



Assessing the impact of working from home on employee's productivity and work-life balance at National Gas Company (S.A.O.G) during COVID-19

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Abstract—This paper presents a brief study on the working from home during COVID-19, the research focuses to assess the impact of working from home on employee's productivity and work-life balance rate of employees within Gas organization. For the observed analysis researcher select National Gas Company. The earlier research about this subject has concentrated about work from home very positive aspect of work style, it has been workable because of the latest technologies have being easily presented. The research aim was to examine fully of employees' experiences while work from home and how they felt their productivity and work-life balance rate were influenced. A qualitative and quantitative research methodology was used in this research. This methodology employed to collect employees' thoughts and familiarity to see if any trends emerged in relation to their productivity work-life balance rate during work from home. Also, employees defining that working from home makes higher difference on their productivity and work-life balance. Overall, it was observed that high rate of positivity containing working from home as well as how this impacts positively on employee productivity and work-life balance rate, which may have positive influence on employee wellbeing and work life balance and employment satisfaction. Additionally, to this weather employees are more motivated and work to a high norm than this is possible to also have a positive impact on organization rank in terms of retaining staff and done more. The study targeted on 80 employees out of the 200 employees from population of the study by responding to a questionnaire as a primary tool in data collection. After processing the data with the statistical analysis application (JASP 0.14.1.0, Excel), the outcome of the study showed that there is a relationship between the use of work from home and employees' productivity and work-life balance. Also, the impact of technology. In addition, NGC Company seeks to have work from home policy to gain productive human resources and achieve a competitive advantage in the business. The findings recommend that work from a home associated information technology and Labour law within the company is necessary to keep pace with the rapid technological, as for technical security. [4]

Keywords— *Work from Home, Covid-19, Productivity, Work-Life balance, Impact, NGC, and National Gas Company.*

I. INTRODUCTION

All organizations currently changed the office working hours, reducing the number of office employees to be 30% then to 70% as per Sultanate of Oman supreme committee instruction to minimize the COVID-19 cases and maintain social distancing. Most of the organizations in Sultanate of Oman have no working from home policy and procedures to follow. Therefore, this decision impacts employee's productivity and work-life balance. It may have a positive or negative influence on office employees as per (Ministry of Health,2020) the COVID-19 pandemic in Oman is a part of the global pandemic of coronavirus ailment 2019 (COVID-19) due to extreme acute breathing syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The virus has reached Oman on 24 February 2020 while people tested for COVID-19 after returning to Oman from different countries. COVID-19 pandemic has affected the worldwide economy. Also, the office employees work routine. The office employee's productivity and work-life balance have been a great challenge for employees and employer because some of the employees they cannot work remotely or from home which may negatively it will affect their productivity and life balance especially during this period for examples schools and some other organization who shifted to work from home. National Gas Company (S.A.O.G) has faced many challenges during this period to shift office employees to work from home. NGC with high efficiency worked to reduce the Sultanate of Oman supreme committee and world health organization decisions on employee's productivity and life balance. It has created COVID-19 team to guide and help reduce unwanted impacts., the study focused on the impact of working from home on employees productivity and work-life balance. The problem lies in the type of work from home impact either positive or negative , suddenly office routine change due to COVID-19 and stat working from home,also to assess the employees productivity and work-life balance and the technical systems required to perform the work . The study started by discussing the

academic literature on work from home and the different factors influencing work from home and employees work and personal life .

II. IMPORTANCE OF RESEARCH

The availability of information technology helps companies to adopt work from home style and implement related policy aligned with Labour Law. This allow to increase the performance rate of the company , achieving the advantage, efficiency and how can they do good. Futhuremore, the reason for seleting and highlighting this mattre is the companies should think about work from home style to confirme that there is postivt impact in both employer and employees. Work from home policy or style will allow to ratain good employees and incarse company production. working from home is a modern trend which provides the employee flexibility in where and whene, to complete the work tasks as well as continuous innovation and high performing. NGC was chosen to examine the research because of less studies and parcaties of work from home and it impact on employees productivity is unfamiliar in oil and gas segment. Since oil and gas industries are large funders to national economies, impact on productivity reflects on the economy.

- The study hypotheses
- The availability of IT and other communications channels allow to work from home and found new work environment associated with work such as productivity and balancing between work and personal life.
- The impact type during this period on employee's productivity and work-life balance according to: Gender, age group and educational qualification.
- NGC Company try to adopt work from home style and introduce work from home policies. Also, apply the available technology and attract good candidates and achieve a competitive advantage in the business.

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Employees are the important asset of any company and its the main ingredient for company success, as it concentrates on the people factor which is the common worthy resource and the influencing productivity in all time. it's mean that employees management is a foundation of many companies as it intends to increase company abilities and empower companies to bring and qualify the necessary competencies to be in a place to cope with existing and future challenges. Depending on the effectiveness, abilities, and expertise of those employees, and their passion for work, they will be empowering the company to succeed in accomplishing its goals. [2]

Hence, companies management and experts have constructed in setting systems and frameworks that assist to make the greatest of every employee in the company within employees management. Those structures begin from hiring, preparation, development, production management and performance, and all things related to the employee element. De, M. Faber, H, R., Hamersma, M. (2020), described Employee management as a strategic method to direct employment scheme in a business with improving the abilities of its employees and avail from them to perform

competitive advantages; all these through a differentiated group of mixed work policies, practices, and plans. [2]

Employee productivity (usually referred to as workforce productivity) evaluates an employee's efficiency or employees' group. Productivity may be assessed in terms of the production of an employee at a particular time. Employee productivity is a significant consideration for companies. As per Rouse (2015), The reason for organizational success relies on employee's productivity. Companies try to find different methods to develop and keep the best employees by introducing a different policy type in the current situation.

In terms of work-life balance is all about prioritizing personal and office work activities in personal life and the level to which activities linked to their job are present the home. It is also a significant aspect of a healthy work environment and manages work-life balance benefits to decrease work stress and stop burnout in the workplace.

Therefore, Work-life balance the main key to having a successful business and supports high competitiveness levels to run into the business work from home positively on employees' work/life balance.

IV. LITERATURE REVIEW

- Impact on Employees Productivity and work-Life balance

The initial studies on impact of work from home on employee productivity and work-life balance thought was to verify in on employee's health constantly, then he noticed that the productivity rises, and employees began completing their tasks /projects ahead as per the deadline. However, many recent articles by the researcher like Hafermalz (2020) discussed how past study has proposed that employees working from home are observed to become so active and more beneficial than co-located as a full-time. Much research conducted the previously outlined that production while work from home is improved and increased than work in office. However, working from home has different factors impact on the employee's productivity in past years the employees were and unable to focus and work from home but recently working from home begin needs and required in this period. Reference to National Gas employees they are agreed on the new work style which allows them to spend more time with their families and finish their work along with that the work product was high. According to the research done by Turcotte (2010), work/life balance was highly positive for employees who worked at home in Canada. Nevertheless, this research also discussed that workers who worked at home for more than 10 hours weekly were dissatisfied with their work/life balance. The statistics done for this research pointed that 17% of employees were delighted with work from home, 14% of employees were satisfied with working from home and 12% of employees who were dissatisfied with working from home. Reference to this study, it is noticed that employees has spent too much time with their families because of work from home option, and this was having a positive influence on their job satisfaction and work productivity. Also, work from home can have a positive impact and a negative influence on employees' work-life balance. In this case, employees who are willing to work from home should

control and separate their work and life responsibilities. work. [3] [10]

- Benefit of Working from Home

Senz (2019) notes the benefits of working from home scheduling option as follows: living free and sleep in and work late, starting and ending early, working forty hours in four days instead of five or six days a week, scheduling private appointments (e.g., physician, dentist, hairdresser) during office work hours and performing the work later in the evening without using vacation days. Also, working from home for the employees saves time driving to the office, avoiding rush-hour traffic. Additionally, that employees will have extra free time to be with their family members by not driving. There is also a financial advantage from various features for the employees working from home. They can save money by not spend with the drive to the office such as savings in fuel and vehicle maintenance, expenses for parking or other transport". Employees can also save money by reducing expenses of proper office clothing and food. Another financial benefit they have is decreased expense of getting "babysitting and others. Also, do not pay any extra expense for programs after school.[7]

The authors have interviewed worker who worked from home. One participant commented on how the company keeps and retain their employee because it offered them work from home option. Also, He concludes that organizations such as Ctrip can reduce the cost by enabling employees to work from home to save more area in the office, and less money would require to be spent on office furniture. In this specific organization, it was approximate cost \$1,900 and saved 22 per employee within 9-month time, which could be noticed that a huge saving for the organization. [7]

The paper by These studies identifies various benefits of working from home options; it will reduce the driving rush and stress to reach office. It will also reduce employees' expense, and they will spend more time with their families than work from the office, which is also benefiting the new mothers. Who has disabled children a this is the overall understanding of the benefits related to working from home? However, some factors were not clearly explained: the diversity among competitors and control of finances related to work from home. Also, discussed the advantage of working from home for an organization like financially is benefited organization saved their expenses by reducing the buying cost. The employees were happy to work from home and be with their families, reflecting on their productivity and work-life balance. Additionally, some organizations cannot adopt this type of working style because of their business strategy (services companies). [7]

- Research gap

Earlier research was generally fragmented and concentrated on Call Centre's activities where work from home may be integrated. Work from home in other industries, like oil and gas, are less researched, and the influence of such arrangements on worker productivity is unidentified. Considering oil and gas industries are important contributors to state economies worldwide; the influence on productivity reflects the economy. As an outcome, there is a necessity to present this gap in research and help to the increasing collection of information on work from home by

verifying evidence over the surrounding information. besides, in growing countries like Oman, the systemization of processes is only in the improvement stage and must be supported with study to move forward and be sustainable. This study proposes to address these problems.

V. METHODOLOGY

A descriptive methodology has followed in this research that the phases for applying the descriptive method are encapsulated as follows: determining and explaining the issue, expressing aims and hypothesizes, defining the data and information that should be gathered, collecting data from various sources and employing the approaches that have been recognized, preparing data and information with explaining and describing it, forming results and conclusions, and promoting relevant recommendations. Here, a questionnaire has been adopted which is the type of research that all targeted of the research population or a sample of them are questioned to move to the next phase and describe the phenomenon studied. So, the Quantitative research method has used through conducting questionnaires for the targeted employees at (NGC) as well as the Qualitative research method has been used through conducting semi-structured interviews with a HR manager from NGC Company. Additionally, research has depended on some earlier research paper -literature reviews-, E-books, and websites. [1] [7]

VI. FINDINGS

- Main findings of the research
- The general Mean for the positive impact of working from home tends to Strongly agree by $<.001$ as positive signal of working from home impact on employees.
- The high rate for all questions of the productivity and work-life balance part is strongly agreed. It is clear throughout the participates answers that all of them strongly agreed and agreed on the current work style when working from home and feel comfortable when working on their home outside their offices, as well they are mastering their work and giving interest to details in their work tasks. If there is excellent productivity and healthy work-life balance, this leads sustainable high productivity of the employees. Also, it is evident that employees are willing to make more efforts to help the company succeed and applying work from home even after COVID-19 and they disagreed on no clear policies and work culture employed in the company about work from home which leads to achieving the goals. The higher the performance, the more it shows the employees are comfort and like to work outside the office place. Moreover, this generates functional loyalty to them and hence leads to high productivity.
- The usage of NGC systems and the technical readiness part tends to strongly agree by 75% as a positive of technical readiness. It is apparent from the answers that mean that employees accept the technical readiness and their ability to use the system smoothly and easily, as well as the availability of technical support from NGC IT Department.
- There is a strong positive relationship among IT and productivity to perform the work from home.

- It is a clear indicates that men employees can work from home and balance between office at home, unlike singles. Also, the females were unstable performing Because new mothers and mothers with disabled children may be busy with their children., moreover employees with bachelor and master's degrees were more performing and dedicated to work, which may signify that education level and knowledge are able to handle IT smoothly and work easily from home., unlike the least knowledgeable. Employees with more than 5 years of work experience were more productive and able to complete the tasks, and this confirmed that the experience is necessary to work from home, on other hand employees with less experience may it will be difficult for them to work from home because they will be required help from their colleagues and supervisors.

The outcomes of the research proved that there is a relationship among the work from home, high productivity, and stable work-life balance of employees. Also, IT is playing an important role while adopting work from home systems. This verifies that National Gas Company realizes this important to enhance and evolve the work from home policy. Furthermore, there is a difference in the influence of IT, the productivity and work-life balance of employees at NGC to the of demographic variables of participants the high productivity that has nothing to do with the length of the service. In addition, NGC Company attempts to select work from home methods by employing the IT optimally to get productive employees and perform a competitive advantage in the business environment. The findings recommend that introduce the work from home policy and practice this style after COVID-19 within the National Gas Company as an important to upgrade the IT-related the system of working from home may represent a solution for many employees especially females, however, in 2021 the CEO of National Gas Company has called the HR team and the legal department to draft work from home policy to get board of directors' approval to adopt work from home after this period. This meeting aims to add working from home methods, forming a work-life balance, and enhancing Also, working from home build trust and comfort for both employer and employee by creating this type of work and change the routine culture. however, when an employee feels that he is trusted to work remotely or from home, it enhances the motivation and productivity level. Also, working from home are providing best flexibility, work-life balance, decreasing driving time and utilizing the extra hours for additional work. [1]

VII. CONCLUSION

IT is the key factor of working from home and employee high productivity and positive work-life balance. It became essential element of company objective to achieve success and continued existence in a competitive market. Align to several technical improvements, techniques that impact business pursuits have also developed. Many companies noticed the need of employee care and development as an investment for bigger productivity and production of company. The good workforce led to better competitive advantage a organization can evolve has occurred in a

movement towards employee supervision practices in recent decades. A part of this is to realize employee demands and promote business methods that are beneficial both to the employee and the company like work from home scheme. COVID-19 was a reason for the emergence of work from home as a practice. NGC is one of Oil and Gas companies have implemented the work from home style has been assessed in this research. Throughout this research it became clearer to us about the impact of work from home on employee productivity and work-life balance and the effect of information technology in implementing this work culture. The hypothesis verified that work could be achieved from a different place not necessary from the workplace and stay for eight to five in one place front the desk to complete the work. Nowadays, we must be more realistic by measuring the real result/output of employee, how the policy places trust on employees which in turn creates obligation towards work. The research aims were achieved. National Gas Company was chosen to examine the research because fewer studies about the work from the home impact of such systems on employee's productivity are unclear in the oil and gas private sector. As oil and gas businesses are important grants to national economies, productivity and work-life balance reflect the economy.

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concluded some recommendations which are as follows:

- The HR department, top management and legal department need to ensure and maintain work from home policy, and it should be aligning with the ministry of labour and Labour Law.
- Introduce working from home into more business areas. There is a high level of positivity linked to this working style.
- The managers should conduct routine meetings and follow up to check the effect that this has had on employee connections and workload.
- As for the existing crisis of COVID-19, I recommend that for future emergency work plan: Introducing the basics of work from home and the current for new joiner.
- Should evaluate the facilities to ensure that they have the proper facilities to allow employees to work from home. Technology is a primary factor for working from home. Also, certify that the IT infrastructure helps the work from home and implemented with safe network connections.
- NGC must adopt work from home as work style after the positive impact and upgrade the IT security.
- The need to benefit from the other local companies experiences of work from home style, as well as benefit from the experiences of other countries where NGC office located and in same business field.
- Need to conduct training session for new employee to increase the skills and proficiency to deal with information technology.
- Limit rights of access for jobs linked to the corporate network.

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