

# Satisfaction of Employees with the Work-from-Home Concept

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## INTRODUCTION

Work From Home or WFH is a concept where the employee can do his or her job from home (or even remotely) using company-approved assets, policies, and tools. Work from home gives flexible working hours to the employee as well as the job for the employer is done with ease. The COVID-19 pandemic's social and economic shocks altered organizational and individual perspectives of work and occupations in macro and micro ways. The COVID-19 pandemic caused worldwide social distancing to prevent the virus from spreading. Due to government-mandated closures and stay-at-home directions, several industries ceased operations at their usual workplaces. Work-from-home (WFH) was caused by exponential victim growth and was predicted to be an effective method of flattening the COVID-19 victim curve. Employee productivity, business continuity, and the national economy all suffered as a result of the strict adoption of WFH for all office workers (Muller & Pelsler, 2022).

### Statement of the problem

Several studies have been conducted to examine the impact of WFH since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the satisfaction of employees with WFH concept has not been covered in any study in Kerala. Hence, this study is attempted.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The WFH model is not a prevalent work culture in enterprises and organizations, particularly government entities bound by service, and requires direct supervision, discipline, and restricted preparedness of supporting facilities and infrastructure (Chakraborty & Kar, 2021). WFH, however, cannot be ignored and must be adopted. Employees, in reality, do not wholly comprehend WFH, and they face several dilemmas, such as the belief that the house is haunted (Farooq & Sultana, 2021). Even though WFH allows for time and location flexibility, this dilemma may lead to family conflict (Darouei & Pluut, 2021). However, WFH has flaws, such as a lack of team performance and a supervisory structure that could be utilized to its full potential by the management (Schieman et al., 2021). In addition to demonstrating flaws, the study's findings show that WFH gives freedom and flexibility for employees to complete their work without being closely supervised by superiors or supervisors (Van Der Lippe & Zoltan, 2020).

WFH as a work alternative has been recognized since the early 1990s. It is often referred to as teleworking, telecommuting, virtual office, or remote working and is described as a regular or temporary remote work arrangement that allows employees to work flexibly from any location rather than a traditional office (Yucel & Chung, 2021).

Many organizations are now implementing WFH as a strategy. It assists many firms by reducing costs such as office facility leases, employee messes, and other work support facilities that must be provided by the employer (Ahamad et al., 2022). WFH, on the other hand, also possesses challenges. What frequently develops is mutual distrust between the employer and the job recipient. As a result, the trust aspect of the idea of WFH becomes a highly significant factor that all parties must agree on, indicating that confidence in others is found on the assumption that others will perform activities that are regarded as important (Lal et al., 2021).

WFH also enhances productivity, retains people, and improves commitment and performance. Other advantages include lower emissions (because of less travel), cheaper office expenditures, better work-life balance, higher efficiency, lower tiredness risk, and beneficial impacts on the pace and quality of new product development (Sawhill & Guyot, 2020).

Management support is regularly cited as crucial in achieving the adjustments required to implement an invention in many innovations works of literature. It is also seen as playing a key role in WFH deployment. WFH adoption necessitates management commitment to support changes in work culture, including WFH implementation. (Salju Salju, et.al.2023)

Examining the desire to WFH about the socio-economic and travel characteristics, pre-pandemic commute length emerges as a significant predictor of desire to WFH, with longer commute times being associated with an increased desire to spend more time WFH. (Agnieszka Stefaniec, et al.,2022)

Hence, this study aims to investigate the satisfaction of employees with WFH concept. Following the literature review and preliminary studies aforementioned, the current study proposed the following objectives and hypotheses:

## OBJECTIVES AND HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

Following the literature review and preliminary studies aforementioned, the current study proposed the following objectives and hypotheses:

### Objectives:

1. To analyse the satisfaction level of employees towards the WFH concept

### Hypothesis

1. There is no significant difference between satisfaction with the WFH concept and marital status.
2. There is no significant difference between satisfaction with the WFH concept and gender.
3. There is no significant difference between satisfaction with the WFH concept and the working field.
4. There is no significant difference between satisfaction with the WFH concept and the distance between the house and the workplace.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

### Research Design

This research employs a descriptive design and utilizes a cross-sectional research approach. The respondents are employees working in the fields of auditing and accounting, Banking, IT, and teaching in Kerala. The population is infinite. The sample size was 379, which was determined using the Krejcie and Morgan formula. Convenient sampling was used to select the sample, with questionnaires collected online from the respondents. Further, SPSS was used for analysing the data. To determine the reliability of the instrument, Cronbach's alpha was used, yielding an index of 0.887 on 9 items, which shows consistency in the results.

### Measurement

Level of satisfaction towards the WFH concept was measured with a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = highly dissatisfied to 5 = highly satisfied.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data collection was conducted during the period of December 2023 to March 2024. The demographic profiles of respondents in this research are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Demographic profile of the respondents**

Profiles	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	203	54
Female	176	46
<b>Total</b>	379	100
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Married	185	49
Unmarried	194	51
<b>Total</b>	379	100
<b>Working field</b>		
Auditing and Accounting	42	11
Banking	14	4
IT	169	44
Teaching	71	19
Other fields	83	22
<b>Total</b>	379	100
<b>Distance from home to workplace</b>		
Up to 10 km	28	7
10 km-20 km	17	5
20 km-30 km	55	15
30 km to 40 km	179	47
More than 40 km	100	26
<b>Total</b>	379	100

Source: Primary data

## Measurement Results

### Satisfaction with WFH

The following table provides the mean values and standard deviations of the employees' agreement on the eleven statements on a five-point Likert scale, which are used to gauge their level of satisfaction with the WFH concept.

**Table 2: Matrix for measurement scales regarding satisfaction of the respondents**

Variables		Attributes	Mean	SD
Satisfaction	S1	Work time flexibility	3.63	1.12
	S2	Infrastructural support by the management	3.58	0.98
	S3	Attitude of Customers/students/clients	3.51	1.03
	S4	Work-life balance	3.72	0.99

S5	Cost and Time savings	3.79	1.04
S6	Salary during WFH	3.51	1.11
S7	Health	3.37	1.1
S8	Relationship with family	4.08	1.03
S9	Stress management	3.47	1

In respect of all nine attributes, respondents accept that they are satisfied. The most acceptable advantage of WFH concept is that it helps to maintain a relationship with family (mean value 4.08) followed by its feature of cost and time savings (mean value 3.79).

Mean value of their satisfaction is further analysed categorically under four categories, such as their gender, marital status, working field, and distance between workplace and home as shown in the tables given below.

**Table 3: Satisfaction and Gender**

Satisfaction	Gender (Mean)		Sig. value (t-test)	Reject or fail to reject Ho
	Male	Female		
S1	3.62	3.64	0.853	Fail to reject
S2	3.59	3.57	0.859	Fail to reject
S3	3.46	3.56	0.376	Fail to reject
S4	3.73	3.7	0.773	Fail to reject
S5	3.78	3.79	0.952	Fail to reject
S6	3.67	3.34	0.004	Reject
S7	3.39	3.36	0.783	Fail to reject
S8	3.96	4.22	0.012	Reject
S9	3.4	3.55	0.152	Fail to reject

There is a significant difference between male and female respondents in respect of their satisfaction with S6 and S8. In respect of their satisfaction with S6 male employees are more satisfied, while in the case of S8, female employees are more satisfied.

**Table 4: Satisfaction and marital status**

Satisfaction	Marital Status (Mean)		Sig. value (t test)	Reject or fail to reject Ho
	Married	Unmarried		
S1	3.56	3.70	0.211	Fail to reject
S2	3.50	3.65	0.146	Fail to reject
S3	3.33	3.68	0.001	Reject
S4	3.68	3.76	0.451	Fail to reject
S5	3.89	3.69	0.054	Fail to reject
S6	3.63	3.40	0.043	Reject
S7	3.58	3.18	0.000	Reject

S8	3.96	4.19	0.030	Reject
S9	3.48	3.46	0.867	Fail to Reject

There is no significant difference between married and unmarried respondents in respect of their satisfaction with S1, S2, S4, S5, and S9, while in respect of their satisfaction with S3, S6, S7, and S8, there is a significant difference between married and unmarried respondents. In respect of their satisfaction with S3 and S8, unmarried employees are more satisfied, and in respect of S6 and S7, married employees are more satisfied.

**Table 5: Satisfaction and working field**

Satisfaction	Working field (Mean)					Sig. Value (ANOVA)	Reject or fail to reject Ho
	Auditing and accounts	Banking	IT	Teaching	Others		
S1	4	4.36	3.78	3	3.55	0.000	Reject
S2	3.76	4.64	3.49	3.59	3.47	0.000	Reject
S3	4	4	3.45	3.04	3.69	0.000	Reject
S4	4	4.64	3.68	3.52	3.67	0.001	Reject
S5	3.81	4.57	3.8	3.52	3.83	0.012	Reject
S6	3.64	4.57	3.56	3.2	3.45	0.000	Reject
S7	4	3.29	3.4	3.17	3.2	0.001	Reject
S8	4.62	4.86	4.18	3.38	4.07	0.000	Reject
S9	3.62	3.93	3.48	3	3.71	0.000	Reject

There is a significant difference among respondents from different working fields in respect of satisfaction with all attributes WFH concept, used in the study. Further analysis reveals that bank employees are more satisfied with S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6, S8, and S9. In the case of S7, employees from the Auditing and Accounting field are more satisfied.

**Table 6: Satisfaction and distance between home and office**

Satisfaction	Distance between home and office (Mean)					Sig. value (ANOVA)	Reject or fail to reject Ho
	up to 10 km	10km - 20 km	20 km- 30 km	30 km- 40 km	above 40 km		
S1	2.57	3.29	2.78	3.78	4.19	0.000	Reject
S2	2.61	3.82	2.73	3.83	3.83	0.000	Reject
S3	2.68	3.76	3.04	3.66	3.68	0.000	Reject
S4	2.64	4.06	2.62	3.88	4.28	0.000	Reject
S5	2.82	4.06	2.8	3.72	4.68	0.000	Reject
S6	2.18	4.06	2.85	3.65	3.91	0.000	Reject
S7	2.29	3.29	3.02	3.39	3.86	0.000	Reject
S8	3.64	4.29	3.13	4.13	4.60	0.000	Reject
S9	3.18	3.76	3.02	3.34	3.99	0.000	Reject

There is a significant difference in respect of all the attributes of satisfaction among the respondents classified according to the distance between their residence and office. Respondents who need to travel more than 40 km to reach the office are more satisfied with the WFH concept, which means there is a strong association between satisfaction and distance to travel to reach the office.

## RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study highlights the need for companies and employees to consider how they feel about the "work from home" notion. Employers need to be aware of how workers are satisfied with it. They ought to be aware of the workers' readiness to carry on with this procedure as well. A few agreements must be reached, taking into account the degree of difficulty on the part of the workers, in order to create an integrated work culture where staff members who are eager to pick up new skills can receive them while tending to the more senior yet knowledgeable staff members. There can be a hybrid system of work where both options can be kept open to employees. It is possible to provide specific training courses and counselling sessions to help staff members mentally adjust to the shifting workplace culture. Enough consideration for the employees' families should be shown while requiring them to work from home. Regular family get-togethers can be planned online, and to help kids feel like they are not forgotten, programs or activities can also be planned. Employees need to learn how to consciously and voluntarily embrace different cultures. By adhering to a rigorous and regular work schedule, they should learn how to manage their work and family obligations. They will have the energy to make up the difference if they take some time to unwind and exercise. It will lessen their extra working hours gradually.

## CONCLUSIONS

Therefore, it can be said that work from home may become the new norm for working in India, provided that it is done so in a way that is acceptable and practical. The main area focussed in the study was workers' contentment with the WFH idea. It has demonstrated an association between respondents' various demographic characteristics and their level of satisfaction with the WFH idea.

## SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The satisfaction with the WFH concept was the main area of attention for the study. Future research can also take into account the WFH concept's advantages and its impact on the productivity of employees.

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