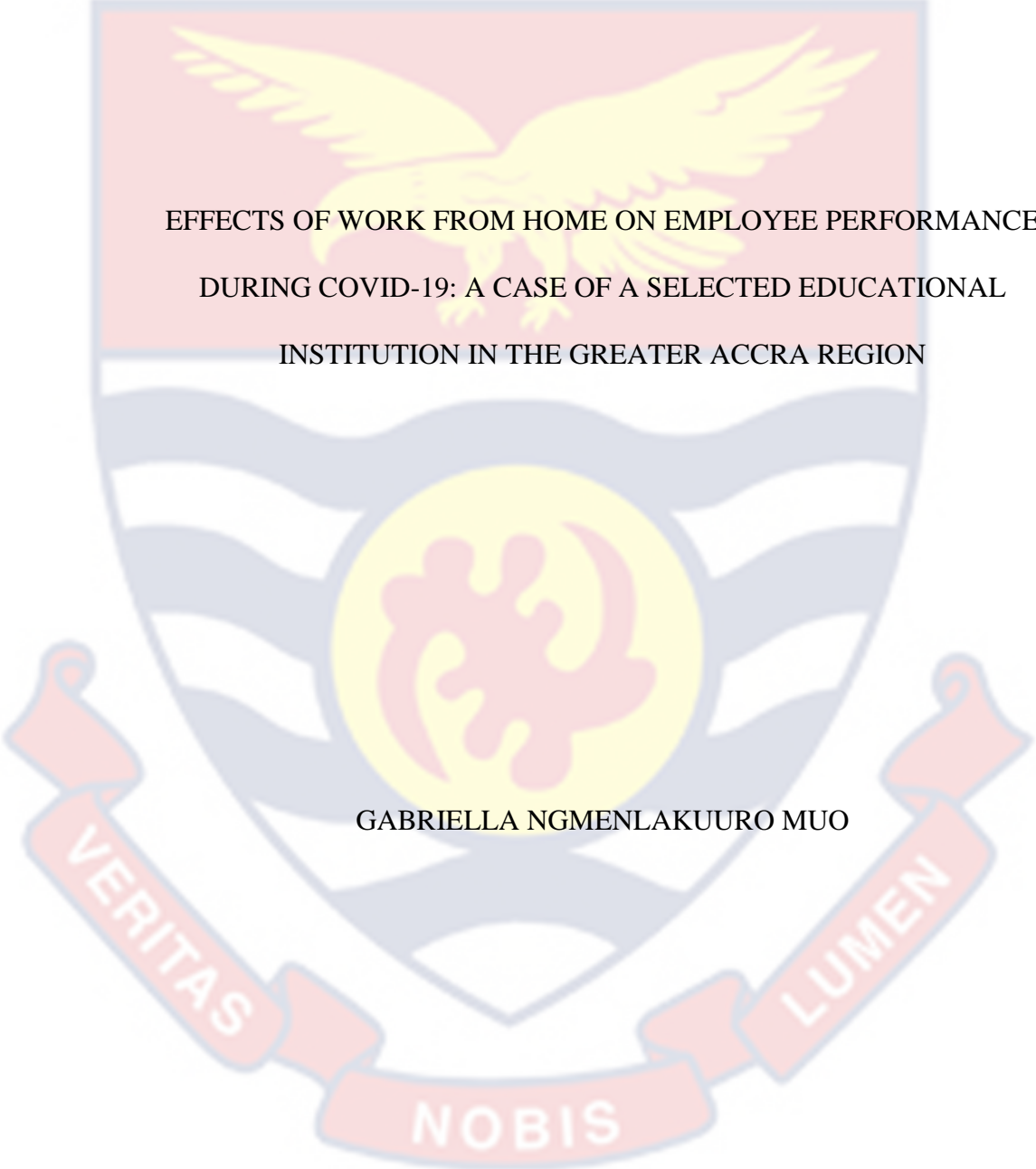


UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST



EFFECTS OF WORK FROM HOME ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE  
DURING COVID-19: A CASE OF A SELECTED EDUCATIONAL  
INSTITUTION IN THE GREATER ACCRA REGION

GABRIELLA NGMENLAKUURO MUO

2024

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INSTITUTION IN THE GREATER ACCRA REGION

BY

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Distance Education, University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements for the award of Master of Business Administration degree in  
Human Resource Management

MARCH 2024

## DECLARATION

### Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature: ..... Date: .....

Name: Gabriella Ngmenlakuuro Muo

### Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the dissertation were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Supervisor's Signature: ..... Date: .....

Name: Dr. (Mrs.) Joana Eva Dodoo

## ABSTRACT

This study sought to determine the perceived effect of working from home on employees' performance during COVID-19 in selected educational institutions. The cross-sectional descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. Through the use of the multi-stage (cluster and proportionate) technique and the simple random sampling procedures, 267 administrative staff were involved in the study. A questionnaire was used to gather the requisite data for the study. Data were analysed through the computation of descriptive and inferential statistics such as frequencies, percentages, mean of means distributions, multiple regression, independent samples and independent t-tests. The results reveal uncertainties among employees regarding perceptions of remote work. Despite this uncertainty, employees demonstrated high task and contextual performance levels, suggesting the effectiveness of remote work arrangements. Challenges associated with remote work, such as task completion and home environment suitability, were also uncertain among employees, emphasizing the importance of organisational support mechanisms. Surprisingly, remote work positively impacted task and contextual performance but negatively impacted counter-productive behaviour. Gender differences in perceived challenges were insignificant, warranting gender-inclusive support mechanisms. Recommendations include implementing flexible work policies, fostering ongoing feedback, and providing resources to support remote work effectiveness. Further research could explore regional differences and reasons for gender disparities in remote work challenges by using open-ended questionnaires and interviews.

**KEYWORDS**

COVID-19

Educational Institutions

Employee Performance

Work From Home

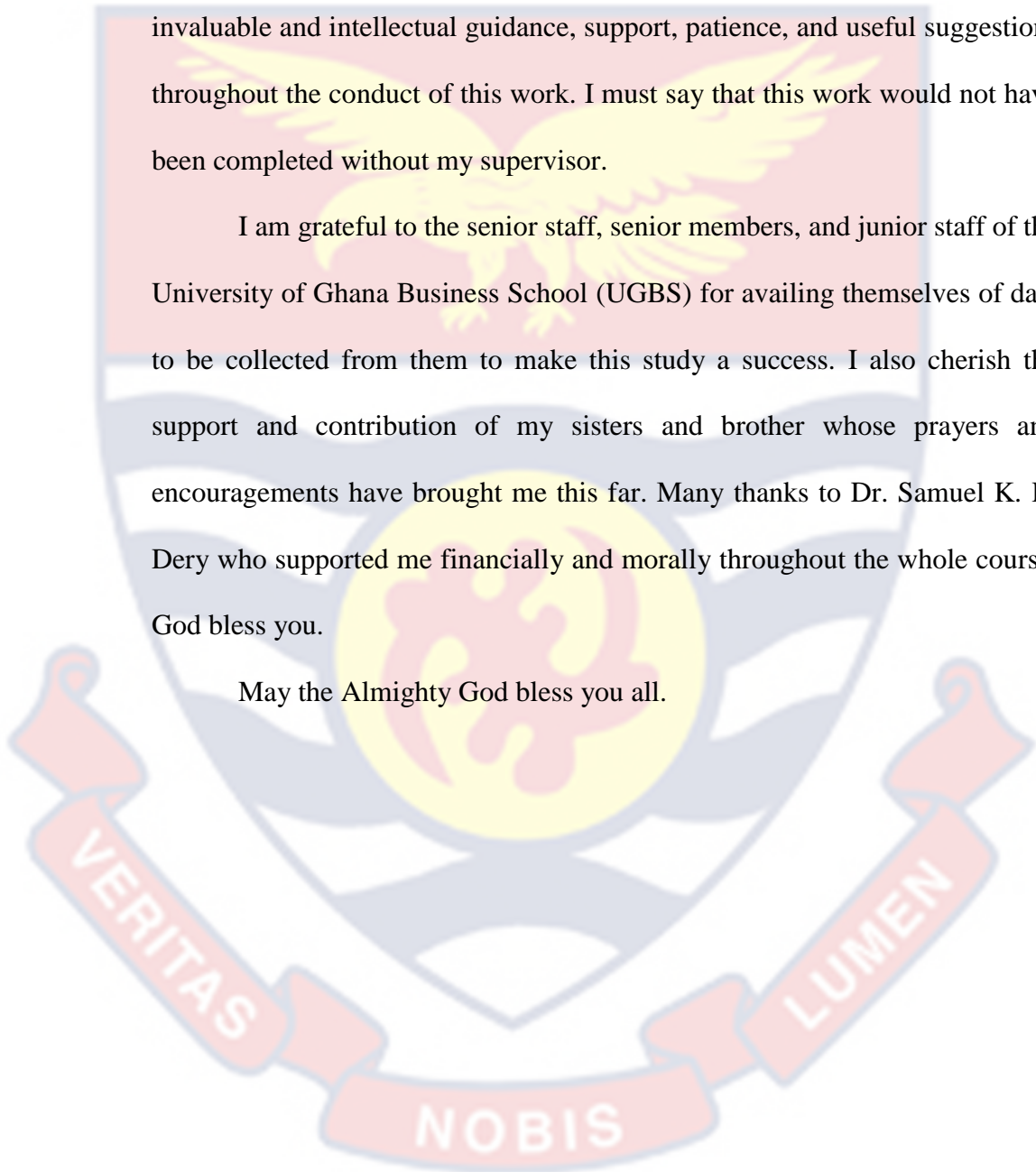


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May the Almighty God bless you all.





## DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my lovely and wonderful husband, Dr. Samuel K. K. Dery who is my mentor in life and source of encouragement, and my children Jessica Bawapagranaa, Jenny Ngmenbuobo, Jacqueline Ngmentero, and Jocelyn Song



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
DECLARATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
KEYWORDS	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
DEDICATION	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
LIST OF TABLES	x
LIST OF FIGURES	xi
LIST OF ACRONYMS	xii
<b>CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION</b>	
Background to the Study	1
Statement of the Problem	6
Purpose of the Study	8
Research Objectives	8
Research Questions	9
Significance of the Study	9
Delimitations	10
Limitations of the Study	10
Definitions of Terms	11
Organisation of the Study	12
<b>CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	
Introduction	13
Theoretical Review	13



Conceptual Review	18
Empirical Review	49
Conceptual Framework	60
Chapter Summary	63
<b>CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODS</b>	
Introduction	64
Research Paradigm	64
Research Approach	65
Research Design	66
Study Area	67
Population	68
Sampling Procedure	69
Data Collection Instrument	72
Data Collection Procedures	74
Data Processing and Analysis	75
Component Matrix	75
Validity and Reliability	76
Ethical Considerations	77
Chapter Summary	78
<b>CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION</b>	
Introduction	79
Analysis of Data from Respondents	79
Perceptions of Employees on the Practice of Work From Home	81
Level of Employee Performance in Relation to Working from Home	85
Challenges Faced by Employees During Work from Home	88

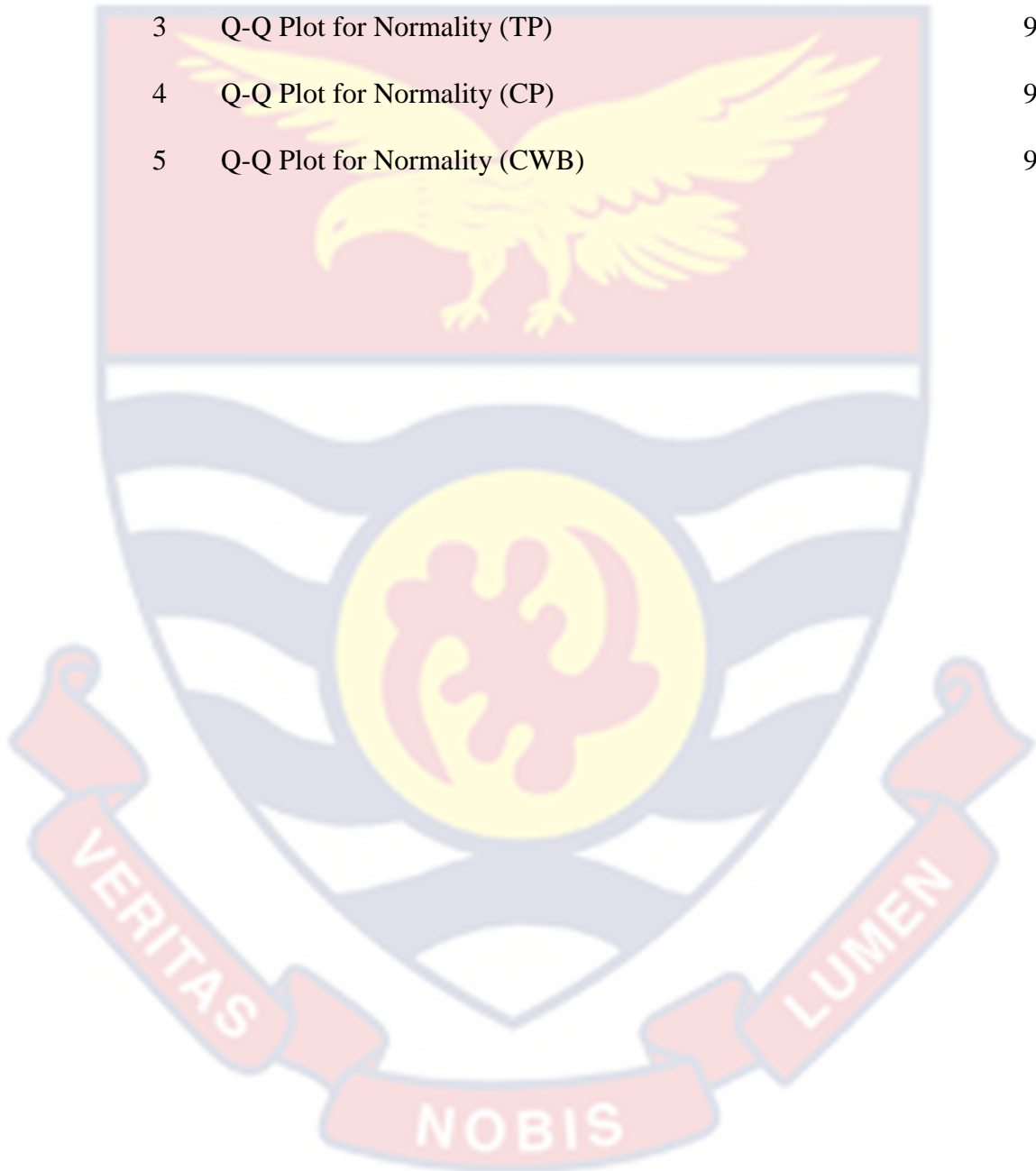
Effect of working from home on employee's performance	91
Correlation Analysis	91
Normality Test	92
Model Diagnostics Test	94
Regression Results	96
Differences between the Perceptions of Male and Female Employees Regarding the Challenges they Face while Working from Home	98
Chapter Summary	100
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	101
Introduction	101
Summary of the Study	101
Summary of Key Findings	102
Conclusions	103
Recommendations	106
Suggestions for Further Research	107
REFERENCES	108
APPENDICES	142
APPENDIX 1 - QUESTIONNAIRES	142
APPENDIX 2 - COMPONENT MATRIX	147

## LIST OF TABLES

	Page
1 Reliability Statistics	76
2 KMO and Bartlett's Test	77
3 Characteristics of Administrative Staff	80
4 Perceptions of Employees on the Practice of Work from Home	82
5 Level of Employee Performance in Relation to Working from Home	85
6 Challenges Faced by Employees during Work from Home	88
7 Correlation Matrix <sup>a</sup>	91
8 Model Summary <sup>b</sup>	95
9 ANOVA	96
10 Multiple Regression Analysis of Working from Home on Employee's Performance	97
11 Independent Samples T-test on the Perceptions of Male and Female Employees regarding the Challenges they face Working from Home	99

**LIST OF FIGURES**

	Pages
1 Conceptual Framework of the Study	61
2 Steps involved in the multi-stage technique	70
3 Q-Q Plot for Normality (TP)	92
4 Q-Q Plot for Normality (CP)	93
5 Q-Q Plot for Normality (CWB)	94



**LIST OF ACRONYMS**

CP	-	Contextual Performance
CWB	-	Counter-productive Work Behaviour
EP	-	Employee Performance
SPSS	-	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TP	-	Task Performance
WFH	-	Work from Home
WFO	-	Working from the Office
WLB	-	Work-Life Balance



## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

The practice of working from home (WFH) has been rising for years since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic (Bick, Blandin & Mertens, 2023).

As more organisations and employees use computers and have access to reliable home Internet connections, it is expected that WFH will remain a viable option for most organisations and establishments (Al-Habaibeh, Watkins, Waried & Javareshk, 2021). Compared to Working from the Office (WFO), WFH has the potential to reduce commuting time, provide more flexible working hours, increase job satisfaction, and improve work-life balance. The COVID-19 pandemic forced a dramatic rush to WFH in early 2020 for a large fraction of the workforce in countries across the world (Bloom, 2020). Even if only a fraction of this shift becomes permanent, it would have implications for urban design, infrastructure development, and reallocation of investment from inner cities to residential areas. There is significant debate about how effective WFH will be, how much further we can improve implementation, and the extent to which firms will continue using WFH. Initial experiences led to optimism, but many firms are starting to question the sustainability of extensive WFH (Waizenegger, McKenna, Cai & Bendz, 2020). This prompts one of the most important questions in this context how WFH affects productivity.

#### **Background to the Study**

The COVID-19 pandemic has catalyzed a transformative shift in organizational operations and workplace dynamics globally (Ratten, 2020). As governments worldwide imposed lockdowns and social distancing



measures, organizations had to rapidly adapt to ensure business continuity. This adaptation led to the widespread adoption of remote working, fundamentally altering traditional office culture (Haffar et al., 2023). The abrupt shift to working from home (WFH) has introduced a new norm, challenging the status quo and presenting both opportunities and difficulties for employees and employers alike (Kniffin et al., 2021). WFH has emerged as not only a temporary solution during the pandemic but also a potentially enduring component of the future work landscape (Bai, 2020). This paradigm shift from physical office spaces to virtual work environments underscores the need to understand its implications on various aspects of organizational performance, including employee productivity and satisfaction (Shareena & Shahid, 2020).

The imperative to maintain and enhance productivity amid the uncertainty brought on by the pandemic has become more critical for organizations (Bryce et al., 2022). Productivity, often regarded as the backbone of organizational performance, directly influences an organization's efficiency and success (Kamble & Wankhade, 2017). It encompasses the efficiency with which employees perform their tasks and contribute to the organization's goals (Barrero et al., 2021). During the pandemic, as many organizations adopted WFH, questions arose about whether this mode of working would sustain productivity levels seen in traditional office settings (Kniffin et al., 2021; Thorstensson, 2020). Understanding the factors that influence productivity in a remote work environment is crucial for developing strategies to support employees and optimize their performance.

While the concept of working from locations other than the office has been explored for decades, it has not been widely implemented until recently. Known variously as telework, work in third spaces or smart work hubs, this model involves working remotely from home, satellite offices, or other non-traditional workspaces (Jaiswal & Arun, 2024). Initially, WFH was part of flexible working arrangements designed to enhance work-life balance (WLB) and accommodate employees' personal needs (Dockery & Bawa, 2014). However, the pandemic has thrust WFH into the spotlight as a necessary measure rather than a voluntary arrangement (Kazekami, 2022). The increasing reliance on WFH highlights the importance of understanding its impact on both individual performance and organizational outcomes. This model, which promises greater flexibility and autonomy, must be scrutinized to identify best practices and potential pitfalls.

Employee performance, defined as the quality and quantity of work produced in fulfilling job responsibilities, is a critical metric for organizational success (Elangovan & Rajendran, 2021; Meričková et al., 2020; Kusumaningrum et al., 2020). Effective WLB initiatives can enhance productivity by reducing conflicts between work and personal life, thus fostering a better balance and improving overall employee satisfaction and performance (Santiawaty & Erawantob, 2022). The challenge for organizations is to implement WLB strategies that are effective in a WFH context, ensuring that employees can maintain high performance levels while managing their responsibilities. The balance between work demands and personal life is pivotal in determining employees' motivation, engagement, and ultimately, productivity.

In many developing countries, WFH has been perceived as ineffective due to cultural and technological challenges (Flores, 2019). For instance, in Indonesia, employees struggled to adapt to the new work system and faced technological barriers (Purwanto et al., 2020; Setyawan & Lestari, 2020). The lack of reliable internet infrastructure, limited access to digital tools, and insufficient training on remote work technologies have exacerbated these challenges. Despite these obstacles, the global pandemic necessitated the implementation of WFH, highlighting the need for improved infrastructure and support systems (Xiao et al., 2021). This situation underscores the disparities between developed and developing countries in terms of technological readiness and adaptability to remote work.

Over the years, three key factors—technology, globalization, and changing work culture—have supported the growing popularity of WFH (MacRae & Sawatzky, 2020). Technological advancements, including global internet connectivity and digital communication tools, have enabled remote collaborative work. Technologies such as video conferencing, cloud computing, and project management software have facilitated seamless communication and collaboration among remote teams. Globalization has facilitated the hiring of talent across borders, making it easier to work on international projects. Furthermore, shifts in work culture towards more flexible, autonomous, and independent working arrangements have supported the adoption of WFH, aligning with the aspirations of many modern workers (Kniffin et al., 2021; Bellmann & Hübler, 2021; Thorstensson, 2020). These factors have collectively redefined the traditional notions of the workplace,

making remote work a viable and often preferable option for many organizations and employees.

Empirical studies across different countries provide varied insights into the impact of WFH on productivity. In Indonesia, Prasetyaningtyas, Heryanto, Nurfauzi and Tanjung (2021) found that WFH positively impacted productivity in the banking sector, although it negatively affected work-life balance. This suggests that while remote work can enhance certain aspects of performance, it may also introduce new challenges that need to be addressed. In India, Ravi and Anulakshmi (2021) demonstrated that stress negatively impacted productivity, while WLB and job satisfaction had positive effects during the pandemic. This highlights the complex interplay between different factors influencing employee performance in a WFH setting. In Nigeria, Mmakwe and Ukoha (2018) highlighted that flexible working hours significantly enhanced employee performance in the banking sector by balancing personal and organizational roles.

In Ghana, Tardie and Umar (2022) revealed that WFH during COVID-19 was as productive as office work. Their findings emphasized the need for organizations to invest in WFH-friendly infrastructure, such as laptops and mobile devices, to support remote work. This adaptation not only maintained productivity but also reduced the costs associated with office space and commuting (Darkwah & Tsikata, 2021). By facilitating a smooth transition to remote work, organizations can harness the benefits of WFH while mitigating its challenges.

This study aims to explore the effects of WFH on employee performance during the COVID-19 pandemic, specifically within the context



of Ghanaian educational institutions. By addressing the benefits and challenges of WFH, this research seeks to provide insights that will inform the development of effective remote work policies and practices. Understanding how WFH influences employee performance in this specific context can help educational institutions optimize their operations and support their staff during and beyond the pandemic.

### **Statement of the Problem**

It is becoming increasingly common for organizations to offer their employees the option to work from home for various reasons, such as decreasing office rent costs, balancing work-life for employees, and saving time on commuting (Van der Lippe & Lippényi, 2020). This trend gained significant importance during the COVID-19 pandemic as many countries implemented physical distancing strategies to curb the spread of the virus, making working from home (WFH) the only viable alternative for many employees (De Klerk, Joubert & Mosca, 2021). Given that employee productivity is a critical business factor, it is essential to investigate whether WFH influences productivity, whether the influence is positive or negative, and how these factors have evolved since 2000 (Ravi & Anulakshmi, 2021).

Currently, there is widespread adoption of WFH practices across various sectors, including education (Mordi, Ajonbadi, Adekoya & Oruh, 2023). This shift was initially driven by necessity during the pandemic but has since continued due to its perceived benefits. However, the impact of this shift on employee performance remains mixed and warrants further investigation. The main issue with the current situation is the mixed and often contradictory findings regarding the impact of WFH on employee productivity. Some

studies report positive outcomes, such as increased job satisfaction and flexibility (Ansong & Boateng, 2018; Prasetyaningtyas et al., 2021), while others highlight negative effects, such as decreased team performance and higher stress levels (Van der Lippe & Lippényi, 2020; Ravi & Anulakshmi, 2021).

The COVID-19 pandemic was a significant catalyst for the widespread adoption of WFH policies. During this period, many employees were reluctant to commute due to the stigma and fear of contracting the virus, which impacted their willingness and ability to work from the office. Studies by Guler, Guler, Gulec, and Ozdoglar (2021) highlighted the health and productivity impacts of WFH during this period. This research focuses on the University of Ghana (Legon). Unlike other sectors, the educational sector, particularly in Ghana, has received limited attention regarding the impact of WFH on employee performance.

Research in other settings has provided mixed results. For instance, Van der Lippe and Lippényi (2020) found that team performance declined when co-workers frequently worked from home. Conversely, Prasetyaningtyas et al. (2021) found significant positive effects of WFH on employee productivity in Indonesia's banking sector. Ravi and Anulakshmi (2021) observed a negative relationship between stress and productivity among advertising agency employees in India. In Ghana, studies like that of Ansong and Boateng (2018) on telecommuting in the telecommunications sector indicated higher job satisfaction due to WFH practices. However, these studies were conducted before the pandemic and did not address the educational sector, thus lacking recent and sector-specific insights.



There is a notable gap in understanding the impact of WFH on employee performance within educational institutions in Ghana. Most existing research focuses on other sectors and regions, leaving a significant gap in the educational context within Ghana. Addressing this gap is crucial as educational institutions have unique operational dynamics and employee roles that may respond differently to WFH practices. This study aims to resolve controversies and fill knowledge gaps by exploring how WFH affects employee performance in an educational institution. It will address the contextual gap by focusing on the University of Ghana and assessing the unique challenges and benefits of WFH in this setting. The dependent variable in this study is employee performance, while the independent variable is the WFH arrangement.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to determine the perceived effect of working from home on employees' performance during COVID-19 in selected educational institutions in the Greater Accra Region.

### **Research Objectives**

Specifically, this study sought to:

1. Examine employees' perceptions of the practice of working from home.
2. Evaluate the level of employee performance in relation to working from home
3. Assess challenges faced by employees during work from home.
4. Examine the effect of working from home on employee performance.

5. Determine the differences between the perceptions of male and female employees regarding the challenges they face working from home

### **Research Questions**

1. What are the employee's perceptions of the practice of working from home?
2. What is the level of employee performance in relation to working from home?
3. What are the challenges faced by employees during work from home?
4. What is the effect of working from home on employee performance?
5. Is there a difference between the perceptions of male and female employees regarding the challenges they face working from home?

### **Significance of the Study**

In advancing arguments to address the study objectives, the study makes theoretical and practical contributions to extend knowledge and practice. This study was considered beneficial to university policymakers whereby valuable information on the extent to which working from home has affected employees' performance during the COVID-19 pandemic in the selected educational institutions. Secondly, the study was to benefit the College employees by improving their performance towards their clients (students and other stakeholders of the university). Finally, the study was to benefit and help future researchers as their guide and also hopefully bridge some gaps that the previous researchers left as far as looking at other effects of work from home on employee productivity in educational institutions and factors affecting employee performance in public institutions.

### **Delimitations**

Geographically, the research was delimited to employees of a selected educational institution in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana (University of Ghana Business School (UGBS)). The study was delimited to employees of selected educational institutions. The study focused on the outcome of the effects of working from home on employee performance in the educational institutions under consideration. The study made use of both primary and secondary data. Secondary data was used to identify the total staff size which was sampled for the survey whereas primary data was collected based on the sampled survey from the research setting. The data was primarily collected through the use of a questionnaire, open-ended questions in a semi-structured format, and closed-end questions. Collected data was analyzed critically using descriptive and inferential statistical methods.

It is imperative to note that the results of this study cannot easily be generalized to all educational institutions across this country. This is because it is possible not all institutions practised working from home.

### **Limitations of the Study**

Every study is likely to be faced with some imposed restrictions and this study may not be an exception. For instance, the uncooperative attitude of some employees affected the study. Some employees were reluctant to answer the questionnaires wholeheartedly because of fear of being victimized by the employers in case, they wrote anything negative about the organisation. Again, since the questionnaire was employed as the instrument for the study, some of the items were not answered and some of the respondents were not truthful in responding to the items on the questionnaire. In addressing these

limitations, the researcher checked for completeness upon receiving each of the questionnaires from the employees. Again, the researcher explained points for clarification and assured respondents of confidentiality.

### **Definitions of Terms**

#### **Work from home**

Work from Home (WFH) refers to a work arrangement where employees or individuals perform their job duties remotely, typically from their own homes or any other location outside the traditional office setting (Grant, Wallace & Spurgeon, 2013).

#### **Employees**

Employees are individuals who work for a company, organisation, or individual in exchange for wages, salaries, or other forms of compensation. They are hired to perform specific tasks, roles, or responsibilities within the employer's business or operations (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020).

#### **Employee performance**

Employee performance refers to the assessment of an employee's effectiveness, productivity, and contributions to their organisation. It is a measurement of how well an employee carries out their job responsibilities and achieves the goals and objectives set by their employer (Decramer, Audenaert, George & Van der Heijden, 2021).

#### **Work-life balance**

Work-life balance refers to the equilibrium between an individual's work-related responsibilities and their personal life activities. It is the ability to effectively manage and prioritize the time and energy dedicated to one's



professional commitments and personal pursuits, such as family, friends, hobbies, health, and leisure activities (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011).

### **Educational institutions**

An educational institution is an organisation or establishment dedicated to providing formal education and instruction to students of different ages and backgrounds. These institutions are designed to facilitate learning, foster intellectual growth, and impart knowledge and skills in various fields (Brint, 2020).

### **Organisation of the Study**

Chapter One of this study focused on the introduction; background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives, and research questions, hypotheses, significance of the studies as well as delimitation and limitation of the study. Chapter Two dealt with the literature related to the study. The literature review entailed a theoretical review conceptual frameworks and empirical review. Chapter Three described the methodology that was adopted for the study. It also described the research approach, research philosophy, research design, population, the sample and sampling procedures for the study, the research instruments, and pilot testing procedure, the validity and reliability of the instruments, the data collection process, and the data analysis. Chapter Four dealt with the results and discussion of the study and Chapter Five considered the summary, conclusions, and recommendations of the study.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Introduction

The chapter reviews the literature on the perceived effect of working from home on employees' performance during COVID-19 in selected educational institutions. It discussed the theoretical review including theories such as; Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory. Also, conceptual review of key concepts such as; Work from Home, Work from Home during the Pandemic— Global Perspective, and Work from Home (WFH) were reviewed. Moreover, dimensions of the employee performance concept were discussed. Finally, the chapter discussed an empirical review and concluded with a conceptual framework.

#### Theoretical Review

In this section, the researcher discusses some of the relevant theories from the works of literature that underpin this study

#### Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory

Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, proposed by Abraham Maslow in 1943, is a foundational theory in understanding human motivation. This theory posits that human motivation progresses through a hierarchy of needs represented by a pyramid (Maslow, 1987). At the base of the pyramid are basic physiological needs, which include food, shelter, clothing, rest, and safety (Kenrick et al., 2010). As these basic needs are met, individuals seek to satisfy higher-level needs such as belonging and love, esteem or social needs, and ultimately self-actualization (Tay & Diener, 2011). According to this theory, individuals must satisfy their lower-level intrinsic needs before they



can focus on higher-level needs (Nwagwu, 2020). For example, an employee cannot concentrate on esteem or psychological needs if their basic physiological needs remain unmet.

In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory provides a valuable framework for understanding how working from home (WFH) affects employee performance. The pandemic forced many organizations to rapidly adopt WFH policies as a survival strategy to ensure business continuity and safeguard employees' health (Sawatzky & Sawatzky, 2019). From Maslow's perspective, this shift can be seen as addressing both lower and higher-level needs simultaneously. For instance, remote work during the pandemic meets employees' basic safety needs by reducing the risk of virus exposure (a physiological need) while also addressing higher needs for job security and stability (Sawatzky & Sawatzky, 2019). The pandemic has highlighted the importance of meeting these needs to maintain employee motivation and performance.

However, while remote work may provide safety and job security, it also presents challenges in fulfilling other needs in Maslow's hierarchy. The absence of physical workplace interactions can impact employees' sense of belonging and social connections, which are critical for their emotional well-being (Sawatzky & Sawatzky, 2019). Furthermore, the lack of a structured work environment can hinder employees' ability to achieve esteem and self-actualization needs, such as recognition and professional growth (Nwagwu, 2020). This lack of social interaction and recognition can lead to feelings of isolation and decreased motivation, ultimately affecting performance.

Therefore, it is essential to understand how these needs are balanced and how they affect overall employee performance during the WFH period.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory is particularly relevant to this study because it offers a comprehensive framework for understanding how various levels of employee needs are affected by the shift to WFH during the COVID-19 pandemic. By using this theory, we can systematically analyze how WFH impacts different aspects of employee well-being and performance (Nwagwu, 2020). This approach helps in identifying specific areas where organizations can intervene to support their employees better. For instance, while WFH addresses safety needs, organizations must also find ways to enhance social interactions and provide opportunities for professional development to fulfil higher-level needs. Studies have shown that remote work can be part of higher needs for autonomy, self-leadership, self-actualization, and the need to achieve or express creative sides (Sawatzky & Sawatzky, 2019). However, during a crisis such as a pandemic, organizations must first think of survival and cushion the effect on employees by ensuring they are not laid off and can work from home.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory is employed in this study to provide a structured analysis of how remote work affects employee performance by addressing different levels of needs. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for developing strategies that enhance employee productivity and well-being in the context of remote work.

### **Herzberg's two-factor theory**

The theoretical foundations of this study represent the Herzberg Two-Factor Theory. Herzberg (1968) proposed a well-known Two-Factor Theory

also known as the Motivator-hygiene. The Herzberg Two Factor theory assumes that all employees in an organisation have the same set of needs therefore allowing the organisation to predict the factors that must be present on the job (Yusoff, Kian & Idris, 2013). The motivation-hygiene theory explains that people work in their self-enlightened interest, and they become happy when they can accomplish their tasks. The theory implies that there are two sets of factors known as hygiene factors and motivation factors or satisfiers, which affect employees' working attitudes and level of performance named Motivation-Hygiene Factors (Hall, Baddoo, Beecham, Robinson & Sharp, 2009).

The hygiene factors are often referred to as dissatisfiers and the motivators are classified as satisfiers (Bradley, 2003). The central argument of Herzberg's theory is that when employees meet lower-level needs (extrinsic, hygiene factors) they will not be motivated to exert more effort but will only prevent them from dissatisfaction (Yusoff et al., 2013). Yusoff et al. added that to motivate employees, higher-level needs (Intrinsic or motivational factors) must be provided and catered for in the organisation. The primary difference between motivator factors and hygiene factors is that, where the motivator factors result in positive satisfaction, the hygiene factors on the other hand prevent any dissatisfaction from the employee.

Herzberg argues that eliminating the cause of dissatisfaction (through Hygiene factors) would not result in satisfaction for employees instead results in a neutral state. Herzberg's Motivation-hygiene theory explains that motivators (satisfiers) are elements in the workplace that include: recognition, work responsibility, advancement, and challenging work which gives positive

satisfaction. The motivation factors are intrinsic to the job content and the factors are responsible for adding more meaning to the job. On the other hand, the hygiene factors referred to as ‘dissatisfiers’ include; supervision, interpersonal relations, and working conditions.

Locke and Lathan (1990) added that hygiene factors include; pay and salaries, company policies and administrative policies, physical working conditions, status, interpersonal relations, and job security. The contribution of Herzberg’s theory to this study is that various factors affect employee performance. Motivation represents one of the key factors affecting employee performance and therefore management must provide both physical and non-physical factors to motivate employees and hence improve performance. organisations must supply both intrinsic and motivational factors to spur employee performance (Hall, Baddoo, Beecham, Robinson & Sharp, 2009). When employees are satisfied with both intrinsic and motivational factors and also working environment is improved, it reduces complaints and absenteeism while increasing productivity (Roelofsen, 2002).

The theory further contributes to an insight into the study of employees by espousing the ‘dissatisfiers’ and ‘satisfiers’ effect on the work environment on employee individual performance (Samson & Swanson, 2015). Herzberg’s theory has some criticisms. One important criticism of this theory is that the theory omitted other behavioural criteria such as performance, absenteeism, and labour turnover. Oldham and Hackman (1976) also noted that the theory does not allow for individual differences such as particular personality traits, which would impact an individual’s unique responses to motivating or hygiene factors. In view of this, the study sought to



test the effect of respondent's characteristics on the relationship between work environment practices and employee performance. The researcher therefore adopts the Herzberg theory to underpin this study.

### **Conceptual Review**

The key concepts underpinning this study have been discussed in this section.

#### **The concept of working from home before the pandemic**

In 1976 a US scientist, Jack Nilles, had posed the option of using telephone lines and computers to move some work out of traditional offices and thereafter came to be acknowledged as the 'father of telecommuting' (Mears, 2007), which evolved into WFH. A similar suggestion of WFH came as a response to another business problem, that of high gasoline prices with an article in a leading American newspaper suggesting that gasoline (petrol) costs could be saved by people working from their homes (Schiff, 1979).

A study of US employees working from home in all industries found that by 2000 the number of employees working from home almost doubled. This was especially true amongst jobs that relied on information technology (Oettinger, 2011). The author also found that this increase was largely driven by the fall in costs of working from home. In a 1989 article in the Wall Street Journal, management guru Peter Drucker stated that all the basic infrastructure was available for knowledge work to move from offices to the residences of employees (WatersLynch, 2020).

A UK study (Bailyn, 1988) of IT and non-IT employees indicated that working from home made employees independent and increased their motivation. A US study (Linos, 2020) found that while teleworkers, working

at home, showed a reduction in productivity, their peers who worked in the offices showed an increase in productivity. A pioneering experimental study (Bloom, Liang, Roberts & Ying, 2015) in a travel agency in China by researchers from the University of Stanford was conducted to understand the effect of WFH on call centre employees. They found that when employees started working from home the productivity of call centre employees increased by 9%, with a 50% drop in turnover (attrition). However, they also found that employees were worried about their chances of promotion because they may not be visible to the management. A study in Germany (Kira & Beckmann, 2016) showed that employees worked harder when working from home.

Another study found that knowledge workers chose WFH to avoid the daily commutes and reduce disturbances they faced in offices, and to fulfil family commitments (OWL Labs, 2017). A global study reported in the *Harvard Business Review* (Schawbel, 2018) indicated that around two-thirds of employees working from home did not feel engaged in their work; most of these were knowledge workers. The author shared his own experiences of working from home over several years where he felt very positive about a lot of things, like independence, and yet felt isolated and disengaged.

### **The concept of work from home during the pandemic — a global perspective**

As the pandemic forced societies to lock down, a study (Dingel & Neiman, 2020) estimated that over one-third of the total jobs in the US ‘can be performed entirely at home’, including the typical knowledge work of the IT industry. Research among white-collar employees found that immediately



after the lockdowns were implemented a fall in productivity was seen. This (fall in productivity) may be expected whenever there is a large-scale change, such as the lockdown (Berstein et al., 2020). The fall in productivity was reversed after a couple of months, and the employees found themselves with 10 to 20% longer working hours on average. An Italian study found that even an arrangement of working one day a week from home (which they call ‘smart-working’), increased the productivity and well-being of workmen in a traditional Italian company of blue- and white-collar employees (Angelici & Profeta, 2020). Another US study of knowledge workers found that productivity was up mainly because employees were spending less time in meetings and more time with customers and partners, and non-essential activities were down by 25% (Birkinshaw et al., 2020).

However, a study by Wu and Chen (2020) at Purdue University amongst a cross-section of US employees showed that while workload increased by about three hours per week after the lockdowns, there was a 38% fall in productivity largely due to technology and connectivity reasons. The Economist (2020) magazine reported that employees were experiencing longer working hours and the reality of working from home was less ideal than what employees had expected. The article quoted other research to say that Israelis on average were working 47 minutes longer, South Koreans, seven minutes longer and Japanese workmen, 16 minutes longer than before the pandemic, while they were at their regular workplaces. This was also the conclusion of a survey (PWC, 2020), which found managers and employees differing in how they viewed productivity, with 44% of the managers

expressing that the employee productivity had increased although only 28% of the employees reported an increase in their productivity.

An interesting study (Quito, 2020) found that employees working from home while under lockdown, were conveying feelings and emotions by using about 80% more emojis, including some newly developed emojis (for example, to convey Wi-Fi problems at home). As long back as the 1980s (De Sanctis, 1984) it was suggested that working from home (or telecommuting, as it was called then), would be a problem if issues of communication and provisions of adequate physical resources were not addressed.

Giurge and Bohns (2020) advised employees to build boundaries while working from home with simple activities like going for a walk during normal commute time and wearing more formal clothes even while working at home. An article (Deighton, 2020) quotes Microsoft as developing tools to help employees who miss out on, say, the commute time from home to the office, by building a virtual commute into their calendars. A Brookings study by Guyot and Sawhill (2020) predicts that WFH will continue in the foreseeable future. Even as the pandemic is ongoing business leaders like Microsoft founder Bill Gates predicted that WFH will continue with some newer ways of doing work (PTI, 2020).

In a study among employees working from home during COVID-19, the researchers Bao et al. (2020) found that the increase in productivity was not consistent and that WFH was not positive for all employees. The employees working on larger projects were most negatively affected. In a qualitative study of Indonesian employees at WFH during the pandemic, the researchers Mustajab et al. (2020) found that WFH negatively affected

women employees who had to pick up the entire burden of housework in the absence of domestic help due to the lockdowns and the high expectations of society and family. In a 'unique' study (the authors used this word to acknowledge the coincidence of studying similar employees before and during the pandemic) the authors Beno and Hvorecky (2021) noticed a drop in the productivity of employees while working from home and this was because of the difficulties of balancing the many domestic activities.

After a detailed study on the impact of the WFH paradigm, Alon et al. (2020) conclude that in the long run, WFH may have some positives for women employees since organisations will start investing more in child care, flexible working and other options to ensure that women employees continue to maintain productivity. At the same time, men would learn the additional responsibilities of child care and relieve the burden on the women employees to that extent.

### **Work from home (WFH)**

It was alluded to in the previous chapter of this study that remote work is not a new phenomenon (MacRae & Sawatzky, 2020). It did not come into the limelight in the workplace as a cure-all innovation for global businesses on account of COVID-19 (Davidescu, Apostu, Paul & Casuneanu, 2020). It is neither a new work style nor was it the first time that workers began to work from their homes rather than from their office cubicles, private offices, pantries, or factory production spaces provided by their employers (Toscano & Zappalà, 2020; Virtanen, 2020). It was seen as one of the work designs or methods that could be adopted to cushion the effect of the infectious disease outbreak (COVID-19) on the society and economy (Mirzoev & Sedaghat,

2020; PwC, 2020). This is because most businesses, apart from those providing essential services, had to shut down their physical operations as a matter of exigency government policy, or legislation. This was done to protect their workforce from contacting and/or spreading the virus which had no cure at the beginning of the crisis.

However, for the first time, remote work became an inevitable work strategy that received global acceptance and was a new experience for most workers who had to work from their homes for the first time in their working lives (Focacci & Santarelli, 2021; Vyas & Butakhieo, 2021; Chanana & Sangeeta, 2020). But some authors such as Barrero, Bloom and Davis (2021), Contreras, Baykal and Abid (2020), and Kniffin et al. (2021) argue that remote work has become a post-pandemic reality that might not be easily shaken off in many workplaces. For these authors, a return to the pre-pandemic context might be entirely difficult because of the lingering fear of infection, and the potential that remote work holds in many economies such as the German economy in which remote work is feasible for about 56% of its overall workforce (Alipour, Falck & Schüller, 2020; Bellmann & Hübler, 2021). But doubts remain, one of which is safeguarding valuable corporate data from cybersecurity attacks by social engineers and hackers (Borkovich & Skovira, 2020). These attacks may happen owing to employee error, negligence, or risky behaviour (Saroy, Gupta & Dhal, 2020). However, since remote work helps the organisation to align its needs with those of the employee, remote work remains a work strategy that may not be easily wished away (Prasad & Mangipudi, 2021). Particularly in Nigeria where work stress is found to be high in most industries, including the financial industry, remote



work might help reduce employee job stress in the FinTech industry and enhance employee performance (Atiku, Jeremiah & Boateng, 2020).

### **Factors that may necessitate remote work in a post-pandemic world**

According to Yuliati, Smith and Prasetyaningtyas (2023), there are indicators of work from home including:

1. Flexible work environment. A work environment that allows employees to have their own choice of how, when and where employees are involved in tasks related to their work.
2. Stress disorders. Stress disorders can be caused by a stimulus that turns heavy and prolonged so that it is difficult for a person to deal with it and usually occurs due to life problems and daily disturbances.
3. Proximity to family. The role of the family is important for someone to support all activities and activities.
4. Travel time. Travel time is the time it takes to cover a certain distance.
5. Health and work balance. Maintaining health and work balance for an individual is something that is important and must be considered to obtain maximum work results.
6. High creativity and productivity. Creativity is needed to always provide ideas in solving problems.
7. Separating homework and work and self-pressure.

### **Benefits of working from home**

According to Johns and Gratton (2013), there is a prediction among experts that within a few years, more than 1.3 billion people will work remotely. Accordingly, it can be deduced that this working arrangement is gaining popularity among employers. Dell has embraced this type of working



and believes the flexibility it offers increases job satisfaction, and engagement and enables attraction and retention of top talent (Kossek, Thompson, & Lautsch, 2015).

There are benefits of working from home for employers as well as employees. Savings may be made by the employer in terms of office space, energy used and insurance (Khorsand & Peráček, 2023). Richardson and McKenna (2014) in her study found that participants did not have a permanent desk at the office but availed of hot desking – a phenomenon whereby employees make use of open cubicles 10 during time spent at the office. Through this method, the company can save desk space. Dell has implemented similar measures and encourages employees to share communal spaces when based at the office (Kossek, Thompson, & Lautsch, 2015). At the same time these savings for the employer may result in costs to the employee as once working from home they will need to utilise their energy and make provisions for a home office. Dell has introduced a formal working remotely policy and offers employees an allowance to cover the costs of running a home office (Kossek, Thompson, & Lautsch, 2015).

Other companies may not offer this allowance and the cost involved may be seen as a negative, it can also be argued that employees are saving on the economic and environmental costs of commuting. They can avoid the stress and time of commuting (Emerald Group Publishing, 2008). As Khorsand and Peráček (2023) put it time spent commuting can be time put back into work and not commuting will also save the employee money. The actual savings or costs resulting from teleworking can be difficult to quantify as one cost appears to trade off against a saving.

According to Emerald Group Publishing, (2013), productivity can be increased when people are not constrained by a schedule and can work at their own pace and to their timetable. Different employees may be more productive at different times of the day and working from home gives people the flexibility to plan their day around such realisations. Khorsand and Peráček (2023) supported this point and noted that once the teleworker is available during core business hours and working as many hours as the office-based employees an early start or a late finish should be at the employee's discretion. Khorsand and Peráček (2023) also discussed other advantages such as scheduling appointments or running errands at quieter times of the day to save time. Wheatley (2012) noted the same benefits with employees able to schedule the day around home responsibilities.

The indication is that employees with more control over their working day are ultimately happier, more satisfied employees with more time to invest in how they choose. For many employees, it is easier to work uninterrupted at home than at work as people are more comfortable telling their family not to interrupt them than their colleagues or boss (Tietze & Musson, 2005). Boundaries in the home are important however so that workers can minimise interruptions and family members are aware of where they stand. Some people in the study carried out by Tietze and Musson (2005) used a change of outfit or lipstick to distinguish work time from home time. All used some form of marker to differentiate between the two.

## Negative impacts of working from home

### *Multitasking*

Some female informants, especially those who are married and have children, state that they have difficulties in dividing household tasks with their husbands such as taking care of children, cooking and other tasks because the husbands cannot do these tasks and household assistants, who usually do the work, are forced to temporarily leave during the COVID19 prevention quarantine period to apply social distancing and protect all people to avoid the pandemic so that they do dual roles and tasks even though this has an impact on workload and high work stress for them (Beck & Hensher, 2022). Furthermore, this dual role and task do not apply to couples who can divide tasks with their respective partners and this makes the atmosphere at home more harmonious and fuller of cooperation like teamwork (Ward, 2017).

### *Decreased work motivation*

Decreased motivation in working is felt by employees who do WFH, this is due to the dilemma conditions and the mindset they have about “the perception of the home is a place to rest” (Ward, 2017). However, when working at home, many employees lose focus on choosing to work or relax with their family to enjoy the area quarantine period and social distancing to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Decreased work motivation is also caused by many disturbances such as invitations to communicate through social media, social interaction with colleagues without discussing work and enjoying the means of entertainment they have such as watching movies, karaoke and playing with children, these activities directly make them

reluctant to do the work given and often postpone their work (Beck & Hensher, 2022).

#### ***Additional cost***

However, by doing WFH, there will be additional financing (Ward, 2017). To this problem, all informants state that by doing WFH, many of the bills they incur such as increased electricity, internet, and communication costs, differ when they work in the office, all of the financings is certainly borne by the employer, due using electronic devices, sending data and making virtual communications more often result in surges in the bills they have to pay and this problem weighs on their routine expenses (Beck & Hensher, 2022).

#### ***Distraction***

During the WFH, many employees feel technical and social distractions such as family disruptions and slow internet speeds or electrical power restrictions so they often lose focus and choose to postpone work until they rediscover work spirit and reduce distraction to do or complete work (Beck & Hensher, 2022).

#### ***Limited communication***

The WFH phenomenon as an effort to prevent COVID-19 in Indonesia generally provides several advantages and disadvantages, but the most often felt by employees (who become informants) is the obstruction of communication both with colleagues and managers (Beck & Hensher, 2022). Limited communication is often caused by technical problems such as disruption of the internet network so they have difficulty sending work data and information to each other and they feel the difference from the



psychological aspects in which before the COVID-19 outbreak, they always interact in the office and communicate directly so they can see the face and the response of the other person directly.

From the current literature, there are also identified challenges facing remote work. Some of these include as following:

First, communication challenges. In the pre-pandemic era, most organisations had their employees assembled in an office environment where communication was made between and among them. With remote work, communication challenges may ensue on account of a poor network, poor signals, and poor weather conditions (Yusuf, 2021). In addition, without effective communication, job performance and overall organisational productivity may be threatened. Second, some studies have also reported management, transparency, and technology challenges as some of the demerits facing remote work (Beno and Hvorecky, 2021).

Third, team cohesion is said to be threatened during remote working which could delay project delivery timelines or cause friction between and among team members if not well managed (Parham and Rauf, 2020). Fourth, training employees in the latest software and technology equipment that should aid remote work may also pose a difficult challenge as reported by some studies (CIPD, 2021). Fifth, with a lack of supervision, employee job performance may also plummet if they lack self-motivation, self-management, and self-leadership abilities. Sixth, corporate data and information can also be attacked which, if successful, could affect the fortunes of the organisation involved (Maurer & Nelson, 2020).



Seventh, feelings of vulnerability, isolation, loneliness, and lack of interaction with colleagues and team members could affect job quality, delay the timely delivery of tasks, and increase workload (Bellmann & Hübler, 2021). Eighth, a balance of work-family pressures may be difficult to achieve particularly for women professionals whose daily escape to work would have been denied them as they must put up with meeting the needs of their families and meeting job deadlines (Bellmann & Hübler, 2021). Ninth, time management problems may also become an issue for remote workers. As they work from home, the temptation to relax a bit, extend the flexible work time they have, or be immersed in the comforts of the home environment may deny them the professional urgency that their jobs require (Beno & Hvorecky, 2021).

Tenth, in developing countries, infrastructure problems such as poor electricity supply, high internet and data costs, cost of fueling electric generators, and costs may make remote work very challenging (Prodanova & Kocera, 2021). Lastly, one-third of the global workforce (36%) who make up hourly workers and live paycheck to paycheck will find remote work impossible because they must earn their daily wages by going to a designated place of work such as a factory (Kuruzovich *et al.*, 2021; Prasad & Mangipudi, 2021; Schmitt, Breuer & Wulf, 2021)

According to Timsal and Awais (2016), companies that support work-from-home claim that this last opportunity results in greater productivity. Changes in the organisation in assigning duties and responsibilities to employees by "prohibiting" employees from working in offices and gathering in rooms, so that employees have to work at home, this is called work from

home (WFH) or working from home (Mustajab, et al., 2020). For now, WFH is a strategy adopted by many organisations and provides many benefits for organisations including educational institutions.

### ***Higher education***

Today, more than ever in their history, higher education institutions are being judged by how they respond to the social and economic needs of society, that is, how they are facilitating social mobility and wider access to higher education for disadvantaged groups (Furlong & Cartmel, 2009). How their actions enhance graduate employability, their short-term and long-term contributions to national economic growth and local development, and how they are stimulating the birth of new enterprises and innovation in existing firms. However, the complexity of our world is constantly adding new challenges for higher education institutions. However, not all of the challenges require direct responses or can be solved by higher education institutions. Yet, in their totality, these challenges raise questions about the current shape and constitution of the educational sector (tertiary level). Some scholars call for a deep, radical and urgent transformation. Barber, Donnelly and Rizvi (2013), in particular, highlight the relevance of traditional conceptual and organisational models of higher education institutions.

### **Employee performance**

According to Sinaga and Nawangsari (2019), understanding performance is an overview of the level of achievement of an activity program or policy of realizing the dream, objectives, vision, challenges, and organisational mission that is poured through the strategic planning of an organisation. According to Motowidlo, (2003), performance comes from the

word job performance or actual performance (the achievement of the real work or progress achieved by someone). Performance sense is the result of work in the quality and quantity by an employee in fulfilling their duties following the responsibilities given to him. Performance is the result or level of one's overall success during a certain period of carrying out a task in comparison to various possibilities, such as the standard of work, and targeted or predetermined criteria, and is agreed to jointly (Motowidlo, Borman & Schmit, 2014).

According to Anderson and Butzin (1974), performance is a function of motivation and ability. To accomplish a task, a person should have a certain degree and level of ability and skill. Performance is a real behaviour that is shown by everyone as a work achievement produced by personnel in keeping with their role inside the company. Mowday, Porter and Dubin (1974) described performance as a level of contribution given by employees to the purpose of their work or unit of work and company or organisation as a result of their conduct and application of their skills, abilities, and knowledge. Choi, et al. (2019) cited that overall performance is dimensional; thus, performance is a variable that can be perceived as a measurement and suffering from several factors.

According to Marwansyah (as cited in Purba, Rafiani, & Ali, 2018), performance is the success of a person regarding the duties exposed to him. According to Wibowo (as cited in Bohlen, 2019), performance can be seen as a process or work outcome. Overall performance is the output produced by way of the capabilities or signs of a job or a profession at a particular time (Rinny, Purba & Handiman, 2020). The performance is used to signify the

production of a company/organisation, tools, management features (manufacturing, financial marketing), or output of an employee. Performance could be critical because overall performance can find out how high-quality their ability to finish duties assigned to it.

Performance is the volume to which a character is carrying out tasks. It refers back to the degree of accomplishment of the venture that makes up an employee's job (Manyenga, 2016). The contribution of employees' inactivity is the most vital aspect of development and excellence in business. An employee's overall performance is a primary supply of reaching the organisation's goals. The overall performance of personnel on distinct jobs in near coordination is wanted for the fulfilment of the unit. Employees have to recognize what they want to do to carry out their processes successfully (Golden & Gajendran, 2019). Any enterprise can make progress most uncomplicated if its employees perform in a better way.

Performance is described as a document of consequences that result from a specific pastime, all through a particular duration as well (Angelis, Conti, Cooper & Gill, 2011). Overall performance can be summed up because of the vision that may be achieved with the aid of a person or group of human beings within a business enterprise both quantitatively and qualitatively to fulfil the powers duties obligations of each, to achieve the goals of the organisation in query legally, it now not violates the regulation following moral or ethics.

According to Sedarmayanti (as cited in Alfiyah & Riyanto: 2019), increased employee performance has been seen from the growth in fulfilment of the agency that can reap predetermined organisational goals. Performance



is individuals tormented by effort, ability, and environmental situation (Santoso & Riyanto, 2020). According to Dessler (as cited in Alfiyah & Riyanto, 2019), performance is a work performance, specifically an evaluation among work outcomes with set standards, each in amount or best of work consequences of individuals or corporations in organisations in wearing out simple responsibilities and features that are guided by normal, operational standards processes criteria and predetermined or relevant measures in the corporation.

Bintoro and Daryanto (as cited in Kusfiandi, Lenny & Nawangsari, 2020) stated that the employee's overall performance is the result of the personnel achievement fee throughout all particular durations of duty compared to the range of possibilities, such as the usual of the visions, the goal or targets or criteria which have determined in advance has been once upon. According to Rivai and Sagala (as cited in Nurhidayad & Purba, 2019), performance is the actual conduct of employees as work achievements generated by their role within the company. According to Mondy (as cited in Kusfiandi, Lenny & Nawangsari, 2020), overall performance appraisal is a formal machine to evaluate and examine the overall performance of the obligations of employees, both people and teams.

While Wilson (as cited in Huda, Nawangsari & Sutawidjaya, 2018), stated overall performance is the result of work finished by someone based on activity requirements. The overall performance is the final result of an activity. According to Hasibuan (as cited in Herlissha & Riyanto, 2019), performance is a result of work carried out by a person in sporting out obligations assigned to him based totally on skill, experience, and sincerity in



addition to time. Worker performance is the total predicted cost of episodes of behaviour completed by personnel over a certain period for the organisation. The overall worker performance describes the conduct of personnel staff at work that contributes to the desires of the employer (Anitha, 2014).

In determining someone's overall performance, Rivai (as cited in Setyowati & Nurhayati, 2019), provides the following dimensions of overall worker performance:

1. The ability to work relates to a person's ability to carry out a given task or responsibility.
2. Quantity of speed completes the work, this relates to the number of jobs that can be completed according to the set time, the target set, or the target for each employee
3. Thoroughly or accuracy relates to the accuracy, fragility, correctness, and proficiency in working so that the work is assured according to the task given.
4. Loyalty relates to the willingness of an employee to prioritize better completion of a task given for benefit in a company accompanied by the use of good time scheduled or not, either in a company or outside the company for the progress of the company.
5. The initiative is related to the ability, to improve and update the results for the benefit of the company which can be proved through the effort of employees in improving the outcome of work, whether requested or not by the company.
6. Cooperation, it's the ability to establish good relations in their work units or other units of work or with other parties outside the company

in carrying out duties, willing to give opinions and willing to accept the views of others and willing to take decisions contrary to his beliefs.

Unsatisfactory performance can be defined as a tendency to fail to perform tasks or attain standard work continuously. Specific reasons include absence, excessive delays, continuous failure to achieve employment requirements, or traits that harm a company, supervisor, or coworker.

### **Dimensions of employee performance**

According to studies on effective performance management in organisations, particularly emphasizing high levels of employee performance, the organisational context is very important for accomplishing a company's strategy and objectives (St-Onge, Morin, Bellehumeur & Dupuis, 2009). Therefore, in the overall context of business globalization, authors focus on outlining the role of particular organisational contexts where employee performance appraisals take place, outlining the interest in future research comprising the wider cross-cultural context (Den Hartog, Boselie, & Paauwe, 2004).

Moreover, Erdogan (2002) highlights the role of social context in employee performance appraisal, mentioning the role of contextual factors represented by the perceived organisational support, organisation culture, and the quality of the exchange (relationship) between members and the leader. It is noteworthy that the organisational context was associated with employees' perceptions of the system's practices and the leader's behaviours, being also related to employees' trust in team management or organisational citizenship behaviour (Zheng, Zhang, & Li, 2012).

It may also be noticed that recent studies on employee performance appraisal evolved from an emphasis on performance measurement to a focus on organisational context, according to Murphy & Cleveland (1991) (in Zheng, Zhang, & Li, 2012). Accordingly, it should be outlined that employee performance appraisal represents a motivational and social process, a consequence of interactions between employees and the company through managers' interventions (Zheng, Zhang, & Li, 2012). The main dimensions of job performance include task performance, contextual or citizenship behaviour and counterproductive behaviour.

### *Task performance*

Performance in the form of task performance comprises job-explicit behaviours which include fundamental job responsibilities assigned as a part of the job description (Borman, & Brush, 1993). Task performance requires more cognitive ability and is primarily facilitated through task knowledge (requisite technical knowledge or principles to ensure job performance and having the ability to handle multiple assignments), task skill (application of technical knowledge to accomplish tasks without much supervision), and task habits (an innate ability to respond to assigned jobs that either facilitate or impede the performance) (Conway, 1999). Therefore, the primary antecedents of task performance are the ability to do the job and prior experience.

In an organisational context, task performance is a contractual understanding between a manager and a subordinate to accomplish an assigned task (Borman, & Brush, 1993). Entrusted task performance is broken into two segments: technical-administrative task performance and leadership task performance. The expected job performance comprises planning,

organizing, and administering the day-to-day work through one's technical ability, business judgment and so on are called technical-administrative task performance. Leadership task performance is labelled through setting strategic goals, upholding the necessary performance standards, and motivating and directing subordinates to accomplish the job through encouragement, recognition, and constructive criticism (Borman, & Brush, 1993).

Borman, and Motowidlo (1997) defined job performance in the context of task performance as "effectiveness with which job occupants execute their assigned tasks, that realizes the fulfilment of organisation's vision while rewarding organisation and individual proportionately." Werner (1994) has synthesized the earlier propositions of task performance by relating it to organisational formal reward stating as "the demonstrated skill and behaviour that influences the direct production of goods or service, or any kind of activities that provides indirect supports to organisation's core technical processes."

#### ***Contextual/ citizenship performance***

Contextual performance is a kind of attitude like volunteering for extra work, helping others in solving difficult tasks, upholding enthusiasm at work, cooperating with others in time of need, sharing critical resources and information for organisational development, abiding by the prescribed rules and regulations, and supporting organisational decisions for a better change (Coleman, & Borman, 2000; Motowidlo, 2000). This kind of behaviour contributes to creating a stimulating culture and climate in the organisation which aids in achieving individual productivity and organisational effectiveness. For selecting and inducting the right personnel in organisations,



introducing personality tests and group discussions for measuring a prospective candidate's ability for contextual performance along with the efficiency tests (ability and experience tests) to measure their task performance is proposed.

### ***Counterproductive work behaviour (CWB)***

CWB is a voluntary or intentional behaviour that could harm the interest of the organisation either directly or indirectly by hurting the employees which resultantly reduces their effectiveness (McShane & Glinow, 2005). Spector et al. (2006) have categorized CWB into five facets: (a) abuse; behaviours that can be harmful physically or psychologically. It may include making nasty comments about a coworker or reducing the effectiveness of a coworker; (b) sabotage; affecting the physical property of the organisation (i.e. undermining the physical workplace of the organisation); (c) production deviance; behaviours that destroy the work process; (d) theft; results from economic need, job dissatisfaction or injustice and can be regarded a form of aggression against the organisation (Mustaine & Tewksbury, 2002; Neuman & Baron, 1997) and; (e) withdrawal; behaviours that reduce the amount of time one works to less than what the organisation requires. Sabotage and production deviance have a direct impact while the withdrawal behaviour of employees has an indirect impact on the functioning of the organisation (Fox, Spector, & Miles, 2001). Some employees may engage in CWB as an emotional reaction or retaliation while others may opt for it as a well-planned behaviour (Fox & Spector, 2010).

Many researchers categorized CWB into different categories. Sackett and DeVore (2001) defined CWB as a contrary act by a member of an



organisation which focuses on individual behaviour and does not benefit the organisation. Sackett and DeVore (2001) concluded that CWB is a hierarchy model which thoroughly observes unproductive behaviour. An individual who is involved in CWB is prone to be involved in other CWBs (Gruys & Sackett, 2003). Gruys and Sackett (2003) also categorized CWB to that targeted behaviour by listing 11 factors such as theft, destruction of organisation property, misuse of organisation information, misuse of time and resources, dangerous behaviour, lateness to work, unsatisfactory work quality, drug addiction, use of abusive words, and dangerous physical behaviour.

Fox and Spector (1999) introduced the Model of work frustration-aggression, an extreme cognitive-affective approach. This model explains that every activity leading to disappointment may lead to an affective reaction. Cognitive is said to play a less important role in the following sequence (reaction-affective response-response). The individual affective response is simple (locus of control, anger) and one will slow down counterproductive work behaviour may be due to certain punishment. This model can explain behaviours other than aggressive but CWB is not driven by other factors other than aggressive.

Behaviours such as absenteeism, neglecting a company's properties and inefficiency at work, for instance, dreaming, surfing the internet, and long rest may be driven by factors other than aggression. Hot-tempered is an example of interpersonal CWB whereby an individual will express his/her anger at work (Fox & Spector, 1999). This is an individual reaction based on personal experiences such as depression, less autonomy, organisational injustice, organisational constraint, and emotions and perceptions at the

workplace. CWB is said to be a response to frustration in obtaining strong empirical support and any wrongdoings are the effect of stress and tension faced (Fox & Spector, 1999).

In the last two decades ago, studies on CWB have shown progress. Past studies related to aggression categorized two objectives, i.e., hostile and instrumental. Hostile aggression means to harm other parties including hatred and jealousy. This group of people is more aggressive and hostile than those with bad-tempered, impulsive and have the intention to cause harm to the target. Meanwhile, instrumental aggression does not depend solely on emotion but also has the intention to harm the target. In general, the main objective of an individual is to react aggressively and to cause harm but instrumental aggression has a far more advanced objective such as robbery (Anderson & Bushman, 2002).

The behaviour categorized as CWB (Spector et al., 2007) falls into two categories, i.e., the behaviour directed at the organisation and the behaviour directed at the individual in an organisation (Bennett & Robinson, 2000). Spector et al. (2006) explained that counterproductive work behaviour can be categorized into two, i.e., counterproductive work behaviour for an organisation (CWB-o) and counterproductive work behaviour for an individual at an organisation (CWB-i) (Spector et al., 2006). This classification is very important and helpful in understanding CWB issues in an organisation.

These are such deviant behaviours which are continuously increasing day by day and are a big problem in any organisation. These behaviours have been damaging the organisations. Researchers are taking an interest in this

topic (Mawritz et al., 2012). CWB are those behaviours causing harm to employees or the organisation in certain forms like bullying employees, theft, breaking the organisational things or damaging the important papers of the organisation. Such behaviours can occur one at a time or there is the possibility that these behaviours can go simultaneously together. (Fagbohunge, Akinbode & Ayodeji, 2012). CWBs are those behaviours which are against the organisational goals and benefits. Spector et al. (2006) categorized it into five categories: abuse, sabotage, production deviance, theft, and withdrawal behaviours.

Thus, further found that people show different reactions to overcoming workplace incivility and the severity of incivility can cause a lot of damage to the organisation. Some employees use production deviance behaviour as a strategy. If a strategy is to gain “as a strategy to obtain control over stressors and their negative emotional reactions” then it becomes more dust-hating. Employees who do not have security in their jobs may show deviant behaviours or may be involved in counterproductive work behaviours which are not good for the organisation's betterment (Joe-Akunne, Oguegbe & Aguanunu, 2014). Like, Relationship between Job Insecurity, Workplace Incivility and Counterproductive work behaviours among employees: Role of Work-Family Conflict.

Bultena (1998) found that if employees have job insecurity, they are involved in counterproductive work behaviours. Research has revealed that workplace incivility is such behaviour which may decrease the workers' productivity, performance, creativity, and satisfaction and increase their absenteeism, laziness, intentional delay of work and turnover intentions (Lim

& Cortina, 2005; Penney & Spector, 2005). These kinds of behaviours may lead the person towards work-family conflict because of working and family. The research was performed on 280 subordinates and their partners and it was studied how abusive supervision affects their family. Abused subordinates have been found to experience increased intensity of work-to-family conflict. Similar results have been reported (Hoobler & Hu 2013).

### **Factors that affect employee performance**

Factors affecting the performance of employees, according to Davis-Blake and Uzzi (1993) are the ability and motivation factors (motivation).

#### ***Ability factor***

In psychology, employee ability consists of an above-average potential (IQ) (IQ 110-120) with adequate education for the position and skilled in working on daily work, so it will be easier to achieve the expected performance. Therefore, employees need to be placed in jobs that are appropriate for their skills (the right man in the place, the man in the correct position).

#### ***Motivation factor***

Motivation takes the form of the attitude of a worker in coping with situations (situation) motivation is a circumstance that moves from employees who are directed to attain organisational goals. According to Bernardin and Russel (as cited in Mentari, 2016), there are six categories of results used to measure employee performance values or job functions, namely:

1. Quality, how far the process or outcome of carrying out activities close to perfection, is reviewed from suitability in the ideal way of running an event or fulfilling the intended purpose of a game.



2. Quantity, the amount produced, expressed in the dollar or rupiah value, the number of units or the number of cycle activities that have been completed.

3. Timeliness, how far either event is completed, or the results produced at the earliest time desired from the coordination standpoint with the other outputs or maximized the time that exists for other activities.

4. Cost-effectiveness, how far an organisation's resources are maximized in the sense of gaining the highest profit or reduction in losses from each unit.

The need for supervision is how now an employee can perform the work function without having to ask for supervision assistance or require surveillance intervention to prevent adverse results.

6. The impact of interpersonal/contextual performance, how far employees increase self-esteem, and goodwill, from the cooperation between fellow employees and subordinates.

### **Gender and Working from Home**

The literature suggests gender is one of the most significant variables affecting the experience of Working from Home (WFH) (Sullivan & Lewis, 2001). Although WFH was heralded as enabling a breakdown of traditional gender roles, via the lack of separation between work and family (Silver, 1993) this has not materialised. In fact, in many cases, WFH has reinforced the domestic burden of women and perpetuated the marginalization of female employment (Sullivan & Lewis, 2001). Sullivan and Smithson (2007), for example, found that WFH supported gender equity in households that were already egalitarian and made minimal difference in more traditional households. Research on other flexible work arrangements echoes this sentiment (Powell & Craig, 2015).



Ammons and Markham (2004) suggest women may find it particularly hard to maintain boundaries given gendered demands and expectations around domestic work and care. Such responsibilities make it difficult to avoid interruptions to and fragmentation of employment activities (Mann & Holdsworth, 2003). From their qualitative study, Sullivan and Smithson (2007) concluded that flexibility was seen as beneficial to women working at home because it facilitated their domestic work and mothering role. Employment may even be combined simultaneously with domestic work and care. Working at home while supervising children, for example, may enable employed parents to have a greater presence in their children's lives (Callister & Singley, 2004). For men, the flexibility of WFH is more likely to be seen as a means of controlling their paid work, although it may enable them to 'help' more with domestic work and childcare and spend more time with their families (Sullivan & Smithson, 2007).

In other words, women may be more likely to WFH to accommodate work and family demands, while men may be more likely to WFH to facilitate additional employment time. These findings are echoed elsewhere with research indicating WFH is a less common strategy for juggling work and non-work among men than among women, particularly those with children (Berke, 2003). Sullivan and Smithson (2007) conclude, however, that differences among people who WAH are less about gender, and more about dependent children. Also, on a positive note, Felstead and Jewson (2005) argue that given the gendered nature of domestic work, WFH may provide women with an opportunity to exercise power and control.

### **Working from home and employee performance**

To understand how co-workers working from home influence individual performance, we first need to understand the role of working from home itself. The literature on work and labour processes lists both positive and negative aspects of working from home. Starting with the positive aspects, first, working from home should provide employees with more opportunities to focus on their work tasks. When working away from the office, teleworkers can significantly reduce contact with other co-workers. Indeed, research has shown that working from home is associated with fewer interruptions (Bailey & Kurland, 2002). Second, because nobody is physically monitoring the teleworking employee, teleworkers have greater discretion in how, under what conditions and sometimes when they can complete tasks (Kossek & Thompson, 2016). It increases employee flexibility over work demands (White et al., 2003). More autonomy in the job is likely to be associated with more productivity (Vega, Anderson & Kaplan, 2014). Third, employees who can telework may be more willing to put in extra effort to reward their employer for the 'favour' of flexible work arrangements (Kelliher & Anderson, 2009).

In addition to the positive aspects, a number of negative aspects have also been identified. First, an important drawback of working from home is the decreased control by colleagues or the supervisor. This can be true for both the organisation and the employee. When someone's work is poorly monitored, a greater opportunity for work avoidance exists, but there might also be less feedback on potential errors. Team working might become a problem (Knights & McCabe, 2003). Teamwork is the will to govern but

becomes more problematic when working from home. It might create uncertainties, tensions and resistance strategies by employees. Second, social and professional isolation might result once working at home (Kurland & Bailey, 1999; Crandall & Gao, 2005), which leads to less interpersonal networking, informal learning that enhances work-related skills and mentoring from colleagues and supervisors. Being away from the office may also create a lack of visibility and increase teleworkers' fear that being out of site limits opportunities for promotion, rewards and positive performance reviews (Cooper & Kurland, 2002).

Moving to co-workers, they are likely to influence the performance of the employee in various ways. Individual attitudes and behaviours of workers are influenced by co-workers in everyday 'horizontal exchanges' (Chiaburu & Harrison, 2008), including social exchange and reciprocity norms (ten Brummelhuis, Haar & Van der Lippe, 2010). Labour process literature on conceptive control in teams indicates that shared norms developing in teams exert a strong influence on workers (Barker, 1993), and trust and shared experiences are embedded in relationships among workers (Taskin & Edwards, 2007). 'Tacit knowledge' is about values, practices and systems of social exchange that are more likely to emerge in groups of workers, facilitating the functioning of group members. Group cohesiveness is positively related to performance, but when nobody is around, workers experience less cohesiveness (Cohen & Bailey, 1997).

Following the job demands-resources model (Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti & Schaufeli, 2007), trust and shared experiences improve performance by requiring less effort to maintain co-worker transactions and

by acting as a resource for knowledge and practical help. The exchange of critical information about how things in the organisation work makes tasks easier to execute by directly helping employees advance towards their work goals and by facilitating smoothing transactions with co-workers (Chiaburu & Harrison, 2008). However, if such information is not exchanged between employees, this might affect their work intensification as they are not helped by others (Chung & Van der Lippe, 2018).

What do these insights suggest with regard to the influence of co-workers working from home on individual employee performance? Consider a situation in which most of an employee's co-workers work from home. The negative aspects of this arrangement might outweigh the positive aspects, such as less 'disturbance' from co-workers. As more co-workers work from home, the employee's interactions with them, including informal conversations and establishing shared experiences, are apt to become less common. Reciprocal norms in relationships are more difficult to establish if the worker has no opportunity to see his or her co-workers.

Furthermore, when many co-workers work from home, it is less likely that someone will notice any problems the employee may have and provide support when needed (Golden & Gajendran, 2019). In other words, the lack of shared norms and information increases the likelihood of conflict and antagonism, which decreases the likelihood of positive co-worker exchanges (Chiaburu & Harrison, 2008). Note that this is all of course dependent on the teleworking practice, that is how many days a week or hours a day a co-worker works from home. Negative consequences of teleworking might surface only at a certain frequency of working from home. As it is an



empirical question where such a threshold lies, we formulate a linear hypothesis but we take into account the possibility of a non-linearity in our analyses.

The few empirical results available support the existence of this negative aspect of co-workers working from home. A higher prevalence of working from home by co-workers results in workers being less satisfied with these co-workers (Golden & Gajendran, 2019). Social disconnection has been shown to develop between employees working from home and office workers because working from home allows employees to distance themselves from work relationships at the office (Collins, Hislop & Cartwright, 2016). This might result in a less cohesive organisational culture. Although the first results suggest a negative relation between colleagues working from home and work performance, working from home might not be the same as being absent from the workplace. Today's working life includes many possibilities for establishing a presence (or 'face time') at a distance, through digital media. Thus, being physically absent from work does not equal absenteeism in every sense of the word.

### **Empirical Review**

This is a systematic review and examination of past studies related to the topic under discussion.

### **Employees' perceptions of the practice of work from home**

Ashika (2021) examined the perception, experience and challenges of the employees in working from home when compared to working from the office using a sample of 100 respondents. The data was collected using a structured questionnaire and their perception was analysed statistically using



SPSS software. The results revealed that the majority of employees feel that they do not get to see colleagues as much as they wished to while they are working from home. Most of the employees require physical equipment to do work which they do not have access to at home, most of them agree that they get disturbed by other people at home and they are unable to keep focused on work. Also, most respondents agree that they miss getting out of home as well as feel that the work they do from home is not as interesting as the work they used to do at the workplace. It was identified that most employees do not get time for personal activities, feel tired of their computers and are concerned about work tasks that they wanted to do but cannot do, since they are working from home. Overall they concluded that they had a negative perception about working from home as compared to working at the office. Both Ashika's study and this current study used a questionnaire for the data collection and SPSS for the data analysis.

Shareena and Shahid (2020) examined the employees' perceptions and experiences of working from home. The study used questionnaires to collect the data from 50 respondents of which 48 percent of males and 52 percent of females. The results of the study showed that most of the respondents are also of the opinion that even if they are ready to work from home they do not like to work from home, thus, although they are ready to work from home, they have a negative perception about actually working from home. The study also found that willingness to work from home is entirely dependent on the presence of their children at home, comfortable space at home, quiet environment at home and good.

Bolisani, Scarso, Hansen, Ipsen and Kirchner (2020) explored the perceptions, attitudes, and challenges of working from home among smart workers in Italy using an online survey. The survey revealed that there were different groups of employees based on their satisfaction with working from home: some were very happy, some were very unhappy, and some were undecided. Some reported feeling isolated and disconnected from their colleagues, while others appreciated the increased focus and productivity. The main factors that influenced their satisfaction were the availability and quality of communication tools, the degree of autonomy and flexibility, the support from managers and colleagues, and the balance between work and personal life. The studies are different in relation to the location that the study was conducted as Bolisani, Scarso, Hansen, Ipsen and Kirchner's study was conducted in a developed country (Italy) while this current study is being conducted in Ghana, a developing country.

Munobwa, Ahmadi, Zandi, Davidsson and Akhavan (2022) examined the coping methods and job satisfaction of university faculty, staff, and students while working from home during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study used an online survey to gather data from 674 respondents across different countries. Factor analysis revealed three clusters of coping methods: social and health factors, activity factors, and public health trust factors. The study also found that 56% of the respondents were satisfied with working from home, with higher satisfaction observed among older respondents, university employees, and those with higher education levels. Additionally, 34% of the respondents reported working more than contracted hours while

working from home, which was associated with slightly lower job satisfaction.

### **Level of employee performance in relation to working from home**

Anugrah and Priyambodo (2022) examined the correlation between organisational commitment and performance in employees working from home in Surabaya. A quantitative descriptive approach was used. A questionnaire was used to collect data from 151 participants through purposive sampling. All participants were employees with work domiciles in Surabaya who worked from home during the Covid-19 pandemic. The results indicated that work-from-home employee performance in Surabaya during the Covid-19 pandemic. Also, the study found a significant positive relationship between organisational commitment and the performance of employees in Surabaya who worked from home during the COVID-19 pandemic. Both studies used questionnaires for data collection and a quantitative data analysis approach. However, this study is different in relation to the location where the study was conducted.

Troll, Venz, Weitzenegger and Loschelder (2022) used a qualitative approach to explore which strategies employees use to telework effectively using a sample of 266 the study found that work-from-home employee performance was very high as well and modifying somatic conditions and autonomous motivation was significantly associated with job performance and mediated the self-control-performance link.

Khan, Mohammed and Harith (2018) investigated whether the impacts of telecommuting engagement (i.e. job autonomy, work-family balance, work productivity, and level of occupational stress) lead to employee performance.

This research aims to identify the most dominant impact of telecommuting engagement that leads to employee performance. The study has adopted correlational research and cross-sectional survey research design to explore the relationship between variables. 229 respondents who practice telecommuting work arrangements were used for this study. They were chosen from 11 oil and gas companies located in Kuantan, Pahang. The results of the study showed that the level of performance of the telecommuting employees was very high. The findings of the study also revealed that all of the telecommuting impacts which consist of job autonomy, work-family balance, work productivity and level of occupational stress have a significant relationship with employee performance.

Ward (2017) explored how working from home affects the motivation and performance of employees in a banking organisation. The author uses a qualitative research approach, conducting semi-structured interviews with 12 employees who work from home. The results showed that most of the workers showed a high level of motivation of employees because it gave them more autonomy, flexibility, and control over their work environment and schedule as well as a high level of performance reported higher productivity and quality of work

#### **Challenges faced by employees during work-from-home**

Bakar et al. (2022) aimed to examine employees' perception of working from home during the movement control order by focusing on the effectiveness and challenges employees face when working from home. The researchers used quantitative methods which employed a set of surveys. The survey was distributed among 104 employees in different working sectors in



Malaysia who work from home during movement control orders (MCO). The findings showed most of the respondents agreeing to challenges that include feeling they do not have any clear boundary between their workspace and their area, it is even more difficult staying on the same page when everyone works from home, family members always interrupt them when I am working at home, working from home makes them realize that their stress and anxiety levels have risen, it is difficult concentrating on work when surrounded by personal items, working alone is hard since they need to interact with their coworkers and difficulty in sticking to work schedule. The studies are different in relation to the location where the study was conducted as Bakar et al.'s study was conducted in Malaysia while this current study is being conducted in Ghana.

Flores (2019) analysed the challenges of remote working and its impact on workers. A descriptive method of research was used in this study and the instrument used in gathering data is a researcher-constructed questionnaire. The respondents were 43 remote workers of Pearson People Services selected through the use of a random sampling technique for data gathering. The results showed that collaboration/communication with others, making the technology work, organizing time, balancing work/life demands, staying on top of informal developments and finding information are the common challenges encountered by workers in working remotely.

Mann and Chitranshi (2021) explored the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the work-life balance of employees in India. The researchers used both primary and secondary data collection methods, such as surveys, interviews, and literature review, to gather information from various sources

and analyze them using descriptive statistics and thematic analysis. The results showed that difficulties in managing their work and personal life, such as increased workload, lack of communication, blurred boundaries, stress, anxiety, isolation, and family interference were the main challenges faced by these workers. The studies are different in relation to the location where the study was conducted as Bakar et al.'s study was conducted in India while this current study is being conducted in Ghana.

### **Perceived effect of working from home on employee's performance**

Choukir, Alqahtani, Khalil and Mohamed (2022) investigated the mediating role of attitudes and perceptions between working from home and employees' job performance. This study used an exploratory design and collected the data using a questionnaire. The data was collected from 399 employees employed by the principal Saudi businesses. The study used structural equation modelling to test the research hypotheses and examine the direct and indirect relationship between working from home and employees' job performance. The results identified the fact that perceptions of working from home have an inverse impact on job performance. Also, the study found a significant direct linkage between WFH and employees' job performance through the mediating roles of WFH employees' attitudes and perceptions. Our findings also confirm the significant relationship between WFH employees' attributes and their job performance, and the significant association between WFH and job performance. Choukir, Alqahtani, Khalil and Mohamed's study was conducted in Saudi Arabia and used structural equation modelling to test the research hypotheses while this current study was conducted in Ghana and will use SPSS to analyse the data.

Van der Lippe and Lippényi (2020) conducted a study on Co-workers working from home and individual and team performance. They used unique data from a large-scale survey involving nine European countries, 259 establishments, 869 teams and 11,011 employees to show the impact of working from home by co-workers on performance. The researchers used linear regression including fixed effects for teams to control for team-level and establishment-level confounders to analyze the data. The results showed that working from home negatively impacts employee performance. Moreover, team performance is worse when more co-workers are working from home. Van der Lippe and Lippényi's study was conducted in Europe while this current study is being conducted in Ghana.

Gultom and Wanasida (2022) examined the direct effect of work-from-home and followership style on employee performance, as well as the indirect effect through work motivation as a mediator. The research population is PT. Sampang PSC employees who came from PT. Ophir. The number of samples using the Slovin formula is 142 employees. The sampling method uses purposive sampling and incidental sampling. The data analysis technique used PLS-SEM by selecting SmartPLS 3.0 as software. The study result shows that working from home has a positive but not statistically significant effect on employee performance. Working from home has an unfavourable and insignificant effect on work motivation. Followership style has a positive and significant effect on work motivation. Followership style has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. Work motivation has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. Work motivation plays a role as a full mediator variable to increase the effect

of working from home on employee performance. Work motivation does not act as a mediator on the effect of work from home on employee performance, and the effect of followership style on employee performance.

Alfanza, (2021) aimed at determining the relationship between telecommuting intensity and employees' job performance and work-life balance. Further, it sought to know if there was a significant difference in employees' productivity when working at the office and at home. A total of 396 telecommuting employees from three BPO companies in the Philippines were gathered using stratified random sampling. Pearson correlation, T-test, and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) were executed for this study. The result of this study provides evidence that telecommuting intensity is not significantly correlated with employees' job performance, supporting the second finding that there is no significant difference in the percentage of work done and the amount of time spent finishing a job at home and at the office. On the other hand, intensified telecommuting has a negative relationship with employees' work-life balance. It means that longer time spent in telecommuting decreases the work-life balance of employees.

#### **Differences between the perceptions of male and female employees regarding the challenges they face while working from home**

Ajjan, AbuJarour, Fedorowicz and Owens (2020) investigated home-office conditions by studying employees who were forced to work from home during the COVID-19 crisis. The researcher focused on how gender and family responsibilities shape worker reactions to work from home. Data was collected via an online survey administered at the height. A survey of 545 was complete and valid for analysis. A two-way multivariate analysis of variance



(MANOVA) procedure was used to test the significance of the direct and interaction effects of gender. The results were mixed with the statement pointing statements like control over time and usefulness of technology showing a significant difference among the genders and statements including working from home attitude and working from home conflicts showing an insignificant difference. The overall aggregate indicated a significant difference among the genders.

Shareena and Shahid (2020) while examining employees' perceptions and experiences of working from home also tested the hypothesis to confirm whether the willingness to work from home is dependent on gender based on their perception and the challenges they face. The study used questionnaires to collect the data from 50 respondents of which 48 percent of males and 52 percent of females. The results of the study showed that the p-value obtained is 0.770, which is greater than 0.5 ( $p > 0.5$ ), hence the alternative hypothesis is rejected and the null hypothesis is accepted. Thus, the challenges of working from home are not dependent on the gender of the respondents. The gender of the respondents does not influence the willingness to work from home.

Also, Ashika (2021) while examining the perception, experience and challenges of the employees in working from home when compared to working from the office using a sample of 100 respondents tested the hypothesis to confirm whether there is a significant relationship between the gender of the respondents and the various challenging factors during work from home. The data was collected using a structured questionnaire and their perception was analysed statistically using SPSS software. The results were mixed with most of the statement pointing to no significant relationship

between the gender of the respondents and the various challenging factors during work from home (need for physical equipment to do work which is not available at home, difficulties in keeping themselves focused on work when they are alone, employees not getting enough exercise when they work from home, the feeling of Less time for personal activities and concern about work tasks that they want to do but cannot do from home) with only one of them having a significant difference (getting disturbed by other members at home while work from home). Both Ashoka's study and this current study used a questionnaire for the data collection and SPSS for the data analysis

### **Gaps in Literature**

Despite the extensive research on the impact of working from home (WFH) on employee performance, several gaps remain that warrant further exploration, particularly in the context of educational institutions in developing countries like Ghana. First, much of the existing literature predominantly focuses on sectors such as banking, telecommunications, and technology, with limited attention given to the educational sector. Studies by Ansong and Boateng (2018) and Prasetyaningtyas et al. (2021) highlight the benefits of WFH in telecommunications and banking, respectively, but there is a paucity of research examining its impact on educational institutions.

Second, there is a notable geographical gap in the research. Most studies have been conducted in developed countries such as the United States, Europe, and parts of Asia (Kenrick et al., 2010; Van der Lippe & Lippényi, 2020), with fewer studies focusing on developing regions like Africa. This geographical bias limits the generalizability of findings to different cultural and economic contexts. Third, there is inconsistency in the findings regarding

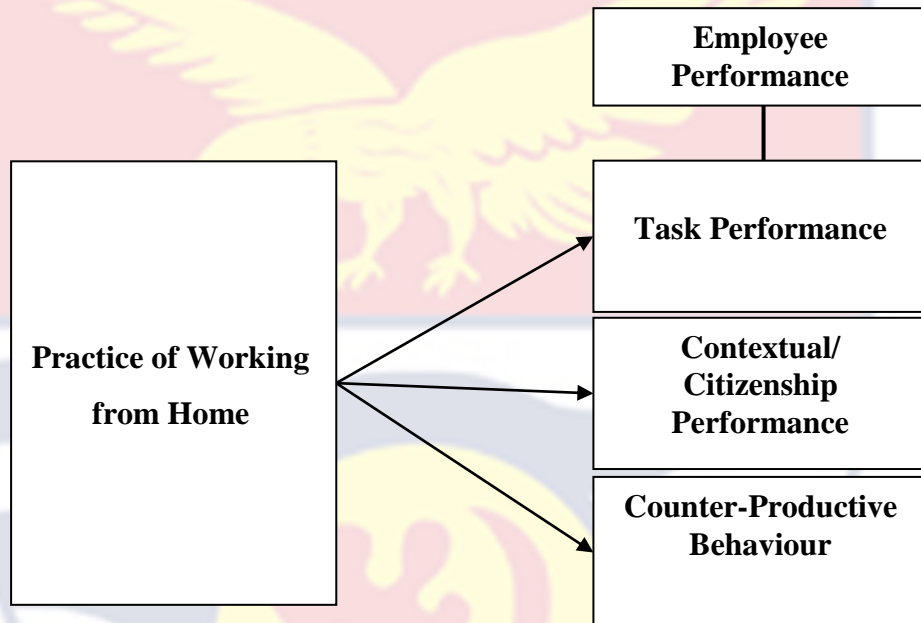
the impact of WFH on employee performance. While some studies report positive outcomes such as increased productivity and job satisfaction (Bloom et al., 2015; Sawatzky & Sawatzky, 2019), others highlight negative aspects like decreased team performance and higher stress levels (Van der Lippe & Lippényi, 2020; Ravi & Anulakshmi, 2021). This inconsistency suggests that the effects of WFH may be context-specific, and influenced by factors such as the nature of the job, individual characteristics, and the home environment.

Finally, there is a lack of comprehensive studies that integrate multiple theoretical perspectives to understand the multifaceted nature of WFH. While theories such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Herzberg's two-factor theory have been employed to examine employee motivation and satisfaction (Maslow, 1987; Herzberg, 1968), few studies have combined these theories to provide a holistic understanding of how different needs and factors interact to influence employee performance in a WFH context.

### **Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework represents the researcher's synthesis of the literature on how to explain a phenomenon. Thus, the researcher's "map" in pursuing the investigation and how the research problem would be explored. According to Imenda (2014) and Regoniel (2015), the conceptual model maps out the actions required in the course of the research given the researcher's previous knowledge of other researchers' points of view and his observations on the subject of research. This study seeks to determine the perceived effect of working from home on employees' performance during COVID-19 in selected educational institutions.

As shown in Figure 1, the independent variable in this study is the perceived effects of working from home. These independent variables are expected to influence the dependent variable (employee performance). This means that employee performance depends on the perceived effects of working from home.



*Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study*  
Source: Author's construct (2023)

Employees' perceptions entail flexibility, commute savings, increased productivity and reduced stress. This study therefore seeks to establish employees' perceptions of the practice of working from home and its influence on employee performance. This implies that if employees have favourable perceptions towards working from home, their performance on the job will increase and vice versa. An increase in employee performance would be manifested in terms of job satisfaction, skill development, personalized workspace, reduced office distractions and security concerns.



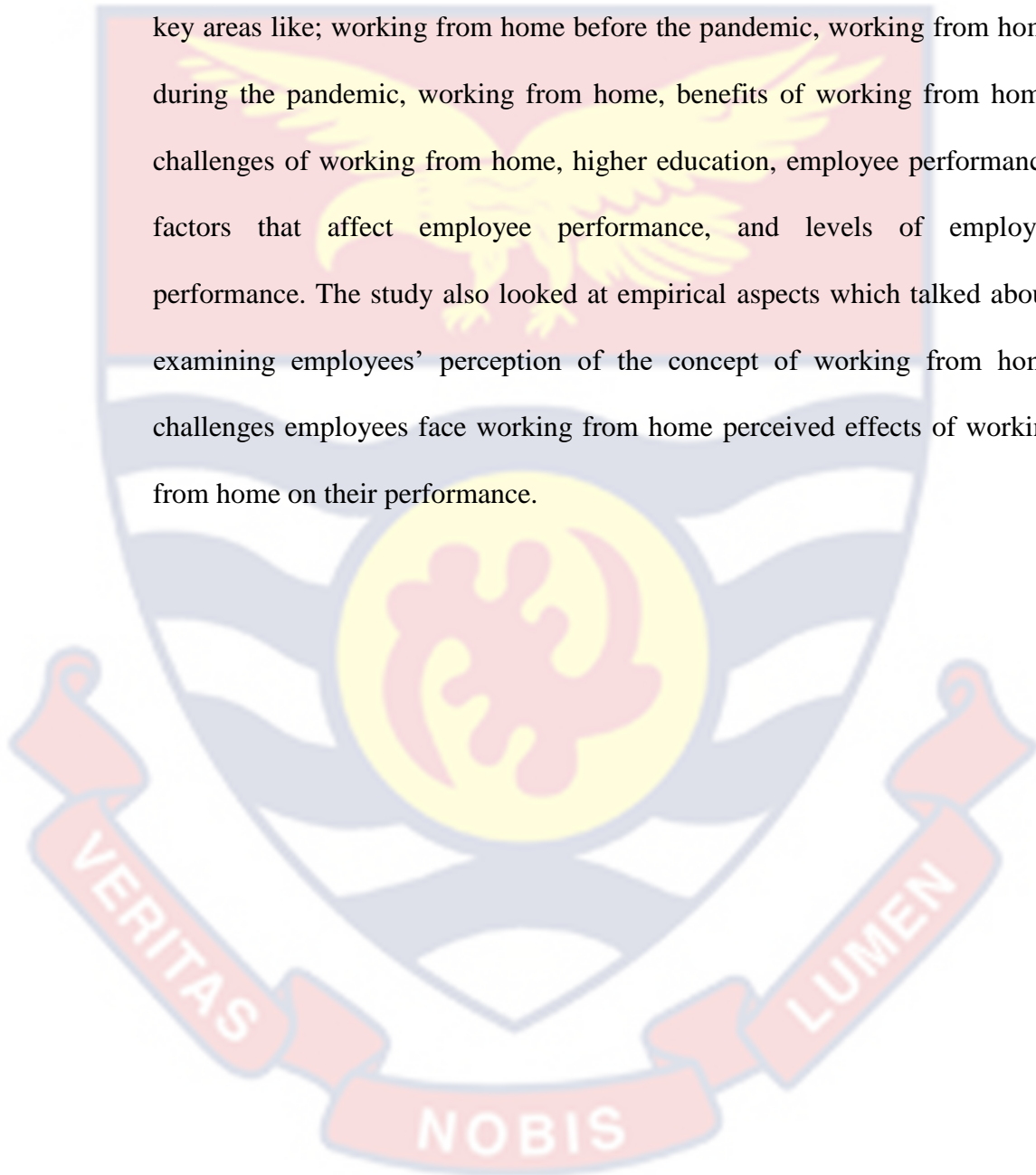
### Lessons Learned from Literature

The review of the literature on WFH and employee performance provides several important lessons that can guide future research and practice. Firstly, the application of Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory and Herzberg's two-factor theory has demonstrated that addressing both lower-level and higher-level needs is crucial for maintaining employee motivation and performance during WFH. For example, ensuring job security and reducing virus exposure address basic safety needs, while providing opportunities for professional growth and autonomy to cater to higher-level needs (Kenrick et al., 2010; Sawatzky & Sawatzky, 2019). Secondly, the mixed findings on the impact of WFH highlight the importance of considering individual differences and job-specific factors. Research suggests that while some employees thrive in a remote work environment due to increased autonomy and flexibility, others may struggle with isolation and lack of direct supervision (Van der Lippe & Lippényi, 2020; Nwagwu, 2020). This indicates that WFH policies should be tailored to accommodate diverse employee needs and job characteristics.

Additionally, the literature points to the potential long-term benefits of WFH, such as increased job satisfaction and work-life balance, provided that the initial implementation challenges are addressed. For instance, the studies by Alon et al. (2020) and Guyot and Sawhill (2020) suggest that with proper support and adaptation, WFH can lead to sustained productivity gains and employee well-being. Finally, the review highlights the need for more empirical research in diverse contexts, particularly in developing countries and the educational sector.

## Chapter Summary

In a nutshell, it can be seen that working from home is a good phenomenon. Theoretically, the Maslow Hierarchy of Needs theory and Herzberg's Motivation Hygiene were used. The conceptual review covered key areas like; working from home before the pandemic, working from home during the pandemic, working from home, benefits of working from home, challenges of working from home, higher education, employee performance, factors that affect employee performance, and levels of employee performance. The study also looked at empirical aspects which talked about; examining employees' perception of the concept of working from home challenges employees face working from home perceived effects of working from home on their performance.



## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODS

#### Introduction

The chapter presents the method used to determine the perceived effect of working from home on employees' performance during COVID-19 in selected educational institutions in the Greater Accra Region. It focuses on the research approach, research design, study area, population, sampling, procedures, data collection instrument, reliability and validity test of the instrument (quantitative data), data collection procedures, ethical considerations, data processing and analysis.

#### Research Paradigm

A research paradigm is described as a broad framework for theory and research that encompasses assumptions, questions, and models of good research and ways of posing questions and seeking answers (Neuman, 2006). According to this view, failure to consider research philosophical issues and paradigms is likely to influence the quality of research (Amaratunga, Baldry, Sarshar & Newton, 2002).

Ontology and epistemology are the two major philosophical stances of social research (Bryman, 2004). Ontology concerns the beliefs of the researcher about the world and what can be learned from it in relation to the global community. Ontology comprises two extreme positions namely: Realism and relativism are two major theories that have been widely discussed in the field of international relations. The realist position describes that social entities (like organizations, societies and teams) possess an existence that is independent of the people in them. Relativism can be

attributed to the fact that the formation of knowledge is affected by the ideologies of the researcher. At the ontology level, the philosophy of this study is the realist position.

Epistemology is the recognition of knowledge in a discipline. Epistemology also comprises two extreme positions namely: The two major approaches of research methodology are positivism and interpretivism. Positivist research only recognizes factual statements as true and scientific. The positivist paradigm aims at getting factual data by avoiding value judgments and the researcher should not have any influence over the respondent (Malhotra & Birks, 2007). Furthermore, the positivist paradigm is also linked with the quantitative research approach in the works of literature (Smith, 1983). On the other hand, Interpretivist research only considers the subject thoughts and ideas as the truth. Interpretivist paradigm is the second one and it uses an inductive approach which means that it looks at an issue and through investigation by various research methods, tries to develop a theory for the research. Interpretivist research is also defined as a type of qualitative research approach in the literature. At the epistemology level, the philosophy that guides this study is the positivist paradigm.

### **Research Approach**

The current study employed the quantitative research approach. This is due to the nature and purpose of the study under consideration. The current study demands that the researcher collect numerical data that would be analysed quantitatively. The current study also demands that the study's result be generalized to the entire population. Tashakkori and Teddlie (2010) averred that quantitative methods are often considered deductive because



inferences from tests of statistical hypotheses result in general inferences about the characteristics of a population. Lincoln, Lynham and Guba (2011) are also of the view that the quantitative approach to research is directed towards the development of testable hypotheses and theories which are generalizable across settings. Considering the purpose and objectives of the study and the relations between the variables being examined, it was deemed appropriate to use the quantitative approach

### **Research Design**

According to Sekaran and Bougie (2016), a research design is a plan or a guide which specifies how data relating to a given research should be collected, measured and analysed. Kothari (2004) also posited that research designs deal with the creation of decisions vis-à-vis the techniques which are utilized in gathering data, the type of strategies and instruments for sampling, and ways in which the constraints of time and cost can be dispensed. Sekaran and Bougie (2016), and Saunders et al. (2016) categorised research design into three broad categories; namely, exploratory, descriptive and causal designs. In the view of the authors, researchers employ an exploratory design when little or no information exists about how study variables have been dealt with by earlier scholars. Furthermore, a descriptive design is utilized by scholars when they want to describe and understand the characteristics of the study variables. Finally, researchers adopt a causal design when they want to determine how one variable causes another variable to change.

This study adopted the descriptive survey. Descriptive design is often employed by researchers to allow them to describe and understand the characteristics of the study variables (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). This design

was important for use in the study because it offered the researcher the opportunity to describe and examine the phenomenon in the educational sector.

### Study Area

The study was carried out at the University of Ghana Business School (UGBS). It is a premier business school in the sub-region focused on developing world-class human resources and capabilities to meet national development needs and global challenges, through quality teaching, learning, research and knowledge dissemination. UGBS is a member of reputable international networks of business schools such as AACSB - The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business ([www.aacsb.edu/about](http://www.aacsb.edu/about)), GNAM - Global Network for Advanced Management (<http://advancedmanagement.net/>) and AABS - Association of African Business Schools (<http://www.aabschools.com/>). The School has collaborations with leading business schools in North America, Europe, Asia and Africa in the areas of student/faculty exchanges, academic programmes, case studies, and research development.

The school offers various undergraduate, masters and PhD programmes in its six academic departments – Department of Accounting, Department of Finance, Department of Marketing & Entrepreneurship, Department of Operations and Management Information Systems (OMIS), Department of Organisation and Human Resource Management (OHRM), and Department of Public Administration and Health Services Management (PAHSM). Some of the master's programmes including EMBA, MBA, MSc Development Finance, MSc Information Systems, and MA Marketing

Strategy are also run in a flexible mode (evenings, weekends and sandwiches) to enable students to pursue graduate studies while working.

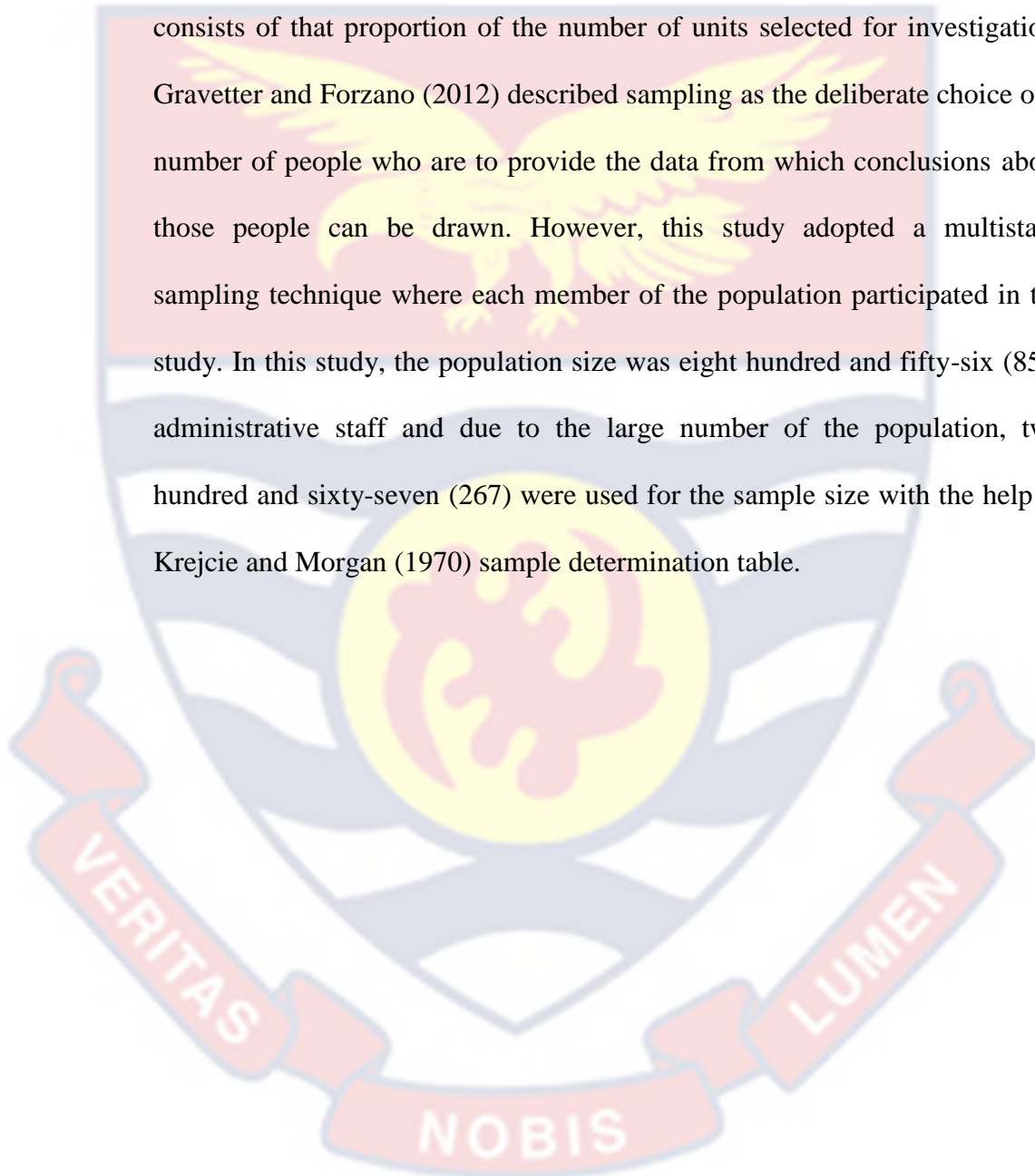
The school's executive education outfit, UGBS-Executive Development (UGBS-ED), offers executive education and tailored programmes to executives and senior management across various sectors while its Enterprise Development Service (EDS) specialises in providing business development, business advisory, and consulting to a wide range of enterprises. UGBS has qualified and experienced faculty who are committed to carrying out research that is relevant to policy, covering a variety of areas including, finance, banking, insurance, accounting, marketing, entrepreneurship, information systems, operations management, human resource management, health services management, and public administration.

### **Population**

Population is the entire aggregation of cases that meet a designed set of criteria (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). According to Ngechu (2004), population is seen as a set of elements, events, people, or groups of items under a research-based investigation. Leedy and Ormrod (2010) also postulated that the population can be seen as the target group about which the researcher is interested in acquiring information and concluding. For this research, the population of the study was eight hundred and fifty-six (856) administrative staff such as; Senior staff, Senior members and the Junior staff (University of Ghana, Directorate of Human Resource, School of Business, 2023).

### Sampling Procedure

A subset or some part of a larger population that shares some set of characteristics of the larger group is termed a sample (Zikmund, Babin, Carr & Griffin, 2013). Bambale (2014) emphasized that a sample of a population consists of that proportion of the number of units selected for investigation. Gravetter and Forzano (2012) described sampling as the deliberate choice of a number of people who are to provide the data from which conclusions about those people can be drawn. However, this study adopted a multistage sampling technique where each member of the population participated in the study. In this study, the population size was eight hundred and fifty-six (856) administrative staff and due to the large number of the population, two hundred and sixty-seven (267) were used for the sample size with the help of Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample determination table.





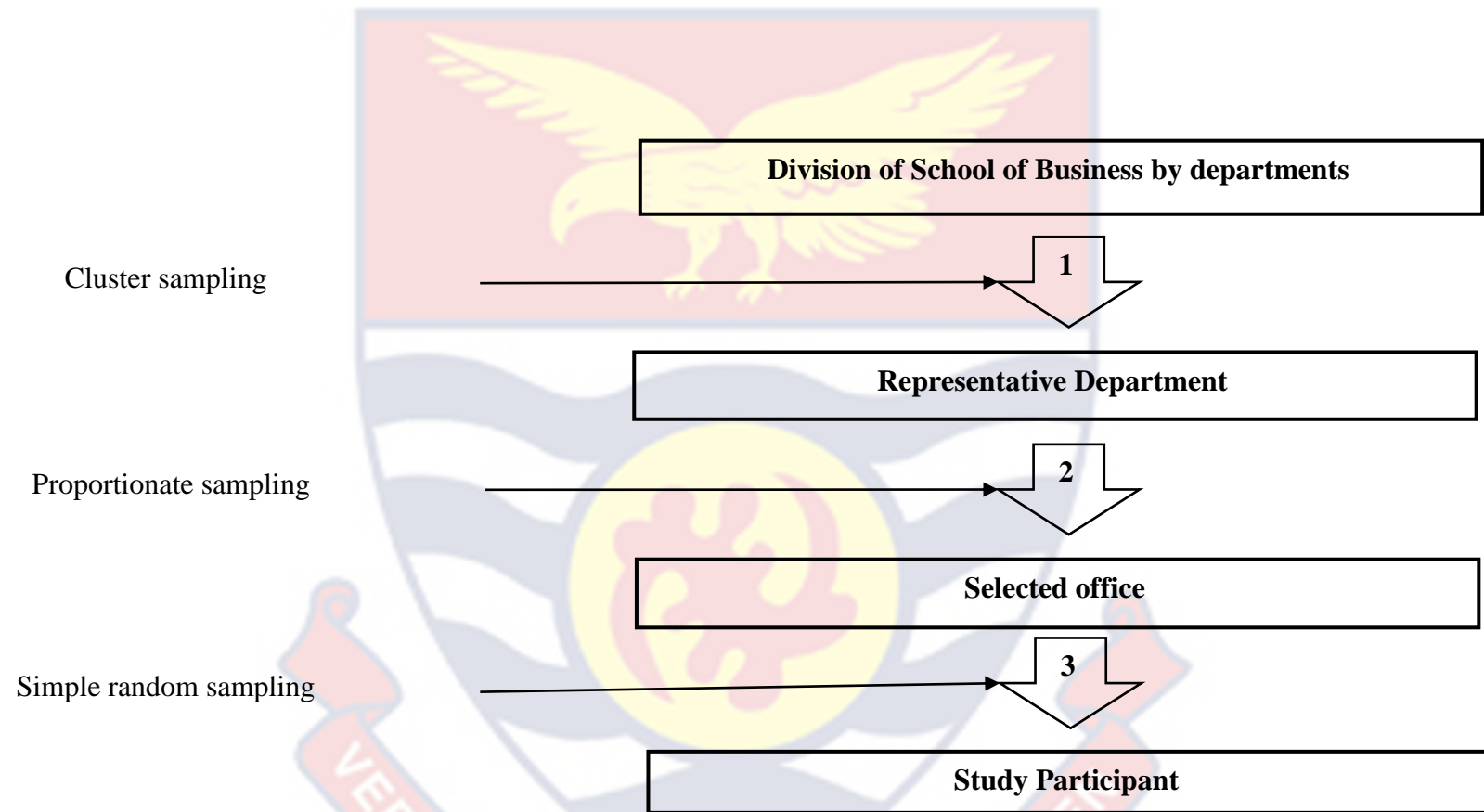


Figure 2: Steps involved in the multi-stage technique  
Source: Authors Construct (2023)

In this study, a multistage sampling technique consisting of cluster, proportionate and simple random sampling methods, was used to select the sample. A multistage sampling technique was used to select the participants for the study. A multistage sampling technique is a type of sampling in which the sample is drawn in many stages, and it entails the use of a combination of sampling methods in a variety of ways to address sampling needs more efficiently and effectively (Draeger, 2017).

The multistage sampling technique was chosen for this study because, it is useful for a study population that is widely spread across a large geographic area, and it is impractical to list and sample from all its units. Figure 2 shows the sampling procedure for the study

In the first stage of the sampling process, the multistage sampling technique method was utilized to group the offices in the department into 12 clusters based on administrative duties. These were the office of the dean, the office of the school administrator, the University of Ghana Business School (UGBS) registry, the UGBS library, the office of the registry, the executive MBA office, the Regular / Weekend MBA office, underground academic office, facility office, UGBS bursary, UGBS ICT unit, endowment fund secretariat.

In the second stage of the sampling process, the proportionate sampling method was used to select the respondents from the various offices. Proportionate sampling is a powerful tool for ensuring that our samples are representative of the populations we are studying. The number of workers in each office was divided by the total population (856) and the result was

multiplied by the sample size (267). This helped the researcher have a fair distribution of the various respondents from the various offices.

In the third stage of the sampling process, the simple random sampling method was used to select participants from each selected office employing the lottery method (drawing from a bowl). A “yes” or “no” option was written on pieces of paper and given to the respondents to choose. Once they chose yes, they were selected for the study to participate. Again, those who were present at the time of conducting the study were used for the research

### **Data Collection Instrument**

Research instruments are the tools that are used in the process of data collection for research purposes. Some scholars have posited that the validity and reliability of research findings are partly a function of the choice of the research instrument (Anlo, 2012). According to Alam (2020), the selection of the appropriate study instrument depends on the type and kind of data needed for the study and the goals of the study. Based on the objectives of the study, the present study adopted questionnaires as the tool for data collection. The questionnaires were self-administered. The reason for using a self-administered questionnaire was because of the following advantages; it is easier to build rapport with the respondents, create a pleasant and healthy atmosphere in which the respondents can easily participate, answer questions and explain any confusion they may have had about any aspect of the study (Mondal & Mondal, 2018).

Three instruments were used to collect data for the study, namely: Practice of Working from Home and benefits of Working from Home by Hansen, Ipsen and Kirchner (2020); as well as the Individual Work

Performance Questionnaire, developed by Koopmans, et. al. (2014). All three instruments were adapted to suit the local conditions of employers in Ghana. The rationale for adapting the instruments was that, in the first place, the instruments were crafted in developed countries and some parts of Europe such as Finland, Sweden, Germany, Spain and Canada. Therefore, there was then a need to modify the instruments to suit the local conditions of employers in the Educational Institutions in the Greater Accra Region. Also, individual dispositions in terms of patterns of feelings, thinking, behaving and beliefs among employers in the Greater Accra Region vary considerably from those of developed countries, and could probably affect the level of employee performance.

The items on the questionnaires were closed-ended and based on the Likert type of scale with each set of responses ranked from 1 to 5, permitting respondents to rank their opinions. The use of questionnaires also allowed the study participants to respond at their convenience and pace. The researcher prefaced each instrument with a document that declared and explained the purpose of the study. The text further assured the participants of anonymity as well as the confidentiality of responses. The document encouraged the teachers to participate in the study and to be frank in their responses.

The development of the questionnaire was in four parts/sections (A, B, C & D) and consisted of 43 items. The A part was geared towards obtaining information about the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The section contained five items on gender, age, highest educational qualification, years of working experience and position/rank. Section B contained 10 items (Items 6-15) which sought information on employees' perceptions of the



practice of working from home. The items were scored as follows; 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly Agree.

The C part was geared towards obtaining information on the challenges faced by employees during work from home. The section contained 10 items (Items 16-25). The items were scored as follows; 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly Agree. Section D contained 18 items (Items 26-43) which sought information on the level of employee performance in relation to working from home. The items were scored as follows; 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly Agree.

#### **Data Collection Procedures**

Primary data was used for this study. Primary data are original data sources that are collected fresh and for the first time and therefore happen to be the original. The primary data was collected using the survey method. This involved the distribution of questionnaires and the collection of data from respondents. In order to achieve the objectives of the study, well-designed questionnaires with close-ended questions were used. The researcher first presented an introductory letter from the University of Cape Coast to the University of Ghana, School of Business. This was to seek permission from the departmental head on an appropriate day the data collection can start. On the days of the data collection, the questionnaires were distributed to the respondents by the researcher. The researcher agreed with the respondents on the appropriate time for the collection of filled questionnaires. The time agreed upon was strictly adhered to and this led to the successful completion

of data collection. The data collection was done from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2023 to 15<sup>th</sup> December 2023.

### **Data Processing and Analysis**

Data are meaningless unless they are subjected to rigorous analysis, interpretation and discussions. The data was analysed using simple linear regression. It is documented that if the objective of the study requires the establishment of a relationship or prediction, then the data collected with respect to the study variables can be analysed using regression analysis (Olanipekun, Aje & Abiola-Falemu, 2013). The data was analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27. Both descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were employed in the analysis of data that was gathered. The background characteristics of the respondents were analysed using descriptive statistics (frequency counts and percentages). Research questions 1-3 were analysed using descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations). Research question 4 was analysed using inferential statistics (Multiple regression analysis). Research question 5 was analysed using inferential statistics (independent samples t-test).

### **Component Matrix**

The principal component matrix, also known as the component loading matrix, is a key output of Principal Component Analysis (PCA). It represents the relationships between the original variables and the extracted components. The values in the component matrix are called "loadings" or "factor loadings." Loadings indicate the strength and direction of the relationship between a variable and a component (Dziuban & Shirkey, 1974). A loading represents the correlation between a variable and a component,

indicating how much the variable contributes to the component. According to Shrestha (2021), a loading greater than 0.40 indicates that they are representative of the factor. As presented in Appendix 2, all the components loading were more than 0.40, therefore none of the items were omitted

### Validity and Reliability

Leech, Barrett and Morgan (2014) documented that a reliability test is used to determine how consistent the items purporting to measure the construct are with one another, as well as how free of measurement error the data is. In measuring the internal reliability of the construct, the study used Cronbach's Alpha. Nunally (1978) stipulated that for a construct to be considered reliable, its Cronbach Alpha value should exceed 0.70. The results of the Cronbach's alpha reliability test indicate the internal consistency and reliability of the factors examined in the study. The values from Table 1 for the reliability measure are .818, .726, .923, .788 and .742 which are far greater than the cut-off value. This indicates that the said constructs are deemed reliable.

**Table 1: Reliability Statistics**

Factor Category	Cronbach's Alpha	Number Of Items
Working from Home	.818	10
Task Performance	.762	5
Contextual Performance	.912	8
Counterproductive Work Behavior	.788	5
Challenges of Working from Home	.742	10

Source: Field survey (2023)

Kaiser-Meyer-sampling Olkin's adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity were also checked and validated to ensure the results of the principal component factor analysis can be considered acceptable. The results

from Table 2 suggest that there exists sampling adequacy for the factor analysis as the value for KMO values is .781, .767, .870, .792 and .780 for WFH, TP, CP, CWB and CHA respectively which are higher than the acceptable threshold of 0.7 and they also showed a significant value for the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ( $p = .000$ ).

**Table 2: KMO and Bartlett's Test**

	WFH	TP	CP	CWB	CHA
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.781	.767	.870	.792	.780
Bartlett's Approx. Chi-Square	787.542	240.822	1168.358	323.265	578.858
Test of Sphericity Df	45	10	28	10	45
Sig.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

Source: Field survey (2023)

### **Ethical Considerations**

A study by Patten and Newhart (2017) as cited in Bless, Higson-Smith and Kagee (2000) revealed major ethical issues that need to be considered in every research. According to them, these major ethical issues include voluntary participation, the right to privacy, anonymity and confidentiality of information. As such, all efforts were geared towards ensuring that all these ethical issues were attended to. For instance, with voluntary participation, every respondent was allowed to participate in the data collection exercise of his or her own free will. Also, the possible issues of the right to privacy were realised by allowing respondents to answer the questionnaires on their own and unclear questions were appropriately attended to through their convenient medium.



Further, the issue of anonymity was attended to by restricting respondents from providing detailed information about themselves on the questionnaire in relation to names, contact numbers and personal addresses. Respondents were also assured that none of their identities would be leaked to the public domain nor used for purposes other than this study. Finally, the study ensured the confidentiality of information by assuring respondents that all information provided would be kept confidential. They were also assured that none of the information neither provided would be used against them nor found in the public domain. In summary, the study ensured that all major ethical issues were appropriately addressed.

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter described the methods used in achieving the aim of this study. It revealed the study design and the researcher's reason for choosing a particular design. The population, as well as the sample size for the study and the sampling techniques, were discussed. For analysis's sake, the chapter touched on the methods for collecting the data and the instruments employed in collecting the data. The chapter has shown enough information about analysing the data and complying with an ethical stance. The next chapter, Chapter Four gives a presentation of the results of the collected and analysed data.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine the perceived effect of working from home on employees' performance during COVID-19 in selected educational institutions in the Greater Accra Region. A set of questionnaires was employed to gather the requisite data for the study. The data was analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27. Both descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were employed in the analysis of data that was gathered. The data from the employees was analysed through the computation of descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, and mean of means distributions) as well as inferential statistics (correlation and independent samples t-test). A total number of 267 questionnaires were distributed. Out of the total questions distributed, 229 questionnaires were completely filled and returned. The analysis done was based on the 229 respondents which represents a response rate of 85.8%. This chapter presents the interpretations, discussions and inferences that were made from the output.

#### Analysis of Data from Respondents

Table 3 shows the characteristics of the employees who served as respondents for the study in terms of gender, age, highest educational level, years of working experience and their positions.

**Table 3: Characteristics of Administrative Staff**

Variable	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	110	48.0
	Female	119	52.0
Age	21-25 years	16	7.0
	26-30 years	26	11.4
	31-35 years	55	24.0
	36-40 years	48	21.0
	41 years and above	84	36.7
	Highest Educational Qualification	Diploma	18
HND		10	4.4
Bachelor's Degree		102	44.5
Master's Degree		79	34.5
Doctorate		20	8.7
Years of working experience	Less than 1 year	3	1.3
	1-5 years	37	16.2
	6-10 years	47	20.5
	11-15 years	58	25.3
	16-20 years	30	13.1
	Above 20 years	54	23.6
	Position/ Rank	Junior Staff	68
Supervisory Staff		87	38.0
Managerial Staff		74	32.3

Source: Field survey (2023)

From Table 3, 229 out of the targeted sample size of 267 administrative staff were involved in the study. This indicates a return rate of 85.8%. From Table 3, out of the 229 employees who were involved in the study, 48.0% of them were males while 52.0% were females. Therefore, the majority of the respondents were females. In relation to the age of the respondents, 7.0% were between 21-25 years, 11.4% were between 26-30 years, 24.0% were between 31-35 years, 21.0% were between 36-40 years and 36.7% were 41 years and above. Thus, the majority of the employees were 41 years and above. It is also evident from Table 1 that the majority of the respondents had a first degree (Bachelor's Degree) as their highest

educational qualification. This is because 7.9% had a Diploma 4.4% had a Higher National Diploma (HND), 44.5% had a Bachelor's Degree, 34.5% had a Master's Degree and 8.7% had a Doctorate.

It can also be seen that the majority of the respondents had worked between 11-15 years. With this, 1.3% had worked for less than a year, 16.2% had worked between 1-5 years, 20.5% had worked between 6-10 years, 25.3% had worked between 11-15 years, 13.1% had worked between 16-20 years, and 23.6% had worked for more than 20 years. The implication is that, with the majority of the staff having worked between 11-15 years, they can provide the needed information with respect to the perceived effect of working from home on employees' performance during COVID-19 in selected educational institutions. Concerning the position/rank of the respondents, 29.7% were junior staff members, 38.0% were supervisory staff, and 32.3% were managerial staff. So it goes that, the majority of the employees were the supervisory staff.

### **Perceptions of Employees on the Practice of Work From Home**

This research objective aimed to examine the perceptions of employees on the practice of working from home. The views of the respondents are presented in Table 4.



**Table 4: Perceptions of Employees on the Practice of Work from Home**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
I got time to focus on my work without interruptions by other people.	2.88	1.24
I saved travel time to and from work.	3.39	1.30
I could take a break when I like to.	3.29	1.23
I felt more productive when working from home compared to working in the office.	2.86	1.19
My job responsibilities could be performed effectively from a remote location.	2.96	1.25
I had the flexibility to set my work hours when working from home.	3.34	1.20
Working from home allowed me to achieve a better work-life balance.	3.19	1.20
I felt isolated or disconnected from my team when working from home.	2.96	1.26
Communication and collaboration with colleagues were very effective.	2.84	1.26
I did not have anyone watching me.	2.93	1.23
<b>Overall</b>	<b>3.064</b>	<b>.761</b>

Source: Field survey (2023)

*Levels of Agreement: Strongly disagree = 1.00-1.80; Disagree = 1.81-2.60; Neutral = 2.61-3.40; Agree = 3.41-4.20; and Strongly agree = 4.21-5.00* (Bosch et al., 2022)

Concerning this statement; “I got time to focus on my work without interruptions by other people”, it was found that a significant majority of the employees were not sure about the statement. A mean of 2.88 and a standard deviation of 1.24 were attained. This means a lot of the employees were indifferent about the interruptions that came with working at home or the workplace. Also, a mean of 3.39 and a standard deviation of 1.30 indicate that the employees were unsure as to whether they saved travel time to and from work. Again, the majority of the employees were unsure as to whether they could take a break when they liked to. A mean of 3.29 and a standard deviation of 1.23 were attained for this item and this falls within the unsure.

In connection with this statement, “I felt more productive when working from home compared to working in the office”, a mean of 2.86 and a standard deviation of 1.19 were obtained. Thus, to a greater extent, the

employees were unsure as to whether they felt more productive when working from home compared to working in the office. In line with the statement; “My job responsibilities could be performed effectively from a remote location”, a mean of 2.96 and a standard deviation of 1.25 were recorded. This means that the employees were unsure about the statement. However, the high standard deviation realised which was higher than the mean of standard deviation of 1.24 indicates that there were variations in the responses and that not all the respondents shared this view. Yet, it remains that the majority of the employees were neutral about the statement.

Again, the respondents were unsure as to whether they had the flexibility to set their work hours when working from home. This is because a mean of 3.34 and a standard of 1.20 were achieved for the statement. This means that the workers are neutral about the statement that working from home increases employee flexibility over work demands. In line with the statement; “Working from home allowed me to achieve a better work-life balance”, a mean of 3.19 and a standard deviation of 1.20 were obtained. Thus, the employees were not sure whether working from home allowed them to achieve a better work-life balance. Also, a mean of 2.96 and a standard deviation of 1.26 indicate that the employees were unsure as to whether they felt isolated or disconnected from their team when working from home.

Again, the majority of the employees were unsure as to whether communication and collaboration with colleagues were effective. A mean of 2.93 and a standard deviation of 1.23 were attained for this item and this falls within the neutral option. The overall mean of 3.064 indicates that the employees had a neutral attitude towards working from home, neither strongly

agreeing nor disagreeing with the statements. However, there are some variations in the responses for each statement, as shown by the standard deviations ranging from 1.19 to 1.30.

These results are partly consistent with the study of Bolisani, Scarso, Hansen, Ipsen and Kirchner (2020) who found that some employees are undecided about their perception of working from home and working from the office. However, these results are inconsistent with the studies of Ashika (2021) and Shareena and Shahid (2020) who found that employees have a negative perception of working from home as compared to working from the office as well as Munobwa, Ahmadi, Zandi, Davidsson and Akhavan (2022) who found out that employees have a positive perception about working from home as compared to working from the office. The variation in the results may be due to the locational differences where the study was conducted as the current study was conducted in Ghana and the other studies were not.

From the foregoing, it can be concluded that the employees were unsure about the perceptions they had on the practice of working from home. This hinges on the findings that the employees were unsure as to whether got time to focus on their work without interruptions by other people; whether they saved travel time to and from work; whether they felt more productive when working from home compared to working in the office; and whether they performed their job responsibilities effectively from a remote location. Again, the employees were unsure as to whether they had the flexibility to set their work hours when working from home; whether working from home allowed them to achieve a better work-life balance; whether they felt isolated

or disconnected from their team when working from home; and whether communication and collaboration with colleagues was much effective.

### Level of Employee Performance in Relation to Working from Home

This research objective aimed to examine the level of employee performance in relation to working from home. The views of the respondents are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5: Level of Employee Performance in Relation to Working from Home**

Statement	Mean	SD
I managed to plan my work so that it was done on time.	3.57	1.124
My planning was optimal.	2.93	1.068
I kept in mind the results that I had to achieve in my work.	3.62	1.000
I was able to separate main issues from side issues at work.	3.49	1.095
I was able to perform my work well with minimal time and effort.	3.46	1.126
<b>Total Task Performance</b>	<b>3.42</b>	<b>.7066</b>
I took on extra responsibilities.	3.38	1.124
I started new tasks myself when my old ones were finished.	3.52	.976
I took on challenging work tasks, when available.	3.45	1.032
I worked at keeping my job knowledge up-to-date.	3.56	1.109
I worked at keeping my job skills up-to-date.	3.68	1.096
I came up with creative solutions to new problems.	3.69	1.007
I kept looking for new challenges in my job.	3.49	.949
I actively participated in work meetings.	3.53	1.126
<b>Total Contextual Performance</b>	<b>3.54</b>	<b>.8284</b>
I complained about unimportant matters at work.	2.50	1.194
I made problems greater than they were at work.	2.07	1.002
I focused on the negative aspects of a work situation, instead of on the positive aspects.	2.03	1.059
I spoke with colleagues about the negative aspects of my work.	2.43	1.085
I spoke with people from outside the organisation about the negative aspects of my work.	2.14	1.145
<b>Total Counter-productive Work Behaviour</b>	<b>2.24</b>	<b>.8086</b>

Source: Field survey (2023)

*Levels of Agreement: Strongly disagree = 1.00-1.80; Disagree = 1.81-2.60; Neutral = 2.61-3.40; Agree = 3.41-4.20; and Strongly agree = 4.21-5.00 (Bosch et al., 2022)*

The results from Table 5 assess the level of employee performance in relation to working from home. Firstly, regarding total task performance, the mean score of 3.42 falls within the Agree range. This suggests that, on



average, employees perceived themselves as capable of effectively completing their assigned tasks while working remotely. Thus, they were able to manage to plan their work so that it was done on time (mean = 3.57), they were able to keep in mind the results to be achieved (mean = 3.62), they were able to separate main issues from side issues at work (mean = 3.49) and they were able to perform their work well with minimal time and effort (mean = 3.46). The only exception was with the statement “My planning was optimal” which had a mean of 2.93 indicating neutrality. However, these results indicate a generally positive perception of task performance in a work-from-home setting.

Similarly, the mean score for total contextual performance is 3.54, also falling within the Agree range. This implies that employees perceived themselves as performing well in aspects beyond their core tasks, such as taking on extra responsibilities (mean = 3.38), starting new tasks by themselves when the old ones were finished (mean = 3.52), taking on challenging work tasks, when available (mean = 3.45), working at keeping their job knowledge up-to-date (mean = 3.56), working at keeping their job skills up-to-date (mean = 3.68), coming up with creative solutions to new problems (mean = 3.69), looking for new challenges in my job (mean = 3.49), and actively participating in work meetings (mean = 3.53). This suggests that employees felt capable of maintaining their level of engagement and contribution to the broader organisational context despite the remote work environment.

However, when considering total counterproductive work behaviour, the mean score of 2.24 falls within the disagree range. This suggests that there

was a disagreement among employees regarding the occurrence of counter-productive behaviours while working from home. Thus, they disagreed with the statements “I made problems greater than they were at work (mean = 2.07)”, “I focused on the negative aspects of a work situation, instead of on the positive aspects (mean = 2.03)” and “I spoke with people from outside the organisation about the negative aspects of my work (mean = 2.14)”. However when it came to the statements “I complained about unimportant matters at work (mean = 2.50) and I spoke with colleagues about the negative aspects of my work (mean = 2.43)”, they were neutral about them. However, these results indicate a general disagreement about being counter-productive which indicates a positive perception.

These results are consistent with the studies of Anugrah and Priyambodo (2022), Troll, Venz, Weitzenegger and Loschelder (2022), Khan, Mohammed and Harith (2018) and Ward (2017) who established that employees working from home had higher levels of performance. Based on the results, it seems that the employees have a positive attitude towards working from home, as they agree that their task performance and contextual performance are high, and their counter-productive work behaviour is low. This means that they can complete their assigned tasks, contribute to the organisational goals, and avoid any actions that might harm the organisation or their colleagues. The mean scores of the statements indicated positive results, indicating that the employees were satisfied with their work outcomes and behaviours while working from home. The standard deviations of the statements are relatively low, suggesting that there is not much variation or disagreement among the employees.

### Challenges Faced by Employees During Work from Home

This research question sought to assess the challenges faced by employees during work from home. The views of the respondents are presented in Table 6.

**Table 6: Challenges faced by Employees during Work from Home**

Statement	Mean	SD
I was concerned that there were work tasks that I wanted to do but could not do from home.	3.15	1.26
I was worried about the lack of exercise when I was not at my workplace.	2.91	1.12
The physical conditions in my home afforded a good working environment.	3.07	1.13
The availability of necessary technology and equipment (e.g., computers, high-speed internet) was adequate for efficient work from home.	3.24	1.20
My productivity levels have decreased since I started working from home.	2.82	1.21
I got disturbed by other people in my home.	3.07	1.17
I missed the food and other benefits that we have at my workplace.	2.63	1.16
The inability to see my colleagues and other people was a worry to me.	2.77	1.11
I had experienced feelings of isolation and loneliness while working from home.	2.71	1.17
I found it difficult to maintain a work-life balance when working remotely.	2.77	1.12
<b>Overall Mean and Standard Deviation</b>	<b>2.91</b>	<b>0.64</b>

Source: Field survey (2023)

*Levels of Agreement: Strongly disagree = 1.00-1.80; Disagree = 1.81-2.60; Neutral = 2.61-3.40; Agree = 3.41-4.20; and Strongly agree = 4.21-5.00* (Bosch et al., 2022)

A mean of 3.15 and a standard deviation of 1.26 were obtained for the statement; “I was concerned that there were work tasks that I wanted to do but could not do from home”. Thus, the employees were unsure as to whether they were concerned that there were work tasks that they wanted to do but could not do from home. Also, the respondents were neutral about the statement; “I was worried about lack of enough exercise when I was not at my workplace”. With this, a mean of 2.91 and a standard deviation of 1.12 were

obtained. In line with the statement; “The physical conditions in my home afforded a good working environment”, a mean of 3.07 and a standard deviation of 1.13 were obtained. So it goes that, the majority of the employees were unsure as to whether physical conditions in their homes afforded a good working environment. A standard deviation of 1.20 and a mean of 3.24 attest to the fact that the majority of the employees were unsure as to whether the availability of necessary technology and equipment (e.g., computer, high-speed internet) was adequate for efficient work from home.

The high standard deviation obtained which was higher than the mean of standard deviation of 1.17 indicates that there were variations in the responses recorded for this item. Yet it remains that the majority of the employees were not sure about this statement. Regarding the statement; “My productivity levels had decreased since I started working from home”, a mean of 2.82 and a standard deviation of 1.21 were obtained. This implies that the employees were not sure as to whether productivity levels had decreased since they started working from home. In connection with the statement, “I got disturbed by other people in my home”, a mean of 3.07 and a standard deviation of 1.17 were obtained. Thus, the employees were unsure as to whether they got disturbed by other people in their homes.

Concerning the statement; “I missed the food and other benefits that we have at my workplace”, it was found that a significant majority of the employees were neutral about the statement. A mean of 2.63 and a standard deviation of 1.16 were attained. Also, a mean of 2.77 and a standard deviation of 1.11 indicate that the employees were not sure as to whether the inability to see their colleagues and other people was a worry to them. Again, the



majority of the employees indicated that they were unsure as to whether they had experienced feelings of isolation and loneliness while working from home. A mean of 2.71 and a standard deviation of 1.17 were attained for this item. In line with the statement; “I found it difficult to maintain a work-life balance when working remotely”, a mean of 2.77 and a standard deviation of 1.12 were recorded. This means that the majority of the employees were unsure as to whether they found it difficult to maintain a work-life balance when working remotely.

An overall means of 2.91 and a mean of the standard deviation of 0.64 were obtained for the statements that were posed to the employees concerning the challenges they face during work from home. This implies that the employees were unsure about the challenges they faced while working from home. These results contradict the studies of Bakar et al. (2022), Flores (2019) and Mann and Chitranshi (2021) whose studies found that employees who work from home have the notion of having challenges such as feelings of isolation and loneliness while working from home, difficulty in maintaining a work-life balance, inability to see and communicate with colleagues and disturbed by other people.

It can be concluded that the employees were not sure about the challenges they faced while working from home. This is because the employees were not sure whether: they were concerned that there were work tasks that they wanted to do but could not do from home; whether the physical conditions in their home afforded a good working environment; and whether they got disturbed by other people in their homes

### Effect of working from home on employee's performance

In this regression, the dependent variable is the employee's performance made up of task performance, contextual performance counterproductive work behaviour, and the independent variable is the practice of working from home. Diagnostic tests were carried out on the models.

#### Correlation Analysis

Table 7 examines the correlation matrix which assesses the level of correlation between variables and determines if multicollinearity is a concern.

**Table 7: Correlation Matrix<sup>a</sup>**

		WFH	TP	CP	CWB
Correlation	WFH	1.000	.323	.378	-.149
	TP	.323	1.000	.631	-.271
	CP	.378	.631	1.000	-.365
	CWB	-.149	-.271	-.365	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	WFH		.000	.000	.012
	TP	.000		.000	.000
	CP	.000	.000		.000
	CWB	.012	.000	.000	

a. Determinant = .439

Source: Field survey (2023)

The correlation coefficient between are Computerized Accounting System and Total Firm Performance is less than 0.90 indicating that there is no multicollinearity among the variables. Also, the results as per Table 7 show that a significant correlation exists among the variables.

### Normality Test

The normality assumption was tested before the test was conducted. The normality test was conducted using the Q-Q plots and the result is shown in Figures 3, 4 and 5.

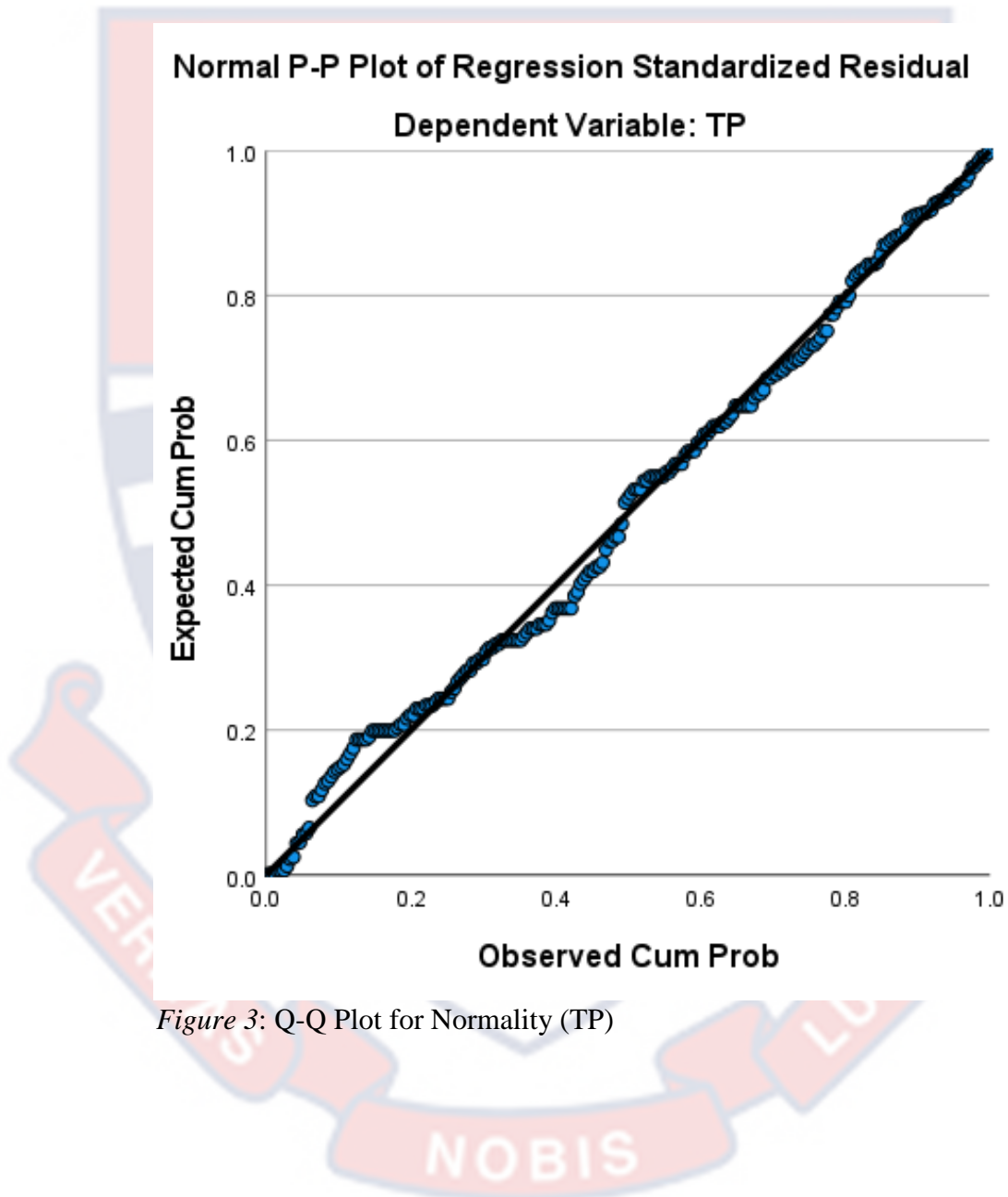


Figure 3: Q-Q Plot for Normality (TP)

Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual  
Dependent Variable: CP

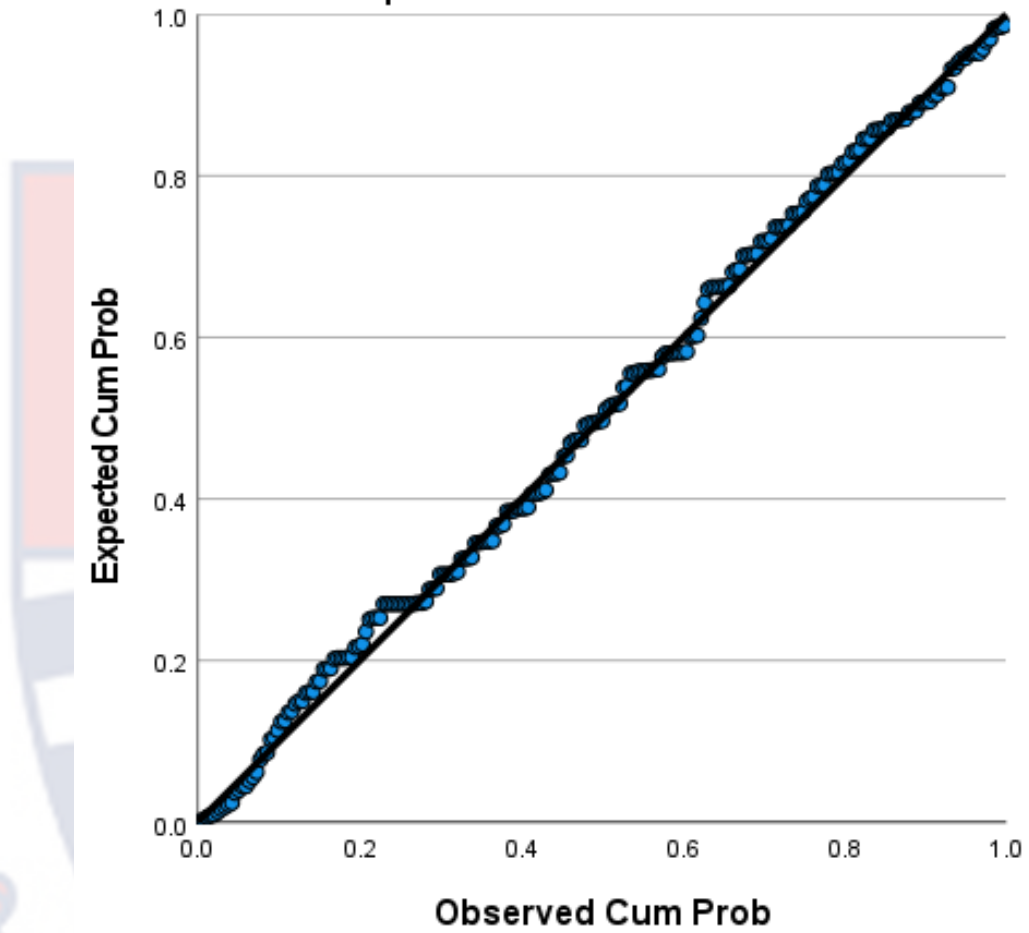
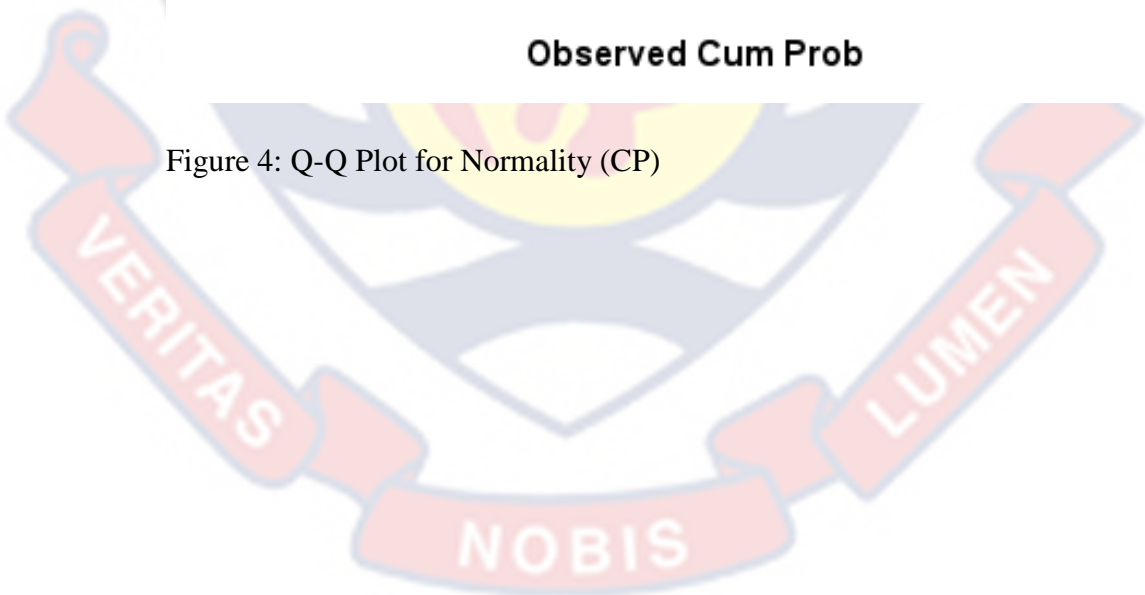


Figure 4: Q-Q Plot for Normality (CP)





## Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual

Dependent Variable: CWB

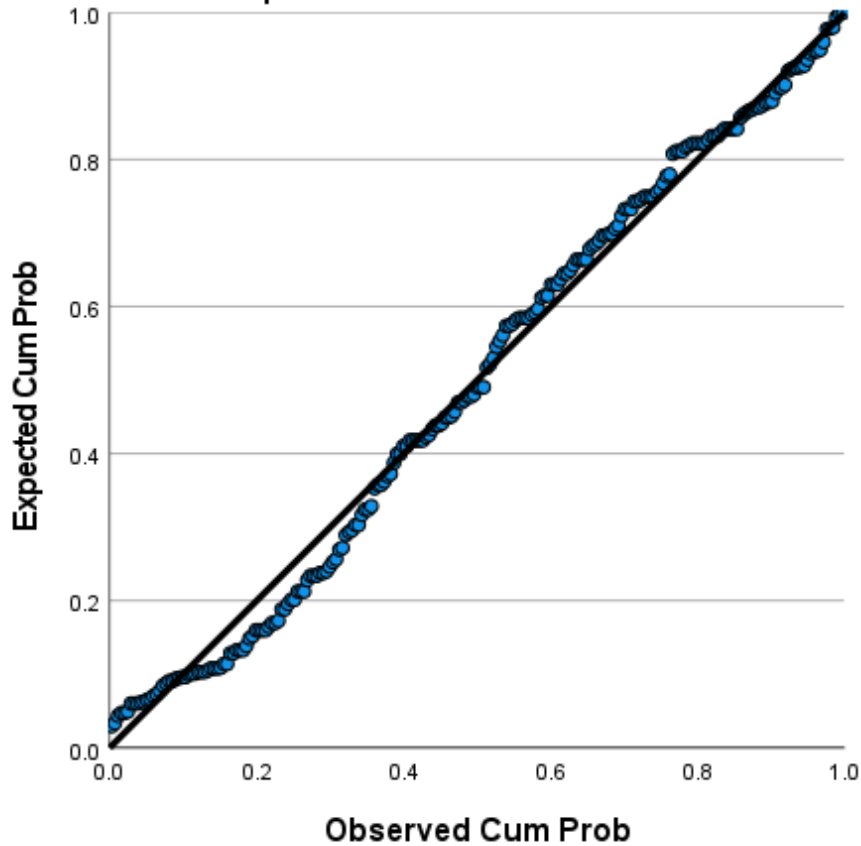


Figure 5: Q-Q Plot for Normality (CWB)

The Q-Q plot shown in Figures 3, 4 and 5 revealed that the data points are closer to the regression line. This depicted that the residuals for the variable work engagement are normally distributed and hence, the normality assumption was satisfied.

#### Model Diagnostics Test

The model diagnostics presented in Tables 8 and 9 provide information about the performance and goodness of fit of the regression model that examines the effect of working from Home on Employee's Performance (measured as Task Performance (TP), Contextual Performance CP, Counter-productive Work Behaviour (CWB))

**Table 8: Model Summary<sup>b</sup>**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin- Watson
1 (TP)	.323 <sup>a</sup>	.104	.100	.6702	1.625
2 (CP)	.378 <sup>a</sup>	.143	.139	.768666	1.617
3 (CWB)	.149 <sup>a</sup>	.022	.018	.8013	1.925

a. Predictors: (Constant), Working From Home

b. Dependent Variable: Task Performance (TP), Contextual Performance CP, Counter-productive Work Behaviour (CWB)

Source: Field survey (2023)

The results from the model summary showed a correlation coefficient of .323, .378 and .149 for models 1, 2 and 3 respectively. The results further revealed that about 10.4%, 14.3% and 2.2% of the variations in task performance (TP), contextual performance (CP), and counter-productive work behaviour (CWB) were explained by the practice of working from home respectively. The Durbin-Watson statistic value is used to detect the presence of autocorrelation in the residuals. This statistic ranges from 1.5 to 2.5 (Adam, 2015) suggesting no autocorrelation. The values for the Durbin-Watson statistic for each model fit into the range suggesting autocorrelation.

**Table 9: ANOVA**

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 (TP)	Regression	11.874	1	11.874	26.437	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	101.956	227	.449		
	Total	113.830	228			
2 (CP)	Regression	22.418	1	22.418	37.943	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	134.122	227	.591		
	Total	156.541	228			
3 (CWB)	Regression	3.316	1	3.316	5.165	.024 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	145.764	227	.642		
	Total	149.081	228			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Working From Home

b. Dependent Variable: Task Performance (TP), Contextual Performance CP, Counter-productive Work Behaviour (CWB)

Source: Field survey (2023)

From Table 12, the regression analysis reveals that the models are statistically significant, as indicated by the significant F-test ( $F = 26.437$ ,  $p < .000$ ,  $F = 37.943$ ,  $p < .000$ ,  $F = 5.165$ ,  $p = .0024$ ). This suggests working from home has a significant impact on the employee performance indicators.

### Regression Results

The regression results presented in Table 10 provide insights into the effect of working from Home on Employee's Performance (measured as Task Performance (TP), Contextual Performance CP, Counter-productive Work Behaviour (CWB))

**Table 10: Multiple Regression Analysis of Working from Home on Employee's Performance**

Models		Unstandardized		Standardized		
		B	Error Std.	Beta	t	Sig.
1(TP)	(Constant)	2.496	.184		13.562	.000
	Working From Home	.300	.058	.323	5.142	.000
2 (CP)	(Constant)	2.276	.211		10.781	.000
	Working From Home	.412	.067	.378	6.160	.000
3 (CWB)	(Constant)	2.720	.220		12.361	.000
	Working From Home	-.158	.070	-.149	-2.273	.024

a. Dependent Variable: Task Performance (TP), Contextual Performance CP, Counter-productive Work Behaviour (CWB)

Source: Field survey (2023)

The constant terms have coefficients of 2.496, 2.276, and 2.720 for models 1, 2 and 3 implying that when all predictors are zero, there is a positive intercept for Task Performance (TP), Contextual Performance CP, Counter-productive Work Behaviour (CWB) all significant at 5% ( $p = .000$  for all three models). Also, the coefficients for the effect of working from home on employee performance are .323, .378 and -.149 on Task Performance (TP), Contextual Performance CP, and Counter-productive Work Behaviour (CWB) respectively all significant at 5% ( $p = .000$  for task performance,  $p = .000$  for contextual performance and  $p = .024$  for counter-productive work behaviour). This means that a unit increase in working from home causes a .323 increase in task performance, a unit increase in working from home causes a .378 increase in contextual performance and a a unit increase in working from home causes a .149 decrease in counter-productive work behaviour. This means that overall working from home has a positive effect on employee



performance as it increases task performance and contextual performance as well as decreases counter-productive work behaviour.

The findings of this study stand in contrast to those of previous research conducted by Choukir, Alqahtani, Khalil, and Mohamed (2022), as well as Van der Lippe and Lippényi (2020), Gultom and Wanasida (2022), and Alfanza (2021). Choukir, Alqahtani, Khalil, and Mohamed (2022), along with Van der Lippe and Lippényi (2020), concluded that remote work had a detrimental effect on employee performance. Conversely, the results presented by Gultom and Wanasida (2022) and Alfanza (2021) suggested that the impact of remote work on employee performance was statistically insignificant. The contradiction may be due to the locational differences and the differences in research methods used.

#### **Differences between the Perceptions of Male and Female Employees Regarding the Challenges they Face while Working from Home**

This research objective sought to find out whether or not there were differences between the perceptions of male and female employees regarding the challenges they face working from home. Independent samples T-test was used in the analysis. The results are presented in Table 11.

**Table 11: Independent Samples T-test on the Perceptions of Male and Female Employees regarding the Challenges they face Working from Home**

Gender	Group	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Df	t-value	p-value
Perceptions Regarding the Challenges of Working from Home	Male	110	2.932	.63			
	Female	119	2.897	.65	277.0	0.405	0.686

Source: Field Data (2023)

\*\* significant at  $p=0.05$  (2-tailed)

Table 14 shows the results of the independent sample t-test on male and female employees regarding the perceptions they had on the challenges they faced working from home. From Table 14, it was realized that the male employees had a mean score of ( $M=2.932$ ;  $SD=.63$ ) while the female employees had a mean score of ( $M=2.897$ ;  $SD=.65$ ). This means that the male employees encountered more challenges working from home compared with their female counterparts. Again, the standard deviation ( $SD=.65$ ) of the female employees indicates that the challenges encountered by female employees working from home varied more than that of the male students ( $SD=.63$ ).

However, when the mean scores of the two groups were tested using the independent samples t-test at a 5% significant level, two-tailed, the results revealed that there was a statistically insignificant difference between male and female employees regarding the perceptions they had on the challenges they face working from home ( $t=.405$ ,  $p = 0.686$ ). Therefore, there is no

statistically significant difference between the perceptions of male and female employees regarding the challenges they face working from home.

This finding is consistent with the findings of Shareena and Shahid (2020) who found no difference between male and female employees regarding the perceptions they had on the challenges they face working from home. However, this result is partially consistent with the studies of Ajjan, AbuJarour, Fedorowicz and Owens (2020) and Ashika (2021) who found that there may be differences between males and females in relation to some challenges they face working from home.

### **Chapter Summary**

In this chapter, the study presented and discussed its results and findings. Descriptive statistics were employed to summarize and describe the collected data, while regression analysis was conducted to investigate the relationships as well as the independent Samples T-test. The results showed that employees' perceptions of working from home were neutral attitudes. Employees reported high task and contextual performance, and low counter-productive behavior, suggesting satisfaction with outcomes. Challenges faced were uncertain, particularly regarding work tasks, home environment, and distractions. Working from home positively impacted task and contextual performance but a negative impact on counter-productive behavior. Gender differences in perceived challenges were insignificant ( $t=4.05$ ,  $p = 0.686$ ), despite male employees reporting slightly higher challenges.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Introduction

This chapter marks the concluding part of the study. It aims to highlight the main findings. It also presents a summary of the research process, the conclusions, and recommendations and offers implications for future research.

#### Summary of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the perceived effect of working from home on employees' performance during COVID-19 in selected educational institutions. To find answers to the research questions and the hypotheses that were formulated to guide the study, the cross-sectional descriptive survey design was employed. The study covered all administrative staff at the University of Ghana Business School. In all a sample of 267 administrative staff was drawn for the study, however only 229 usable questionnaires were returned. The multi-stage (cluster and proportionate) technique and the simple random sampling procedure were used to select the administrative staff to serve as respondents.

The questionnaire was used to gather the requisite data for the study. A set of five-point Likert scale type of questionnaires was used to gather data from the employees. The data gathered from the respondents were analysed with statistical tools such as frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations, multiple regression analysis and independent samples t-test.



### Summary of Key Findings

With regards to the first objective which was to find the perception of employees on working from home, it was realised that employees were unsure about the perceptions they had on the practice of working from home. This is because the employees were unsure as to whether got time to focus on their work without interruptions by other people; whether they saved travel time to and from work; whether they felt more productive when working from home compared to working in the office; and whether they performed their job responsibilities effectively from a remote location.

With regards to the second objective which was to find the level of employee performance in relation to working from home, it was realised that the level of performance in relation to task performance and contextual performance were high with counter-productive work behaviour being low. This means that they can complete their assigned tasks, contribute to the organisational goals, and avoid any actions that might harm the organisation or their colleagues. Thus, it indicated positive results, indicating that the employees were satisfied with their work outcomes and behaviours while working from home.

With regards to the third objective was to find the challenges faced by the employees with regard to working from home. The results showed that the employees were not sure about the challenges they faced while working from home. This is because the employees were not sure whether: they were concerned that there were work tasks that they wanted to do but could not do from home; whether the physical conditions in their home afforded a good

working environment; and whether they got disturbed by other people in their homes.

With regard to the fourth objective, working from home had a positive effect on task performance, working from home had a positive effect on contextual performance and working from home had a negative effect on counter-productive work behaviour. This means that overall working from home has a positive effect on employee performance as it increases task performance and contextual performance as well as decreases counter-productive work behaviour. Thus, working from home had a positive effect on employees' performance and working from home was a statistically significant factor that influenced employee performance.

With regards to the fifth objective, it was found that male employees encountered more challenges working from home compared with female employees, however, there was a statistically insignificant difference between male and female employees regarding the perceptions they had on the challenges they face working from home.

### **Conclusions**

Regarding the first objective, which aimed to gauge employees' perceptions of working from home, it was evident that employees expressed uncertainty about their attitudes toward remote work. The study revealed a lack of clarity among employees regarding various aspects of working from home, including their ability to focus, productivity levels, and effectiveness in fulfilling job responsibilities. One possible explanation for this uncertainty is the varying personal circumstances and home environments of employees, which can significantly influence their work-from-home experience. This

study contributes to a better understanding of the problem by highlighting the need for organizations to address these individual differences. Ensuring that employees have the necessary resources and support to create a conducive work environment at home could help mitigate these uncertainties.

Moving on to the second objective, which sought to assess the level of employee performance in relation to working from home, the findings were unexpectedly positive. Despite employees' uncertain perceptions about remote work, the study revealed that employees reported high levels of task and contextual performance while exhibiting low levels of counter-productive behaviour. These results suggest that, despite initial uncertainty, employees were able to adapt to remote work environments effectively and maintain high levels of productivity and job performance. This indicates that remote work can lead to positive employee outcomes when the right conditions are met. These findings suggest that employees are capable of maintaining and even enhancing their productivity and performance in a remote setting. The study contributes to Herzberg's two-factor theory by illustrating those intrinsic factors such as autonomy and flexibility, which are often enhanced in remote work settings, can significantly boost employee performance.

Regarding the third objective, which aimed to identify the challenges faced by employees when working from home, the findings echoed the uncertainties expressed by employees in the first objective. Employees reported uncertainty regarding various challenges associated with remote work, such as task completion, the suitability of the home environment for work, and potential disruptions. This uncertainty might be due to the novel

nature of the widespread shift to remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study suggests that organizations need to better identify and address the challenges employees face to improve their remote work experience.

Moving on to the fourth objective, which investigated the effect of working from home on employee performance, the findings revealed a positive impact on task and contextual performance, while a negative impact on counter-productive behaviour. This indicates that remote work can enhance overall employee performance, provided that employees are well-supported and their working conditions are optimized. These results suggest that remote work can fulfil higher-level needs such as autonomy and self-actualization, as posited by Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory.

Finally, the fifth objective, which explored gender differences in perceived challenges faced when working from home, revealed an unexpected finding. While male employees reported encountering more challenges compared to their female counterparts, the statistical analysis indicated that there was no significant difference in the perceptions of challenges between male and female employees. This unexpected result suggests that gender may not be a significant factor in influencing employees' perceptions of challenges associated with remote work. organisations should consider these findings when developing strategies to support employees in remote work environments, ensuring that support mechanisms are gender-neutral and accessible to all employees.



## Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions drawn from the study, the following recommendations have been made:

To address uncertain perceptions of remote work, organisations should provide comprehensive communication and training sessions to educate employees about its benefits and challenges, alongside implementing flexible work policies that allow employees to choose between remote and in-office work based on their preferences and job requirements. Additionally, offering resources and support services, such as technology assistance and mental health resources, can help employees adapt to remote work environments effectively.

Leveraging the positive performance outcomes of remote work requires encouraging ongoing feedback and communication between managers and remote employees, alongside investing in technology infrastructure and remote collaboration tools to facilitate seamless communication and collaboration among remote teams. Recognition and rewards for high performance and productivity levels while working remotely can also boost morale and motivation.

Mitigating challenges associated with remote work involves conducting regular surveys or focus groups to gather feedback from remote employees about their challenges and concerns, alongside providing flexible work arrangements, such as hybrid work models, to allow employees to balance work and personal responsibilities effectively. Additionally, offering resources and support services, such as ergonomic assessments and remote

work best practices guides, can help employees create a conducive work environment at home.

To optimize the positive impact of remote work on performance, organisations should implement clear performance metrics and goals for remote employees to ensure accountability and track progress effectively. Fostering a culture of trust and autonomy within remote teams, alongside investing in professional development and training programs, can enhance remote employees' skills and competencies and support their career growth.

In terms of gender-inclusive support mechanisms in remote work environments, it is essential to ensure that support resources and policies are inclusive and accessible to all employees, regardless of gender. This can be achieved by offering flexible work arrangements and accommodations to accommodate the diverse needs and preferences of employees, alongside providing training and education on diversity and inclusion topics to foster an inclusive remote work culture and eliminate gender biases and stereotypes.

### **Suggestions for Further Research**

This study sought to determine the perceived effect of working from home on employees' performance during COVID-19 in selected educational institutions in the Greater Accra Region. The study could be replicated in other regions in the country to find out what persists there. The study was conducted using the questionnaire as the only instrument for data collection. Future studies may consider the use of interviews to make the study more interactive. It is suggested that future studies should investigate the reasons why female employees encountered more challenges working from home compared with male employees.

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## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1 - QUESTIONNAIRES

QUESTIONNAIRE ON PERCEIVED EFFECT OF WORK FROM  
HOME ON EMPLOYEES' PERFORMANCE DURING COVID-19

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

COLLEGE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS PROGRAMMES

Dear Respondent,

I am a student of the University of Cape Coast, offering a Master of Business Administration (Human Resource Management) programme at the College of Distance Education, Department of Business Programmes. This questionnaire is designed to ascertain information for my research work on the topic: **“PERCEIVED EFFECT OF WORK FROM HOME ON EMPLOYEES’ PERFORMANCE DURING COVID-19 IN SELECTED EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE GREATER ACCRA REGION”**. This research is in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of a Master of Business Administration Degree in Human Resource Management at the University of Cape Coast.

All the answers you provide will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and for academic purposes only. Please feel free to answer the questions as candidly as possible.

Thank you (**MuoNgmenlakuuro Gabriella**)

**SECTION A: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DATA OF RESPONDENTS**

To answer a question, kindly tick [] on the space provided where necessary.

## 1. Gender:

- a. Male []      b. Female []

## 2. Age:

- a. 21-25 years []      b. 26-30 years []

- c. 31-35 years []      d. 36-40 years []

- e. 41 years and above []

## 3. Highest educational qualification:

- a. Diploma []      b. Higher National []

- c. Diploma/BSC []      d. Master's Degree []

- e. Doctorate []

## 4. Years of working experience:

- a. Less than 1 year []      b. 1-5 years []

- c. 6-10 years []      d. 11-15 years []

- e. 16-20 years []      f. Above 20 years []

## 5. Position/Rank

- a. Junior Staff []      b. Supervisory Staff []

- c. Managerial Staff []

## SECTION B: EMPLOYEES' PERCEPTIONS OF THE PRACTICE OF WORK FROM HOME

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements on employees' perceptions of the practice of working from home.

1 – Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree 3-Neutral, 4- Agree, 5 –Strongly Agree.

Please tick [  ]

Practice of Working from Home (PWFH) by Hansen, Ipsen & Kirchner (2020).							
S/N		Item	1	2	3	4	5
6.	WFH1	I got time to focus on my work without interruptions by other people.					
7.	WFH2	I saved travel time to and from work.					
8.	WFH3	I could take a break when I like to.					
9.	WFH4	I felt more productive when working from home compared to working in the office.					
10.	WFH5	My job responsibilities could be performed effectively from a remote location.					
11.	WFH6	I had the flexibility to set my work hours when working from home.					
12.	WFH7	Working from home allowed me to achieve a better work-life balance.					
13.	WFH8	I felt isolated or disconnected from my team when working from home.					
14.	WFH9	Communication and collaboration with colleagues were very effective.					
15.	WFH10	I did not have anyone watching me.					

### SECTION C: CHALLENGES FACED BY EMPLOYEES AND EMPLOYERS DURING WORK FROM HOME

Please indicate your level of agreement to the following statements on challenges faced by employees and employers during work from home.

1 – Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree 3-Neutral, 4- Agree, 5 –Strongly Agree.

Please tick [ ]

<b>Challenges of Working from Home (CWFH) by Hansen, Ipsen &amp; Kirchner (2020).</b>							
S/N		Item	1	2	3	4	5
16.	CHA1	I was concerned that there were work tasks that I wanted to do but could not do from home.					
17.	CHA2	I was worried about the lack of enough exercise when I was not at my workplace.					
18.	CHA3	The physical conditions in my home afforded a good working environment.					
19.	CHA4	The availability of necessary technology and equipment (e.g., computers, high-speed internet) was adequate for efficient work from home.					
20.	CHA5	My productivity levels have decreased since I started working from home					
21.	CHA6	I got disturbed by other people in my home.					
22.	CHA7	I missed the food and other benefits that we have at my workplace.					
23.	CHA8	The inability to see my colleagues and other people was a worry to me.					
24.	CHA9	I had experienced feelings of isolation and loneliness while working from home.					
25.	CHA10	I found it difficult to maintain a work-life balance when working remotely.					



## SECTION D: LEVEL OF EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN RELATION TO WORKING FROM HOME

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements on the level of employee performance in relation to working from home.

1 – Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree 3-Neutral, 4- Agree, 5 –Strongly Agree.

Please tick [ ]

<b>Individual Work Performance Questionnaire (IWPQ) by Koopmans, et. al. (2014).</b>							
S/N		Item	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Task Performance (TP) Scale</b>							
26.	TP1	I managed to plan my work so that it was done on time.					
27.	TP2	My planning was optimal.					
28.	TP3	I kept in mind the results that I had to achieve in my work.					
29.	TP4	I was able to separate main issues from side issues at work.					
30.	TP5	I was able to perform my work well with minimal time and effort.					
<b>Contextual Performance (CP) Scale</b>							
31.	CP1	I took on extra responsibilities.					
32.	CP2	I started new tasks myself when my old ones were finished.					
33.	CP3	I took on challenging work tasks, when available.					
34.	CP4	I worked at keeping my job knowledge up-to-date.					
35.	CP5	I worked at keeping my job skills up-to-date.					
36.	CP6	I came up with creative solutions to new problems.					
37.	CP7	I kept looking for new challenges in my job.					
38.	CP8	I actively participated in work meetings.					
<b>Counterproductive Work Behavior (CWB) Scale</b>							
39.	CWB1	I complained about unimportant matters at work.					
40.	CWB2	I made problems greater than they were at work.					
41.	CWB3	I focused on the negative aspects of a work situation, instead of on the positive aspects.					
42.	CWB4	I spoke with colleagues about the negative aspects of my work.					
43.	CWB5	I spoke with people from outside the organisation about the negative aspects of my work.					

Thank You

## APPENDIX 2 - COMPONENT MATRIX

## Component Matrix (Working from Home)

Statements	Component 1
I got time to focus on my work without interruptions by other people.	.567
I saved travel time to and from work.	.734
I could take a break when I like to.	.686
I felt more productive when working from home compared to working in the office.	.658
My job responsibilities could be performed effectively from a remote location.	.566
I had the flexibility to set my work hours when working from home.	.754
Working from home allowed me to achieve a better work-life balance.	.787
I felt isolated or disconnected from my team when working from home.	.478
Communication and collaboration with colleagues were very effective.	.477
I did not have anyone watching me.	.621
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. a. Component extracted.	

Source: Field survey (2023)

**Component Matrix (Work Performance)**

Statements	Component 1
<b>Task Performance</b>	
I managed to plan my work so that it was done on time.	.660
My planning was optimal.	.427
I kept in mind the results that I had to achieve in my work.	.772
I was able to separate main issues from side issues at work.	.842
I was able to perform my work well with minimal time and effort.	.746
<b>Contextual Performance</b>	
I took on extra responsibilities.	.671
I started new tasks myself when my old ones were finished.	.772
I took on challenging work tasks, when available.	.807
I worked at keeping my job knowledge up-to-date.	.843
I worked at keeping my job skills up-to-date.	.771
I came up with creative solutions to new problems.	.831
I kept looking for new challenges in my job.	.801
I actively participated in work meetings.	.807
<b>Counterproductive Work Behavior</b>	
I complained about unimportant matters at work.	.656
I made problems greater than they were at work.	.784
I focused on the negative aspects of a work situation, instead of on the positive aspects.	.808
I spoke with colleagues about the negative aspects of my work.	.674
I spoke with people from outside the organisation about the negative aspects of my work.	.769
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.	
a. Component extracted.	

Source: Field survey (2023)

**Component Matrix (Challenges of Working from Home)**

Statements	Component 1
I was concerned that there were work tasks that I wanted to do but could not do from home.	.539
I was worried about the lack of enough exercise when I was not at my workplace.	.606
The physical conditions in my home afforded a good working environment.	.418
The availability of necessary technology and equipment (e.g., computers, high-speed internet) was adequate for efficient work from home.	.484
My productivity levels have decreased since I started working from home	.512
I got disturbed by other people in my home.	.642
I missed the food and other benefits that we have at my workplace.	.615
The inability to see my colleagues and other people was a worry to me.	.732
I had experienced feelings of isolation and loneliness while working from home.	.731
I found it difficult to maintain a work-life balance when working remotely.	.809
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.	
a. Component extracted.	

Source: Field survey (2023)