

An Analysis of the Health and Wellbeing of Workers at Home and Organisation Based Working with Particular Reference to Emotional Intelligence

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**An Analysis of the Health and Wellbeing of Workers at Home and
Organisation Based Working with Particular Reference to Emotional
Intelligence**

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DECLARATION

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree

Signed.....*Mali*.....

Date...13/06/2024.....

I hereby give consent for my dissertation, if accepted, to be available on the university's IT system to those who have consent to use the system.

Signed.....*Mali*.....

Date.....13/06/2024.....

Dissertation submitted as part of the requirements for the award BA (Hons) Developing Leadership and Management

Abstract

The dissertation researches the mental impact of those who worked in an organised based setting and home workers during the Covid pandemic. The research focus is placed on how the pandemic has shifted working conditions and how leadership had intervened during and post pandemic.

These objectives help focus the study which was conducted via secondary and primary research. Quantitative data was obtained through questionnaires and subsequent interviews. The convenience method was administered via social media to reach the audience for the questionnaire.

The results produced from analysis determined that there were direct links of the Covid pandemic with workers' mental health. There were also patterns arising from a great shift into remote working in the future with management seeking emotional intelligence as suitable measure to sustain a productive homeworking environment where workers mental health conditions would be a minimal problem.

There are many benefits to homeworking and the trajectory has indicated that many do opt in working from home however there has to be a good balance where work and home life are not to be blurred.

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Aims

The question to be investigated in the study is to compare the health and wellbeing of the workers in organised based working and homeworking around the period of the Covid-19 pandemic with reference to emotional intelligence and its link to employees' ability to cope with changes. There will also be discussions on emotional intelligent leadership and its benefit in recognising the change in behaviours of employees. The rationale behind the study is to critically evaluate the wellbeing conditions of employees during Covid and if and how the pandemic changed the dynamic of wellbeing. There will be an investigation on initiatives taken by organisations and managers to address and elevate work related health problems and has these challenges been addressed due to the increase of homeworking.

1.2 Objectives

The objectives to be included in the dissertation are:

- Compare approaches to home and organisation-based working before, during and after the Covid pandemic
- Using secondary and primary research to discuss the support given to the health and wellbeing of employees because of the Covid 19 pandemic
- Using secondary and primary research to critically assess the use and benefits of emotional intelligence for employees to cope with changes
- Provide recommendations on best practices on the use of emotional intelligence and support for home workers post-Covid-19 pandemic.

1.3 Background

According to the World Health Organisation (2024) mental health is described as a state of mental wellbeing that allows people to cope with the stresses of life and realise their abilities, learn and work well. Mental health is an interconnected component of health and wellness that underpins peoples' individual and collective abilities to build relationships and make decisions. It is a basic human right and it is vital to the personal, community and socio-economic development. There are detrimental factors that can contribute to mental health such as unfavourable exposure to economic, social, geopolitical and environmental circumstances. This can include inequality and environmental deprivation.

According to the Mental Health Foundation (2023) for many, work plays a significant role in people's lives, and it is where most of their time is spent earning an income and even making friends. A job which is fulfilling can enrich wellbeing and mental health. However, job related routines such as travel, or deadlines can affect other personal circumstances. Those of whom have had mental health issues at work has added a value to the economy to the sum of £225bn each year. This mounts to 12.1% of UK's total GDP. It is vital to address mental health issues at work to combat a corrosive environment and protect that value. Kornhauser (1965) found that poor mental health was directly linked to unfavourable working conditions, the necessity of having to work fast, the excessive working hours and placing a lot of physical effort. Similarly, Marcson (1970) and Shepard (1971) found that physical health is also adversely affected by dehumanising environments. This suggests that health and wellbeing conditions have been prevalent and a concern historically in working environments.

Work-related stress, anxiety or depression is defined as a harmful reaction individuals have due to pressures and demands placed upon them at work (The Society of Occupational Medicine, 2021).

According to the NHS (2024) many workers have had to adjust working arrangements since the Covid pandemic in 2020. It has become more common to work from home remotely or split working hours between the office and home (hybrid working). Some have only entered the workforce for the first time and have not experienced an office-based job role. Working from home can have many perks and benefits such as not having to commute but changes like this can impact mental health. Factors such as a lack of motivation and juggling work with family life can become stressful. It is advised to keep to a routine and not blur the line between work and personal time so scheduling the day and remaining consistent is key to a balance. It is also advisable to set boundaries at home with those you live with while working, distractions at home from children can prove difficult so it is best to discuss needs at home and emphasis when working hours are scheduled not be distracted (NHS, 2024). Similarly, the same ethic should be placed with work and logging off from a working day can break the cycle and make family time more enjoyable. Though remote working has been touted as a much-welcomed solution of a fast-paced pre pandemic lifestyle as it allowed for time to be spent on hobbies and families for many, new research has produced mixed results. Microsoft's 2022 New Future of Work Report (2022) found that though remote working can improve job satisfaction it can also cause remote workers feeling isolated socially and the elimination of physical boundaries has led employees to always having a sense of 'always being on'. Research suggests that remote workers are working longer hours and data suggests 80% of UK workers feel remote working has negatively impacted mental health, a complicated emerging picture of the wellbeing of remote working. A survey found that 81% of under 35s feared the associated loneliness from long term remote working and studies have showed the high levels of anxiety and stress amongst the younger workers especially of those who have just entered the workspace (BBC, 2022).

Emotional competence is defined as a learned capability based on emotional intelligence that produces outstanding results in the workplace (Goleman, 1998). However, possessing emotional competence such as social awareness or skills in managing relationships does not guarantee that they have mastered the additional learning that is required to resolve problems, it is that they have the potential to become skilled at the competence. Emotional competence such as job skills must be learned and an underlying emotional intelligence ability though not sufficient to manifest into competence is deemed necessary (Cherniss and Goleman, 2021). Emotional intelligence is defined as an underlying characteristic an individual is related to be effective or superior in their job role (Boyatzis, 1982). People who are not ready for change are viewing the cost of change such as effort, time and any potential embarrassment as a greater factor than the benefits (Prochaska, 1999). The intervention strategies for people who are at the contemplating phase requires realistic assessments of the benefits and cost of change. A vital strategy is education that the learner provides in the form of information and data in emotional intelligent competencies can aid in achieving greater satisfaction at work and in their life in general for the future (Cherniss and Goleman, 2021).

The study will also carry out primary and secondary research to underpin its findings. The literature that are to be included as part of the research are books, websites, journals, and articles which provide information on employee-based wellbeing and the benefits and drawbacks of practices or the lack of. The primary research conducted will be using a survey

via an online questionnaire to gather data. Some respondents will be further interviewed to get in-depth feedback on experiences.

The chapters in the study will be as follows:

- Literature review- the literature review will be relevant to the study's aims and objectives
- Research methodology- how the research will be undertaken
- Data analysis and discussion – findings on the data collected and analysed including graphs/tables
- Conclusion and recommendations – conclusion to the study and offer recommendations.

2.0 Review of Key Literature

2.1 Pre-Covid Work Trends

According to UK Parliament (2022) trending data indicated that before the pandemic hybrid and remote workers were increasing gradually and between January-December 2019, about 1 in 10 which equates to 12% of the UK workforce had worked at least one day from home in the previous week and 5% (1 in 20) reported to mainly working from home. Of course, this had increased during Covid hitting a peak of around 49% working at least one day from June 2020 and 38% worked exclusively from home. When the restrictions had been lifted these figures had decreased but still remain higher than pre-pandemics figures of around 13% working from home exclusively. There is variation in the overall working employees in remote and flexible working and hybrid working. The variation is seen across by industry, role, employment type, age, gender, ethnicity, sector, caring responsibilities, disability and region. Most of these factors are interconnected, pre-pandemic and post lockdown data indicated that across all types of flexible working arrangements, the public sector reported to higher levels of flexibility in comparison to the private sector. The public sector however were more likely to work flexitime or part time than work remotely compared to the private sector and the self-employed were more likely to sometimes or always work from home before Covid. There are also significant differences between industries with those in information and communication, administrative industries and professional were more likely to work from home compared to workers in service occupations and skilled trades. The differences have become more prominent during Covid.

It has been stated (The Home Office Life, 2024) prior to 2020 working from home was the exception and a modern phenomenon. Going back to 1981 only 1.5% were working from home and by 2019 this tripled to 4.7% (Wales Institute of Social and Economic Research and Data, 2020). Before the pandemic employees were in the office on average of 3.8 days a week (BBC, 2022).

2.2 Working During Covid and Effects on Health

According to Future Care Capital (2023) a report from the Centre of Social Justice found the lockdown during Covid had a detrimental effect socially in the UK resulting in catastrophic mental health including increase in domestic abuse and a rise in addictions. The report conducted states that the UK were in danger of forming divisions and widening the gap between mainstream and the worse off. Some were getting by and then there were those who were not and for the latter were facing poverty and working was not worth it as lives were met with family breakdown, most were sick, living quality was poor, and expensive (The Centre of Social Justice, 2023). The analysis concluded that 40% of those in the most deprived reported to having mental health conditions in comparison to 13% of the mainstream population. The number of people who were inactive economically due to long term sickness has risen passed 2.6m which is an increase of almost half a million since the pandemic and 53% of this figure had signed off reporting anxiety, bad nerves and depression (ONS, 2023).

A survey conducted by the Royal Society for Public Health (2021) revealed health impacts of homeworking during the pandemic. And as working from home is set to be the new norm for millions of the UK workforce research indicated that there are key disparities in health and wellbeing between people who had changed to homeworking due to the pandemic. The poll resulted that overall, 45% of respondents felt that working from home was better for their health compared to around 29% of respondents who felt worse for their health and wellbeing working from home. Of those working from home (67%) felt less connected to their

colleagues, 39% developed musculoskeletal issues while 37% were exercising less and 37% reported of having disturbed sleep. 26% of homeworkers were doing work from either a sofa or a bedroom and 48% of those had developed musculoskeletal issues. The findings of the survey also suggested that most people did not want to go back into the office full time with 74% of workers wanting to split their working hours between home and office. However, employers need to address the health and wellbeing issues that are affecting home workers severely, and so the Royal Society for Public Health are calling for employers to ensure that all staff have access to mental health services to support and help cope with anxiety and increased isolation. Another suggestion is for all employees to have access to remote assessment and equipment to support with their physical health and for organisations to foster a culture which encourages its employees to separate home life and work while remote working encouraging workers to block work communications out of working hours.

2.3 Employer, Leader and Organisational Initiatives

BBC (2022) stated that Friday is the UK'S most popular day for remote working with only 13% of employees working from the office. There are employers who have offered flexible working to attract and retain staff due to staff shortages. Some people have opted to home working due to the rise of cost of living which allowed the cut back of transport and lunch costs. A co-director of a marketing agency in Wales, Gareth Waters offered his staff a chance to work from home on Fridays to aid saving money. He stated that some employees were commuting on average 40 miles a day and this approach would have an instant financial impact. He went on to say that this move had no detrimental effect on the daily running of the business. The benefits of supporting employees' mental health can lead to:

- A reduced turnover, absenteeism and injuries
- An increase in productivity and improvement in work performance
- An improvement in mental health which benefits overall health
- An enhanced retention, recruitment and reputation.

Dealing with employees' Covid related concerns in the workplace such as distress and feeling worried is understandable during the pandemic and the situation was rapidly changing and the future was uncertain. Most common fears and concerns related to catching the virus during commute, poor work-life balance, changes in work roles and practices, bringing the virus into home infecting family, the social isolation working from home brings and the lack of sense of control. How employers deal with these factors has a significant impact on the productivity and wellbeing of workers now and in the future.

A CIPD report (2020) found that one concern was that almost one third of respondents reported that their employer or line manager had not checked in on their health or wellbeing since the onset of the pandemic.

NHS England (2024) state that through the onset of the pandemic to date, both individuals and teams have contributed a huge amount to support each other by regular check-ins and allowing space for colleagues to rest. Nationally NHS England and NHS Improvement offered all staff with:

- Free access to wellbeing and mental health apps
- Specialised bereavement support
- Dedicated health and care staff support service which included confidential support via texting and phone
- Webinar series providing a forum for conversation experts and support.

In addition, the organisation has also developed guidance for NHS line managers to further support and lead teams during the pandemic. These include online resources and tool kits on maintaining individual resilience, managing stress and compassionate leadership in a crisis including caring conversations about emotional wellbeing and mental health. NHS England state that these interventions have aided in staff feeling more supported and valued. The health and safety of the staff is paramount and in the early stages of the pandemic very little was known, and NHS now must continue efforts to keep employees safe. Main key focus is placed on the following areas:

- **Rest and respite:** NHS employers need to ensure that staff have sufficient breaks and rest from work and encourage annual leave
- **Home working support:** NHS employers should ensure those working from home can do safely and are supported with suitable equipment if needed
- **Support for staff during sickness:** NHS Employers should identify and proactively support staff when they are off sick and support in any way for their return to work. NHS England have improved occupational health services in line with SEQOHS (2024) to ensure that employees are supported to stay well and in work.
- **Physically healthy workplace:** Employers should ensure the workplace offers adequate opportunity to be physically active throughout the working day especially if the role is more stationary.

2.4 Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace

Emotional intelligence in the workplace has always played an important part in the workplace but through the turbulence of the pandemic which affected the world, interest in learning about emotional intelligence has never been so greater. Many people were not 'passing the test' when it came to emotional intelligence as they were 'phobic' in talking about feelings especially at work where there is a preconception that emotions are to be left at the door. A dominant emotion facing people currently is anxiety. So many people around the globe are stressed due to the pandemic with the second majority in the UK (America being place as the first). A survey conducted by Yale found that globally 5,000 people used the word "fearful", "worried", "overwhelmed" and "anxious" in the early stages of the pandemic to describe their feelings.

Increased levels of stresses at work are often diminished through satisfying interpersonal exchanges such as engaging in meetings or having coffee at work or meeting with colleagues for after work drinks. Due to remote working environments and social distancing these vital experiences were missed. Communications via emails, messaging and video conferencing people are not always able to read someone's empathetic responses and so isolation can be intensified. Though there has been a surge interest in emotional intelligence there are many uncertainties on how it can be applied to relationships at work.

2.5 Emotional Intelligence Approaches and Concepts for the Workplace

Indeed (2020) states that emotional intelligence is important especially for leaders and HR professionals to develop emotional intelligence as a skill in the workplace. To fully appreciate the use and benefits of emotional intelligence to cope with change Indeed recommend the following:

- **Understanding what emotional intelligence is:** once you are emotionally intelligent, emotional triggers can be easily identified allowing for better alignment to values to actions and moreover, the individual can then begin to identify emotional

triggers and values of others which will improve relationships in the workplace and overall performance whether it be leading a team or collaborating with colleagues

- **Identifying values:** values are important ideals or beliefs about what is desirable and undesirable. Examples of a person's value can include respect, competency, kindness, teamwork and responsibility and values can strongly influence ones' behaviours and attitude in most situations. Values shape decisions, interact successfully with others and determine priorities. If values guide one's life, they are effectively happy however, if value is challenged or compromised there is a risk to the emotional intelligent competencies
- **Developing self-management strategies:** once self-awareness is identified the next stage is to try and manage emotions in a positive way. To achieve this, think on a previous emotional workplace trigger, was the reaction anger which was later regretted? Was the reaction physical such as a racing heart? Self-awareness is connected to important values and self-management is connected to developing a range of productive and thoughtful reactions when values are challenged. The goal is to react positively to negative triggers.

These steps can aid in self-management:

- Taking deep breaths
- Devise logical next steps to resolve conflicts at work
- Take time out to get control of the emotions before responding
- Practice mindfulness.

2.6 Post- Covid and Remote Working

In today's digital age, remote working has become increasingly dominating as it offers such benefits as work life balance and flexibility. On the contrary it does come with challenges mainly maintaining and connecting effectively with remote colleagues (LinkedIn, 2023). According to Finkbeiner (2023) staggering results in mental health rise accumulation has led leadership teams to see the bleak impact of the statistics are having on the workplace. Most managers are at the forefront of the mental health pandemic intertwining with the Covid pandemic. Working environments has exposed workers to social, cognitive and financial pressures to preexisting wellness concerns such as burnout, depression and anxiety. Though opting to work remotely is regarded as the gold standard to employee flexibility, the pandemic rule of remaining home has led the optional remote working null and void for most. Many workers are facing the new imminent challenges from operating within the home such as social support and family needs. Furthermore, there are many businesses where working from home is not a suitable option and has resulted in many employees leaving current job roles for a more remote friendly organisation. With the current fast paced turnaround in business dynamics comes into effect will there be enough managers to fill these positions and are leaders trained adequately?

2.7 Emotional Intelligence in Leadership

The transition from a role of managing tasks to a role of managing employees brings along emotion to the role. While many businesses focus on qualifications when recruiting managers there is a shortfall in assessing emotional intelligence competencies as a criterion.

The new pandemic paradigm and fast-moving changes has spurred businesses to assess job candidates not only on credentials but an addition of tangible qualities of high levels of emotional intelligence. A smart decision for businesses is the recruitment of those who possess emotional intelligence as they add an element of value in serving as a resourceful support mechanism for colleagues who may be juggling family constraints such as tending to children who are navigating glitchy online classes to those who had to care for a loved one contracting Covid. Since the start of the pandemic a staggering 60 million Americans were filing for unemployment, even those in employment feel insecure. Even not working together physically can result in a toxic environment and so those with strong emotional intelligent levels can offer comfort and assistance to colleagues who are facing issues during a difficult time and positively influence them with compassion. It is reported that employees with a high emotional intelligence tend to demonstrate leadership capabilities, perform better under pressures and stresses, resolve conflicts swiftly, have better responses to constructive feedback and make better decisions (Kelly, 2020). Additionally, emotionally intelligent workers tend to advance within a company. A survey conducted by TalentSmart (Sabin, 2020) indicated 90% of top performers were highly emotional intelligent and emotional intelligence accounted for about 60% of performance for CEOs and supervisors. A global leadership forecast study in 2011 conducted by Development Dimensions International which received responses from 12,423 leaders from 74 countries and 1,897 human resources professionals in areas such as financial performance, companies with the highest leaders were 13 times more likely to outperform industry competition when emotional intelligence were present in the workplace. However, despite emotional intelligence having a direct link to higher performance, senior leadership is not often reflecting this. Research by Harvard Business Review (2005) during the past five years discovered a trend through measuring the emotional intelligence of more than 100,000 senior executives including self-awareness and relationship management. Emotional intelligence in executives rose as they climbed managerial positions, peaking at manager level and rapidly dropping at CEO position. This meant that most executives that are promoted had possessed the least emotional intelligence even though it is a strong indicator of great leadership. The statistics indicate a golden opportunity for organisations who are seeking to become intelligent in the future (Sabin, 2020).

2.8 Conclusion

Now more than ever due to the pandemic emotional intelligence is crucial in the workplace to ensure that the needs and changes of behaviours is recognised and addressed. To fully apply emotional intelligence to the workplace it must be understood. The main attribute is identifying values and align them to actions. Another strategy is developing self-awareness by managing emotions in a positive way. It will be beneficial of leaders to foster emotional intelligence as tangible qualities will add value and act as a resourceful support for employees who are facing hardship. Emotional intelligence has been linked to higher performance and great leadership.

3.0 Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The aim of the study is to compare and investigate the health and wellbeing of workers pre, during and post Covid in a work based and home setting. Methodology is described as a theoretical and systematic approach in which data is collected and analysed through the period of a research process allowing researchers to validate the study with credibility and reliability (Bhosale, 2023). To obtain such data in this study, numerous research methods have been applied. The secondary research conducted within the key literature review have been the foundation to formulate the primary research questions to further expand on workers' health and wellness during the designated period. Research is defined as the creation of new knowledge and or the use of existing knowledge in a new way to generate understandings and concepts. Research can include analysis of research previously undertaken. The research encompasses both pure and strategic basic research, applied research and development (Western Sydney University, 2024). The information collected for the study is a combination of secondary research consisting of books, websites, journals, and articles and primary research on employee-based wellbeing and the benefits and drawbacks of practices or the lack of.

3.2 Primary Research

3.2.1 The Questionnaire

A questionnaire is defined as a set of structured questions which are designed to gather specific information. The questions can be set in various formats such as multiple choice, tick boxes to open ended questions. A questionnaire is likened to a targeted conversation on either paper or online. The idea is to ask a set of well thought out questions which will enable to answer the information that is needed. The questions can cover various topics that help the researcher to understand behaviours, opinions and preferences (Williams, 2024).

Cleave (2023) states that there are many benefits of a questionnaire in research in particular online questionnaires. The following are some of the advantages of utilising an online questionnaire for research purposes:

- **Cost saving:** using a PC and not paper will speed up the process
- **Reach audience quickly:** there is a wide option on ways to distribute and easily share the questionnaire enabling to receive feedback swiftly from respondents
- **Scalability:** using the internet has enabled a quick and simple way to ramp up the audience and can be reached anywhere around the world **Respondent anonymity:** online questionnaires can offer anonymity in comparison to face to face and over the phone questioning as when seeking sensitive information. Anonymity immediately puts the responder at ease
- **Flexibility for respondents:** online questionnaires can be completed wherever and whenever which boosts response rates
- **Data accuracy:** in comparison to face or over the phone questionnaires, online platform allows for automated replies which can be inserted into databases and spreadsheets reducing human error.

There are however drawbacks to questionnaires which can affect the validity and quality of the data collected such as:

- **Low response rate:** it can be a challenge to ensure a high response rate and avoid a non-biased response
- **No response:** respondents may ignore or forget to complete the questionnaire, or they may not have received it at all resulting in a low or unrepresentative sample of the target audience
- **Ambiguous questions:** respondents may skip or answer incorrectly to questions that are misunderstood or may not follow instructions adequately. The researchers cannot verify responses or observe the nonverbal cues of the responders.

(LinkedIn, 2024).

The primary method of collection of data has been conducted through a survey which has been shared via an online portal. This is accessed through a shared link and all answers have been recorded automatically saving time rather than filling out a hard copy. This data will confirm unbiased assumptions. The questions on the survey are open and closed ended and recorded as statistical data and will also allow for respondents to provide unanticipated answers (Survey Monkey, 2024). The survey also contains some open-ended questions which will allow for qualitative analysis so there is a deeper understanding of the scope and implications of remote working. The inductive technique has been applied to the survey as this approach asserts an arising framework through the data analysis. The reasoning for this choice was so that the data is to be free from bias from any existing theories which are typically found in deductive reasoning which relies on an existing belief or idea (Indeed, 2022). The idea is to not be able to alter the course of the study once it has established.

The quantitative research approach has been applied in conducting the survey as the results produced will be backed by figures which can be turned into numerical data. The technique has allowed for the research analysis to be from a statistical perspective and has been representative of the chosen target market. According to Qualtrics (2024) a survey is well suited to quantitative research and can aid averages and patterns. The focus has been placed on jobs that could be done at home or in a workplace setting.

3.2.2 Piloting

According to the National Library of Medicine (2006) a pilot study is defined as a 'small study' to test research protocols such as data collection and sample strategies. The piloting is a crucial stage in any research project and can aid in identifying problems and areas of improvement prior to the full study. However, pilot studies do pose several limitations including the possibility of inaccurate assumptions and predictions based on the pilot data. Furthermore, a successful completion of a pilot study does not automatically mean a successful full-scale questionnaire, but having completed a pilot study can offer valuable insights of the size and likelihood of the response rate of the full-scale questionnaire (University of Surrey, 2001).

To ensure that the questionnaire is easy to read and complete without ambiguity the piloting was essential to test to a small group of individuals. A pilot questionnaire was sent out via an online link and there were 10 responses. From the responses the following problems have been identified and rectified:

1. There were several spelling and grammatical errors
2. The wording of some questions was ambiguous and not concise so that it was easy to understand
3. Some questions were not relevant as they felt as a repeated question.

From feedback the questionnaire took between 5 and 10 minutes to complete.

3.2.3 Interview

In addition to the survey, the second method of primary research was through interviews with a selection of respondents who had completed the survey and given permission to be interviewed. The interviews were conducted to collect qualitative data such a deeper explanation of their personal experiences. The interviews were conducted face-to-face, on the telephone and via Facetime/Zoom call. The focus for the interviews is to assess respondent's emotional intelligence when discussing their feelings regarding working around the period of Covid. Four responded to be interviewed.

3.3 Secondary Research

According to Bermingham (2020) secondary research is defined as the synthesis and analysis of primary research. Secondary research reviews the evidence of primary research and once collected can explain about an area. The complete secondary research was provided in the literature review in 2.0. The data included research from books, websites, online articles and journal publications from health boards and government data. The focus was on online materials as it contained up to date and current information. The secondary data collected was used as the foundation for the primary research and aided in the questions that were included in the questionnaire and interviews.

3.4 Sample

The sampling approach that was used for the study was convenience sampling. Convenience sampling refers to using respondents who are convenient to the researcher. There is no structured pattern in acquiring the respondents and can be easily recruited by asking random people who are present in public. This approach can be highly biased as the researcher will undertake the convenience sample by simply asking friends, family and colleagues to participate. However, despite the disadvantage it can generate a wide range of attitudes and opinions which can be tested rigorously (Edgar and Manz, 2017).

The link for the questionnaire was initially shared via WhatsApp. This was then in turn shared to others to participate. Additionally, the link was also shared to social media platform Facebook as this would be suited to convenience sampling.

The initial aim was to collect 50 responses which would provide a range of data that could be analysed and 45 people responded and 4 people were interviewed.

3.5 Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity play strong importance and are fundamental in the assessment of measuring methodology for collection of data comprehensive research. Validity refers to an instrument measure and how well it does whereas reliability refers to the truthfulness in the data gathered (National Library of Medicine, 2021). It was crucial for questions to be simple and clear and meet the aims and objectives of the study. So that the data gathered was reliable the questionnaire that was shared were all the same.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

The primary research conducted did include ethical considerations. The compilation of the research was in line with the University of Wales Trinity St David's guidelines and were completed to the best standard. To ensure this, the respondents were all adults above the age of 18 years old. All respondents had given consent prior to participation and acknowledged that the data collected were to be used for research purposes only and the data will be protected including any personal data. To ensure this, the data collected is in line with the Data Protection Act 1998 (House of Commons, 2024). All participants understood that any participation was on a voluntary basis and that they could withdraw at any time. The survey platform utilised to ensure that data is protected is Microsoft Forms which is data encrypted at rest and in transit. Furthermore, Microsoft Forms is GDPR compliant as of May 2018 (Microsoft, 2024).

3.7 Limitations

There were limitations to the study as the Covid pandemic event had only taken place four year prior to the study so there is a lack of published academic theory to underpin secondary research. Secondly, the primary research conducted were majorly contacts of the researcher via social media and so responses may reflect only those who have had similar experiences due to location and ages of respondents. Thirdly, the focus of the research was purely on the health and wellbeing of people in employment during the time of the Covid pandemic and so does not reflect the people who were not working during the time. And lastly, there is the limitation of time constraints as the study is to be completed and submitted on the 5th of July 2024).

3.8 Outcomes

The data collected was analysed to determine the mental health and wellbeing of people who worked around the period of Covid. The focus was how their work affected their ability to perform, relationships with others, leadership intervention, and maintaining a work life balance.

Once the 45 responses from the questionnaire were collected alongside the 4 interviews conducted, the data were collated into pie charts and tables. The results are published within the data analysis chapter and individually analysed.

A blank questionnaire is displayed in appendix 2 and the blank interview questions in appendix 3.

4.0 Data Analysis/ Discussion

4.1 Introduction

The following findings shows the questionnaire data that was collected in May 2024. The aim was collecting 50 responses and received 45 responses which still provided valuable data.

For the interview 5 questions were asked to 4 respondents of the questionnaire for an in depth understanding of the study investigated. The interview allowed a richer data of why they felt the way they did during working through Covid.

The finding contained in this chapter will be displayed in pie charts, tables and of the open-ended questions will show key answers.

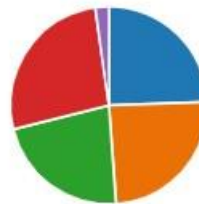
4.2 Findings

Figure 1. What are the biggest challenges you have faced or are currently facing at work that affects your health and wellbeing?

1. **What are the biggest challenges you have faced or are currently facing at work that affects your health and wellbeing?**

[More Details](#)

● Lack of support	11
● Lack of resources	11
● Not feeling part of a te...	10
● Overworked and under...	12
● Other	1



12 respondents indicated as overworked and undervalued. When pressure or stress becomes so excessive that an individual feels that they cannot cope with the situation the work performance deteriorates. Physiological responses to stress occur in three steps:

Alarm reaction - the body automatically reacts to the stress and prepares for action

Resistance - the body makes attempts to adapt and recover however if stress continues to elevate then the third step occurs

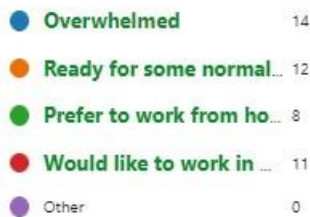
Exhaustion - the adaptive mechanism collapse.

Long term stress is harmful and can lead to the development of serious health problems (Cooper and Cartwright, 1996).

Figure 2. How do you feel being back in the workplace after the Covid Pandemic?

2. How do you feel being back in the workplace after the Covid pandemic?

[More Details](#)

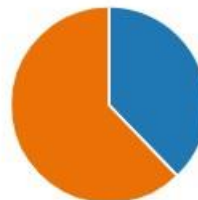


14 respondents answered as feeling overwhelmed returning to the workplace after the pandemic. It is important to understand the human state and the environments that creates progression and regression of the psychological state that guides how people behave at work. If the respondents work in highly regulated environment or are schooled in a strict way, they will feel controlled and constrained in their choices coming back. Doing well at work being regulated is one thing but if you have never experienced or developed a world where the actions taken were determined by an advanced state of understanding it can over stimulate a person's working conditions (Timms, (2020).

Figure 3. Did you feel you could speak to management about any concerns you were facing?

3. Did you feel you could speak to management about any concerns you were or are currently facing?

[More Details](#)



28 respondents answered 'No' they could not speak to management about any concerns they have or had. Leaders who demonstrate empathy while an employee openly expresses feelings involves an articulate understanding of behaviours and views of others. This perception creates a sense of inclusion and belonging. The compassion leadership principle (HEIW, 2020) reinforces a collaborative culture where people feel nurtured and respect one another through remaining objective by seeing the reality as it presents and sharing decisions. It can be argued that placing autonomy on employees can be deemed as an increased level of demands (Gov.UK, 2014) which can be detrimental as some individuals seek direction and do not view personal competency as vital so leaders should look at how emotions influence the workplace by the identification of the benefits of change that are initiated (Prochaska, 1999). Management is viewed to be the epicentre of influence and inspiration and an emotional intelligent approach in proactiveness, and vision can impact positively on wellbeing (Celestine, 2019).

Figure 4. If yes, did management/organisation offer any support help elevate your concerns?

4. If yes, did management/organisation offer any support help elevate your concerns?

[More Details](#)

[Insights](#)

19

Responses

Latest Responses



19 responded they felt that management or the organisation did offer support help elevate concerns of 5 who responded 'yes'.

Figure 4.1. If yes, did management/organisation offer any support help elevate your concerns?

4. If yes, did management/organisation offer any support help elevate your concerns?

19 Responses

ID	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	N/A
2	anonymous	They referred to counselling
3	anonymous	N/A
4	anonymous	Yes management were able to resolve my concerns.
5	anonymous	Yes
6	anonymous	Yes.
7	anonymous	Yes
8	anonymous	Gave me time off
9	anonymous	No made it worse
10	anonymous	Offered me support
11	anonymous	Can work from home 2 days a week
12	anonymous	Time to grieve a death
13	anonymous	Help with work rota
14	anonymous	Help with workload
15	anonymous	Yes
16	anonymous	No
17	anonymous	Yes
18	anonymous	They listened to my needs
19	anonymous	Yes

People who are experiencing a crisis can display mental health problems such as breaking down or losing touch with reality. Colleagues too can feel a sense of crisis too, but it is vital for management to remain calm. Management can assist an employee with concerns by:

- Listening to employees without judgement
- Offer practical support or information while reassuring them
- Ask what support they require and involve them in the solution
- Encourage them to seek professional help
- Avoid confrontation even if they become agitated.

It is advised for leaders to remind colleagues that they are there for them and not dismiss their experiences. Leaders helping others through concerns can feel upset so should seek dialogue with HR without identifying the colleague (Race and Furnham, 2014).

Figure 5. If you could change one aspect about your workplace to improve health and wellbeing, what would it be, and how would it positively impact you at work?

5. **If you could change one aspect about your workplace to improve your health and wellbeing, what would it be, and how would it positively impact you at work?**

[More Details](#)

[Insights](#)

45

Responses

Latest Responses

"Less noise to pay more attention to my work"

"More group tasks to improve social activity"

"make group activities to improve everyone's wellbeing"

[Update](#)



45 respondents answered the open-ended question with 9 answering 'work'.

Figure 5.1 If you could change one aspect about your workplace to improve health and wellbeing, what would it be, and how would it positively impact you at work?

5. If you could change one aspect about your workplace to improve your health and wellbeing, what would it be, and how would it positively impact you at work?

45 Responses

ID ↑	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	Better PC, better efficiency
2	anonymous	Be able to have water bottles on unit More staff
3	anonymous	Do more group activities
4	anonymous	Weekly catch up with colleagues
5	anonymous	Reduce case loads as daily targets are often unrealistic.
6	anonymous	Be more free
7	anonymous	Improve the wellbeing of colleagues
8	anonymous	Install windows for more natural lighting
9	anonymous	Better recognition for my work.
10	anonymous	Discuss more with the management about the problems arising in work and in your private life. It will help with managing stress .
11	anonymous	Give better support equipments
12	anonymous	I would want them to offer flexible working to suit around family life
13	anonymous	Working overtime and going home late
14	anonymous	Manager needs to be more empathetic
15	anonymous	Team bonding exercises
16	anonymous	More group activities or days out
17	anonymous	Less demanding leadership
18	anonymous	Flexible working

19	anonymous	Mental health resources
20	anonymous	Flexible working
21	anonymous	Team bonding
22	anonymous	Offer better technology
23	anonymous	Team work
24	anonymous	More meetings with line manager
25	anonymous	Change job to a people friendly role
26	anonymous	More staffing
27	anonymous	More communication with management
28	anonymous	Schedule (time entering workplace)
29	anonymous	Less working hours
30	anonymous	Conditions
31	anonymous	Better location
32	anonymous	More support
33	anonymous	Do work I want to do
34	anonymous	More money
35	anonymous	More pay and hours
36	anonymous	More breaks for mental health
37	anonymous	More support
38	anonymous	Less noise as it will improve focus
39	anonymous	More intervention from manager
40	anonymous	Team bonding
41	anonymous	Less noise as it will improve concentration
42	anonymous	More breaks and less pressure to deliver
43	anonymous	make group activities to improve everyone's wellbeing
44	anonymous	More group tasks to improve social activity
45	anonymous	Less noise to pay more attention to my work

Morden (2007) states that strategies determine how organisations intend to carry out activities which works in achieving its objectives. Strategies is focal to the direction in decision making of people and leadership. For a logical incrementalism approach for the strategy to work there must be flexibility in response considering changing circumstances while being prepared on forecasting capabilities (Mintzberg et al, 1998). Leadership needs to meet the needs of employees to maintain wellbeing as well as sustain social connection, and relationships (Harvard Business Review, 2020). Mind (2020) have devised a Wellness Action Plan which addresses staff wellbeing. The tool can aid in identifying and support tackle work related problems. The data collated from the plan can identify stress triggers. Management should be open to receiving feedback and demonstrate adequate awareness

skills as this will reflect on employees. It is vital to recognise individual indicators such as concentration levels, motivation and emotional state.

Figure 6. Have you ever had a period when your mental health affected your performance at work, positively or negatively? Please explain



43 responded to the open-ended question with 9 answering 'working'.

Figure 6.1 Have you ever had a period when your mental health affected your performance at work, positively or negatively? Please Explain

6. Have you ever had a period when your mental health affected your performance at work, positively or negatively? Please explain

43 Responses

ID ↑	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	Yes, we are often short staffed so it becomes stressful and unpleasant
2	anonymous	No I have not
3	anonymous	Long days and being under paid
4	anonymous	No
5	anonymous	No
6	anonymous	No
7	anonymous	No
8	anonymous	No.
9	anonymous	No. I didn't have any problems
10	anonymous	Yes
11	anonymous	Yes, when having to deal with personal issues but meeting deadline was difficult
12	anonymous	No
13	anonymous	Negatively as I had too much workload and not enough time
14	anonymous	Shifts are long hours and no time for a break in between.
15	anonymous	Yes when juggling small children and working till late
16	anonymous	No
17	anonymous	I was poorly with Covid and work was affected
18	anonymous	Yes when I lost a loved one. Couldn't cope with workload
19	anonymous	No

20	anonymous	During covid felt so sad
21	anonymous	No
22	anonymous	No
23	anonymous	Yes during Covid I felt lonely
24	anonymous	Yes as I work in own office room I feel isolated
25	anonymous	Work overload due to staff turnover
26	anonymous	Negatively as not paid enough compared to workload
27	anonymous	No
28	anonymous	Yes over worked, pay is low
29	anonymous	Negative, too tired to do work
30	anonymous	Positively as met new friends
31	anonymous	Yes
32	anonymous	Never
33	anonymous	Yes
34	anonymous	Only during covid felt scared
35	anonymous	Positive, motivated to help with output
36	anonymous	Negatively as when I worked I felt my job performance was worse
37	anonymous	Yes as too much bad thoughts
38	anonymous	Yes
39	anonymous	Negatively as I felt less productive when working
40	anonymous	Sometimes, I've felt overworked
41	anonymous	Positively as I would set goals to achieve and this would increase my motivation to work
42	anonymous	When I'm ill it affects my mental health negatively because I'm more focused on trying to get better than working
43	anonymous	When I've overthought and over stressed it impacted my mental health negatively

Empathy needs to be recognised in times of crisis such as the pandemic as employees face challenging times such as stress and fear and leaders who demonstrate empathy to colleagues shows that their experiences matter. Empathetic skills allow managers to better understand and provide support (Catalyst, 2024). Cherniss and Goleman's (2001) guidelines to enable change in others is to offer ongoing feedback and support as this allows individuals to fine tune their behaviours such as going off track. It is best for feedback to be specific and immediate. Specific feedback helps build social awareness and self-awareness. Feedback should also be motivational as most employees spend far more time on things that they are measured on.

Figure 7. Are you intending to maintain your current work-life balance? Please explain your reasons for your intended choice

7. Are you intending to maintain your current work-life balance? Please explain your reasons for your intended choice

[More Details](#)

[Insights](#)

45
Responses

Latest Responses

"Yes as maintaining work-life balance will lead to less oversteering and fewe...

"No becuae I will overwork and over stress myself which will decrease time t...

"No as my job requires a lot of time and energy so I don't have enough time t...

[Update](#)

10 respondents (23%) answered **time** for this question.

balance is quite difficult
job role time for my work balance and time time and energy home life
happy with balance life balance **time** work-life commute time
shift work mental health quality time job free time time with kids
life for my family lot of time life is balanced

45 responded to the open-ended questions with reasoning and 10 responses mentioned the word 'time'.

Figure 7.1. Are you intending to maintain your current work-life balance? Please explain your reasons for your intended choice

7. Are you intending to maintain your current work-life balance? Please explain your reasons for your intended choice

45 Responses

ID ↑	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	N/A
2	anonymous	Doing shift work doesn't give me much free time and swapping from days to nights makes me feel exhausted and tired all the time. But I recently cut my hours down so hopefully this will help
3	anonymous	Yes I am intending in at keeping my current work-life balance. As I give enough time for my work to then to have enough time to chill and live my life
4	anonymous	Yes
5	anonymous	Yes I enjoy working from home as I save the commute time to and from the office. I am also able to take breaks for the school run and give my children quality time. Overall this has had a positive impact on my work life balance.
6	anonymous	Yes so i can spend time with family
7	anonymous	Yeah by working enough but not too much so there is home life for my family
8	anonymous	Planning a career shift.
9	anonymous	Yes. I work part time and do not plan for the foreseeable future to change that. I enjoy my free time too much.
10	anonymous	Yes. My work-life is balanced. I'mgappy as it is.
11	anonymous	Having family work life balance is quite difficult
12	anonymous	Yes
13	anonymous	Yes
14	anonymous	Yes as I need an income
15	anonymous	Yes
16	anonymous	Yes as been at this role for years

17	anonymous	Yes
18	anonymous	Yes as suits my circumstances
19	anonymous	Yes
20	anonymous	Yes
21	anonymous	No
22	anonymous	Yes
23	anonymous	Yes as I am comfortable where I work
24	anonymous	Yes as I need this job
25	anonymous	No
26	anonymous	No. I'm applying for new job
27	anonymous	Yes as need an income
28	anonymous	No
29	anonymous	Yes as I'm studying and need the part time work
30	anonymous	No,more time with kids
31	anonymous	Yes and I like the job role
32	anonymous	No work life balance
33	anonymous	Yes,like the balance and time off
34	anonymous	Nope
35	anonymous	Yes as good place to work
36	anonymous	Depends on situation but yes I am happy with balance
37	anonymous	Ok
38	anonymous	Yes as it will lead to greater productivity
39	anonymous	No my mental health has been effected due to long Covid
40	anonymous	Hopefully
41	anonymous	Yes as I can set goals for myself when I work so I can have more time to rest
42	anonymous	Yes, to focus on my mental health
43	anonymous	No as my job requires a lot of time and energy so I don't have enough time to rest
44	anonymous	No becuae I will overwork and over stress myself which will decrease time to live my life
45	anonymous	Yes as maintaining work-life balance will lead to less oversteering and fewer health problems

There has never been a time when there has not been a change in their world. The attribution to the changes can be due to technological advances to economic trends. Improved communications mean that it is easier to work remotely from a physical location however this can bring some problems and can create high staff turnover. Long working hours required can take a toll on employee health. There have been early studies (Breslow and Buell, 1960) which has linked long working hours with coronary heart disease. Though it seems that the average working hours in many western countries are decreasing this is not the case for the United Kingdom who have deregulated economies. It has been noted that of

those who work over 40 hours a week, the time spent is unproductive and can cause ill health (Arnold et al, 2005).

Figure 8. If you live with others, do you feel your work allows you to spend the amount of time you want with them?

8. **If you live with others, do you feel your work allows you to spend the amount of time you want with them?**

[More Details](#)



24 respondents answered 'no' to the question, with a close 'yes' of 21 responses that work allows them to spend time with people they live with. Loved ones and family are important as they provide support and being with them helps improve mental health. It also helps promote adaptability, aids in development and build resilience. Such crucial lessons can only be taught by family members coaching one another in life's ups and downs. Everyone needs in person interactions and face-to-face communication as this reduces anxiety, depression and mental illness. Physical presence with loved ones offers strong emotional support and can allow individuals to rise through challenges (Thatcher, 2020).

Figure 9. Have you ever experienced isolation from colleagues from work?

9. **Have you ever experienced isolation from colleagues from work?**

[More Details](#)



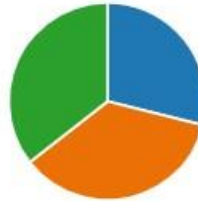
24 respondents answered 'yes', they have felt isolated from colleagues from work. Loneliness can affect many people at some point of life. 1 in 5 workers feel lonely at work on a typical working day. Loneliness can affect mental health. As workplaces have changed over recent years and employers and workers have embraced flexible working which in theory allows better time with friends and family but what does this mean for the workforce? A polling conducted by YouGov in 2022 of 2,023 people loneliness can be a strong driver and a product of poor mental health. 23% of workers stated that loneliness at work affects their mental health. When asked what the preventative measures are to combat isolation for others 53% stated there was lack of time within the working hours to discuss concerns with others and 50% stated the work culture did not encourage talk on mental health (Mental Health UK, 2024).

Figure 10. Now that the Covid-19 pandemic is over, do you feel better or worse mentally?

10. **Now that the Covid-19 pandemic is over, do you feel better or worse mentally?**

[More Details](#)

● Better	13
● Worse	16
● Equal	16
● Other	0



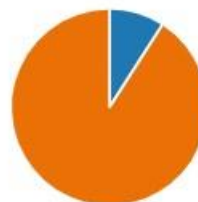
On this question there were 16 responses for 'worse' and 16 for 'equal' for how they felt mentally now that the pandemic is over. Mind (2024) found from research conducted in 2020 that a third of 12,000 people across England and Wales felt their mental state has worsened since March 2020, 88% agreed loneliness made mental health worse and 1 in 5 did not seek support during the pandemic as they felt their issues were not serious enough. When mental health needs have heightened, mental health services have been disrupted. This was more noticeable early in the pandemic when employee and infrastructure were redeployed to Covid relief. Social measures in place prevented workers from accessing care while misinformation about the virus created fear and worries stopping people seeking help (World Health Organisation, 2022). Optimism will help in remaining hopeful and build resilience when there are setbacks and provide self-belief for improved productivity (Prochaska, 1999).

Figure 11. Are you interested in participating in a short follow-up interview? (Please leave your name and email address)

11. **Are you interested in participating in a short follow up interview? (Please leave your name and email address).**

[More Details](#)

● Yes	4
● No	40



4 respondents agreed to a follow-up interview.

Figure 12. Name

12. Name

9 Responses

ID ↑	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	Anitha Bari
2	anonymous	Taaj Ali
3	anonymous	Shemul Aktar
4	anonymous	Jahangir ali
5	anonymous	Hamza-ur Rahman
6	anonymous	Luminita Miron
7	anonymous	Rusina
8	anonymous	Nashrin
9	anonymous	Taaj

9 respondents left their name.

Figure 13. Email Address

13. Email Address

8 Responses

ID ↑	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	ani_b89@icloud.com
2	anonymous	taajali2006@gmail.com
3	anonymous	shem09@live.co.uk
4	anonymous	Mai.hem@hotmail.co.uk
5	anonymous	hamza-urrahman@live.co.uk
6	anonymous	mironluminita54@gmail.com
7	anonymous	Rusinakze@gmail.com
8	anonymous	nashtaaj@hotmail.co.uk

From the 45 respondents there were 8 emails given.

The above responses prompted to a more in-depth analysis via interview questions on what support they received from management from remote working and organised based working.

Out of the 4 interviews conducted two interviewees did work from home, one interviewee worked in both settings, and one worked from an organised setting during Covid. Three interviewees that worked from home stated that they were given equipment such as computers and a desk so they could continue to work from home alongside Covid related guidance to minimise risks. One interviewee who worked in a hospital stated she felt vulnerable due to lack of PPE and was not offered any mental health support until two years later and even that was not sufficient as most staff had suffered PTSD. From the four interviews three worked at home. Two interviewees encountered no issues while one did state they found it difficult to work alongside children who were also at home due to lockdowns but did not contact management to remedy this concern. Also, she stated that her manager was unreachable at times regarding work related matters. On question 4 regarding working from home policies two interviewees stated that they did receive covid related policy and extra breaks to help with wellbeing. One interviewee who worked from home received no policy and was expected to get on as they would in the workplace. Two interviewees worked in an organisation during Covid. One stated that there were barriers and hand sanitisers in use and the other stated that though management did follow Covid guidelines they showed no concern for the wellbeing of staff resulting sick leave. A full table of interview responses can be found in appendix 4.

4.3 Summary

Although it was anticipated to receive at least 50 survey respondents, the 45 completions allowed enough data to ensure the aims and objectives of the study to be addressed. By utilising the easy-to-use Microsoft Forms allowed the respondents to complete the questionnaire on average of 5 minutes and 7 seconds. The findings contained within the research indicates that during the Covid pandemic the majority did feel overworked and undervalued and though feeling overwhelmed, management were accessible with concerns faced and did help alleviate any worries. In terms of mental health, the majority did feel isolated from colleagues and were unable to spend time with family. In relation to how they felt now that the pandemic is over the majority indicated that mentally they felt the same or worse.

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

The aim of this research study was to investigate and compare approaches to home and organisation-based working before, during and after the Covid pandemic. Data was collected and analysed to find out how workers working remotely and, in an organisation, had felt and dealt with their health and wellbeing. The questionnaire and interviews conducted provided reliable and valid collection of data which supported the objectives of this study.

5.2 Research Objectives

There has been a gradual increase in remote working which had increased exponentially during Covid. With this sharp shift in remote working led to a sharp rise in mental health and social relationships. Adding to this was the formation of divisions occurring nationwide between people where some were worse off facing poverty and breakdowns in relationships in family. Those who were facing hardships reported to mental health conditions such as depression and anxiety. This along with no support from employers heightened their worries. However, some employers and organisations had implemented approaches to elevate and address their employees' woes such as combating the cost-of-living crisis by offering the option to work from home on Fridays to save money. This initiative reduced absenteeism, enhanced retention and was a step in improving overall mental health. The NHS had also supported its staff offering several services including dedicated health and care staff support and access to wellbeing apps. The NHS went further to address the matter by providing further guidance nationally to departments to ensure staff are fully supported. This demonstrates that as an organisation they are proactive in helping their staff combat worries and diminish the effects of Covid had on individuals.

From some key questions identified that majority of respondents had felt isolated (63%) and could not spend time with people they lived with (47%) and when it came to balancing work life 'time' (24%) was the main concern indicating balancing the time with home and work was an issue. The Covid pandemic had severely impacted workers mentally with 27% feeling overworked and undervalued.

Emotional intelligence plays a key role in managing change as leaders who adopt emotional intelligence can use their tangible skills to support colleagues especially during Covid. Furthermore, workers who were homeworking had to navigate the challenges family and other factors bring and use their emotional intelligence to overcome hurdles. Emotional intelligent leaders were able to assist colleagues by offering guidelines on Covid and working-from-home policies to listening to individual needs (38%) with 26% reported that their managers had proactively helped with a solution such as help with workload and mental support.

To conclude the study, the aims and objectives of the study were achieved by extensive secondary literature research conducted through studies which contained up to date findings on mental health impacts on employees during the pandemic resulted and underpinned the data from primary research which expressed similar results. The interviews further enhanced the predicament faced by many during Covid from the secondary data.

Emotional intelligent leadership has indicated as a transformative measure to cope with change, and it has been proven that during the pandemic it has been a beneficial trait in helping shape the mental health and wellbeing of workers in many ways.

5.3 Recommendations

The recommendations on moving forward for homeworkers and their mental health are:

- Adaptability in innovation which will harness to retool the remote workers by an analysis of what work can be done at home focusing on tasks rather than complete jobs
- Focusing on skillset rather than academic achievements
- The leadership will need to define clear goals for the company and then set up a new working practice. This can be done by optimising work communication by holding virtual meetings weekly and setting remote productivity standards
- Support an inclusive approach to homeworking by more training and increase the infrastructure in improving digital skills
- Management need to consider the basic work set up for home working such as is it realistic to work from a small screen long term from a kitchen table. For a permanent solution a suitable office setup needs to be available
- Regular feedback from remote workers on what is working and what are the challenges encountered. Then this should be worked on to find a sufficient solution
- There must be discussions on hours worked and are they working outside business hours. Are homeworkers putting in hours late evenings after children go to bed? Leaders should work on a case by case to see if there can be a way to resume regular hours
- Those remote working are more likely to feel professional isolation where they receive less interaction with onsite colleagues and will receive less understanding of current projects so therefore leadership should consider how to bring the hybrid team together. This can be done by encouraging homeworkers to speak to an onsite colleague daily rather than emailing as this will stimulate a natural conversation.

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7.0 Appendices

Appendix 1 Ethics Approval Form



PRIFYSGOL CYMRU
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
UNIVERSITY OF WALES
Trinity Saint David

APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL – BA level

CAIS AM GYMERADWYAETH MOESEGOL – Lefel BA

Mae'r ffurflen hon i'w chwblhau gan bob BA myfyrwr. Rhaid i bob ffurflen gael ei ystyried gan diwtor y modiwl. Dylai un copi o'r ffurflen yn cael ei roi ar y ffeiliau Gyfadran ac un copi cadw ar y ffeil myfyrwr.

This form is to be completed by all BA Leadership and Management students conducting independent projects. This form should be completed by the student. All forms must be considered by the Module Lead- Maria Heffernan. A copy of the form must be kept centrally and on the student file.

ADRAN 1 – MANYLION MYFYRIWR

SECTION 1 - STUDENT DETAILS

Enw Llawn Full Name	Masuk Ali		
Ysgol/Cyfadrn/ School/Faculty		Rhif Myfyriwr Student Number	2021839
Cydlynnydd prosiect / Tiwtor Module Tutor/ Programme Co-ordinator		Enw'r Gradd Name of Degree	BA Developing leadership and management

Teitl dangosol yr Traethawd Hir:

Indicative Title of the Independent Project:

Put in title

An Analysis into the Health and Wellbeing of Workers at Home and Organised Based Working With Particular Reference to Emotional Intelligence

ADRAN 2 – MANYLION CYFRANOGWYR / CYNULLEIDFA

SECTION 2 - PARTICIPANT / AUDIENCE DETAILS

Pwy yw'r cyfranogwyr arfaethedig?	Who are the intended participants?	Ydw / Yes	Na / No
Myfyrwyr / staff Y Drindod Dewi Sant	Students / staff of Trinity Saint David	yes	
Oedolion (dros oed 16 ac yn gymwys i gydsynio)	Adults (over the age of 16 and competent to give consent)	yes	
Plant a phobl ifanc dan oed	Children / legal minors		no
Cleifion neu gleientiaid gweithwyr proffesiynol	Patients or clients of professionals		no

Rhywun sy'n cael ei gadw yn y ddalfa neu y mae'r llys wedi cymryd cyfrifoldeb amdano	Anyone in custodial care or for whom the court has assumed responsibility		no
Aelod o unrhyw sefydliad lle mae'n bosibl bod angen i unigolyn arall hefyd gydsynio.	A member of any organisation where another individual may also need to give consent.		no
Eraill: Nodwch: / Others: please identify:			

Nifer, Oed a Ffynhonnell y Cyfranogwyr Rhowch fanylion yr demograffeg y cyfranogwyr / gynulleidfa.		Participant / Audience Number and Age Provide details of the demographics of the participants / audience.	
Nifer o Gyfranogwyr / yn y Gynulleidfa	Participant/ number	Audience	50 people
Gnŵp oedran y Cyfranogwyr/y Gynulleidfa	Participant/ group	Audience age	18-70 years

ADRAN 3 – GWEITHGAREDD YMCHWIL

SECTION 3 – RESEARCH ACTIVITY

1.	Ydy'r prosiect yn cynnwys:	Does the project include:	Ydy / Yes	Nac ydy/No
	Defnyddio holiadur neu offeryn ymchwil tebyg	Use of questionnaire or similar research instrument	yes	
	Defnyddio prawf ysgrifenedig neu gyfrifiadurol	Use of written or computerised test		no
	Cyfweiliad (cysylltwch gwestiynau posibl)	Interview (attach provisional questions)	yes	
	Dyddiaduron	Diaries		no
	Arsylwi ar gyfranogwyr a hwythau'n ymwybodol o hynny	Participant observation with their knowledge		no
	Arsylwi ar gyfranogwyr a hwythau ddim yn ymwybodol o hynny	Participant observation without their knowledge		no
	Recordio fideo neu sain	Video or audio-taping		no
	Mynediad i wybodaeth bersonol neu gyfrinachol heb gydsyniad penodol y cyfranogwyr	Access to personal or confidential information without the participants specific consent		no
	Defnyddio unrhyw gwestiynau, ysgogiadau prawf, cyflwyniad y gallai rhai cyfranogwyr eu profi fel rhywbeth sy'n achosi niwed / tramgwydd corfforol, meddyliol neu emosiynol	Administration of any questions, test stimuli, presentation that may be experienced as physically, mentally or emotionally harmful / offensive		no
	Cyflawni unrhyw weithredoedd allai achosi embaras neu effeithio ar hunan-barch	Performance of any acts which may cause embarrassment or affect self-esteem		no

Ymchwilio i gyfranogwyr sy'n ymwneud â gweithgareddau anghyfreithlon	Investigation of participants involved in illegal activities		no
Gweithdrefnau lle defnyddir twyll	Procedures that involve deception		no
Gweini unrhyw sylwedd, cyfrwng neu blasebo	Administration of any substance, agent or placebo		no
Dull arall o gasglu data neu fformat cyflwyno (esboniwch)	Other method of data collection or presentation format (please explain)		no

2. Restrui eich dull o gasglu data	List your method of data collection:
Describe your methods of data collection 1. Questionnaire 2. Interview	

3. Risg Posibl: (corfforol, seicolegol, cyfreithiol, cymdeithasol neu economaidd)	Potential Risk: (physical, psychological, legal, social or economic)
A oes unrhyw risg bosibl i:	Is there any potential risk to:
A Cyfranogwyr?	Participants?
B Ymchwilydd?	Researcher?
C BrifYsgol/Cyfadrn?	University?

4. Rheoli Risg: Os oes, beth yw'r risg a sut y bydd yn cael ei reoli?	Management of Risk: If yes, what is the risk and how will it be managed?
no	

5.	Os ydych yn delio â phlant a / neu oedolion agored i niwed, rhaid i chi gyflwyno eich tystysgrif DBS i'ch tiwtor goruchwyllo i'w cymeradwyo cyn i unrhyw gysylltiad â cyfranogwyr hyn.	If you are dealing with children and/ or vulnerable adults you must present your DBS certificate to your supervising tutor for approval before any contact with these participants.	
		Ydw / Yes	Na / No
A	Ydych chi wedi gwneud cais am dystysgrif DBS?	Have you applied for a DBS certificate?	no
B	A yw eich tiwtor weld a'i gadarnhau eich tystysgrif DBS?	Has your tutor seen and approved your DBS certificate?	no

6.	A fyddwch yn cael cydsyniad gwybodus ysgrifenedig gan eich cyfranogwyr?	Will you obtain written informed consent from your participants?		
			Ydw / Yes	Na / No
A	Os na fyddwch, pam hynny?	If no, why not?	yes	
B	Os byddwch, sut byddwch yn sicrhau cydsyniad gwybodus?	If yes, how will you secure informed consent?	Electronic checkbox on questionnaire	
Rhowch eglurhad / Please explain:				
Cynhwyswch gopi o'r ffurflen gydsynio os ydych yn defnyddio un.			Please include a copy of the consent form if you are using one.	

ADRAN 4	SECTION 4
CEFNOGWYD /APPROVED	NIS CEFNOGWYD/ NOT SUPPORTED
Datganiad Mae'r wybodaeth a gynhwysir yma yn gywir, hyd eithaf fy ngwybodaeth a'm cred. Rwyf wedi ceisio dynodi unrhyw risgiau a phroblemau sy'n gysylltiedig â'r prosiect / ymchwil neu gynhyrchiad ac rwyf yn cydnabod f'ymrwymadau innau a hawliau'r cyfranogwyr.	Declaration The information contained herein is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, accurate. I have attempted to identify any risks and issues related to the project/research or production and acknowledge my obligations and the rights of the participants.

Llofnodau Dylai'r ffurflen hon gael ei chwblhau a'i llofnodi gan y myfyriwr a'r Cydlynnydd y prosiect /Twitor	Signatures This form should be completed and signed by the student and the Module tutor/Programme Co-ordinator.
---	---

Myfyriwr / Student Masuk Ali	Dyddiad: / Date: 04/02/2024
Cydlynnydd y prosiect /Twitor Project co-ordinator / Supervisor	Dyddiad: / Date:
Sefydliad / Organisation	Dyddiad: / Date:



PRIFYSGOL CYMRU
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
UNIVERSITY OF WALES
Trinity Saint David

Cyfranogwr Rhif Adnabod:
Participant Identification Number:

2021839

CWESTIYNAU CYFWELIAD SAMPL

SAMPLE INTERVIEW/ SURVEY QUESTIONS

TEITL Y PROSIECT: / PROJECT TITLE:

An Analysis into the Health and Wellbeing of Workers at Home and Organised Based Working With Particular Reference to Emotional Intelligence

1	Sample of questionnaire or interview questions you need at least 6. What are the biggest challenges you have or are currently facing at work that affects your health and wellbeing? 1. Lack of support 2. Lack of resources 3. Not feeling part of a team 4. Overworked and undervalued 5. other
2	How do you feel being back in the workplace after the Covid pandemic? 1. Overwhelmed 2. Ready for some normality 3. Prefer to work from home 4. Would like to work in both environments 5. Other
3	Did you feel you could speak to management about any concerns you were or are currently facing? 1. Yes 2. No
4	If yes, did management/organisation offer any support help alleviate your concerns? 1. Yes 2. no

5	If you could change one aspect about your workplace to improve your health and wellbeing, what would it be, and how would it positively impact you at work? Please elaborate.....
6	Have you ever had a period when your mental health affected your performance at work, positively or negatively? If yes, please explain
7	Are you intending to maintain your current work-life balance? Please explain why
8	If you live with others, do you feel your work allows you to spend the amount of time you want with them? 1. Yes 2. No
9	Have you ever felt isolated at work? Are you still experiencing isolation from any employees of the company? 1. Yes 2. No
10	

ENW A CHYFEIRIAD YR YMCHWILYDD	NAME & ADDRESS OF RESEARCHER Masuk Ali 42 Brunswick Street Swansea SA1 4JP
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PRIFYSGOL CYMRU
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
UNIVERSITY OF WALES
Trinity Saint David

Cyfranogwr Rhif Adnabod:
Participant Identification Number:

2021839

FFURFLEN GANIATÂD CYFRANOGIAD

PARTICIPATION CONSENT FORM

TEITL Y PROSIECT: / PROJECT TITLE:

An Analysis into the Health and Wellbeing of Workers at Home and Organised Based Working With Particular Reference to Emotional Intelligence

Name of Researcher: Masuk Ali

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet dated **XXXX** for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.

☐

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.

☐

3. I understand that any information given by me may be used in future reports, articles or presentations by the research team.

☐

4. I understand that my name will not appear in any reports, articles or presentations.

☐

5. I agree to take part in the above study.

☐

Name of Participant

Date

Signature

Masuk Ali

04/02/2024

Researcher

Date

Signature

You may decline to participate in this study. You may end your participation in this study at any time. If you decide to remain anonymous, maintaining your anonymity will be a priority and every practical precaution will be taken to disguise your identity. If you prefer anonymity, there will not be any identifying information on audiotapes or transcripts of this or any interview. No-one will hear any audiotapes or see any transcripts without your prior consent. All materials generated from this or any interview will remain confidential.

When completed, please return in the envelope provided (if applicable). One copy will be given to the participant and the original to be kept in the file of the research team at:

PLACE:

ENW A CHYFEIRIAD YR YMCHWILYDD

NAME & ADDRESS OF RESEARCHER

Masuk Ali
42 Brunswick Street

	Swansea SA1 4JP
--	--------------------



PRIFYSGOL CYMRU
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
UNIVERSITY OF WALES
Trinity Saint David

Cyfranogwr Rhif Adnabod: 2021839
Participant Identification Number:

FFURFLEN GANIATÂD CYFRANOGIAD

SAMPLE PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

TEITL Y PROSIECT: / PROJECT TITLE:

An Analysis into the Health and Wellbeing of Workers at Home and Organised Based Working With Particular Reference to Emotional Intelligence

***THIS FORM IS TO BE AMENDED AND ADAPTED AS NECESSARY**

Dear Participant:

My name is Masuk Ali and I am studying in the School of UWTSD.

I would like to invite you to participate in my research project. This project will analyse the health and wellbeing of workers at home and organised based working and aims to critically compare home and organised based working around the time of the Covid-19 pandemic with particular reference to emotional intelligence

*Attached to this letter is a short questionnaire developed by Masuk Ali which will assess the approaches to home and organisation-based working before, during and after the Covid pandemic. I believe your opinions will be extremely helpful to me.

Through your participation in the questionnaire and/or interviews, I hope to ascertain your opinions, views and feelings regarding health and wellbeing during working.

All questionnaires will be kept strictly confidential to the researchers involved and at **NO** time will individual questionnaires be released to the general public. This gives you a chance to express your views on your programme a confidential and anonymous forum and still be able to make a difference. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary so you can withdraw from the questionnaire at any stage.

Our questionnaire should take about 30 minutes to complete, but there is no time constraint. There are also no right or wrong answers. Attached to this letter along with the questionnaire is an electronic consent check box and a consent form for interviewees and a feedback form will be included both data collection. As this is a new project, your feedback is also important to us, and we would be much obliged if you could also complete the feedback sheet along with the questionnaire. We understand that your time is at a premium but your opinions are very valuable to us.

8

After careful and precise analysis of the data obtained from this questionnaire, I will be happy to provide you with a copy of the findings at your request. The results of this questionnaire will hopefully enhance my understanding of health and wellbeing concepts at work and will be stored on the researcher's file. The results of the research will be fed back to UWTSD and the module lead.

We thank you in advance for your time and participation. If any questions do arise, feel free to contact me at your convenience.

ENW A CHYFEIRIAD YR YMCHWILYDD	NAME & ADDRESS OF RESEARCHER
	Masuk Ali
	42 Brunswick street
	Swansea
	SA1 4JP

Health and Wellbeing of Workers at Home and Organised Based Working

My name is Masuk Ali (2021839) and I am studying in the School of UWTSD. I would like to invite you to participate in my research project. This project will analyse the health and wellbeing of workers at home and organised based working and aims to critically compare home and organised based working around the time of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Attached to this message is a short questionnaire which will assess the approaches to home and organisation-based working before, during and after the Covid pandemic. I believe your opinions will be extremely helpful to me.

Through your participation in the questionnaire and/or interviews, I hope to ascertain your opinions, views and feelings regarding health and wellbeing during working.

All questionnaires will be kept strictly confidential to the researchers involved and at NO time will individual questionnaires be released to the public. This gives you a chance to express your views on your programme a confidential and anonymous forum and still be able to make a difference. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary so you can withdraw from the questionnaire at any stage.

The questionnaire should take about 10 minutes to complete, but there is no time constraint.

The results of this questionnaire will hopefully enhance my understanding of health and wellbeing concepts at work and will be stored on the researcher's file. The results of the research will be fed back to UWTSD and the module lead.

I thank you in advance for your time and participation. If any questions do arise, feel free to contact me at your convenience. My email address is 2021839@student.uwtsd.ac.uk.

1

What are the biggest challenges you have faced or are currently facing at work that affects your health and wellbeing? *



- ☐ Lack of support
- ☐ Lack of resources
- ☐ Not feeling part of a team
- ☐ Overworked and undervalued
- ☐ Other

2

How do you feel being back in the workplace after the Covid pandemic? *



- ☐ Overwhelmed
- ☐ Ready for some normality
- ☐ Prefer to work from home
- ☐ Would like to work in both environments
- ☐ Other

3

Did you feel you could speak to management about any concerns you were or are currently facing? *



- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

4

If yes, did management/organisation offer any support help elevate your concerns?



Enter your answer

5

If you could change one aspect about your workplace to improve your health and wellbeing, what would it be, and how would it positively impact you at work? *



Enter your answer

6

Have you ever had a period when your mental health affected your performance at work, positively or negatively? Please explain



Enter your answer

7

Are you intending to maintain your current work-life balance? Please explain your reasons for your intended choice *



Enter your answer

8

If you live with others, do you feel your work allows you to spend the amount of time you want with them?



☐ Yes

☐ No

9

Have you ever experienced isolation from colleagues from work?



☐ Yes

☐ No

10

Now that the Covid-19 pandemic is over, do you feel better or worse mentally? *



☐ Better

☐ Worse

☐ Equal

☐ Other

11

Are you interested in participating in a short follow up interview? (Please leave your name and email address).



☐ Yes

☐ No

12

Name

Enter your answer

13

Email Address

Enter your answer

Health and Wellbeing of Workers at Home and Organised Based Working



Appendix 3 Interview Questions Sample



Questions for the Interview

Question 1

Did you work in an organised based setting such as an office or did you work from home during the Covid-19 pandemic?

Question 2

Did management offer any support to you to aid you in working efficiently such as offering equipment and resources? Did the support help or hinder your wellbeing?

Question 3

While working from home what problems did you encounter which hindered you from completing your work? Did management help or hinder your concerns?

Question 4

Did management draw up any working-from-home policies which acted as a guideline for what they expected from you while working from home during the pandemic? If so, what were they and were they helpful for your wellbeing?

Question 5

Did management draw up any policies or make any adjustments in the workplace to ensure Covid-19 government guidelines were met?

Appendix 4 Interview Responses

Question 1

Did you work in an organised based setting such as an office or did you work from home during the Covid-19 pandemic?

Interviews	Responses
Interview 1	I work in a bank and had to work from home during covid.
Interview 2	I did work in the office until the pandemic hit. I then had to work from home during the lockdown and when it eased as everyone wanted it this way.
Interview 3	I worked in the hospital, frontline.
Interview 4	Yes, from the office and home

Question 2

Did management offer any support to you to aid you in working efficiently such as offering equipment and resources? Did the support help or hinder your wellbeing?

Interviews	Responses
Interview 1	Yes. We were provided with all the equipment required to work from home, including a desk, chair, dual monitor and mobile phones. We were also still keeping in touch with our team daily via zoom meetings. All this enabled me to carry on working as normal and there were no issues.
Interview 2	They offered me to take the equipment from my desk such as the computer, keyboard and the mouse. I also took stationery. I was also able to use the office online applications from home. In terms of resources, we were given leaflets and online guidelines on Covid transmission and how to minimise risks.
Interview 3	No, we were told we had limited PPEs, so it was locked in the charge nurse's office, and were given certain amount per day. There wasn't much support. I felt vulnerable, scared and stressed about the lack of PPEs. One year after, most of us were affected with PTSD. We were offered psychological help two years after, but it was all online or telephone which I didn't find helpful.
Interview 4	Yes, I was provided with all the relevant equipment such as a laptop, desk and chair. Also, well-being groups support the staff's mental and wellness.

Question 3

While working from home what problems did you encounter which hindered you from completing your work? Did management help or hinder your concerns?

Interviews	Responses
Interview 1	I did not encounter any issues whilst working from home as I was given all the resources for a smooth transition.
Interview 2	I was working while the children were at home, which was hard to manage as they were off school. They too were attending school online and this caused issues where kids could not log in or issues with Wi-Fi which they needed me to help them with. I did not ask the management for help with this as this was out of their control. Also, there were instances where my manager was unreachable when I needed them to sign off on work I had completed. In the office I could speak to him face to face whereas from home I had to wait or further contact them for a response. Management did relay that they too were overwhelmed by working remotely.
Interview 3	I worked on the unit throughout covid.
Interview 4	No issues.

Question 4

Did management draw up any working-from-home policies which acted as a guideline for what they expected from you while working from home during the pandemic? If so, what were they and were they helpful for your wellbeing?

Interviews	Responses
Interview 1	Once equipment had been provided for staff we were expected to work as we would in the office, so no policies were introduced.
Interview 2	Yes, they did email us all with the policy which also included Covid related guidelines and what actions to take if affected.
Interview 3	I worked in covid ITU, at that time, the staff nurses' band 5/6 worked in covid areas while the band 7s stayed outside the areas. They hardly came into the units; they took handovers from the band 6s or from the nurses who went outside for breaks.
Interview 4	Yes, we were provided with extra break times to help with our wellbeing.

Question 5

Did management draw up any policies or make any adjustments in the workplace to ensure Covid-19 government guidelines were met?

Interviews	Responses
Interview 1	We only worked from home during covid and have only recently returned to the office (once a week).
Interview 2	I was working from home as were everyone from the office
Interview 3	Yes, management followed government guidelines on COVID-19, but they did not show concern for the well-being of the staff. We felt bad about taking sick leave due to staff shortages and the resulting pressure.
Interview 4	Yes, all the guidelines were met such as barriers were in place, hand sanitisers were in place around all areas.

