



Working from Home vs Learning from Home: A Critical Investigation and Analysis during the COVID-19

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Author ASM designed the study, performed the statistical analysis, conducted the small-scale research, wrote the protocol and wrote the first draft of the manuscript. Author MSIS contributed on the analyses of the study and also assisted on the literature searches. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

The article aimed to make a critical investigation and analysis on working from home vs learning from home during the COVID-19. Small-scale research was conducted only targeting parents (having at least one school going child) to capture the view of how they deem the concept of working from home vs learning from home and whether there are any reservations among both concepts. The findings from the 36 respondents' feedback suggest that parents often prefer working from home (wherever possible) but the same parent does not want their child to learn from home. The research shows that most parents believe remote working leads to higher productivity and leads to cost-effectiveness and remote learnings deteriorate creativity.

Keywords: *Working from home; learning from home; work-life balance; quality of life; thinking paradox.*

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1. INTRODUCTION

The concept of working from home is slowly growing and heading of steam for workers of all ages. There was various research work done in this area which is not very promising considering the empirical evidence but still better than having nothing [1]. Over the past five years, evidence from the study shows that U.S. workers working remotely grew 44 percent to around 4.7 million, according to research by job board Flexjobs.com in partnership with Global Workplace Analytics. Gallup research also evidenced that around 43 percent of employees worked remotely in some capacity which was conducted before the COVID-19 epidemic. A similar study conducted by Condeco Software of global businesses surveyed that around 41 percent of the businesses already offered some degree of remote working and they also are predicting that around 73 percent of all teams will have remote workers by 2028 [2].

On the other hand, learning from home is considered as a very different, workable, and successful approach to learning that some parents are choosing for their children instead of school. Learning from home or homeschooling is simply the way of educating children by taking the opportunity of full responsibility for their children's education without sending them to school [3]. It uses resources from various sources and an open-ended and variable approach to learning that is proven to give children a broad and deep education, often quite different from that which many of them would receive in school. It generally develops children who are extremely motivated, self-confident, sociable, and intelligent, who have a wide variety of life skills,

and who successfully go on to higher education or into work [4].

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The article will focus on studying the human mind and human psychology literature to establish the relationship between thinking or to address if there is any differentiation in thinking considering the circumstances.

2.1 Freud's Model of Human Mind

The psychoanalytic theory and the study of human psychology is a long-standing concept which was gaining greater attention after the 90 developed Sigmund Freud's model of the human mind. The essence of the model was primarily evolving within the subject of psychopathologies and as a result of mental illness within a subject. In his model, he developed three main levels of awareness or consciousness [5]. The model is depicted with the illustration below which indicates the levels which are conscious, subconscious, and unconscious. It was also evidenced that these elements working together can create the true reality of our minds.

2.2 Conscious Mind

The word consciousness is best described as the event of awareness and being able to recall it to mind and recalling is the state of the human's mind of activities [6]. There is an estimation that only 10% of the mind's works are made up of conscious thought and the rest are the random events created by the mind. The conscious mind serves as a scanner and is based on the importance of the event it stores either in the unconscious or the subconscious area of the human mind.

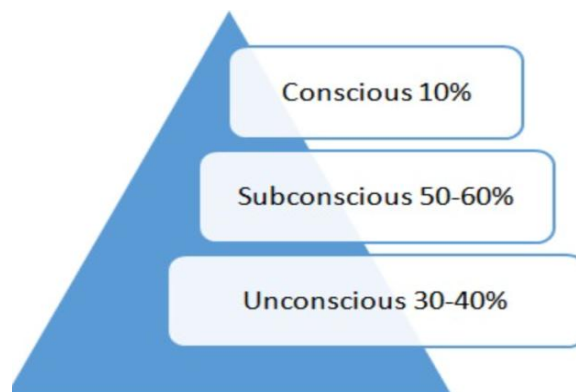


Fig. 1. Sigmund Freud's model of the human mind and usage

Source: Created by the author, 2020

2.3 Subconscious Mind

According to [5], the subconscious mind is the state of holding and the recent recall of any memories including thoughts, behaviour patterns, habits, and feelings. Freud stated, "*Thus the unconscious mind can be seen as the source of dreams and automatic thoughts (those that appear without any apparent cause), the repository of forgotten memories (that may still be accessible to consciousness later time), and the locus of implicit knowledge (the things that we have learned so well that we do them without thinking).*"

2.4 Unconscious Mind

The unconscious mind is the state of mind that primarily holds memories and past experiences. Some of these memories could have been developed through trauma designed as automatic thoughts [7]. The illustration above depicted the deeper involvement of behaviours and beliefs which sitting a layer deeper in the mind under the subconscious. It was evidenced that although the subconscious and unconscious are directly related with almost similar things, still unconscious mind is the cellar on compared to the others.

2.5 Personality Study and Theories

The study of social psychology, cognitive psychology, and individual psychology all reveal the endeavour of how we behave and how our behaviour circulates and is considered as the factor to success. Despite our similarities, it is hard to doubt that each of us on the planet is uniquely distinct in our thinking process. Personality psychology study is the only empirically tested measure to address and identify the human differences. Personality psychology is the only way that answers the most common questions for instance, why we differ from each other? How consistent these differences are? in what situation and along what dimensions do we differ in concepts and or perceptions? This concept and the developed theory were completely opposed by some experts who defined the situationism. The concept of situationism defines that the behaviour of a human differs not because of his/her personality traits but because they are the artifacts of various situations and the impact of human's own social, cultural, and environmental surroundings [8]. The study of human psychology

has a long-standing history and thus requires understanding the philosophical perspective. Plato (427-347 BCE) saw the human soul as the seat of personality. In his literature, he mentioned three basic forces that guide human behaviour which is: reason, emotion, and appetite. Among these three reasons has been given the highest value and ranking as Plato believed that reason keeps the more primitive forces of appetite and emotion at bay. Aristotle (384-322 BCE) referred to the seat of personality as the psyche and his explanation of psyche was the product of biological processes. He saw the psyche as including a set of faculties that he placed in a hierarchy of importance. He also mentioned that these faculties can also be found among plants and animals. On the other hand, Rene Descartes (1596-1650), a French philosopher explained human personality as the product of the interaction of divine and primal forces [9]. In his view, the essential force behind the personality is the immortal soul, which is perfect, pure, and intangible.

The current research was conducted to see if the variation on the decision choice and the personality characteristics are the product of the dual personality or not which is very much indicated from the study of *Cartesian Dualism*. The concept of Cartesian Dualism is the distinct philosophical stands of two substances which include: matter and spirit or brain and mind.

2.6 Working from Home (WfH)

The concept of working from home is a recent trend in international companies where they believe that it increases the healthy working life balance by allowing the flexible working hours to its employees. It was evidenced by various company examples that, companies having appropriate and high profiled technological advancement are greatly benefited from allowing its employees and have less constraint at work. The employees are having less stress, can save on traveling, and spent more quality time on family responsibilities. The concept also can be used in various other names which include, telework, telecommute, or flexible working these all are initiated to improve employee productivity and also attracted talented graduates to come and stay in the labour force. [10] stated that flexible working often applied to the ICT industries, but a recent study highlighted that academics are also given the option to take lessons online including open and distance education programs in the higher education institutions [11].

On the other hand, the most recent study conducted by the American Time Use Survey by the Bureau of Labour Statistics indicated that around 57% of employees are working under a flexible schedule, 29% of people are allowed to work from home and approximately 25% people often worked on a flexible working schedule [12]. Owl Labs researched in 2019 and the State of Remote Work report indicated that some employees are even ready to accept a pay cut to consider flexible working. According to the report, 34% of workers would be willing to take a 5% cut; 24% would take a 10% cut, and 20% would take a cut larger than 10%. The study also emphasized on the reason why peoples' are interested working from home despite the pay cut and study revealed that 91% believe working from home will increase their better work-life balance, 79% believes it will increase productivity by allowing better focus on tasks, 78% believe it reduced the stress and 78% agrees as it will allow them to avoid a commute to work [13].

2.7 Learning from Home (LfH)

Likewise, many other subjects' technological study and the use of technology has increased in recent days. Technology has entered into our life and especially in the life of education [14]. The increased number of students, technological development, new learning theories, and personal needs have led to the introduction of e-learning and vis-à-vis learning from home [15]. E-learning has recently been very popular (especially considering the COVID-19 situation and lockdown) and learning from home for the children as they stayed out from the school and did home learning to keep them educationally updated. Many schools in Britain have adopted online teaching using various technological tools to keep their pupils updated and ahead on the crowd [16]. Most of the higher educational institutions also considered delivering their regular programs online. While assessing the importance of home learning with the parents it was evidenced that parents agreed on flexible learning (often referred to as e-learning and home learning) because they think e-learning has made education effective, it has been considered as a motivation factor in terms of self-efficacy [17]. However, from the personal experience of teaching and learning, it was truly evident that there are a lot of differences between traditional and e-learning. In traditional learning, the teachers have full control of class management and the learning environment. In traditional learning, the teacher's ability,

personality, quality, adaptation, to the learning situation, and the creation of course materials affect the learning-teaching performance which is quite different in the online/e-learning situation [18].

3. METHODOLOGY

The research used a mixed method combining qualitative and quantitative research methods. Data was collected during the UK lockdown period May-June 2020 using 3 open-ended and 2 close-ended questions. The research aimed at very small-scale respondents selected carefully from the working colleagues in various industries, specially targeted parents (having at least one school going child). There were 5 questions relating to the concept of working from home and learning from home which was carefully designed to capture the feeling of parents about their professional job vs their own children's learning from home perceptions. A total of 36 responses were used in this current survey to analyze the findings. The online data collection platform Survey Monkey was used to collect the research data. Data were organized and analyzed using Microsoft Excel to formulate the tabulation and graphical presentation.

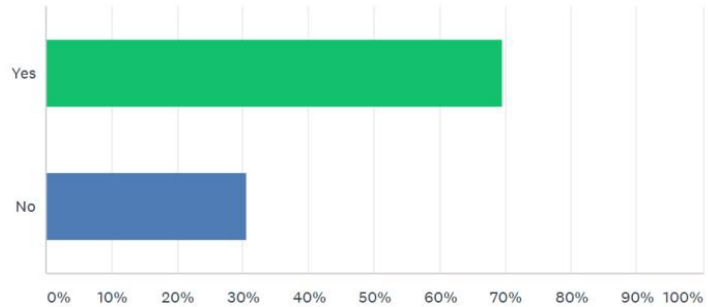
4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

There was a total of 36 responses collected where all the respondents were asked the same 5 questions. On the first question, the respondents were asked whether they prefer support working from home or not. All 36 respondents replied among which 69.44% of respondents said they do support working from home and 30.56% of respondents do not support working from home. While some respondents were asked whether they do support their children's learning from home or not. 48.57% of respondents agreed supporting learning from home for their children and 51.43% disagreed and do not support learning from home. However, 1 respondent has decided not to respond.

Analyzing the results of these two questions it is quite clear that parents prefer to work from home but when it comes to learning from home for their children, they do not feel comfortable. When asked about the professions of the respondents the research finds that equally 40% of the respondents are equally from the education and telecommunications industry, construction, advertising & marketing, and manufacturing and the healthcare sector also received equally 5.71% each.

Do you support Working from Home?

Answered: 36 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES

Yes

No

TOTAL

RESPONSES

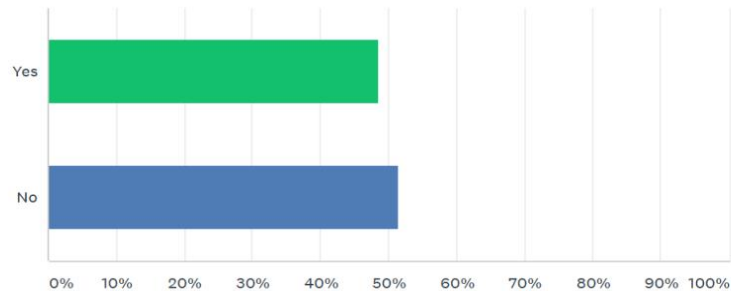
69.44%

30.56%

Fig. 2. Graphic presentation of working from home

Do you support Learning from Home for your child?

Answered: 35 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES

Yes

No

TOTAL

RESPONSES

48.57%

51.43%

Fig. 3. Graphic presentation learning from home

From the rest of the respondents, 8.57% was from transportation and the remaining 28.59% are from various sectors including agriculture, automotive, business support & logistics, food & beverages, and financial sectors. It can be deemed that, the higher the skill levels are for the professionals, their perception of learning from home might be considered as positive and vice-versa. When asked the reason

behind their choice most of the respondents referred to the COVID-19 pandemic as an excuse which is obvious and true to some extent following the UK government lockdown restrictions. However, many referred to the safety and security measures while others mentioned that, their children learn a better and more organized way in a homely environment.

5. CONCLUSION

The Dual Process Theory suggests that, while making decisions we often use two different thinking systems called intuition or gut feeling (automatic, emotional, and subconscious) and deliberate decision making applying various concepts, models, and environmental considerations (conscious) [19]. It is difficult to make any tested measure (there are no empirical tested results and findings so far) for the concept to draw a concrete and solid basis to accept that those who believe working from home increase productivity, the same personal belief learning from home reduces the quality of education. Analysis of the subconscious mind which deals with a great deal of data and works accurately in social dynamics where the conscious mind uses a lot of system thinking using facts and figs, logic, and abstractions. While attempting to analyze human thinking and decision making using the perceptual model the research finds that the process for decision makings is evidence of moral or ethical behaviour which [20] considered as intuitionism. In his research, he suggested that moral judgments are made predominately while others use rationalism. The authors also found the similarity from the data analysis that revealed that most of the respondents preferred model of working supports working from home when they believe distance learning impairs creativity.

CONSENT

As per international standard or university standard, participant's written consent has been collected and preserved by the author(s).

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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