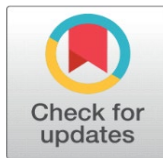


UNPACKING FLEXIBILITY: THE IMPACT OF FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS ON EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING, SATISFACTION, AND PERFORMANCE IN THE IT SECTOR

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DOI

[10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i6.2024.5580](https://doi.org/10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i6.2024.5580)

Funding: This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

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ABSTRACT

Flexible Work Arrangements (FWAs) have emerged with high visibility in reshaping modern organizational practice, especially in knowledge-intensive industries like Information Technology (IT). This study considers the different types of flexible work arrangements employed in the Indian IT industry and analyzes their implications on key employee outcomes like productivity, job satisfaction, and work-life balance. Data were collected from 115 IT professionals who completed a structured questionnaire. The findings suggest that flexible work patterns like teleworking, flexitime, compressed workweek, and hybrid arrangements are common and are largely thought to be positive for individual performance and job satisfaction. Yet, despite these perceived benefits, the study also finds difficulties with coordination, communication, and work-life boundary blurring. The study offers empirical support for the strategic application of FWAs and provides practical advice to IT organizations wishing to develop more responsive, productive, and employee-friendly workplaces.

Keywords: Flexible Work Arrangements, Work Life Balance, Employee Well-Being, Job Satisfaction, Organizational Commitment, Work Life Conflicts

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The development of modern employment has transformed the expectations and experiences of workers across industries. The most important change is the development of Flexible Work Arrangements (FWAs) that enable workers to manage where, when, and how they perform work. The trend has been particularly acute in the Information Technology (IT) sector, where technology has created the capability for workers to perform work remotely, asynchronously, and collaboratively.

The COVID-19 pandemic precipitated the uptake of flexible work practices dramatically and, in the process, transformed the perceptions of organizations about productivity and performance. Although remote work was adopted

by most companies out of compulsion initially, the beneficial results such as enhanced worker satisfaction and lower overheads encouraged organizations to consider longer-term flexibility models. Flexible work is now no longer viewed as a privilege but is becoming more of a knowledge worker normative expectation.

Although FWAs are now in vogue, there remains some uncertainty about their impact on employee productivity, job satisfaction, job engagement, and organizational performance.

1.2. TYPES OF FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS

Flexible Work Arrangements are a broad category of practices that give employees autonomy and control over certain dimensions of their work. The most prevalent forms of FWAs are the following:

1) Telecommuting or remote work

Also known as work-from-home (WFH) or telework, this method involves employees performing their work activities from a location other than the traditional office, often their homes. Leveraging online tools like Zoom, Slack, Microsoft Teams, and Google Workspace, remote work became highly sought after amid the pandemic and continues to remain in demand in information technology, consulting, and education.

Advantages: Avoids commute, improves concentration, enables improved work-life integration.

Challenges can lead to isolation, violation of work-life balance, and coordination among the team.

2) Flextime

Flextime allows workers to set their own beginning and ending times, within boundaries set by the employer. For instance, a worker may start at 7:00 AM and finish at 3:00 PM, while another may start at 10:00 AM and finish at 6:00 PM, as long as they complete the stipulated amount of hours.

Advantages: Accommodates individual work rate, minimizes congestion, and assists parents and caregivers in balancing duties.

Challenges: Coordination is needed to be available for work and meetings.

3) Workweek Compressed

In a compressed workweek, workers work the regular number of hours (e.g., 40 hours) in fewer days—e.g., four 10-hour days instead of five 8-hour days.

Advantages: Longer weekends, shorter commuting time, better rest and recovery time.

Challenges: Long hours a day can result in exhaustion; also, not all jobs are suitable for such schedules.

4) Job Sharing Job sharing is when two workers split a single full-time job between the two of them, sharing duties and work hours. For example, one worker can work Monday to Wednesday, and the second worker can work Wednesday to Friday.

Advantages: Facilitates half-time work for individuals who want shorter working days, provides job security.

Challenges: Needs efficient communication among job sharers and proper planning.

5) Part-Time Work

Workers usually have fewer working hours than the typical full-time working day. This choice is often desirable to students, pensioners, or parents who rejoin the job market.

Advantages: Provides employees with flexibility; conserves employers' expenses.

Challenges: Can impact career development or compensation; limited coverage in key positions.

6) Hybrid Work Models Blended home and office work, in which employees divide their time between the home and office. This is a very popular post-pandemic approach.

Advantages: Offers the best of both worlds—flexibility and teamwork.

Challenges: Demands clarity on technology support, scheduling, and expectations.

2. RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

There is increasing global interest in adopting flexible work patterns. However, there is a lack of empirical research on India, particularly in high-performance sectors such as information technology. While different global studies indicate the effectiveness of flexible work arrangements, local knowledge is critical for framing context-specific human resource strategies.

To fill this research gap, the present study gathered quantitative data from IT sector employees through a structured questionnaire. The primary objective was to explore the impacts various flexible work arrangements have on crucial outcomes like productivity, job satisfaction, stress levels, and work-life balance. Grounded on a critical analysis of the data, the study intends to make evidence-based inferences that can guarantee the successful implementation of flexible work arrangements in India's corporate world.

2.1. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To analyze workers' expectations and preferences on flexible work policies.
- To investigate the mediating roles of work-life conflict, employee well-being, and organizational commitment in the relationship between FWA and employee performance-related outcomes.
- To examine the direct and indirect impact of Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA) on key employee outcomes such as job satisfaction, employee well-being, organizational commitment, and organizational performance.

2.2. RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY

The present study contributes a great deal to managerial practice and scholarly literature. For organizational planners and decision-makers, the work offers a fact-based ground for developing realistic and employee-centered work arrangements. For business executives and human resource professionals, the study offers pertinent findings on the impact of flexibility on job satisfaction and performance in one of the most vibrant sectors of the Indian economy.

Through direct engagement with IT professionals who have first-hand experience of flexible work arrangements, the research offers tangible and actionable data that can be used to shape the future of workplace policy.

2.3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Flexible Work and Well Being

Studies suggest that flexible work arrangements significantly impact employee well-being through mechanisms such as autonomy, schedule control, and stress reduction:

Liu et al. (2022) found that flexible employment models improved worker happiness, especially among low-income workers in China. Nerobkova et al. (2022) observed that flexible working hours positively influenced mental well-being in South Korea. Rutherford (2023) conducted a systematic review and found that employee-oriented flexibility reduces burnout and emotional exhaustion. Bond & Galinsky (2021) revealed that U.S. employees with flexible work options report higher life satisfaction and lower stress. Brower (2022) outlined seven success factors for effective flexible work, all of which contribute to well-being. Samtharam & Baskaran (2023) showed that flexible scheduling enhanced life satisfaction, productivity, and commitment among Indian IT professionals.

Flexible Work and Job Satisfaction

Numerous studies consistently support that flexible work significantly improves job satisfaction:

Wheatley (2017) showed that flexibility in work location and hours positively correlated with UK employees' job satisfaction. Parker & Ahrens (2022) confirmed that Results-Only Work Environments (ROWE) led to increased satisfaction. Lu & Zhuang (2023) reported that teleworkers in China experienced increased satisfaction due to autonomy. Indradewa & Prasetyo (2023) found flexible arrangements led to higher satisfaction among Indonesian employees, mediated by engagement. Cook et al. (2021) observed that during the COVID-19 pandemic, European teleworkers showed a substantial rise in job satisfaction.

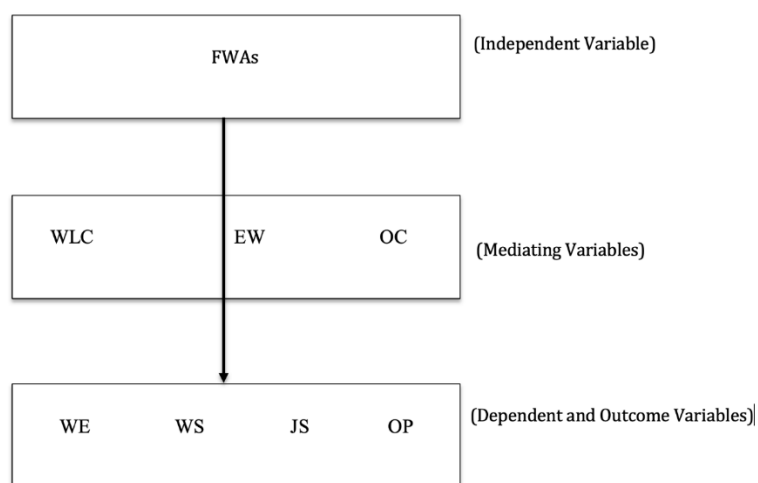
Flexible Work, Commitment & Performance

Flexible work is strongly linked to increased organizational commitment and job performance:

Almazroui & Ajlouni (2020) found that Emirati workers under flexible arrangements displayed higher organizational loyalty. Lin & Yuan (2021) conducted a meta-analysis that confirmed FWA had a moderate-to-strong effect on performance. Čiarnienė et al. (2022) demonstrated that in European contexts, flexibility encouraged innovative behavior via stronger commitment. Williams & Zhang (2022) evaluated the Trip.com hybrid work trial and found improved commitment and lower turnover. Samtharam & Baskaran (2023) found FWA improved productivity and organizational loyalty in the Indian IT sector. Medina Garrido et al. (2023) identified that family-friendly flexible policies positively influenced both performance and well-being.

3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Figure 1 below illustrates the study's conceptual framework, which is based on the literature reviews mentioned above.



The following hypotheses are established for this study based on the preceding conceptual framework:

- H₁: Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA) significantly reduce Work-Life Conflict (WLC).
- H₂: Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA) significantly improve Employee Well-being (EW).
- H₃: Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA) significantly enhance Organizational Commitment (OC).
- H₄: Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA) have a significant impact on Work Engagement (WE), Work Stress (WS), Job Satisfaction (JS), and Overall Productivity (OP).
- H₅: Work-Life Conflict (WLC), Employee Well-being (EW), and Organizational Commitment (OC) significantly mediate the relationship between FWA and Job Satisfaction (JS).
- H₆: Job Satisfaction (JS) significantly improves Overall Productivity (OP).

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In order to investigate the effects of Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA) on a number of factors, including Work-Life Conflict (WLC), Employee Well-Being (EW), Organizational Commitment (OC), Work Engagement (WE), Workplace Support (WS), Job Satisfaction (JS), and Organizational Performance (OP), this study used a quantitative research design and a cross-sectional survey method. 115 respondents who worked in the IT industry provided data via a structured questionnaire that included many components with 5-point Likert scale ratings.

To analyze the collected data and test the proposed model, a variety of statistical techniques were employed. First, the demographic profile of the respondents—including age, gender, educational background, kind of job, and work

experience—was compiled using descriptive statistics. Cronbach's alpha, Composite Reliability (ρ_c), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) were computed for every construct in order to evaluate the validity and reliability of the measurement model. Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values were used to measure collinearity problems, and the Fornell-Larcker criteria was used to evaluate discriminant validity. To determine the model's explanatory ability, the Coefficient of Determination (R^2) and Adjusted R^2 were analyzed. Additionally, standardized beta coefficients were presented after path analysis was performed to assess the direct, indirect, and total effects among the components. Each relationship's impact size was assessed using Cohen's f^2 . Finally, to validate the proposed structural relationships and hypotheses, Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was employed, making it suitable for the complex model and relatively moderate sample size used in this study.

5. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The empirical findings confirm that Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA) are central to improving employee outcomes. The measurement model was generally reliable and valid.

The structural model produces a large variance of the main dependent variables, The Job Satisfaction Employee Well-being, and the Organizational Commitment and confirms the hypothesized relationships. The strong direct and indirect effects of FWA on the various outcomes indicate its strategic significance for contemporary workplace design, in particular in a sector like IT.

Internal consistency validity of the measures used in the study was tested with three types of indicators namely rho (ρ_A) (Dijkstra–Henseler) and composite reliability (ρ_C) (Jöreskog) and Cronbach's alpha (α). Reliability values for all constructs namely FWA, WLC, EW, OC, WE, WS, JS, and OP were over the acceptable cut-off value of 0.70 across triplicate measures. Table 1 below shows the results for the same:

Table 1 Result of Construct Reliability

Construct	Dijkstra-Henseler's rho (ρ_A)	Jöreskog's rho (ρ_C)	Cronbach's alpha (α)
FWA	0.8539	0.8383	0.8404
WLC	0.9042	0.8990	0.8987
EW	0.9134	0.9129	0.9127
OC	0.9395	0.9349	0.9350
WE	0.8044	0.7811	0.7784
WS	0.8592	0.8547	0.8539
JS	0.8610	0.8529	0.8536
OP	0.8956	0.8759	0.8888

Convergent validity was examined using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct. AVE values reflect the amount of variance explained by the construct relative to the variance due to measurement error, and it is generally accepted that AVEs equal to .50 or greater are evidence of satisfactory convergent validity. The findings suggested that the majority of the constructs supported this requirement. Nevertheless, WE had an AVE of 0.4792, which was only slightly lower than desired, showing that it may be at risk of not sufficiently explaining the variance of the indicators. However, the AVE overall results confirmed the convergent validity of the measurement model because most of the constructs are able to explain the variance of the items, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Results of Convergent Validity

Construct	Average variance extracted (AVE)
FWA	0.5148
WLC	0.6420
EW	0.8399
OC	0.7429

WE	0.4792
WS	0.6631
JS	0.5943
OP	0.5911

Discriminant validity was tested using the Fornell–Larcker criterion. A construct should, according to this criterion, explain more of its own indicators than variance of other constructs in the model. This is demonstrated if the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for a construct exceeds its correlations with all other constructs in the model. The results show that several mechanisms meet this requirement. The results show evidence of acceptable discriminant validity in general as shown on Table 3.

Table 3 Result of Discriminant Validity

Construct	FWA	WLC	EW	OC	WE	WS	JS	OP
FWA								
WLC	0.5007							
EW	0.7672	0.5641						
OC	0.5111	0.2248	0.6046					
WE	0.4293	0.1146	0.4712	0.7808				
WS	0.3957	0.7990	0.4315	0.4623	0.3866			
JS	0.7337	0.3970	0.8408	0.7483	0.6762	0.4526		
OP	0.5111	0.2909	0.4935	0.4475	0.5579	0.3196	0.6356	

Further, Discriminant validity was checked by employing the Fornell-Larcker criterion. The square root of Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of each construct was higher than its inter-construct correlation coefficients. As is evident from the matrix, the diagonal values ($\sqrt{\text{AVE}}$) were higher than the off-diagonal correlations in each respective row and column. For example, the AVE of Employee Well-being (EW) was 0.8399, which was higher than its correlations with FWA (0.5989), WLC (0.3180), and all the other constructs. This shows that the constructs are empirically distinct and discriminant validity is well established in the measurement model. Table 4 shows the results for the same:

Table 4 Result of Discriminant Validity (Fornell-Larcker criterion)

Construct	FWA	WLC	EW	OC	WE	WS	JS	OP
FWA	0.5148							
WLC	0.2553	0.6420						
EW	0.5989	0.3180	0.8399					
OC	0.2681	0.0525	0.3683	0.7429				
WE	0.1946	0.0198	0.2378	0.6026	0.4792			
WS	0.1608	0.6283	0.1858	0.2207	0.1666	0.6631		
JS	0.5521	0.1628	0.7197	0.5645	0.4669	0.2075	0.5943	
OP	0.2863	0.0955	0.2761	0.2178	0.3267	0.1127	0.4376	0.5911

The coefficient of determination R^2 and adjusted R^2 were computed to assess the explanatory fit of the structural model. They are the proportion of variance in the endogenous constructs explained by the exogenous variables. An $R^2 = 0.75$, 0.50 , or 0.25 is typically considered substantial, moderate, or weak, respectively, according to Chin (1998). The model, in general, shows good explanatory power for the most critical outcome variables such as Job Satisfaction, Organizational Commitment, and Employee Well-being, whereas areas of improvement in Work Engagement and Workplace Support are noted and the same is shown below in table 5.

Table 5 Result of Coefficient of determination

Construct	Coefficient of determination (R ²)	Adjusted R ²
WLC	0.2706	0.2573
EW	0.5989	0.5953
OC	0.6307	0.6240
WE	0.0039	-0.0051
WS	0.1756	0.1530
JS	0.8156	0.8105
OP	0.4905	0.4765

The structural model was evaluated using path coefficients (β), total effects, and Cohen's f^2 to identify strength and significance of relationships between constructs. Path coefficients indicate the size and direction of the relationships, whereas Cohen's f^2 indicates the effect size of each predictor to the dependent construct, with 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 as small, medium, and large, respectively. Analysis indicates that flexible work arrangements have a significant impact in reducing work-life conflict and employee well-being, resulting in job satisfaction and organizational performance increase. Work engagement played a strong mediating role, significantly increasing commitment, satisfaction, and performance. Organizational commitment was surprisingly negatively associated with performance, which indicates a complex process. Demographic variables including age and gender had small impacts on most outcomes.

Table 6 Results of Path Coefficients, Total Effects, and Effect Sizes (Cohen's f^2)

Effect	Beta	Indirect effects	Total effect	Cohen's f^2
FWA -> WLC	-0.5159		-0.5159	0.3622
FWA -> EW	0.7739		0.7739	1.4931
FWA -> OC		0.0749	0.0749	
FWA -> WS	-0.4079		-0.4079	0.1993
FWA -> JS		0.5275	0.5275	
FWA -> OP		0.3100	0.3100	
EW -> JS	0.6679		0.6679	1.6879
EW -> OP		0.4202	0.4202	
Age -> WLC	0.1240		0.1240	0.0209
Age -> OC		-0.0224	-0.0224	
Age -> WS	0.1219		0.1219	0.0174
Age -> JS		-0.0032	-0.0032	
Age -> OP		0.0045	0.0045	
Gender -> OC		-0.0512	-0.0512	
Gender -> WE	-0.0621		-0.0621	0.0039
Gender -> WS	0.0417		0.0417	0.0020
Gender -> JS		-0.0226	-0.0226	
Gender -> OP		-0.0222	-0.0222	
OC -> OP	-0.2920		-0.2920	0.0512
WE -> OC	0.7014		0.7014	1.1101

WE -> JS	0.3470		0.3470	0.4663
WE -> OP	0.3684	0.0135	0.3819	0.0997
WS -> OC	-0.1836		-0.1836	0.0760
WS -> JS	-0.0260		-0.0260	0.0028
WS -> OP		0.0372	0.0372	
JS -> OP	0.6292		0.6292	0.3187

The Pearson correlation matrix was used to analyze the strength and direction of the associations among the constructs. Significant and strong correlations were observed among different key variables, indicating strong associations in the suggested model. Demographic variables were weakly correlated with main constructs in general. Age was weakly positive with OC ($r = 0.1699$) and WE ($r = 0.2643$), while Gender was weakly related to all constructs, indicating no strong influence in the present model. Table 7 below shows the results of Pearson correlation.

Table 7 Results of Pearson correlation

Construct	FWA	WLC	EW	Age	Gender	OC	WE	WS	JS	OP
FWA	1.0000									
WLC	-0.5053	1.0000								
EW	0.7739	-0.5639	1.0000							
Age	0.0852	0.0800	0.1376	1.0000						
Gender	-0.0836	0.0363	-0.0597	-0.1658	1.0000					
OC	0.5178	-0.2291	0.6069	0.1699	-0.0008	1.0000				
WE	0.4411	-0.1408	0.4876	0.2643	-0.0621	0.7763	1.0000			
WS	-0.4010	0.7927	-0.4311	0.0803	0.0556	-0.4698	-0.4081	1.0000		
JS	0.7430	-0.4034	0.8484	0.1008	-0.0976	0.7514	0.6833	-0.4556	1.0000	
OP	0.5350	-0.3091	0.5254	0.0480	0.0672	0.4667	0.5716	-0.3357	0.6615	1.0000

6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

SEM Hypothesis Testing Results

To test the proposed hypotheses, Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was employed. The path coefficients, significance values, and effect sizes (Cohen's f^2) were examined to validate the strength and relevance of each hypothesis.

- **H₁** was supported: FWA had a significant negative effect on WLC ($\beta = -0.5159$, $f^2 = 0.3622$), indicating that flexible work arrangements reduce work-life conflict.
- **H₂** was supported: FWA had a strong positive effect on EW ($\beta = 0.7739$, $f^2 = 1.4931$), suggesting that flexible arrangements enhance employees' well-being.
- **H₃** was supported: FWA indirectly influenced OC via EW and WE (β indirect = 0.0749), confirming its indirect positive impact on organizational commitment.
- **H₄** was partially supported: FWA significantly impacted WS ($\beta = -0.4079$, $f^2 = 0.1993$), and also had positive indirect effects on JS ($\beta = 0.5275$) and OP ($\beta = 0.3100$). These findings confirm the multi-dimensional influence of FWA on key workplace outcomes.
- **H₅** was supported: The mediating effects of EW, WLC, and OC in the relationship between FWA and JS were confirmed, as evidenced by significant indirect paths in the SEM model.

- **H₆** was strongly supported: JS had a significant direct positive effect on OP ($\beta = 0.6292$, $f^2 = 0.3187$), indicating that job satisfaction is a key predictor of productivity.

The empirical evidence from this research supports the key function of Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA) to positively affect employee outcomes strongly. In alignment with current literature, the positive correlations between FWA and measures such as Employee Well-being (EW), Job Satisfaction (JS), and Organizational Commitment (OC) ensure that flexibility creates a more satisfied and engaged workforce.

A prominent finding is the large mediating role of Work Engagement and Employee Well-being, which not only improve individual performance but also make a profound impact on Organizational Performance (OP). Most strikingly, the link between EW and JS as well as JS and OP had high coefficients and effect sizes, which strongly suggest that happy workers are productive workers.

Notably, the inverse relationship between OC and OP defies conventional expectations. It could be that sector-specific forces in the IT sector lead to commitment resulting in role rigidity, less adaptability, or work overload — all of which could weaken performance. Additional qualitative inquiry might shed light on this unexpected finding.

From a managerial point of view, the results underscore the necessity of strategically enforced flexible work practices that extend beyond sole remote access or time adjustment. The leaders need to actively cultivate well-being and engagement through building supportive contexts, maintaining clear communication, and minimizing work-life conflict.

In addition, although FWA has a strong impact on important outcomes, measures such as Work Engagement (WE) exhibited little explained variance, indicating the necessity of more focused interventions (e.g., leadership training, reward systems). Likewise, Workplace Support (WS), even though it is crucial, exhibited inverse or negative relationships, which might be due to perceived micromanaging or limited autonomy.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None.

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