A Literature Review on Work from Home and Job Satisfaction Under the Mediating Effects of Work-Life Balance

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Abstract

Working from home was rare in India, but after Covid-19, the virtual way of working is growing in popularity due to its potential for cost savings. It also enables an organization to be more agile and respond to crises like, global pandemics. Changing jobs and culture creates more problems for individuals managing their work and personal life, work-life balance issues have taken on a lot of significance due to rising stress levels, competition, and insecurities in life. Through the mediating effects of work-life balance, it has been determined that there is a direct and indirect association between working from home and job satisfaction. The study adds to the body of literature asit provides information on the various implications of this phenomenon in different organizational structures across multiple industries, demonstrating the importance of treating employees with respect and care in order to foster a sense of work-life balance among the workforce.

Keywords- Tele-work, work-life balance, Covid-19, Job Satisfaction

Statement of the Problem

Before COVID-19, virtual employment or working from home was not a common choice for all businesses, but it has become the new normal and unprecedented. Following the discovery of COVID-19, most firms began looking for ways to migrate from physical to virtual work (working remotely/from home) as long as there was stakeholder input, primarily from customers or clients.

The umbrella phrase "work from home" is defined by Gajendran and Harrison (2007) as "a structure that permits personnel and their tasks to be shared across settings away from a central place of business or physical, organizational location". According to the authors, telecommuting is the most well-known work from home; nevertheless, this work arrangement is also known as telework or remote work. This work arrangement was first created by Jack Nilles in the 1970s while delayed in traffic in LA. Initially, it was characterized as working from a remote location away from a traditional office or worksite (Kurland & Bailey, 1999).

"Working outside the typical workplace and communicating with others via telecommunications or computer-based technologies," according to Nilles (1994). (Bailey & Kurland, 2002). Global Workplace Analytics (GWA), a research-based consulting firm, estimates that 80 per cent to 90 per cent of the US workforce would like to work remotely part-time (Latest Telecommuting Statistics, 2017). As a result, more flexible work arrangements are becoming more popular, impacting employee satisfaction.

Job satisfaction refers to an employee's overall good attitude about their job and works environment. The feeling could be assessed in cognitive (evaluative), affective (emotional), or behavioural aspects. In this field, lots of studies have been done., and the satisfaction measures differ in how much they measure feelings or cognitions about the job(Judge et al., 2003). Job satisfaction also considers the context of an individual's work experience, work-life quality, and the value that a job provides to an employee. Job satisfaction is sometimes characterized by interactions with other relevant elements, such as overall well-being, work stress, workplace control, work-life balance (homework interface), and working conditions (Tomaževič & J Seljak, 2014). The current study investigates the impact of work-life balance in mediating the link between working from home and job satisfaction.

Work and personal life are like two parts of the same coin. It is creating and managing a balance between work life, and personal life is considered to be a work-life balance necessitated in attaining equilibrium between professional work and other activities so that it decreases friction between official and domestic life. Increasing work pressure, globalization and technological advancement balance professional life and personal life.

Work-life balance refers to a person's ability to allocate resources to meet both family and work obligations so they can fully engage in both aspects of their lives. (Voydanoff, 2005)

Objectives of the Review

- To elucidate the significance of Work from Home in fostering Job Satisfaction through work-life balance.
- To enquire about the direct relationship between Work from home and Job Satisfaction.
- To explore the mediating effects of work-life balance in bringing an indirect relationship between Work from home and Job satisfaction.

Methodology

This research is a type of theoretical review that synthesizes existing and extensive literature in the investigation and authentication of the aforementioned problem using specified objectives. It also serves as a conceptual foundation for this study, substantiates the presence of a research problem, identifies the gap as one that adds something new to the body of knowledge, and validates the methods or approaches used in the study.

Antecedents of Work from Home

Going through various literature, several factors have been found that determine the extent of work from home.The various definitions of telework and work from home-highlight four dimensions (Bussing, 1998; Haddon & Brynin, 2005).

- **Telework:-** Teleworkis defined as work that takes place somewhere other than a centralizedorganizational office. Workers substitute or supplement office time with time spent at home, a field site, or a satellite office.

- **Information and communication technologies:-** Most current definitions of telework/work from home require out-of-office work activities to be technologically mediated.

- **Locational time distribution:-**Early researchers concentrated on full-time teleworkers, or those whose work in other locations completely supplanted their office tasks (in which case the dimension corresponds to work location). However, according to recent research, teleworkers are people who regularly spend a significant portion of their work time in other locations but also work from a central office.

- **Contractual relationship Between worker and employer :-**Different types of telework are distinguished by whether workers are regular employees, self-employed, or contract workers.

Literature Review

Various eastern and western studies have been conducted to develop an understanding of and inquire about the relationship between Work from Home on Job Satisfaction and the MediatingEffect of Work-Life Balance.

Work from Home and Job Satisfaction: According to Locke, E. A. (1976), job satisfaction is "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from an appraisal of one's job or job experiences." Overall, the connection between remote work and job satisfaction is predicated on the idea that workers have more flexibility and autonomy over how their work is carried out when working remotely, which helps the employee meet the demands of their job and personal (life and family). There has been mixed data regarding whether telecommuting improves or decreases job satisfaction (Bailey & Kurland, 2002). Some researchers, for example, have discovered evidence supporting a linear relationship between telecommuting and job satisfaction, implying that employees. (Guimaraes &Dallow, 1999. In the wordsof (Cooper & Kurland, 2002) who work remotely more often are either happier or less happy with their jobs.

Golden (2006) found evidence that the amount of telecommuting (or the amount of time spent working remotely) and job satisfaction have a curvilinear (as opposed to a linear) relationship. The authors suggest that as remote work becomes more common, job satisfaction will increase as well; however, this is only partially true. (Golden & Veiga 2005)

People who work from home are more dedicated, enthusiastic, and engaged at work but only if they work outside the office 20% or less of the time, per a Gallup report on Gallup's 2017 State of the American Workplace report.Therefore, a better understanding of the effects of remote work is essential for the future of the workplace if organizations want to remain profitable and competitive in a growing technological society.(Guimaraes & Dallow, 1999) In this study, they resolved previously inconsistent findings by proposing and finding a curvilinear inverted U-shaped relationship between the extent of telecommuting and job satisfaction. The findings cast doubt on conventional wisdom, namely, that the more employees

telecommute, the more satisfied they are, irrespective of the nature of their jobs (Pinsonneault & Boisvert, 2001). Job satisfaction initially increases as the extent of telecommuting rises; however, at higher levels of telecommuting, it starts to level off and decrease slightly, and essentially plateaus. Although this study explored that the impact of telecommuting on job satisfaction is more complex than previously thought, it also suggests that gains in job satisfaction at lower levels of telecommuting are relatively substantial compared with those at higher levels.

In a recent meta-analysis, Allen et al., (2015) discovered that remote work was positively associated with job satisfaction. Still, the correlation was small (r =.09). Furthermore, the authors discovered that the extent of telecommuting did not correlate equally with job satisfaction, explaining why the relationship between remote work and job satisfaction is curvilinear. The researchers discovered that as remote work increased, so did employees' levels of job satisfaction, but only to a point (15.1 hours per week). As the use of remote work increased, employees' job satisfaction began to fall.

Virick et al., (2010), In this study, they examined previously inconsistent findings regarding the relationship between the extent of telecommuting and job satisfaction. The findings failed to support the linear contention that the more employees telecommute, the more satisfied they are (Pinsonneault and Boisvert, 2001), or that telecommuting leads to decreased job satisfaction (Cooper and Kurland, 2002). On the contrary, the findings of this study add to the evidence of a curvilinear inverted U-shaped relation first posited by Golden and Veiga (2005).

In addition, the current study adds to the existing literature on telecommuting by proposing and finding higher-order relations influencing complex relations.

According to the findings, doing remote work increases employee job satisfaction. More particularly, as the frequency of teleworking rises, so does job satisfaction, with no point of decline as previously hypothesizedSchall, M. A. (2019).

There has been substantial uncertainty regarding whether telecommuting has a positive or negative impact on job satisfaction (Bailey & Kurland, 2002).

Anderson, D. (2004). The authors' results show, in general, that flexible working practices had a strong, positive impact on employees' perceptions of job quality. However, there were some variations according to different dimensions of job quality. There was strong evidence that control and autonomy were enhanced by the opportunity to work flexibly. For remote workers, in particular, autonomy was very real in this case, with over 90 per cent reporting that it was at their own discretion. Along similar lines, flexible working was reported to have a positive effect on work-life balance by more than 80% of flexible workers. Although our survey data did not allow us to compare the levels of job satisfaction of flexible workers with non-flexible workers, the interview data demonstrates that flexible working was seen to positively impact on job satisfaction.

Work from Home and Work-life Balance

Golden at el. (2006) Given the popularity of telecommuting, researchers and practitioners clearly need to know more about the full extent of the trade-offs involved in everyday practice, as our findings suggest an upside and a downside. Although we are only able to speculate on whether the trade-offs involved are zero-sum, we would at this point, caution that telecommuting might not be the panacea that popular convention contends, especially when done extensively. However, because we were unable to assess a priori each individual's level of work-family conflict prior to starting telecommuting, we cannot accurately assess the absolute benefits derived, only the relative change. And, despite the fact that individuals with larger households pay a greater price in the form of increased FWC the more they telecommute, we are hesitant to recommend cessation of this work modality for them, because they may also be experiencing the benefits of greater family enrichment.

Work-life Balance and Job Satisfaction: Al Sumaiti, R. S. (2010)stated the connections between telework, open offices, work-life balance, and job satisfaction in the Oil and Gas Organization in the United Arab Emirates and developed related theories. To achieve this aim, different methods were used to gather the information and analyze them and get results. This study shows that all main study variables were positively related to each other. As the

results show, the work-life balance has many benefits for an organization, such as the fact that when employees are more satisfied with their job, they will have more commitment and higher productivity. The more an organization provides and supports their employees in having good WLB, the more satisfied they are, which leads the organization to provide good services or products to the public. People will be able to deal effectively with commitments not only at work but also at home because implementing a good WLB policy will lead them to have time to balance work and home matters effectively.Agha, K. (2017).

As per the structural equation model, WPLE had a positive relationship with both teaching satisfaction and job satisfaction, whereas WIPL and PLIW had a negative relationship with both. Thus, it is safe to say that work and personal life should be seamlessly integrated and shouldn't be allowed to negatively affect one another. This balance or imbalance is likely to have an impact on both the teachers and the organization's overall performance. Golden et al. (2006),as the author's purpose of this study, is to improve our understanding of how work-life balance affects employee job satisfaction. This study showed that job satisfaction is strongly correlated with work-life balance. The level of satisfaction among employees of different genders was not examined in this study. This study focused primarily on analyzing work-life balance on job satisfaction across five factors Working hours, working conditions, work pressure, change of job and WLB programs without considering the variety of demographic and professional variables. In summary, this study has added information to understanding private sector commercial banks as having complex social scenarios with a variety of work conditions among organizations. This study's findings suggest ways to improve job satisfaction through work-life balance.

Pathak et al., (2019) findings suggest that work-life balance has a deep impact on individual/employee job satisfaction in industries. The higher the level of balance in the work life of an individual employee, the higher will be his commitment to his work and the more will be satisfied in his job. The present study talks in an aggregate domain that past literature suggests that work-life balance has a direct impact on the job satisfaction of employees.

Bird, J. (2006) Highlighted the need for work-life strategy within the organization along with the methods for its effective implementation. He emphasized the organizational need for employee-oriented work-life strategies to have effective return on investment, employee commitment, better customer service, competitive advantage for talent, and healthcare cost solutions. For this, he suggested two legs of the work-life strategy where organizational efforts constitute the left leg and individual's actions form the self-constitute right leg. He offered dual-purpose work and life training to 57 employees, which will become helpful in their on-the-job lives as well as off-the-job lives. Time, project and activities management skills learned on the job are also transferable to accomplishing family, personal and community objectives. Thus, this study aimed at suggesting human resource managers' specific work-life strategies and their practical implementation for reducing absenteeism, turnover and enhancing satisfaction.

Discussion and Gap Identification

Some previous research has been identified to investigate the direct and indirect relationship between work from home and job satisfaction, in addition to a mediating effect of work-life balance specifically for the purpose of having a definite and precise view in the study of indirect relationships.Initially, several antecedents of Work from home have been studied, such as Telework, Information and communication technologies, Locational time distribution and the Contractual relationship Between worker and employer (Bussing, 1998; Haddon & Brynin, 2005). Allen et al., (2015), and Locke, E. A. (1976), Guimaraes & Dallow, (1999) found positive relationships between work-from-home and job satisfaction.

Fonner and Roloff (2010) investigated the link between remote work and job satisfaction regarding work-life conflict. The researchers looked specifically at how remote work affected job satisfaction by considering potential mediators such as work-life conflict, stressful situations such as meetings or interruptions, organizational politics, and information exchange. The researchers discovered that telecommuters were more satisfied with their jobs than office-based employees after studying 89 teleworkers and 103 office-based employees. They also discovered that work-life conflict is a mediator of the relationship between remote work and job satisfaction. In this study, telecommuters were defined as employees who agreed with their employer to work at least three days per week from a location other than the office. Overall, the researchers discovered that telecommuters benefited significantly from their working arrangement and that the main factor contributing to their overall satisfaction was the absence of work-life conflict. The implications of their findings are that working remotely may make situations where work and life conflict easier, which could lead to an environment at work that is more productive and fulfilling overall, spending less than 50% of the workweek in the collocated office affords more flexibility and aids in the balance of work and personal roles, which teleworkers find satisfying," they added.
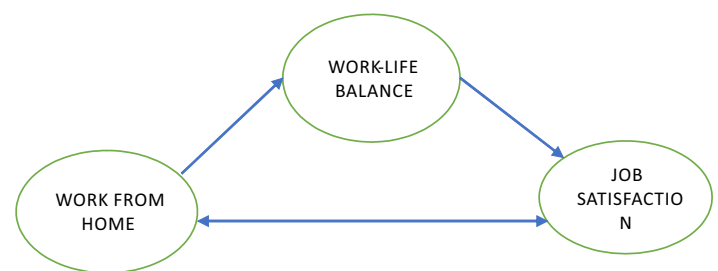
Figure: IMediating Effect of Work-life balance

Work from home is intended to pose as an independent variable in the above diagram, which is being linked with Job satisfaction, i.e., a dependent variable, in a direct manner, and Work-life balance is assumed to serve as a mediator between independent and dependent variables, which will help to bring out an indirect relationship between these two specified constructs of the study, which ultimately contributes to elucidate the association between Work from home and Job satisfaction.Work from home is very common in western countries as like (Kurland & Bailey, 1999),

Nilles (1994). (Bailey & Kurland, 2002), (Tomaževič & J Seljak, 2014). However, in the Indian context, only a few studies are available. Furthermore, few studies have been found to support the mediating effects of work-life balance. Pathak et al., (2019).

Conclusion and Implications

According to the literature, it has been determined that working from home has an effect on job satisfaction, confirming both a direct relationship and a strong relationship with work-life balance. In addition, job satisfaction is positively impacted by work-life balance at successive stages, serving as an indirect link between work-from-home and job satisfaction, which supports the mediating effects of work life. Stressing the importance of work-life balance in promoting job satisfaction will motivate organizations to value their staff members and look out for their needs, including family support and other crucial duties. Work from home will provide Telework, Information and communication technologies, Locational time distribution and the Contractual relationship Between worker and employer, which can provide a way to job satisfaction among employees and will create value for the organization. Working from home is creating a balance between employer and employee, especially in the IT sector in India most companies use dual models for the betterment of the organization.

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