

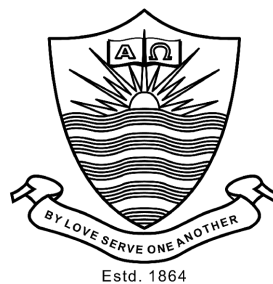
**Name: Maliha Amjad Qureshi**

**Roll no: 21-11444**

**Course code: PSYC 301**

**Instructor: Ma'am Nazia Takkhar**

**Interview Project**



**FORMAN CHRISTIAN COLLEGE**  
**(A CHARTERED UNIVERSITY)**

--	--	--

As the covid-19 spreads all over the world, the entire world experience such a peculiar and troublesome circumstances. Coronavirus, a colossal challenge confronting the whole world in 2020, has affected the people lives badly. Social distancing, self-isolation, and remote work are one of the approaches to end up the epidemic of corona virus. Government has closed down the educational institutions, businesses and companies to prevent the spread of virus. So during this situation, an ever increasing number of organizations ask their staff and employees to switch to working from home.

For some people, like graphic designers, journalists, writers, remote working may not be such a big deal as they may be already familiar with it but for many other businesses, companies and organizations, to work from home will be their first experience in this current situation. Employers and workers are facing numerous arduous challenges of working from home during corona virus pandemic.

In a research conducted by Mann et al. (2003), the researchers examined the psychological effects of working from home and its impact on emotional wellbeing and health of the worker. Furthermore, they also explained the pros and cons of working from home. Teleworking or Working from home is different from working from office as it requires virtual contact with clients or colleagues and no face to face interaction is done. The benefits of working from home such as no commute, increased flexibility and productivity, and better balance of home and work life has been reported by researchers in the study that

--	--	--

give rise to positive emotional impact in workers like enjoyment. Whereas, the problems of remote working that contribute to negative emotions are social isolation, career progression, and lack of support. The results of the study showed that employees working from home undergo more mental health symptoms. They experience more negative emotional and psychological effects in terms of stress, irritability, loneliness, guilt and worry as compared to employees working in office.

Farrell (2017) in his study clarified that working from home allows an individual to decide his/her working hours ensuring an employee to invest more time with his family members and better work/life balance with greater productivity and creativity. In addition, it causes conflict between work and home. It becomes difficult for the workers to isolate work from home or home from work and even work from his very own personal space. Work load with access to innovation every minute of every day prompting extended periods, with little rest from work increases mental and physical problems. Furthermore, in his literature, he portrayed the demands of working from home, which requires a specific working hours and personal place for work where no interruptions or disturbance can be found. Working from home requires an equilibrium structure in the working schedule and the resting time in the same physical space, guaranteeing that the worker does not obscure the lines between socializing time, leisure time and working time. This balance can be achieved by few tactics (Temporal, communicative and physical tactics) explained by the researcher in the study.

Crosbie et al. (2004) proposed in his study different coping strategies adopted by the research participants to overcome the demotivation stress and social isolation while working

--	--	--

from home. 45 research participants were interviewed and 3 focus groups explained the experiences of working from home along with the stress involved in balancing work and life commitments. Different coping strategies to conquer stress and demotivation such as creating supports systems with associates, making arrangements to associate with companions or family members; setting individual focuses for the culmination of work, partaking in normal social exercises outside of the home, and rescheduling timetable are described by the research participants who took part in this study.

Taking into consideration these research articles, I conducted an interview of a teacher from primary school in my near vicinity. She teaches science to 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade students. This person was chosen because she is undergoing the challenges of working from home during the current pandemic. After the lockdown, the institution asked all the staff to work remotely and teach all the students online. Well, it's a drastic change involving stressful events for her to shift to digitalization to work remotely. The major stress she encountered while shifting to digitalization was how she would be going to conduct online classes alongside with her family priorities and how students would be able to understand the lecture and if there was no face to face interaction between her and students then how she would be able to acknowledge if everybody understands what she said or not. She was also worried about how she would be able to take online quizzes, exams and presentations. She uses smartphone and laptop to work remotely and the medium she utilizes to take online classes is zoom or google meet meanwhile she uses email or WhatsApp to interact with students in other hours. Other than that, she has to record the lectures for students who does not have full time access of internet. She works in her own room with no soundproof

--	--	--

space for taking classes that requires a complete silence. She claimed that “I am working in my home close by my children in inappropriate places with no defined office hours.” At times, working in front of laptop screen for hours creates stress and headache for her which is the major drawback of shifting to digitalization.

The learning of the students cannot be predicted well when teaching through remote working. In Zoom classes, while teaching to students, the major stress in digitalization involves the disturbance caused by the students themselves. They does not take the online class sessions seriously. The immature behaviour of some students interrupt the whole class and the concentration level of the whole class goes down to zero. Students make fun, making extraordinary and monstrous sounds during the online class sessions to make it interesting. Even some of the students are not able to conduct the classes due to bad internet connection or some other issue. For them, recorded lectures are uploaded weakly. She told, “It is really difficult to teach efficiently and to grab students’ attention during the online classes”. She added, “Once in my online class session, one of the students did unacceptable behaviour. The boy kept making fun of others and saying “Shut up” in the chats to other students. I ignored once or twice. But for the thrice time, I warned him. But when he kept doing that, I conveyed that issue to administration, and found out that he had been doing all this in other classes too which is destroying the whole class environment.”

Perhaps, everybody working from their homes once or twice experiences bad Wi-Fi connection which is quite irritating. She said “If I have a poor internet connection or my electricity goes down someday, I have to cancel the class and shift it to some other day

--	--	--

which is entirely troublesome as it would be delaying my work”. If the internet issue stays longer, she has to manage a backup to conduct classes e.g., A cell phone data or a 4g device.

Working from home resembles putting the work and family needs one next to other. The major challenge looked by the vast majority of the working representatives are managing their kids. The children staying at home all day long due to closure of schools, forced her as a parent to take care of their studies as well. “Teaching my children school subjects and making them to understand and learn the concepts urged me to work as a full time teacher along with housewife” she said. This additional job of full time instructor has created immense burden for her. As a housewife, it becomes hectic to take class in the room with the noise of family members and children. At the same time while taking class, somebody calls her for something which distracts her a lot. If her baby starts crying, she has to go to her to make her quiet. Even while taking the zoom class, her 3 year old baby saying Mama doodoo!, shows up in the room wanting her mother to cuddle her. Other than children and family members, there are other distractions too like TV, mobile phone, a door bell, music, or a sound of cat. It can be any kind of distraction at home which create distressing circumstances at times, and even awkward or embarrassing moments sometimes. Once she was recording the lecture, meanwhile, her baby started crying and she had to stop that recording and here she said that she finds it harder to balance the home and work life. Even at times, she has to attend the calls from colleagues while washing the dishes or cooking food which entirely mix up her roles.

--	--	--

Waking up early morning to get ready for work to waking up a little bit late for giving breakfast to family changed her daily routine. She does not work at same office hours as she used to but instead she works in blocks of time by taking breaks. She can take classes at any time in a day. Her sleep schedule also becomes irregular. She finds herself in bed next to her husband staying up late at night replying to the bundles of emails from students. She asserted "Staying at the same place with family, doing work and home activities at the same time, blur all the boundaries between working time and leisure time."

Lack of in person interaction with colleagues is the hardest challenge facing by her. Connecting with a colleague online can be more time-consuming than a quick physical face to face interaction. In this current situation, not being able to socialize with colleagues has created miscommunication and her motivation to work with colleagues has reduced in online settings as compared to motivation that she can get through in-person interactions. Relying on a single text, waiting for the email for hours, make the communication harder for her and she asserted that even this has created misunderstandings among us. People, busy in some work, even wrote the email hurriedly and a bad phrased email has been written by one of the colleagues which has misread by all of us. Furthermore, she said, "To communicate to colleagues or administration through emails is harder for me as it took hours to wait for the reply so now instead of sending emails, I usually give them a call or video chat them to get across a possible controversial message in a short time"

Social isolation and loneliness is something that has affected every individual's mental health during this pandemic including the teacher. She stated that "Being in bustling

--	--	--

offices working conditions to being distant from everyone else has changed my lifestyle. Not having random chit chats with colleagues and face to face interactions and staying at home all the time focusing at work and home, sometimes makes me depressed and demotivated. In order to stay productive and motivated, I often go on a walk with my husband, or watch any movie or Pakistani drama, or do afternoon exercise, or sometimes do video calls with my friends and relatives. This makes me happy.”

Working from home as a teacher allows her to be more flexible with time. She does not have to wake up to get ready for work at regular fixed office hours as she is able to take classes at suitable timings at any time a day. She said “The best part of working from home is that I don’t have to dress up or put on makeup for work and not feeling hurried as usual. I can take the classes in my casual outfit, relaxed sitting in my room bare footed”. Moreover, she added, “I am able to give more time to my children and husband, taking care of them, which improved my relationship with them. My children used to complain all the time about neglecting them during office hours, so this “working from home” thing let me to give attention to them and I tend to play with them in my leisure time.” Staying at home for months has increased her physical health as she is able to eat healthy food daily in home and with extra time, sometimes she is able to do some physical exercise too. In the end, she concluded by saying “this outbreak of Covid-19 is really a big challenge for all of us. People are already having tough times working from home and everyone living in these conditions can also be a bit destructive. But this pandemic has brought closer many families who did not have a single minute for each other also it has allowed many of us to explore our hobbies and to do such things we didn’t have time for in our busy life schedules”

--	--	--



**REFERENCES:**

- Crosbie, T., & Moore, J. (2004). Work–life balance and working from home. *Social Policy and Society*, 3(3), 223-233.

--	--	--

- Farrell, K.M. (2017) Working from home: A double edged sword, Home Renaissance Foundation Conference, November 16-17, 2017, Royal Society of Medicine in London.
- Mann, S., & Holdsworth, L. (2003). The psychological impact of teleworking: stress, emotions and health. *New Technology, Work and Employment*, 18(3), 196-211.

--	--	--