

The Impact of Age Factor on the Perception of Working from Home Experience

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Abstract

The Indian government places a high focus on work-life balance. However, demographic changes are creating an impact on the labor market at the same time. To keep the companies at a competitive level, they need to address the fact that their employees are getting older and make necessary adjustments to how they manage their human resources. The papers aim is to answer the question of whether or not the Age of employees impacts the actual work-from-home experience concerning work-life balance and employee productivity. The evidence presented in this paper comes from conducted surveys of 350 employees of the IT sector in Delhi and NCR. The authors conducted the group comparisons to see the differences concerning Age and its linkages with WFH, WLB, and EP. ANOVA was used to see the age groups' differences in working from home, Work-life balance, and Employee productivity. The outcomes could motivate employers' decisions and activities in personnel management for setting up work environments that encourage all employees of different ages.

Keywords: Work-life balance, aging workforce, workers' assessment

Introduction

People change as they age, including their physical appearance, behaviour, observation and judgment of many situations. In the view of the worldwide population's gradual aging and the rising number of older people in the overall population (Desa, U. N. 2014), more and more attention is being devoted in the literature to the study and characterization of unique traits, attitudes, and behaviors of older people (Fealy, Gerard, et al. 2012) (Schafer, M. H., & Shippee, T. P. 2010). Concerns involving the individual's feeling of pleasure, life satisfaction, and self-esteem of well-being as a result of the work-life balance established (Gardiner, Jean et al., 2007); Charalampous, Maria, et al., 2019) are significant for scholars.

The scholars of this paper investigate the whole work-from-home experience by analysing employees' perceptions of work-life balance at the in-

dividual level and its influence on productivity in different age groups of employees. The analysis sought to determine whether workers' age influences their perception of the work-life balance they achieve while working from home and whether there is a relationship between workers' ages and the productivity of the activities their employer provides them with work-life balance. The authors intended the findings to serve as an inspiration for employers' personnel management decisions and activities and for developing workplace circumstances that encourage senior workers to continue working even after they become eligible for an old-age pension.

Literature Review

Working From Home - Overview of The Basic Issues

In today's world, it has become more common to do the job outside of the traditional office. The phenomenon is at various place referred to as telework, telecommuting, virtual offices, remote work, location-independent working, and home offices. In this study, we shall refer to 'working from home (WFH), a term that usually refers to working from any place outside the employer's designated region.

WFH practice and its impact on job efficiency and well-being have received a fair amount of attention inside and outside of academia (**Charalampous Maria et al. " 2019); Van der Lippe, T., & Lippényi, Z. 2020**). WFH has become more prevalent in recent decades due to increased Internet connectivity and personal IT infrastructure (**Tremblay, D. G. 2002**). The study indicates that people who work from home need flexibility for several reasons. Home-working is a specific option for parents with dependent children (**Vilhelmson, B., & Thulin, E. 2016**). However, many workers desire a better work-life balance (**Van der Lippe, T., & Lippényi, Z. 2020**) and a different work environment (**Gautam, R., & Sharma, M. 2020**).

The current most flexible working option is WFH, allowing employees to devote more time to their job tasks and personal life. Regular face-to-face work with coworkers significantly decreases when working away from the office. When there is no physical supervision, employees now have more freedom in how, when, and under what conditions they give activities due to WFH. Employees have greater flexibility in their job. WFH provides more job autonomy, which will almost certainly result in enhanced production. The lack of control by coworkers or employers is one of the significant downsides of WFH. Employees and employers alike are affected. Lack of oversight on a person's employment might lead to work avoidance. When there are urgent issues in the workplace that need to be

resolved, and work has to be done, WFH will be beneficial. In order to boost productivity, most IT organizations have included work from home in their employee leave policies (Gautam, R., & Sharma, M. 2020).

Work-life balance – Overview of The Basic Issues

Work-life balance combine work with other aspects of human life, such as home, family, health, social activities, and private hobbies (Tremblay, D. G. (2002), Clark S. C. (2000). According to this, WLB promotes psychological well-being, high self-esteem, satisfaction, and an overall feeling of harmony in an individual's life (Clark, S. C. 2000); Clarke, M. C., Koch, L. C., & Hill, E. J. 2004). also, Individuals who maintain a healthy work-life balance are happier, healthier, and more creative (McGee-Cooper, A., & Trammell, D. (1993). They meet their need for prosperity as well as a sense of success and pleasure (Robak, E. 2010). According to Arnott, D. Corporate Cults (2000), simply interacting with three aspects of life at the same time (in the home, the job, and the community) provides a person with optimal growth and psychological equilibrium. However, It should be highlighted that everyone's point of balance is different and that excellent time management and support from family (Połaska, Magdalena, et al. 2013) make it feasible to balance work and personal obligations.

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The present research work is mixed and conducted with the help of both qualitative and quantitative research methods. In this study, the researchers have adopted standardized measurements from the relevant literature review to measure employees' perception and satisfaction with the employees who work in the IT sector in Delhi and NCR towards the relationships between working from home and employee productivity.

3.2 Measures

To Examine the studied variable "working from home," the researchers has used questionnaire items from "Construction and initial validation of the E-Work Life Scale to measure remote e-working." adopted the following items "Working from home takes up time that I would like to spend with my family/friends or on other non-work activities. (item-1), I often think about work-related problems outside my normal working hours when working remotely. (item-2), I am happy with my work-life balance when I work from home (item- 3); constant access to work through e-working is very tiring (item 4); when I e-working from home, I know when to put

work down so that I can rest. (item-5), I feel that work demands are much higher when I am e-working remotely (item-6), My social life is poor when e-working remotely (item-7), My organization provides training in e-working skills and behaviors (item- 8), My organization trusts me to be effective in my role when I e-work remotely (item -09), I trust my organization to provide good e-working facilities to allow me to e-work Effectively (item-10), My supervisor gives me total control over when and how I get my work completed when e-working. (item-11), My work is so flexible I could easily take time off e-working remotely, if and when I want to (item-12); my manager allows me to flex my hours to meet my needs, providing all the work is completed (item-13)” (**Grant, Christine Anne, et al. 2018**).

For work-life balance, the researchers have used questionnaire items from (Research and practice in human resource management (**Hayman, J. 2005**). Adopted the following items. “Item 1-Personal life suffers because of work. Item 2-Job makes personal life difficult. Item 3 -Neglect personal needs because of work. Item 4 -Put personal life on hold for work. Item 5 -Miss personal activities because of work. Item 6-Struggle to juggle work and non-work. Item 7 -Happy with the amount of time for non-work activities. Item 8 -My personal life drains me of energy for work. Item 9-Too tired to be effective at work. Item 10-My work suffers because of my personal life. Item 11-Hard to work because of personal matters. Item 12-Personal life gives me energy for my job. Item 13-Job gives me the energy to pursue personal activities Item 14-Better mood at work because of my personal life. Item 15-Better mood because of my job”.

For employee productivity, the researchers have used questionnaire items from two papers, “Collectivist team values for Korean-Chinese co-worker relationships and job performance” (**Chen, Yifeng, et al. 2010**) and “Construction and initial validation of the E-Work Life Scale to measure remote e-working” (**Grant, Christine Anne, et al. 2018**). Adopted the following items “When e-working from home, I can concentrate better on my work tasks. (item-1), I do a large amount of work each day (item 2); e-working makes me more effective in delivering my key objectives and deliverables (item 3), and I always beat our team targets. (item-4), I accomplish tasks quickly and efficiently. (item-5), I have a high standard of task accomplishment (item-6); if I am interrupted by family/other responsibilities while e-working from home, I still meet my line manager’s quality expectations (item-7), My work outcomes are of high quality (item-8), My overall job productivity has increased by my ability to e-work remotely/ from home. (item- 9)”.

Data Collection and Analysis

4.1 Procedure

Data was collected with the help of standardized tools from employees who work from home in various public and private IT organizations in Delhi and NCR and analysed statistically. Significant findings were drawn related to relationships between working from home and employee productivity. A sample of 350 employees was collected. Responses of employees have been recorded on the “Nominal” and “five Point Likert Scale” in view of achieving and testing the following objective and hypothesis.

Data was further examined to assess the central tendency and dispersion with the help of means, standard deviation, variance, minimum and maximum scores (Sekaran, 2003). Correlations among research variables were also checked with the help of Pearson technique to ascertain that the way these variables were related to each other. Results revealed that WFH was positively and significantly related with WLB ($r = .288, p < .05$), this relationship was somehow weak on the strength scale. WFH was also positively and significantly related with EP ($r = .374, p < .05$), their relationship was moderate at the strength scale. Similarly, WLB was positively and significantly related to EP ($r = .613, p < .05$) and this relationship was strong at the strength scale

Once demographic analysis was done and descriptive analysis also showed that further analyses can be carried out, therefore the researchers moved to the assessment of measurement model or confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Before assessing the measurement model common method bias or social desirability element was ruled out with the help of Harman's (1960) single factor analysis (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Single factor analysis showed that 31.378%, i.e., lesser than the majority or 50%, of the variance was the largest one caused by any single factor. So, it was definitely safe to conduct the CFA. We utilized AMOS (analysis of moment structures) software to assess the measurement model. Results of the CFA confirmed that six-factor (consisting of 3 lower order constructs i.e., WIPL, PLIW & WPLE as dimensions of the WLB construct, and 3 high order constructs i.e., WFH, WLB and EP) showed a good fit between the measurement model and the data collected, $X^2(1092) / df(616) = 1.77 < 3$, CFI = .944 > .90, TLI = .939 > .90, RMSEA = .047 < .05, RMR = .048 < .05. Reliability of the scales was established as WFH a 13-items scale adopted from Nicole (2015) had the Cronbach alpha equal to .941 and factor loadings > 0.6, WLB a 15-items and 3-dimensions scale adopted from Hayman (2005) had Cronbach alpha equal to .895 (WIPL = .882, PLIW = .869 & WPLE = .862) with factor loadings > 0.6, and EP a 9-items scales adopted from Chen and Tjosvold (2008)

and Lee and Brand (2010) had a Cronbach alpha equal to .939 and factor loadings > 0.7 . Additionally, all of these scales had composite reality score greater than 0.7 (Hair et al., 2019). Convergent and discriminant validity of these scales was also established as the AVE and HTMT were greater than 0.5 and smaller than 0.85 respectively (Hair et al., 2019).

4.2 Analysis

In view of examining the perception of work-from-home experience regarding work-life balance and productivity of employees from different age groups. Also to achieve and test the proposed objective, researchers have conducted group comparisons to see the differences with respect to Age and its linkages with WFH, WLB, and EP.

Objective

- “To investigate the perception of work-from-home experience regarding work-life balance and productivity of employees from different age groups.

Age Groups: As the Table 1 shows that most of the respondents (47.7%, $n = 167$) belonged to 31-40 years age group. 39.4% of the respondents ($n = 138$) belonged to 20-30 years age group. 10.6% of the respondents ($n = 37$) belonged to 41-50 years age group. 2.3% ($n = 8$) of respondents were in > 50 years age group, see Figure 1 as well.

Table 1 : Age Groups

Age	Frequency	Percent
20-30 Years	138	39.4
31-40 Years	167	47.7
41-50 Years	37	10.6
> 50 Years	8	2.3
Total	350	100.0

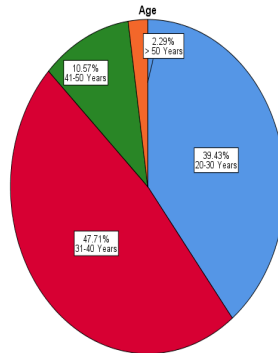


Figure . Age Groups

Age Differences on WFH, WLB and EP: ANOVA was conducted to see the differences of age groups on WFH, as shown in Table 1 that none of the differences of age groups were statistically significant, so it was confirmed that all age groups perceived / conceived the WFH equally.

Table 1 shows that confirmed that > 50 Years age group ($M = 4.15$) had better perceptions of WLB than 20-30 Years age group ($M = 3.49$) and this difference was statistically significant as well ($M = .66, p = .022$). Similarly, 41-50 Years age group ($M = 3.84$) had better perceptions of WLB than 20-30 Years age group ($M = 3.49$) and this difference was also statistically significant ($M = .35, p = .018$). Likewise, 31-40 Years age group ($M = 3.91$) had better perceptions of WLB than 20-30 Years age group ($M = 3.49$) and this difference was statistically significant ($M = .42, p < .001$). All other age differences on WLB were not significant, hence we can imply that older respondents had better perceptions of WLB.

Similar to WLB, ANOVA revealed that > 50 Years age group ($M = 4.47$) was more productive than 20-30 Years age group ($M = 2.97$) and this difference was statistically significant ($M = 1.50, p < .001$). > 50 Years age group ($M = 4.47$) was also more productive than 41-50 Years age group ($M = 3.47$) and this difference was statistically significant as well ($M = 1.00, p = .045$). Age group 41-50 Years ($M = 3.47$) performed better than 20-30 Years age group ($M = 2.97$) and this difference was statistically significant ($M = .50, p = .032$). Similarly, 31-40 Years age group ($M = 3.68$) also performed better than 20-30 Years age group ($M = 2.97$) and this difference was statistically significant as well ($M = .70, p < .001$). All other age differences on EP were not significant, therefore we can imply that older employees scored better on EP while working from home.

Table 1 : “ANOVA – Age Differences

	(I) Age	N	Mean	(J) Age	Mean Difference (I-J)	SE	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
								Lower Bound	Upper Bound
WFH	20-30 Years	138	2.49	31-40 Years	-0.05	0.06	0.855	-0.21	0.11
				41-50 Years	-0.11	0.10	0.675	-0.38	0.15
				> 50 Years	-0.43	0.20	0.138	-0.94	0.09
	31-40 Years	167	2.54	20-30 Years	0.05	0.06	0.855	-0.11	0.21
				41-50 Years	-0.06	0.10	0.919	-0.32	0.19
				> 50 Years	-0.38	0.20	0.226	-0.89	0.13
	41-50 Years	37	2.61	20-30 Years	0.11	0.10	0.675	-0.15	0.38
				31-40 Years	0.06	0.10	0.919	-0.19	0.32
				> 50 Years	-0.32	0.21	0.454	-0.87	0.24
	> 50 Years	8	2.92	20-30 Years	0.43	0.20	0.138	-0.09	0.94
				31-40 Years	0.38	0.20	0.226	-0.13	0.89
				41-50 Years	0.32	0.21	0.454	-0.24	0.87

WLB	20-30 Years	138	3.49	31-40 Years	-0.42	0.07	0.000	-0.61	-0.23
				41-50 Years	-0.35	0.12	0.018	-0.65	-0.04
				> 50 Years	-0.66	0.23	0.022	-1.26	-0.07
	31-40 Years	167	3.91	20-30 Years	0.42*	0.07	0.000	0.23	0.61
				41-50 Years	0.08	0.12	0.914	-0.22	0.37
				> 50 Years	-0.24	0.23	0.716	-0.84	0.35
	41-50 Years	37	3.84	20-30 Years	0.35*	0.12	0.018	0.04	0.65
				31-40 Years	-0.08	0.12	0.914	-0.37	0.22
				> 50 Years	-0.32	0.25	0.573	-0.96	0.32
	> 50 Years	8	4.15	20-30 Years	0.66*	0.23	0.022	0.07	1.26
				31-40 Years	0.24	0.23	0.716	-0.35	0.84
				41-50 Years	0.32	0.25	0.573	-0.32	0.96

EP	20-30 Years	138	2.97	31-40 Years	-0.70*	0.11	0.000	-0.99	-0.41
				41-50 Years	-.50*	0.18	0.032	-0.96	-0.03
				> 50 Years	-1.50*	0.36	0.000	-2.42	-0.58
	31-40 Years	167	3.68	20-30 Years	0.70*	0.11	0.000	0.41	0.99
				41-50 Years	0.20	0.18	0.663	-0.26	0.66
				> 50 Years	-0.80	0.35	0.111	-1.71	0.12
	41-50 Years	37	3.47	20-30 Years	0.50*	0.18	0.032	0.03	0.96
				31-40 Years	-0.20	0.18	0.663	-0.66	0.26
				> 50 Years	-1.00*	0.38	0.045	-1.99	-0.02
	> 50 Years	8	4.47	20-30 Years	1.50*	0.36	0.000	0.58	2.42
				31-40 Years	0.80	0.35	0.111	-0.12	1.71
				41-50 Years	1.00*	0.38	0.045	0.02	1.99
*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level."									

FINDING AND RESULTS

of ANOVA confirmed that all age groups perceived / conceived the WFH equally, while employees in age group > 50 Years age group (M = 4.15), 41-50 Years age group (M = 3.84) and 31-40 Years age group (M = 3.91) had significantly better perceptions of WLB than 20-30 Years age group (M = 3.49). Which meant that older employees had better perceptions of WLB. Similarly, ANOVA revealed that > 50 Years age group (M = 4.47) was significantly more productive than 41-50 Years age group (M = 3.47) and 20-30 Years age group (M = 2.97). 41-50 Years age group (M = 3.47) and 31-40 Years age group (M = 3.68) were significantly more productive than 20-30 Years age group (M = 2.97), meaning that among the study participants older employees apparently scored better on EP while working from home.

CONCLUSION

In today's business world, companies must adhere to the policies established based on the premise that younger workers have a long time until retirement. When an organization can amortize training costs and enjoy the benefits, senior employee skills will likely become obsolete. Employers are responsible for paying attention to and acknowledging that older workers may be more productive when allowed to work from home. From an economic point of view, human resource management practitioners need to ask whether the opportunity costs associated with training are more or lower than the opportunity costs related to growing productivity throughout a lifetime. According to **Goldin, C., & Polachek, S. (1987)** Residual differences by sex: Perspectives on the gender gap in earnings. *The American Economic Review*, 77(2), 143-151. study, younger workers' earnings and performance may be superior to those of older workers. This may lead to the case of direct investment in training made by employers and younger workers. To summarise, decisions about the retention or recruitment of older workers and making efforts to optimize their performance need to consider costs and benefits, potential legal issues, and the corporation's duty for the growth of all individuals, young and old.

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