

A Study on Working Women and Work from Home Amid Coronavirus Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

Working from home it seems to be pleasant but it's not that easy. Amid novel coronavirus almost all business houses, enterprises firms or institute switched from 'work at office' to 'work from home'. Lockdown provides most of working people get chance to work from home, in busy life get some time for family but it is not that easy especially for women. Most of working women especially married women took help of helper/ maids to get household chores but due to lockdown no one except health workers, police force & people providing essential services, go to their work so all work has to be get done by itself. Balancing office work & household work all together is becoming challenging for working women. The objective of research is to study challenges that a working woman may faces amid coronavirus lockdown and to investigate the cost that working women's incurred during novel coronavirus pandemic. Apart from this, objective to find out that there is relationship between "Being women, it is more challenging to work from home than work at office" and "Working more as that of normal hours". The research is conducted using descriptive research methodology. For the study data has been collected via structured questionnaire, with sample size of 44 respondents. The study concluded that there is positive significant relationship between "Being women, it is more challenging to work from home than work at office" and "Working more as that of normal hours", $r(38) = 0.585$, $p < 0.01$ by applying Pearson correlation(r) and Spearman's rho correlation. Apart from this, working from home leads to personal cost for many. Balancing office work & household work all together is becoming challenging for working women.

KEYWORDS

COVID-19 Work from Home Mental Health

OBJECTIVES

- To study challenges that a working woman may faces amid coronavirus lockdown.
- To investigate the cost that working women's incurred during novel coronavirus pandemic.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research is conducted using descriptive research methodology which comprises of both qualitative and quantitative data. For the study data has been collected via structured questionnaire, with sample size of 44 respondents. Research has been conducted in order to investigate the challenges and factors which affect the mental set of working women during novel coronavirus pandemic.

HYPOTHESIS

H0: There is no significant relationship between "Being women, it is more challenging to work from home than work at office" and "Working more as that of normal hours".

H1: There is significant relationship between "Being women, it is more challenging to work from home than work at office" and "Working more as that of normal hours".

LITERATURE REVIEW

Muhammad Shakil Ahmad, Zainab Fakhr & Jalil Ahmed conducted the research on the work-life conflict for working women. The study investigated the various factors which were behind the work life conflict faced by women. The data for the study had been collected from 100 women who were working in 25 banks. The study concluded that household responsibilities & financial needs were positively associated with the work family conflict being faced by women.

Tanja van der Lippe and Zoltán Lippényi conducted the research which examined the supportive role of organisation in order to make work from home to facilitate combination of family and work. More particularly researchers addressed that to which extent perception for support of management, work culture and how work from home option related to the work and family conflict. Researchers also addressed the gender differences in context of experience of conflict in between work & family is faced more by women than men. Data had been collected via multilevel survey at 259 organization, 11011 employees and 869 teams. The study concluded that for both men and women, work culture increased the conflict at work and family level because of work from home option.

Mittal Darji, conducted the research that investigated the untapped problems of working women of India to balance personal as well as professional life. Variables identified were family size, hours of work, children's' age, social support and so on.

INTRODUCTION

Now a day's everywhere be it newspaper TV internet social media whatever we click see one word CORONA VIRUS. Whole world is suffering from this deadly Novel COVID 19. Each class whether it is upper, middle or poor is suffering. Virus is not discriminating any nation class or religion.

In this world apart from the divide developed developing and poor nations, one more divide prevailing that is on the basis gender that is Male & female. Because of lockdown in whole world people are working from home as schools, offices & industries have been shut down. Employers are helping employees to give them work from home options so that they can earn their livelihood. Household helpers' hawkers, laborers' and daily wagers are getting help either from government or from NGOs.

A random thought came to author minds that what about working women. They are also working from home. What is their experience?

In this paper author tried to find out the same. And results showed that it is really horrible for working women. Their lives have become more stressful. No domestic help they are doing their office jobs as well as domestic chores along with looking after their children.

CHALLENGES THAT A WORKING WOMAN FACES AMID CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

Working women are facing many challenges faced during lockdown due to novel coronavirus. Following are the challenges:

Lack of training and Set up

If worker is trained and having proper set up at home then it is not tough to work from home. Working from home without training, preparation and set up it is exactly same as if join army, then on 2nd day you are told that you are supposed to go for parachute jumping on the same day. This above problem is same for both women and men whereas it is more challenging for women, as extra time is required to handle newer challenges but to household responsibilities it might be bit difficult to cope up with these challenges.

Working around the clock

Working women are working around the clock as work from home is demanding much more time to get balance between house life and work life.

Burden of women increased manifold

Due to contiguous nature, lockdown and social distancing is imposed in my countries, so now help workers are also not supposed to come to their workers. Help workers took additional work as well as of additional burden of respective families. But now burden of women increased manifold in order to meet deadlines.

'Work from home' for you give rise to:

- Mental stress
- Neglecting personal health
- Neglecting household responsibilities to meet deadlines
- Other: Difficult to manage both at the home and work

COST THAT WORKING WOMEN'S INCURRED DURING NOVEL CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

Novel coronavirus turned masses into remote workers in order to have operations going on. It is important for many industries in order not to go into crisis but at the same time it is not that positive for workers as well as for productivity. Working from home leads to personal cost for many. Working from home is not that challenging if it is out of choice and if it is in normal days. During lockdown due to pandemic novel coronavirus, every day work from home becomes hardest. Following are the cost incurred by the working women during novel coronavirus pandemic:

Economic cost:

Due to contiguous nature of coronavirus, in many countries lockdown becomes the last resort in order to stop virus to spread. So definitely, many sectors come to halt, which hinders the economic condition of nation and even across world. Now for working married women having kids comes under pressure. Under this type of scenario it is difficult for them come up with new ideas, innovation and creativity as even it is difficult for them to get their task accomplished on time, therefore there is no question of innovation this year. This year will be year of lost innovation

Personal cost

Personal cost is another cost which may all women incurred during work from home. It may come up with explosion in mental issues. Reason being people are get isolated at their homes and social interaction barred and replaced by the social distancing, therefore these all things going to lead a woman into depression. As kids are supposed to at home, no additional hands for help and even struggling to keep pace at work place too, so in nutshell women are suffering and struggling between household responsibilities as well as office work at home. Not only mental health, physical health will also get hit very badly.

INTERPRETATION & ANALYSIS

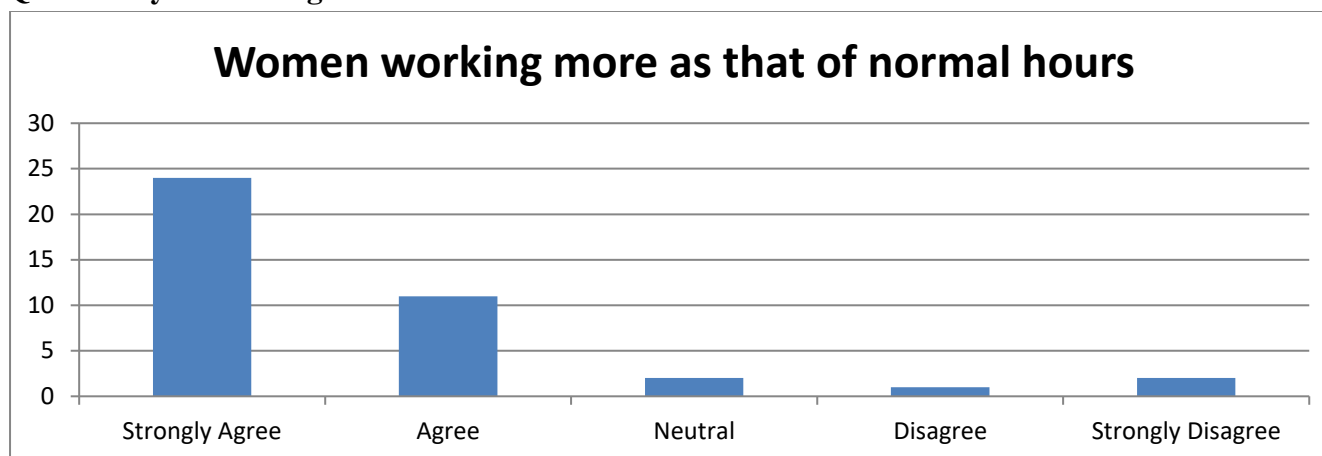
PARTICULARS	NO. OF RESPONDENT	PERCENTAGE
AGE		
20-30	16	40%
31-40	20	50%
41-50	4	10%
Above 50	0	0%
Area of residence		
Rural Area	2	5%
Semi-Urban Area	10	25%
Urban Area	28	70%
Annual Income		
1,00,000-5,00,000	34	85%
5,00,001-10,00,000	6	15%
Above 10,00,000	0	0%
Amid coronavirus pandemic, Do you have option of 'Work From Home'		
Yes	37	92%
No	3	8%
For household chaos, are you dependent on servant?		
Yes	8	20%
No	25	63%
To some extent	7	17%
If yes, Amid coronavirus, Do you need extra time to handle household work?		
Yes	28	70%
No	5	13%
May be	7	17%
Being women, Do you feel "Work from home" is more challenging than 'Work at office'?		
Strongly Agree	21	52%

Agree	9	22%
Neutral	7	18%
Disagree	1	3%
Strongly Disagree	2	5%
Are you working more as that of normal hours?		
Strongly Agree	24	60%
Agree	11	27%
Neutral	2	5%
Disagree	1	3%
Strongly Disagree	2	5%
Are you able to meet deadlines via 'Work from home'?		
Strongly Agree	8	20%
Agree	9	22%
Neutral	17	43%
Disagree	5	12%
Strongly Disagree	1	3%
'Work from home' for you give rise to:		
Mental stress	28	
Neglecting personal health	12	
Neglecting household responsibilities to meet deadlines	17	
Safety amid ncoronavirus	8	
'Work from home' is same as that of 'Work at office'	4	
Other: Difficult to manage both at the home and work	1	
Marital Status		
Married	29	73%
Unmarried	11	27%

Additional Questions for married women's & Total respondents = 29		
Do you have Kid(s)?		
Yes	21	72%
No	8	28%
For day to day working of house (kitchen, grocery & kid(s)), your family is dependent on you?		
Strongly Agree	16	55%
Agree	7	24%
Neutral	3	10%
Disagree	2	7%
Strongly Disagree	1	4%
Is it difficult to handle kids at home?		

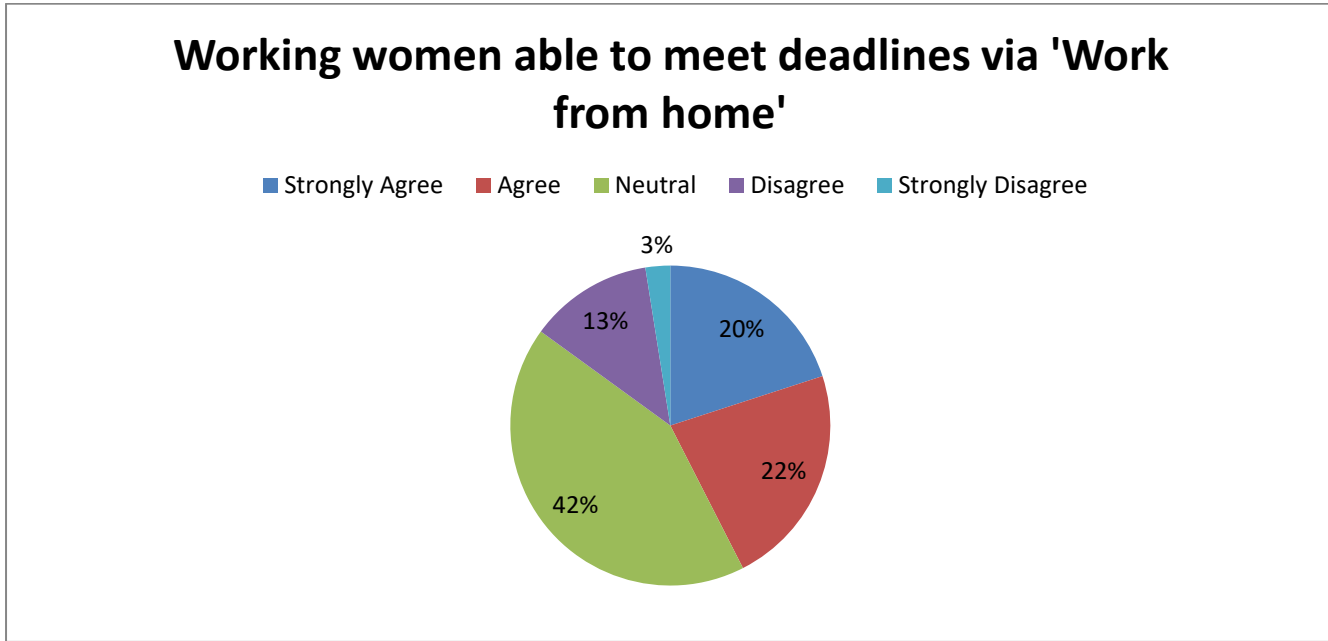
Strongly Agree	5	17%
Agree	12	41%
Neutral	4	13%
Disagree	2	6%
Strongly Disagree	1	3%
Are you feeling double pressure to handle both family and 'Work from home' simultaneously?		
Strongly Agree	16	55%
Agree	6	20%
Neutral	4	15%
Disagree	2	7%
Strongly Disagree	1	3%

Ques. Are you working more as that of normal hours?



Interpretation: According to the response, 60% of respondents' strongly agree that working women are working more than normal hours, 25% of respondents agrees that working women are working more than normal hours whereas, 5% of respondents are strongly disagree that working women are working more than normal hours.

Ques. Being women, Do you feel "Work from home" is more challenging than 'Work at office'?



Interpretation: According to the response, 52% of respondents’ strongly agree that being women, ‘work from home’ is more challenging than ‘work at office’, 22% of respondents’ agree that being women, ‘work from home’ is more challenging than ‘work at office’ and 5% of respondents’ strongly disagree that being women, ‘work from home’ is more challenging than ‘work at office’.

HYPOTHESIS TESTING

H0: There is no significant relationship between “Being women, it is more challenging to work from home than work at office” and “Working more as that of normal hours”.

H1: There is significant relationship between “Being women, it is more challenging to work from home than work at office” and “Working more as that of normal hours”.

Correlations

		Working more as that of normal hours	Being women, it is more challenging to 'Work from home' than 'Work at office'
Working more as that of normal hours	Pearson Correlation	1	.585**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	40	40
Being women, it is more challenging to	Pearson Correlation	.585**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	

'Work from home' than 'Work at office'	N	40	40
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** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Correlations

			Working more as that of normal hours	Being women, it is more challenging to 'Work from home' than 'Work at office'
Spearman's rho	Working more as that of normal hours	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.410**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.009
		N	40	40
	Being women, it is more challenging to 'Work from home' than 'Work at office'	Correlation Coefficient	.410**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.009	.
		N	40	40

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed).

INTERPRETATION

There is highly positive significant relationship between “Being women, it is more challenging to work from home than work at office” and “Working more as that of normal hours”, $r(38) = 0.585$, $p < 0.01$ by applying Pearson correlation(r). There is highly positive significant relationship between “Being women, it is more challenging to work from home than work at office” and “Working more as that of normal hours”, $\rho(38) = 0.410$, $p < 0.01$ by applying Spearman's rho correlation. Therefore, Alternate Hypothesis (H_1) is accepted and Null Hypothesis is not accepted.

FINDINGS

Amid novel coronavirus, 92% of women respondents have option of 'Work from home' whereas 8% of women respondents do not have option for 'Work from home'. Amid novel coronavirus almost all business houses, enterprises firms or institute switched from 'work at office' to 'work from home'.

According to the response in survey, 60% of respondents' strongly agree that working women are working more than normal hours, whereas, 5% of respondents are strongly disagree that working women are working more than normal hours.

According to the response in survey, 52% of respondents' strongly agree that being women, 'work from home' is more challenging than 'work at office' and 5% of respondents' strongly disagree that being women, 'work from home' is more challenging than 'work at office'.

CONCLUSION

- ✓ Due to contiguous nature of coronavirus, in many countries lockdown becomes the last resort in order to stop virus to spread. So definitely, many sectors come to halt, which hinders the economic condition of nation and even across world.
- ✓ Working from home leads to personal cost for many. Working from home is not that challenging if it is out of choice and if it is in normal days. During lockdown due to pandemic novel coronavirus, every day work from home becomes hardest.
- ✓ Balancing office work & household work all together is becoming challenging for working women.
- ✓ The study concluded that there is positive relationship between “Being women, it is more challenging to work from home than work at office” and “Working more as that of normal hours”, $r(38) = 0.585$, $p < 0.01$ by applying Pearson correlation(r) and Spearman’s rho correlation.

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