



"Comparative Analysis Of Psychological Well-Being, Mood Disorders And Burnout Among People Working From Home Versus Office Going Bank Employees During The Covid-19 Pandemic."

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Abstract:-

BACKGROUND: As a result of rising Covid cases in India, Nationwide Lockdown was implemented from March 22, 2020, followed by a second wave leading to phase 2 of lockdown. Prolonged Work from home and its impact on mental health needs to be evaluated on urgent basis.

METHODOLOGY: The study was cross sectional in nature and the participants taking part in this survey were selected randomly (snowball sampling) through phone, email or in person. A questionnaire was sent to them in a google form document and entries received. The survey questionnaire included Beck's depression scale, Burnout index, and WHO well being scale. The survey was done during the timeline of second wave of Covid 19 in India (1 April 2021- 31 August 2021). Comparison between two groups done by Chi square test.

RESULT: The study revealed that 53% of work from home employees suffered from moderate depression as compared to the second group which had more number of people (39%) suffering from mild depression and less than 1% suffering from moderate depression. 66% of the work from home employees had average and above-average levels of burnout, in comparison, 47% of the regular office goers had average and above-average levels of burnout. As per WHO Well being scale, Regular office goers had mean value of 18.16 indicating greater well being as compared to Work from home employees that had 12.90 as the mean value.

CONCLUSION: It is intriguing that apart from the benefits from working from home, it has negative repercussions on the mental health of the employees.

Keywords:- Work from home, burnout, depression, COVID 19

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Introduction:

The World Health Organization (WHO) announced on January 30, 2020 that severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus (COVID-19) was a Public-Health Emergency of International Concern. Due to the rise in number of cases in India from the period of January 2020 to March 2020, complete

nationwide Lockdown was implemented in India from March 22, 2020(1). This was followed by the second wave with record breaking covid positive tallies and increase in the number of mortalities that lead to extension of this lockdown into phase 2. This step was necessary keeping in mind that COVID 19 had long incubation period, ease of

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transmission, high mortality rate, and lack of any specific treatment(2). For maintaining public health need of the hour was to prevent further transmission of disease. Physical separation of people and limiting social interactions was the most effective step in controlling this pandemic. While on one hand these measures helped in controlling the disease but on the other hand, they have disrupted the social and economic life of the people. Covid 19 has reportedly had a negative impact on economy, social as well as daily life and forced work from home that have impacted psychological framework of the people(3). Recent studies indicate that there have been numerous consequences of the Lockdown and the Work from Home policy being implemented throughout the nation from the past two years. Mental health of the Working population of the country has been affected by this new setup. Since this has happened for the first time that people are confined long time and were not able to go out even for their work, a lot of negative repercussions of this step are coming to light(4). Factors that include loneliness, reduced social support, depression, anxiety and stress and their impact on mental health needs to be evaluate (5). Due to sudden emergence of novel COVID-19, presenting for the first time, research is understandably limited. Research findings from past studies on effects of past pandemics on mental health of the people, for on the mental health of the working population of India. It is predicted that Work from home orders by the government would have a example 2003 SARS outbreak was associated with higher rates of depression and anxiety(4). Since research on psychological impact of Covid is limited, this study is done to analyse the impact of covid 19 deleterious effect on the mental health of the people. It is also predicted that more the duration of work from home higher are the chances of negative psychological effects. This would also lead to increased levels of frustration among people(5). This is in-depth research on the effect of covid 19 stay at home orders on the mental health of the population. The study will evaluate mood changes, Burnout and wellbeing of the patient as the key factors and analyse the changes that people have experienced post

the lockdown and after working from home for a long period of time.

AIM:

This study is to analyse the effect of work from home on the mental health of the people in comparison to the regular office goers (bank employees) during the covid 19 pandemic.

OBJECTIVE:-

1. To investigate Psychological Wellbeing, Mood Disorders and Burnout among People Working from Home Versus Office Going Bank Employees During the Covid19 Pandemic.

MATERIALSAND METHODS:

Study group:- People Working From Home Versus Office Going Bank Employees.(100 sample from each group)

Period of Study:- (1 April 2021- 31 August 2021)

Study design:- snowball sampling

Ethical, Concern and Confidentiality Procedure:

- A) After getting the consent from ethical review board of Tertiary Level Hospital, through online survey after giving them appropriate information and undertaking consent.
- B) People were informed about the nature and purpose of the research.
- C) An accessible written account of the study's aims was made available to all participants.
- D) Participants were assured confidentiality, that neither their name nor their identity would be revealed in any written dissemination of the research findings.
- E) Survey-based self-reporting anonymous online survey. Participants taking part in this survey were selected randomly (snowball sampling) through phone, email or in person. A questionnaire was sent to them in a google form document and entries received.
- F) Data was collected as per enteries and analysis was done using Chi-Square Test.

Tools used:

1. Semi Structured Proforma: Addressing about age, nature of work, duration of work, country in which the participant is residing.



2. Beck's Depression scale(6):

The Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) is a 21-item self-reporting questionnaire for evaluating the severity of depression in normal and psychiatric population.

3. Burnout Index(7):

It evaluates Burnout in terms of Non-accomplishment, Depersonalization, Emotional exhaustion, Friction, Task avoidance, Distancing, Neglecting, Easy going.

4. WHO Well being scale(8):

The World Health Organisation- Five Well-Being Index (WHO-5) is a short self-reported measure of current mental wellbeing.

RESULTS:

A total of 200 completed surveys were included in the final data set.

1. AGE: (TABLE 1)

The major age group of the participants for both the groups (90%work from home employees and 80% bank employees) was within 25-40 years of age. The age group of more than 50 years had less number of participants in the work from home category (1.9%) while bank employees in this age group were 14%.This suggests that younger population was more adequately represented in the survey while those in their 50s were underrepresented (especially the work from home participants which was a meagre percentage of 1.9%). The mean ageof the participants working from home was30.6 and the other group was 37.

Entries with less than 6 months of work during covid were rejected .Maximum percentage of participants working from home 9-13 months.

AGE (years) (GROUP 2)	N=100	%
<25	1	0.9
25-30	36	35.6
31-35	31	31
36-40	24	23.8
41-45	4	3.9
46-50	3	2.9
>51	2	1.9

AGE GROUP (GROUP 1)	N=100	%
<25	4	4
26-30	35	35
31-35	27	27
36-40	13	13
41-45	4	4
46-50	3	3
>51	14	14

*Table 1: Age group of the participants.

2:-BDI total SCORE INTERPRETATION

	Group 1	Group 2	Grand Total
0 to 13 minimal	60	27	87
14 -19 mild depression	39	19	58
20-28 moderate depression	1	53	54
29-63 severe depression	0	1	1
	100	100	200

BDI total SCORE				
Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	P Value LS
Group 1	100	10.30	4.95	
Group 2	100	17.49	8.59	<0.001S
Total	200	13.90	7.87	

Chi-square = 70.488 with 3 degrees of freedom; P <0.001S

*Table 2: BDI Scores of two groups and comparison between them.

Participants were assessed on the Beck Depression Scale, People who worked from home had a mean score of 17.49 (std deviation 8.59)as compared to regular office goers whose mean score was 10.30(std. dev 4.95) Also it was found that53% of work from home employees suffered from moderate depression as compared to the second group which had more number of people (39%) suffering from mild depression and less than 1% suffering from moderate depression.

1% of the work from home population suffered from severe depression while the count was 0 in people who were regular office goers.



3. WHO WELL-BEING SCALE INTERPRETATION:

WBI				
Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	P Value LS
Group 1	100	18.16	2.936	<0.001S
Group 2	100	12.90	3.252	
Total	200	15.53	4.062	

WBI *100

*Table 3: WHO Wellbeing scale

As per the WHO Well being scale, Group 1(Regular office goers) had mean value of 18.16 indicating greater well being as compared to Work from home employees that had 12.90 as the mean value.

4. Burnout Index interpretation:-

Gr	Group 1			Group 2			P Value LS
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	
NA	100	13.13	2.61	100	14.41	2.54	.001
DEP	100	10.07	2.28	100	11.91	2.22	<0.001S
EE	100	12.78	2.36	100	14.33	3.00	<0.001S
FR	100	13.45	2.82	100	14.12	2.75	.090
TA	100	15.12	2.64	100	15.91	2.86	.044
DIS	100	15.87	2.54	100	15.31	2.73	.134
NE	100	14.54	2.48	100	14.60	2.96	.877
EG	100	15.24	2.25	100	13.88	2.38	<0.001S

Gr	N	Mean	SD	P Value LS
Group 1	100	110.20	18.29	0.09NS
Group 2	100	114.47	17.45	
Total	200	112.34	17.96	

*Table 4: Burnout scale

Comparison of Burnout index

	Group 1	Group 2	Grand Total
Extremely high	2	3	3
high	0	56	78
above average	0	3	23
slightly above average	23	2	4
Average	22	2	2
slightly below average	33	29	52
below average	20	5	38
	100	100	200

Chi-square =2.765 with 6 degrees of freedom

*Table 5: Burnout Index

Burnout Index was applied to determine the physical and mental exhaustion among the two comparative groups, according to the analysis 56% of the work from home employees suffered from a "high" degree of burnout while the regular office goers had a higher percentage(23%) of "slightly above average" burnout. The maximum percentage of regular office goers had a "slightly below average" level of burnout.

In totality, 66% of the work from home employees had average and above-average levels of burnout, in comparison, 47% of the regular office goers had average and above-average levels of burnout.

According to the survey, during the covid 19 pandemic, 73.3% of the participants working from home reported that they do not enjoy things as much as they used to do before while 76% of the people working in offices reported that they do not enjoy the things that they used to enjoy more. People who are regular office goers reported more decreased enjoyment (2.3%) as compared to work from home.

Higher percentage of participants (71.3%) working from home reported that they felt guilty over many things that they have done or should have done as compared to regular office goers (56%). The percentage difference was significant (14.3%)

80.2% of Participants working from home reported that they had no thoughts of killing themselves during the covid19 pandemic, while 19.8% of them reported that they had thoughts of killing themselves but they won't carry them out. Participants group who were going to the office during the pandemic reportedly did not have any thoughts of killing themselves. This reported a significant amount of frustration and helplessness among people working from home as they battled negative thoughts and anxiety sitting at home.

Both group of participants reportedly got tired or fatigued easily than usual, during the covid 19 pandemic. 77% of both groups of participants experienced more fatigue than usual while 23% reported no change. 16.8% of the participants working from home registered themselves as being disappointed many times and 73.3% of participants marked that they



were disappointed some times. In comparison, regular office goers, 96% of them said that they were disappointed sometimes, less than 4% of them were in the second category of disappointment (many times.) Almost 2/3rd (76.2) of the participants working from home felt that they feel drained and tired many times as compared to regular office goers where only 1/3rd (28%) of the participants felt drained many times.

DISCUSSION :

Methodological strength: The present study to the best of our knowledge is a broad based investigation on the impact of work from home on mental health of the employees as compared to the regular office goers, employing appropriate methodology that can further pave way for further studies on this issue. Since covid 19 is a new age disease of the modern world, steps taken to curb its spread and its impact on mental health of the population is relatively inadequately researched. Since large scale surveys based on random sampling techniques tend to be very expensive to administer. Also the social distancing measures and impending third wave of covid has also made it difficult to conduct large scale physical surveys, an online survey was developed in order to ensure sufficiently large community sample. Internet based surveys have been especially useful as it offers a greater degree of anonymity with answering the questionnaire at the comfort of one's home, thus making it comfortable for both the surveyor and the participant. Moreover, survey data collected via the internet has been identified an acceptable method for collecting large, heterogeneous samples with hard-to-reach populations (e.g. Birnbaum, 2004; Rhodes et al., 2003). The survey was developed using the most widely used google forms application, the form was sent to all the eligible participants according to the exclusion and inclusion criteria. The survey was started on June 1, 2021, and continued till the total sample number was completed (100 for each group). Mixed sampling strategies were used to select adult and young population. Snowball sampling, was also used so as to reach maximum number of participants.

Methodological limitation: The study had its own set of limitations that include: On line

survey was self-selected, non-random, and limited to those with internet access, thereby possible limiting representation of general population. Technique of snowballing was used only when deemed appropriate as the research team was mindful of the risk of sampling bias that can occur through an over-reliance on networks of peers. Survey under-represented women, seniors, and also in all likelihood persons with low literacy levels, as well as persons whose first language is not English.

Work from home for prolonged duration along with the anxiety and uncertainty of the pandemic has taken a toll on the mental health of the individuals. The employees working from home have suffered the brunt more as compared to others. Burnout is comparatively higher in people working from home as compared to office going employees. Moderate depression is present in around 50% population working from home during the pandemic. Work from home apart from its advantages, certain other factors need to be considered such as disrupted family environment, lack of recreational facilities, deteriorating health due to sedentary lifestyle, and increased working hours. Population has responded in a different manner during each wave of Covid 19 as each wave brought its own challenges. Work from home no doubt has its own set of advantages and is a feasible option (the only option during covid 19) but its impact on mental health of population also needs detailed evaluation. The study concluded that there is need of adequate counselling at regular intervals and giving adequate amount of breaks so as to relieve stress. Employees need to be counselled to maintain a Work-life balance as the line becomes a little blur in this concept. Also Regular follow ups and adequate guidelines need to be set up in place so that there is decreased burnout among employees and for the upkeep of their mental health.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST: There was no conflict of interest among authors.

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