Impact of remote working on employees in IT industry

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Abstract: remote working and employee's satisfaction, performance is recently being discussed often as the world is in a pandemic situation, Need for doing research has become inevitable in this field as many employees are working from home with limited resources. many significant factors are chosen for this study. The objective of this study is to know the impact of remote working in the IT industry, to find out the positive and negative consequences faced by employees while remote working, to study the influence of demographic variables on the perception of employees regarding remote working, and to give suggestions to overcome negative consequences. The questionnaire was circulated to remote workers in the IT industry. A total number of 61 respondents were contacted and were given the opportunity to participate in the survey through a convenience sampling method. The results of this research were found to be that communication is the most influencing factor of creating job satisfaction among remote employees in the IT industry and remote working is becoming the upcoming trend.

Keywords: Remote working, employees, work life balance, productivity, technostress, job satisfaction, communication, innovation

INTRODUCTION

Remote work is a working method that encourages experts to work past the traditional workplace setting. This is primarily based on the thinking that there is no want for work to be carried out in a unique location. When in contrast to commuting to a place of job each and every day and working from a constant desk, remote working by using the humans carrying out their things to do and tasks, and acquiring their desires somewhere they choose yields lots extra productivity. The personnel have a life like managing to lay out their days to see that their expert and private lives can exist to their fullest doable and pride and coexist peacefully. Remote working also helps employees to manage both work and non-work activities, and the breaks in-between their work time gives them space to carry out their domestic and leisure activities. (Anderson and Kelliher, 2020)

This is a conceptual shift and faraway work has capitalized on that independence. The beauty of faraway work is the truth that a worker can select work in a way that makes work-life stability perfect. However, some personnel want to go to the workplace monthly to have face to face peer conferences with a possibility to work remotely for the majority of the working week, however have to travel to in-person conferences at the workplace one day a week. Another thinking co working area and sharing economies are on upward push the place and organization or an employee. The co working areas are hubs of productivity, community, and technology, supplying wonderful scope for community connectivity to get the work done. The co working areas fall between full normal administrative centers and faraway work or work from home. The advantages and benefits of remote working expand productivity, work-life balance, saving the commuting time and workplace resources, and grant extra bendy lifestyle. This helps females to overcome genetic/gynecology challenges so she can attend the workplace duties at her comfort. A worker additionally should pursue his/her lengthy standing hobbies, expert interest etc., which ought to now not be fulfilled due to time constraints or due to lack of freedom at administrative center to pursue them. Remote workers are much less burdened compared to in-office counter components with reduced absenteeism and higher fitness and well-being. The major disadvantages faced through this remote working are isolation, decreased employee visibility, decreased work/life balance, lack of relationship among co-workers and increased distractions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

(Staples et al., 1998) investigates how the virtual organization manages remote workers effectively. Self-efficacy theory was used in this research to complete this study. Method chosen in this research study is quantitative research design to examine the hypothesis. This study also provides a basis to do the future research in the remote work area. (Ware and Grantham, 2010) describes how to manage remote workers in the view of leaders. In this

paper, the authors explained the challenges faced in managing the remote workers and real-world experiences of leading them.(Bell, 2012) explains about Aetna Inc. which is the leading provider of healthcare, dental, pharmacy, life and disability insurance in the United States. The author suggested the ways to increase the benefits and reduce the risks associated with the remote work. (Gebert, 2012) describes that the companies do not realize the consequences that the remote working landscape impact on the future of the work. Future must be predicted now to achieve the organization's long- and short-term goals and act accordingly to shape the remote working landscape. (Abdelkader, 2014) conducted to address the benefits and challenges of remote working at the employee and IT organization level in Egypt. It is found that in Egypt, females face problems in balancing the life between taking care of the child and the work, so, the best solution for this in IT organizations is suggested to be remote working. The results found are effective remote management will lead to remote job satisfaction, effective management increases the worker's self-efficacy, lower the cost of ICT will increase the remote work, greater the available connectivity of technology provided to remote worker will higher the employee's work productivity and increased remote and flexible working will decrease the stress especially for women. (Felstead and Henseke, 2017) explains the effort, well-being and work-life balance of the employees who are working away from the traditional workplace. Flexible working, changing trends of the workforce and shifts towards the knowledge economy is assessed thoroughly in this paper. Flexible remote workers show increased levels of organizational commitment, enthusiasm and job satisfaction towards the work. (Kłopotek, 2017) discusses the advantages and disadvantages for remote work workers or the key issues faced by the remote employees (particularly the young employees). This research study group contained the majority of women respondents than men. (Elshaiekh et al., 2018) Elaborate information on the concept, advantages, disadvantages, challenges and issues faced by the employees while working remotely in detail is explained in this paper. There are numerous ways to conduct this flexible working and the types are also described. (Stone et al., 2018) explains the benefits and challenges of agile and remote workers in EDF energy, an UK company. 741 responses were collected through conducting an online survey which results in giving the benefits experienced by the workers, which includes increased organizational commitment, engagement in work as well as resulting organizational outcome.

(Magni et al., n.d.) says that due to COVID-19, remote workers face the major problem in balancing between personal and professional life. As a result of this study, it is found that family-to-work enrichment benefits the remote workers by relating to reducing anxiety and better work effectiveness is the outcome when the employee has a balanced state on both family and work. (Agostoni, 2020)suggests that remote working helps the organization to increase productivity. The author generates some ideas to welcome a new way of working, which will end up in a change of mentality and effective production. It enriches some key ways to maximize the benefits and minimize the drawbacks while working from home. (Chattoraj et al., 2020) The motive of the author's study is to research about the psychological well-being of the employees while remote working in the information technology (IT)industry. This research was mainly conducted to the remote workers during the first lockdown period i.e., from March 24, 2020 to April20, 2020 and results are evaluated based on the respondents. (Brynjolfsson et al., 2020) analyses the impact of remote working and what can be expected in the future from the side of employees. The results implicate that the rise of remote working will become the upcoming trend according to the survey. There is a rise in the number of remote workers in comparison with pre COVID-19 and post COVID-19 situations.

(Malecki, 2020) explains how to handle security risks while remote working. Employees must be aware of keeping the important files backed up to avoid security risks. If any problem arises, the data must be easily recoverable. The author suggests that the employees must be aware of the cyber-attacks and data theft and learn measures to safeguard them. (Prasada et al., 2020) The purpose of this study is to find out the new challenges and occupational stress and psychological well-being of the remote working employees during this pandemic in this information technology industry. The questionnaire of this empirical study is based on seven independent occupational stress-causing factors. It is observed through the analysis that gender and age differences that affect the psychological well-being of employees. (Prasad et al., 2020) conducted the empirical study to the employees working in the agricultural research sector. The results of this study were analyzed through multiple regression analysis. The main objective of the study is whether the factors linked with remote working affect the work-life balance of the employees and to study whether gender and age differences influence the work-life balance of the employees in the agricultural research institute. (Molino et al., 2020) Due to the remote working situation in this COVID-19 pandemic, this research study was conducted in Italy. The major negative consequence faced by the employees is technostress. The two aim of this study is to assess the psychometric features of the Italian translation of a short edition of scale of the technostress founders and to add the scale of the COVID-19 emergency technostress investigation.(Phillips, 2020) explains how the employees see the transition of remote working during this pandemic and also about the leadership and management of remote employees. Frequent and effective communication between the employer and employee is very essential during this remote work period. (Miele and Tirabeni, 2020) examined the different kinds of control practices of digital technologies and how these technologies help within workplaces. In trying to decide what kind of control behavior is evolving with the advent of new technology, the authors discovered that both the activities are related to top-down management processes,

which broaden administrative oversight to problems typically left to the control of employees. Our research idea is based on the rich knowledge acquired by our peer teams across the university.(A.C.Gomathi, S.R.Xavier Rajarathinam, A.Mohammed Sadiqc, Rajeshkumar, 2020; Danda et al., 2009; Danda and Ravi, 2011; Dua et al., 2019; Ezhilarasan et al., 2019; Krishnan and Chary, 2015; Manivannan, I., Ranganathan, S., Gopalakannan, S. et al., 2018; Narayanan et al., 2012, 2009; Neelakantan et al., 2013, 2011; Neelakantan and Sharma, 2015; Panchal et al., 2019; Prasanna et al., 2011; Priya S et al., 2009; Rajeshkumar et al., 2019; Ramadurai et al., 2019; Ramakrishnan et al., 2019; Ramesh et al., 2016; Venugopalan et al., 2014)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND ANALYSIS
This research study is based on quantitative research design. The IT employees from various companies were targeted to collect the data for this research through a convenient sampling method. A 5-point Likert scale was used in the questionnaire regarding demographic variables and statements related to different types of situations faced by the employees has been circulated to 61 employees.
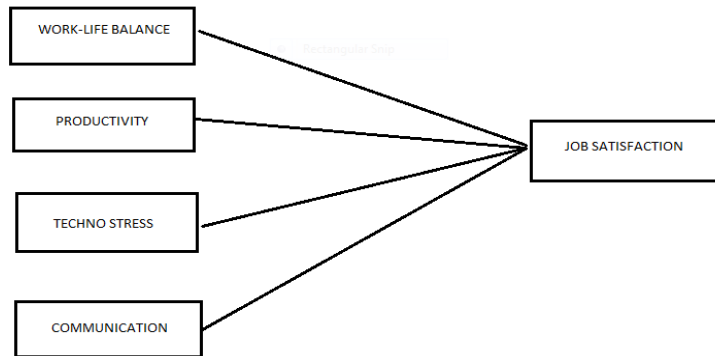

Fig.1:

The independent and dependent variables used in the questionnaire are work-life balance, productivity, job satisfaction, techno stress and communication. The objective of the study is to find the impact of remote working in the IT industry, to find out the positive and negative consequences faced by employees while remote working and to study the influence of demographic variables on the perception of employees regarding remote working. Collected data were analysed using frequency, mean, independent t-test, one-way ANOVA and regression analysis in SPSS by descriptive statistics.
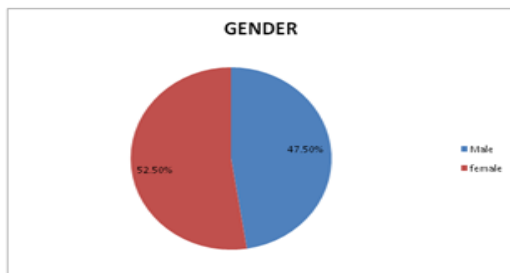
Fig.1: The figure 1 explains the majority of respondents are female employees (52.5%) compared to male (47.5%).
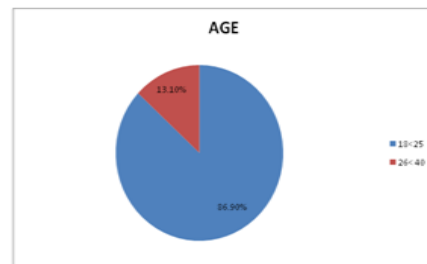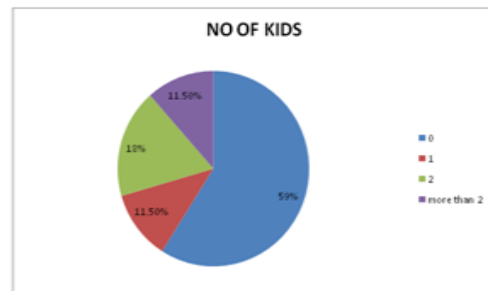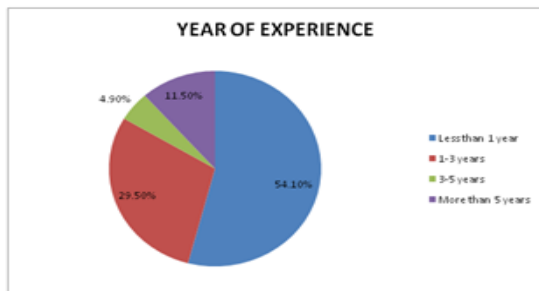

Fig.2: The figure 2 explains that the majority of the employees responded are below the age group of 18-25 (86.9%), followed by the age group of 26-40 (13.1%).
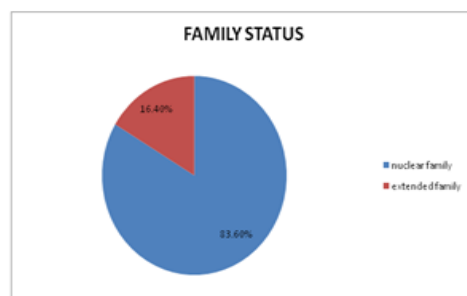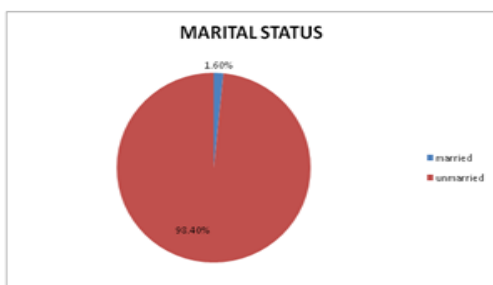
Fig.3: Figure 3 states that the most of the employees are unmarried (98.4%) and followed by married (1.6%).

Fig.4: Figure 4 stated that many respondents are from the nuclear family (83.6%), followed by the extended family (16.4%).

Fig.5: From figure it is concluded that most of the employees responded were less than one year experience, second highest is 1-3 years (29.5%), followed by more than 5 years (11.5%), followed by 3-5 years (4.9%).

Fig.6: From figure 6 majority of the employees responded that the kids in their family are 0 (59.0%), followed by 2 (18.0%), followed by 1 (11.5%), followed by more than 2 (11.5%).
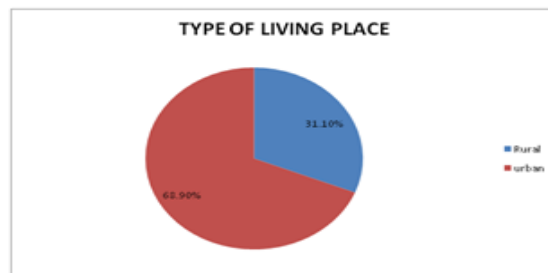
Fig.7: From figure 7 stated that many respondents are from nuclear family (83.6%), followed by the extended family (16.4%).

Table 1: Mean analysis of statement related to work life balance, productivity, technostress, job satisfaction and communication

Statements related to work life balance	Mean	Rank
Our organization provides clean and effective communication	3.72	1
I can spend equal time with family and work	3.56	2
I keep concentrating and thinking about the work and find difficulty in winding up at the end of a workday	3.56	2
Mishaps or discomforts in work space affects the personal life	3.46	4
I get distracted by the family environment while working from home	3.36	5
Statements related to productivity	**Mean**	**Rank**
Our organization welcomes new methods of working to improve team productivity	3.67	1
Working in home increases the flexibility of accomplishing work	3.66	2
I am able to be just as productive while working remotely when compared to usual working location	3.49	3
Due to regular breaks, I feel productive towards the work	3.44	4
My work is free from unnecessary interruptions and disruptions	3.21	5
Statements related to techno stress	**Mean**	**Rank**
I face network issues that affects my work to be performed	3.80	1
I have the technology I need to help me to stay connected to my team	3.48	2
I feel lack of technology equipment's I need to perform effective at home/remotely	3.44	3
I am forced by technology to do more work than I can handle	3.30	4
I do not know more about the technology to handle my work and I need time to learn about it	3.18	5
Statements related to job satisfaction	**Mean**	**Rank**

I feel comfortable to voice my opinion, even when it differs from the group opinion	3.69	1
The amount of work I am expected to do is reasonable for my position	3.64	2
I am recognized and rewarded for the successfully accomplished job	3.61	3
I feel included in every organizational decision that improves my job satisfactory level	3.61	3
I have given the freedom to make the decision about my work	3.59	5
Statements related to communication	**Mean**	**Rank**
Our organization provides clean and effective communication	3.93	1
I feel frequent communication between the employee and employer is essential to maintain the smooth relationship	3.90	2
Communication with colleagues or co-workers have been decreased due to remote working.	3.74	3
I feel lack of face-to-face communication leads to misunderstanding of information conveyed	3.52	4
Frequent motivation through video conferencing helps me to boost up the performance	3.25	5

The above table explains that many of the respondents feel that their life is enhanced due to remote working, as they can spend quality time with family as well as concentrating on their work. Since remote working is a new normal concept, they keep on thinking about the work. But they strongly disagreed that family members or family environments distract their work. Respondents feel that their organizations introduce and welcome new methods of working to improve better productivity. They also feel more flexibility in completing the work when working from home as they could take breaks in between and find some time for relaxing. Employees feel that they find unnecessary interruptions and disruptions which will affect the productivity of the organization. Many respondents feel that they face network issues while working remotely which affects the work to be performed. Majority of the employees have the technology support to keep connected with their team and employers. But they strongly disagreed with the statement that they do not have the knowledge on technology to handle their work. The respondents feel that they could voice out their opinion when it differs from the group opinion and therefore, it has a positive influence on job satisfaction. The work allotted for the employees for their position is reasonable and felt satisfied by the employees as there is no work load. At the same time, they feel that they are not given the freedom to make the decision about their work which can lead to the downfall of the job satisfaction level of the employees. Respondents feel that their organization communicates matters in a clear and effective manner about the work to be done. They strongly agree that the frequent communication between the employee and employer will enhance the smooth relationship but they strongly disagree that frequent motivation through video conferencing does not help to boost up the performance as the employees feel comfortable and motivated by the remote working environment.

Table 2: Independent sample T test of gender vs. work life balance, productivity, technostress, job satisfaction and communication

Factors	T value	Significance
Work-life balance	2.152	.036
Productivity	.973	.335
Technostress	1.036	.304
Job satisfaction	1.006	.318
Communication	1.598	.115

The above table shows the independent t-test analysis of gender versus Work life balance, productivity, technostress, job satisfaction and communication. It is visible that the majority of the 'p' values are greater than 0.05, which means that there is no significant difference between gender with respect to work life balance, productivity, technostress, job satisfaction and communication. Female employees have the highest work life balance compared with the male employees.

Table 3: one way ANOVA of age and years of experience vs work life balance, productivity, technostress, job satisfaction and communication

Age	F-value	Significance
Work life balance	.182	.671
Productivity	.986	.325
Technostress	5.061	.028
Job satisfaction	.266	.608
Communication	1.184	.281
Years of experience	**F-value**	**Significance**
Work life balance	.713	.548

Productivity	.475	.701
Technostress	.248	.070
Job satisfaction	.641	.592
Communication	.441	.724

The above table shows the one-way analysis of age versus work life balance, productivity, technostress, job satisfaction and communication. It is visible that 'p' values (.671, .325, .608, .281) are greater than 0.05 which means that there is no significance difference among the age with respect to work life balance, productivity, job satisfaction and communication. It is visible that 'p' value (.028) is lesser than 0.05 which means that there is significance difference among the ages with respect to technostress. Also, it shows the one-way analysis of years of experience of versus work life balance, productivity, technostress, job satisfaction and communication. It is visible that 'p' value (.548, .701, .070, .592, .724) are greater than 0.05 which means that there is no significance difference among years of experience with respect to work life balance, productivity, technostress, job satisfaction and communication.

Table 4: Regression analysis

MODEL		UNSTANDARDIZED COEFFICIENTS		STANDARDIZED COEFFICIENTS	t	SIGNIFICANCE
		B	STD.ERROR	BETA		
1	(Constant)	.658	.368		1.789	.079
	Work life balance	-.124	.116	-.114	-1.071	.289
	Productivity	.212	.127	.220	1.671	.100
	Technostress	-.073	.097	-.086	-.752	.455
	Communication	.795	.099	.786	8.023	.000

The above table shows the value of beta and the significant value. It is clear that communication has the significant value less than 0.05. It is inferred from the table that communication (beta=.786. t=8.023, p= .000) is influencing job satisfaction. This influences that communication positively influences job satisfaction regarding remote working in the IT industry.

DISCUSSIONS
The research has been done to find out the impact of remote working in the IT industry and the results found where better communication is influencing the job satisfaction among employees while working remotely. It is also found that the female employees have the highest work life balance compared with the male employees. It was conducted in the time of covid-19 pandemic when remote working was becoming a growing trend in many organizations. HR can allow flexibility in work when the employees share the problems in personal life so that the employees feel motivated and concentrate more on work after resolving the problem. In rural areas, the technical support can be provided because of the discomforts faced by the employees due to poor network support. They can be provided with the system and better internet modems to work from home if they find difficulty with the technical resources they are working with. Virtual fun games and celebrations can be organized to reduce the stress of employees working remotely. Employers can get feedback on a regular basis about the difficulties and challenges faced by the employees. For this, the HR department along with management can frame an online feedback mechanism to find out the bad effects of remote working. Interact socially with the employees like chatting about home life, personal interests and opinions through scheduling virtual coffee meetings. Resources can be provided for the employees to make their remote working an effective one. This study was conducted with the variables referred from various secondary sources, so the future study can be done based on the several factors which are not considered in this study and this study was constrained to the IT industry. Future researchers can concentrate on the same remote working concept with various industries and study the impacts.

CONCLUSION
The empirical research was conducted to study the impact of remote working in the IT industry. The factors taken for the study were work life balance, productivity, technostress, job satisfaction and communication. To know the employee's perception, a questionnaire was built and circulated among the IT employees and a sample of 61 was obtained. Remote work is applicable for all industries, but most of the IT industries it is the successful way to run the organization in uncertain situations. It has both advantages and disadvantages based on the individual employee. The remote working may increase to a great extent in the mere future. So, the employers must know the better effective ways to handle the employees to increase better productivity.

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