies with the possibility of getting into complete stream work from office based on the situation of COVID 19	"*My office is following a flexible hybrid approach and depending on COVID situation, complete work from office may start soon" (Case I)*
	"With Agile leave, I can be working without actually being present in the office or attending meetings. It is a boost to my productivity and work-life balance." (Case III)
	"Given the pandemic situation, we may not have much reason to complete WFH again. However, given that we are already used to it, we can use a mix of WFH and WFO in future." (Case IV)
	"My office is planning to continue this hybrid model in the long term" (Case V)

VI. Discussion

Theme 1: Positive impacts of WFH on work-life balance

WFH bears positive sides with it. WFH modality allowed employees to work from their homes and stay with their family members. This is a privilege that every professional long for. From our results, we see almost every respondent treasured this privilege. This advantage of the WFH modality gave a significant drive to employee morale and, more importantly, helped them spend time with their family while enabling them to achieve an excellent work-life balance.

Our findings ensured that respondents liked that WFH saved their valuable time. This did not come as a surprise. Employees of both sectors responded that they could save up free time. This free time helped them gain a fresh mind and achieve better balance.

In a few cases, respondents mentioned that they get good focus while working from home. The overall analysis shows that respondents working in both sectors focused mainly on two positive impacts: Time with family and Free time.

Theme 2: Negative impacts of WFH on work-life balance

When it comes to negative aspects, the negatives easily outweigh the positives. Our analysis reveals almost the same pattern from all the respondents, irrespective of their working sectors.

To sum it up, working from home is not as good as we initially think. First, professionals responded that they do not have a fresh mind while working from home because they have a terrible sleep schedule and extra work pressure. This hits upon their work-life balance.

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Secondly, respondents confirmed that distractions are always there at home. Focus can be quickly diminished, and work productivity lowers, resulting in working extra to finish the projects and meet the deadline and ultimately having an insufficient work-life balance or free time for oneself.

Adjusting to this work modality was a bit stressful for many. People working in this modality did not know many things and were confused about their performance and the quality of their work. These could have been avoided, as they responded so if they worked from the office.

Work from home modality resulted in extra work pressure. The assumption of managers that working from home is like vacation has led them to delegate more tasks. Plus, as they cannot visibly notice each employee's workload, they are ignorant of their subordinates' work pressure. This work pressure results in late-night finishing up projects with little or no time at all to self or family members. So, even if the respondents are with their family members, they are not there at all.

Finally, some other issues hinder the peace and work-life balance of employees. These are communication gaps and less representation of one's work. All in all, these problems contribute to an employee's working up to more or procrastinating more or even wondering what to do not getting clear instructions—finally, these result in a poor work-life balance.

Theme 3: Preference for work policy

Every respondent unequivocally agreed that a hybrid work modality is better among the three options: Work from home, Work from the office & Hybrid. They believe that the hybrid modality gives them the best work-life balance, and it takes up pros from both the other modalities.

VII. Recommendations

In this section, the paper suggests recommendations that tackle the problems and negative impacts of WFH modality and combine the positive effects of WFH modality and work modality preference of employees.

Breaking the monotony: WFH can get very monotonous, as supported by the case studies. Organisations can include fixed free time every day to mimic employees' interaction in their office to tackle this case. In that free time, fun activities, usual chit chat, etc., can be done to break the monotony of employees.

Easy approaching and problem-solving process: During the WFH modality, employees face the problem to approach their managers or other employees to solve problems or even get feedback. While in office, this can be quickly done, but in the WFH situation, this has become tough. A straightforward approach or problem dropping system can be introduced. As illustrated from Case V, many employees, new employees especially, do not know whom to approach to solve a new problem. Our recommendation will be to develop a site or use Google Sheets or any other interactive office document system where employees can drop their problems. Every other employee will have access to the site or document and can contribute to solving the problem instantly. It's like a Quora for office problem-solving.

Specific time frame of work: A specific time frame for doing work must be ensured and monitored. For example, a particular hour for lunchtime where no other meetings will be conducted. Plus, a fixed overall time frame like the work from the office module (9 AM-6 PM) should be ensured. Not maintaining a proper time frame has resulted in an overload of tasks for most employees, and if this specific time frame of work can be provided, it will give a better balance to employee's life and work.

A system to easily understand employees' workload: As evident from the interviews, during the WFH modality, it is difficult for managers to know their subordinates' work pressure effectively. This is primarily due to: a) Subordinates do not usually disclose their work pressure. They cannot say no to new work from their managers; b) Managers cannot physically see the project that the subordinates are working on; c) There is no policy that organisations ensure that managers check first before delegating work to their subordinates. An interactive system where everyone can see their current work can be maintained to solve this problem. For example, a Google Sheet for current projects can be sustained where every employee can fill up details like the project they are working on, the name of the manager that delegated the task, etc. This will help the managers to know the current project that one employee is working on. A corporate practice to ensure managers check work pressure before delegating can also be followed.

Training up to perfect communications in the online world: Communications gap arises during working from home, as evident by Case V. Training on how to conduct communications in this online modality for all employees can help teach the employees of the organisation the techniques and methods that they can follow to ensure effective communications.

Following the hybrid model of work: As all respondents suggested, the hybrid modality is the most preferred form of working and gives them the best work-life balance. Organisations can implement hybrid modalities to provide employees with the best working experience and help them achieve a healthy work-life balance.

VIII. Conclusion

This paper seeks to explore the impact of work from home modality. This paper shows that working

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from home has far more negative consequences than positive ones. The negatives hamper the work-life balance of professionals, as confirmed by all the employees. There are positives, but the negatives have outweighed the effect of those. Suppose organisations want to run a work from home policy entirely. In that case, they may need to run so if COVID 19 wave strikes again, they can work on the negatives and mitigate the problems as suggested by the recommendations. In that case, work from home can become much more tolerable. Few interviews indicated that the organisation did take some initiative to make the work from home modality bearable, like fixing a mandatory lunchtime where there will be no meeting, setting the work time after which there will be no work, etc. So, in this way, if organisations can solve the problems, working from home can have a good impact. The respondents back the recommendations of this paper, and it is thus considered that the recommendations if implemented, can make work from home policy much more suitable. This paper also shows that the hybrid modality is the most preferred. Every respondent likes this modality, and they believe this gives them the best work-life balance. Organisations can use a hybrid modality to provide the best work experience to their employees.

Work from home modality is a perfect option to have. If this policy is implemented in the right way, then this can increase productivity, reduce stress and give employees a better work-life balance. The paper tried to portray the overall scenario of the WFH modality in our country. The paper's recommendations can help organisations achieve a better WFH experience for their employees.

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