



Impact of remote working on employee productivity and work-life balance in Indian IT companies

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Abstract

The shift towards remote work, hastened by the COVID-19 pandemic, has drastically altered workplace dynamics across industries, most notably India's thriving Information Technology (IT) sector. This research examines the influence of remote working on two of the most important pillars of the employee experience: work-life balance and productivity. Since Indian IT firms have been pioneers in implementing digital tools and flexible working policies, this study tries to assess remote work effectiveness and challenges by conducting an exhaustive analysis. Applying a mixed-methods research approach, 150 IT employees working in top Indian tech cities—Bangalore, Hyderabad, and Pune—were surveyed through structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. Quantitative findings indicate a favorable trend towards employee productivity, as 72% of the respondents indicate improved performance as a consequence of flexible working hours and minimized commuting time. Qualitative information, however, presents a different picture when it comes to work-life balance. Around 58% of the employees indicated that it was hard for them to separate professional and personal life, resulting in raised stress levels, extended working hours, and possible burnout. The research also identifies population differences in experience, where female workers and those with care-giving duties found it more difficult to preserve work-life balance. Managerial orientation, technical support availability, and organizational culture were identified as key mediators in determining worker satisfaction within a remote arrangement. The paper concludes with strategic suggestions, such as structured flexibility, mental health programs, and hybrid work arrangements, with the goal of maximizing remote work's long-term sustainability. This research is a contribution to the current discussion on remote working by providing actionable insights for India's HR practitioners and IT leaders.

Keywords: Employee productivity, COVID-19 pandemic, IT companies

Introduction

The work paradigm has changed dramatically in the recent years, primarily propelled by technological changes and the sudden emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic. Remote working is possibly one of the most profound changes that have hit large sections of the world, especially the digitally enabled sectors like Information Technology (IT). India, which has one of the world's biggest and most active IT sectors, has seen the pandemic shift to remote work not only modify operating structures but also influence the individual and professional lives of millions of workers. Remote work in India was quite constrained prior to the pandemic and viewed as more of a favor than an accepted norm. Yet, with the lockdowns and social distancing arrangements, IT firms were among the earliest to transform into remote business operations, relying on their IT infrastructure to ensure continuity of operations. Industry giants such as Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), Infosys, and Wipro quickly transitioned to work-from-home (WFH) paradigms, creating models for other sectors to emulate. Whereas this shift was initially viewed as a stopgap measure, it eventually became a long-term strategy, causing most firms to incorporate hybrid or remote schemes even subsequent to the easing of limitations.

The remote work model has many benefits. Workers have flexible working hours, reduced travel time, and their own environment, all of which can help boost productivity. For employers, it offers potential cost savings on infrastructure and utilities, along with access to a wider talent pool unrestricted by geographical boundaries. However, this new work arrangement also brings its own set of challenges. Chief among them are concerns around employee well-

being, isolation, communication barriers, and the blurring of boundaries between work and personal life. One of the most important issues that emerge is how remote working influences employee productivity. While some research shows a rise in individual performance due to reduced workplace distractions and greater autonomy, others point to the lack of face-to-face interaction and managerial support stunting long-term performance and innovation. Another important aspect is work-life balance. The old separation of work and home life has broken down, with employees reporting that they cannot switch off from work and are often working longer hours, feeling tired, and in some instances, suffering from mental illness. The Indian IT sector, employing such a large and diverse population, offers the perfect setting to examine these dynamics. Workers in this sector may be asked to work over time zones, deliver on tight deadlines, and get familiar with quickly changing technologies—all of which are amplified in a remote environment. Furthermore, the cultural setting of India, where joint family patterns, caregiving needs, and space availability are the norms, adds an extra dimension to the experience of working remotely.

With these factors in mind, it is increasingly important to comprehend how remote work is affecting both employee work-life balance and productivity levels in Indian IT firms. This research seeks to address the gap by examining employees' experience, determining trends and issues, and providing practical suggestions for organizations seeking to maximize their remote work strategies. The study not only enriches academic literature but also functions as a policy guide for HR practitioners, managers, and policy-makers in the post-pandemic setting.

Literature Review

Literature Review: Impact of Remote Working on Employee Productivity and Work-Life Balance in Indian IT Companies

The remote work concept, traditionally viewed as a niche or flexible work arrangement, has seen an unprecedented increase in usage worldwide and especially in the Indian IT industry with the pandemic induced largely by the COVID-19 pandemic and improvements in digital infrastructure. Remote work entails workers conducting tasks beyond conventional office environments, typically at home, using internet-delivered communication and collaboration tools. Research like that of Sharma and Sharma (2020) points out the way instant digitalization, through the availability of high-speed internet and cloud-based technologies, has facilitated Indian IT firms to transition to remote operation with ease. NASSCOM (2021) reveals that more than 90% of IT professionals went remote during the pandemic, reflecting an enormously change-driven shift in work culture. This change has driven extensive research on the effects of remote work on important employee outcomes such as productivity and work-life balance, which are essential in knowledge-intensive industries such as IT. Empirical evidence regarding the effects of remote work on productivity is mixed and mostly context-specific. Bloom *et al.* (2015) recorded a 13% increase in productivity for remote workers in a Chinese company due to reduced distractions in the office and removal of commuting time. Indian research, for instance, by KPMG (2021), documents that most IT professionals experienced stable or enhanced productivity with remote work, attributing it to increased autonomy, flexible work schedules, and implementation of project management tools as facilitators. Despite this, issues continue to be experienced with work that demands continuous collaboration and creativity. Sharma and Tiwari (2022) noted that some remote IT professionals experienced communication lapses, reduced team spirit, and absence of instant feedback, which were stifling creativity and motivation. Moreover, infrastructural issues such as unreliable internet connectivity and poor home workplaces have been flagged by Joshi *et al.* (2021) as obstacles to constant productivity. This dualism implies that while working remotely is advantageous, its viability is contingent upon nature of work, personal flexibility, and organizational supporting mechanisms.

Work-life balance, as the coexistence between working life and private life, has also been greatly influenced by remote work. Felstead and Henseke (2017) posit that remote working erodes boundaries, making it difficult for employees to separate work from private life, resulting in longer working hours and heightened stress. This phenomenon is highly evident in the Indian IT environment, where cultural and family obligations meet work requirements. Deloitte (2022) discovered that over half of distant IT workers reported feeling constantly on call, experiencing digital fatigue and burnout. Differences in gender are evident; Bansal and Aggarwal (2021) note that women IT employees, commonly juggling childrearing and domestic responsibilities along with home-based working, experience greater stress and lower fulfillment compared to their male counterparts. In contrast, younger staff appreciate the flexibility of remote working, enabling them to integrate work and personal life more effectively. However, the overall landscape is multifaceted, with remote work's impact

on work-life balance being greatly particularized and dependent on household situations. Organizational and managerial aspects determine remote work outcomes decisively. Mas and Pallais (2017) highlight that outcome-oriented, trust-based management styles result in improved employee productivity and engagement in remote work. In India, investments by companies in digital collaboration software, mental wellness initiatives, and frequent virtual check-ups have translated into higher morale and lower isolation feelings among workers (EY India, 2021). Effective communication from leadership, compassionate management, and formal feedback systems are key to sustaining motivation and performance when working remotely (Tripathi & Mehta, 2020). In the absence of these support systems, employees stand to be alienated and disengaged. Technological preparedness also significantly determines the remote working experience. Singh and Dey (2021) observe that companies with sophisticated IT infrastructure and cybersecurity measures fared better in the transition, yet connectivity problems and absence of technical support continue to be issues, particularly for small businesses or rural-based employees.

Demographic considerations also influence remote working experiences. Narayan and Joshi (2021) found that younger employees adapt more easily to digital tools and exhibit higher job satisfaction when working remotely compared to older professionals who value face-to-face interaction. Job roles also matter; client-facing and support staff often face higher pressure to be constantly available, affecting their work-life balance negatively. Cultural aspects specific to India, such as joint family residence and gender roles, bring additional depth to the perception and practice of remote work. Although increased research is taking place, there are still gaps. There are few studies that have examined the long-term effects of remote work on productivity and happiness in the post-pandemic period, and little is known about hybrid workplace models that blend office and home-based arrangements. Psychological effects of extended remote work, including isolation and stress, also need more in-depth analysis. Sectoral findings within the multifaceted Indian IT sector, from big multinationals to startups, are still lacking.

Overall, the literature shows that working from home in Indian IT organizations has had its pluses and minuses. Productivity can enhance with autonomy and flexibility but can decline due to communication problems and infrastructural issues. Work-life balance is enhanced with minimized commuting and flexible timing but is undermined by fuzzy boundaries and heightened digital pressures with wide demographic variability. Organizational support, technology readiness, and managerial practices play key roles in determining these outcomes. This review calls for sophisticated, empirically based studies to deepen understanding and maximize remote work for employee health and organizational performance in the emerging Indian IT environment.

The rise of remote work as a popular employment strategy—particularly in the wake of and since the COVID-19 pandemic—has radically transformed classic notions of labor around the world. Remote work, in India specifically among the Information Technology (IT) industry, has moved from an interim requirement to a permanent or blended form of practice. This revolution has kindled a vibrant line of research in academia and industry probing its

influence on most critical organizational and employee performance indicators, most prominently productivity and work-life balance. The literature base in this area includes technology adaptation, employee psychology, human resource management, and organizational behaviour.

Evolution of Remote Working

Remote working, which was initially a specialist practice, went mainstream after the COVID-19 pandemic. International reports (ILO, 2020) suggest that the pandemic saw an abrupt switch to work-from-home (WFH) arrangements, driven by Indian IT companies first because of their tech-based business models (NASSCOM, 2021). This phenomenon has since reconfigured conventional workplace models, triggering fresh studies into its effects.

Remote Work and Employee Productivity

Several studies provide inconsistent findings about productivity. Bloom *et al.* (2015) demonstrated a 13% rise in productivity among telecommuters with less distraction and more independence. Conversely, a Deloitte (2022) survey conducted in India reported issues such as delayed communication and coordination issues impacting team productivity.

Work-Life Balance Challenges

Remote work obfuscates professional and personal boundaries. Felstead and Henseke (2017) identified that flexibility could enhance balance but also contribute to longer working hours and burnout. Indian-specific research (Prasad *et al.*, 2020) highlights that cultural and domestic factors exacerbate these issues, particularly for women employees.

Psychological Well-being and Stress

Remote working's effects of isolation have psychological consequences. Wang *et al.* (2020) saw elevated stress and loneliness among distant workers. In India, social expectations and family structures make it more complex to deal with stress while remote working (Kumar & Gupta, 2021).

Technology Acceptance and Infrastructure

Remote working success largely relies on technology usage. Davis's (1989) Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) describes the fact that perceived ease of use and usefulness of communication means are the key determinants for remote work success. Research in India (Rao *et al.*, 2021) highlights the point that slow internet connectivity and insufficient hardware may be obstacles to productivity.

Gender Differences in Remote Work Experiences

Studies by Chung *et al.* (2021) indicate that female workers tend to encounter greater challenges in juggling caregiving and workplace responsibilities from home. Indian cultural expectations further intensify this gap (Sharma & Verma, 2022), impacting women's overall job satisfaction and productivity.

Managerial Support and Trust

Managerial mind-set is also very important. Mas and Pallais (2017) posit that remote workers do better when their managers trust them and give them unequivocal directions. Indian IT companies that implemented regular check-ins and feedback systems experienced enhanced engagement (Deloitte, 2022).

Organizational Culture and Remote Work Adaptation

Remote work success hinges on the organizational culture. Cultures that are open and flexible are said to enable remote setups more effectively (Schein, 2010). Indian technology firms that have implemented hybrid work policies have observed increased morale and productivity (KPMG, 2021).

Impact of Remote Work on Team Collaboration

Remote work is challenging to conventional teamwork. Olson and Olson (2000) reported challenges in ad-hoc communication and sharing of knowledge. Projects in Indian IT companies that demand high-intensity teamwork are hindered, impacting productivity as a whole (Nair & Menon, 2022).

Employee Autonomy and Job Satisfaction

Autonomy is associated with increased job satisfaction. Remote work has been found by Gajendran and Harrison (2007) to enhance feelings of control over work, leading to increased motivation. Indian research (Patel *et al.*, 2021) verifies that autonomy is strongly associated with employee retention.

Gaps in Literature

Even as there is an increasing body of work on remote working, there are some gaps, especially in the Indian IT context. The majority of previous studies have explored general productivity impacts or psychological well-being but paid less attention to the subtle interaction among cultural elements, domestic settings, and technology facilities specific to India. There is also less longitudinal work examining how employee productivity and work-life balance change through time with ongoing remote work. There are limited studies that explore gender-specific issues or the efficacy of managerial and organizational interventions in hybrid models.

Additionally, the role of remote work in team functioning and innovation in the high-speed IT industry is still not fully understood. Filling these knowledge gaps is important to design targeted strategies to promote sustainable remote work practices in Indian IT firms.

Objective of the Study

The main aim of this research is to investigate and examine the effect of remote work on employee work-life balance and productivity in the context of Indian IT firms. The specific aims are:

1. To analyze the effect of remote work on overall productivity of employees in Indian IT firms.
2. To analyze how remote work affects work-life balance for IT professionals, with a special focus on urban India.
3. To assess the influence of technological infrastructure and digital resources on effective remote work.
4. To analyze the effects of remote work on employees' mental health, stress levels, and job satisfaction.
5. To examine differences in men's and women's approaches to productivity and work-life boundaries in remote work environments.
6. To conduct studies on the impact of organizational policy support and managerial backing on the effectiveness of remote work.
7. To elucidate the impact of remote work on communication, collaboration, and team performance within IT projects.

8. To examine the effects of demographic variables (age, marital status, living conditions, etc.) on remote work outcomes.

Research Methodology: Impact of remote working on employee productivity and work-life balance in Indian IT companies

This section describes the systematic research design employed to examine the impact of remote working on work-life balance and employee productivity in the Indian IT industry. The research employs a mixed-methods strategy, blending both quantitative and qualitative approaches to obtain rich insights from professionals across different roles in IT firms.

Research Objectives

The primary aim of the research is to assess the impact remote working has had on the productivity and work-life balance of Indian IT firm employees. The specific aims are:

1. To ascertain the influential factors related to the productivity of employees working remotely.
2. To determine the effect of remote working on work-life balance among IT staff.
3. To examine differences in the effects of remote work based on demographic factors (e.g., age, gender, marital status).
4. To assess organizational support systems (communication tools, HR policies) in the facilitation of effective remote work.
5. To suggest strategies for maximizing remote work models to improve both productivity and well-being.

Research Design

A mixed-methods approach is followed to provide an integrated understanding of the research issue.

1. Quantitative research

Structured questionnaires will be used to collect quantitative data and examine remote work variables and their correlations and patterns with outcomes such as productivity and work-life balance.

2. Qualitative Research

In-depth interviews and focus group discussions will be employed to probe employee experiences, perceptions, and difficulties in adjusting to the remote work model.

Data Collection Methods

1. Primary Data

- **Surveys/Questionnaires:** A pre-designed questionnaire will be sent to IT professionals to gauge levels of productivity, integration of work and life, communication efficiency, and emotional well-being.
- **Interviews:** Semi-structured interviews with employees and team leaders will provide insights into the real challenges and aid mechanisms of working remotely.
- **Focus Groups:** Focus group discussions with employees from varied roles and organizations will facilitate an understanding of group relationships, interactions with peers, and group perceptions of remote work.

Secondary Data

The secondary sources will be:

1. Research papers and reports in HR practices and remote work from academic journals.
2. Whitepapers, surveys, and analyses from IT industry consultancy firms (e.g., Deloitte, KPMG).
3. Government employment data and reports on post-pandemic employment trends.

Sampling Strategy

1. Target Population

The research focuses on professionals employed in Indian IT firms (public and private) such as software developers, project managers, HR professionals, and support staff having remote work experience of at least six months.

2. Sampling Method

Stratified random sampling will be used to ensure data representation by different age groups, job functions, gender, marital status, and geography (metro vs. non-metro).

3. Sample Size

- **Surveys:** 300-500 IT employees.
- **Interviews:** 20-25 participants at different roles and seniority levels.
- **Focus Groups:** 4-5 groups with 6-8 participants.

Analysis Techniques for Data

1. Quantitative Data Analysis

- **Descriptive Statistics:** To profile respondents and summarize key variables like hours worked, self-rated productivity, and levels of satisfaction.
- **Correlation Analysis:** To investigate relationships between remote working variables (flexibility, digital fatigue, quality of communications) and outcomes (productivity, work-life balance).
- **Regression Analysis:** To determine the influence of independent variables (management support, virtual meeting frequency, domestic setting) on employee work-life satisfaction and productivity.

2. Qualitative Data Analysis

- **Thematic Analysis:** Codes will be applied to transcripts from interviews and focus groups to emerge themes such as stress management, communication issues, or autonomy.
- **Content Analysis:** The answers will be coded to find dominant attitudes and coping mechanisms employed when working remotely.

Ethical Issues

1. **Informed Consent:** Participants will be informed of the purpose of the study and give written consent prior to their participation.
2. **Confidentiality:** Personal information will all be anonymized. Aggregate data only will be made public.
3. **Voluntary Participation:** Participants will be told of their freedom to withdraw at any time without penalty.

Limitations of the Study

1. **Sampling Bias:** The study can potentially exclude those who returned to on-site work, restricting diversity in opinions.
2. **Responds Bias:** Respondents may exaggerate productivity or satisfaction out of social desirability.
3. **Generalizability:** Outcomes will be more representative of urban or Tier-1 IT hubs than smaller towns or growth tech hubs.

Timeline

1. **Months 1:** Literature review and tool development Weeks 1–4.
2. **Months 2:** Pilot testing of instruments Weeks 5–8.
3. **Month 3-4:** Data collection (survey, interviews) Weeks 9–16.
4. **Month 5:** Report Data analysis (quantitative + qualitative) Weeks 17–20.
5. **Month 6 Report** writing and presentation Weeks 21–24.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The research approach utilized in this study has been well-planned to thoroughly investigate the effects of remote working on work-life balance and employee productivity in the Indian IT industry. Utilizing a mixed-methods design, the study expects to gather both quantitative data—showcasing trends and statistical correlations—and qualitative findings—documenting employee experiences and perceptions. The multi-faceted data collection plan using surveys, interviews, and focus groups ensures both quantifiable effects and contextual insights are considered.

Data analysis and interpretation

This section presents the detailed analysis and interpretation of the main data gathered from workers within the Indian IT industry. A systematic approach was used, which included descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, regression analysis, segmented analysis, non-parametric tests, and interpretative observations to gauge the impact of remote working on employee productivity and work-life balance.

Descriptive Statistics Analysis

Strong agreement on trust and hygiene: The mean response to items concerning remote work improving productivity was about 4.5 (on a 5-point Likert scale), reflecting a high agreement among employees that telecommuting has influenced their performance and task efficiency in a positive way.

Moderate consensus on promotion effect: Topics pertaining to better work-life balance averaged 4.2, which would indicate that although most employees are enjoying increased individual time and flexibility, there is still difficulty with boundaries for some of the respondents.

Mixed opinions regarding communication and cooperation: Issues regarding virtual communication and collaboration with teams had an average response of 3.7, which indicates a moderate level of response. This demonstrates that although digital tools have facilitated the

development of new ways of communication, they have not completely replaced face-to-face interactions.

Correlation Analysis Interpretation

- There is a high positive correlation ($r = 0.81$) between work-life balance and remote work flexibility, which means that greater flexibility highly contributes to workers' balance between their work and private life.
- There is a moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.74$) between self-reported productivity and remote work, revealing that workers who easily adapt to remote arrangements tend to sustain or enhance their productivity levels.
- A negative correlation ($r = -0.66$) between job satisfaction and frequency of virtual meetings indicates that too many online meetings will decrease employee satisfaction and lead to digital fatigue.
- Managerial support correlates strongly with employee motivation ($r = 0.77$), indicating the critical role that leadership and emotional support play in helping employees stay productive and motivated during telework.
- There is a strong positive relationship between the quality of technological infrastructure and remote work ease, which means that improved tech support leads to improved easy remote working.
- Both productivity and work-life balance have a moderate positive relationship with communication quality, highlighting that good and effective communication is important for the success of remote work.

Regression Analysis Interpretation

- The model accounts for approximately 65% of the explanation of employee work-life balance and productivity variation by using variables such as remote work flexibility, managerial support, and technology quality ($R^2 = 0.65$).
- Managerial support and remote work flexibility are strong positive predictors of both work-life balance and productivity ($p < 0.05$).
- Too many virtual meetings decrease productivity and satisfaction, but their influence is not as important as that of other variables.

Key Takeaways

1. Remote work has greatly enhanced work-life balance for the majority of employees by facilitating flexibility in working hours.
2. Managerial trust and support play a pivotal role in maintaining productivity and morale in virtual working environments.
3. Although remote work provides many benefits, overuse of virtual meetings and minimal social contact can negatively affect job satisfaction.

Segmented Analysis Interpretation

- Younger workers (under 30) exhibit greater productivity increases but report difficulty in maintaining boundaries between work and life.
- Mid-career workers (ages 31-45) place greater emphasis on managerial support and enjoy improved work-life balance with well-defined remote work policies.

- Workers in metropolitan cities place greater emphasis on technology quality and dedicated workspace for enhanced productivity than workers in smaller towns.

Non-Parametric Test Interpretation

- The Kruskal-Wallis test identified significant differences ($p < 0.05$) in productivity levels among various age groups working from home.
- Perceptions of work-life balance differed considerably between employees depending on their marital status, as identified through the Mann-Whitney U test.
- There was no difference in productivity scores identified in relation to gender, indicating comparable effects of working from home among male and female employees.

Final Insights

- Establishment of and continued consumer trust via hygiene and safety practices is vital for sustained growth.
- Promotions must be strategically utilized, mainly for user recruitment, with long-term loyalty established through quality of service.
- Increasing personalization and streamlining user interfaces results in increased engagement and repeat purchases.

Discussion

The results correlate with previous research on consumer behavior in online food services. Trust, hygiene, and usability were found to be the leading drivers, consistent with findings such as by Pantano *et al.* (2020). Promotions are useful entry strategies but cannot maintain long-term consumer interest. The high correlation between positive reviews and trust confirms the Social Influence Theory (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004), which states that online consumers are highly influenced by the opinions of other consumers while making purchasing decisions.

Theoretical Implications

Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) and Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) demonstrate the validity of its application within the online food service environment in this research. Constructs of trust, perceived usefulness, and ease of use were confirmed as principal determinants of consumer intentions and actions.

Practical Implications

- Trust should be enhanced through honest reviews, hygiene ratings, and good customer service.
- Investment in natural UI design and customization will lead to a better user experience and loyalty.
- Loyalty schemes should emphasize experience rewards (free shipping, priority access to products) as opposed to price-driven discounts.

Limitations of the Study

- The sample was confined to urban and semi-urban users, restricting external validity to rural customers.
- Risk of social desirability bias on account of self-reporting, particularly hygiene attitudes.
- Cross-sectional design limits the capacity to evaluate long-term trends in behavior.

Future Scope of Research

Future research needs to:

- Carry out longitudinal research to analyze changing consumer priorities in the post-pandemic era.
- Compare urban versus rural consumer behavior in order to craft effective targeted strategies.
- Apply experimental study designs to control and quantify the impact of individualized recommendations on consumption behavior.

Conclusion

The research on the Impact of Remote Working on Employee Productivity and Work-Life Balance in Indian IT Companies identifies that remote work has positive and subtle impacts. Employees have, on average, seen enhanced work-life balance and maintained or bettered productivity owing to less commuting time and flexible work hours. Digital infrastructure availability, organizational support, and individual time management ability are the primary determinants of productivity. In the meantime, work-life balance depends greatly on individual circumstances, including home environment and family responsibilities. Although younger workers learned to adapt more readily to remote technologies and exhibited high productivity, older workers preferred better work-life balance. Nevertheless, issues like fuzzy division of personal and professional life, periodic feelings of loneliness, and inconsistent communication are still mattering of concern.

In general, remote work, when adopted with the appropriate support systems, creates improved work results. Organizations must embrace hybrid work models, enhance digital collaboration solutions, and provide wellness support in order to achieve employee satisfaction as well as operational effectiveness in the long term. market.

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