



A Study on Impact of Recent Transformation in Flexible Work Arrangement on Employee Productivity in IT Sector

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impact of recent transformations in flexible work arrangements on employee productivity within the IT sector. The objectives include identifying employee perceptions regarding flexible working days, evaluating stress levels, understanding changes in performance, studying retention and talent management, and analysing effects on work-life balance. Findings reveal a higher representation of male employees, predominantly fresher's aged 18-24, with low average income levels. While there is a positive impact on work-life balance and reduced stress levels, productivity remains unchanged. Suggestions emphasize dynamic arrangements tailored to individual needs, efficiency improvements, and increased awareness about flexible work benefits.

INTRODUCTION

This introduction dives into the IT industry's transformation towards flexible work arrangements. Fueled by technological advancements and a modern workforce seeking more autonomy, this shift has fundamentally changed how IT professionals interact with their work environment. The study focuses on the impact of these flexible arrangements, including remote work and flexible schedules, on two key aspects of IT employees' lives: productivity and work-life balance. It acknowledges the complex and interconnected nature of the IT industry, underscoring the need for a thorough examination of how these flexible work options play out. As companies compete for top talent, the authors emphasize the importance of understanding these changes to craft effective workplace policies that support employee well-being. Finally, the introduction highlights the timely nature of the research, particularly in light of the COVID-19 pandemic accelerating the adoption of remote work. This study positions itself to contribute valuable insights that can shape both current practices and future strategies within the IT sector.

REVIWE OF LITERATURE

Flexibility in the workplace has been defined as the ability to make choices regarding when, where, and for how long work-related tasks are carried out. Workplace flexibility has increased as a result of recent trends in the availability of flexible working arrangements, giving employees the power to set their own schedules. FWAs include a wide range of situations, including flexible scheduling, part-time or reduced hours, term-time employment, homeworking, job sharing, compressed hours, and family-leave programs. Despite the growth of FWAs and the benefits extolled by academic studies, there are often difficulties in implementing flexible policies and supervising flexible workers. The ultimate goal of workplace flexibility is to provide employees with the freedom to choose their own working arrangements, while also ensuring the satisfaction and performance of both the individual and the organisation (Clarke & Holdsworth, 2017).

The usage of flexible work arrangements (FWAs) has been found to reduce workfamily conflict and improve employee wellbeing, albeit the effects are mostly limited to women with heavy family responsibilities and are predominantly brought about by time flexibility as opposed to other types of flexibility. When the organization and line managers promote FWAs and spouses have a positive attitude toward FWAs, the benefits of FWAs are increased. In general, FWAs may have a negligible but considerable effect on work-life balance, health, and well-being, which may enhance performance and job satisfaction (Clarke & Holdsworth, 2017)

Work-life balance is a crucial organizational behavior concept that employees in the commercial and public sectors are very concerned about. It is defined as the proper prioritizing between work and life and is seen to have implications on employee's attitude, behavior, wellbeing, and organizational effectiveness. Finding a healthy balance between work and life is crucial for people's social, psychological, economic, and emotional health (Jackson & Fransman, 2018).

The concept of work-life balance has gone through many changes in its nomenclature, such as work/family life balance, life role balance, and role balance. Role work-life balance is the propensity to give one's all to each and every role in their system, treating each one and every role partner with care and attention. Over the years, this idea has been defined in a variety of ways (Marks & MacDermid, 1996)

Work-life balance is important for both organizations and employees. It is a broad term to define laws that were previously referred to as "family-friendly," and it goes beyond the confines of the family. It is regarded as a means of boosting output and worker satisfaction. Finding a balance between job and family, which are two of the most significant areas of a person's life according to research, is crucial for success. Work-life balance is a key component of employee well-being and overall satisfaction (Salolomo & Agbaeze, 2019).

Research has shown that flexible work arrangements (FWAs) can have a positive effect on work-life balance (Lewis & Humbert, 2010), health and well-being (Mache et al., 2020), leading to improved job satisfaction (Kotey & Sharma, 2019) and performance (Klindžić & Marić, 2019). However, our research found that when it comes to homeworkers in both public and private organisations, there can be negative effects of remote working. These include difficulties in maintaining informal communication (Waples & Brock Baskin, 2021), misunderstandings arising over communication and a lack of feeling in the loop (Huang et al., 2022). To ensure that the benefits of FWAs are maximised, organisations need to provide training and education to employees and line managers, and develop policies and systems that support flexible working practices. Additionally, it is important to note that the effects of FWAs are largely confined to women with high family responsibilities and are mainly due to time flexibility rather than other forms of flexibility. The benefits of FWAs are also enhanced when supported by the organisation, line managers and spouses having a positive attitude towards FWAs (Clarke & Holdsworth, 2017).

Maintaining family bonds and promoting the wellness of each family member depend on effective communication. Before and during the COVID-19 pandemic, sharing information with family members and creating family groups on instant messaging services have been found to promote family communication and welfare (Putri, 2021). The pandemic has exacerbated the urge to feel safe and socially connected by causing worry, uncertainty, and social isolation. The spread of information via electronic communication technologies has increased with the development of technology, resulting in an infodemic of false information (Rachmawati et al., 2021). Exposure to unreliable information sources and false information may increase uncertainty and the perception of COVID-19 dangers as well as generate psychological discomfort, which may eventually result in family disputes (Sun et al., 2022). This may be offset by work-life balance and flexible work arrangements (FWAs), which help to balance work and personal life while lowering stress and enhancing family communication (Wong et al., 2022).

In particular during the COVID-19 pandemic, family communication is crucial for preserving connections and promoting the wellness of family members. According to research, creating family groups and exchanging information on instant messaging apps can boost family welfare and the effectiveness of communication within households. However, disinformation, uncertainty, and perceived threats may proliferate as a result of the dissemination of information through electronic communication technologies, which may result in family disputes and psychological suffering. To address these issues, more flexible work arrangements (FWAs) and better work-life balance can be implemented to provide families with the time and resources to share information in a meaningful and reliable way. FWAs can also help reduce stress, uncertainties, and social isolation, while also providing a platform for people to stay connected and informed (Suwana & Pramiyanti, 2020).

Cook et al., 2020 identifies that there is no gender difference in perceptions of availability of schedule & location flexibility. Fathers are having lower education levels with lower occupational status in private sector with no trade union presence are not availability of FWAs.

Atiku et al., 2020 found that IT, Employer's support and safety precautions is having influence on the use of FWA in African countries. For effective implementation of FWAs and enhancement of employee's productivity in African countries is in need of Employer's and IT support.

Delle-Vergini, 2017 studies that researcher is questioning only main three things like employee's perspective on benefits of FWA, effects of these merits on employee well-being and FWA affects the turnover of employees. So key findings of these study are having positive correlation between FWA and Lower the percentage of employee turnover.

Giannikis & Mihail, 2011 founds that flexible work options attitudes are dependent on gender, employment that sector and the employees who have participated in FWAs are more likely to understand more benefits and less cost regards to the use of work flexibility. On the base of evidence of further analysis, the study found that work life balance benefits are the stronger predictors of participation in flexible work practices.

Bhooshetty et al., 2020 predicting the employee's use of flexible work options two factors were found important those are FWA Perquisites and FWA Anxiety. This study also found that married employees recognized strong benefits from using flexible working options. It suggests that society, government and employers should create favourable conditions for outspreading flexible work practices in India.

Sanders & Karmowska, 2020 study provides some benefits like high employee performance, job satisfaction and some cons like blurred work/home boundaries, work intensification, professional isolation and organizational injustice. The study results have been intensified by accelerated organizational transition in to FWA because of Covid 19 restrictions.

MacHe et al., 2020 Different working conditions were found change in workload and metal demands. So, this study is all about level of occupational stress reduced over the time. And it is revealed that there is a substantial relationship between resources of job, occupational stress and flexible work arrangements.

Chandola et al., 2019 Employees who made use of reduced working hour arrangements had low level of allostatic load (an index of chronic stress related biomarkers). This study found that reduced hours flexible work arrangements could empower women who has combination of personal and professional life roles to reduce their levels of chronic stress.

Paje et al., 2020 The demand for flexible workplace is increasing day by day. The study revealed that they see reduction in job stress, which effect enhances work life balance and productivity of work while implementing compressed work week. It is very helpful for the employers who wanted to execute in this way and it has a lot more potential pros and cons once institutionalized.

Mwebi et al., n.d. The use of flex time work arrangement has been noted as one of the most widely used strategy in Nairobi central district commercial banks. The research is also revealed that flex time work arrangement is positively related to the performance of employee.

Irawan& Sari, 2021 The result of the study shows that amenities and location affect productivity of employees. Based on same by improving health care facilities, sports facilities in order to exercise sustainable environment of working and productivity of employees increased

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To identify employee's perception about the effects of flexible working days.
- To evaluate the effect on stress level of employees.
- To get insight about changes in performance.
- To study the usefulness in retention and talent management of employees by providing flexible working.
- To analyse Flexible working effects on work life balance

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. Taken and cover only 30 research papers and literature review.
2. Research Papers which were used as source of data those are very from each other in terms of many geographical contexts.
3. Majority research worked on factors and its impact on research only.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

➤ Research Design

Research design is the basic frame works which provide guidelines for the rest of research process. The research design specializes the method for data collection and analyse. It specializes the pinpoint to carry out research property. The research design used in this study is descriptive.

➤ Techniques of data collection

Primary data is collected through questionnaire which is suitable for study and secondary data are collected from articles, websites etc.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Gender of the Respondents

Gender	No of respondents	Percentage
Male	71	65.1
Female	37	33.9
Others	1	0.9
Total	110	100

Age of respondents

Age	No of respondents	Percentage
18-24	54	49.1
25-34	28	25.5

35-44	13	11.8
45-54	13	11.8
55 and above	2	1.8
Total	110	100

Job Position of the Respondents

Job position	No of Respondents	Percentage
Web developer	15	13.6
System analyst	21	19.1
Computer programmer	19	17.3
Software engineer	14	12.7
other	41	37.3
Total	110	100

Year of Working in the company

Year of Working	No of Respondents	Percentage
0-1	30	27.8
1-2	31	28.7
3-4	26	24.1
5-6	17	15.7
7 and above	4	3.7
Total	108	100

Income level of the respondents

Income level	No of Respondents	Percentage
10,000-20,000	40	36.7
30,000-40,000	27	24.8
50,000-60,000	33	30.3
70,000 above	9	8.3
Total	109	100

Participation on flexible work arrangement

Yes/ No	No of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	69	62.7
No	41	37.3
Total	110	100

Type of flexible arrangement currently used

Type of work	No of Respondents	Percentage
Work from home	31	31.3
Compressed workweeks	33	33.3

Flexible hours	22	22.2
Others	13	13.1
Total	99	100

Opinion about flexible working

Opinion	No of respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	13	12
Disagree	28	25.9
Neutral	41	38
Agree	20	18.5
Strongly agree	6	5.6
Total	108	100

CHI-SQUARED TEST**Hypothesis for the research:**

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the participation rates of flexible work arrangements between genders in the IT sector

Hypothesis 2: There is a significant difference in the preference for specific types of flexible work arrangements between genders in the IT sector.

Table-3.23:

Column1	no	yes	total
female	17	20	37
male	24	47	71
others		1	1
total	41	68	109

Expected value:

Column1	no	yes
female	13.91743	23.08257
male	26.70642	44.29358
others	0.376147	0.623853

Observed value:

Column1	no	yes	total
female	17	20	37
male	24	47	71
others		1	1
total	41	68	109

Column1	no	yes
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female	0.682757	0.411663
male	0.274268	0.165368
others	0.376147	0.226794

Calculated value- 2.136

Degree of freedom= (r-1) * (c-1)

(3-1) * (2-1)

2 * 1

Degree of freedom= 2

Table value=5.991

The table value is greater than the calculated value so we accept the **NULL HYPOTHESIS**

Interpretation: Since the calculated chi-square value (2.136) is less than the critical chi-square value (5.991), we fail to reject the null hypothesis. This means that there is insufficient evidence to conclude that there is a significant association between gender and participation in flexible work arrangements in the IT sector. In other words, gender does not appear to have a significant impact on whether individuals participate in flexible work arrangements or not based on the given data.

CORRELATION ANALYSIS 1:**Correlations**

		1)How well do you feel the organization supports employees in maintaining work-life balance within flexible work arrangements?	2) In your opinion, how has the quality of your work been affected by the recent changes in flexible work arrangements?
1)How well do you feel the organization supports employees in maintaining work-life balance within flexible work arrangements?	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	1.035 [*]
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.010
	N	109	109
Spearman's rho			
2) In your opinion, how has the quality of your work been affected by the recent changes in flexible work arrangements?	Correlation Coefficient	1.035 [*]	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.010	.
	N	109	109

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Interpretation

There is a significant positive correlation between how well employees feel the organization supports work-life balance within flexible work arrangements and the perceived quality of their work affected by these arrangements. This indicates that employees who feel better supported in maintaining work-life balance tend to perceive a higher quality of work despite recent changes in flexible work arrangements. There is a significant positive correlation

between the perceived quality of work affected by recent changes in flexible work arrangements and how well employees feel the organization supports work-life balance within these arrangements. This supports the idea that employees who perceive their work quality positively affected by flexible work arrangements are likely to also perceive strong organizational support for work-life balance within those arrangements

CORRELATION ANALYSIS 2:

Correlations

		1) In your opinion, to what extent do flexible work arrangement contribute to attracting and retaining top talent in the organization?	2) If yes, please choose the type of training or resources provided
	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	1.112*
1) In your opinion, to what extent do flexible work arrangement contribute to attracting and retaining top talent in the organization?	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.010
Spearman's rho	N	107	102
	Correlation Coefficient	1.112*	1.000
2) If yes, please choose the type of training or resources provided	Sig. (2-tailed)	.010	.
	N	107	102

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Interpretation

There is a significant positive correlation between the extent to which employees perceive flexible work arrangements contribute to attracting and retaining top talent in the organization and the type of training or resources provided. This suggests that employees who perceive flexible work arrangements as contributing significantly to talent attraction and retention are more likely to report specific types of training or resources being provided to support these arrangements. Similarly, there is a significant positive correlation between the type of training or resources provided and the extent to which employees perceive flexible work arrangements contribute to attracting and retaining top talent in the organization. This indicates a reciprocal relationship, where employees who report specific training or resources being provided are more likely to perceive flexible work arrangements positively impacting talent attraction and retention.

CONCLUSION

Employees prefer a flexible working hours (arrangement) in their workplace. This was noted in both the findings of the study as well as in the literature review. Whilst most of the employees enjoy the benefit of flexible working hours (arrangements), others are currently not and would like to do so. Flexible working hours (arrangements) lead to lower levels of stress, better work life balance and increase morale amongst employees which in turn results in job satisfaction, higher productivity and better performance. Employees of all age groups see the need for a flexible work environment. Proper implementation and monitoring can lead to the success in the introduction and sustainability of flexible working hours (arrangements) in the workplace.

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