

RESEARCH ARTICLE



The Collision of Working Remotely on Employee Engagement in IT Organizations: Empirical Evidence from Bengaluru-Based Organizations

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Abstract: The collision of working remotely on employee engagement has been examined in information technology companies in Bengaluru. Data were collected from 105 IT employees using a structured questionnaire. Descriptive statistics, correlation, regression, and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used for analysis. The results indicated a moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.493$, $p < 0.01$) between stress levels and challenges in maintaining a work-life balance. In regression, stress was found to explain about 24.3% of the work-life balance variation ($R^2 = 0.243$; $F = 32.695$; $p < 0.001$). No significant differences in engagement levels were found based on gender and age according to ANOVA results. The tool used for this study proved to be reliable (Cronbach's alpha = 0.875). It can be inferred that remote work allows flexibility, but managing stress is fundamental to sustaining employee engagement. The research provides relevant insights for Human Resources (HR) practitioners and organizational leaders in improving the remote work policies and the general well-being of employees.

Keywords: employee engagement, remote work, work from home, Bengaluru IT organizations

1. Introduction

The very remote working environment that used to be a distant idea has tremendously changed over the past few years, especially within the context of information technology (IT), with organizations worldwide increasingly favoring the hybrid model, flexible work hours, and greater technology dependence. These trends have ignited intense debates on the matter of productivity and employee engagement within the spheres pointed out by Olawale et al. [1] and Raju [2]. These articles support the view that while flexible work arrangements are beneficial, they create an environment in which keeping employees engaged and productive becomes a challenge.

At this juncture, Prasad et al. [3] proceeded to analyze stress-related issues of teleworking, such as work overload and isolation among IT professionals. Work overload and isolation among IT professionals are studied within the broader context of subsequent research examining the psychological and performance-specific consequences of remote work. The works of Adisa et al. [4] and Fatima et al. [5] also frontally address the role of management during employee engagement in this transition, maintaining that leadership, communication, and technological support are essential in securing engagement within remote work environments. Chanana and Sangeeta [6] as well as Swaroop and Sharma [7] have

hypothesized that virtual engagement strategies, including regular communication and team-building activities, are key to employee satisfaction and cohesion. These methods worked wonders during the COVID-19 lockdown and continue to apply as IT firms now stagger their way into a post-pandemic work culture. Chaudhary et al. [8] and Galanti et al. [9] stress the need for innovative, tailored Human Resources (HR) measures to boost engagement and performance in the virtual environment. Our findings resonate with the same view.

The work-life balance dilemma, especially for employees with family obligations, has been dealt with by Toscano and Zappala [10]. Their findings regarding productivity being down because of household obligations are in line with the problems faced by IT professionals in India. Kausar et al. [11] and Nalini [12] contend that there is a demand for strong engagement methods going forward that will make employees feel connected and supported within the remote work environment. This is highly critical toward the optimization of participation and engagement within remote-working populations.

The literature suggests that organizational culture and leadership practices exert considerable influence on the success of remote work. In these studies, Saurage-Altenloh et al. [13] as well as Hajjami and Crocco [14] show how leadership becomes central in engendering trust and resilience among remote teams and highlight the need for fostering supportive work environments. Likewise, Nizamidou [15] and van Dick et al. [16] further explore the emotional well-being and stress management variables, unraveling another

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layer of complexity regarding remote engagement, particularly in the context of mental health issues faced by IT professionals.

The study investigates how remote work policies are changing in Indian IT organizations in terms of the employee engagement versus productivity debate and maintaining a reasonable work-home balance, as these are some challenges discussed in this study. It investigates leadership, HR practices, and communication in an attempt to glean insights about sustainable engagement approaches for remote employees in the IT sector.

2. Literature Review

The remote workplace has been defined greatly with the growing dependence on technology, especially in IT, emerging as the new normal of flexible models and schedules. Olawale et al. [1] show these practices, including the challenges facing organizations in finding the balance between productivity and engagement. Indeed, the expression of remote work has evolved and recently brought both possibilities and problems around employee engagement, considering the rapid technology adoption within the organization as highlighted by Raju [2] when he states that there has been a policy change toward hybrid models.

One of the major fields of study is work-related stressors affecting remote employees, especially in the IT industry. Prasad et al. [3] found that the major stressors of telework professionals in Hyderabad were work overload and isolation. Their results lay copious emphasis on the psychological downside of virtual work along with its possible influence on employee health and productivity. These stressors were supported in the publication of Adisa et al. [4], where the authors discussed how trust, communication, and managerial support are important for keeping employees engaged in remote work. It was thus proposed that leadership and organizational support would be the factors that mitigate stress and promote engagement in remote working conditions.

This view was echoed by Chanana and Sangeeta [6] as well as Swaroop and Sharma [7], who emphasized virtual engagement strategies – everything from communication to team building – in helping garner employee satisfaction and cohesion. They certainly mattered during the lockdown but will also matter as IT companies transition into a new post-COVID culture – the culture of remote work. In a similar vein, Chaudhary et al. [8] and Galanti et al. [9] shed light on pathway developments for innovative, personalized HR strategies to enhance employee involvement and performance in virtual settings, which is again reflected in the study findings.

The work-life balance issue with particular reference to employees' family responsibilities was examined by Toscano and Zappalà [10], whose finding on the reduced productivity due to domestic obligations aptly correlates with the plight of Indian IT professionals. The study of Kausar et al. [11] and Nalini [12] focuses on the continuing need for effective engagement practices whereby employees end up feeling connected and supported in this remote work habitat, especially critical for optimizing participation and engagement in a virtual working populace.

Next, the literature review reveals that there are strong organizational cultures and leadership practices that drive the following policies of organizations toward successful implementation. Saurage-Altenloh et al. [17] as well as Hajjani and Crocco [14], for example, reflect on the roles played by leadership in building trust and resilience in remote teams as well as obligatory favorite working conditions. Nizamidou [15] and van Dick et al. [16] further delve deeper into emotional well-being and management of stress. These studies can then be added to understand the nuances of remote working integration, especially with respect to mental health issues among IT professionals.

The same will look into how these policies on remote work are changing in terms of having a future in Indian IT organizations and thus explore employee engagement and productivity, as well as the challenges of work-life balance. The study will further contribute to knowledge by examining the role of leadership, HR practices, and communication in the development of sustainable engagements for remote workers within the IT domain.

2.1. Theoretical framework

Investigating the effects of teleworking on productivity and employee involvement would be best served through a well-constructed theory of how such conditions affect employee welfare. A fundamental model for understanding the effects that workplace factors have on employee engagement is Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) [18]. Within the JD-R model, job resources are defined as aids to engagement, such as stimulation, social support, and autonomy, whereas job demands, consisting of such things as stress and strain, lead to burnout and disengagement. In telecommuting, what autonomy and flexibility give as benefits is translated into internal resources for the individual, whereas a resource-draining effect on participation is created by the absence of direct support or face-to-face interaction, as it raises demand without sufficient resources to sustain it.

In this context, Self-Determination Theory (SDT) [19] further discusses how autonomy promotes engagement and well-being. SDT declares that fulfillment of psychological needs, such as autonomy, competence, and relatedness, is necessary for motivation and engagement. Taking control over his or her timetable and space in a remote work setting can reinforce self-efficacy and self-empowerment, the underlining motivation of engagement. However, limited interpersonal communication and social interaction reduce mutual engagement in remote teams because employees miss the relationship dimension of the workplace. This might call for rebalancing autonomy against meaningful social contact, such that employees do not feel disenfranchised from work tasks and relationships within the team. Lastly, the increasing salience of social exchange theory in organizational settings has translated into an increasing emphasis on relations and communication as determinants of employee engagement.

Kelliher and Anderson [20] submit that telecommuting as a work-related change actually enhances productivity and engagement through greater employee commitment and satisfaction. The theory implies that when organizations offer flexibility and freedom to employees, the quality of the exchange rises, thereby increasing employee engagement and productivity. In the context of telecommuting, such integral boundaries as quality and integrity of communication and organizational support define the overall collision of working remotely with employees. Social exchanges in the workplace would translate into an increased level of engagement as employees become more supportive and feel valued, which would consequently be translated into higher productivity.

Alongside these perspectives, de la Calle-Durán and Rodríguez-Sánchez [21] proposed the 5Cs model, which emphasizes that employee engagement and wellbeing are interdependent factors, particularly in crisis-driven contexts such as COVID-19.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research design

The current research is a quantitative, descriptive, and empirical approach to the investigation of the relationship between virtual working and workplace participation switching behavior among IT

professionals in Bengaluru. The use of a structured survey method enabled data to be collected in a standardized form for statistical analysis, so that patterns and relationships were sought.

The target population consisted of employees working remotely for selected IT organizations in Bangalore. A sample size of 105 convenience interviewees was selected from those who met specific criteria: the employees had to be accessible and remote work experienced. Non-probability sampling would limit generalization, yet because of the exploratory nature of the study and time constraints, it was appropriate to use this method.

The data were gathered through pre-tested structured questionnaires developed based on established literature and validated constructs of workplace involvement and virtual work factors. It contains closed-ended questions using a Likert scale, which measures subjective perception of measurable data.

Responses were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.0. Analysis methods used were descriptive statistics, reliability analysis (Cronbach's alpha), Pearson correlation, and regression analysis, used to assess the internal consistency of the instrument and to find relationships between remote work variables and employee engagement.

This type of design was able to detect statistically significant patterns and relationships that are helpful in gaining insight into the situations in which workplace involvement is developing in the Indian IT sector virtual work environments.

3.2. Participants

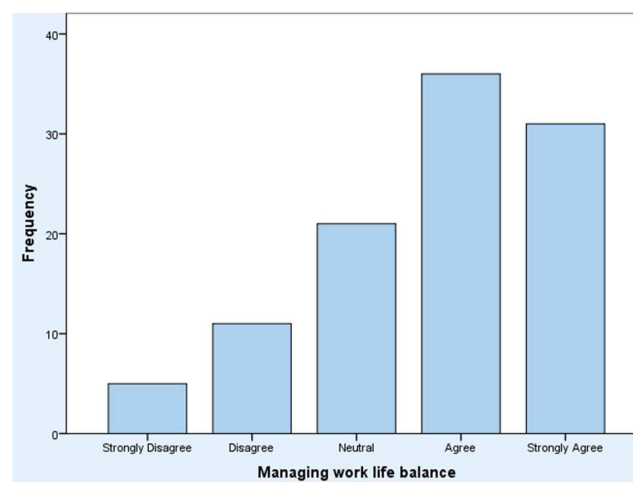
Random sampling was the methodology adhered to in selecting the participants from IT organizations in Bengaluru, which were 105 in sample size, including 64 females (61%) and 40 males (38.1%), so that females were slightly larger in number. This gender break gives a balanced demographic, aiding the study to understand how remote work affects employee engagement. Participants had a wide range of professional experience, with 37.1% having less than one-year experience, 27.6% having 1–3 years, 16.2% having 4–7 years, 7.6% having 8–10 years, and 10.5% having more than 10 years of experience. Such a broad distribution of experience allowed diverse perspectives to be brought to bear on the remote working phenomenon and its effects on employees at varying stages of their careers. Among organizational types, the major group is Multinational Corporations (MNCs), which constituted 57.1%, followed by 21.9% Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), and finally 20% start-up organizations. Diverse representation ensured that the survey considered, for example, the collision of working remotely amidst different organizational structures. The analysis showed that stress had significant effects on the management of work-life balance, whereby the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) results proved that the regression model was statistically significant ($F = 32.695, p < 0.001$) and thus accounted for a considerable share of the variance in work-life balance management. The regression model revealed that stress positively affected work-life balance management with an unstandardized coefficient of 0.459 and a standardized coefficient (β) of 0.493, depicting that higher stress levels are accompanied by higher management of work-life balance. The constant of the model was significant as well, with a t-value of 6.201 ($p < 0.001$), indicating a level of working amid work-life balance. This study instrument further showed an excellent level of reliability testing for Cronbach's alpha at 0.875, indicating high internal consistency. These findings instill confidence that stress is an important determinant in the management of work-life balance by employees, further providing an indication of the general effect that remote work has on employee engagement.

3.3. Research objectives

- 1) To assess the level of employee engagement among IT professionals working in remote and hybrid work environments.
- 2) To identify critical variables of remote work: flexibility, communication, autonomy, and work-life balance, which influence employee engagement.
- 3) To study the relationship between remote work practices and general employee engagement in the IT sector.

Figure 1 depicts the outlook of respondents in managing work-life balance. Most respondents were positive, with the highest number selecting "Agree," followed by "Strongly Agree." A moderate number remained "Neutral," whereas few respondents opted for "Disagree" or "Strongly Disagree." This distribution indicates that most participants consider themselves able to manage their work-life balance, meaning that they are generally satisfied in this respect.

Figure 1
Respondents views on managing work-life balance



The bar chart depicts the outlook of respondents in managing work-life balance. Most respondents were positive, with the highest number selecting "Agree," followed by "Strongly Agree." A moderate number remained "Neutral," whereas few respondents opted for "Disagree" or "Strongly Disagree." This distribution indicates that most participants consider themselves able to manage their work-life balance, meaning that they are generally satisfied in this respect.

3.4. Hypothesis development

3.5. Instruments

Table 1 exhibits the instrument reliability statistics for this study. For instance, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was found to be 0.875, while the Cronbach's alpha based on standardized items

Table 1
Reliability statistics

Cronbach's alpha	Cronbach's alpha based on standardized items	N of items
0.875	0.876	8

Table 2
ANOVA table for regression

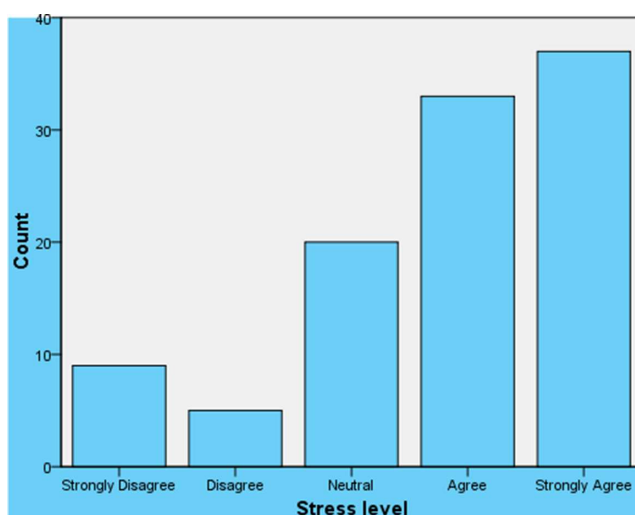
Model	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Regression	32.524	1	32.524	32.695	0.000 ^b
Residual	101.466	102	0.995		
Total	133.990	103			

was 0.876. Such figures confirm a high level of internal consistency between items on the scale, indicating that the instrument is reliable for measuring the constructs of interest. The reliability of the research tool is also valued in that it is scaled to 8 items, part to the overall care in data collection from the study.

Table 2 presents the results of the ANOVA test for the regression model. The sum of squares for the regression is 32.524, with 1 degree of freedom (df), and the mean square is 32.524. The F-value is 32.695, which is statistically significant with a p-value of 0.000. This indicates that the regression model significantly explains the variation in the dependent variable, managing work-life balance. The residual sum of squares is 101.466, with 102 degrees of freedom, and the total sum of squares is 133.990, with 103 degrees of freedom. The significance of the F-test confirms that stress level is a significant predictor of managing work-life balance in the model.

The Figure 2 gives an idea of participants' responses to various stress levels. To a greater extent, the results show that a huge number of respondents indicated extreme stress levels with "Strongly Agree" and "Agree" as the most selected options. Strong average group's neutrality within the participants; the rest are only a small percent who chose options, "Disagree" or "Strongly Disagree". This indicates that stress is, invariably, the order of the day for many of those who took part, with most admitting they have much stress in their lives.

Figure 2
Perceived stress levels of respondents



The illustrated bar chart gives an idea of participants' responses to various stress levels. To a greater extent, the results show that a huge number of respondents indicated extreme stress levels, with "Strongly Agree" and "Agree" as the most selected options. A strong average group remains neutral within the participants; the

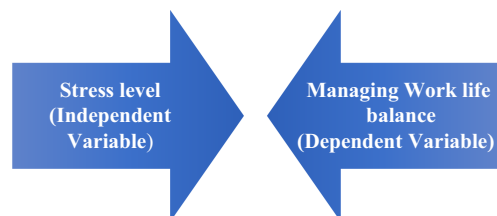
rest are only a small percentage who choose the options "Disagree" or "Strongly Disagree." This indicates that stress is, invariably, the order of the day for many of those who take part, with most admitting they have much stress in their lives.

According to the statistics in Figure 3, there is an inverse relationship between stress and work-life balance since higher stress does act as a hindrance in the face of employees trying to handle their respective work-life responsibilities.

The framework presented will tell us how stress level influences balancing between work and life ways for an individual person. Heaviness of stress progressively becomes a struggle in sharing time and energy for work and life. People feel tired and overwhelmed and totally lose their concentration, which causes imbalance and chaos in life.

When the stress is less, the person stays organized, pays better attention to things, and keeps between job and personal time a happy balance. So, stress level could make someone good or bad at managing both work and private life.

Figure 3
Conceptual framework showing the relationship between stress and work-life balance



4. Results

In summary, the relationship between levels of stress and the ability of employees in the Bengaluru IT sector to manage their work-life balance is evident and statistically significant. The regression analysis reaffirms that the level of stress makes for a good prediction of the work-life balance level, which is attested by the F-value of 32.695 and a p-value of 0.000, showing the strength of the model. This means that any change in the level of stress will visibly account for some variance in the way employees deal with work-life issues. The standardized coefficient ($\beta = 0.493$) indicates how far stress functions in manipulating the management of work-life balance, obversely to the acceptability; nevertheless, in the present situation, it might indicate that adaptive coping strategies are resorted to in remote working. The instrument employed for this study attains a very high Cronbach's alpha of 0.875; hence, the internal consistency is high and hence the reliability of the items that were used for measuring the variables. Such a finding requires the organizational support systems to appreciate the complexity of the nature of stress within the life of every employee in an organization.

Just as rhetorical awareness increases the effectiveness of writing in English, understanding the dynamics of stress is essential in fortifying the strategies for achieving work-life balance. Figure 1 conveys the fact that most respondents picked agree with their ability to manage work time and Figure 2 shows that a large percentage of respondents reported high stress levels.

5. Discussion

One of the significant stress levels was found to affect the management work-life balance of remote employees in the IT industry of Bengaluru; however, contrary to this, a beneficial association was proved. That is, when under stress, employees tend to manage their work-life boundaries better. This is perceived as an adaptive function in the remote work environment. The very high reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.875$) of the items also supported these results. Generally speaking, stress plays a major role in defining interplay and work-life management in a remote setting. This aligns with the findings of Jawabri et al. [22], who explored similar impacts in the service sector in the UAE.

6. Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

Stress affects how successfully workers combine work and life, according to one study. Stress often prevents people from coping with both their organizational work and personal obligations, both of which eventually lead them toward burnout and a poorer quality of job life. In addition, the paper finds young and inexperienced workers to have more difficulties trying to balance life with work than older employees. Workplace context also significantly affects this balance as start-up employees tend to report higher stress and more challenges in achieving it than employees from a multinational company.

These findings support the notion that there are unique solutions tailored to a particular aspect of work-life problems and that more organizational support and commitment exist for work-life conflict matters. Hence, there is a need for an integrated stress management program with flexible work practices aimed at balancing work and family life. Policy changes like flexible scheduling and telecommuting, along with occasional wellness programs, could reduce stress and motivate employees. In addition to this, mentoring for junior employees, along with policies that really help to manage their workload, could be adopted. Start-ups also need to consider implementing work-life balance policies to increase employee satisfaction and performance while reducing burnout. All this will translate into a healthy work culture in sustainable organizations.

The findings now draw attention more to the individual himself than to the exceptional organizational support in which work-life conflicts thrive. In this regard, the organization should place emphasis on proactive interventions – from stress management to flexibility in the workplace – to achieve a better work-home life fit for its workers. Flextime, telecommuting, or regular wellness activities may help relieve stress or act as a motivator.

Mentoring programs can be developed to assist new employees in meeting the expectations of the workplace. Thereafter, effective policies concerning load management should be set forth and clearly defined. Work-life balance would be an important consideration for most innovative companies, as this would lead to more job satisfaction and more productivity with less chance of burnout; thus, it would create instead a culture of healthy sustainability in organizations.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest to this work.

Data Availability Statement

The data that support this work are available upon reasonable request.

Author Contribution Statement

Sanober Shaikh: Conceptualization, Methodology, Validation, Writing – original draft, Visualization, Formal analysis, Project administration. **Preeti S. Desai:** Investigation, Visualization, Validation, Writing – review & editing. **Gireesh Y. M.:** Writing – review & editing, Validation.

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