

## Should Working From Home be the Norm in Nigeria After Covid\_19?

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### ABSTRACT

As part of the response to Covid 19, working from home (WFH) was enforced by governments of more than 150 countries in order to curtail the transmission of the pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic had brought new business ideas, making organizations change how they conduct their business. This study aims to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of working from home in the scientific literature, using questionnaires, how employees feel about WFH in the aspects of family values, increase of performance, isolation and disrupts work-life balance, how workers cope with WFH. Data was collected from the primary source by using a structured questionnaire completed through google form. The target respondents were employers and employees both from the private sector of the economy . Data was gathered from 504 respondents. SPSS and Excel were used to analyse the data. The majority of the respondents were employees (76.98%), while 23.02% were employers. An inquiry was also made about the marital status of the respondents, and the majority (71.83%) were married while 28.17% were single. The study showed that respondents were still able to connect with their teammates despite working from home, frequently communicate with leaders, and have clarity on working from home policies. It can also be seen that the majority of the respondents enjoyed working from home, although they still look forward to returning to the office. Findings on working from home on family values show that this work style positively influences availability at the home front. Findings on the effect on work performance show average agreement on the positive impact of working from home. Agreement on the negative impact of working from home on office/social interaction and work-life balance was also seen to be on average. It can be inferred from this study that working from home is a work style that employees would prefer to continue post-COVID-19.

**Keywords:** Working from Home, Teleworking, Remote Working, Covid 19 Pandemic, Stakeholder Theory

### INTRODUCTION

Most companies have been forced to innovate and change the way they do their business due to the outbreak of Covid 19 around the globe. As a result, offices have become less important, and work from home has suddenly become mandatory (Savić, 2020). The covid 19 pandemic has undoubtedly been a worldwide human and economic disaster, but it has also led to interesting and unexpected revelations about how we work, play, and live (Ford et al., 2020). The world was caught unprepared for COVID-19 as a pandemic. It had a serious adverse effect on every sphere of life. It brought untold adversity to many developing countries like Nigeria, which may take several years to recover. Staying at home due to lockdown for a considerable

period modifies many practices and activities for many people (Adeyemi, 2020). The Covid 19 pandemic is a clear example of disruptive change that caused employees and employers to make quick adjustments within a short time (Caligiuri & Cieri, 2021).

As a response to Covid 19, working from home (WFH) was enforced by governments of more than 150 countries in order to curtail the transmission of the pandemic (Nur et al., 2020). Before Covid 19 became a basis for WFH, digital way of working from home has been in practice by many organizations in developing countries such as South Africa, Belgium, Philippines, China, Malaysia, & Thailand (Garg & Rijst, 2015; Bloom Liang, Roberts & Ying, 2015). Isaac Newton retreated to his country home in 1665 during the Great Plague. During which he worked for about 18 months. Within the period, he developed his theories on optics calculus and the law of gravitation, which fundamentally changed science's path for centuries. Newton described the 18 months as the most productive period of his life (Westfall, 1980). WFH is not a new thing. The first set of studies have its origin in the 1970s alongside the reduction in costs of data communications and the influx of microcomputers into offices and homes (Pratt, 1984; Bailey & Kurland, 2002).

The COVID-19 pandemic had brought new business ideas, making organizations change how they conduct their business and the offices' role in generating secure, successful, and rewarding careers (World Economic Forum, 2020; PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2020; McKinsey, 2020). Compared to what obtains today, the number of employees working from home is greater than before Covid 19 (Bolisani et al.; 2020). The Covid 19 pandemic has increased the number of people working from home (WFH) tremendously. According to Park (2018) and Park & Kim (2013), job position and the leadership style of each job and individual can also play a role on WFH. Studies to date have shown that remote working is getting popular throughout the world, and it is expected that the number of remote workers will increase over time (Belzunegui-Eraso & Erro-Garces, 2020). Remote work is a practice that allows workers to work beyond the traditional office setting; any place they are productive and that leads to perfect work-life balance, and this is centered on the notion that there is no need for work to be carried out in a particular place (Prasad, Rao, Vaidya & Muralidhar, 2020).

On February 27, Nigeria confirmed its first case in Lagos State; an Italian citizen who works in Nigeria had returned on February 25 from Milan, Italy through the Murtala Muhammed International Airport, fell ill on February 26 and was transferred to Lagos State Biosecurity Facilities for isolation and testing (Ogunode, Abigeal & Lydia, 2020). The first phase of the lockdown was announced by the President on April 27, 2020, with effect from May 4 to 17, spanning two weeks in FCT, Lagos, and Abuja. Nigerian President Buhari and the Presidential Task Force on COVID-19 (PTF) have approved 'phase two' measures to ease the lockdown, which has been in place since March 29, 2020. Phase two of the lockdown was in place from June 2, 2020 – June 29, 2020.

WFH is something not too common in Nigeria before Covid 19. For most people working from home seems to be a strange experience. Some employees have been working from home for over a year despite the pandemic having drastically reduced (Savić, 2020). The percentage of Nigerians vaccinated is very low; this makes some employers mandate their employees to continue to WFH. Also, there is segregation between those that are yet to receive. In some cases,

employers allow those vaccinated to resume work at their offices, while those who have yet to receive the vaccine cannot resume at their offices. In this era of better information technology, being physically present in the workplace is no longer the only way of operating in an organization (Day & Barber, 2019). Nigeria needs to improve its digital technology because this has helped many companies in developed countries survive the consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic. It may also create an opportunity to improve the country's digital economy (Ozili, 2020).

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

This study aims to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of working from home in the scientific literature, using questionnaires. Also, this quantitative study examines how employees feel about WFH in the aspects of family values, increase of performance, isolation and disrupts work-life balance, how workers cope with WFH.

### **PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Most Governments of the World introduced a lockdown to curtail the spread of the Covid 19 pandemic except for critical workers. This made many workers work from home (Ipsen, Veldhoven, Kirchner & Hansen, 2021). The Covid 19 pandemic led public organizations, schools, and many companies worldwide to mandate their workers to work from home. The work methods and culture of many organizations have been changed as a result of Covid 19. To prevent the spread of Covid 19, WFH measures have been introduced in many countries, impacting workers' productivity (Mustajab et al.; 2020).

The challenges of WFH include: lack of boundaries between work and personal life, need for socialization, lack of boundaries between work and personal life, blurred boundaries between leisure and work (Bell, & Kozlowski, 2002). Also, the problem of effective communication and cooperation with managers and coworkers (Mitchell, 2017). For WFH to thrive, Trust, which is a major factor between an employer and employee, must be agreed upon by both parties (Mustajab et al.; 2020). For many people, WFH is now a dream, especially the current millennial generation who will not need to wake up early and prepare to go to work, thereby avoiding traffic congestion on the way (Purwanto et al.; 2020). According to researchers being a leader when workers work from home is more difficult than leading traditional teams (Fisher & Fisher, 2001).

### **Conceptual Framework**

The workplace can be understood as the place or building where people perform their jobs (Cambridge Dictionary, 2020). WFH has been studied under numerous; partially overlapping terms, like telework, telecommuting, virtual office, home office, location independent working, and remote work. "Telework" simply means to work that is carried out in any place other than the usual. "WFH" refers to when the work is carried out partly or totally in the worker's home (ILO, 2020). Although the variety of terms makes it complicated to find the related literature, the term "telework" is mainly used in this study, although the terms were eventually used as synonyms. Throughout this article, we use the terms working from home, remote working, and teleworking interchangeably.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **STAKEHOLDERS THEORY**

Business is about interaction among stakeholders, i.e., customers, employees, financiers, suppliers, communities, and managers, to create value (Freeman et al.; 2010). From a stakeholder perspective, business meant a set of relationships among groups that have a stake in the activities that make up the business (Freeman, 1984). Stakeholders are persons, neighborhoods, organizations, groups, institutions, societies, and the natural environment (Mitchell, Agle & Wood, 1997). According to Freeman (1984), "A stakeholder in an organization is any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization's objectives." Stakeholder refers to "persons or groups with legitimate interests in procedural and/or substantive aspects of corporate activity" Donaldson & Preston (1995).

A manager is expected to prefer solution where there is a stakeholder's conflict of interest; to the extent, the conflict resolution by the manager may even create more value (Freeman, 1984). Managers, management, and owners of businesses need to confront Covid 19 for their establishments to achieve the set goals and objectives and consider the issue of the organization's stakeholders. One of the ways of realizing the set goals and objectives of an organization is to keep the company going. With various government orders worldwide about social distancing and lockdown, it becomes necessary to adopt the concept of working from home, which affects the various stakeholders of an organization. It is the work of management to ensure that stakeholders' interests are protected in the best possible way (Mitchell et al.; 1997). In the joint value creation process, there should be mutual stakeholder relationships in which stakeholders are both recipients and co-creators of value (Freudenreich, Ludeke-Freund & Schaltegger, 2020).

### **DEFINITION OF WORKING FROM HOME**

WFH is when employees of an organization carry out their duties remotely, like in their homes, rather than the norm of working in the office (Nur et al.; 2020). WFH is the work activities with the deployment of information and communication technologies (ICT) that enables workers to access their work tasks wherever possible such as at home (Nakrosiene et al., 2019). According to Savić (2020), WFH can be defined generically as employees working outside company offices. It includes four basic characteristics: Work being performed outside the company's physical premises; a person who is an employee of a company or a staff member of an organization; telecommunication with the employer; actual work engagement with a company or an organization on specific tasks. WFH can be defined as any situation where the employee is physically separate from the employer, which could physically decentralize functions, as well as "offshore" (Nilles, 1976) WHF can be defined as any work carried out in an environment different from the employer's workplace (Hatch, 2006). WFH is a means to carry out work away from the traditional go from house to office and vice-versa. Teleworking is work performed from various locations that empower employees to access their work activities by utilizing Information and Communication Technology (ICT) (Perez-Perez et al., 2003).

### **ADVANTAGES OF WORKING FROM HOME**

According to Ipsen et al.; (2021), the advantages of WFH include work-life balance, increased productivity, less stress, reduced time of commuting, less contact with other staff, and increased control of work patterns. WFH makes it easier for organizations to attract qualified

professionals who do not want to be tied to a specific work location. This gives the management of companies the opportunity to reduce management costs. The virtual method of working saves companies a lot of costs, thereby making it increasingly popular. It makes an organization more agile and able to cope with ever-accelerating market changes and various crises. WFH allows companies to hire qualified workers living anywhere globally, working 24 hours a day irrespective of time zones. This also makes WFH attractive and more popular (Fisher & Fisher, 2001); Stich, 2020).

According to Zykova & Maussymbe (2021), the following are the advantages of WFH: flexible schedule allows workers to spend more time with family and work from everywhere; remote work contributes to reducing commuting costs and time; consequently, it reduces traffic jams and exhaust gases; online work boosted digitalization and automation; remote work might lead to progress in communication and manufacture technologies; for some economic sectors, remote work is good opportunity to boost income. According to Savić (2020), the benefits of WFH include increased productivity and job satisfaction, increased staff retention, reduction in office cost, greater flexibility, environmental benefits, and improved work-life balance. WFH has been linked with saving time commuting to work (Klopotek, 2017) and high levels of work satisfaction (Schall, 2019). Telework has attracted the interest of both professionals and academics because of the possibility of working in any place and whenever. Therefore, it is a win-win situation for both organizations and employees. It leads to workers' motivation, creating work-life balance, and reducing costs (Madsen, 2003).

Perez-Perez et al.; (2003) discussed the advantages of teleworking as cost-saving; companies can reduce costs in water, infrastructure, phone and internet bills, electricity, cleaning, and security costs (Radcliffe, 2010). Teleworking can also reduce employee turnover because there is an increase in employee satisfaction and fewer sick days. Morgan, 2004 asserted that teleworking encourages planning skills. Teleworking has been shown to increase family time. Employees can combine work with the capability to manage family-related issues, enabling an employee to balance work and family time. (Johnson, Audrey & Shaw, 2007). It offers time flexibility to an employee who can choose productive time to start and finish work responsibilities. Thus an employees can build up a pattern of work that best suits them. Teleworks save cost and time of commuting to work. (Tremblay & Genin, 2007). Teleworking affords women the opportunity to spend more time and invest more energy in taking care of their children (Hartig, Kylin & Johansson, 2007). Teleworking allows women to balance work and family time (Lim & Teo, 2000).

Giovanis & Ozdamar (2021) asserted that previous studies show that WFH can positively affect the employee's job, loyalty to the organization, financial satisfaction, and productivity. WFH can increase 'spare' time, which is not always spent on recreational activities but is mainly occupied with other paid work or household chores. Increased stress and health problems can result from commuting to work. WFH may be advantageous to women, as it allows them to have a better time to attend to household responsibilities and at the same time to also better manage their work.

### **DISADVANTAGES OF WORKING FROM HOME**

Professional isolation and lack of communication by employees with their colleagues. The Manager-employee relationship is adversely affected. This affects feedback, practical demonstration of what should be done by subordinates in some circumstances (Diab-Bahman & Al-Enzi, 2020). The disadvantages of WFH include decreased interpersonal contact, misunderstandings, isolation, role ambiguity (Ipsen et al., 2021). According to Bolisani, et al; (2020). WFH has a negative effect on staff socialization, knowledge sharing, and knowledge management. According to Van der Lippe & Lippenyi (2020), teamwork can be difficult when too many employees work from home. Sarti & Torre (2017) observed that possible obstacles to WFH include difficult coordination and cooperation among workers, anxiety related to work in isolation, investments in information technologies, and fear of control by management.

According to Moretti et al.; (2020), the disadvantages of WFH include the cost of working from home, difficulties monitoring performance, lack of clarity between work and home tasks, and communication problems. Compared to the office environment, the home environment may not be as conducive, especially the nonavailability of ergonomic office furniture at home may hamper the adoption of a healthy posture and may promote the onset of musculoskeletal disorders (Pillastrini. et al.; 2020; Will, Bury, Miller, 2018). For example, an International company gave instructions to their staff to carry their chairs home to reduce medical bills related to back disorders. Also, working in a sedentary position for prolonged periods may increase the risk of neck pain and or low back pain. WFH may also lead to isolation, stress, and anxiety, influencing wellbeing, job effectiveness, and work-life balance (Côté et al.; 2008; Baker et al., 2018). Likelihood problems of communication, working environment, technology, and management need serious attention; WFH can negatively affect work-home conflicts, social isolation, and intensification (Bently & Kurland, 2016). This can negatively affect physical and mental wellbeing and work performance (Oakman et al.; 2020).

According to Zykova and Maussymbe (2021), companies providing high incomes cannot fully apply for remote work; remote work is strongly dependent on an internet connection; people in business are skeptical about remote work; the majority of workers cannot establish strong communication with colloquies which decreases productivity; distance work might cause a huge number of mental struggles: loneliness, depression, and aggression; it might reduce the productivity of companies because of demotivation among workers. Different types of cyberattacks can affect work from home (WFH); they include Ransome ware attacks, phishing, DOS, and DDOS attacks (Sebastian, 2021). The following steps, according to Sebastian (2021), may help to combat cyberattacks in the workplace: Access controls, incident management, remote monitoring, employee training, Backups, and Recovery plans, endpoint security, vendor security controls, usage of a virtual private network (VPN) and multi-factor authentication (MFA).

### **EMPIRICAL STUDIES**

According to Ipsen (2021), data was gathered from 5,748 workers in 29 European countries on their experiences during the early stages of lockdown when workers were working from home (March 11 to May 8, 2020). The results showered that most workers had a more positive rather than negative experience of WFH during the lockdown period. The advantages of WFH include the following factors: work-life balance, greater work control, and improved work efficiency.

The main disadvantages were work uncertainties, home office constraints, and inadequate tools.

In a research carried out by Mustajab et al.; (2020), part of the findings revealed that working from home has advantages and disadvantages for the organization and the employee. WFH may also be responsible for the decline in employee productivity. Furthermore, part of the research findings reveal that WFH cannot be the norm because many work areas cannot be done from home; nevertheless, WFH has allowed a work-life balance for many employees.

In a research carried out by Nur et al.; 2020, a Google form survey using Likert scales and was answered by 110 respondents. Findings showed that many of the respondents agreed that WFH has more advantages than disadvantages, and this revealed that WFH gives more convenience to the employees.

Zykova & Maussymbe, 2021 carried out a survey); a question was asked on what mode of work you prefer at the end of self-isolation? The survey revealed that more than half of the respondents (55.13%) would like to return to a normal working mode while only 24.36% would continue working online, and 20.51% of respondents cannot give the exact answer.

In a research carried out by Miller (2021), the first, an exploratory survey during the early months of the pandemic with 2,265 telecommunications (Information Technology developers) workers, showed that many developers were confronted with challenges attaining milestones and that their team productivity had changed. Through qualitative analysis, it was also discovered that vital team culture factors like social connection and communication had been affected. In the second survey, quantitative research was carried out on cultural factors that emerged from the first survey to comprehend the reported changes. From the responses of 608 developers, it was discovered that 74% of the respondents missed social interactions with colleagues, and 51% reported a decrease in their communication ease with coworkers. It was found that the satisfaction with interactions from social activities, ability to brainstorm with colleagues, and difficulty communicating with colleagues, are significant factors associated with how developers report their software development team's productivity. The result of the research also showed how managers in large software companies could support and sustain team productivity during a period of crisis.

Using a convenient sampling method, Aczel et al.; (2021) surveyed 704 academicians who worked from home. The result showed that the Covid 19 Pandemic lockdown decreased work efficiency for nearly half of the researchers. At the same time, about a quarter of them was more efficient during the lockdown period than before. 70% of the researchers think if they could spend more of their time at home in the future, they would be similar or more efficient than before. They reasoned that they are better at working on their manuscript, analyzing data, and reading the literature at home. At the same time, when they are in office, they are better at keeping in touch with their team, sharing thoughts with their colleagues, and collecting data. Also, 66% would prefer to work more from home in the future than they did before the lockdown.

Weisholtz (2020) reported that in a research carried out by New York Times- Morning Consult, "more than 1,100 people who've worked at home over the last several months revealed that 86% are happy with working away from the office. Only 11% of employees and 13% of managers welcome going back to their offices full-time. Another survey was carried out to evaluate how WFH is managed; the outcome revealed that the remote team management experience of 594 managers who participated in the Remote Managers 2020 survey, and the survey contained respondents that cut across some industries, company sizes, and working conditions to know how they dealt with the new challenge irrespective of their industries (Remote-how, 2020) According to the survey, respondents revealed that the biggest advantages of remote teams are happier employees (59%), a global talent pool (57%), and more productive employees (52%). On the other hand, they mentioned some disadvantages of remote teams too. Some of the disadvantages include lack of relationships among employees (57%), communication difficulties (47%), and decreased employee visibility (45%). Research conducted by Borggreven (2020) revealed that through WFH, business costs saving either direct or indirect to the tune of € 1,681.4 million per year. Many companies worldwide intend to allow their employees to work from home, especially once a vaccine becomes available for COVID-19. The health crisis passes to gain from cost reduction and benefiting from advancement of digitalization, according to Statista (2021), research showed that the outbreak of COVID-19 has led to substantial growth for enterprise software spending in 2020.

In a research carried out by De Klerk, Joubert, and Mosca (2021) during the spring lockdown of 2020 among Spanish households using a total of 1,800 surveys and over 200 images in quantitative and qualitative method research, the results showed that there were insufficient spaces for more than a quarter of the homes. There were also strong relations between the perceived workspace adequacy and social status or stability of homes was shown and validated. In a study conducted by Bansal and Rajagopal (2021) in Pune city in India, with a sample size of 120 respondents using a convenient sampling procedure across the business sectors, the result showed that most employees were dissatisfied while they were working from home during the pandemic. According to the result of the research, what caused the dissatisfaction among employees to include very few alternatives for interaction with peers and colleagues, prolonged working hours, constant work pressure, doing repetitive jobs without any break, and pressure from the domestic end in terms of family commitments and expectations.

A worldwide survey carried out by Twilio revealed that Covid 19 has been speeding up the digital transformation by 5.3 years (D'mello, 2020). While a recent article published by Waller (2020) shows that the Coronavirus has been speeding up the digital transformation in many countries. Lerman and Dwoskin (2020); Harper (2020) mentioned that the Coronavirus had created a new working approach, especially in creative industries. An instance of this would be Microsoft, which is executing fewer days a week of work at the office, implementing a home-based office instead of a clear shift towards working more remotely (Harper, 2020). Other Companies considering a similar arrangement include Facebook, Spotify, Twitter, and Shopify (McLean, 2020).

According to Hunter (2019), in a survey carried out by Vodafone, the result showed that 75 % of organizations worldwide are adapting to flexible working arrangements, such as providing opportunities for employees to work from home. Among this 75%, it is pointed out that 83% of

those have had productivity improvement. A study conducted by Butler et al. (2007) examines the effect of remote working on productivity. It was mentioned that the majority of studies made previously confirm the postulation that having a more flexible working approach does increase productivity. Rupietta and Beckmann (2018) revealed that there had been a major increase in remote offices during the last decades, mainly due to the technological development in many countries. Findings from the research showed a positive link between an increased work effort from employees who can work outside of the organization compared to those who are always present at the physical office space (Rupietta & Beckmann 2018).

According to Hunter (2019), there are many benefits for individuals. These benefits are mentioned as increased family time by not having to transport oneself from point A to point B and increased creativity. Hunter (2019) revealed in a survey that included around 10,000 individuals working around the globe, where 89% of these participants indicated that flexible working should be viewed as a new normal at their workplaces.

A two-year study made by Bloom et al.; (2015) shows a significant 13% productivity increase for individuals working from home. However, as a contradiction to this, Hunter (2019) argues that the lack of face-to-face interaction may negatively affect.

#### **LIMITATIONS OF WORKING FROM HOME**

According to Green, Tappin, and Bentley (2017), the following are key challenges of WFH; Collaboration and communication can be limited because of WHF (Green et al., 2017). This is one of the reasons companies do not want to adopt WFH. Technological tools such as workflow management tools, online collaboration tools, desk video conferencing, and web-based presentation rooms can be used to enhance collaboration (Bayrak, 2012). The mindset of management can also be a limitation to WHF. The traditional view of wanting to see the worker and measure the workers' productivity with 'time in the seat' (Dahlstrom, 2013). Therefore, communication in a WFH context must be more explicit than it might be in a comparable person-to-person interaction (Makarius & Larson, 2017).

There should be clear objectives with realistic goals that must be communicated through many avenues as determined by the workers' preferences. There is also a need for Trust and perception of autonomy given to workers. This will lead to greater performance and satisfaction in remote workers (Kroll et al., 2017). Effective communications among workers are vital for the flow of information and coordination of work activities (Charalampous et al., 2019). WHF also has the challenge of sufficient technology (Green et al., 2017). Technology plays an important part in reducing the potential challenges of WHF (Green et al., 2017). WHF also brings the challenges of professional and social isolation. (Bentley et al., 2016). Social isolation has been increased in this period of the Covid 19 pandemic as people were isolated from their work and their wider family, friends, and recreational activities (Green et al., 2017). Technology can close the gap of WHF by employees by using rich communication technologies such as video conferencing (Eckhardt et al., 2019). Zoom has become part of our language during the pandemic.

The physical home working environment is not sometimes as fitting as the general office workplace (Bentley et al., 2016). This may have a negative impact on workers' mental and

physical wellbeing. Cybersecurity preparedness is a major issue during the WFH; during the covid 19, companies struggle to reach the right balance between flexibility and security for remote work. Cybercriminals may want to take advantage of inadequate preparation in relation to Information Technology infrastructure (Sebastian, 2021).

### **TIPS TO IMPROVE WORKING FROM HOME**

According to Kamali (2021), the following tips could help organizations to increase their WFH productivity:

Employees and managers need to manage their emails which is one of the principal ways of communication during WHF. Daily, managers should contact their employees and maintain strong and consistent connections. Employees working from home should not hesitate to contact their managers for help with any task and timeliness. There should be a to-do list to be submitted by employees to their managers daily. This will help employees to prioritize their time and finish everything on their list without delay. Also, it will help them to keep to their deadlines.

Workers need to set up a dedicated space where distractions will be minimal while working from home. Also, this will keep the Company's equipment safe. Networking among colleagues should be encouraged while working from home. This will help the employee not feel isolated so that ideas can be shared and socializing gaps can be closed. ICT tools and a proper environment are vital to performing day-to-day works by employees working from home (Kamali, 2021). Leaders will have to develop skills to manage their employees working from home and provide mental and physical support (De Klerk, Joubert & Mosca, 2021). Time and attendance software should be introduced to monitor workers working from home. This remote tracking is necessary to ensure that workers are at their duty post and that employees are paid correctly for their time (Kamali, 2021).

### **METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH**

The data was collected from the primary source by using a structured questionnaire via Google form. The questionnaire was divided into two main sections. Section A covers the basic information about the respondents, while Section B covers information on the study. The target respondents were employees and employers in private sector of the economy. Data was gathered from 504 respondents in Nigeria. The questionnaire was designed using dichotomous Yes/ No answers and five points Likert scale ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1) to provide information on the topic.

### **RESULTS**

Questionnaires designed to understand if working from home should be the norm after COVID-19 were distributed to respondents in Nigeria. Valid responses were received from 504 respondents. The questionnaire was formulated using dichotomous questions (Yes/No) and a Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree(1).

**Table 1: Characteristics Of Respondents**

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Level of management</b>		
Officer	73	14.48%
Middle Management	267	52.98%
Top Management	164	32.54%
<b>Working Experience</b>		
Less than 5years	68	13.49%
6 – 10 years	193	38.29%
11 – 15 years	109	21.63%
Greater than 15 years	134	26.59%
<b>Employment Category</b>		
Employee	388	76.98%
Employer	116	23.02%
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Married	362	71.83%
Single	142	28.17%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>504</b>	<b>100%</b>

The table above shows the characteristics of the respondents interviewed. The majority of the respondents were Middle Management (52.98%), followed by Top Management with 32.54% and Officer level (14.48%). The working experience of respondents was majorly 6- 10 years (38.29%), followed by those with greater than 15 years experience (26.59%), 21.63% for those with 11- 15 years' experience, while 13.49% had less than five years experience.

The majority of the respondents were employees (76.98%), while 23.02% were employers. An inquiry was also made about the marital status of the respondents, and the majority (71.83%) were married while 28.17% were single.

**2: General Questions On Working From Home**

Sn	Question	Frequency (%)	
		Yes	No
1	Do you feel connected enough to your teammates?	461 (91%)	43 (9%)
2	Is the working from home policies in your organization clear?	402 (80%)	102 (20%)
3	Are you satisfied with the frequency of communication from leaders?	420 (83%)	84 (17%)
4	Do you have all the equipment and remote tools you need to complete your work to your usual ability?	355 (70%)	149 (30%)
5	Have you been able to stick to a work routine or schedule?	381 (76%)	123 (24%)
6	Do you take regular breaks?	289 (57%)	215 (43%)
7	Do you look forward to returning to the office?	376 (75%)	128 (25%)
8	Do you feel your organization is providing the proper support?	366 (73%)	138 (27%)
9	Do you have all the equipment needed to fulfill your role to your usual standard?	323 (64%)	181 (36%)
10	Do you enjoy working from home?	360 (71%)	144 (29%)
11	Do you prefer working from home to the office?	278 (55%)	226 (45%)

The respondents were asked general questions on their views on working from home regarding how it has affected their work. Connection with teammates had the highest frequency at 91%, followed by satisfaction with frequency of communication from leaders (83%) and clarity of the organization's working from home policies (80%). Preference for working from home had the least frequency at 55% (although still above average), followed by taking regular breaks at 57%.

**3: Statements On Family Values**

Sn	Statement	Mean	Std
1	Working from home influence your family values	4.03	0.95
2	It positively affects the relationship with your spouse	3.96	1.02
3	Have quality time with your spouse	3.96	0.99
4	Able to adjust your schedules to accommodate your children	4.06	0.88

The respondents were asked to rank their level of agreement to statements on family values regarding working from home. The analysis showed positive means ranging from 3.96 to 4.06 with a standard deviation from 0.88 to 1.02.

The statement "Able to adjust your schedules to accommodate your children" had the highest mean (4.06), followed by "Working from home influence your family values" (4.03).

**4: Statements On Work Performance**

<b>Sn</b>	<b>Statement</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std</b>
1	Working from home increase your work performance	3.68	1.01
2	It is convenient working from home	3.84	1.00
3	Working from home is quiet and productive	3.51	1.12
4	Working from home makes a person focused without or less distraction	3.24	1.12
5	Working from home made you flexible	3.99	0.80

The respondents were asked to rank their level of agreement to statements on work performance regarding working from home. Results from the analysis showed positive means ranging from 3.24 to 3.99 with a standard deviation from 0.80 to 1.12.

The statement " Working from homemade you flexible" had the highest mean (3.99), while "Working from home makes a person focused without or less distraction" had the least mean (3.24).

**5: Statements On Office/Social Interaction**

<b>Sn</b>	<b>Statement</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std</b>
1	Feel isolated when working from home	2.97	1.13
2	Working from limited support from other colleagues/superior officers	3.29	1.11
3	Working from home affect the effectiveness of supervision of supervisors	3.37	1.13
4	Working from home negatively affect your social interaction with your colleagues	3.21	1.13
5	The absence of face-to-face hinder your socialization	3.14	1.13

The respondents were asked to rank their level of agreement to statements on office and social interaction regarding working from home. The analysis showed means ranging from 2.97 to 3.37 with a standard deviation from 1.11 to 1.13.

The statement " Working from home affect effectiveness of supervision of supervisors" had the highest mean (3.37), while "Feel isolated when working from home" had the least mean (2.97).

**6: Statements On Work-Life Balance**

<b>Sn</b>	<b>Statement</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std</b>
1	Working from home disrupt employees work-life balance	3.00	1.11
2	Working from home deprived of rest	2.66	1.13
3	Working from home increase the level of stress	2.53	1.10
4	Long hours influence physical condition	3.58	0.98
5	Working from home make me lose sight of the priority	2.49	1.04

The respondents were asked to rank their level of agreement to statements on work-life balance regarding working from home. The analysis showed means ranging from 2.49 to 3.58 with a standard deviation from 0.98 to 1.13.

The statement " Long hours influence physical condition" had the highest mean (3.58), while "Working from home increase the level of stress" had the least mean (2.53).

### DISCUSSION

The participants of this survey were majorly middle management employees and mostly had over six years of working experience.

A large majority were also married, enabling insight into the effect of working from home on family values.

The study showed that respondents were still able to connect with their teammates despite working from home, frequently communicate with leaders, and have clarity on working from home policies. It can also be seen that the majority of the respondents enjoyed working from home, although they still look forward to returning to the office.

Findings on working from home on family values show that this work style positively influences availability at the home front.

Findings on the effect on work performance show average agreement on the positive impact of working from home. Agreement on the negative impact of working from home on office/social interaction and work-life balance was also seen to be on average.

### CONCLUSION

The trend of WFH resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic is not likely to go away as workers discovered WFH to be both attractive and productive. Indeed, many employees may prefer companies that offer opportunities to work from home. Nearly all tasks can now be carried out effectively remotely, and therefore employees expect remote working to continue at least partially. It can be inferred from this study that working from home is a work style that employees would prefer to continue post-COVID-19.

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