An Exploration of Home Office Design and Its Effect on Stress Reduction, Happiness, and Productivity for Working Mothers’ Well-being during COVID-19

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By

Janay Brown

Under the mentorship of Ms. Erica Bartels

ABSTRACT

This study explores how the home working environment can help reduce stress, increase productivity, and support happiness for remote working mothers within a home office environment aiding in their overall well-being. In response to COVID-19, many workers have transitioned to working from home to maintain safety. This study aims to help examine the impacts of home office design on working mothers with respect to stress reduction, happiness, and productivity. The researcher conducted face-to-face virtual interviews and the results were analyzed by creating categories and themes out of the rich descriptions to understand working mothers’ experiences in their home office environment through a phenomenological qualitative data framework. A discussion of the findings from the interviewees’ responses answered the research questions for this study.

Thesis Mentor: ________________  
Ms. Erica Bartels

Honors Director: ____________________  
Dr. Steven Engel

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School of Human Ecology
Honors College
Georgia Southern University
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I would like to thank both of my mentors, Ms. Erica Bartels and Dr. Angelita Scott, both have helped guide and support me through this journey of completing my Honors thesis. Also, I am thankful for all the wonderful knowledge I was taught as an undergraduate interior design student.

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Introduction

The lived experiences of working mothers, often affected by stress levels, feelings of happiness, and productivity, is additionally impacted by the need to work from home during a pandemic. Specifically, this study explores how the home working environment can support remote working mothers and their overall well-being. Due to COVID-19, many workers have transitioned to working from home to maintain safety. Working mothers endure more stress when it comes to working at home while attending to their children’s needs (Kadale, Pandey, Raje, 2018). There have been numerous studies that focus on increasing well-being in office buildings but there are not many studies examining home office environments (Nakrošienė, Bučiūnienė, & Goštautaitė, 2019). For the purpose of this study full-time and part-time working mothers are defined as female (with the pronouns she, her, hers) that have younger children between the ages of 3 and 13 who are at home- instead of school or childcare at home due to COVID-19.

Literature Review

There is a gap in the literature related to home office workplace environments and interior design features that may enhance overall well-being. Factors such as ergonomics, positive psychology, access to nature, lighting and noise will impact the variables of this study. Additionally, research findings related to COVID-19 are limited, specifically studies focusing on mothers that are new to working from home.

COVID-19 & Impact on Working Mothers

COVID-19 changed every aspect of our lives and caused many disruptions in businesses, which led many people to transition to working from home. According to Leohardt (2020), “roughly 9.8 million working mothers in the U.S. are suffering from workplace burnout,” which means
mothers are 28% more likely to experience major burnout than fathers (para. 3 & 4). It is because remote working mothers are finding it difficult to balance work with home responsibilities. Many children stayed home instead of returning to their classrooms in person because of the pandemic and this is forcing many women to make a difficult choice and drop out of the workforce altogether (Horsley, Hsu, & Schenider, 2020). According to the Figure 1 chart below, in the U.S., there are 2.35 million additional cases of burnout due to the unequal demands of home and work that are placed on working mothers. There are also cases of burnout that are higher among Black, Asian, and Latino mothers compared to their White counterparts (Leohardt, 2020). This means that people need to implement more positive qualities and preventative tools into their daily routines, this can overall decrease stress significantly by promoting wellness.

**Figure 1**

Figure 2

*Figure 2: Working Women Vs Working Partners working from home, in the office, and not working because of COVID-19*

**Note.** This chart demonstrates that women are less likely to have kept working in their usual workplace than men. 44% of working women have kept their jobs by working from home than 30% of men. Therefore, women are much more likely to work from home, which increases the likelihood of a heavier overall workload for women resulting from the combination of their occupation and domestic work. Also, it shows the women and men have stopped working because of COVID-19 (Boca et al., 2020).

**Interior Environment**

COVID-19 has become our new normal, therefore, to help mitigate the spread of the virus more business activities have been done at home. Many people are now adjusting to their new reality of working from home, which is why it's important to have a home working environment that makes people feel comfortable, happy, and productive (Spangler & McLeod, 2020).
Research has found that people need to focus on the physical aspects of an ergonomic working environment to increase productivity in a home office space to limit health problems from occurring (Janneck, Jent, Weber, & Nissen, 2018). Also, studies have shown that men find it easier to work from home than women because men are able to abscond from any responsibility for childcare, supervision, and housework while working than women do (Kadale, Pandey, Raje, 2018). Due to the impact of COVID-19, women find it challenging to balance their work-life while overseeing their children who are in remote schooling as well as doing household chores like cooking and cleaning (Kaushik, Guleria, 2020). Therefore, this research study focuses on enhancing wellbeing for working mothers.

Creating a healthy home office environment is important to improve productivity and reduce stress. When designing a home office space, there are key ideas that need to be considered such as a dedicated space, good ergonomics, health, light, and noise (Grantham & Mulholland, 2020).

**Light & Noise**

“Good lighting is essential. Ideally, you want as much natural daylight as possible. If your space has a window, it will enhance the lighting” wrote Gumpel (2021, para. 15). If no daylight is available, think about ambient and task lighting within the home working environment. To avoid glare, don't place overhead lighting directly above computer screens, and don't put a computer screen directly in front of a light source that will cause eyestrain (Gumpel, 2021, para. 18).

Some working mothers find it difficult to set physical boundaries while working from home with their children. According to Steelcase, if you don’t have a home office, it’s easy to be distracted every time someone walks into the room. Therefore, to block out visual noise mothers
can use plants, bookcases, and tidy up their workspace to eliminate visual chaos that can be distracting (2020, para. 7). Steelcase (2020) noted that “The number one complaint in the office is noise, but it can be even more of a problem at home” (para. 8). A few ways to control noise in the home office environment are to use headphones as an option, portable screens as a divider for privacy, schedule accordingly when there needs to be quietness, and practice mindfulness when the mind starts to wander and redirect their attention. Therefore, to help minimize the impact of noise in the home office consider using existing furniture in turn into dedicated work zones. A home office environment should be a place where it reflects a mother’s personality and where they can enjoy being in to enhance their work rather than as a distraction.

**Physical Health & Nature**
Incorporating nature is an important aspect to include in a remote working mothers’ home office space. Biophilic design is a practice used to connect people with the natural environment. As a result, this can contribute to a working mothers’ physical and mental health, fitness, and wellbeing. Winer (2020) found that movement has a powerful impact on the body and the mind. Just a few minutes of movement can help recharge and reduce anxiety or stress. Being able to step outside, feel the fresh air, and connect to nature can offer powerful benefits to our mood and overall mental well-being. Going outside safely provides an opportunity to disconnect from our screens and experience the natural beauty around us. Barnes (2020) says that Americans spend about 90 percent of their lives indoors, it’s important to be purposeful about introducing nature into your space. Engaging with natural materials, organic patterns, and allowing yourself to the outdoors and natural daylight patterns can help you re-energize, increase productivity and promote alertness (para.5).
Ergonomics

According to Spangler & McLeod from WELL (2020), “Ergonomics is the study of people at work. As a scientific discipline, it’s concerned with understanding and optimizing the relationship between the human body and the various environments within which it functions” (para. 2). Studies have shown that many employees working at home face the challenges of designing their own ergonomic workspace without ample ergonomic knowledge. It is because many don’t have enough space or adequate office furniture, such as ergonomic chairs, adjustable tables, resulting in unfavorable sitting positions (Janneck et. al., 2018). Also, there are several concerns with identified workstations such as poor lighting, glare from the monitor, hard edge on desk surface and some workers have a non-office workstation such as their bed, sofa, dining table for their primary work area (Davis et al., 2020). It is stated to avoid working in those areas because it often leads to poor postures and discomfort.

Research has been found that home offices are appealing to workers due to less commuting, better work–home balance, and less stress due to being in the comforts of home. Home offices will need to incorporate sound ergonomic concepts to ensure the long-term health of the workers. As home offices are becoming a permanent option for many workers, companies will need to provide proper accommodations with respect to ergonomics to increase workers’ health (Davis et al., 2020). This is important because this will enable workers to be more relaxed and comfortable while working to avoid health problems such as eye strain, back pain, headaches, problems concentrating, etc. Also, it is highly recommended to change posture throughout the day. Every 30 minutes, one should stand up and move around for at least 2 minutes (Davis et al., 2020).
According to Janneck et al., (2018), Figure 3 shows the correct sitting posture. The thighs should be in a horizontal position. Thighs and lower legs should form a right angle, as well as upper arm and forearm. Workers should be able to type on the keyboard without tensing their shoulders. As a general rule, the wrist should be below the elbow (p. 3). Therefore, the chair should have a backrest and armrests with adjustable height. Screen work often involves a lot of sitting and a lack of physical activity (p. 2). As a result, to avoid muscle strain and back pain another suggestion would be using a stand-up or height-adjustable desk which allows a person to stand up and work comfortably.

**Workplace Productivity**

Telecommuting can provide benefits to both employees and employers. The ability to work from home has been found to increase productivity and employee satisfaction, although it also can induce feelings of isolation and loneliness (Carli, 2020, pg. 5). Research has shown that to increase workplace productivity for working mothers it's important to create new routines, set realistic expectations for the day and try to tap into their support system. This could mean asking your partner to be more active in splitting the household responsibilities, childcare, talking to your colleagues or manager about what you need to be able to do your job more effectively (Leohardt, 2020). Creating a more productive workplace environment can increase a sense of wellbeing while working from home.
Positive Psychology

Positive Psychology is an important aspect of well-being because it helps people to flourish and contribute to their mental health that ultimately leads to happiness within a built environment (Kun, Balogh, & Krasz, 2017). It is a relatively new branch of psychology that was founded by Martin Seligman. Seligman suggested five components of well-being and developed a new model of well-being called the PERMA. The five domains include Positive emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment. Positive emotion is a prime indicator of flourishing to cultivate gratitude, love, joy, and compassion. Increasing positive emotions help individuals build physical, intellectual, psychological, and social resources that lead to this resilience and overall wellbeing. Engagement refers to flow, which is the involvement in activities, duties, and tasks that enable people to use their top strengths. Relationships encompass stronger connections with their partners, family, friends, colleagues, supervisors, and their community at large. Meaning and purpose help one’s self to fulfill goals that are important to them which are guided by personal values to live longer and have greater life satisfaction. Accomplishment is a result of working toward and reaching goals, mastering an endeavor, and having self-motivation to finish what you set out to do (Madeson, 2021).

The literature shows that positive psychology may become a key approach as well to decrease stress for working mothers who have younger children. It may encourage them to focus more on their positive thinking and emotions such as hope, optimism, resilience, and happiness for them to flourish in their work field (Kun et al., 2017). This will give them the ability to engage more in life which channels their inner peace and creativity and cultivate it through self-care behaviors. Examples of implementing positive psychology would be doing gratitude exercises, pursuing personal hobbies, volunteering, reading, and traveling. Overall, this can
achieve happiness and form better relationships with their families and establish boundaries. Also, adopt good coping skills during stressful situations, boost physical health, have fewer sleep problems, and help gain back their sense of personal control which will signify a more productive, meaningful life for their well-being.

Hybrid Workplace

The global pandemic of COVID-19 has fundamentally changed how we live, learn, and work. There is an increasing number of people who have more needs and expectations when it comes to returning back into the office. A hybrid workplace (2021) is a flexible workplace model that is designed to support a distributed workforce of both in-office and remote workers. The hybrid workplace model provides workers with the flexibility to work wherever they are most productive: in the office, from a remote location (most notably work from home), or a combination of the two (Bradley, para. 6). This can help working mothers to have a choice if they feel like they are more productive at the home than the office or vice versa. In 2021, this gives employees a choice and control over where they want to work based on what they need to do (Steelcase, para. 7).

Research Questions

This exploration aims to address the following research questions from the perspectives of remote working mothers who have younger children and how the home office environment impacts their well-being operationalized by stress levels, feelings of happiness, and productivity during COVID-19.

1. How does the home working environment decrease stress for working mothers during COVID-19?

2. How does the home working environment increase happiness for working mothers during COVID-19?
3. How does the home working environment increase productivity for working mothers during COVID-19?

Method

Sample and Participant Selection

The population utilized for this study was remote part-time and full-time working mothers who have children between the ages of 3 and 13.

To recruit subjects, the principal investigator contacted a professor at Georgia State University-Perimeter College who has access to the Spelman’s Moms Facebook group that has 3800 people. A Facebook post was created only for 24 hours for those willing to participate in this interview. This correspondence took place over email, and she contacted people from her contacts. The study included 7 remote working mothers’ participants: 17 children. The age of the children started at 3 as the youngest age and 11 as the highest age. The sample of the participants is reported to be a part of the African American/black descent who is identified as a female with the pronouns she, her, hers.

Assessments and Measures

The interview questions were made up of detailed responses to allow subjects to describe their lived experiences about their home working environment and wellbeing as a working mother during COVID-19. The appendices include the interview questions participants were administered. See Appendix B for questionnaire.

Analytical Approach

Phenomenology qualitative research is used as a theoretical framework. A phenomenological analysis is a great way to explore in detail how participants share knowledge about their personal
experiences to help designers understand the phenomena to develop new ideas that can improve the quality of life for people (Neubauer, 2019). Therefore, the researcher conducted interviews to gain a better understanding of the participants' lived experiences. There is a gap in the literature related to home office workplace environments and interior design features that may enhance overall well-being. The results were analyzed by creating categories and themes out of the rich descriptions to understand working mothers' lived experiences in their home office environment through a phenomenological qualitative data framework.

**Procedure**

The primary researcher conducted face-to-face virtual interviews. Participants were asked to verbally consent before participating in the interview. Participation in this study included the completion of a voluntary, 20-minute recorded virtual interview. Therefore, at any time, participants may decide to end their participation by letting the investigator know. All data is kept confidential. When prompted to enter their name, participants were asked to use their first, middle, and last initials of their name to maintain anonymity. The primary researcher carried out the analysis by asking the participants questions about their wellbeing and home working environment during the interview. The interviews were recorded with 7 participants. In addition, a pilot study was conducted before the full study is administered to support trustworthiness.

The common themes such as time management, interior environment, distractions, physical and social health have emerged from the results. The time management category includes travel/commute and scheduling. The interior environment category includes furniture, lighting, technology/equipment, and privacy/acoustics. The distractions category includes anything that hindered them from being productive while working from home such as phone, television, a
cluttered workspace, and children which were considered as the main distraction in this study.

The physical and social health category includes exercise or physical activity and the meaningful relationships that they have with other people (socialization). Interestingly, the results suggest that pre-pandemic WFH mothers considered time management as a stronger indicator of productivity than since COVID-19 pandemic WFH mothers.

**Figure 4**

*Q18 and Q6 challenges and happiness categories related to overall feelings of productivity*

Note. According to Q18, many WFH mothers felt like time management and distractions were the main challenges to overall feelings of productivity. Over half of the interviewees’ responses suggested an underlying theme related to time management in this question. Closely behind were the distractions with 40%. Answers related to health were 10% of responses in terms of challenges, specifically physical and mental health.

According to Q6, the results indicated that 55.6% of working from home mothers stated that *kids/family* is the main contributor to their happiness more than time management which is 44.4%. Based on the interviewees’ responses, WFH mothers can spend more time with their
families which are one of the best parts of working from home. From Q19, this question addressed what the highlight of their day was. One of the interviewees said “It's given me the opportunity to become a better wife and a better mom, so I enjoy being at home. I've become creative in the ways that I've spent time with my kids, spent time with the dog, and spent time with my husband.” Another interviewee said the highlight of her day “It’s actually cooking myself breakfast and having coffee in the morning.” She said she never got a chance to eat a full breakfast when going into the office, she always grabbed a quick breakfast when she was out before work. Therefore, she is able to eat healthier than before. Another interviewee said their highlight of the day was her clients complimenting her work and telling her that she has inspired them. Lastly, a few interviewees also said they enjoy the end of the day when they are off work and not having to get dressed up as often as if they were going into the office. All these responses have overall increased their happiness while working from home (Appendix B, Questions 6, 18, 19).

**Figure 5**

*Overall factor contributing to work-at-home mothers’ productivity*
Note. This figure demonstrates the overall factor contributing to work-at-home mothers’ productivity from the interviewees’ (Participant 1-7, displayed as “P1”, etc.) responses to all the questions that were asked during the interview. The indicators show the number of times that participant mentioned that category in their interviews. The legend displays those who were working from home before the COVID-19 pandemic and since the COVID-19 pandemic. According to this figure, time management and the interior environment were the main contributors that affected the mothers' productivity the most positively and/or negatively.

Figure 6

Suggested Interior Environment for WFH Productivity

Note. This is a 3D rendering of a women’s home office space that allows natural light to come in from the windows. Good lighting is critical for any home office space. Therefore, choosing a location with natural light and a view, if possible, to improve mood, worker satisfaction, and energy. It also has ambient lighting with recessed can lights on the ceiling and task lighting with the desk lamp for additional direct lighting while working. This modern workspace has a modern desk with an ergonomic chair for support and comfort. In addition, it has greenery with plants that can help reduce stress. This space also has the necessary technology/equipment such as a desktop HD computer monitor and a printer that can be placed. Additionally, it provides
recreational lounging where one can be both studious and relaxed while working from home. Overall, this is a calming, organized, and welcoming environment that adds a pop of color and personality which can overall increase productivity within this home office environment.

**Discussion**

The research was conducted to determine how remote working mothers' home office environments and interior design features enhance their overall well-being. The first research question regards how the home working environment decreases stress for working mothers during COVID-19. According to Q18, from the figure 4 graph above, we found that time management, distractions, and their health affected their stress levels while working from home. In addition to Q5, a few interviewees mentioned they are not stressed by not having to be in the office but stressed because of balancing work with their children and the uncertainty of the pandemic. Another interviewee said, “I have no stress since I have been working from home before the pandemic.” It has led her to more flexibility, however, COVID-19 created stress by her wanting to leave the house but also trying to keep her family safe. Other interviewees said they have increased stress either because of their physical health, scheduling issues, or decreased stress by not having to interact with people all the time as if they were in the office. (Appendix B, Questions 5 & 18).

The second research question regards how the home working environment increases happiness for working mothers during COVID-19. According to Q6, from the figure 4 graph above, kids/family and time management have increased their happiness. The majority of the interviewees mentioned being able to spend extra time with their children. One interviewee said, “She is able to do more household activities because she doesn’t have to worry much about the
commute time to and from work.” Other interviewees said, “I love being able to work from home. Mainly, because I work for myself at home.” and “I'm able to prepare a meal knowing something as simple as cooking dinner because I'm not spending time in traffic.” (Appendix B, Question 6).

The third research question regards how the home working environment increases their productivity for working mothers during COVID-19. The figure 6 chart above demonstrates the overall factor contributing to work-at-home mothers’ productivity. According to Q7, 5 out of the 7 interviewees said that they have decreased productivity while working from home because of the following reasons: difficulty to remain focused and rather just get back in the bed, COVID-19 which creates difficulty balancing time with her home responsibilities with her kid and work life, or not having enough work being assigned from her job. One interviewee said she has a decrease in productivity because of staying in bed for a longer period of time which leads to longer breaks, however, an increase in productivity due to exercising more often while working from home because of not having to commute to and from work. Another interviewee said, “I think I do more when I work from home because I work when I want to and I work when I'm comfortable and I work when I feel like it.” However, from Q14 only 2 out of the 7 interviewees said they are more productive in the office than while working from home. One interviewee said, “Because the office has all the necessary resources (e.g. printer, monitor).” and the other participant said, “It is because my job is trying to find me work to do and the office is behind schedule.” Another interviewee said, “It's neutral for me, I’m productive at home and the office.” (Appendix B, Question 7 & 14).
In conclusion, the factors of time management, physical and social health, distractions, and the interior environment can help interior designers better understand how to design home office environments for WFH mothers. In addition, this study can further help WFH mothers implement new ways to reduce their stress and increase their happiness and productivity to improve their overall wellbeing in their home working environment.

Limitations and Future Directions

This biggest limitation would be the researcher not further analyzing the interior environment such as space planning, sound absorption/acoustics, materials and finishes, thermal comfort, and psychology of color through on site visits versus remote/user subjectivity for these categories. For future direction, the researcher could address sound absorption/acoustics within the home office environment as it relates to a key finding in distractions. Secondly, this research study can also be studied further by analyzing only certain job sectors that want to implement a more hybrid collaboration concept, it is designed specifically for those who are working in the office and working remotely. Lastly, this study can be conducted using a larger sample with a diverse population and try using a different analytical approach which is collecting more quantitative data.

Reflective Critique

Throughout this undergraduate research experience, I have strengthened and gained new skill sets to conduct this research study. Taking college courses while conducting this research study was challenging yet a rewarding experience. There were times I wanted to give up or was stuck on something, however, I believe my ambitious mindset took me to the next level by not giving up and not being afraid to ask questions from my peers and professors/mentors.
Personal growth is an important value to me throughout college for me to be happy by venturing beyond my comfort zones and having that feeling that I can achieve anything I set my mind to. I am always working on having a better commitment to time management, being patient because good things take time, developing a more optimistic worldview, expressing my creativity through problem-solving, and just being willing to identify and acknowledge my strengths and weaknesses. I have gained skill-sets such as learning tips on how to interview people, researching peer-reviewed sources by choosing the perfect keywords that helped limit down my searches related specifically to my topic and how to collect, organize, and analyze qualitative data from the interviewees' responses.

This research allowed me to become self-motivated which gave me a sense of independence to give the option to talk about anything related to my field of study. Also, it allowed me to better understand published works and the IRB process, and how to discover my passions through my research. I’ve always told myself the more experience I can attain, the more it can enhance my career pathway. Therefore, I wanted to have much exposure to research about my field of interior design and cover a topic more in-depth that can be discussed more in the field. I actually enjoyed researching my topic and having research is always important to find answers to solve problems within society. Furthermore, my honors experience helped define my career goals after college under my professors/mentors' guidance and become a more well-rounded individual as a whole as I go into my career as an interior designer.
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**Appendices**

**Appendix A**

**COLLEGE OF BEHAVIORAL SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**SCHOOL OF HUMAN ECOLOGY**

**Informed Consent**


My name is Janay Brown, and I am an undergraduate student studying Interior Design at Georgia Southern University. You are invited to participate in a virtual interview for research about the well-being of remote working mothers and their home working environment.

This study is being conducted to satisfy the University Honors Program's senior thesis requirement at Georgia Southern University.
1. **Purpose of the Study:**
   This study explores how the home working environment can help reduce stress, increase productivity, and support happiness for remote working mothers within a home office environment aiding in their overall well-being. Due to COVID-19, many workers have transitioned to working from home to maintain safety. This study aims to help examine the impacts of home office design on working mothers with respect to stress reduction, happiness, and productivity. There is limited literature related to home office workplace environments and interior design features that may enhance overall wellbeing.

2. **Procedures to be followed:**
   Participation in this study will include the completion of a voluntary, 20-minute recorded virtual interview. When prompted to enter your name please use the first, middle, and last initials of your name to maintain anonymity. Please be sure to have your camera and microphone on. You may use this link for directions on changing your name and other support. https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/360021921032-In-meeting-controls-and-settings. Also, it would be helpful for the researcher if you are located in the area where you usually work from home during the interview.

3. **Discomforts and Risks:**
   There are no foreseen risks to this study, however participants may feel discomfort with discussing potentially personal feelings when responding to questions if they have had negative experiences.

4. **Benefits:**
   This study will benefit participants by giving them guidance on strategies to support wellbeing within a home working environment that may improve their productivity and happiness. Also, the findings of this study can be beneficial to interior designers with outcomes that may better inform their practice specifically for well-being in home office design.

5. **Duration/Time required from the participant:**
   The estimated duration of the completion of this interview is 20 minutes.

6. **Statement of Confidentiality:**
   We are careful to ensure that the information you voluntarily provide to us is as secure as possible; however, you must be aware that transmissions over the Internet cannot be guaranteed to be completely secure. Your confidentiality will be maintained to the degree permitted by the technology being used. You will be subject to the privacy policy of Zoom. The data of this study will be securely stored in a google drive folder. The researchers will solely have access to this information. The data will be maintained for future use and investigation. To maintain anonymity, you will be asked to sign into the Zoom interview with your initials only.

7. **Future use of data:**
   Deidentified or coded data from this study may be placed in a publicly available repository for study validation and further research. You will not be identified by name in the data set or any reports using information obtained from this study, and your confidentiality as a participant in this study will remain secure. Subsequent uses of records and data will be subject to standard data use policies which protect the anonymity of individuals and institutions.

8. **Right to Ask Questions:**
   Participants have the right to ask questions and have those questions answered. If you have questions about this study, please contact the researcher named above or the researcher's faculty
advisor, whose contact information is located at the end of the informed consent. For questions concerning your rights as a research participant, contact Georgia Southern University Institutional Review Board at 912-478-5465.

9. **Compensation:**
   No type of compensation will be distributed for the participation in this virtual interview.

10. **Voluntary Participation:**
    Participation for this interview is voluntary and you may, at any time, decide to end your participation by letting the investigator know.

11. **Penalty:**
    There is no penalty for not participating in this study and you may, at any time, decide to end your participation.

12. You must be 18 years of age or older to consent to participate in this research study. By participating in this virtual interview, you consent to participate in this research study.


Principal Investigator: Janay Brown; jb20233@georgiasouthern.edu
Research Advisor: Ms. Erica Bartels, ebartels@georgiasouthern.edu, 912-478-5422, Georgia Southern University

This consent is being provided electronically. The researcher(s) will ask you to verbally consent before completing the interview. Participating in the interview indicates your willingness to participate in this research.

**Appendix B**

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<th>LITERATURE</th>
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<td>1. Do you work full-time or part-time?</td>
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<td>2. What is your profession?</td>
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<td>Probe: How often do you maintain this regular schedule?</td>
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<td>Probe: Do you have a separate office space to work?</td>
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<td>Probe: what area in your home do you typically work in?</td>
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<td>Question</td>
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<td>17. Do you have exposure to nature? Probe: How will nature help you?</td>
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<td>19. What is the highlight of your day? This can affect wellbeing as well as how designers should design a space.</td>
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<td>20. Do you have any additional comments about your home working environment?</td>
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<td><strong>Pilot Study</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Did you understand the questions clearly?</td>
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<td>2. Was the length of the interview reasonable?</td>
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<td>3. Were you able to understand the terms and concepts?</td>
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<td>4. Do you have any comments about the interview?</td>
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