

Work From Home Satisfaction: Filipino Remote Workers and the Covid-19 Pandemic

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Asia Pacific Journal of Management and Sustainable Development
Vol. 10, No. 2, pp. 70-77
March 2022
ISSN 2782-8557(Print)

ABSTRACT: *The covid-19 pandemic has moved the norm of paperwork to working from home. Employers and management of big firms, universities, and other organizations are forced to send home their workers and produce work typically wiped out of the workplace. This study aimed to determine how different groups of Filipino remote workers evaluate work from home setup. The evaluation of working from home by 166 remote Filipino employees was investigated using an online questionnaire. The findings imply that factors affecting work efficiency and the attributes necessary are judged differently based on gender, age, education, and length of employment. It was revealed that the most satisfied Filipino remote worker is a millennial woman with a bachelor's degree but with a short-term experience in the business process outsourcing. The lack of feedback when working impacts her efficiency. The most dissatisfied Filipino remote worker is a millennial man with a bachelor's degree who has worked for less than a year of management and administration experience. Work-life balance is still seen as an essential factor in work satisfaction. Solid time management skills and commitment to the organization were given importance but saw the lack of face-to-face interaction and connection as important missing factors.*

Keywords: *Covid-19, quarantine period, remote worker, telecommuting, work from home*

INTRODUCTION

Before the pandemic happened, the Philippine government passed the Telecommuting act in 2019. The national government approved the implementation of work from home or alternative work arrangements by many employers of the different organizations. The coronavirus pandemic has forced companies and organizations to let their employees work from home, so business operations and services will continue. Even government services and education must continue to work even though people have to stay at home to avoid being contacted with the virus and protect their families.

During the COVID pandemic, numerous organizations worldwide, such as companies, universities, and government offices, sent home their employees [1]. The ability to work far from the office is a vital instrument to weaken the economic breakdown resulting from social distancing measures to stem the Covid-19 pandemic [2]. Many people would want the idea of working from home. Waking up early in the morning, taking a shower, and getting ready to go to the office by commuting through traffic jams that take a lot of time is not favorable for the millennial generation. Wearing any desired clothes, and opening the laptop is

enough to start working at home [3]. Working from home also faced negative factors and challenges. The sudden shift from face-to-face to virtual and modular learning resulted in substantial challenges for teachers' work. Organizational policy and administration and technical supervision were slightly more challenging, and administrators faced emergency and continuity plans for their institutions. The choice of working anywhere at home when bored is an advantage of working remotely. Activities when it comes to working from home are more flexible in completing work. They can measure their comfort level at work. They can take full responsibility for completing the work daily [4].

There are a lot of disadvantages of Work from Home status. They seem likely to lose work inspiration since the house isn't like an office, diverted by social media and other things [4].

Dockery & Bawa [5] said that the probability of doing work at home increases with age. It is remarkably higher for female employees with small children in their house, whether married or single. The capability of employees to work from home will secure employment and help protect against the further spread of covid-19 [6]. Many employees have begun working at home in response

to the pandemic, and a possibility that employers and workers will become more comfortable with telework arrangements [7].

Workers do not work in a vacuum since they must collaborate regularly. Individual performance is influenced by employees working from home and their co-workers' working from home, with specific and competitive workers performing better when their co-workers do not work from home [8]. When representatives are unable to share critical information, collaboration becomes more complex [9].

Employees may experience stress as a result of their work environment. Job stress can exacerbate depressive symptoms and work from home can hasten the onset of depressive symptoms in female employees with minor children [10].

According to a study conducted in the Philippines, working from home improves employee job satisfaction and productivity. Working from home reduces job performance [11]. Remote workers who opt to work from home have a more ordered environment than those who conclude their work from home - the latter owing to work overload rather than freedom [12].

Women cherish and appreciate telecommuting more than males [13]; [14] because working from home entails taking care of the household and children [15]. Employees who "smart worked" from home saved time commuting, had the opportunity to strengthen their relationships, eat meals together, and enjoy working while seeing their families [16].

White-collar workers are the ones that are most likely to work from home. Nonetheless, their proclivity to work from home varies significantly by industry [17]. Families earning higher salaries in which a home-based position is a full-time job are more likely to employ time-management measures [18].

Many research studies have been done in the past two years about work from setup, but the satisfaction of Filipino remote workers was merely missed thus this study was conducted.

Work from home is a concept that allows employees to do work at home. Employees have more flexibility with their working hours when they work from home, and the employer's task is easier to do. This option is most common for some companies.

Working from home (WFH) is a modern trend in today's virtual work environment that allows anyone to work wherever the employee wants, far from the office [16]. It is also synonymous with telecommuting, implying that the employee is working remotely, usually at home.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study aims to see if there were any differences in how different groups of workers evaluated work from home using a questionnaire. It seeks to determine how the different groups of remote workers evaluated the factors negatively affecting work efficiency, working from home evaluation when respondents are grouped according to their field of activity and evaluation of disadvantages of working from home and the needed qualities for remote workers when grouped according to their employment duration.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

The study utilized descriptive and inferential quantitative research.

Data Gathering Instrument

The researcher used a questionnaire based on three scales to assess motivational factors for working from home and elements that hinder efficiency and essential traits for working from home. The research used an adopted instrument from Raisiene et al. [19] survey.

The motivating elements were assessed using a nine-item measure. All items ranging from 1 to 5 were graded on a 5-point Likert scale. Higher-scoring motivational factors were given more weight in the outcomes. The scale's Cronbach alpha was 0.767, indicating a credible result.

There were 29 indicators to consider while evaluating telework efficiency. Its goal was to assess the drawbacks of working from home. Things were said in a negative tone and graded on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 to 5. Higher ratings indicate a more negative assessment of the variables that reduce telecommuting productivity. Cronbach alpha was 0.967 for the scale's reliability coefficient. The study used a 7-item scale to assess necessary attributes for telework, with items evaluated on a 5-point Likert-type scale. The scale's Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient was 0.922.

Participants and Procedures

The researcher approached Filipino employees who worked from home to see how they viewed the benefits and downsides of working from home and the qualities required. Participants were randomly chosen through social media. They were asked first if they were working from home before the survey link was sent to them to be answer. Only 166 employees took part in the research. Males made up 32.5 percent (N=54) of the sample, while females made up 67.5 percent (Table 1).

The respondents have four groups of distinct generations in terms of age distribution: 1.8% (N=13) of baby boomers, 16.9% (N=28) of Generation X, 60.2 percent (N=100) of Millennials, and 21.1 percent (N=35) of Generation Z. In terms of education, 0.6 percent (N=1) of the respondents had completed secondary school, 6.6 percent

(N=11) had not finished college, 75.9% (N=126) had completed a bachelor's degree, 13.9 percent (N=23) had completed a master's degree, and 3% (N=5) had completed a doctor's degree. In terms of activity fields, the majority of respondents (N=63) worked in business process outsourcing, 12.7 percent (N=21) in management and administration, and 21.1 percent (N=35) in health, education, and social services, and 22.3 percent (N=37) in government agencies. The data were collected between May 5 and June 6, 2021. The information was gathered using an online poll that took about 10 minutes to complete on average. SPSS software was used to examine the data. Participants agreed that the information acquired would be treated confidentially and informed consent to participate in the survey.

Table 1. Socio-demographic characteristics

Variable		N	%
Gender	Male	54	32.5
	Female	112	67.5
Generation	Baby Boomers (1946-1964)	3	1.8
	Gen X (1965-1980)	28	16.9
	Millennials (1981-1996)	100	60.2
	Gen Z (1997-2012)	35	21.1
Education	High School Graduate	1	0.6
	College Undergraduate	11	6.6
	Bachelor's Degree	126	75.9
	Master's Degree	23	13.9
	Doctor's Degree	5	3
Field of Activity	Management and Administration	21	12.7
	Health, Education, & Social Services	35	21.1
	Business Process Outsourcing	63	38
	Government Agencies	37	22.3
	Others	10	6
Total		166	100

Data Analysis

Spearman's rank-order correlation was used to assess the correlations between gender, age, educational attainment, the length of service, and the motivational factors of working from home, factors negatively affecting work from home efficiency, and the required qualities for work from status. Dunn-Bonferroni post hoc method followed by a significant Kruskal-Wallis test was used to examine factors impacting telecommuting efficiency and traits necessary for telework by distinct groups characterized by generation, education, fields of activity, and job duration.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Males and females differed in their assessments of the drawbacks of working from home, as seen in Table 2. The lack of feedback when working at home ($r=0.166$, $p < 0.05$) has been discovered as having a detrimental impact on women's productivity.

Next, the researcher looked into the relationship between respondent age and study factors. According to Spearman's correlation, the respondent's generation and the evaluation of elements influencing the efficiency of working from home had positive correlations (Table 2).

Table 2. Correlation between study variables

Motivational Factors	Gender	Age	Education	Duration of Employment
Possibility of choosing one's own working hours	0.023	-0.123	0.052	0.161*
Possibility to strike a work-life balance	0.121	0.237**	-0.063	-0.192*
Time saved on commuting	0.040	0.165*	-0.074	0.001
Factors Negatively Affect WFH Efficiency				
Inability to communicate with co-workers face to face	-0.007	0.071	0.180*	-0.104
Inability to communicate with manager/supervisor	-0.080	0.105	0.162*	-0.190*
Inadequate feedback	0.166*	0.083	0.028	-0.070
Other household members' distractions when teleworking	0.082	0.058	0.004	-0.161*
Due to manager's inability to predict workload I was forced to work overtime	-0.018	-0.115	-0.156*	0.102
On-line meetings that last a long time	-0.035	-0.040	0.184*	-0.055
Longer time to make a decision	0.071	0.043	0.088	-0.187*
When a team works from home, they become more focused on communication than on the duties at hand	0.024	0.025	0.153*	-0.058
Inability of family members to understand the situation	0.045	0.038	0.154*	-0.109
Required Qualities for WFH Status				
Good time-management skills	0.044	0.172*	-0.030	-0.084
Personal accountability for one's work	0.057	0.139	0.082	-0.162*

It appears that younger generations valued the ability to balance work and personal life when working from home ($r=0.237$, $p=0.01$) and the time saved traveling ($r=0.165$, $p=0.05$). Furthermore, the younger generations tended to value solid time-management abilities as a necessary trait when working from home ($r=0.172$, $p=0.05$). A Dunn-Bonferroni post hoc approach was used, followed by a significant Kruskal-Wallis test, to see how different generations viewed aspects influencing working from home efficiency (Table 3). The study found that millennials felt more than the manager and employer's excessive expectations without considering the actual workload ($p=0.044$) and blurred boundaries between work and personal life ($p=0.029$) are the elements that affect work from home efficiency compared to generation X.

The study also looked at the relationship between the respondent's educational background and all of the study's factors. As shown in Table 2, having a bachelor's degree appeared to be associated with an increased lack of face-to-face interaction with co-workers ($r=-0.180$, $p=0.05$) and lack of face-to-face interaction with managers/supervisors ($r=0.162$, $p=0.05$). It is also associated with working overtime due to the manager's inability to estimate workload ($r=-0.0156$, $p=0.05$), extended online meetings ($r=0.184$, $p=0.05$), and time-consuming asynchronous communication when telecommuting the team.

The researchers used Dunn-Bonferroni post hoc testing and Kruskal-Wallis tests to see if education affected the evaluation of working from home, but the results were not significant.

Table 4 illustrates how respondents rated their sector of work. According to the results of Kruskal-Wallis and Dunn-Bonferroni post hoc tests (Table 4), respondents in the management and organization field valued the ability to engage and maintain a commitment to the organization ($p=0.023$) and strong personal responsibility for one's work ($p=0.011$) as qualities required of remote workers more than others. Furthermore, remote workers in the field of business process outsourcing find the ability to choose their workplace ($p=0.040$), the ability to balance work and personal life ($p=0.005$), the time saved on commuting ($p=0.016$), and the ability to limit unnecessary interactions ($p=0.041$) to be motivating factors of working from home. Furthermore, respondents in management and administration believe that others complete their responsibilities and enjoy life at home ($p=0.050$) and that information overload ($p=0.034$) hurts their job efficiency. Furthermore, respondents in the health, education, and social services industries said that family members' lack of understanding ($p=0.045$) negatively impacted their work productivity compared to business process outsourcing.

Table 3. Evaluation of factors negatively affecting telework efficiency among different generations of respondents

Construct	Generation	N	Mean Rank	χ^2	p
Managerial/employer expectations that are unrealistic when compared to the actual workload	Baby Boomers	3	84.83	8.077	0.044
	Generation X	28	64.20		
	Millennials	100	90.92		
	Generation Z	35	77.64		
Work-life balance is skewed	Baby Boomers	3	46.50	9.000	0.029
	Generation X	28	66.32		
	Millennials	100	91.10		
	Generation Z	35	78.70		

Table 4. Telework evaluation among different groups of respondents' activity fields

Construct	Field of Activity	N	Mean Rank	χ^2	p
Possibility to select one's workplace	Management and Administration	21	85.57	10.029	0.040
	Health, Education and Social Services	35	78.49		
	Business Process Outsourcing	63	95.30		
	Government Agencies	37	70.76		
	Others	10	69.50		
Possibility to strike a work-life balance	Management and Administration	21	85.50	14.705	0.005
	Health, Education and Social Services	35	81.01		
	Business Process Outsourcing	63	94.85		
	Government Agencies	37	73.23		
	Others	10	54.50		
Time saved on commuting	Management and Administration	21	71.50	12.159	0.016
	Health, Education and Social Services	35	76.43		
	Business Process Outsourcing	63	93.98		
	Government Agencies	37	76.26		
	Others	10	94.20		
Possibility of limiting contacts that aren't necessary	Management and Administration	21	70.93	9.947	0.041
	Health, Education and Social Services	35	83.94		
	Business Process Outsourcing	63	95.19		
	Government Agencies	37	76.53		
	Others	10	60.50		
Being under the idea that other people complete responsibilities and enjoy life at home while I am constantly working	Management and Administration	21	101.86	9.504	0.050
	Health, Education and Social Services	35	87.34		
	Business Process Outsourcing	63	79.67		
	Government Agencies	37	85.16		
	Others	10	49.50		
Overload of information	Management and Administration	21	99.36	10.383	0.034
	Health, Education and Social Services	35	92.63		
	Business Process Outsourcing	63	79.26		
	Government Agencies	37	82.82		
	Others	10	47.45		
Inability of family members to understand the situation	Management and Administration	21	91.62	9.758	0.045
	Health, Education and Social Services	35	102.69		
	Business Process Outsourcing	63	74.85		
	Government Agencies	37	76.45		
	Others	10	79.90		
Ability to get involved in the organization And stay committed to it	Management and Administration	21	105.05	11.352	0.023
	Health, Education and Social Services	35	76.09		
	Business Process Outsourcing	63	87.91		
	Government Agencies	37	77.73		
	Others	10	57.75		
Personal accountability for one's work	Management and Administration	21	103.14	13.153	0.011
	Health, Education and Social Services	35	77.20		
	Business Process Outsourcing	63	88.48		
	Government Agencies	37	77.84		
	Others	10	53.90		

Table 5. Evaluation of disadvantages and qualities required for remote workers by groups with different employment duration

Construct	Duration of Employment	N	Mean Rank	χ^2	p
Other household members' distractions When teleworking	Less than 1 year	9	123.56	9.527	0.049
	1 to 3 years	67	85.78		
	4 to 10 years	61	77.88		
	11 to 20 years	26	80.94		
	More than 20 years	3	49.00		
Longer time to make a decision	Less than 1 year	9	96.78	10.459	0.033
	1 to 3 years	67	94.11		
	4 to 10 years	61	71.61		
	11 to 20 years	26	83.77		
	More than 20 years	3	46.00		

Finally, the study looked at the respondents' employment duration and how it correlated with their perceptions of telecommuting (Table 2). According to the results, employment duration is positively related to choosing work hours ($r=0.161$, $p < 0.05$) but adversely associated with balancing work and personal life ($r=-0.192$, $p < 0.05$). Furthermore, it was revealed that having a shorter employment duration tended to emphasize the following disadvantages of working from home: lack of face-to-face interaction with the manager/supervisor ($r=-0.190$, $p < 0.05$), distractions from other household members when telecommuting ($r=-0.161$, $p < 0.05$), and extended decision-making time ($r=-0.187$, $p < 0.05$). Additionally, respondents with less job experience tended to value strong personal responsibility for one's work more ($r=-0.162$, $p < 0.05$) as an essential quality when working from home. Respondents with shorter job duration reported that distractions from other households ($p=0.049$) and extended decision-making time ($p=0.033$) negatively affect their work efficiency when working at home compared to those who have worked for more than 20 years.

The researcher compared the responses of the respondents in distinct conditional groups. The investigation revealed additional assessments of the benefits and drawbacks of working from home and the personal attributes necessary for a remote worker.

According to the study, women noticed that the lack of feedback when working at home impairs their work efficiency. The men did not mention this aspect of working from home. On the other hand, women emphasize the relevance of feedback from a manager, supervisor, or employer from a gender perspective.

Younger generations, on the whole, consider the need for solid time management skills as a required characteristic when performing work at home, and see the time saved on commuting as a motivating element. Without regard for the actual workload, exaggerated expectations of the manager/employer caused Millennials to suffer, as did blurring the lines between work and family life. Younger generations are more driven, yet working from home still has its challenges.

For individuals with bachelor's degrees, the impact of education on performing work at home was significant. They are more likely to see the disadvantages of working from home.

When it came to telecommuting, respondents in management and administration prioritized engaging and keeping a commitment to the organization and solid personal responsibility for one's work. They also discovered that factors like believing that others finish their chores and enjoy life at home and information overload have a detrimental impact on their work productivity.

Respondents in the business process outsourcing industry were motivated by choosing their workplace, combining work and personal life, the time saved on traveling, and the ability to limit needless encounters when working from home.

According to respondents in the health, education, and social services fields, family members' lack of understanding is a disadvantage.

Employees who have worked for a shorter period said that the lack of face-to-face connection with their manager/supervisor, distractions from other household members while telecommuting and extended decision-making time impair their work productivity. They also stressed the importance of strong personal accountability for one's job when working from home.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Depending on their gender, age, education, the field of activity, and job tenure, the study found disparities in appraising the benefits and drawbacks of working from home and the required remote worker's qualities.

The results of the study will be beneficial to the partial or total adoption of work from home setup in the Philippines. Though work from home has existed already in the past, only a few are lucky enough to have experienced it before the pandemic happened. By considering the results, employers should find ways how to implement work from a setup that will be beneficial to the employer-employee relationship. This could be a win-win solution for both parties as this could lead to cost savings. Cost savings is one of the major benefits to the firm and its employees when working from home [20]. This could reduce utility and transportation costs.

One of the findings is the importance of face-to-face interaction for an efficient job. When pandemics ends, I highly recommend that employers should look at the implementation of both work from home and work in the office setup. They should try to see the effectivity of this to the productivity and the overall performance of employees.

Remote workers underlined the significance of balancing work and personal life and the importance of workload considerations over increasing employer expectations. According to Palumbo [21], working from home has adverse effects on work-life balance because it involves overlapping personal and professional lives, which leads to more significant contamination of emotional problems and work responsibilities.

The study was limited only to a small number of respondents and their specific location was missed when it was conducted. Also, other respondents were not responsive when asked about answering the survey. Other researchers should consider these points.

Although the survey was conducted with a relatively small sample to represent the WFH Filipino employees, the research insights can help better organizational management regarding the employees' challenges when doing work at home. Organizations can also find ways to motivate their employees to achieve greater efficiency when work is done at home.

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