"Job Satisfaction and Work-Life Balance of Employees Working in Work From Home Setting vs in the Organization: A Comparative Study"

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Abstract— The purpose of this study is to compare and examine the work-life balance and job satisfaction levels of employees who work from home vs those who work in traditional office settings. Given the increasing popularity of remote work arrangements, it is critical to comprehend the effects that these two very different work environments have on workers' general well-being and job satisfaction. Utilizing survey data from a broad sample of workers in a variety of industries and occupational functions, a quantitative method was used for data collection. Our results shed important light on the benefits and drawbacks of both work environments and have important ramifications for companies and policymakers who want to maximize worker productivity and well-being in the dynamic workplace. The results, therefore, reveal that there is no significant difference between the job satisfaction levels and work-balance of employees who are working from home vs those employees who are working in the office setting.

Keywords: Job Satisfaction, Work-life Balance, Work from Home setting, Work from Office setting.

I. INTRODUCTION

Recent years have seen an abrupt shift in the nature of the modern workplace, with more and more people choosing to work remotely. Technology advancements and the necessity to adjust to previously unprecedented worldwide occurrences, like the COVID-19 pandemic, have accelerated this change. During the pandemic, several governments had imposed severe lockdowns, banned travel, and closed all business and companies, due to which traditional working patterns of coming to the organization and working had disrupted in a huge scale of employees across all the sectors. Nowadays, employees can select between working remotely from home or in conventional office environments, as companies had to survive the lockdown with the introduction of various work arrangements.

Although there are many advantages to this flexibility, it also prompts crucial concerns about how work-life balance and job satisfaction are impacted by these work environments. While there were reports of several people and their increased productivity due to working in their comfort zones, many also faced difficulties by WFH models due to family responsibilities and other duties and roles to play. Disturbances in the family environment or the neighboring areas make it difficult for the employees to focus on their jobs and to experience any sort of job satisfaction at all. As a result, they feel the organizational setting works wonders for their productivity due to lack of disturbances and plenty of space to work. Job satisfaction also varied according to multiple studies, some were working from home and were happy with the flexibility while the managers were disappointed due to the struggles in communication in the early stages of the pandemic and still have issues related to any form of

decision-making ability. Many felt their stressors rising significantly and were unable to handle it properly which also caused a rise in the clinical cases of anxiety and depression.

An individual's general well-being and productivity are significantly influenced by their work-life balance and job satisfaction. Contented employees are more likely to be motivated, engaged, and dedicated to their work, which improves productivity and retention. Like that, attaining a sound work-life balance is crucial for mitigating stress and burnout, endorsing physical and mental wellness, and cultivating satisfaction with work. The capacity to achieve this balance can differ significantly according on the type of work environment—home, office, or hybrid—that one is in.

This research study compares and quantifies the work-life balance and job satisfaction levels of employees in various work environments to solve these concerns. Our objective is to offer valuable insights to employers, HR professionals, and policymakers regarding the future of work. We will do this by methodically analyzing the experiences of those who work in typical office settings and those who work from home.

To collect the experiences and viewpoints of a varied sample of employees from a range of industries, job functions, and geographic locations, the methodology we employ makes use of a reliable survey instrument. We gather specific information about respondents' job satisfaction, work-life balance, and the elements that affect these aspects of their professional and personal lives through this survey. To find patterns, trends, and differences between the two groups, this data will be carefully examined. The result will be a sophisticated understanding of the ways in which employees' sense of well-being and happiness are impacted by their choice of work environment.

The research's conclusions are highly relevant to both practice and academia. By providing insights into the dynamics of contemporary work environments, it adds to the body of knowledge already available on work-related well-being. Regardless of the location in which people choose to work, it also offers practical guidelines for businesses and policymakers seeking to establish work cultures that maximize job satisfaction and foster a healthy work-life balance. In an era where the workplace is always changing, this research is a useful tool for adjusting to the changing dynamics of the contemporary workplace. As we continue to explore the implications of these changing work environments, we will likely find solutions that improve both organizational performance and worker well-being.

Few studies directly compare job satisfaction and work-life balance between typical office settings and work-from-home settings, even though these issues have been the subject of several separate studies. This research fills this need by performing an extensive comparative analysis. The rise in remote labor, fueled by developments in technology and world events, has changed the nature of work. Even though it is becoming increasingly common, more research is still needed to fully understand how remote work affects job satisfaction and work-life balance. Not enough research has been done to determine if working remotely is linked to greater or poorer job satisfaction and work-life balance.

II. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To understand Job Satisfaction Levels of employees Working from Office (WFO) and of employees who Work from Home (WFH).
- To understand levels of Work-life Balance of employees Working from Office (WFO) and of employees who Work from Home (WFH).
- To analyze the data in a comparative study to determine which type of work arrangement has higher levels of Job Satisfaction and Work-life Balance.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

The COVID-19 pandemic and associated quarantine policies has led to a surge in work-from home (WFH) arrangements, particularly among skilled workers. The change in the incidence of WFH and its current popularity has attracted various views about its longevity, ranging from highly favorable to deeply concerned. This paper sheds light on how various WFH arrangements affect employee job satisfaction and their work-life balance.

The idea is explained by Hoppock (1935), who provided the first definition of job satisfaction. He believed that job satisfaction was "as being any number of psychological, physiological, and environmental circumstances which leads a person to express satisfaction with their job." Vroom (1982) also defines the concept of job satisfaction as the "employees' emotional orientation toward their current job roles."

However, Locke (1976) defines job satisfaction as a "pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or the experience while pursuing the job."

A hybrid work arrangement combines traditional "in-office" labor with telework or remote work conducted "out of the office" (Cook et al., 2020). Employees can work from home, a coffee shop, a coworking space, or any other remote location outside of their employer's facilities with this hybrid strategy, whether they use ICTs. Halford (2005) asserts that hybrid labor modifies the characteristics of work, management, and organizational space in household, organizational, and cyberspace contexts. The hybrid work arrangement that divides an employee's workday between an office and a home is the subject of this study. Combining work from home with office work might have advantages for both parties, but it can also result in several problems that are specific to each workplace.

Although opinions on the effectiveness of flexible working arrangements are divided, many firms are adopting flexible working solutions like "work from home" in response to the COVID-19 epidemic to maintain business continuity. For example, while some researchers contend that workers who telecommute are happier in their jobs (Fonner & Roloff, 2010), others found that workers who work from home are less happy in their jobs due to a decline in relationships with coworkers, feelings of loneliness, or a fear of being replaced (Schall, 2019).

Palm et al. (2020) have conducted literature evaluations on work environment trends, digitization, and emerging job forms. These reviews emphasize several potential changes that may occur in the health and work outcomes of the workforce of the future. For example, it has been suggested that employees may become more stressed and have a lower level of job satisfaction because of worrying that they might lose their jobs because of growing digitalization of labor (Brougham et al., 2019).

Kirchmeyer (2000) defined work-life balance (WLB) as achieving rewarding experiences in the numerous facets of life which require diverse resources, such as commitment, energy, and time, and these resources are dispersed over all the domains. The phrase "work-life balance" is sometimes used interchangeably with "work-family balance," although the former phrase also considers an individual's involvement in their community, social circles, religion, and leisure activities.

The current setting makes maintaining a work-life balance more difficult, and this difficulty stems from the fact that balancing work and other facets of life may be quite demanding. Apart from posing difficulties for individuals, the notion of work-life balance (WLB) has been embraced by human resource departments and businesses worldwide. As a result, numerous policies and techniques have been developed to mitigate the tension between work and personal life. (Khateeb F, 2021)

In the literature, various approaches to work-family balance have been examined. Based on their direction and valence, four categories of influence between work and family were identified in a general classification. Family-to-work conflicts arise when there is a detrimental impact from the family domain to the work domain. Work-to-family conflict is the term used when the negative effect extends from the work domain to the family domain. Positive effects are referred to as enrichment, and they can occur in both ways: from the home to the workplace and from the workplace to the family. Work-family conflict, the negative manifestation of work-family balance, has been the subject of much research. But since the 2000s, work-family enrichment—a positive aspect of it—has come into the academic community's attention. (Gragnano et al., 2020)

Employees working from home are happier than those who want to work at home, job satisfaction is higher and work–life balance is not worse under a strict contractual agreement than under a nonbinding commitment. (Bellman & Hubler; 2021)

IV. HYPOTHESIS

Ho: There is no significant difference between the job satisfaction levels and work-life balance between the two types of work arrangements, that is, Work from Home and Work from Office.

V. METHODS

A. Research Design

To evaluate and examine work-life balance and job satisfaction levels among employees in both office and work-from-home environments, this study uses a quantitative research methodology. Numerical data is gathered and analyzed using quantitative methods, which allows us to make statistically meaningful conclusions.

B. Measures

A web-based survey application called Google Forms was used to gather data. A simple and safe platform for conducting surveys and gathering replies is provided by Google Forms. Google Forms were a convenient medium to effectively contact a wide range of individuals with this approach. The purpose of the survey instrument was to assess work-life balance and job satisfaction. Likert scale items, multiple-choice questions, and closed-ended questions were all included in it. While some questions were created specifically to meet research aims, others were modified from previously validated scales. For assessing Job Satisfaction levels in both the types of work arrangements, a questionnaire by Paul E Spector (1994) has been used. For assessing Work-life Balance, the scale and questionnaire has been designed by Kumar, S., & Sarkar, S. (2021).

Job Satisfaction Survey, JSS: Paul E. Spector (1994)

The Job Satisfaction Survey or JSS, has some of its items written in each direction--positive and negative. Scores for total job satisfaction, based on the sum of all 36 items, can range from 36 to 216. Each item is scored from 1 to 6 if the original response choices are used. High scores on the scale represent job satisfaction, so the scores on the negatively worded items must be reversed before summing with the positively worded into facet or total scores. A score of 6 representing strongest agreement with a negatively worded item is considered equivalent to a score of 1 representing strongest disagreement on a positively worded item, allowing them to be combined meaningfully. Responses to the items should be numbered from 1 representing strongest disagreement to 6 representing strongest agreement with each. This assumes that the scale has not be modified and the original agree-disagree response choices are used. Negatively worded items are 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 19, 21, 23, 24, 26, 29, 31, 32, 34, 36. For the 36-item total where possible scores range from 36 to 216, the ranges are 36 to 108 for, and between 108 and 144 for ambivalent.

Work-life Balance

Work-life balance questionnaire has been designed by Kumar & Sarkar (2021). It is a 15-item questionnaire, which has been divided into sub divisions as demographics, job parameters, type of family, family impact on work, work impact on family, organisational awareness. Each division has 4-scale Likert responses, with Strongly Agree being scored as 5 (highest) and Strongly Disagree as 1 (lowest).

Population and Sampling

The sample size of this research paper has been 103. The employees age range has been specified as from 20 – 65 and has focused on employees working in all the sectors of corporates. Convenience and snowball sampling were used in combination to choose participants, with the goal of achieving a varied representation from a range of professions and sectors from the cities of Pune, Mumbai, and Bangalore.

Inclusion Criteria

- Employees should be aged between 20-65.
- Paid interns can also participate in the research.
- Employees should be following any one type of work arrangement, either **Work from Home** or **Work from Office**.
- Participants should be working in the corporate sector and should be based in the cities of Pune, Mumbai, or Bangalore.

Techniques of Data Analysis

Collected data were analysed using various statistical techniques, including descriptive statistics to summarize the data, independent t-test to compare the means of job satisfaction and work-life balance scores between the office and work-from-home groups. Statistical software of Jamovi was employed to ensure accuracy in data analysis.

VI. RESULTS

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Job Satisfaction and Work-life Balance of employees working from Home and of employees working from office

Descriptives

	Type of Work Arrangement	Job Satisfaction	WLB Total Score
N	WFH	45	45
	WFO	58	58
Missing	WFH	0	0
	WFO	0	0
Mean	WFH	154	69.6
	WFO	152	67.2
Median	WFH	161	70
	WFO	150	68.5
Standard deviation	WFH	25.3	7.55
	WFO	24.8	7.86
Minimum	WFH	113	54
	WFO	103	52
Maximum	WFH	202	81
	WFO	202	87
Shapiro-Wilk W	WFH	0.925	0.951
	WFO	0.975	0.965
Shapiro-Wilk p	WFH	0.006	0.057
	WFO	0.260	0.089

The two groups being compared in this study are Work from Home (WFH) and Work from Office (WFO), as presented in the table. Given indicates there are 45 individuals in the WFH and WFO groups in this instance suggests that the sample size is balanced.

The average value for every group is shown by the **mean**. The WFH group's mean for work satisfaction is 154, whereas the WFO group's mean is 152. The WFH group's mean score for the Work-Life Balance (WLB) total is 69.6, whereas the WFO group's score is 67.2. This shows that compared to the WFO group, participants in the WFH group generally report slightly greater work satisfaction and WLB total scores.

The variability or dispersion of the data is measured by the **standard deviation**. More variety in the data is indicated by a higher standard deviation. The WFH group's standard deviation for job satisfaction is 25.3, whereas the WFO group's is 24.8. The standard deviation for the WLB total score is 7.86 for the WFO group and 7.55 for the WFH group. These numbers imply that the work satisfaction and WLB data points are fairly dispersed from their respective averages in both groups, with the WFO group showing considerably higher variability.

Table 2. Independent Samples t-test of Data

Independent Samples T-Test

		Statistic	df	p
Job Satisfaction	Student's t	0.486	101	0.628
WLB Total Score	Student's t	1.593	101	0.114

Note. H_a μ WFH ≠ μ WFO

Table 3. Group descriptives of Data

Group Descriptives

	Group	N	Mean	Median	SD	SE
Job Satisfaction	WFH	45	154.3	161.0	25.33	3.78
	WFO	58	151.9	150.0	24.83	3.26
WLB Total Score	WFH	45	69.6	70.0	7.55	1.12
	WFO	58	67.2	68.5	7.86	1.03

When comparing the means of two groups, particularly for job satisfaction and the Work-Life Balance (WLB) Total Score, in the context of employees working from home (WFH) and employees working from the office (WFO), an independent samples t-test has been used, which is represented by Table 2.

For job satisfaction, the t-statistic is 0.486. For this test, there are 101 degrees of freedom. The t-test result for work satisfaction has a 0.628 p-value. The t-test for job satisfaction assesses whether employees who work from home (WFH) and those who work from the office (WFO) have significantly different job satisfaction levels. The p-value in this instance is 0.628, which is higher than the typical significance level (e.g., 0.05). As a result, the null hypothesis (H0), according to which there is not a significant difference in work satisfaction between the two groups, is not successfully rejected. This implies that there is insufficient information to draw the conclusion that job satisfaction varies considerably between WFH and WFO employees based on the sample data.

For the WLB Score, the t-statistic is 1.593. For this test, there are 101 degrees of freedom. The t-test for the WLB Score has a p-value of 0.114. If there is a significant difference in Work-Life Balance between WFH and WFO employees, it is assessed using the t-test for the WLB Score. The p-value of 0.114 in this instance is likewise higher than the usual significance threshold. The p-value is rather near to the 0.05 threshold even if it is not below it. This implies that, although the sample data may not approach conventional standards of statistical significance, there may be some indication of a possible difference in Work-Life Balance between the two groups.

Table 3 presents the data between the two groups (WFH - Work from Home and WFO - Work from Office) according to the variables of Work-Life Balance (WLB) Score and Job Satisfaction.

Employees working from home (WFH) report slightly better job satisfaction on average (154.3) than employees working from the office (151.9). This difference in mean score is since WFH employees are somewhat more satisfied with their jobs than WFO employees. It is crucial to remember that the WFH group's median job happiness score (161.0) is noticeably higher than the WFO group's median (150.0), indicating that the WFH group's middle job satisfaction values are significantly higher. The standard deviation and standard error show that work satisfaction varies at a similar rate for both groups.

While the WFO group's Work-Life Balance (WLB) Total Score was 67.2, the WFH group's mean score of 69.6 indicates that, on average, WFH employees report a somewhat better work-life balance. Likewise, the WFH group's median WLB Total Score (70.0) is marginally higher than the WFO group's median (68.5). The standard deviation and standard error show that the WLB Total Score variability in both groups is similar.

To summarize, the Work-Life Balance (WLB) Total Score of the WFO group was 67.2; however, the mean score of 69.6 for the WFH group shows that WFH personnel report a little better work-life balance. Similarly, the median WLB Total Score (70.0) for the WFH group is somewhat higher than the median (68.5) for the WFO group. The similarity in the WLB Total Score variability between the two groups is indicated by the standard deviation and standard error. However, more

statistical analysis is required to determine whether these differences are statistically significant. These findings offer preliminary insights into the comparative trends in work satisfaction and Work-Life Balance between the WFH and WFO groups.

VII. DISCUSSION

The examination of the data provides fascinating new information on workers' job satisfaction in WFH and WFO environments. The variations are worth investigating even though they are not very noticeable. Workers who work from home (WFH) report a mean job satisfaction score that is, on average, somewhat higher than that of workers who work from the office (WFO) (Mean = 151.9). According to this research, WFH workers generally seem to have a little higher level of job satisfaction.

The WFH group's median job satisfaction score (Median = 161.0) is particularly noteworthy because it is significantly higher than the WFO group's (Median = 150.0). This indicates that WFH employees typically have a much higher job satisfaction score near the middle of the distribution. This fundamental tendency may point to a more stable and high degree of job satisfaction among WFH staff members, which is crucial to consider when evaluating the total employee experience.

Notably, both groups exhibit comparable standard deviations and standard errors, indicating a similar degree of variability in job satisfaction. This suggests that although there are modest differences in the central tendency, the range of work satisfaction levels within each group is rather consistent. Put differently, employees from WFH and WFO demonstrate a comparable range of job satisfaction results.

The descriptive statistics continue to display an intriguing trend when examining the WLB Total Score. Employees in the WFO group report a mean WLB Total Score that is somewhat lower (67.2) than that of the WFH group (69.6) on average. This implies that WFH employees have a little better work-life balance.

Additionally, the WFH group's median WLB Total Score (Median = 70.0) is marginally higher than the WFO group's (Median = 68.5). This suggests that WFH employees generally had slightly better-balanced work-life experiences in the middle of the distribution.

The WLB Total Score standard deviations and standard errors for both groups are reasonably stable, much like the job satisfaction statistics. This suggests that the distribution of work-life balance outcomes within each group is similar, as the variability in work-life balance is similar for both WFH and WFO individuals.

IMPLICATIONS

Important information on the relative job satisfaction and work-life balance of WFH and WFO employees can be gleaned from the descriptive statistics data. It is important to stress that although the disparities between the means and

medians are statistically significant, they are not statistically significant. They show that WFH employees generally do slightly better in terms of work-life balance and job satisfaction.

Notable are the higher median values for WLB Total Score and work satisfaction in the WFH group. Their suggestions point to a general trend of increased happiness and improved work-life balance, which may be a sign of more regular and satisfying experiences for WFH staff members.

It is crucial to keep in mind that these are preliminary conclusions derived from descriptive statistics. Additional inferential statistical tests, such as independent t-tests, ANOVA, or regression analysis, should be performed to determine whether these differences are statistically significant. These assessments will yield a more comprehensive comprehension of the variations and plausible causative elements.

Furthermore, in WFH and WFO arrangements, it is crucial to consider the setting, industry, and individual aspects affecting work-life balance and job satisfaction. Deeper dives or qualitative study could be required to fully understand the complex dynamics at work in these two environments.

LIMITATIONS

The study's sample size, with 103 participants, is somewhat small. Notwithstanding the measures taken to guarantee sample diversity, it is possible that some industries and occupational roles are not well represented in the results. Expanded and varied sample sizes in subsequent studies may improve generalizability. The industry, corporate culture, and job function are examples of contextual factors that may have an impact on work-life balance and job satisfaction, however these are not sufficiently covered in this study. Future studies could examine the interactions between these variables and work schedules.

By using a cross-sectional approach, this study can take a momentary picture of work-life balance and job satisfaction. More in-depth understanding of causality and temporal trends may be obtained through experimental designs or longitudinal studies monitoring changes over time.

VIII. CONCLUSION

In this research, work-life balance and job satisfaction were the main areas of attention as connection between work arrangements and employee well-being was looked at. To shed light on the differences between the dynamics of these two work environments, the study compared employees who work from home (WFH) with those who work from the office (WFO).

The results show that employees in the WFH group generally report a somewhat better work-life balance and a slightly greater level of job satisfaction than their counterparts in the WFO group. The WFH group has significantly higher median values for both work-life balance and job satisfaction, indicating a central tendency toward

more consistent and positive experiences among WFH employees.

It is crucial to understand that, despite their consistency, the variations seen are not significant. A cross-sectional design, a limited sample size, and possible self-reporting bias are some of the study's shortcomings. These restrictions underline the necessity of exercising caution when interpreting data and point out areas that warrant further study.

Knowing the subtleties of work-life balance and job happiness is crucial in the post-pandemic era, when remote and flexible work arrangements are becoming more common. This study lays the groundwork for future research that will include larger and more varied sample sizes, longitudinal studies, and in-depth qualitative analysis to offer a thorough knowledge of the ways in which work arrangements affect employees' well-being.

The need for evidence-based methods that promote work-life balance and employee satisfaction is rising as firms manage the constantly changing nature of work. This study lays the groundwork for future, more in-depth research by providing a point of departure for finding opportunities and weighing the wider effects of both in-person and remote employment.

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