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Work From Home Impact on Job Satisfaction During Covid Era: A Study in 'It/Ites' Sector

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Abstract — The workplace has shifted dramatically through the years, from agricultural and industrial settings to centralized offices and, increasingly, the home office. For decades, the workplace was viewed as a singular location where employees physically gathered to complete tasks under direct supervision. However, the COVID-19 pandemic and technological transformation have upended this perception, and these days, remote and hybrid arrangements are popular and praised among professionals in numerous sectors. This revitalized remote workforce holds vast potential for defining the future of work, but distinct management practices and policies must be adopted to overcome challenges in communication and collaboration. A key concern with analyses such as ours is that unobserved differences in job satisfaction or intent-to-leave are correlated with selection into different WFH arrangements. For example, higher productivity workers tend to have greater bargaining power (e.g., better outside options), thereby potentially enabling them to select into more flexible work arrangements. Employees who always WFH also have a higher intention to leave their job than employees who never opted work from home. In contrast, less frequently WFH arrangements related to higher satisfaction but no difference in intention to leave, and their impact is limited relative to workplace environment characteristics.

Keywords— Coordination, Work Targets, Team Support, Compensation.

I. INTRODUCTION

Remote work is far from new. Prior to the Industrial Revolution, the vast majority of work was, in fact, home-based. Even after a new vision of the workforce emerged, a significant subset of professionals continued to earn a living outside of conventional work environments.

From writers to salespeople to consultants, many individuals successfully navigated compelling career paths without feeling tied to the physical workplace.

WFH falls into the category of remote work; existing research has identified factors that increase employee job satisfaction of remote work, including income, working hours, free time, appropriate physical activity, the frequency of remote work, work location, social interaction and technical support, position, company training, relationship with supervisors and environmental conditions at work.

Beyond that, scholars initially investigated the associations between WFH and employee job satisfaction in terms of individual needs. According to signalling theory, observable organizational actions can be interpreted as a signal of unobservable characteristics, such as the organization's concern for employee welfare. After receiving the signal, employees tend to adopt a more positive attitude.



Research based on this theory proposes that WFH is traditionally presented as an employee benefit that contributes to a positive work attitude and is usually seen as a work–family enrichment measure. Role balance theory suggests that individuals who can successfully balance multiple roles (employee, spouse, etc.) will experience more positive effects than those who achieve less balance. According to these studies, WFH enhances job satisfaction by contributing to work–family life balance. On the other hand, self-determination theory emphasizes how WFH fulfils personal psychological needs (e.g., autonomy, competence, relatedness) as a driver of job satisfaction. Scholars have subsequently noted that individual and job characteristics can moderate the relationship between WFH and job satisfaction. Both social exchange theory and organizational justice theory posit that

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people seek a balance between an investment in a relationship and what they receive in return. Studies based on social exchange theory contend that social support in the workplace can strengthen home-based workers' job satisfaction and sense of embeddedness. According to justice theory, employees who are unable to participate in WFH because of technical or management issues tend to compare their situation with that of home office workers, perceive inequity and unfairness, and attempt to remove such feelings by reducing their job satisfaction and intention to stay. The essence of job characteristic theory is that certain job characteristics may increase the probability that individuals will find their work meaningful, take responsibility for work outcomes, and have trustworthy knowledge of the results of their work, which can motivate task completion and enhance job satisfaction. On that basis, job demands–resources theory divides job characteristics into demands and resources. Studies based on these theories identify a suitable home workspace and job autonomy as likely sources of high-level job satisfaction.

In the early days of the pandemic, it became clear that "business as usual" would place employees and entire communities at risk. That being said, it was not practical to simply shut down operations-especially amid so much uncertainty. Instead, leadership cobbled together a remote response that allowed professionals across numerous industries to tackle everyday responsibilities safely at home. This called for rapid innovations and significant investments in digital infrastructure, with communication platforms such as Slack and video conferencing tools such as Zoom swiftly replacing in-person meetings and traditional workflows.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Bloom et al. (2015) find that WFH results in a 13 percent average productivity increase in randomized control trials of call-center workers in China, with the increase due mainly to employees taking fewer breaks. Harrington and Emanuel (2021) report that WFH raises productivity 8 percent in a natural experiment with call-center workers in the US. However, they also present evidence of adverse selection of employees into WFH arrangements. The adoption of a work-from-anywhere approach yielded a 4 percent productivity gain in a natural experiment involving U.S. Patent Office workers (Choudhury et al., 2021a). Angelici and Profeta (2020) also find that granting employees some flexibility over when and where to work raises productivity in a field experiment at a large Italian firm. Our results on the link between various WFH arrangements and employee job satisfaction and intention to leave the firm broaden our understanding beyond employee productivity effects.

The second stream of research considers how WFH arrangements impact aspects of the work relationship. For instance, in a field experiment involving persons seeking call-center jobs, Mas and Pallais (2017) find that applicants will accept an 8 percent wage cut for the option to work from home in a full-time job. DeFilippis et al. (2020) find that WFH involves more (but shorter) meetings per day, more email, and longer workdays. Using an RCT in Bangladesh, Choudhury et al. (2021b) vary the number of days that employees come into the office, finding that more days in the office are associated with more emails and emails directed towards more diverse employees in the organization. This is part of a broader literature on alternative working arrangements and work-life balance (e.g., Bloom et al. (2009) and Mas and Pallais (2017)). Our evidence on how the impact of working from home varies by job task characteristics and the employee–direct manager relationship extends these studies by highlighting how various WFH arrangements affect employees' psychological states not only 6 compensation and how employees complete their work. Finally, recent research examines the extent and incidence of WFH during the COVID19 pandemic in particular and associated outcomes, including: Adams-Prassl et al. (2020), Mongey et al. (2021). There is evidence of adverse and unintended effects, especially when remote work arrangements were adopted poorly or in a rush (e.g., Gibbs et al. (2021)), and that remote work during the pandemic may have reduced family satisfaction (Mohring et al., 2021). Other work, including Davis et al. (2021), and Papanikolaou and Schmidt (2020), examines the association between firm level stock returns during the pandemic and the capacity of employees to work from home. Regardless of its net benefits and their source, it appears that WFH work arrangements will remain in place for some time.

III. METHODOLOGY

Objectives

- To study the most influencing factors for job satisfaction during pandemic.
- To study the impact of pandemic time on employee compensation and remuneration.
- To asses impact of job satisfaction with productivity of employees in IT sector.

Hypotheses

- **H_{01}:** There is no significance relation between work target pressures by management during WfH time.

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- **H_{02}:** There is no association between team members' cooperation and job satisfaction during remote working time.

Sample
The study sample consist of software professionals with at least three years of work experience, out of which one year is work from home mode and it includes people with titles like software programmers, software testing analysts, system administrators, and team leaders.

Sample Unit
All software professional who are with more than 3 years of experience (companies listed in NSE) in Cyberabad/ GHMC region which is also treated as one of the biggest IT hub in India.

Sample Size
A sample of 100 software professionals with above profile will be considered for data collection to get valid input for the proposed study.

Data Analysis Factor Analysis (Job Satisfaction)		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.756
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	737.830
	df	66
	Sig.	.000

The KMO value is 0.756 >06. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity indicates a measure of the multivariate normality of set of variables (Sig. value is less than 0.05 indicates multivariate normal and acceptable for factor analysis). Both the sampling adequacy and Bartlet's values are statistically valid. The below variance matrix indicating 84.96 % (statistically 60% variance valid) variance on tested variable, i.e 26 % of other factors are influencing to decide employee job satisfaction factors.

Total Variance Explained									
	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
Component	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	7.124	64.762	64.762	7.124	64.762	64.762	6.797	61.787	61.787
2	1.211	11.006	75.767	1.211	11.006	75.767	1.532	13.932	75.718
3	1.011	9.195	84.962	1.011	9.195	84.962	1.017	9.243	84.962
4	.649	5.897	90.858						
5	.417	3.795	94.654						
6	.287	2.613	97.267						
7	.177	1.610	98.877						
8	.076	.688	99.565						
9	.039	.356	99.921						
10	.009	.079	100.000						
11	-1.043E-15	-9.483E-15	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

The total variance is made up to common variance and unique variance, and unique variance is composed of specific and error variance.

Rotated Component Matrix[a]			
	Component		
	1	2	3
Flexi. working Chance	.717	.339	.036
Team Cooperation	.855	.141	.035
Work Life Balance	.082	.833	-.081
Senior Guidance	-.034	-.024	.994
Appraisal Ratings	.206	.769	.054
Health safety	.909	.048	-.053
Pay Cuts	.779	.135	-.051
Family Care	.847	.167	.048
Work Targets	.753	.105	-.081
Tension less work	.978	.163	-.027

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
a. Rotation converged in 4 iterations.

The rotated component matrix, sometimes referred to as the loadings, is the key output of principal components analysis. It contains estimates of the correlations between each of the variables and the estimated components.

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The above Rotated component matrix filtered (Based on Eigen values which is greater than 1) 03 factors among all tested 10 factors which are impacting job satisfaction on employees during pandemic time.

The most influencing factors tension less work to employees, where they need not follow strict timings and no pressure on rush to office in time to complete task and also gives a freehand to work whenever you are free. The second influence factor is work life balance, where the employee can take utmost care to their family members' health & hygiene concern issues during pandemic and it improves employees' job satisfaction a lot. The final factor is senior guidance, even though they are in remote work place all the seniors and team leader are guided in fair manner to complete the task without any hurdle.

H_{01}: *There is no significance relation between work target pressures by management during WfH time.*

The one-sample t-test is a statistical hypothesis test used to determine whether an unknown population mean is different from a specific value. If your sample sizes are very small, you might not be able to test for normality. You might need to rely on your understanding of the data. When you cannot safely assume normality, you can perform a *nonparametric* test that doesn't assume normality.

One-Sample Statistics				
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Work Targets	100	1.82	1.184	.118

The above descriptive table indicating that, the standard deviation with reference to work target pressure and job satisfaction was relatively dependable.

One-Sample Test						
	Test Value = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Work Targets	15.373	99	.011	1.820	1.59	2.05

Inference: The above significant table indicating that, the significant value was 0.011 (less than 0.05) **reject the null Hypothesis**, i.e the work targets by management in obviously a influencing factor for job satisfaction of IT employees, it means the work targets in WfH period created mental pressure on employees leads to job dissatisfaction.

H_{02}: *There is no association between team members' cooperation and job satisfaction during remote working time.*

One-Sample Statistics				
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Team Cooperation	100	2.04	1.333	.133

The above descriptive table indicating that, the standard deviation with reference to teammate's cooperation during remote work time was quite impressive.

One-Sample Test						
	Test Value = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Team Cooperation	15.307	99	**.000**	2.040	1.78	2.30

Inference: The above significant table indicating that, the significant value was 0.005 (Less than 0.05) **reject the null Hypothesis**, i.e the team members cooperation was highly appreciable while employee working in a remote location and without proper cooperation once cannot complete the task successfully and it's a major contributor for job satisfaction.

IV. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Job satisfaction is overall feeling about a job, including the features, the environment where the job is performed, and the perceived value of tangible/intangible outcomes associated with the input/output ratio. In this study, mainly all of these factors touched but with the different tastes of variables and numeric measurements. The variables had some degree of influence on employee perception about the job to decide either they were satisfied or not, but statistically only 3 variables were efficient and significant to explain together. The results from the study indicated that if an individual had to work more than the office hours (which they called overworked) they tend to be less satisfied compared to some people who were commuting a long hour every day could save that time for their family due to no commute.

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The researcher found employee satisfaction towards work from home during covid with reference IT Professionals has revealed that, they are very satisfied with the work from home and most of the respondents can able to balance their work life balance during WFH most of the organization also encouraging, boosting and supporting the employee during their work from home they can able to work productively equal to traditional method of working. The main challenges faced by employee during work from home is there is lagging of internet connectivity issues during their meetings and clients calls they are facing challenges at the same time the work from home environment is new to many employee so for many it takes time to adapt the work from home culture most of the time employees are being pressured and work more during the work from home comparing to the office.

Job satisfaction is not influenced by one or two factors, there is always a combined effect of different variables, the manager at this unprecedented time, could be successful if s/he is able to understand whether his/her employees are happy working remotely. In the absence of para-verbal communication, body language cues, workplace socialization, managers have to work hard to know their employees, and how they are perceiving jobs. People with less technical skills may have to struggle to integrate themselves with techno-savvy colleagues, so proper technical skills assessment and short term training could benefit the employee in different ways, for example, people don't have to spend extra hours after office due to being slow, it minimizes the anxiety of using technology and increases the velocity of activities, and also increases the fun part of work.

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