

Work-life Balance among Work from Home Employees: A Study with Reference to it Companies of Mangalore City

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ABSTRACT

The issue of how to combine work and personal obligations has received more attention in recent years in scholarly and political debates. One programme that has been marketed as a technique to enhance work-life balance is homeworking. This essay looks at the experience of working from home, where a lot of personal tension is typically passed from one partner to the next. The family may experience significant tension and stress when both members work to advance their careers. Couples with kids or other family duties may find this situation to be much more challenging.

Since there are more jobs that need computers and telecommunications, more individuals have dependable home Internet connections, and more families have both parents working full-time, the number of people working from home (WFH) has increased. The Covid-19 outbreak hastened this development by compelling a sizable portion of the world's workforce to temporarily convert to WFH. Working from home (WFH) has the ability to promote work-life balance, give more flexible working hours, and cut down on commute time as compared to working from the office (WFO). The more fundamental effects of WFH, such as those on productivity and the elements that influence whether WFH is more or less productive than WFO, are still little understood.

Keywords: Work from home, Satisfaction, Stress, Work-Life Balance, Mangalore

INTRODUCTION

The term "work-life balance" refers to the harmony between a person's personal and professional lives. The capacity of a person to strike a balance between job and family responsibilities. In early 2020, the effects of the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak caused a global economic and social shock that is expected to have an impact on how businesses and industries run as well as how individuals live and work. Teleworking, telecommuting, or the policy of working from home has become one of the most noticeable shifts as a result of the COVID-19 epidemic across all occupations. e-ongoing technology's development enables some people to work from anywhere, at anytime. Management may be driving the growing acceptability of working from home because they anticipate lower labour costs and rising productivity and **profitability**. Individuals at work are frequently mindful of their obligations at home and during family time, but they ultimately cannot justify either domain since they are preoccupied with their jobs. Researchers, practitioners, and policymakers have become increasingly interested in work-life balance issues and how they affect both personal and professional lives. While some believe that work-

life balance is impossible since it requires sacrifice on one's part, others believe that working from home has some promise in resolving work-life balance concerns. In fact, Putri & Amran (2020) found that higher Work from home application results in a higher work-life balance for an employee. This paper attempts to conduct an inquiry on the WLB, and job satisfaction of WFH of IT employees. In brief, we mainly investigate the effects of WFH on the WLB of IT sector employees.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The researcher strongly believed that this was a good time to conduct an empirical investigation on the effect of WFH on WLB. Hence the major research objective is to empirically examine the effect of WFH on WLB.

Study aimed to address the following research questions:

RQ1: Is gender significant for the work-life balance and job satisfaction of WFH?

RQ2: Is there any significant positive effect of work from home on the work-life balance?

RQ3: Are the IT sector employees facing any challenges due to work from home?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The job satisfaction of every employee depends upon factors like salary, work environment, and work flexibility. Employees are satisfied only when they have adequate facilities for work and enough support from their companies (Matzler & Renzl, 2007).

The emergence of work from home has driven a paradigm shift in the work culture as well as work-life balance and has caused many other positive and negative outcomes in the economy (Gould & Gallagher, 2020).

WFH is a hybrid model of work that can be applied in the wake of the pandemic for a highly educated and well-paid workforce (McKinsey Report, 2020). Felstead & Jewson, (2002) opined that WFH is suitable for public sector companies and large establishments. Bick et al., (2020) found that individuals with high income and high education were successfully managed and maintained their potential employment with WFH.

Tele working has always been a topic of discussion because of the hazy lines between work and non-work when one is not physically present at a job, the emotional and social repercussions, and the advantages and disadvantages of flexible working hours. Working remotely or from home has some benefits, including time management skills, the capacity to access company papers from home, the suitability of having a workspace at home, the option to work from home in times of sickness, and the ability to care for family members (Nakroien et al. 2019).

Work-family conflict is the topic of this research study by JH, KM, and JD from 2003. He comes to the conclusion: how can we reduce work-family conflict? By devoting an equal amount of time to each area, a person can reduce work-family conflict and increase their quality of life.

In this study, married women are told that achieving work-life balance is the only way they can live a quality life. It's a crucial topic that demands discussion.

THE CONCEPT OF BALANCE

Making time for both what one needs to do and what one wants to do is the key to living a balanced life. Work-life balance is the act of devoting equal time and effort to your personal and professional lives. Finding a work-life balance while working from home takes time. In practise, it is preferable to consider work-life balance as a goal rather than a constant state of being. It is typically elusive and difficult to maintain. Compromises must be made when faced with a long workday or work assignment, family obligations, or any of life's little surprises.

Balance-shifting abilities are also necessary. Work-life balance is more of a practised art than a proven science. It entails more than just dedicating half of each waking hour to work and the other half to personal activities. For some, the split will appear to be 70-30 rather than 50-50. This is due to the fact that having a work-life balance refers to being completely satisfied with both our personal and professional lives. In this sense, rather than balancing our time and energy investments, we aim for equal amounts of enjoyment in both the personal and professional spheres. Thus, the concept of "work-life balance" can be used to gauge both personal and professional attention.

WORK-LIFE BALANCE IN IT SECTOR

Work-life balance became a major topic in India in 1991 due to globalization. The work-life balance of employees was negatively influenced by the long hours they put in due to environmental change, achieving goals, and competition. Information technology's development was the main outcome of globalisation. IT dramatically expanded between 1994 and 2008. During this time, there was a noticeable rise in the proportion of women working in the IT industry. Despite the fact that there are more women engaging in this field than in other industries, it does not discriminate against women. Due to night shifts, long workdays, and cultural and social variances, the IT industry requires employee commitment. In the information technology industry, this has caused an unbalance between work and life.

To maintain a healthy work-life balance, organisations are just as important as the individual employees. Organizations, which establish the rules and regulations, provide a range of programmes and policies to enhance the quality of life for their employees by enabling them to adapt to their varying needs and preferences.

WORK FROM HOME

In 2020, the coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2), which was originally discovered in Wuhan, China, stunned the entire world. Nearly all heads of state throughout the world take prompt action and care for the safety of their citizens by closing schools, offices, and crowds, including international travel, to combat the fast-spreading COVID-19 virus. The organization implemented work-from-home for all its employees during the outbreak of the pandemic. The concept of working from home has been around for 40 years it was highly implemented during the lockdown. Work from home is defined by how individuals conduct their business outside of the office, where the workplace can be customized to meet their needs. While using different terminology. These phrases include telecommuting, remote working, teleworking, distance working, and mobile working.

Work from home is like a double-edged sword. For some people, working from home is more productive than working in an office, but for others, working from home often results in unfinished work due to a variety of factors. Knowing the work time limit is one of the tricks or actions to do to make work from home operate smoothly. Work from home is similar to working overtime if it is not restricted, with the workplace and the place of rest being kept separate to distinguish between work and rest time. Lack of intense communication among coworkers is a disorder that frequently occurs when working from home, and this can lead to a lack of precision in work coordination. Information technology is therefore required to promote improved work efficiency.

SWOT ANALYSIS

The research helps us to analyze the strength, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of Work-life balance among work-from-home employees of the It sector in Mangalore city.

Strength (S):

- Work from facilitates to avoid the time consumed to commute.
- Provides greater accessibility with the schedule.
- Work from home is incredibly flexible in terms of time and location.
- High job productivity is achievable when working from home.
- Professionals from all over the world can be hired by employers since they can work virtually.
- Working from home doesn't cause workplace distractions from co-workers.
- Working from home does not result in workplace stress.
- Working from home can inspire fresh approaches to solving issues at work.
- Working from home will develop relationships within the family.
- Employers significantly lessen their impact on the environment by reducing energy consumption.
- Work from home allows better retention of employees in the organisation.
- It leads to fewer absences to work due to illness.

Weakness (W):

- Due of the unsupportive environment at home, Work from Home frequently encounters interruptions in their job.
- Work from home demands sufficient technological equipment (computers, wifi, programmes, etc.), which must be provided exclusively.
- The employees might feel isolated from their co-workers and the company as a whole that an office setting naturally permits.
- Work from home makes it difficult to manage home workers and monitor their performance.
- Employees working from home may find it difficult to distinguish between business and personal life.
- During employees work from home there are no set working hours, and the rhythm of the working day is erratic
- The secrecy of work-related data, documents, etc., is less than ideal when working from home.
- When working from home, boredom sets in very rapidly, reducing productivity.
- Internet networks are frequently a barrier to working from home.

- More than average electricity bills result from working from home.
- Work from home might lead to over working as the employees not having coffee break conversations or long lunches with co-workers.

Opportunities (O):

- Employees can extend their recruitment to more cities.
- Workers can reduce their additional costs by working from home.
- Employees can operate more independently if they have good time management and discipline.
- Working from home can accelerate the learning of information technology.
- Working at home can establish a work-life balance
- Application innovation for work from home will be implemented more quickly to enable efficient work.
- Work from home establishes routines with scheduled work hours.
- Application of innovation will facilitate efficient work from home will be quicker to implement.

Threat (T):

- Lack of Motivation,
- Unmonitored performance of the employees can make an impact on their career development.
- Lack of office supplies and safety concerns.
- Working from home can lead to distractions to the employee and also an unfavourable working atmosphere
- The process of working from home is given less importance than the final product.
- Some workers may find it detrimental to their productivity if they schedule their days according to convenience.
- During the employees work from home they enforce trial and error method which would consume more time and also cause stress.

FINDING

- Work from Home might sound appealing to work from home. Working from home for the IT sector can have its disadvantages, though, just like any other employment. On the one hand, a person may have a better work-life balance, but on the other, stress and anxiety are still possible.
- Work-life balance encourages people to allocate their time according to priorities and maintain a balance by allocating time for family, health, holidays, etc. in addition to pursuing a profession and traveling for business, etc.
- Following the change in the trend of IT sector, staff members have gushed about how wonderful it is to work remotely, autonomously, and on their own schedules, in addition to all the other advantages of working from home.
- The insufficiency of physical support of co-workers of the IT sector in complex tasks acts as a major challenge during WFH.

- From the study, it was observed that working from home in the IT sector in Mangalore city facilitated in saving time and money for employees. It encourages flexibility in the work, and collaboration across locations, and also achieves work-life balance.
- On the other hand, Working from home can affect the mental health of the employee and also the employees might feel disconnected from the workplace, it also might lead to distraction in the work resulting in a lack of productivity and efficiency.
- WFH has also improved the relationship of the IT sector employees with their families and helped them to build strong networks with their friends.

SUGGESTIONS:

- Regulations, processes, and aiding technologies (computers, programmes) must be planned in advance to support and facilitate work from home in order to increase effectiveness at work.
- Activities promoting employee culture and wellness may be routinely held to provide a break from job stress.
- Individuals working in the IT sector must first work on planning their day, set priorities for their daily duties, but avoid focusing on one to the point where they run out of time for others.
- It may be thought of using welfare programmes like counselling and on-the-job training to understand employee issues and come up with remedies.
- The employees from the IT sector must schedule breaks during the workday. This will help them to clear their head by leaving their desk or workplace. This will increase work productivity as the employee would feel renewed and ready to work as they come back. Also, getting up and moving around once each hour is healthier for your health.
- The company needs to create sound work-life policies and make sure that all employees are well informed about them. vacation; instead, they should concentrate on it because that is when they may relax and unwind from the stress of their jobs.
- Employees from the It industry must set aside time for themselves to pursue their interests or hobbies.

CONCLUSION:

In my opinion, the grass is always greener on the other side. No system in this world is perfect. Everything has its own benefits and drawbacks, and we have to make the best out of everything. Some employees are comfortable working from home, and some are waiting to go back to their workplace, sit on their beloved office chairs and meet their co-workers. The organization must implement new policies for the work-from-home employee. Also, it appears that the existing policies intended to improve work-life balance are not widely known or used.

With a little assistance from the employer and the workforce, as well as appropriate communication and integration, the workplace can serve as the ideal setting for letting out your pressures.

Despite all organizational efforts, the support of the family is what matters most and is one of the things that India lacks the most, especially for working women. Work-life balance issues won't exist if there is support from both the family and the employer.

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