

## Chapter 3

# Factors Affecting Overall Life Satisfaction for Work–From–Home Employees: Evidence From India

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### ABSTRACT

*The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way we live and work. The situation has exponentially increased the use of online platforms in every aspect. Work-from-home has become more prominent, more widespread, and a routine of life rather than the exception. Within this context, drawing support from the conservation of resources theory, a conceptual framework is proposed to list the various factors affecting the psychological capital (PsyCap) which in turn impacts overall life satisfaction. The model is empirically validated with data from the Indian working population using structural equation modeling. Specifically, it was observed that remote abusive supervision, family demands, and work demands negatively influence PsyCap. Simultaneously, social support from work and family (colleague, team, partner/spouse, and parent) positively influences PsyCap. PsyCap, in turn, influences their overall life satisfaction. Psychological detachment negatively moderates the relationship between remote abusive supervision and PsyCap. Implications and future scope of research are also highlighted.*

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## INTRODUCTION

### Background – Covid19

Humanity has been grappling with the pandemic since early January 2020, created by a coronavirus (Covid19). With neither a known cure nor prevention, the only way to restrict the virus' spread was through social distancing, i.e., isolating the sick (Sintema, 2020). Thus, most countries were placed under lockdown (Kaplan *et al.*, 2020). The pandemic had changed the way of functioning for all, some drastically, most permanently. Though countries have started the vaccination process in early 2021, multiple strains created virus' rapid mutation have forced governments across nations to follow social distancing measures, with lockdown restrictions extended (temporarily and intermittently) (Richardson, 2021). Public schools, colleges, public utility spaces like gyms, theatres, malls, etc.) are shut or re-shut after opening for a few weeks. In this scenario, online platforms came to the rescue for socially isolated human beings. Forced to stay at home and unable to venture out, people turned to online avenues for business, education, entertainment, and social interactions. Schools, colleges, and offices, whoever can, shifted to work-from-home arrangements (WFH). Multiple organizations have mandated their workforce to work from home. As per a McKinsey 2021 survey on executives from over 100 geographic locations, most of them are likely to follow a hybrid model of functioning post-pandemic (Alexander *et al.*, 2021).

Since the onset of the pandemic, many organizations have shifted to remote working (work-from-home), in whichever role is possible. New-age stalwarts like Google, Facebook, Twitter, Amazon had mandated one-year or even lifetime work-from-home options. In India, too, companies like Citibank, BCG, HUL, KPMG, RPG Group, Cognizant, Infosys, Philips, Pfizer, Pidilite, and TCS (Basu, 2020), to name a few, have mandated that only essential workers are required to be physically present in the office premises. Tata Group has implemented work-from-anywhere for its employees in specific functions (sales, digital marketing, HR, IT support, etc.) (Bhalerao, 2020). While most preferred to work-from-home during the early lockdown period (as per a survey conducted by Lenovo in July 2020 (Caramela, 2020), the increase in productivity also led to more stress and difficulty in maintaining work-life balance. In addition, people also faced toxic workplace behaviour, albeit online, including incivility, aggressive behaviour, and poor interpersonal treatment (Liu, 2020).

In this context, work-from-home has obtained unprecedented importance, especially being the 'new normal' way of functioning, especially for the workforce. Earlier, work-from-home was considered an employer-provided benefit, given as a way of showing support, to enable employees with family life constraints (young

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