

Better or Worse? Individual Perceptions of Employee Punctuality When Telecommuting
During Pandemic

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Abstract

More and more employers have responded to COVID-19 by having their employees telecommute. Employers and employees can find it helpful if their job punctuality improves when they solely work from home compared to on-site. Compared to previous studies about the effects of flexible work arrangements, this study attempted to fill the gap in discovering how employees and managers evaluate their job punctuality when they solely work from home. The researcher conducted an online survey with a sample group of forty telecommuting employees during COVID-19. Employees reported improvements in their job punctuality when telecommuting compared to working on-site. Managers, however, did not perceive better punctuality in their employees. The insights derived from this study can have meaningful workplace implications for employers and employees, including flexible schedules, fewer commute concerns, work-life balance, and adequate leadership support.

Keywords: telecommuting, working from home, employees, punctuality, leadership

Word count: X

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With the ongoing pandemic, telecommuting, or remote working, is becoming more and more common. More and more employers provide flexible work arrangements in a mix of working on-site and from home in the United States and many European countries (Picu & Dinu, 2016). Due to health and safety concerns, the number of people who are working from home has largely increased during COVID-19. The U.S. Remote Work Survey conducted with executives and employees in both public and private sectors reveals that more than 90% of employees work from home at least one day a week during COVID-19 compared to 36% before COVID-19 (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2020). This survey excludes people who are required to work on-site. Moreover, more than 70% of survey participants expressed their interest in continuing telecommuting and increasing the frequency of working from home after COVID-19.

Employers can foresee an increasing trend of telecommuting. Moreover, they would be interested in evaluating job performance when more employees are working from home for almost or all the time. There are some common measurements of employee performance reviews such as the ability to perform, punctuality, work relationship (Muchhal, 2014). Punctuality is one of the feasible measurements of employee job performance. Little research has been conducting on measuring the impact of solely working from home on specific job performance indicators. Thus, the goal of the current study was to uncover the impact of telecommuting on employee perceptions of job punctuality.

Flexible Work Arrangements & Individual Perceptions

Flexible work arrangements are a mix of flexible work styles and everything from working at different premises, telecommuting, to flexible work hours (Kelliher & Anderson, 2008). Researchers have examined the relationship between flexible work arrangements and

employee job performance (Chen & Fulmer, 2018; De Menezes & Kelliher, 2011, 2017; Giovanis, 2018; Kelliher & Anderson, 2010; Timms et al., 2015). Scholars focus on organizational impacts on implementing flexible work arrangements (Gajendran, Harrison, & Delaney-Klinger, 2015). Organizational impacts, for instance, demonstrating clear leadership support on flexible work arrangements, encourage people to adopt this work style. Moreover, managers and their employees were willing to discuss and use flexible work arrangements, when the communication and the relevant documentations were transparent and available to everyone in an organization. Positive responses to offering flexible work arrangements at the executive and the manager levels help with open discussion and adoption of telecommuting or flexible work hours.

Power structures with flexible working arrangements can impact employee preference (Brewer, 2000). Hierarchical structures appear to be formal and inflexible to change in many organizations. Leaders, especially male leaders, can exert influence on upper management. There are theories about male employees having the advantage of taking their time off compared to their female counterparts. Some theories may argue that female employees are less likely to schedule time off or flexible hours than their male counterparts. Their job performance review may be negatively affected by this kind of request compared to their male colleagues. In fact, there is no much difference in terms of setting up flexible work arrangements for both genders within the studied organizations. Yet high power distance organizations may limit the availability of flexible work arrangements and results in employees' negative perceptions.

Lack of proper organizational support can lead to negative employee performance and high turnover when flexible work arrangements are available (Timms et al., 2015). Limited communication and adequate training on flexible work arrangements would discourage people from telecommuting or requesting flexible work schedules. Employees are concerned about if their managers may underestimate the work value when there is limited physical and real-time interaction. There are also fewer or no boundaries between work and

non-work hours. All these factors result in negative perceptions of flexible work arrangements.

However, some studies argue that the positive perception of flexible work arrangements would happen when it is given as an option to employees rather than being assigned by their managers or the company (Chen & Fulmer, 2018). Employee satisfaction increases when there is a clear organizational commitment to offering flexible work arrangements. The accessibility of flexible work arrangements information helps people understand and communicate when they need to request or approve it. The positive relationship can strengthen job performance. Moreover, employees are more likely to adopt flexible work arrangements, as they see appreciation from managers. Employees perceive the flexible work arrangements option as respect to work and life balance.

To further study individual perceptions of flexible work arrangements, we can use job performance indicators as the main factor in this paper. Some researches show that employers apply job performance indicators such as teamwork and job quality in evaluating the benefits and drawbacks of providing flexible work arrangements (De Menezes & Kelliher, 2017; Kelliher & Anderson, 2008). Employees also try to assess how much they can adapt flexible work arrangements. Some people enjoy this while others are resistant to this work style change.

Impact of Telecommuting on Performance and Satisfaction

Job quality is one of the key job performance indicators (Muchhal, 2014). Job quality defines the value of someone's work and helps evaluate someone's job performance. For instance, job quality is found to increase, especially among employees who can commute regularly without delays (Giovanis, 2018). Important metrics to evaluate job quality include the quality of delivering tasks to managers on time and the quality of relationships between employees and managers. For people who need to spend a decent amount of time

and money on commutes, telecommuting is a big relief as it reduces financial and emotional stresses from traffic and time pressure. They can spend more time on completing tasks and less time on complaining about commute issues to their managers.

The ability to promote personal discretion and work-life balance is the key factor of improving employee attitudes and job quality when they practice flexible work arrangements (Giovanis, 2018; Kelliher & Anderson, 2008). Employees first would need to have adequate equipment and technical support when they are telecommuting. Interviews and surveys have shown that telecommuting allows employees to have personal space and freedom in terms of the ways they communicate and deliver work.

The job requirements of physical presence need to be considered in relation to job quality when employers provide the telecommuting option (Bloom, Liang, Roberts, & Ying, 2015; Golden & Veiga, 2005). For the types of jobs that require a lot of face-to-face interaction or physical performance on-site, flexible work arrangements such as telecommuting would be challenging for employees to demonstrate the same or better work quality.

The ability to plan and handle different tasks also seems to increase at some workplaces when employees are allowed to request telecommuting through an informal rather than a formal process with their managers (De Menezes & Kelliher, 2017). Employees prefer the informal request process, as it creates a more personal and exclusive feeling between the requesters and their managers.

Work hours are another common job performance indicator. Employees who work from home may work more intensively than working on-site (Kelliher & Anderson, 2010). Social exchange theory may be able to explain employee appreciation towards the options of having flexible work and life balance. In return, some employees increase their work efforts and contribute to longer work hours at times.

Punctuality

As one of the most visible job performance indicators, employee punctuality is defined as attending meetings, showing up at work, or delivering tasks on time (Muchhal, 2014). Some research has shown that managers support telecommuting when they see employees attend meetings and finish deliverables within expected timelines (Dishon-Berkovits & Koslowsky, 2002). Employee punctuality may actually not be much different between working on-site versus telecommuting for those who have adapted telecommuting in the past.

Positive changes in employee punctuality have been observed at some workplaces when flexible work arrangements are provided (Bloom et al., 2015; De Menezes & Kelliher, 2011). For instance, Bloom et al. (2015) designed an experiment on a group of randomly selected call center employees. Employee punctuality in general does not decrease when they are assigned to work from home. Some employees show up earlier online than being on-site. De Menezes and Kelliher (2011) conducted a literature review on papers about organizational performance, job performance, and individual well-being outcomes across industries. As flexible work arrangements become more popular, more and more organizations are offering transparent communications and trainings about how it works under specific circumstances. Job punctuality can potentially increase when employees use flexible work arrangements, especially working from home. Many people show up at the expected schedule and deliver work on-time more often when they work from home compared to working on site.

We also need to recognize individual differences in interpretations of punctuality, as it helps understand how people define punctuality in relation to individual performance (White & Valk, n.d.). In many organizational or academic cultures, attending meetings late, especially for younger or lower status people, can be perceived as inconsiderate and not professional to those who are older or in a higher status position. This behavior can

lead to negative personal impressions and employee reviews. Individual standards of punctuality and lateness can vary depending on someone's work or life experience. However, in general, being late to a networking event may be more tolerable than running late for a professional conference. Showing up at the expected time or only a few minutes early can be acceptable at many formal meetings. The general definition of punctuality falls under situational and social contexts. This paper uses this definition of punctuality related to telecommuting.

Assessing job performance indicators helps understand how people define or perceive their jobs. Telecommuting has become a popular work practice during the prevailing COVID pandemic. It would be interesting to see how people think of punctuality in relation to job performance when many of us are solely telecommuting. No prior studies have addressed the relationship between the two variables. The purpose of the study was to apply a survey analysis to understand employee perceptions of punctuality when there was an increasing remote working practice.

The two proposed research questions and hypotheses are listed below.

RQ 1: Do employees see their punctuality improve when they work from home?

RQ 2: Do managers see employee punctuality improve when they work from home?

H1: Employees see their punctuality improve when they work from home.

H2: Managers see employee punctuality improve when they work from home.

Methods

Using a mixed survey design methodology, I examined the relationship between the telecommuting practice and employee punctuality. The survey focused only on employees who telecommuted during pandemic. It integrated open-ended and close-ended questions to collect qualitative and quantitative feedback from voluntary participants. The numbers and the context from the survey results collectively would reveal employee experience and

help understand their reflections on the particular work practice and the job performance indicator.

Participants

Employees who have been working from home more than one day a week during pandemic were the intended participants for this sample survey. Employees at different job levels from entry to management were invited, as this paper is trying to capture employees' and managers' perspectives on employee punctuality and telecommuting. Given the research timeline and the leadership permission, I recruited the survey participants from my professional network and most people have been working from home since the COVID-19 started.

The anonymous survey was sent to 120 employees via email. The response rate was expected at 20%. 40 responses were received and the actual response rate was at 33%. 15 participants identified themselves as managers while the remaining 25 participants as non-managers. Most survey participants worked from home five days per week while one participant worked from home four days per week during the pandemic.

Measures

This survey used the phrase, working from home, as many people were more familiar with this phrase than the word telecommuting. The survey measured participants' overall experience, organizational commitment, and perceptions of punctuality. The overall telecommuting experience was embedded with organizational concepts. The perceptions of punctuality further presented how people defined and evaluated punctuality at work, especially during telecommuting. For people who identified themselves as managers, they had a few extra questions to better understand their perspectives.

Overall Experience. The overall telecommuting experience focused on participants' self-evaluation. All 40 participants rated their overall telecommuting experience on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 indicating the worse experience and 5 being the best experience. The average rating is 4.30 out of 5 ($SD = 0.87$).

All participants rated the likelihood of recommending working from home on a scale of 0 to 10 with 0 indicating least likely to recommend and 10 being most likely to recommend. The average score is 8.35 ($SD = 1.76$, Median = 9). Among the 40 participants, 24 people were considered as promoters for working from home, as they gave a score of 9 or 10. 10 participants gave a score of 7 or 8. This indicates that they were somewhat satisfied and not very enthusiastic about working from home. The remaining 6 participants were considered as detractors for working from home, as they gave a score lower or equal to 6. This indicates that these participants were not thrilled or probably had negative thoughts about telecommuting.

All participants were provided with optional and open-ended questions about naming one thing that they like the most and the least about working from home. All participants answered the one thing that they like the most. Many mentioned no commute pressure. 36 out of 40 participants provided feedback about the one thing that they like the least. Missing in-person socialization with colleagues was mentioned the most.

Organizational Commitment. The comparison of telecommuting frequency between pre-COVID19 and during COVID-19 showed how the organization adjusted work styles in response to the pandemic. Before the pandemic, 18 out of 40 participants did not work from home at all. Only three participants worked from home more than two days per week. During the pandemic, all 40 participants worked from home.

The survey asked employee preference towards telecommuting after the pandemic. All 40 participants indicated some preference towards working from home after COVID-19. No one selected not to work from home. 62.5% of participants chose to work from home

between four and five days per week.

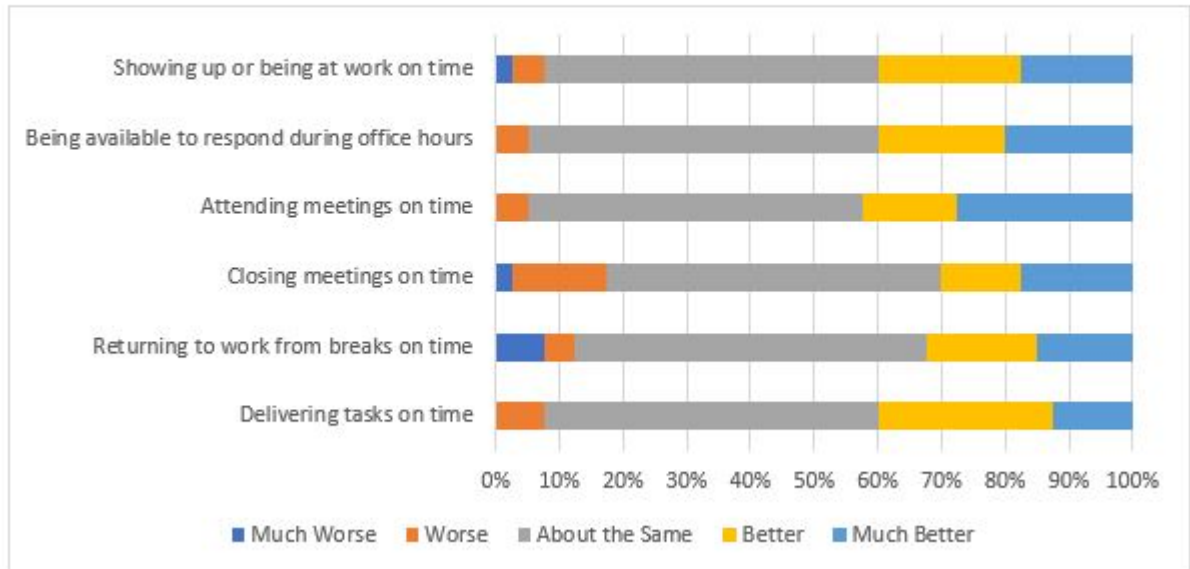
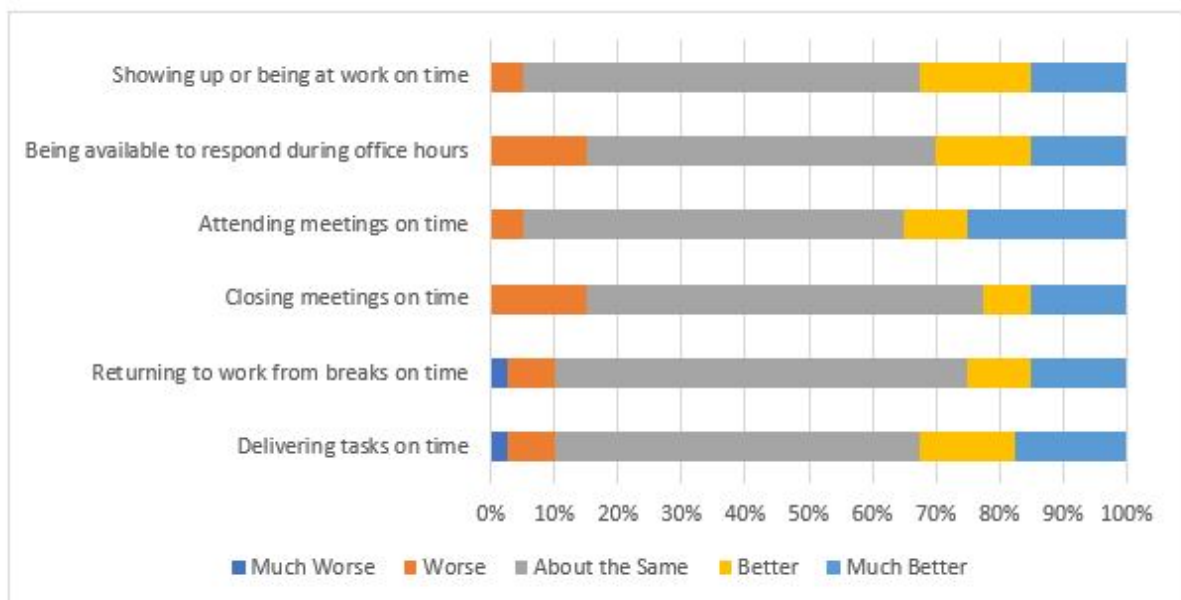
Furthermore, the survey measured the organizational commitment to telecommuting during COVID-19. More than 80% of participants agreed that the leadership provided necessary information to plan and adjust work schedule. More than 70% of participants agreed with the leadership support about providing equipment to set up their home office. 90% of participants agreed with the leadership support about promptly responding to protect health and safety.

Participants also evaluated the frequency of their manager support during the pandemic. More than 60% of participants thought that their managers often provided support in terms of arranging work and paid time off schedules and joining or hosting virtual meetings. When the evaluation was about offering flexible project deadlines, more than 60% of participants thought that they did not receive frequent support from their manager.

Perceptions of Punctuality. The survey assessed perceptions of punctuality through the following concepts, regular commute efforts, self-evaluation and peer evaluation on job punctuality before vs. during COVID-19, contributing factors of punctuality changes, and importance comparison of job punctuality before vs. during COVID-19. The changes in commute efforts affected employees' punctuality and work location preferences. Their evaluations on punctuality definitions, contributing factors, and importance helped understand the attitude changes in situational or sociocultural contexts.

On a scale of much worse to much better, participants were asked to compare the job punctuality of themselves as well as their colleagues before and during COVID-19. Figure 1 shows participants' self-ratings of job punctuality between telecommuting and working on-site. Figure 2 shows their ratings towards their colleagues. Both figures 1 and 2 demonstrate that between 52% and 65% of participants considered the job punctuality of themselves and colleagues about the same in terms of showing up or being at work on time,

being available to respond during office hours, attending meetings on time, closing
meetings on time, returning to work from breaks on time, and delivering tasks on time.

Figure 1*Self-Rating of Punctuality on Working Remotely vs. On-Site***Figure 2***Rating of Colleague's Punctuality on Working Remotely vs. On-Site*

Moreover, 50% of participants rated the same importance of punctuality between

telecommuting and working on-site. 28% of participants rated more important punctuality when people work from home compared to when working on-site. 15% of participants rated much more importance. The remaining 7% rated either less important or much less important.

With the given possible factors that lead to better job punctuality, 23 participants responded and most of them believe that more control over schedule helped. Many also indicated less commute stress, more discretion at working styles, and a quieter work environment.

When it came to the reasons why people may not see an improvement in their job punctuality between telecommuting and working on-site, 20 participants provided different feedback. Some of them mentioned meeting punctuality while some others talked about work and life balance.

Managers had a few extra questions about the frequency of telecommuting and their evaluation of employees' job punctuality during telecommuting. Among the 15 self-identified managers, they confirmed 75%-100% of their employees working from home during COVID-19. This number aligned with employees' answer to the frequency of telecommuting during COVID-19. More than 50% of the managers anticipated 75%-100% of their employees working from home after COVID-19.

53% of managers thought that their employee's overall work punctuality was about the same between telecommuting and working on-site. With 7% giving a worse rating, the remaining 40% of managers considered their employee's punctuality getting better or much better when telecommuting.

Procedure

The sample survey was created online. After obtaining the permission from my leadership at work, I distributed the survey with an invitation hyperlink to potential

participants via email. The survey invitation email was sent out to the selected representative sample to more than 100 employees at a mix of managerial and non-managerial roles. The invitation email explained the purpose of the study and included a consent form for participants. The survey asked a range of questions with a mix of close-ended and open-ended to examine and measure employees' and managers' attitudes towards punctuality and telecommuting during COVID-19. The survey response reached the expected rate, 20% in the first week of distribution.

Data Analytic Plan

All participants answered all required questions. There was no non-normal data. I utilized the analysis charts automatically generated by the survey platform to understand the statistics for each question.

For any free-text responses, I coded keywords and phrases such as in-person connection, schedule flexibility, personal space to fit the context into measures. Combined with sentiment questions, this allowed me to identify if there was any pattern of keywords and to conduct a subjectivity analysis.

The survey questions about perceptions of punctuality were used to test the two hypotheses. The responses revealed the evaluation of employee punctuality with telecommuting from the employee themselves and their managers. The questions about overall experience recommendation and organizational commitment helped further understand the implication of employee attitudes.

Data analysis

We used R (Version 4.0.3; R Core Team, 2020) for all our analyses.

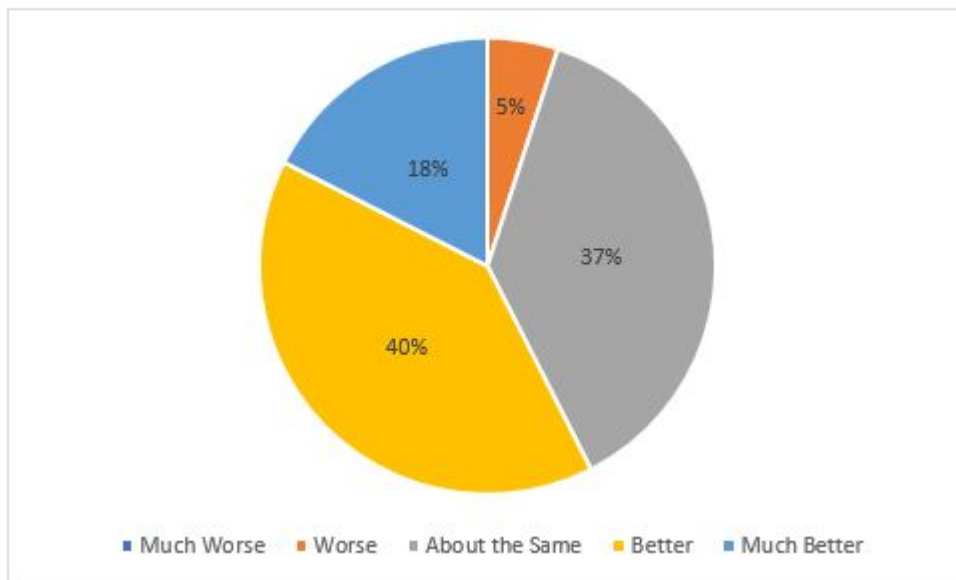
Results

Research Question 1: Employee Perceptions of Job Punctuality

The first research question focuses on whether employees see their job punctuality improve when telecommuting. The survey revealed how participants evaluated job punctuality when they were working from home during COVID-19. Figure 3 demonstrates their self-rating of overall job punctuality including managers. 58% of participants saw their overall punctuality improve when working from home compared to working on-site. To break down the statistics, we see that 40% of participants rated better and 18% rated much better. Among the remaining 42% of participants, 37% believed that their overall job punctuality remained the same when working from home compared to working on-site.

Figure 3

Self-Rating of Overall Punctuality on Working Remotely vs. On-Site



The number of people who rated about the same is very close to the number of people who rated better. This result aligned with their ratings towards specific punctuality experience. As discussed above, figures 1 and 2 demonstrate that a bit more than 50% of participants rated job punctuality of themselves and colleagues about the same between

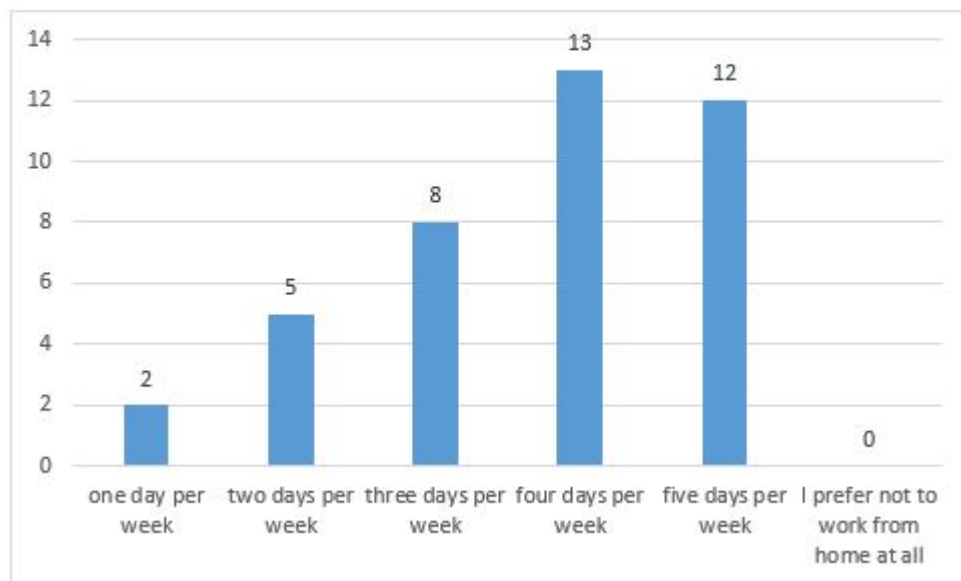
working from home and working on-site. Among the remaining participants, much more people perceived better punctuality experience than negative ones.

The overall positive self-evaluation on job punctuality is also reflected in the overall experience ratings. As mentioned above, the average rating of the telecommuting experience is 4.30 out of 5 ($SD = 0.87$) and the likelihood score of recommending telecommuting is 8.35 out of 10 ($SD = 1.76$, Median = 9). The correlation coefficient between the self punctuality ratings and the telecommuting recommendation is 0.73. This indicates a moderately strong linear relationship between employees' punctuality evaluation and their telecommuting ratings.

Employees seemed to enjoy their telecommuting experience. When they were asked about how frequently they would like to work from home after COVID-19, the majority of participants selected either four or five days per week. As shown in Figure 4, no one selected no telecommuting. This telecommuting preference after COVID-19 once again demonstrates employees' positive experience with telecommuting.

Figure 4

Self-Rating of Telecommuting after COVID-19

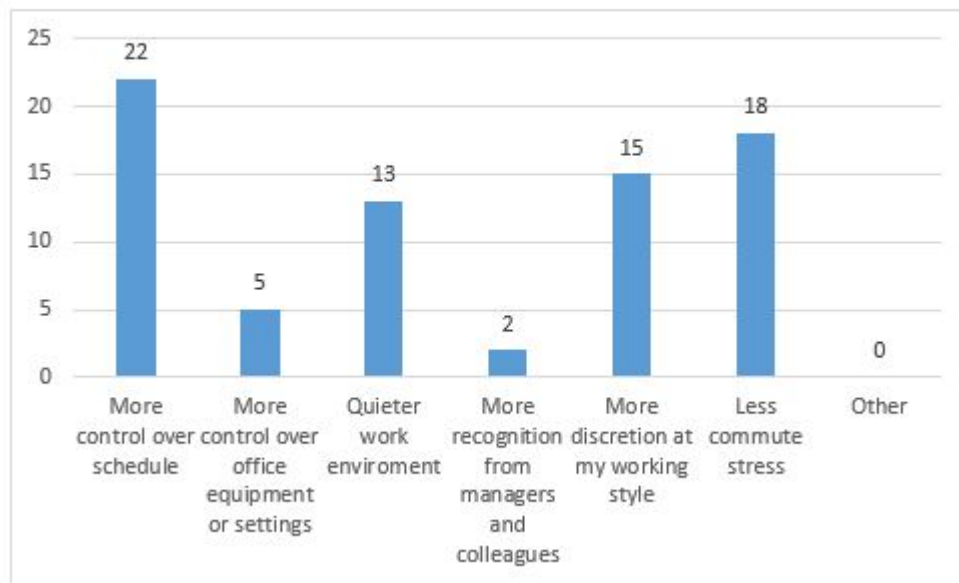


There are several factors contributing to better job punctuality. As figure 5 reveals,

more control over schedule, less commute stress, more discretion at my working style, and quieter work environment are the top four selected reasons of having better job punctuality when telecommuting.

Figure 5

Factors contributing to better job punctuality when telecommuting



This result aligns with individual responses to the one open-ended question, “what is the one thing that you like the most about working from home”. This was an optional question and all 40 participants chose to share their opinions. About half of the participants commented on schedule flexibility. For instance, one participant stated that he or she could “do things during the (lunch at gym time) and then also errands if needed and simply hop on the computer to finish work later.” Similar to the better job punctuality results, about 45% of participants also mentioned less commute stress as the one thing that they like the most about telecommuting. One participant wrote that he or she could “maximize time with family and not waiting any time on commuting back and forth”. Some participants also commented on flexible work style and environment. One stated that he or she could “work at your pace and on one bothers you. The comfort of your own home”. Someone else also mentioned “less oversight from manager”.

The survey also allows participants to share their opinions about the one thing that they like the least about working from home. All 40 participants also responded to this optional and open-ended question. About 70% of participants wrote about lacking in-person interactions. For instance, one participant mentioned “missing connecting running into coworkers and the spontaneous collaboration resulting from interaction”. About 35% of them commented on no clear boundaries between work and home. One participant mentioned “hardness to separate between personal and working hours”.

Moreover, organizational commitments to telecommuting may also contribute to employee perceptions. The correlation coefficient between the ratings of leadership protecting employee health and safety and the self-rating of punctuality is 0.61. The correlation coefficient between the ratings of manager arranging work schedules and the self punctuality rating is 0.51. These indicate a moderate linear relationship between the leadership support and employees’ punctuality evaluation.

When it comes to the factors that may lead to less job punctuality when telecommuting, about 65% of participants commented on limited social interaction. One participant mentioned “less spontaneous social interactions and more friction asking questions/brainstorming ideas”. 30% of them also mentioned technical issues such as inconsistent VPN connections or internet breakdown that can affect their job performance.

In conclusion, employees see their job punctuality improve when they work from home. While there are some factors that can moderately be related to the better punctuality evaluation, we also need to recognize some factors that may negatively impact employees’ perception of job punctuality when they work from home.

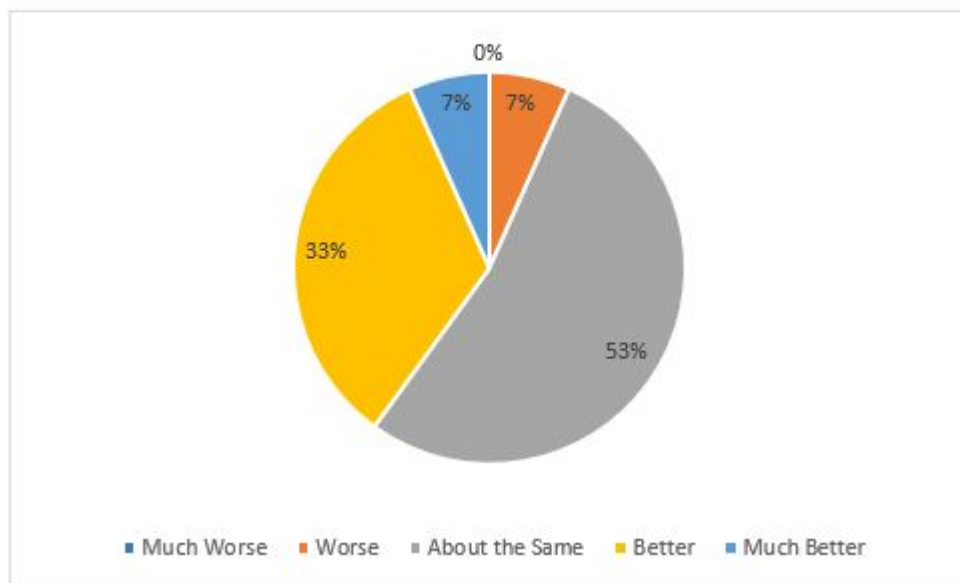
Research Question 2: Manager Perceptions of Job Punctuality

The second research question focuses on whether managers see employees’ punctuality improve when they work from home. 15 out of 40 participants self-identified as

managers in the survey. In the question of rating their employee's overall job punctuality when they worked from home compared to when they worked on-site, 53% of them believed that the employee's job punctuality remained the same. As shown in Figure 6, among the remaining 47% participants, 40% of them rated better or much better.

Figure 6

Manager's Rating of Employee Punctuality on Working Remotely vs. On-Site



Moreover, The correlation coefficient between the above rating and manager's telecommuting recommendation is 0.71. This indicates a moderately strong linear relationship between manager's evaluation on employee punctuality and their telecommuting recommendation.

Among the 15 managers, 13 managers anticipated 50% or above employees continuing to work from home after COVID-19. The 2 managers who anticipated less than 50% are the ones who rated less than 6 out of 10 on the telecommuting recommendation question.

It is important to understand whether there is any statistically significant difference in the ratings between managers and non-managers. The t-test results present the likelihood of telecommuting recommendations between manager and non-manager participants. No statistically significant difference between managers ($M = 8.2$, $SD = 4.03$)

and non-managers ($M = 8.44$, $SD = 2.67$) was found ($t(25) = -0.39$, $p = 0.699$). Similarly, no statistically significant difference between managers ($M = 3.6$, $SD = 0.69$) and non-managers ($M = 3.76$, $SD = 2.69$) was found ($t(30) = -0.59$, $p = 0.559$) in the self punctuality ratings.

In other words, managers and non-managers may share similar perceptions of telecommuting and punctuality. While the overall survey participants see punctuality improve, managers do not see employees' punctuality improve when they work from home.

Discussion

Results Summary

For the first research question, "Do employees see their punctuality improve when they work from home?", the findings support the hypothesis. Employees self-report increasing punctuality when they work from home. This result is consistent with previous studies where people have positive perceptions of remote working. The sample employees rate highly of their telecommuting experience and are willing to recommend telecommuting. Without the need for going into the office, employees relieve pressure from commute time and cost. The home office creates a buffer zone where employees have more control over schedule and enjoyed a better work-life balance. Leadership communication and manager support also help employees adopt telecommuting. Some people recognize some challenges of telecommuting as having limited face-to-face interaction. Yet, the need for telecommuting nowadays changes how people perceive their needs for social interactions. Having virtual catch-ups is a common way to socialize with your colleagues. Overall, employees give positive evaluations of job punctuality and telecommuting experience.

For the second research question, "Do managers see employee punctuality improve when they work from home?", the findings do not support the hypothesis. Managers perceive no increase in their employees' punctuality when they telecommute compared to

working on-site. The number of managers who see no difference is a bit higher than the number of managers who see improvements in job punctuality. In other words, managers' evaluations of employee punctuality do not decrease when they are telecommuting. Moreover, most managers think highly of their telecommuting experience and would like to recommend telecommuting. Similar to non-manager employees, managers anticipated continuous telecommuting after COVID-19. Their positive perceptions of job telecommuting reflect how much support they are willing to provide for their employees. Adequate manager support fosters employees' positive telecommuting experience and evaluations.

Limitations

One main limitation of this study is the limited number of participants. Forty employees from the same department completed the survey. This survey results may represent people who work for the operations function in the financial industry. The data cannot fully represent all telecommuting population in this industry. A different department may have a different perspective about telecommuting due to the nature of their work environment. For instance, employees who barely or never work from home may feel insecure and change their job performance when telecommuting (De Menezes & Kelliher, 2017). Future research can use a larger dataset from the same industry to fully answer the research questions.

Another limitation is the research design of this study. This survey design limits the ability to make causal claims about the connection between job punctuality and telecommuting. Experimental research may better answer the proposed research questions. The study should have one group of employees who work from home regularly and the other comparison group who barely work from home. Future researchers still need to address challenges such as finding robust causal evidence about telecommuting's effects on job punctuality.

Future Directions

Future research can further examine the connections between the specific job performance indicators and employee productivity when telecommuting happens. Here is a potential research question, “Is there a positive relationship between one specific job performance indicator and employee productivity during telecommuting?” Different industries may have different needs for telecommuting despite COVID-19. The frontline staff in finance may have or not share the same telecommuting perspectives with someone in healthcare. The research subjects can expand to more than one industry to validate and evaluate the connections.

Future research can also focus on how organizational policies and leadership support affect employee perceptions of telecommuting and employee productivity. Company policies and communication are changing due to the need for solely telecommuting during COVID-19. Here is a potential research question, “Is there a significant relationship between company policies and employee productivity when employees are telecommuting?” The study may consider comparing previous remote working policies to the new ones in multiple firms.

Implications and Importance

While many studies have focused on the effects of flexible work arrangements, very few examine the relationship of remote working to punctuality. People have shown concerns about declines in employee performance when telecommuting (Timms et al., 2015). However, employees’ self-evaluations in the current study suggest telecommuting may enhance job performance, at least when it comes to punctuality. Organizational commitments and leadership support can contribute to positive perceptions of telecommuting. The solely telecommuting experience due to COVID-19 also re-defines what employees care the most about their work culture. The increased employee autonomy

469 and the saving of travel allow people to focus on their job delivery. Companies can utilize
470 the findings to understand employee needs and adjust the ways to implement
471 telecommuting for their best interests. For instance, employers can proactively
472 communicate with their employees about the telecommuting policy and their ongoing
473 support. Managers can recognize the benefits of increasing autonomy in employees' work
474 styles and facilitate positive job performance. Employees can utilize the ownership of their
475 home office to better balance work and personal needs.

Appendices

Appendix A: Survey Consent

You are invited to participate in a web-based online survey on employee perceptions of job punctuality when telecommuting during COVID-19. This is a research project being conducted by Xiaoying Chen, a student at Harrisburg University of Science and Technology. This research has been approved by the Institutional Review Board of Harrisburg University of Science and Technology. The survey itself should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary. You may refuse to take part in the research or exit the survey at any time without penalty. You are free to decline to answer any particular question you do not wish to answer for any reason.

You receive no direct benefits from participating in this research study. However, your response may help me learn more about your perspectives of job punctuality and performance. The possible risks or discomforts of the study are minimal.

Your survey answers will be sent to a link at Microsoft Forms where it does not collect identifying information such as your name, email address, or IP address. Therefore, your responses will remain anonymous.

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, you may contact my research supervisor, Professor Kayla Jordan via email at kjordan@harrisburgu.edu.

If you feel you have not been treated according to the descriptions in this form, or that your rights as a participant in research have not been honored during the course of this project, or you have any questions, concerns, or complaints that you wish to address to someone other than the investigator, you may contact the Institutional Review Board of Harrisburg University of Science and Technology.

ELECTRONIC CONSENT: Please select your choice below. You may print a copy of this consent form for your records. Clicking on the “Agree” button indicates that

• You have read the above information • You voluntarily agree to participate • You are 18 years of age or older

Agree Disagree

Appendix B: Survey Questions

How would you rate the overall working from home experience? * 1 * 2 * 3 * 4 * 5

How likely are you to recommend working from home to a colleague or a manager? 0 (Not at all likely) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (Extremely likely)

What is the one thing that you like the most about working from home?

What is the one thing that you like the least about working from home?

How often did you work from home before COVID-19? * one day per week * two days per week * three days per week * four days per week * five days per week * I did not work from home at all

How often do you work from home during COVID-19? one day per week two days per week three days per week four days per week five days per week I do not work from home at all

How often would you like to work from home after COVID-19? one day per week two days per week three days per week four days per week five days per week I prefer not to work from home at all

What do you think of the following statements in the response to COVID-19? Each one needs to select from Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, or Strongly Agree.

My leadership has provided necessary information to plan and adjust our work schedule.

My leadership has provided appropriate supplies and equipment to set up my home office.

My leadership has responded promptly to protect our health and safety.

How often do you receive support from your manager in the following aspects? Each one needs to select from Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Very Often, or Always. Arranging work and paid time off schedules Joining or hosting virtual meetings Offering flexible project deadlines

How would you rate the following statements when you work from home during COVID-19 compared to when you worked on-site previously? Each one needs to select from Much Worse, Worse, About the Same, Better, or Much Better. Showing up or being at work on time Being available to respond during office hours Attending meetings on time Closing meetings on time Returning to work from breaks on time Delivering tasks on time

How would you rate the following statements when your colleagues work from home during COVID-19 compared to when they worked on-site previously? Each one needs to select from Much Worse, Worse, About the Same, Better, or Much Better. Showing up or being at work on time Being available to respond during office hours Attending meetings on time Closing meetings on time Returning to work from breaks on time Delivering tasks on time

How would you rate your overall work punctuality when you work from home compared to when you work on-site? Much Worse Worse About the Same Better Much Better

Which of the following do you think contributes to better work punctuality? More control over schedule More control over office equipment or settings Quieter work environment More recognition from managers and colleagues More discretion at my working style Less commute stress Other (free-text entry)

Why do you not see an improvement in your job punctuality when you work from home compared to working on-site?

How would you rate the importance of punctuality when people work from home compared to when working on-site? Much Less Important Less Important About the Same

550 More Important Much More Important

551 Are you at a managerial position? Yes No

552 What percentage of your employees have been working from home during COVID-19?

553 (Managers only) 0-25% 25-50% 50-75% 75-100%

554 What percentage of your employees do you anticipate continuing to work from home

555 after COVID-19? 0-25% 25-50% 50-75% 75-100%

556 How would you rate your employee's overall work punctuality when they work from

557 home compared to when they work on-site? Much Worse Worse About the Same Better

558 Much Better

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