



A Study on Assessment of Physiological and Psychological problems among women working from home

Dr. Mona Mehta¹, Ms. Jahnavi Luhar²

ABSTRACT

The work-from-home (WFH) model has become increasingly prevalent, particularly among women, leading to significant changes in domestic space utilization and daily routines. Although working from home poses several physiological and psychological challenges due to prolonged screen time, inadequate workspace design, blurred work-life boundaries, and increased domestic responsibilities. The current investigation seeks to evaluate the physiological and the physiological and psychological problems experienced by women working from home. The study was conducted among 120 women respondents aged between 22 - 50 years, chosen through the use of purposive sampling. A systematic questionnaire was used to gather data, covering demographic profile, work-from-home conditions, physiological health issues, psychological well-being, and home workspace characteristics. Descriptive and inferential statistical tools were used for data analysis. Findings of the study are expected to highlight common physiological and psychological health concerns such as musculoskeletal pain, eye strain, mental stress, and work-life imbalance among women working from home. The research provides coping strategies, contributing to healthier and more supportive home-based work environments for women.

Keywords: Women working from home, physiological problems, psychological problems, Work-life balance

INTRODUCTION

Work from home (WFH), often known as teleworking or remote working, is a work arrangement where individuals use digital resources including computers, the internet, and communication devices to carry out their professional responsibilities from home (Chirico et al., 2021). When the COVID-19 epidemic struck, this type of work arrangement developed widely as companies used remote working to continue operations while maintaining safety. WFH offers a number of benefits, including more productivity, more work autonomy, shorter commutes, and flexible working hours. Women particularly benefit from it since it enables them to manage duties to family and work (Schur et al., 2020).

WFH offers benefits, but it has also brought about a number of health issues. Without the right ergonomic setup, women who work from home frequently spend long hours in front of computers, which can cause physiological issues like musculoskeletal discomfort, exhaustion, eye strain, and sleep disturbances. According to a study, teleworkers' distant working circumstances resulted in musculoskeletal pain, decreased

¹Assistant Professor, ²Temporary teaching assistant
Department of Family and Community Resource Management
Faculty of Family and Community Sciences
The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda
Email Id: mona.mehta@gmail.com , jahnaviluhar18@gmail.com

physical activity, and poor sleep quality (Chirico et al., 2021).

WFH affects mental health in addition to physical health issues. Due to their workload, household duties, and lack of work-life boundaries, women who work from home feel more stressed out. Anxiety, sadness, and psychological distress are further exacerbated by social isolation, a lack of organizational support, and work-family conflict (Oakman et al., 2020). According to de Macêdo et al. (2020), workspace features including shoddy furniture, insufficient lighting, and a lack of privacy might exacerbate physical and mental health issues. In order to improve the health and well-being of women who work from home, it was crucial to investigate the psychological and physiological issues they face.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

1. To determine the physiological issues that women who work from home face such as musculoskeletal discomfort, eye strain, fatigue, and sleep disturbances.
2. To identify the psychological problems faced by women working from home such as stress, anxiety, depression, irritability, and work-life imbalance.
3. To study the influence of home workspace characteristics such as furniture, lighting, ventilation, noise, and privacy on physiological and psychological health.
4. To suggest coping strategies to improve physical and psychological well-being among women working from home.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A theoretical and empirical basis for comprehending the physiological and psychological issues faced by women who work from home is provided by the literature review. Researchers have concentrated on analysing the impact of working remotely on employees' physical and mental health, work-life balance, and general well-being due to its growing popularity,

especially since the COVID-19 epidemic.

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 Work Life Balance Theory

The connection between people's personal and family roles and their professional obligations is explained by the equilibrium among work and life idea. According to the hypothesis, role conflict, stress, emotional strain, and decreased psychological well-being result from professional expectations interfering with personal and family life. According to Greenhaus and Beutell (1985), work-family conflict arises when expectations from one position make it impossible to participate in another. The physical and psychological lines separating the business and family spheres are frequently blurred when working from home, which raises the risk of role overlap and overload. According to the work-family border hypothesis, poorly managed boundaries between personal and professional domains can have a detrimental impact on people's general well-being and level of life satisfaction (Clark, 2000). As a result, striking a balance between work and personal obligations has grown in importance, especially for women who are juggling several jobs at home. Women who work from home are more susceptible to work-life imbalance since they must juggle both their personal and professional obligations. Emotional weariness and psychological stress are increased by this overlap. According to Galanti et al. (2021), there was a substantial amount of work-family conflict among distant workers, which had a negative impact on their mental and general well-being. The notion emphasizes that minimizing psychological issues among women who work from home requires striking a balance between job and personal life.

2.1.2 Ergonomic Theory

In order to improve comfort, efficiency, safety, and productivity, ergonomic theory highlights the significance of creating work settings that take into account each person's physical capabilities and limitations. In order to reduce physical strain during job activities, proper ergonomic design incorporates the use of appropriate furniture,

sufficient lighting, proper working posture, and well-organized workspace arrangements. Grandjean (1987) asserts that ergonomics seeks to prevent pain and occupational health issues by adjusting the workplace to human needs. However, many people work from home in environments that are not ergonomically planned, frequently utilizing inappropriate furniture and incorrect workstation configurations. Physiological issues such as musculoskeletal disorders, neck and back discomfort, eye strain, and physical exhaustion may be exacerbated by such poor ergonomic settings (Dul & Weerdmeester, 2008). These issues underscore the significance of ergonomic interventions in home-based work settings to promote health and wellbeing, especially for women who manage extended work hours from home. Poor ergonomic circumstances, such as inappropriate seating and inadequate workspace design, greatly raise the risk of physical pain and occupational health issues, according to De Macêdo et al. (2020). According to this notion, women who work from home have physiological health problems as a direct result of improper workstation settings.

2.1.3 Occupational Stress Theory

Occupational stress theory explains how demands and strains at work affect people's physical and mental health. The theory states that stress arises when an individual's capacity or resources are insufficient to meet the demands of their job. Physical exhaustion, mental depletion, anxiety, and decreased job performance can be caused by prolonged exposure to a heavy workload, time constraints, role conflict, and a lack of control over working environment. Uncertain work boundaries, a heavier burden, and juggling work and home obligations at the same time can all contribute to occupational stress when working from home, which can have an adverse effect on general wellbeing (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Cooper & Marshall, 1976). Women who work from home frequently deal with a heavier workload, longer workdays, less organizational support, and disruptions from family obligations. Increased stress, worry, and mental exhaustion are caused by these circumstances. According to Magnavita et al. (2021), teleworking led

to a greater burden and a less distinct division between work and personal life, which in turn raised occupational stress. This theory offers a framework for comprehending the psychological issues related to remote labor.

2.2 Empirical Review

The physiological and psychological impacts of teleworking and working from home have been the subject of several research investigations. According to de **Macêdo et al. (2020)**, who looked at the effects of ergonomic workspace conditions on teleworkers, poor workstation design was a major factor in musculoskeletal pain, physical strain, and elevated stress levels. The study underlined how crucial ergonomic arrangements are to preserving employees' wellbeing and output. In a similar vein, **Moretti et al. (2020)** investigated how remote work affected employees' physical health and discovered that extended sitting and bad posture led to more neck and back pain as well as general physical discomfort. The study emphasized the importance of ergonomic workstation design in averting physiological health issues. In their analysis of the health effects of working remotely, **Oakman et al. (2020)** found that both physiological and psychological problems were caused by poor workspace design, decreased physical activity, and increased workload. The findings demonstrated a strong link between musculoskeletal pain, exhaustion, and poor ergonomic circumstances. Numerous investigations into the health effects of teleworking were conducted in 2021. In a methodical investigation of the impact of teleworking on mental and physical health, **Chirico et al. (2021)** discovered that musculoskeletal discomfort, exhaustion, remote workers frequently had decreased physical activity, weight gain, and poor sleep quality. Psychological problems like stress, worry, depression, and a decline in job satisfaction were also frequently reported. **Afonso et al. (2021)** discovered that remote workers had greater levels of anxiety, depression, and sleep issues in their investigation of the psychological effects of teleworking. Afonso et al. (2021) found that distant workers experienced higher levels of anxiety, sadness, and sleep difficulties.

The study found that two of the main causes of psychological suffering are social isolation and work overload. In their investigation of occupational health difficulties among distant workers, **Ekpanyaskul and Padungtod (2021)** noted psychological problems such stress, anxiety, and work-life imbalance in addition to physiological concerns like weight gain, neck pain, and back pain. Similarly, **Galanti et al. (2021)** examined the relationship between remote work and mental health and discovered that social isolation and work-family conflict were strong predictors of increased stress and decreased psychological well-being. According to the research evaluation, working from home significantly affects a person's emotional and physical well-being. Extended periods of sitting and poor ergonomic circumstances are frequently linked to physiological issues such as musculoskeletal pain, exhaustion, eye strain, and sleeping disturbances. Stress, anxiety, sadness, and work-life imbalance are common psychological issues, especially for women who typically juggle additional family obligations with their professional professions. Features of the workplace have a substantial effect on people's overall health and wellbeing. Reducing health-related issues requires organizational support, ergonomic setups, and successful life at work strategies for balance. Consequently, the present investigation focused on assessing the Physiological and psychological problems that women who work from home encounter and generate methods to improve their health.

METHODOLOGY

A descriptive research methodology was used in this study to evaluate the physiological and psychological problems among women working from home. The descriptive approach was considered appropriate as it enables systematic examination of work-from-home conditions, health-related concerns, and work-life balance without manipulation of variables. A total of 120 women working from home were selected using a purposive sampling technique to ensure inclusion of participants actively involved in remote work. A standardized questionnaire designed for remote work was used to gather data, conditions,

physiological problems, psychological well-being, workspace characteristics, and coping strategies. The study included women aged between 22 and 50 years who have at least six months of experience working from home and regularly used computers or laptops for professional activities. Women not engaged in work-from-home arrangements, those working from home for less than six months, and individuals with pre-existing severe medical or psychological disorders were not included in the research. To evaluate the results, the gathered data were examined using suitable descriptive statistical techniques.

3.2 Data Collection Tool

A systematic questionnaire created by the researcher based on review of literature. The questionnaire consisted of the following sections:

1. Demographic Information comprised inquiries about family type, number of children, education, employment position, age, and marital status.
2. Work-From-Home Conditions which caters questions about, Duration of working from home; Availability of separate workspace; Privacy level
3. Physiological Problems which included questions related to Neck pain, Back pain, Eye strain, Headache, Fatigue, Sleep disturbances
4. Psychological Problems which included questions related to Stress, Anxiety, Depression, Irritability, Work-life imbalance
5. Work life Balance which includes questions related to overlapping work hours of professional life with personal life
6. Home workspace ergonomics which includes questions related to workspace conditions and ergonomics of furniture used while working, lighting and ventilation
7. Coping and Adaptation strategies which includes questions related to taking frequent

breaks and other strategies to reduce the stress.

Responses were measured using a Likert scale such as 3 pointer scale “Agree”, “Neutral”, “Disagree” and “Always”, “Sometimes”, “Never”

3.3 Data Collection Procedure

Women who work from home were given the questionnaire in order to gather data. Before any data was collected, the respondents were informed of the study's goal and given their consent. The respondents were assurances that their answers would be kept private and utilized exclusively for scholarly research.

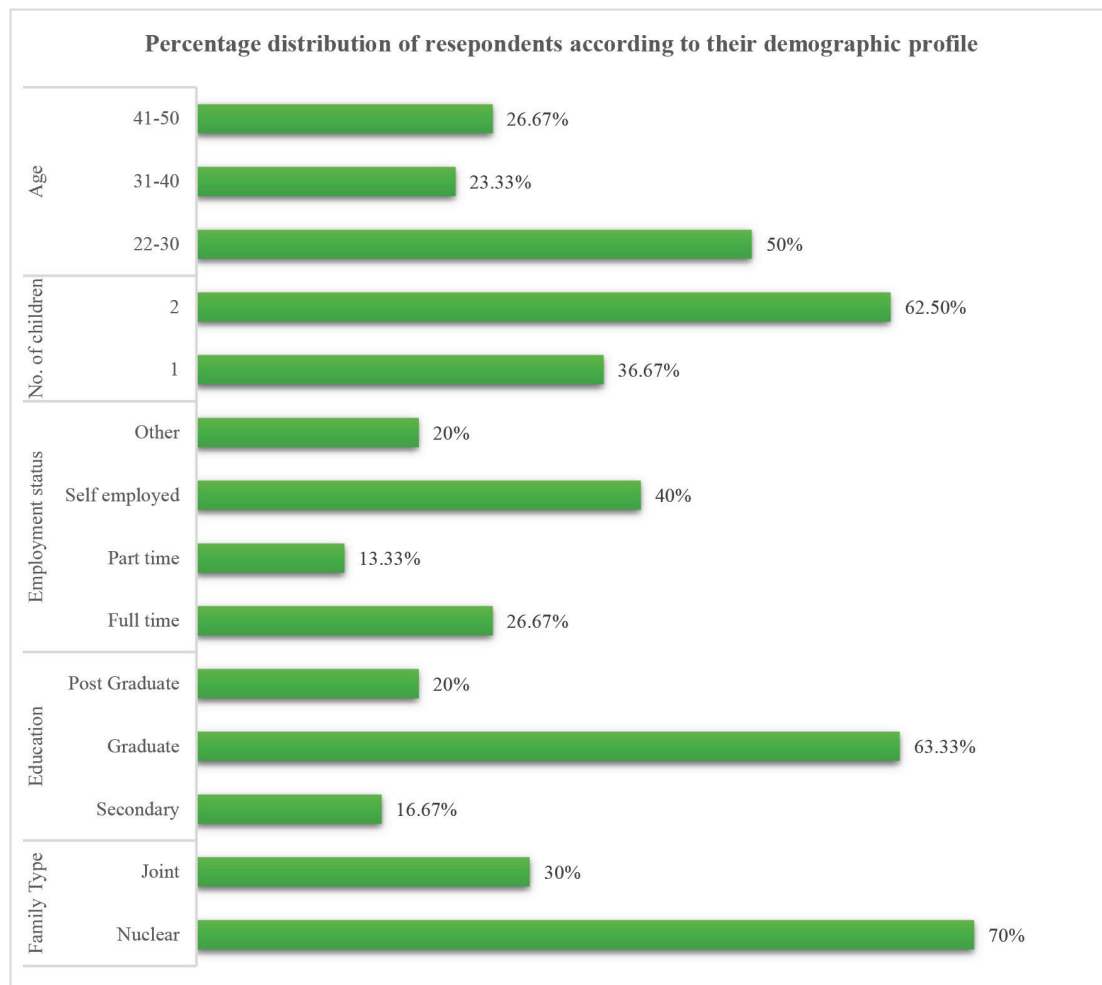
FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The following parts include the study's

findings: demographic profile, work-from-home conditions, physiological problems, psychological problems, work–life balance, workspace ergonomics, and coping strategies.

4.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

The results showed that half (50%) of the women who worked from home were between the ages of 22 and 30, while about one-fourth (26.67%) were aged between 40–50 years and nearly one-fourth (23.33%) were between 30–40 years. All participants (100%) were married. More than three-fifths (62.5%) had two children, whereas over one-third (36.67%) had one child. In terms of employment status, two-fifths (40%) were self-employed, followed by about one-fourth (26.67%) working full-time. Nearly two-thirds (63.33%) were graduates, and more than two-thirds (70%) belonged to nuclear families.



4.2 Extent of satisfaction among the respondents regarding their work from home conditions

Table 1: Extent of satisfaction among the respondents regarding their work from home conditions

Extent of Satisfaction	Range of Scores	(f)	(%)
Low extent of Satisfaction	10 - 16	12	10.0%
Medium extent of Satisfaction	17 - 23	28	23.33%
High extent of Satisfaction	24 - 30	80	66.67%

According to the results, almost two-thirds of the participants expressed a high degree of satisfaction with their remote work arrangements. 66.67% of respondents, or more than two thirds, have a high level of satisfaction. In contrast, only 10% of respondents had a poor level of satisfaction, while over one-fourth of respondents (23.33%)

indicated a medium level of pleasure. These findings imply that while a smaller percentage of women still report moderate to poor levels of satisfaction, the vast majority of women who work from home are content with their working conditions.

4.3 Extent of Physiological Problems among women working from home

Table 2: Extent of Physiological Problems among women working from home

Extent of Physiological Problems	Range of Scores	(f)	(%)
Low Extent of problems	10 - 16	8	6.67%
Medium extent of problems	17 - 23	52	43.33%
High extent of problems	24 - 30	60	50%

The results showed that individuals frequently experienced physiological issues. Less than half (43.33%) of the respondents fall under the medium level of physiological problems, and less than one tenth (6.67%) of the respondents

show low level of physiological problems. Fifty percent of the respondents reported high levels of physiological problems. These imply that most women experience physiological issues when working from home.

4.4 Extent of Psychological Problems among women working from home

Table 3: Extent of Psychological Problems among women working from home

Level of Extent of Psychological Problems	Range of Scores	(f)	(%)
Low Extent of problems	11 - 18	4	3.33%
Medium extent of problems	19 - 25	68	56.67%
High extent of problems	26 - 33	48	40%

The study found that women who work from home had significant psychological issues. While working from home, more than half (56.67%) of the respondents had medium-level psychological issues, less than half (40%) had high-level

psychological issues, and fewer than 10% had low-level psychological issues. This suggests that the majority of respondents had psychological issues when working from home.

4.5 Extent of satisfaction of work life balance among the women working from home

Table 4: Extent of satisfaction of work life balance among the women working from home

Extent of satisfaction	Range of Scores	(f)	(%)
Low extent of satisfaction	8 - 13	76	63.33%
Medium extent of satisfaction	14 - 18	32	26.67%
High extent of satisfaction	19 - 24	12	10%

The results show that among women who work from home, two thirds (63.33%) have low levels of satisfaction with juggling work and personal life, slightly more than one-fourth (26.67%) have medium levels of satisfaction, and one tenth (10%) have high levels of satisfaction.

4.6 Extent of comfort among the respondents regarding the ergonomics of the home work space

Table 5: Extent of comfort of the respondents regarding the ergonomics of their home work space

Extent of Comfort	Range of Scores	(f)	(%)
Low extent of comfort	8 - 13	4	3.33%
Medium extent of comfort	14 - 18	64	53.33%
High extent of comfort	19 - 24	52	43.33%

Regarding the ergonomics of the home workstation, the results revealed that slightly more than half (53.33%) of the respondents had a medium level of comfort, less than half (43.33%) had a high level of comfort, and very few had a low level of comfort. This suggests that the majority of women do not have a pleasant workspace at home.

4.7 Level of Coping and Adaptation Strategies adopted by Women Working from Home

Table 6: Level of Coping and Adaptation adopted by Women Working from Home

Level of Coping and Adaptation Strategies	Range of Scores	(f)	(%)
Low level of Coping and Adaptation Strategies	11 - 18	80	66.67%
Medium level of Coping and Adaptation Strategies	19 - 25	36	30%
High level of Coping and Adaptation Strategies	26 - 33	4	3.33%

The results show that, when working from home, more than two thirds (66.67%) of the respondents had low levels of coping and adaptation strategies, more than one fourth (30%) had medium levels, and less than one tenth (3.33%) had high levels.

To test the hypotheses formulated for the present investigation, as per the nature of variables coefficient of correlation were computed. For the purpose of statistical analysis, the hypotheses were formulated in null form. The results are presented in this section.

TESTING OF HYPOTHESES

HO1: There exists no relationship between the home workspace characteristics and the physiological and psychological wellbeing of respondents.

Table 7: Co-efficient of Correlation showing relationship between the home workspace characteristics and the physiological and psychological wellbeing of respondents.

Selected variables	n	R - Value	Level of significance
Home workspace characteristics	120	0.206	N.S.*
Physiological and psychological wellbeing of respondents.			
Note: N.S. * - Not Significance			

The findings showed that there is no relationship between the respondents' physiological and psychological wellbeing and the features of their home workstation. (Table 7). As a result, the null hypothesis was approved.

OUTCOME OF THE STUDY

The study emphasizes that although working from home offers convenience and flexibility, it also causes serious physiological and psychological problems for women. According to the research, most women suffer from physical health problems such as musculoskeletal discomfort, exhaustion, and eye strain as a result of extended workdays and unfavourable ergonomic settings. Because of the increased pressure and work-life imbalance, psychological issues like stress, worry, and mental tiredness are becoming very common. Women find it challenging to strike a balance between work and personal obligations, despite a high degree of satisfaction with work-from-home arrangements. Their general well-being is further deteriorated by unfavourable working conditions and a lack of coping mechanisms. According to the report, working from home offers freedom but also poses health and lifestyle issues.

A number of actions must be taken in order to enhance the wellbeing of women who work from home. Women should use comfortable furniture, keep good posture, and make sure their workstation has enough lighting and ventilation to promote optimum ergonomic arrangements. To preserve physical health, regular breaks, exercise, and less screen time

should be promoted. Stress-reduction strategies like meditation and relaxation techniques should be used for psychological well-being, and social engagement should be maintained to lessen feelings of loneliness. Work-life balance can be enhanced by setting clear boundaries between personal and professional life and adhering to set working hours. The pressure on women who work from home can also be considerably lessened by cooperation from family members in sharing household duties and help from employers in the form of flexible schedules and mental health programs.

CONCLUSION

According to the study's findings, most women who worked from home were young, married, educated, and juggling work and family obligations. Even while over two-thirds of the respondents expressed great pleasure with their work-from-home arrangements, a sizable portion also encountered difficulties linked to their health. High degrees of physiological issues, including pain, exhaustion, and discomfort, were reported by half of the respondents. In a similar vein, over half reported having moderate psychological issues, which suggests that stress, worry, and mental strain are present. About two-thirds of respondents expressed low satisfaction in juggling their personal and professional responsibilities, indicating that work-life balance was a significant worry. The majority of respondents reported just a modest level of comfort with workstation ergonomics, indicating unsatisfactory home work conditions.

Additionally, over two-thirds lacked adequate coping and adapting techniques. Overall, the results show that women who work from home confront significant physical, psychological, and work-life balance issues even though they are satisfied with flexibility.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The results of this study emphasize the significance of developing healthy and supportive work-from-home environments for women. The study emphasizes the need for ergonomically designed home workspaces with appropriate furniture, adequate lighting, ventilation, and proper posture arrangements to reduce physiological problems such as musculoskeletal discomfort, fatigue, and eye strain. The results also suggest that awareness regarding healthy work habits, including regular breaks, physical activity, and effective workspace organization, is essential for improving physical health and efficiency when working from home. The study further indicates the necessity of organizational and social support systems to help women maintain a balanced combining personal and professional obligations. Employers and institutions may encourage structured working hours, manageable workloads, and policies that promote work-life balance to reduce psychological stress and emotional exhaustion. The findings also provide useful insights for researchers, interior designers, and policymakers in formulating strategies, design guidelines, and actions designed to improve the general productivity and well-being of women working remotely.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

The following suggestions for further research are made in light of the study's limitations and findings:

- Similar larger sample sizes can be used in research.
- Comparative studies can be conducted between men and women.
- Studies can be conducted in different professions and regions.

- Longitudinal studies can be conducted to examine long-term effects.

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