

A Comparative Analysis of IT Employees Preference Between Work from Home & Work in Office in Ahmedabad City

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the work preferences of IT employees, specifically comparing working from home (WFH) and working in the office (WIO). As organizations increasingly adopt flexible work models, understanding employee preferences is crucial for developing effective workplace policies. A questionnaire was administered to IT professionals to assess factors such as productivity, work-life balance, motivation, team connectivity, and job satisfaction in both WFH and WIO environments. The results indicate that while many employees appreciate the flexibility and improved work-life balance offered by WFH, others value the structured environment, team collaboration, and social interaction of in-office work. Furthermore, a significant portion of employees expressed a preference for hybrid work arrangements, combining the benefits of both settings. The study also highlights the importance of technology in enabling remote work, with respondents noting that adequate technological support is crucial for maintaining productivity while working remotely. Additionally, the study addresses the challenges associated with remote work, such as managing distractions at home and maintaining team cohesion. The findings suggest that organizations should adopt flexible, hybrid work policies that balance the needs of individual employees with the goals of the organization. Future research could explore the long-term effects of hybrid models, the impact of remote work on innovation, and the role of leadership in managing dispersed teams

INTRODUCTION

The rise of remote working, particularly due to the COVID-19 pandemic, has sparked widespread discussion on the future of the workplace environment. The Information Technology (IT) department especially has a big shift from work in the office to working from home (WFH). Now more than ever, employees and employers enjoy both of these, and some employees are facing problems in that. It has become a complex challenge and advantage of both WFH and in-office work, especially in tech-driven cities like Ahmedabad (Vidani & Solanki, 2015) (Vidani, 2015).

This study aims to examine the preferences of IT employees in Ahmedabad city regarding work from home and work in the office. With the help of hybrid working models, organizations have started offering flexible working arrangements and making good understanding, which helps better work. The pandemic can promote an experiment to convert to working from home, and the result is in Favor of it. Business has the skill to adopt new environments (Solanki & Vidani, 2016) (Vidani, 2016).

The Post-COVID-19 Work Landscape

COVID-19 has changed our routine life as well as our professional life. Whereas, worldwide, every company and employee adopt remote work to continue their work during lockdown. This sudden shift in Work from Home has experienced advantages of its own like flexibility, time management, and improved work-life balance emphasized how, even after the pandemic, employees prefer to work from home in some companies. It creates a challenge that wants to back employees in the office (Bhatt, Patel, & Vidani, 2017) (Niyati & Vidani, 2016).

Grizbacher's work explores that a hybrid work model. A hybrid work model is a type that combines both work from home and work in the office. The adoption of this helps to increase work efficiency, flexibility in work, and productivity in the in the working environment (Pradhan, Tshogay, & Vidani, 2016).

Motivational Effect on IT Employees in WFH

When it comes to the IT sector, working from home is very helpful. It has varying degrees of success. According to a study by employees face both positive and negative effects of WFH. The primary motivators promote working from home, and they prefer it for flexibility in work, and employees can easily manage time and give time to their family. And take family responsibilities. It reduces the stress level that employees face in daily work life, and it helps to enhance productivity (Modi, Harkani, Radadiya, & Vidani, 2016) (Vidani, 2016).

However, working from home has also some challenges; some employees may find the lack of infrastructure in their home as compared to the office. While flexibility is a major advantage, some individuals struggle to maintain discipline and focus on work; they are not adjusted in WFH; they need physical presence. As well as teamwork is not able to most of the time in WFH. For teamwork, physical appearance is much needed for more success (Mala, Vidani, & Solanki, 2016).

Ashwin and Santosh also highlighted common practices that help both of these WFH and in-office work. To set the goal of daily life, which I did before the end of the day. Employees also ensure about work and their mental health (Singh, Vidani, & Nagoria, 2016).

Predicting Employee's Preferences for WFH and Office Work

Singh & Vidani, (2016) conducted comprehensive analysis work from home and work in office that what employees think about it. These studies identify some key factors, which are age, distance, leader mindset, and responsibilities. Young employees and distanced employees prefer WFH. On the other hand, leaders and responsibilities are high for employees who prefer to work in the office (Dhere, Vidani, & Solanki, 2016) (Singh & Vidani, 2016) (Vidani & Plaha, 2016).

In Ahmedabad, it is also the same and faces similar trends. That we can observe. Traffic problems attract employees in WFH. Also, the young generation prefers remote work. Because it is flexible. However, office environment, creativity, collaboration. Company culture is important to certain groups of employees and leaders (Solanki & Vidani, 2016) (Vidani, 2016) (Vidani, Chack, & Rathod, 2017).

Hybrid Working Model: A Balanced Approach

Hybrid working models include both work from home and work in the office. That follow both structures in mixed. A study by Bloom, Han, and Liang (2022) evaluated the hybrid WFH model in a technology firm, where some employees prefer to work from home in selecting days and another day to work in the office. Their study reveals several positive outcomes, including a 35% reduction in attrition rates and improvements in job satisfaction, work-life balance, and self-work capacity (Vidani, Chack, & Rathod, 2017)(Vidani, 2018) (Sukhanandi, Tank, & Vidani, 2018).

However, in WFH, employees must give hours to the work, which the company decided if they fail to give it, then they are not able to manage work life and personal life. That means discipline must be needed (Biharani & Vidani, 2018) (Vidani, 2018).

One of the key factors out of Bloom & Colleagues research was the increase in communicating ways like messaging and voice calls, even among employees working in offices. It is an advantage for employees to use technical tools to manage work. As compares in Ahmedabad consider adopting hybrid models, they invest their time and money in technologies that help in WFH and work in offices for every employee (Biharani & Vidani, 2018) (Odedra, Rabadiya, & Vidani, 2018).

Employee's Satisfaction and Office Design

Office environment is a factor to determine employee's preference for WFH or in-office. Research by M.Kwon and H.Re My (2019) explores that the office design impacts both satisfaction and productivity. Good office design motivates employees

In Ahmedabad, IT employees choose office work; in that case, the biggest factor is an office environment that offers privacy and conducive spaces for concentration. Poorly designed office design is dissatisfaction of employees and

its move to WFH. On the other hand, a well design environment that promotes collaboration and social interactions may convey employees work in the office. Therefore, the company can spend more on infrastructure and maintain it (Vasveliia & Vidani, 2019) (Sachaniya, Vora, & Vidani, 2019) (Vidani, 2019) (Vidani, Jacob, & Patel, 2019)

LITERATURE REVIEW

A Comparative Analysis of IT Employees' Preferences between Work from Home and Work in Office in Ahmedabad City.

The COVID-19 pandemic has encouraged the world to shift to Work from Home (WFH) from Work in Office. Various sectors are implementing Work from Home, and the Information Technology (IT) department has adopted WFH. This helps such aspects as motivation, productivity, work-life balance, and job satisfaction. This review presents a comprehensive analysis of existing literature, focusing on comparative studies related to IT employees' preferences between WFH and in-office work, with particular emphasis on the context of Ahmedabad city (Vidani & Dholakia, 2020) (Vidani & Das, 2021) (Rathod, Meghrajani, & Vidani, 2022).

Historical Context and the Rise of Remote Work

Before the COVID-19, work from home was rare; in developing countries like India, it was rare; in that office culture, deepu followed. The pandemic has explained our need to adopt work-from-home policies. Studies done by Vidani J. N., 2022 indicate that while work from home was considered a cubicle option for some selected employees, it has now become a big modern business strategy, especially in industries where digital tools are widely available (Vidani J. N., 2022).

In the IT sector, this transition was relatively absolute because most work is suited to remote networks. Flexibility of IT work is noted in research by (Sharma & Vidani, 2023), making work from home a second option in a pandemic. In their study on German IT employees, the majority of workers favored a mixed approach to work, including both work in the office and work from home. This is the same as findings from (Sharma & Vidani, 2023), who highlight the growing preference for mixed work models after the pandemic (Vidani, Meghrajani, & Siddarth, 2023).

Work from Home: Advantages and Challenges

Work from home has countless advantages like increased flexibility, autonomy, and improved work-life balance. Ashwi and Santosh identify some motivational attributes that encourage employees to work from home, such as reducing communication time, increasing flexibility in both personal and professional responsibilities, and some workplace distraction. For IT employees, they can freely, independently, and without any supervision do their work with more productivity, as many tasks, such as coding.

However, some challenges are also associated with working from home. According to (Sharma & Vidani, 2023), one of the major difficulties of working from home is the possibility of feeling oneness and disconnection from their colleagues. In that case, face-to-face conversations do not happen, therefore they can hinder teamwork and innovation, which are vital roles in the IT industry.

Furthermore, Ashvin and Santosh suggest that employees do not work well in their home because of a lack of space. The environment of the home can lead to difficulties for maintaining employees focus and motivation, especially for a long time. This is accepted by some employees who face those same problems and struggle with self-discipline or a small home office work setup (Saxena & Vidani, 2023) (Sharma & Vidani, 2023). In India, working from home also faces some challenges. Research by (Patel, Chaudhary, & Vidani, 2023) found network problems and limited resources in which they could not work very well. This is especially for them who come from small villages to work in big cities, but in that time, they go home and then they face those problems. Also, in some city networks, problems are shown as compared to more developed regions.

In-Office Work: Benefits and Limitations

While work from home has gained popularity, some employees and employers preferred to work in the office. Several studies highlight advantages of working in an office physically present; they can communicate with others face-to-face and through direct interaction, collaboration, and immediate access to resources (Chaudhary, Patel, & Vidani, 2023) found that employees who work in well-designed offices their satisfaction level was high as compared to others who do work from home, due to social interaction with them and the opportunity for teamwork.

Moreover, (Bansal, Pophalkar, & Vidani, 2023) suggests that in-office work structure and discipline maintain the environment of the office, which can be beneficial for tasks and some required collaborations or creative thoughts and brainstorming. This is supported by research done by (Vidani, Das, Meghrajani, & Chaudasi, 2023), which found that if IT employees use mixed work, that means WFH and in-office are more beneficial than single. But office work helps to create boundaries between work and personal life, which helps some employees to enhance their skills and maintain focus and productivity.

However, there are also some notable problems in office work, particularly in urban environments like Ahmedabad. Communicating is one of the major factors. Some employees face many problems in traveling because the distance between their home and office is more. Their energy and time are wasted in traveling. (Saxena & Vidani, 2023) noted that long travel is a major factor for stress for Indian employees, and job satisfaction level is low. In office work time is a major role; employees must have to follow the schedule that offices are declared and arrive at a time that the office has decided.

Hybrid Work Models: The Future of Work?

A growing body of literature suggests that in hybrid work models, both elements of WFH and in-office work are combined, which may represent the future of the company or industry IT. The hybrid model fluctuates WFH-end in-office studies done by (Sharma & Vidani, 2023) include benefits of the hybrid work model. It helps with employee retention, productivity, and main job satisfaction. (Sharma & Vidani, 2023) conducted a small random control trial involving which department is more satisfied with a job between full-time office work and a hybrid arrangement. They show hybrid arrangement

employees had a higher level of job satisfaction and lower attraction rates for working full time in offices. On selected days, provide a work-from-home facility, and it works to increase job satisfaction levels, reduce stress, and improve work-life balance.

In Ahmedabad, traffic issues and long commutes are significant issues; hybrid work helps them generally for the IT department. The ability to work from home is when you go for a task and your boss gives two options to your WFH and in-office.

Employee Preferences in Ahmedabad: A Cultural Perspective

In India, we people are connected with the culture. Same Ahmedabad is also connected. Some times that play a role when choosing about WFH. They think that they can enjoy festivals as well as spend time with their families. (Sharma & Vidani, 2023)

Highlight That WFH is Beneficial as Parents and as Elders

However, India traditionally believes in physical presence hierarchical structures, which make it tough for some employees or employers for WFH. (Sharma & Vidani, 2023) found that leaders always prefer to work in the office because face-to-face conversations work fast and there are good relationships with the team. This is relevant with Indian context authority and visibility.

IT industry in Ahmedabad, like in other Indian cities. It is young and dynamic; they are easily changeable. The Yang generation lived with family and is more connected; therefore, they prefer WFH or hybrid models. (Saxena & Vidani, 2023) found that the Yang generation enhances remote work because it aligns their thoughts with flexibility and autonomy.

METHODOLOGY

Table 1. Research Methodology

Research Design	Descriptive
Sample Method	Non-Probability - Convenient Sampling method
Data Collection Method	Primary method
Data Collection Method	Structured Questionnaire
Type of Questions	Close ended
Data Collection mode	Online through Google Form
Data Analysis methods	Tables
Data Analysis Tools	SPSS and Excel
Sampling Size	162
Survey Area	Ahmedabad
Sampling Unit	Students, Private and government Job employees, Businessmen, Home maker, Professionals like CA, Doctor etc.

Source: Author's Compilation

Demographic Summary

The demographic summary of the sample reveals key characteristics of the participants. A total of 162 responses were recorded, with a significant (83.1%)

being male and 16.8% as female. Most respondents were between 18-25 years old (60.4%), with 39% falling in the 25-32 age group. In the Education section, the majority were postgraduates (42.1%) Regarding experience in the IT sector, more people are there between 2-5 years' experience. As for work setups, 45.7% were work from home, 40.2% worked in office, and 12.8% people followed the hybrid work model.

Cronbach Alpha

Table 2. Cronbach Alpha

Cronbach Alpha Value	No. of items
0.918	10

Source: SPSS Software

The high Cronbach's alpha value of 0.918 shows that the scale employed in the study demonstrates strong and excellent internal consistency and reliability. With 10 items, this shows that the items are closely associated and access the same understanding construct effectively. The outcome assures that the device is reliable and capable of producing precise, and accurate. Overall, the scale's reliability supports its sustainability for further analysis and use in the research.

RESULT

Table 3. Results of Hypothesis Testing

Sr. No	Alternate Hypothesis	Result p =	>/< 0.05	Accept/ Reject Null hypothesis	R value	Relationship
1	H ₁ : There is a significant association between age and the feeling of being more productive when working from home compared to working in the office.	0.001	< 0.005	H01 Rejected (Null hypothesis rejected)	0.354	Weak
2	H ₂ : There is a significant association between age and the perception of whether work from home provides a better work-life balance compared to working in the office.	0.001	< 0.005	H02 Rejected (Null Hypothesis Rejected)	0.151	Weak
3	H ₃ : There is a	0.001	<	H03	0.688	Strong

	significant association between age and the perception of facing more distractions at home compared to the office.		0.005	Rejected (Null Hypothesis Rejected)		
4	H₄: There is a significant association between age and the feeling of being more connected with team members and colleagues when working in the office.	0.001	< 0.005	H04 Rejected (Null Hypothesis Rejected)	0.532	Strong
5	H₅: There is a significant association between age and the perception of whether the company provides the necessary technology and resources to make working from home as effective as working in the office.	0.001	< 0.005	H05 Rejected (Null Hypothesis Rejected)	0.45	Weak
6	H₆: There is a significant association between age and the preference for a hybrid work model over a fully remote or fully office-based work arrangement.	0.001	< 0.005	H06 Rejected (Null Hypothesis Rejected)	0.867	Strong
7	H₇: There is a significant association between age and the feeling of being more motivated when working in the office compared to working from home.	0.001	< 0.005	H07 Rejected (Null Hypothesis Rejected)	0.360	Weak
8	H₈: There is a significant association between age and the perception of how	0.001	< 0.005	H08 Rejected (Null Hypothesis	0.564	Strong

	commuting to the office affects overall job satisfaction.			Rejected)		
9	H ₉ : There is a significant association between age and the perception of productivity decreasing when attending long virtual meetings while working from home.	0.001	< 0.005	H09 Rejected (Null Hypothesis Rejected)	0.893	Strong
10	H ₁₀ : There is a significant association between age and the perception of finding it easier to manage time and tasks when working from home.	0.001	< 0.005	H10 Rejected (Null Hypothesis Rejected)	0.992	Strong

DISCUSSION

The study focus on and goal is to explore the work performance of IT employees, specially comparing working from home and work in office. The result shown in questionnaire reveal a relationship between employees efficiency of productivity, work life balance , distraction and job satisfaction with preference based on individual and organizational factors.

Productivity and Work Environment

A key factor that in this study is mixed work from home and work in office. Where some of those people who has better feel in home and compare to Office. And their productivity increase than some of those who likes to do work in office and productivity increase in office. Where those are think that office is provide work environments better than home. In home many distractions faced by Employees.

Work-Life Balance

The study also revealed that the more employees those who choose work from home those are not balance work life in office. They are not able to give time to their family because of office time, travelling time and other time, therefore work from home is affective for work life balance.

Distraction and Focus

Distraction in both home and office setting highlighted as significant Variables in shaping work. While some employees think that in office they feel like more focus on work. That is not same for all. Different nature depends on them. IT sector give employee option to choose it as base on distraction and focus.

Motivation and Team Connection

Motivation refers to varying person to person, some of those feel motivated when they work in the office, because of the environment, office structure, and social interactions with the help by it. They feel motivated. While some of those who work alone then they feel motivated. That depends on them.

Hybrid Work Model

The data showed a high inclination for a Hybrid work model which was one of the strongest trend. Workers said that to change in work like work from home (WFH) and work in office (WIO) was based on their needs. With the help by Hybrid work model both method of work are covered.

Theoretical Implications

This study provides best theoretical insights into the change of work environment, particularly focus of IT employees in work from home (WFH) and work in office (WIO). By the help of this we can see work structure, employee productivity and job satisfaction, the research has some theoretical frameworks that contribute to growing organization behaviour and remote work.

1. Workplace flexibility and job satisfaction

Work place flexibility and job satisfaction is fixed in office work. There are flexibility whether through WFH, WIO, or Hybrid work models. That are help for job satisfaction particularly knowledge wise in IT sector. IT employees prefer work from home for driven by work-life balance, this also helps to job satisfaction, flexibility is must needed in some job types , like IT sector, where task can effective remote work.

2. Social exchange theory (SET) and motivation

Additionally, the study backs up the social exchange theory (SET), which holds that manually beneficial interventions between employers and employee are motivate workers and foster organizational commitment. Employees who in favor of office work in this situation appreciated in person's social connections and teamwork.

3. Job demands Resources (JD-R) model

Job demand Resources suggest that job demand and resources interact with employees and influence performance and motivation. Work-from-home benefits reduce time, contribute to job satisfaction, and increase productivity. In contrast, offices provide good facilities like job demands in that schedule of work and communication time. That JD-R suggests how in different work environments employee well-being.

4. Technology acceptance model (TAM)

Technology acceptance model influence that how technology work in remote work, particularly in IT sector. Generally, IT Employees choose work from home are influenced by the availability of technological support and tools which are helpful to them, and also support ideas which are they thought With the help by that easily access in remote work.

5. Boundary theory

Boundary theory means how individual employee manage their work in office or in home and balanced between work life and personal life. Work from home blur that boundaries. There are no boundaries between work and personal life at the other hand office work provide separate

location for work and after it Employees Give time to their Family. There are clearly we can see Boundary between work life and personal life and maintain balance between them.

Practical Implications

The finding from the study work in office and work from home has some practical Implication which are helpful to managers and policy makers.

1. Flexible work policies

Organizations need to adopt both works. Work from home (WFH) and Work in office (WIO). The Hybrid model which combines both models is particularly chosen by IT employees, which helps their personal growth related to work and maintains work-life balance. Along with teamwork and collaboration like social interaction. That flexibility enhances the work efficiency of employees, and engages the retention of those, therefore managers should equip a hybrid work model.

2. Support for remote work Technology

The study considers how technology supports remote work. IT employees use better technology than another sector with the help of this they do digital collaboration. Companies need to invest in internet networks, cloud platforms, and other technologies that secure their data offering training and technical support can also minimize problems for employees related to remote work.

3. Maintaining team cohesion

Remote work give flexibility to employee. They value social interaction and team cohesion, regular meetings, some activities are enhance group boundaries and help to maintain connections. Managers should consider to include team activities, team task, in remote work can enhance the productivity.

4. Work-life balance

Generally, in work-from-home employees do not maintain a Boundary between work life and personal life. If the company should give flexibility in working hours, that helps to set boundaries between work and personal life. Managers can give time consideration to work to make a healthy work-life balance.

5. Revaluating office space

The company should need to more money for large set up in the office. If employees are working remotely. Work from home reduces that cost which is useful to invest in employee development and technology. Also Company gives incentives for extra work and gives flexible hours to reduce negative impact.

In summary, the flexible Work model helps support technology, and focusing on employee well-being can help to enhance the productivity and satisfaction of employees in a hybrid work model.

CONCLUSIONS

This study focuses on IT employees of Ahmedabad preferences of working from home versus work in office, and highlights the importance of

hybrid work models. That is flexible and effective. Many Employees prefer to work from home for life balance, while others are focused on the office. They value of office for team Understanding. Technology can play a vital role in remote work but technical problems and setup hinder productivity. The study also emphasizes the need for Clear work-life boundaries and effective Management, especially in a hybrid work model. Reducing travelling time in a flexible work model, and flexible working hours can enhance job satisfaction, productivity, and retention.

RECOMMENDATION

This study provides important insights into IT Employee's preference for work from home (WFH) Versus Work in the office (WIO), but there are several areas where future research depends on it Understanding remote Work and organizational behavior.

1. Long-term impact of the hybrid work model

In hybrid work model finding a key preferences but long term effect like productivity, Work life balance, employee wellbeing and organizational culture remain uncertain. Longitudinal studies focus on long term employees preferences related to work which are led by the hybrid work model to higher retention, or increase burnout.

2. Comparative studies across industries

This study Focus on IT sector comparative studies across industries like manufacturing or customer services. Research examines how remote work adopt different types of job roles, organizational culture and demands of Industry, helps to design Work policy for every sector.

3. Impact of remote work on team collaboration and innovation

Future Studies on it help to explore how remote work influences creatives, innovation, and collaboration. In a person's mind ideas generate crucial innovation in IT. Research could assess whether remote work or hybrid work models hide or enhance productivity, problem solving, and teamwork.

4. Employee well-being and mental health

In remote work, many employees' mental health is not well. Such as isolation and burnout, are important for future research Focus on mental health interaction of employees that helps employees to decide work-life boundaries. With flexible working hours, social activities, and mental health support to the employee.

5. Role of technology in shaping work preferences

Technology is the center of remote work is essential, and Future Studies are investigating of changing role of technology. For shaping Employee's experience. Research could examine how AI tools and other tools and virtual reality enhance remote work capacity and find challenges in communication and collaboration

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