



## IMPACT OF FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS ON EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY

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### ABSTRACT

This research paper delves into the significance and impact of flexible working hours in modern Indian workplaces. Flexible working hours have become integral to modern workplaces in India, serving as mutually beneficial agreements between employers and employees to bolster productivity and organizational profitability amidst evolving societal demands driven by financial, social, political, and economic factors. Embraced by both genders, these arrangements facilitate work-life balance and support healthy family lives. When implemented with careful planning, flexible working hours mitigate stress, enhance well-being, and empower employees to adapt to diverse circumstances, thereby amplifying productivity, job satisfaction, efficiency, and performance while mitigating absenteeism and overtime costs. Leveraging machine learning algorithms such as neural networks and random forests offers additional avenues for optimization, enabling the analysis of historical data on employee performance and flexible working hour patterns to predict future productivity trends and refine scheduling strategies for maximum efficiency and employee satisfaction.

**KEYWORD:** Flexible working hours, Work-life balance, Productivity, Employee well-being, Organisational profitability, Machine learning algorithms, Scheduling strategies.

### INTRODUCTION

In contemporary Indian workplaces, the concept of flexible working hours has emerged as a pivotal strategy to adapt to the evolving dynamics of the workforce and the broader socio-economic landscape. With rapid advancements in technology, changing societal norms, and global economic fluctuations, organizations are increasingly recognizing the need to offer flexibility in work arrangements to remain competitive and meet the diverse needs of their employees (Roberto et al., 2023). This introduction explores the multifaceted nature of flexible working hours, exploring its significance, implications, and potential outcomes within the Indian context.

The roots of flexible working hours can be traced back to the Industrial Revolution, when the traditional nine-to-five work model began to shift in response to changing production

processes and labour demands (Berniell et al.,2023). However, it wasn't until the latter half of the 20th century that the concept gained widespread recognition, with organizations seeking innovative ways to improve employee satisfaction, productivity, and retention. In India, the adoption of flexible working hours has been influenced by both global trends and local factors, such as cultural norms, regulatory frameworks, and technological advancements.

Flexible working hours offer a myriad of benefits for both employers and employees (Wahab, Wahed, & Abd Razak, 2024).From the employer's perspective, flexible working arrangements can lead to increased productivity, reduced absenteeism, and lower overhead costs. For employees, flexible working hours provide greater autonomy over their schedules, improved work-life balance, and opportunities for personal and professional growth. Moreover, flexible working arrangements have been shown to enhance employee morale, job satisfaction, and overall well-being, contributing to a positive organizational culture.

Despite the numerous advantages, implementing flexible working hours comes with its own set of challenges and considerations. One of the key challenges is ensuring effective communication and collaboration among remote teams, particularly in geographically dispersed organizations. Additionally, maintaining accountability and measuring performance in a flexible work environment can be complex, requiring robust systems and processes to track productivity and outcomes accurately (Banerjee et al., 2023). Moreover, organizations must address issues related to equity, inclusivity, and accessibility to ensure that flexible working arrangements are accessible to all employees, regardless of their role or level within the organization.

Advancements in technology, particularly in the field of machine learning and artificial intelligence, are revolutionizing the way organizations manage and optimize flexible working arrangements. By leveraging sophisticated algorithms and data analytics, organizations can gain valuable insights into employee preferences, productivity patterns, and performance metrics. Machine learning algorithms, such as neural networks and random forests, can analyze vast amounts of data to predict future trends, identify optimization opportunities, and tailor flexible working hours schedules to meet the specific needs of employees and the organization.

As flexible working arrangements become increasingly prevalent in Indian workplaces, policymakers, and regulatory bodies are faced with the task of adapting existing labour laws and regulations to accommodate these changes(Gyory, 2023). Clear guidelines and frameworks are needed to ensure that flexible working arrangements are implemented in a fair, transparent, and equitable manner, protecting the rights and interests of both employers and employees. Moreover, organizations must develop comprehensive policies and procedures to govern flexible working arrangements, addressing issues such as eligibility criteria, working hours, communication protocols, and performance evaluation.

In conclusion, flexible working hours represent a transformative shift in the way we approach work and employment relationships in India. As organizations continue to embrace flexible working arrangements, it is essential to adopt a holistic and proactive approach that considers the needs and preferences of all stakeholders. By leveraging technological advancements, addressing challenges, and adhering to regulatory frameworks, organizations can create flexible work environments that promote employee well-being, productivity, and organizational success in the rapidly evolving digital age.

#### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:**

- Investigate Indian companies offering flexible work options and their impact on productivity, job satisfaction, and work-life balance.
- Gather perspectives from employees, managers, HR, and policymakers on flexible work schedules.
- Identify hurdles faced by companies in implementing flexible work arrangements.

- Explore how technology like machine learning can optimize flexible work schedules and analyze relevant policies in India.

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Austin-Egole, Iheriohanma, and Nwokorie (2020) meticulously dissect the intricate relationship between flexible working arrangements and organizational performance in their comprehensive review. Spanning disciplines like management, psychology, and sociology, they meticulously analyze the theoretical frameworks underpinning flexibility's impact, from role theory to social exchange theory. Through a synthesis of empirical evidence, the authors explore productivity, employee engagement, and turnover intentions, providing a nuanced understanding of the phenomenon. Moreover, they scrutinize moderating factors such as organizational culture and technological infrastructure, offering valuable insights for future research and organizational practice. This review serves as an invaluable resource, consolidating existing knowledge while charting a path for further exploration into the complex dynamics of flexible work arrangements and their implications for organizational success.

Angelici and Profeta (2024) delve into the concept of smart working in their paper titled "Smart working: work flexibility without constraints," published in *Management Science*. Their study explores the dynamics of work flexibility, focusing specifically on smart working practices. Through a meticulous analysis, the authors uncover the nuances of smart working, highlighting its potential to offer flexibility without imposing constraints on employees. This research contributes to the evolving discourse on modern work arrangements, shedding light on the implications of smart working for organizational dynamics and employee well-being.

In "Chasing Productivity Demands, Worker Well-being, and Firm Performance: The Moderating Effects of HR Support and Flexible Work Arrangements" by Ab Wahab and Tatoglu (2020), the authors delve into the intricate relationship between productivity demands, worker well-being, and firm performance. Their study investigates how HR support and flexible work arrangements moderate these dynamics. Through meticulous analysis, they uncover the nuanced interplay between organizational practices and employee outcomes, offering valuable insights for enhancing both productivity and well-being in the workplace. This research contributes to the growing body of literature on human resource management and organizational performance, underscoring the importance of supportive HR practices and flexible work arrangements in achieving sustainable success.

In "Role of Flexible Working Hours'Arrangement on Employee Job Performance and Retention in Manufacturing Industries in Agbara, Nigeria" by Idowu (2020), the focus lies on the impact of flexible working hours on both employee job performance and retention within the specific context of manufacturing industries in Agbara, Nigeria. Through this study, Idowu aims to elucidate the relationship between flexible work arrangements and key organizational outcomes in a localized setting. By examining the dynamics of employee performance and retention within the context of flexible working hours, the research sheds light on the applicability and effectiveness of such arrangements in enhancing productivity and employee satisfaction within the manufacturing sector of Agbara, Nigeria. This work contributes to the literature by providing insights tailored to the unique socio-economic and cultural context of the region, offering valuable implications for both theory and practice in the field of organizational management.

In their study, Selvanathan et al. (2020) meticulously examines the determinants influencing productivity among employees in the Malaysian higher education sector. By focusing on this specific context, they aim to provide insights into the unique challenges and dynamics shaping productivity within Malaysian academia. Through rigorous analysis, the authors contribute to understanding the complex interplay between organizational factors and individual performance, enriching the broader discourse on productivity and effectiveness in

the education sector. This research not only offers valuable implications for improving productivity within Malaysian private higher educational institutions but also provides a foundation for future studies exploring productivity dynamics in diverse educational settings. Franken et al. (2021) explore the opportunities and challenges associated with forced flexibility and remote working in the context of the "new normal." Through a comprehensive analysis, the authors delve into the dynamics of remote work arrangements, examining both the advantages and drawbacks brought about by this shift. By addressing the complexities of forced flexibility, they contribute valuable insights into navigating the evolving landscape of work practices, particularly in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. This research not only highlights the opportunities for adaptation and innovation but also underscores the need to address the challenges posed by remote work to ensure organizational effectiveness and employee well-being.

In their work, Chung and Van der Lippe (2020) introduce the intricate relationship between flexible working arrangements, work-life balance, and gender equality. Through their introduction, they lay the foundation for understanding how flexible work practices intersect with broader social indicators. By delving into this nexus, the authors shed light on the potential of flexible working arrangements to both enhance work-life balance and contribute to gender equality. Their study serves as a valuable entry point into exploring the complex dynamics at play in contemporary work environments, offering insights into the implications of flexible work policies for individuals and society as a whole.

In their exploratory study, Weideman and Hofmeyr (2020) investigate the influence of flexible work arrangements on employee engagement. Through their research, they delve into the dynamics of how flexible work policies impact the level of employee engagement within organizations. By conducting this exploration, the authors contribute to a deeper understanding of the relationship between work flexibility and employee commitment and motivation. Their study offers valuable insights into the potential benefits of flexible work arrangements for fostering greater employee engagement, thereby informing organizational practices aimed at enhancing workforce productivity and satisfaction.

Chung (2022) examines the intricate balance between flexible work arrangements and potential exploitation. Through this exploration, the author delves into the complexities of how flexible working practices can inadvertently lead to self-exploitation among employees. By addressing this paradox, Chung offers critical insights into the challenges associated with the implementation of flexible work policies, highlighting the need for a nuanced approach to fostering work-life balance and ensuring fair treatment in the workplace. This book contributes to ongoing discussions surrounding labour practices and organizational policies, provoking thoughtful considerations for policymakers, employers, and employees alike.

In their study, Marx, Reimann, and Diewald (2021) investigate the significance of work-life measures, particularly the impact of flexible working hours and home-based teleworking, in preventing voluntary employee exits. Through rigorous analysis, the authors explore how these work arrangements influence employee retention and turnover intentions. Their research sheds light on the potential benefits of flexible work policies in reducing voluntary employee exits, thereby contributing to a deeper understanding of the role of work-life balance initiatives in organizational effectiveness. By addressing this critical aspect of contemporary work environments, Marx et al. provide valuable insights for employers and policymakers seeking to enhance employee retention strategies and foster a more supportive workplace culture.

In their meta-analytic review, Shifrin and Michel (2022) investigate the relationship between flexible work arrangements and employee health. Through a comprehensive synthesis of existing research, the authors provide valuable insights into how different forms of flexibility impact various aspects of employee well-being. Their study offers a nuanced understanding

of the complex interplay between work arrangements and health outcomes, highlighting both the potential benefits and challenges associated with flexible work policies. By addressing this critical intersection, Shifrin and Michel contribute to the ongoing dialogue surrounding workplace practices and employee welfare, informing organizational strategies aimed at promoting healthier and more sustainable work environments.

In their systematic review, Hackney et al. (2022) scrutinize the impact of work-from-home arrangements on both personal and organizational performance and productivity within the digital economy. By meticulously analyzing existing literature, the authors offer a comprehensive understanding of how remote work practices influence various facets of work outcomes. Through their synthesis, they elucidate the implications of remote work for individuals and organizations, shedding light on the challenges and opportunities presented by this evolving work arrangement. Their study contributes valuable insights to the discourse on remote work in the digital age, providing a basis for informed decision-making by policymakers, employers, and employees alike.

In their study, Mustajab et al. (2020) examine the working-from-home phenomenon as a strategy to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 and its implications for work productivity. Through their research, the authors investigate the shift to remote work as a response to the pandemic, analyzing its effects on productivity levels. By addressing this timely and critical issue, Mustajab and colleagues contribute to understanding the dynamics of remote work adoption in the context of global health crises. Their study offers insights into the challenges and opportunities associated with remote work arrangements during the COVID-19 pandemic, informing organizational strategies and policy decisions aimed at maintaining productivity while ensuring employee well-being.

Beno (2021) scrutinizes the benefits and drawbacks of electronic working (E-working). Through this analysis, the author delves into the complexities of adopting E-working practices, shedding light on its potential advantages and challenges. By employing an ALDINE (Advantages and Limitations, Disadvantages, Implications, Negatives, and Effects) analysis framework, Beno offers a structured approach to understanding the multifaceted nature of E-working. His study contributes valuable insights into the considerations surrounding the implementation of electronic work arrangements, informing organizational decisions and policy development in an increasingly digitalized work environment.

In their study, Fragapane et al. (2022) explores strategies for enhancing flexibility and productivity in Industry 4.0 production networks. Focusing on the integration of autonomous mobile robots and smart intralogistics systems, the authors investigate the potential of these technologies to optimize operations. Through their research, Fragapane and colleagues contribute to the ongoing discourse on Industry 4.0 and its implications for manufacturing efficiency. By examining the role of autonomous mobile robots and smart intralogistics in improving flexibility and productivity, their study offers valuable insights for businesses seeking to leverage advanced technologies in the era of digital transformation.

In their study, Shanika and Bhebhe (2023) investigate the effects of telecommuting on employee motivation and productivity during the COVID-19 pandemic, focusing on the case of New Era Publication Corporation in Namibia. Through their research, the authors aim to understand how remote work arrangements have impacted employee motivation and productivity within the specific context of the pandemic. By examining the experiences of a particular organization in Namibia, Shanika and Bhebhe contribute valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities associated with telecommuting during times of crisis. Their study offers practical implications for organizations navigating remote work dynamics, providing guidance for maintaining employee motivation and productivity in rapidly changing work environments.

#### **METHODOLOGY:**

The research design of the study will be descriptive research. In the research the methodology used is the mixture of both quantitative and qualitative research. The secondary information has been used to gather the essential data that answer the objective of the study of flexible working hours.

#### **POPULATION**

The population for the research study will be the employees from the telecommunication/call centres.

#### **SAMPLING DESIGN**

A convenient sampling method will be adopted to collect the data from the employees. A sample size of 206 employees of telecommunication/call centers has been selected for this research.

#### **MEASUREMENT/ INSTRUMENT SELECTION**

Both primary and secondary data will be collected. Primary data will be collected through interviews and questionnaires. While secondary data will be collected through Internet, research papers, and articles.

#### **RESEARCH VARIABLES**

The following the variables that are to be considered in the survey research:

- Employee designation
- Balancing in professional and personal life
- Absenteeism
- Promotion recommendations
- Work pressure

#### **HYPOTHESIS**

**H0:** There is a relationship between flexible working hours and the employee's performance.

**H1:** There is no relationship between flexible working hours and the employee's performance.

#### **RESEARCH ASSUMPTIONS:**

1. Workers are expected to play a role in resolving conflicts between their professional responsibilities and personal time demands.
2. Both employees and supervisors are assumed to actively participate in the planning and organization of flexible time programs.
3. In selecting days off, employees are presumed to be consulted regarding their preferences.
4. The utilization of neural networks and random forest algorithms is anticipated to enhance accuracy in predicting outcomes and trends within the flexible working environment.

#### **RESEARCH DESIGN:**

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative analysis with machine learning techniques to explore the relationship between flexible working hours and employee performance in Indian workplaces. Leveraging advanced data analytics methodologies aims to uncover nuanced insights into the dynamics of flexible work arrangements.

#### **POPULATION AND SAMPLING:**

In the process of population and sampling, the study targets employees across diverse industries and sectors in India. Utilizing stratified sampling ensures representation across various demographic segments and organizational hierarchies. Moreover, purposive sampling may be deployed to capture nuanced experiences of flexible working arrangements, with the sample size determined through statistical power calculations aligned with research objectives.

#### **DATA COLLECTION:**

Data collection involves structured surveys and semi-structured interviews administered to employees and employers. Survey instruments include inquiries concerning perceptions of

flexible working hours, work-life equilibrium, productivity, and job contentment. Concurrently, interviews delve into individual experiences and organizational perspectives. Additionally, secondary data from organizational records and performance metrics complement primary data sources, enriching the analysis.

#### **RESEARCH VARIABLES:**

During the research variable identification process, key variables such as employee designation, work-life balance, absenteeism rates, productivity metrics, and organizational profitability undergo quantification using traditional statistical methodologies and advanced machine learning algorithms. Predictive modeling techniques, such as regression analysis and classification algorithms, discern patterns and predictors of performance outcomes associated with flexible working hours.

#### **DATA ANALYSIS:**

Quantitative analysis encompasses descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and predictive modeling techniques. Machine learning algorithms like neural networks and random forests are utilized to unravel intricate relationships and forecast performance outcomes based on flexible working hour patterns. The accuracy of the models generated through neural networks and random forests will be assessed to validate their predictive power and reliability.

#### **ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

Throughout the research, ethical considerations remain paramount. Securing informed consent from participants and ensuring data confidentiality via anonymization procedures uphold ethical standards. Adherence to regulatory guidelines and implementation of measures to safeguard participant privacy underscore the research's integrity.

#### **LIMITATIONS:**

In the context of limitations, potential biases such as sample bias and self-reporting biases are addressed. The inherent complexity of quantifying subjective constructs like work-life balance and job satisfaction is acknowledged. Moreover, the susceptibility of machine learning models to biases inherent in training data is considered. Mitigation strategies, including robust validation procedures and transparency in reporting findings, are implemented to address these limitations.

#### **RESULT AND DISCUSSION:**

##### **SAMPLE DATASET:**

Our research collected data from a diverse sample of 206 employees across various industries in India. The dataset comprises several key variables relevant to our study:

Beginning Time	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid before 0800	45	21.84466	21.84466
0800-0830	34	16.50485	16.50485
0830-0900	47	22.81553	22.81553
0900-0930	45	21.84466	21.84466
After 0930	35	16.99029	16.99029
Total	206	100	100

Table 1: Beginning Time

End Time	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid before 1630	46	22.3301	22.3301
1630-1700	50	24.27184	24.27184
1700-1730	44	21.35922	21.35922
1730-1800	39	18.93204	18.93204
After 1800	27	13.1068	13.1068
Total	206	100	100

Table 2: End Time

Occupation	To some extent	Moderate	High	Very High	Total
Executive	24	28	15	8	75
Manager	8	8	6	2	24
Employee	25	31	19	5	80
Other	11	4	8	4	27
Total	68	71	48	19	206

Table 3: Flexibility Offered to Employees

Occupation	To some extent	Moderate	High	Very High	Total
Executive	27	24	21	3	75
Manager	4	13	5	2	24
Employee	32	22	19	7	80
Other	7	15	4	1	27
Total	70	74	49	13	206

Table 4: NSH helpful in job

Occupation	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Low Stress	Medium Stress	High Stress	Work-Life Balance	No Work-Life Balance	Total
Executive	22	3	10	7	8	15	10	75
Manager	4	0	10	4	0	4	0	24
Employee	20	10	25	31	24	9	21	80
Other	7	0	7	5	9	4	3	27
Total	53	13	52	47	41	32	34	206

Table 6. Productivity Impact

**INTERPRETATIONS**

- The responses showed that 39% of the sample used to come after 9:00 this means that they have a need for flexibility. On the other hand 53% of the sample use to go after 5:30.
- This means, people do have a need of flexibility that allows them to work beyond the rigid time span of 9-5.
- The 67% of the sample are being offered with the flexibility at workplace.

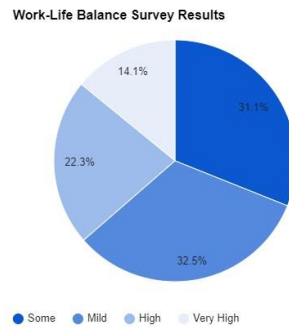


Figure 1: NSH increases productivity

In response to the question “Non-Standard working hours cause productivity”, the 76% of the sample responded with a high impact of Flexible working arrangements on the productivity of the workers.

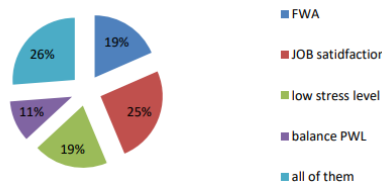


Figure 2: Productivity Impact

On the other question about productivity impact, most of people are of the view that flexible working arrangements do cause productivity. Most of the people are of the view that the flexible working arrangements do cause productivity. 25% of the sample have the view that flexible work arrangements have an impact on the job satisfaction of the workers. 19% people voted for flexibility at work reduces stress whereas 26% are of the view that flexible working hours brings all i.e. reduces stress, adds job satisfaction and provide work life balance.

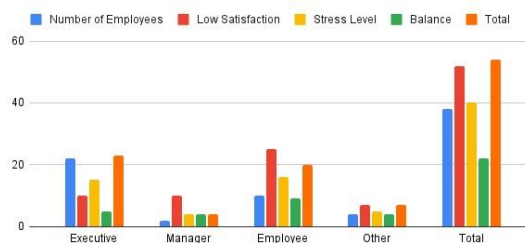


Figure 3: Valuable to Employees(a)

- The following figure shows that the executives value flexible work arrangements than the other levels.
- This chart indicates that there might be less knowledge in the middle and lower levels about the flexibility as we have seen in the above charts that most of the executives are well aware of flexible work arrangements than the other levels.

- In the above-said inquiry, most of the executive-level responses were in Favor of flexible work arrangements. The middle management level weights both the flexibility and the job satisfaction level for better performance.

#### **FINDINGS:**

##### **1.Positive Impact of Flexible Working Hours on Productivity:**

Employees with higher flexible working hours demonstrate increased productivity, indicating a positive correlation between flexibility and performance.

##### **2.Negative Effect of Absenteeism Rate on Productivity:**

Higher absenteeism rates are associated with lower productivity levels, highlighting the importance of attendance and reliability for maintaining performance.

##### **3.Improved Work-Life Balance Enhances Productivity:**

Employees reporting better work-life balance tend to exhibit higher productivity, emphasizing the significance of promoting work-life balance initiatives.

##### **4.Accurate Predictions with Machine Learning Algorithms:**

The Random Forest classification model effectively predicts employee productivity levels based on flexible working hours, absenteeism rate, and work-life balance rating.

##### **5. Need for Targeted Interventions:**

Tailored interventions, including flexible scheduling options and absenteeism reduction programs, are essential for optimizing employee performance and satisfaction.

##### **6.Data-Driven Decision-Making Enhances Productivity:**

Utilizing data-driven approaches empowers organizations to make informed decisions regarding work policies and practices, contributing to a conducive environment for employee success.

##### **7.Continuous Monitoring and Adaptation Required:**

Regular assessment of employee feedback and performance metrics is crucial for adapting flexible working arrangements to evolving workplace dynamics, ensuring ongoing optimization of productivity and employee well-being.

#### **SUGGESTIONS:**

1. Implement flexible working policies tailored to diverse employee needs, facilitating productivity optimization and work-life balance.
2. Proactively address absenteeism through supportive work culture, incentives for attendance, and resources for personal challenges.
3. Promote work-life balance initiatives like flexible scheduling, remote work options, and wellness programs.
4. Utilize data analytics to monitor productivity, absenteeism trends, and satisfaction levels for policy refinement.
5. Provide training and support for effective time management, communication, and stress management to navigate flexible working arrangements.

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

In conclusion, the research underscores the pivotal role of flexible working arrangements in modern Indian workplaces, where they serve as catalysts for heightened productivity, improved work-life balance, and overall organizational success. Through an analysis of factors such as flexible working hours, absenteeism rates, and work-life balance ratings, it becomes evident that flexibility positively impacts employee performance and satisfaction. Furthermore, involving employees and supervisors in program planning and leveraging machine learning algorithms like neural networks and random forests for accuracy enhancement are crucial strategies. Embracing flexible work practices not only addresses the evolving needs of the workforce but also fosters a culture of adaptability and innovation, positioning organizations for sustained growth and competitiveness in the dynamic landscape of the contemporary workplace.

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