



The study in effect of Theory of Motivation in new workplace strategies.

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Abstract

Current situation is the best example entailing the pros and cons of working being virtually present. Every sector apart from hospitality and tourism which is facing complete shut, all the other sectors including education is accessible on virtual platform. The concept of virtual workplace is where an employee works in a different situation away from his office, manager and his colleagues. IBM has managed to save millions of rupees after going for an infrastructural change and making its employee work on virtual platform. The system is unique in its own way where it offers full-time flexibility and a low stress job. It also has its own list of disadvantages. Employees often feel isolated, lack of trust, difficult to be motivated and even they fear of career limits. The management other than to be focussed more on savings time and cost must acknowledge the existence of virtual teams. Some preventive steps from the management can boost the enthusiasm and integrity within the virtual team.

Keywords: *Virtual workplace, Virtual team, isolated, lack of trust, motivated, career limits*

Introduction:

A unique workplace which is not made up of brick and mortar does not have a physical environment, but involves network of employees from diverse location (Ellis-Christensen, 2013).

Virtual workplace involves various definitions, but in simple words, it refers to a working environment, depending primarily on Internet connectivity, telecommunication, video conferencing (Skype) and faxing (Ellis-Christensen, 2013).

The concept has gained much popularity in recent times. It could be a win-win situation for both company and employees. It has been found that IBM has saved 0-60 percent per site annually by eliminating offices for those employees who could work in virtual presence (Cascio, 2000).

The latest phrase visible in workplace is ‘ **Desktop Breakfast**’ . It means employees take coffee and sandwiches to their cubicles to finish of their morning meal along with pending tasks (The Telegraph-Jobs.2013).

But, a survey done by *officer.com* claims it as a loss of time .This is supported by a UK based real estate consultant who has said British Workers lost 31 minutes on a regular basis.(The Telegraph-Jobs,2013)

The emergence of employees’ presence in **Social Networking Sites** has evolved such as Face book, Twitter, and LinkedIn. A report by *salary.com* exhibits only 18% thought getting connected on Internet was a waste of time whereas others voted attending unnecessary meetings even more a waste (The Telegraph-Jobs, 2013).

Considering these facts and more virtual workplace has eventually started gaining popularity and is practised by more companies in recent times.

Objective:

The prime aim of this article is to report on the findings, from the empirical study-which aims to:

Understand the nature of virtual workplace.

Explore its effect on the employees.

Methodology:

To carry forward this research 5 companies were observed practising the concept of virtual workplace. These included 3 numbers of IT companies and 2 numbers of Media companies.

Sample: The questions were asked to Managers, Team leaders and other employees.

Sample size: 50

Some prominent parameters are taken into consideration:

Objective 1: To understand the nature of virtual workplace (Table 1)

<i>Parametes</i>	<i>Managers-Agree (in %)</i>	<i>Employees-Virtual Workplace – Agree (in %)</i>
Reduction in cost of Infrastructure	80	80
Flexibility in time	80	90
Increase in productivity and quality of work life	90	85
Independence in work handling	70	90
Reduced employee problems	90	-
Reduced stress at work	40	70

Objective 2: To explore its effect on the employees (Table-2)

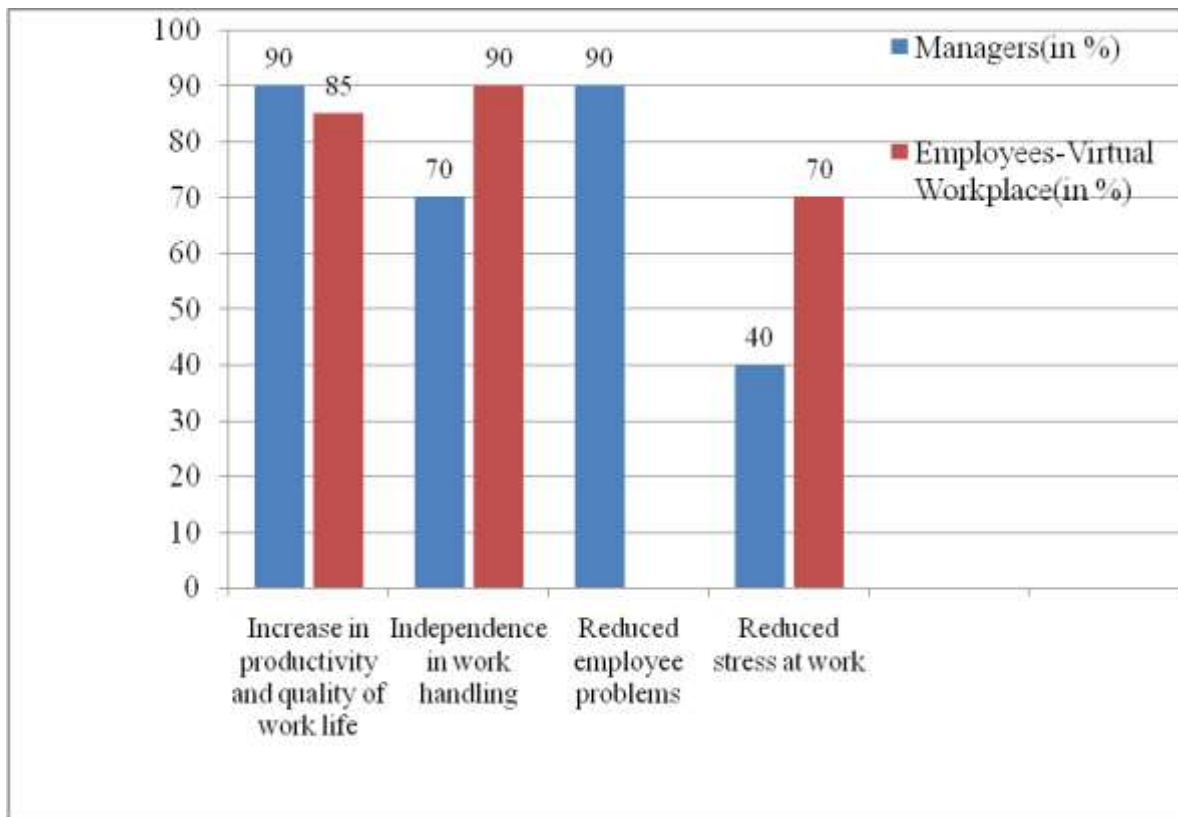
Parameters	Managers-Agree (in %)	Employees- Virtual workplace – Agree (in %)
Lack of interaction with fellow workers	70	90
Fear of career limits due to physical absence	30	80
Lack of proper Performance Management System	80	80
Lack of Group Cohesiveness	90	90
Reluctance of Discipline with respect to work	70	70

The above tables show the list of parameters based on which the managers and employees were interviewed.

Findings:

Below are the graphs interpreting the results deduced for the questionnaire. The graphs represent only the essential portion of the survey.

Finding 1: Nature of Virtual Workplace



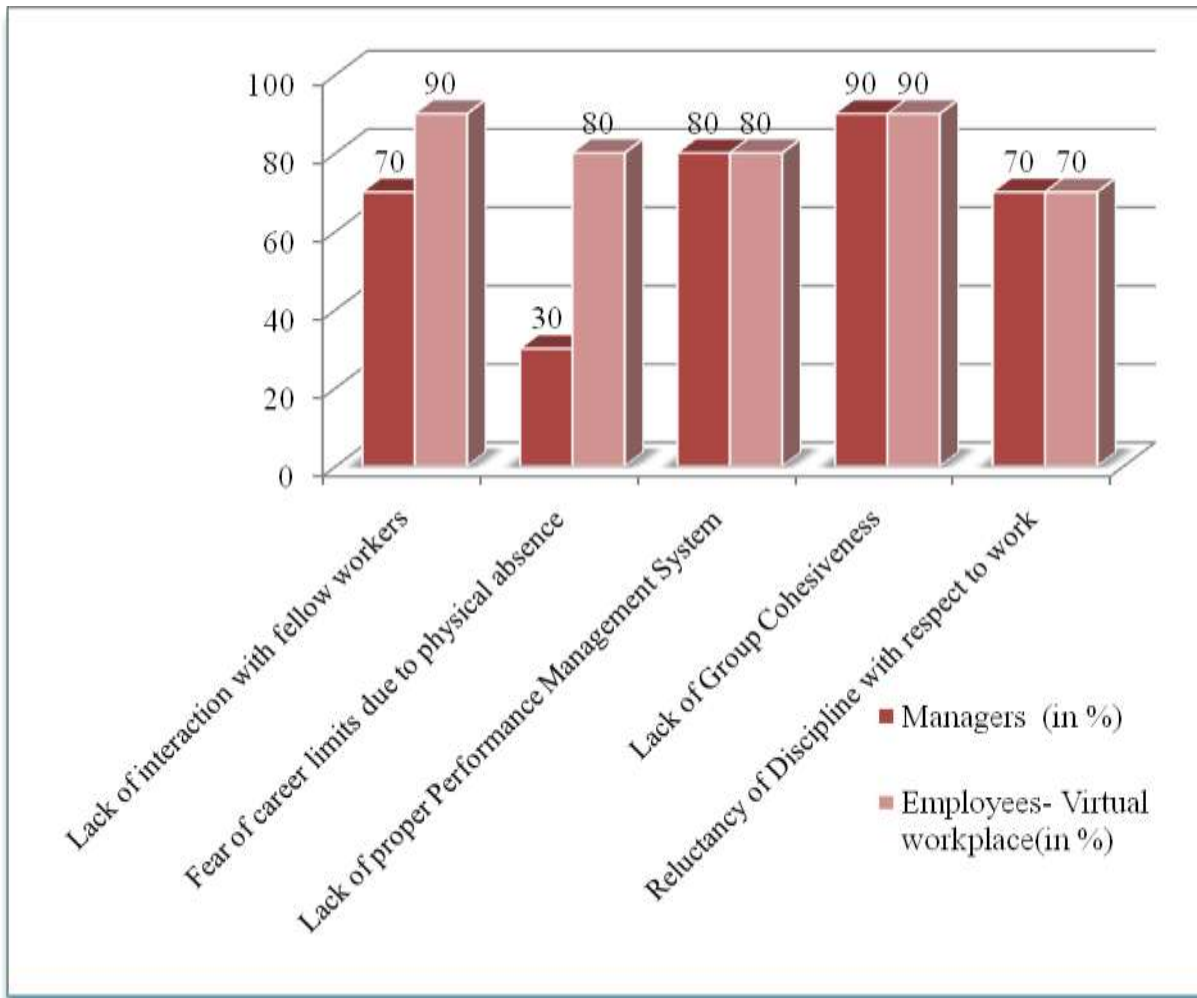
With reference to the graph:-

Increase in productivity and quality of work – life: The employees feel as they are more relaxed and enjoy the flexibility at work. This affects their interests toward work and as a result, the productivity is high.

Independence in work handling: The employees also, specially the women workers as they get more time to spend with their children, take them to doctors, schools, stay with them for long hours, makes them feel less stressed, more oriented towards work. Hence, quality of life also improves. The managers have also acceded with them.

Though the entire work is dependent on technology, still the employees other than technological problems, scheduling tasks, completion of tasks is in their hands. They enjoy the no interference of managers on their works.

Reduced employee problems & stress at work: It is an obvious point; virtual place workers will have fewer problems whether it could be employee-employee relational problem or personal problem. And as these employees are always with their family needs, the percentage of being stressed would be quite low.

Finding 2: Effect on employees

The graph above clearly exhibits:

Lack of Interaction with fellow workers: The emotional distress of Managers and Employees who are or had worked on virtual workplace. They become lonely without regular interaction with their colleagues and hence, end up chatting over telephones for an hour. Lack of face-face communication makes them feel isolated and many employees have also resumed back to offices instead of staying back and working from Home.

Fear of Career limits due to physical absence: Many managers have disagreed to the point of career limits due to physical presence. When interviewed they have said people who are physically present in offices and those who have opted for virtual presence share an equal career opportunity. All are fairly informed for any career advancement programmes, trainings through e-mails. Though a majority of employees have disagreed. They have felt loosening of identity in their offices as not being present physically. If they are informed on any latest information, it is delayed by two-three days.

Lack of Proper Performance Management System: Sometimes it becomes difficult to motivate the employees who are working in virtual presence. These employees feel they miss the emotional support by their colleagues. Also they do not understand the flow of the company, they start developing difficult to trust people in the organisation. The challenges are same in case of managers. When interviewed the managers felt control or monitoring over such employees is almost negligible compared to physically present employees.

Lack of Group Cohesiveness: As the employees lack face-face communication, it results to lack in growth of trust. As a result, lack of group cohesiveness.

Reluctance of Discipline with respect to work: As the virtual place workers avail the flexibility of doing work. Many managers feel the workers leave the pending jobs to be finished at night and fail to meet with the dead-lines. On contrary the workers stated they are more distracted and disturbed when working from home. Friends, family members believe these officers are available at any point of the day and make them socially more engaged.

Conclusion:

The change in the working scenario has proved to be a boon for the professionals especially women employees. Now, they can spend an even time with their family, children, and friends without compromising on their work and vice-versa.

But for a proper implication of the concept of Virtual Workplace, the management still has to take some prerogative steps.

The management has to be more supportive in nature. This could be in terms of cost benefit also align the employees fairly with the organisational strategies (Hloma & Ortlepp,2006).

The management must identify the types of employees who would be working well in this situation. They must offer him a proper training which must include time management skills, personal-balancing strategies and self- well- being development programmes (Hloma &Ortlepp, 2006).

A clear set of targets should be assigned to them with a proper monitoring. It is essential for the management to recognise their contribution and reward them justifiably.

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