Transitioning Workspaces: Analyzing the Post-COVID Impact of Flexible Work on Work-Life Balance in MNCs of Delhi NCR

*Ms. Aanchal Gupta, **Ms. Sonali Taneja

Abstract:
The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the adoption of Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA) globally. Understanding the impact of post-pandemic FWA policies on employee Work-life Balance (WLB) outcomes is crucial as organizations redefine work models for the future. This research examined the impact of post-pandemic FWA policies on the WLB of employees, focusing specifically on 128 professionals at multinational corporations (MNCs) in Delhi-NCR, India. Adopting a quantitative methodology, the study analyzed the effects of FWA provisions on facets of WLB using a Survey Questionnaire. The multidimensional WLB construct comprised aspects like Nature of Work, Workload, Compensation, Organizational Support, and Personal Life. The objective was to assess if FWA positively affected overall WLB, while also testing the moderating effects of demographics. Hypotheses were tested using ANCOVA and Regression Modelling. The findings revealed that FWA positively influenced overall WLB and specific dimensions, affirming benefits of autonomy. However, interactions with demographics emphasized customizing FWA policies to needs across Career Stages, Gender, and Family Roles. The implications guide organizations in sustaining healthy, empowered workforces through tailored, empathetic FWAs aligned to the evolving responsibilities. The study provides data-backed insights and actionable guidance regarding the transitioning work landscape in the new normal. Further research can be built upon the findings to optimize flexible work strategies as workplace transformations continue apace in the post-COVID era.

Keywords: *Flexible Work Arrangements, Work-life Balance, Multinational Corporations, COVID-19, Remote Work, Hybrid Work, India, New Normal*

* *Assistant Professor, Delhi Institute of Advanced Studies, Delhi, India.*
** *Assistant Professor, Delhi Institute of Advanced Studies, Delhi, India.*

INTRODUCTION

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2019 triggered a transformative shift in the global workforce dynamics, compelling organizations to reconsider traditional work structures. In the aftermath, Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA) emerged as a pivotal strategy for multinational corporations (MNCs) to navigate the evolving landscape of work. Earlier, Flexible Working Arrangements (FWAs) such as Work from Home were often presented as optional perks for corporate employees—a choice granted to enhance work-life balance and job satisfaction. However, the landscape of work underwent a paradigm shift post the COVID-19 pandemic. What was once a choice transformed into a necessity as remote work became the norm during lockdowns and social distancing measures. Even as the acute phase of the pandemic receded, the significance of flexible work arrangements persisted. This marked the advent of hybrid work models, a synthesis of in-person and remote work, hailed for their convenience and adaptability for both employees and organizations (Vyas, 2022).

The importance of FWAs cannot be overstated, given their multifaceted benefits for employees and organizations alike. Flexible work arrangements contribute significantly to improved work-life balance, reducing the stress associated with long commutes and fostering a conducive environment for employees to manage personal and professional responsibilities effectively (Shanker 2023; Jiang et al., 2023). For organizations, FWAs offer a competitive edge in talent acquisition and retention, as they align with the evolving expectations of the modern workforce (Bloom et al., 2015; Weideman & Hofmeyr, 2020). Additionally, they contribute to enhanced productivity and job satisfaction, as demonstrated by studies like those conducted by Azizah, Soemaryani & Sartika (2023) and Ronald & Steffen (2021). Post the COVID-19 pandemic, the accelerated adoption of hybrid work models emerged as a testament to the tangible benefits observed by organizations. Hybrid work not only accommodates the preferences and needs of diverse employees but also harnesses the advantages of both remote and in-person work. Organizations experienced increased operational efficiency, reduced overhead costs, and improved employee morale (Wigert & White, 2023). The hybrid model allowed for a more resilient and adaptable approach to the uncertainties of the post-pandemic business landscape (Hopkins & Bardoel, 2023). Employees, too, reaped the benefits of flexibility, enjoying improved work-life balance and greater autonomy in managing their schedules (Battisti, Alfiero & Leonidou, 2022).

Achieving a harmonious Work-Life Balance (WLB) has long been recognized as a crucial element in the pursuit of sustained career success and longevity. Numerous studies, including those by Salazar & Diego-Medrano (2021) and Weziak-Bialowolska et al. (2020), have consistently highlighted the positive correlation between WLB and job satisfaction, employee well-being, and overall career outcomes. A balanced work-life equation not only contributes to heightened job engagement but also plays a pivotal role in reducing burnout and enhancing career resilience (Anastasopoulou et al., 2023; Boamah et al., 2022). Therefore, as employees increasingly seek careers marked by longevity and fulfillment, the impact of evolving work models on the dimensions of Work-Life Balance becomes a matter of paramount importance.

The introduction of hybrid work models post the COVID-19 pandemic has sparked intense discussions regarding its influence on various dimensions of Work-Life Balance. On one hand, proponents argue that the flexibility offered by hybrid models allows employees to tailor their work arrangements to better align with personal responsibilities and preferences (Leonardi et al., 2023; Smite et al., 2023). On the other hand, critics contend that the blurring of boundaries between work and personal life inherent in remote work may exacerbate stress and hinder the delineation between professional and personal spheres (Chung & Van der Lippe, 2020; Sarker et al., 2021). Studies, such as those conducted by Bloom et al. (2015) and Sandoval-Reyes et al. (2021), have delved into the intricate relationship between remote work and work-life interference, emphasizing the complex nature of the impact. Furthermore, the dimensions of Work-Life Balance affected by hybrid work models extend beyond temporal considerations. Hybridity introduces new challenges related to the nature of work, workload management, and the psychological contract between employers and employees (Rajala et al., 2020; Radoynovska & Ruttan, 2023). The shift to virtual collaboration tools and digital communication channels has altered the dynamics of workplace interactions, posing potential challenges to interpersonal relationships and organizational culture (Wu et al., 2023; Vuchkovski et al., 2023). Understanding the detailed consequences of these changes is vital for organizations striving to strike an optimal balance between fostering flexibility and preserving the well-being of their workforce.

Thus, the year 2020 etched itself in history as a turning point, not just for healthcare, but also for the world of work. The COVID-19 pandemic, like a seismic shift, forced a massive overhaul of established practices, propelling the once-peripheral concept of Flexible Work Arrangements (FWAs) into the global spotlight. Overnight, offices emptied, homes transformed into makeshift workspaces, and boundaries between professional and personal spheres blurred like never before. This transformative chapter left the world with a crucial question as to how this new era of work has reshaped the WLB of employees, particularly within the dynamic ecosystem of Multinational Corporations. In view of this, this research delves into the specific context of MNC employees in Delhi/NCR, exploring the intricate interplay between post-COVID FWAs and their WLB outcomes. While the potential benefits of FWAs have been widely discussed, understanding their in-depth effects within the unique demographic and professional landscape of Delhi/NCR's MNC workforce is crucial. This study goes beyond simply ascertaining the presence or absence of FWAs; it dissects how various implementation practices, individual

characteristics, and job contexts intertwine to shape the effectiveness of these arrangements in fostering a balanced Work-life.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The COVID-19 pandemic forced organizations around the world to adopt remote and hybrid work models essentially overnight. In India, the national lockdown in March 2020 led to a dramatic increase in work-from-home, with 75% of organizations shifting to remote work (Phillips, 2023). Even as pandemic restrictions ease, many companies plan to continue offering flexible arrangements; a Deloitte US (2022) survey of 168 organizations in India found that 66% intend to permit remote work and 53% will allow hybrid models going forward. While increased flexibility stands to benefit employees, existing evidence paints a complex picture regarding its impact on work-life balance. Research in Western contexts shows working from home can positively influence autonomy and work-life conflict, but also blur work-life boundaries and enable overwork (Mutebi & Hobbs, 2022). Indian studies similarly highlight both advantages like saved commuting time and disadvantages like longer work hours for remote professionals (Jaiswal & Arun, 2022). Moderating factors like gender, parental status, and job type appear significant as well (Lee, Probst, Bettac, Jenkins, & Bazzoli, 2023).

However, there remains a notable research gap concerning the post-pandemic flexible work situation of MNC employees in urban India specifically. MNCs pioneered modern people-centric policies in India (Lazarova, Caligiuri, Collings & De Cieri, 2023); concentrating on this cohort can provide useful insights for retaining high talent. The NCR is home to the headquarters and offices of various global corporations, making it an ideal region for analysis. Among MNCs, financial consulting stands out for its intense work culture and recent openness to new ways of working (Kronos Group, 2023); focusing here allows a nuanced investigation of flexibility's benefits and costs. Thus, Financial Consulting is a relevant industry to analyze as it has an intense workload culture yet firms like the Big 4 are wholeheartedly embracing flexibility post-pandemic. In view of the issues highlighted above, this study aims to analyse the impact of post-COVID FWAs on the WLB of 128 MNC financial consulting professionals in the Delhi NCR. It will examine how career stages, work hours, compensation changes and other critical factors have shaped employees' abilities to balance work and personal responsibilities. The findings will provide evidence-based guidance to global companies on crafting suitable flexible arrangements for their India offices.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The following papers were cited for the purpose of this research:

S.No.	Authors	Year	Title	Objective	Methodology	Findings	Strengths & Limitations	Journal Name
1.	Wheatley, Daniel	2017	Employee satisfaction and use of flexible working arrangements	Examine use and impact of flexible working arrangements (FWA) on employee job satisfaction	Quantitative analysis of European employee survey dataset	Increased flexible time availability showed positive correlation with higher job satisfaction	Large sample; Correlational limitations	Work, Employment & Society, SAGE Publications
2.	de Menezes & Kelliher	2011	Flexible working and performance	Review links between flex work options and business performance	Systematic review and meta-analysis	Moderate evidence that flex work reduces absenteeism/ increases productivity	Rigorous methodology but limited search parameters	International Journal of Management Reviews
3.	Kanlis, Ioannis	2016	Possibilities and Limitations of Flexible Work Arrangements in the Military	Understand how military agencies can implement flexible working arrangements	Case Study Analysis	Various social, economic, and personal reasons seem to encourage implementation of FWAs in the work environment of Military Agencies	Single-source self-reported data; No causation proof; Limited generalizability as only catering to the military agencies	US Defense Technical Information Center

4.	Adisa, Antonacopoulou, Beauregard, Dickmann & Adekoya	2022	Exploring the Impact of COVID-19 on Employees' Boundary Management and Work–Life Balance	Examine impact of mandated remote work during pandemic lockdowns on boundary management and work-life balance	Qualitative multi-method study interviewing 45 higher education employees	Significant work-life conflict and blurred role boundaries reported, with tactical efforts by some to enact controlled integration	Single sector limits generalizability; self-reported experiences	British Journal of Management
5.	Murat Çemberci, Mustafa Emre Civelek, Adnan Veysel Ertemel, Perlin Naz Cömert	2022	The relationship of work engagement with job experience, marital status and having children among flexible workers after the Covid-19 pandemic	To investigate whether work engagement changes according to marital status, job experience and having children among flexible workers after COVID-19	Quantitative research method, Web-based survey, 199 participants, ANOVA, T-tests	Marital status related to absorption dimension of work engagement; Job experience positively related to all dimensions of work engagement; No relation between having children and work engagement	Strengths:- Examined important issues like work-life balance and gender equality - Contributes to limited flexible working literature after COVID-19 Limitations - Conducted only in Turkey - Only quantitative methods used	PLOS ONE
6.	Chung, Birkett, Forbes, Seo	2020	COVID-19, Flexible Working, and Implications for Gender Equality in the United Kingdom	Examine the role of flexible working in gender equality during the pandemic, focusing on arrangements giving workers control over when and where they work. Explore changes in flexible working during lockdown and its impact on housework division.	Survey of dual-earning working parents in the UK during the peak of the first lockdown (mid-May to mid-June 2020). Online survey panel Prolific Academic and social media channels used. Total sample: 1,160 cases.	Mothers mainly responsible for housework and childcare. Absence of Flexibility Stigma related to the negative impact on one's career. Sharp rise in number of employees working from home and more equitable distribution of work between the heterosexual couples may be attributed to work flexibility.	Strengths: Unique natural experimental setting during lockdown. Detailed data on respondents and partners. Limitations: Limited scope to cis-gender heterosexual couples. No exploration of implications for other gender identities.	Gender & Society, SAGE Publications

7.	Ghali-Zinoubi, Amari, Jaoua	2021	E-Learning in Era of COVID-19 Pandemic: Impact of Flexible Working Arrangements on Work Pressure, Work–Life Conflict, and Academics' Satisfaction	Investigate the influence of flexible working arrangements on work pressure, work-life conflict, and academic satisfaction during the COVID-19 pandemic. Explore the relationship between flexible working practices and academic well-being. Examine the potential moderating role of work-life conflict and work pressure on the relationship between flexible working arrangements and academic satisfaction.	Web survey data collected from 3 February to 16 April 2021.	Support for the positive impact of flexible working arrangements on academic satisfaction.	Strengths: Supports previous findings on the positive impact of flexible working arrangements on academic satisfaction. Addresses the specific context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Investigates moderating effects of work–life conflict and work pressure. Limitations: Methodology details not provided in the excerpt. No information on sample size or demographics. The unexpected positive relationship between work pressure and academic satisfaction requires further exploration.	Vision. SAGE Publications

8.	Timms, C., Brough, P., O'Driscoll, M., Kalliath, T., Siu, O.L., Sit, C., Lo, D.	2015	Flexible work arrangements, work engagement, turnover intentions and psychological health	Examine relationships between flexible work arrangements (FWAs), organizational culture, work engagement, turnover intentions, and psychological strain	- Longitudinal survey of 823 employees in Australia at two time points 12 months apart - Measured perceived organizational culture, use of FWAs, work engagement, turnover intentions, psychological strain	- Negative relationship found between FWA use and work engagement over time - Non-use of FWAs predicted higher work engagement -Organizational culture influences FWA use - FWAs alone may not provide expected positive outcomes without supportive culture	Strengths: - Longitudinal design - Large sample size Limitations: - Self-report surveys - Potential impact of concurrent economic changes	Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources
9.	Alsulami, A.; Mabrouk, F.; Bousrih, J.	2022	Flexible Working Arrangements and Social Sustainability: Study on Women Academics Post-COVID-19	To investigate women's preferences towards FWAs in academia as a social sustainability source. Examine effect of COVID-19 on female faculty job preferences.	Mixed methods - Choice modeling, t-tests, clustering, probit models	Flexibility in location preferred over flexibility in time. Motivational factors impact job preferences. FWAs ensure lifelong learning and improve well-being.	Strengths: Novel use of choice modeling in labor economics considering women employees Limitations: Sample specific to one university, did not consider monetary aspects	Sustainability; MDPI
10.	Heejung Chung, Tanja van der Lippe	2018	Flexible Working, Work–Life Balance, and Gender Equality: Introduction	To examine the potential flexible working has on the gender division of labour and workers' work-life balance	Literature review and introduction to the special issue papers	Flexible working can enable better work-life balance, but outcomes are gendered, with women taking on more domestic responsibilities and men expanding work. Contexts like country, organization, family matter.	Brings together multidisciplinary research using large-scale data from Europe and US. Focuses on role of contexts. Distinguishes between types of flexible working. Incorporates class. Does not address informal care capacities, long-term career consequences, role of contexts in shaping gendered nature of flexibility.	Social Indicators Research

11.	Melika Shirmohammadi, Wee Chan Au, Mina Beigi	2021	Remote work and work-life balance: Lessons learned from the covid-19 pandemic and suggestions for HRD practitioners	To examine work-life balance while working from home during the COVID-19 pandemic	Literature review and thematic analysis of 40 empirical studies on work-life balance while working from home during the pandemic	Identified 4 themes showing mismatch between desirable expectations and undesirable realities of remote work: (1) flexitime vs work intensity (2) flexplace vs space limitation (3) technologically feasible vs technostress/ isolation (4) family-friendly vs housework/care intensity	Provides overview of remote work experiences during COVID-19. Conceptually organizes past research using person-environment fit theory. Focuses only on pandemic-induced research. Does not differentiate types of remote work.	Human Resource Development Review
12.	Mariene A. Estanio, Mary Grace G. Losbanes, Florinda G. Vigonte, Marmelo V. Abante	2023	Flexible Working Arrangements: Its Significance to Employees' Performance and Productivity	To assess the significance of flexible working arrangements to employees' productivity and performance	Descriptive and Correlational Research; Survey of 150 employees aged 18 years old and above	Positive relationship between flexible working arrangements and employees' productivity and performance. Employees tend to be more productive with flexible arrangements.	Focused only on telecom/call centre employees limits industry generalizability Cross-sectional rather than longitudinal analysis No discussion of statistical analysis conducted	SSRN
13.	Sabiha Abid, Daro Khan Barech	2017	The Impact of Flexible Working Hours on the Employees Performance	Determine aspects influencing flexible working hours; understand insights of staff and managers on flexible working hours	Descriptive research; Sample of 200 telecom/ call center employees	Flexible working hours positively impact productivity, performance, work-life balance. Need to increase awareness of benefits among all levels of staff.	Descriptive Study; Limited in Scope	International Journal of Economics, Commerce and Management

14.	Onyekwelu, Monyei, Muogbo	2022	Flexible Work Arrangements and Workplace Productivity: Examining The Nexus	Investigate the nexus between flexible working arrangements (FWA) and workplace productivity across the 6 geo-political zones in Nigeria. Explore the impact of FWAs on business policies and strategies. Assess the adaptability and investment in FWA-supporting strategies by businesses.	Descriptive survey design with a population of 600 businesses in Nigeria's six geopolitical zones. Sample size: 234, using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sampling. Data collected from primary sources. Descriptive and inferential statistics used with a 5% level of significance.	Positive statistical effect of flexible work arrangements on workplace productivity ($R2 = 0.882359$, $F = 1545.089$, p-value = 0.05).	Strengths: Clear and comprehensive methodology. Adequate sample size. Appropriate statistical analysis. Practical implications for businesses. Limitations: One state may not efficiently represent geopolitical zones. Limited generalizability beyond selected sectors. Reliance on self-reported data.	International Journal of Financial, Accounting, and Management (IJFAM)
15.	Anurag, Shanker	2023	Flexible work arrangements and its impact on Work-Life Balance	To examine the relationship between flexible work arrangements and work-life balance	Literature review, Analysis and Discussion	Flexible work arrangements improve physiological and mental wellbeing of employees which helps them strike an optimum work-life balance.	Strengths: Comprehensively reviewed different components of flexible work arrangements Established relationship between flexible work arrangements and work-life balance Limitations: No primary data collection Does not quantify impact	Journal of Emerging Technologies and Business Management

16.	Vidya D Avadhani and Rethy B Menon	2022	Development and standardization of the work-life balance scale for the insurance sector employees	To construct and standardize the work-life balance scale using reliability and validity tests	Literature review to identify factors influencing work-life balance - Qualitative interviews to explore factors - Questionnaire development with 34 items - Pilot testing (n=300) - Survey using stratified random sampling (n=300) - Statistical analysis for reliability and validity	- Six factors identified: nature of work, work flexibility, workload, compensation, organizational support, personal life - Scale showed good reliability (Cronbach's alpha = 0.816) - Construct validity established through EFA and CFA - Hypothesis that scale has required reliability and validity is accepted	Strengths: - Scale developed systematically using literature review, qualitative interviews and expert validation - Reliability and validity established rigorously Limitations: - Focused only on insurance sector employees - Sample limited to India - Cross-validation not done	Cogent Business and Management
17.	Almudena Cañibano	2019	Workplace flexibility as a paradoxical phenomenon: Exploring employee experiences	To explore employee lived experiences of 'flexible working' and shed light on how employees manage the paradoxical tensions generated by flexible working Qualitative case study of a large consulting firm in Spain	Flexible working is experienced as a combination of contributions and inducements through employee interpretation of unfolding experiences	- Employees manage the tension between flexibility as contribution and inducement through two mechanisms: 1. Vacillation between the two to develop a sense of ongoing exchange 2. Integrating contradictory elements into an overall mental picture	Strengths: -Provides an understanding of flexible working from employee perspective instead of just HR policies -Explores paradoxical nature of flexible working and how employees manage the tensions Limitations: -Limited to one case study firm, may not be generalizable -Potential bias in sample selection by HR initially	Human Relations Journal

RESEARCH GAP

Based on the literature review provided in the previous section, the following key research gaps were identified:

It was observed that most of the studies on Flexible Working Arrangements and Work-life Balance have been conducted in Western contexts. There is limited research examining this relationship in the Indian context, especially after COVID-19 which necessitated remote work. Further, while a few studies do analyze the impact of demographics on the FWA-WLB relationship, there is a dearth of research examining how factors like age, gender, experience etc. moderate this association specifically for the MNC employees in India. Besides, no prior study has analyzed the FWA-WLB link using the multidimensional construct of WLB measured through 5 key aspects - Nature of Work, Workload, Compensation, Organizational Support, and Personal Life. Most of them have examined variables like work-life conflict, productivity or job satisfaction only. Last but not the least, the post-pandemic shift to extensive remote work and its impact on boundary management, integration of work and personal life spheres, continues to be an under-researched area especially in developing countries like India.

Addressing the gaps identified above, the present study makes an important contextual, methodological and theoretical contribution by analysing how FWA provisions specifically impact Work-life Balance of Indian MNC employees (specifically employed in the Financial Consulting Sector) based on their personal/ job characteristics and preferences in the post-pandemic period. This study is situated in the Indian context, focusing specifically on MNC employees in Delhi/ NCR region in the post-COVID period. This addresses the context-specific research gap. By using ANCOVA and regression analysis, the impact of demographics like age, gender etc. on the FWA-WLB relationship is being examined thereby addressing this moderation effect gap. Also, the conceptualization and measurement of WLB using 5 key constructs is unique and provides a more holistic assessment as compared to the previous studies. Lastly, the exploration of the experiences of MNC employees allows crucial insight into integration/ segmentation preferences and its effects in a remote working scenario, addressing the boundary management research gap highlighted above.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The following are the objectives that the present study caters to:

Primary Research Objective:

To examine the impact of post-COVID Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA) on the overall Work-life Balance (WLB) of MNC employees in Delhi/NCR.

Secondary Research Objectives:

- To investigate whether personal (age, gender, marital status, parental status) and job characteristics (work hours, career stages) moderate how FWA influences the WLB of MNC employees in Delhi NCR.
- To analyse if implementation of FWA has a significant effect on the nature of work, workload and compensation aspects that shape WLB outcomes of MNC employees.
- To assess whether adoption of post-COVID FWA transforms organizational support systems and personal life domains, thereby impacting the overall WLB of MNC employees.
- To test and validate the hypothesis that post-COVID FWA has a significant impact on the overall Work-life Balance of MNC employees in Delhi NCR, examining sub-hypotheses related to specific aspects of work life.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK & RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The following framework showcases all hypothesized relationships between the independent (FWA) and the dependent variable (WLB):

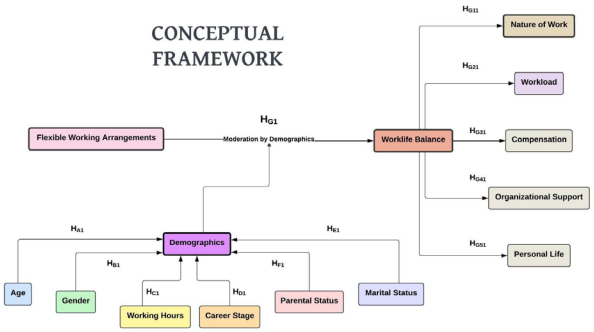

Fig 1: **Conceptual Framework of the study (Source: Authors)**

The conceptual framework showcased above (see Figure 1) visually depicts the hypothesized relationships between FWA, its impacts on the five sub-constructs of WLB, and the moderating role of demographics. This framework lays the foundation for the subsequent analysis, guiding the interpretation of the research findings and contributing to a deeper understanding of the complex interplay between FWAs and WLB in the evolving post-pandemic work landscape in the MNCs of Delhi NCR.

The conceptual framework outlined above guides the study and underscores the critical relationships between key constructs (Figure 1):

Flexible Working Arrangements (FWA): The independent variable in this study, encompassing diverse practices implemented due to the pandemic.

Work-Life Balance (WLB): The dependent variable, defined as the perceived equilibrium between professional demands and personal fulfilment. In this study, five sub-constructs capture the holistic concept of WLB: Nature of Work, Workload, Compensation, Organizational Support, and Personal Life.

Individual demographic factors that potentially influence the FWA-WLB relationship that have been examined in this study are: Age, Gender, Working Hours, Career Stage, Marital Status, and Parental Status.

Based on the given conceptual framework delineated above, the following hypotheses have been framed for testing:

Hypothesis 1:

H_{A1}: The impact of FWA on WLB varies across age groups.

Hypothesis 2:

H_{B1}: The impact of FWA on WLB differs between males and females.

Hypothesis 3:

H_{C1}: The impact of FWA on WLB varies based on working hours.

Hypothesis 4:

H_{D1}: The impact of FWA on WLB varies based on the career stages of employees.

Hypothesis 5:

H_{E1}: The impact of FWA on WLB varies based on the Marital Status of the employees.

Hypothesis 6:

H_{F1}: The impact of FWA on WLB varies based on the Parental Status of the employees.

Hypothesis 7:

H_{G0}: There is a significant impact of Post Covid FWA on the overall WLB of MNC employees in Delhi NCR.

Sub-hypothesis 1:

$H_{G11:}$ FWA have a significant impact on the Nature of Work of MNC employees in Delhi NCR.

Sub-hypothesis 2:

H_{G21}: FWA have a significant impact on the Workload of MNC employees in Delhi NCR.

Sub-hypothesis 3:

H_{G31}: FWA have a significant impact on the Compensation of MNC employees in Delhi NCR.

Sub-hypothesis 4:

H_{G41}: FWA have a significant impact on the Organizational Support offered to the MNC employees in Delhi NCR.

Sub-hypothesis 5:

H_{G51}: FWA have a significant impact on the Personal Life of the MNC employees in Delhi NCR.

Sub-hypothesis 6:

H_{G61}: FWA have a significant impact on the Overall Work-life Balance of the MNC employees in Delhi NCR.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The Research Methodology employed for this research has been explained within the following subsections:

Research Approach

The reasoning approach chosen for this research is the ***Deductive Approach***. The study is built upon the need for establishing results which outline the impact of FWA on WLB of MNC employees in Delhi-NCR, deploying Quantitative Analysis using Primary Survey Data. The base of this study is outcome oriented. The data has been gathered from an Online Questionnaire completed by MNC consultants pertaining to their FWA provisions and perceived WLB; hence, the approach used is deductive as the variables used in this research are predefined, i.e. FWA (Canibano, 2019) and aspects of WLB including Nature of Work, Workload, Compensation, Organizational Support and Personal Life (Avadhani & Menon, 2022). Also, there is a pre-stated set of assumptions to be tested and demographic factors moderate this relationship. A top-down approach was used with theory-based hypotheses evaluated against empirical data. Therefore, this research meets all the requirements of a deductive study.

Research Design

The purpose of this study is to recognize and delineate the impact of FWA on the WLB of MNC employees in Delhi-NCR. The focus of the research is towards describing the current state of FWA provisions and employee WLB outcomes. Hence, a Descriptive Research Design applies to this research.

Additionally, the study puts forth specific hypotheses about relationships between FWA, demographics, and WLB. These hypothesized relationships are then statistically analysed using regression analysis to examine the extent to which post-COVID FWA and demographics predict variation in WLB. Thus, a Correlational Research Design also applies.

Descriptive designs provide accurate portraits of variables like FWA and WLB (Gray et al., 2017), while correlational analysis examines relationships between variables without inferring definitive causality (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). Taken together, the overall research design for this study is

a mix of Descriptive and Correlational Research Designs under the broader Quantitative Research methodology, as it relies on statistical analysis of survey data to both describe and correlate the key variables.

Data Collection

Primary data has been collected using a structured online questionnaire created on Google Forms. Existing validated scales with proven psychometric properties were adapted. WLB was measured using Avadhani and Menon (2022)'s 29-item scale across five factors - nature of work, workload, compensation, organizational support and personal life. FWA comprised 6-items on a single construct from Canibano (2019). The survey link was shared among the target respondents of MNC financial consulting employees in NCR through email, messaging platforms and LinkedIn.

Sampling

A non-probability Purposive Sampling technique has been utilized for this study. The target population was identified as full-time employees working in multinational financial consulting companies in the Delhi-NCR region. This group was deliberately selected given the study's focus on analysing the impact of flexible work policies on work-life balance specifically for MNC professionals.

The sampling frame consisted of employees working in financial consulting roles at 10 renowned MNCs functional in Delhi NCR including KPMG, Deloitte, PwC, McKinsey, EY, Bain, BCG, TCS, Accenture and Mercer. The survey questionnaire was distributed through personal contacts, referrals, and LinkedIn. Links to the online questionnaire were shared with connections working in financial consulting at the targeted MNC firms. These initial contacts further provided referrals to extend participation to other relevant employees in their networks.

The Sample size was estimated based on recommended guidelines for multiple regression models. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2013), a bare minimum ratio of 50 + 8m can be used, where m is the number of independent variables (Green 1991's Sample Size Determination Model for Regression Analysis). With 7 independent variables (1 FWA dimension and 6 demographics) in the analysis, the calculation is: 50 + (8 * 7) = 106 minimum required responses. In total, survey links were distributed to 187 financial consultants across the identified MNCs. Subsequently, questionnaires links were distributed with a mindful consideration of this threshold, resulting in the collection of a total of 128 responses, exceeding the stipulated minimum.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data analysis was done using IBM SPSS Software Version 26. First, the Descriptive Statistics, specifically the frequency tables, were meticulously analysed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the dataset. Thereafter, Reliability Analysis using Cronbach's ***Alpha*** coefficient was used to test the internal consistency of the multi-item scales. This step was perceived to be crucial to ensure the reliability of the measuring instrument, given the utilization of a mix of two pre-validated scales to gauge WLB and FWA. Values exceeded the 0.7 threshold for almost all constructs – Overall Work-life Balance (0.902), Flexible Work Arrangements (0.845) and the five WLB aspects of Nature of Work (0.694), Workload (0.840), Compensation (0.786), Organizational Support (0.705) and Personal Life (0.793). This demonstrates adequate scale reliability.

Further, before hypothesis testing, assumptions of normality, multicollinearity and autocorrelation were checked. Normality was examined using Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk Tests at $p>0.05$, as well Skewness and Kurtosis within +/- 1 range. Multicollinearity was ruled out based on VIF values < 5 and Tolerance > 0.2. Durbin-Watson coefficients between 1.5 - 2.5 indicated no autocorrelation among residuals.

Hypotheses were then tested using two statistical techniques. First, ANCOVA test was used to evaluate the effects of covariates - participant Age, Gender, Career Stage, Daily Working Hours, Marital Status and Parental Status - on the relationship between Flexible Work Arrangements (independent variable) and Work-life Balance (dependent variable). Second, Linear Regression Analysis examined if FWA significantly predicts WLB aspects including Nature of Work, Workload, Compensation, Organizational Support and Personal Life. Statistical significance was evaluated at the 5% level ($p<0.05$).

DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

In the following subsections, the comprehensive analysis of the collected data has been presented:

Reliability Analysis

Reliability Analysis using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was used to test the internal consistency of the multi-item scales.

The following are the output tables representing the alpha values for each individual construct used in this study.

As shown in the output tables presented below, the values exceed the 0.7 threshold for almost all constructs – Overall Work-life Balance (0.902), Flexible Work Arrangements (0.845) and the five WLB aspects of Nature of Work (0.694), Workload (0.840), Compensation (0.786),

Organizational Support (0.705) and Personal Life (0.793). This demonstrates adequate scale reliability.

Cronbach's Alpha of Individual Constructs:

Reliability Statistics (Nature of Work)

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.694	5

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
NOW1	14.67	6.427	.481	.631
NOW2	14.59	7.219	.371	.675
NOW3	14.52	7.196	.336	.688
NOW4	14.96	5.707	.639	.558
NOW5	15.19	5.728	.447	.654

Reliability Statistics (Workload)

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.840	6

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
WL1	15.73	19.822	.694	.800
WL2	15.74	21.059	.573	.823
WL3	16.32	19.668	.640	.810
WL4	15.58	20.041	.617	.814
WL5	15.22	22.015	.495	.836
WL6	15.91	18.385	.691	.799

Reliability Statistics (Compensation)

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.786	4

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
COM1	8.96	8.825	.578	.742
COM2	9.15	8.049	.621	.718
COM3	8.98	7.732	.564	.753
COM4	9.16	8.311	.621	.720

Reliability Statistics (Organizational Support)

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.705	5

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
OS1	12.02	11.590	.442	.665
OS2	11.87	10.352	.481	.650
OS3	12.41	11.188	.551	.624
OS4	12.40	10.667	.529	.628
OS5	12.81	12.311	.324	.711

Reliability Statistics (Personal Life)

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.793	5

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
PL1	13.12	12.955	.499	.776
PL2	13.12	12.057	.602	.744
PL3	13.00	11.559	.694	.713
PL4	13.20	12.473	.608	.743
PL5	13.29	13.168	.466	.787

Reliability Statistics (Flexible Working Arrangement)

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.845	6

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
FWA1	17.55	13.981	.631	.818
FWA2	17.49	13.685	.703	.803
FWA3	17.55	13.982	.685	.807
FWA4	17.36	15.145	.538	.835
FWA5	17.24	15.287	.562	.831
FWA6	17.30	14.305	.629	.818

Overall Scale Reliability:

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	128	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	128	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.902	25

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
NOW1	77.46	228.802	.365	.901
NOW2	77.38	234.947	.160	.904
NOW3	77.31	237.539	.044	.906
NOW4	77.75	225.528	.469	.899
NOW5	77.98	218.212	.602	.896
WL1	78.10	217.005	.628	.895
WL2	78.12	225.081	.391	.900
WL3	78.70	215.395	.623	.895
WL4	77.95	217.636	.571	.897
WL5	77.59	225.015	.410	.900
WL6	78.28	210.692	.689	.893
COM1	78.15	222.285	.498	.898
COM2	78.34	217.217	.591	.896
COM3	78.17	220.537	.433	.900
COM4	78.35	217.568	.613	.896
OS1	77.91	222.032	.471	.899
OS2	77.77	222.464	.376	.901
OS3	78.30	215.599	.713	.894
OS4	78.30	214.242	.666	.894
OS5	78.71	227.687	.292	.903
PL1	77.96	217.345	.603	.896
PL2	77.96	223.203	.412	.900
PL3	77.84	218.716	.554	.897
PL4	78.04	220.243	.542	.897
PL5	78.13	222.148	.455	.899

The demographic profile of the 128 study respondents (working in various Finance Consulting Firms across Delhi NCR) showcases a diverse representation across various categories. In terms of age, the largest group comprises individuals aged 25-30 (52.3%), followed by those in the 18-24 age bracket (20.3%). Gender distribution is nearly equal, with 65 (50.8%) female and 63 (49.2%) male respondents. Marital status indicates that the majority are unmarried (68.0%), while 28.1% are married. A small percentage is separated (2.3%), and 1.6% are divorced. Regarding parental status, a significant proportion (73.4%) report having no children, while 13.3% state that both partners are equally engaged in work and parenting. Working hours are distributed with 37.5% working 9 hours, 20.3% working 8 hours, and 15.6% working 7 hours. In terms of work experience, the majority are in the early career phase (59.4%), followed by 32.0% in the mid-career stage and 8.6% in the late career phase. The statistical breakdown provides a detailed understanding of the respondent demographics, offering a robust foundation for examining the nuanced impact of Post-Covid flexible working arrangements on work-life balance within this diverse sample.

The relevance of this demographic profile to the study on the impact of Post-Covid Flexible Working Arrangements on Work-life Balance will lie in its ability to capture a diverse range of perspectives and experiences. The distribution across age, gender, marital status, parental status, working hours, and career stage will ensure a comprehensive exploration of how these factors may intersect with flexible working arrangements to influence employees' work-life balance in the post-Covid era. Understanding these demographic nuances will be crucial for drawing meaningful conclusions about the generalizability and applicability of study findings to different demographic segments within the workforce.

To this end, in the subsequent section, the paper delves into the intersection between the various demographic variables previously outlined and their interaction with FWA and its influence on WLB. The assessment also encompasses the study of the extent to which these demographic factors mediate the relationship between FWA and WLB.

Descriptive Statistics

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Age	18-24	26	20.3%	20.3%
	25-30	67	52.3%	52.3%
	31-36	22	17.2%	17.2%
	37-43	4	3.1%	3.1%
	44-50	9	7.0%	7.0%
Gender	Female	65	50.8%	50.8%
	Male	63	49.2%	49.2%
Marital_Status	Married	36	28.1%	28.1%
	Unmarried	87	68.0%	68.0%
	Separated	3	2.3%	2.3%
	Divorced	2	1.6%	1.6%
Parental_Status	No Child	94	73.4%	73.4%
	Single Parent	2	1.6%	1.6%
	Both Partners Equally engaged in Work & Parenting	17	13.3%	13.3%
	Joint Family Support in Parenting	10	7.8%	7.8%
	Non-working Partner more engaged in Parenting	5	3.9%	3.9%
Working_Hours	7 hours	20	15.6%	15.6%
	8 hours	26	20.3%	20.3%
	9 hours	48	37.5%	37.5%
	10 hours	16	12.5%	12.5%
	11 hours	5	3.9%	3.9%
	12 hours or more	13	10.2%	10.2%
Work_Experience	Early Career (0-5 years)	76	59.4%	59.4%
	Mid Career (6-19 Years)	41	32.0%	32.0%
	Late Career (20 years and above)	11	8.6%	8.6%

Assumption Testing

Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Nature of Work	.013	128	.058	.970	128	.072
Work Load	.010	128	.054	.980	128	.061
Compensation	.003	128	.002	.975	128	.089
Organizational Support	.027	128	.200*	.982	128	.197
Personal Life	.016	128	.095	.972	128	.110
Overall WLB	.008	128	.200*	.986	128	.193

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

The results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests (for the unstandardised residuals) indicate that for the variables Nature of Work and Workload, the p-values are slightly above the threshold of 0.05, suggesting potential non-normality. However, they are in close proximity to this threshold. On the other hand, Compensation, Organizational Support, Personal Life, and Overall WLB have p-values above 0.05, providing evidence that these variables follow a normal distribution.

Considering the sensitivity of these tests, especially with larger sample sizes (Orcan, 2020), additional methods were employed to assess normality. Visual representations, such as histograms with fitted normal curves, were

examined. Furthermore, researchers often propose that skewness and kurtosis values up to an absolute value of 1 may still indicate normality (Huck, 2012; Demir et al., 2016; Ramos et al., 2018; Orcan, 2020). On cross-examining these values for the above-mentioned variables, it was found that skewness and kurtosis fall within the acceptable range of absolute 1, supporting the assumption of normality for Nature of Work, Workload, Compensation, Organizational Support, Personal Life, and Overall WLB.

Furthermore, a thorough examination of the residuals was conducted to assess the assumptions of multicollinearity and autocorrelation. In terms of collinearity diagnostics, it is generally accepted that a tolerance above 0.2 and a VIF below 5 indicate an absence of multicollinearity issues. Notably, the tolerance levels and VIF for all variables were observed to be in close proximity to 1. This provides robust evidence that there are no significant concerns regarding multicollinearity in the models tested below. Besides, the Durbin-Watson test assesses the presence of autocorrelation in the residuals of a regression analysis. The statistic has a range from 0 to 4, with a value around 2 indicating no significant autocorrelation. The Durbin Watson statistics for all the residuals in this study ranged between 1.5 to 2.5, which suggests a lack of substantial autocorrelation in the residuals, supporting the independence assumption of the regression model.

Inferential Statistics

Hypothesis 1:

H_{A0}: The impact of FWA on WLB is the same across all age groups.

H_{A1}: The impact of FWA on WLB varies across age groups.

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Indexed_WLB

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	36.201[a]	40	.905	6.321	.000
Intercept	498.555	1	498.555	3481.771	.000
Flexible_Working_Arrangements	20.917	19	1.101	7.688	.000
Age	1.790	4	.448	3.125	.019
Flexible_Working_Arrangements * Age	8.035	17	.473	3.301	.000
Error	12.458	87	.143		
Total	1397.173	128			
Corrected Total	48.659	127			

a. R Squared = .744 (Adjusted R Squared = .626)

The Corrected Model examines the overall impact of Flexible Working Arrangements, Age, and their interaction on the dependent variable (Work-life Balance) while controlling for other variables. The F-statistic (6.321) is associated with a p-value of .000, indicating that the model is statistically significant. For FWA, the F-statistic (7.688) with a p-value of .000 indicates that there is a significant main effect of FWA on the dependent variable, WLB. For Age, the F-statistic (3.125) with a p-value of .019 indicates that there is a significant main effect of Age on the dependent variable, WLB.

Showcasing the interaction effect between FWA and Age, the F-statistic (3.301) with a p-value of .000 indicates a significant interaction effect between FWA and Age on the dependent variable, WLB. This suggests that the impact of FWA on WLB differs across different age groups. Further, the Adjusted R-squared (0.626) suggests that 62.6% of the variation in WLB can be explained by the predictor variables, FWA and Age. Based on the results of the two-way ANOVA, the alternate hypothesis, i.e., The impact of FWA on WLB varies across age groups, stands accepted.

Hypothesis 2:

H_{B0}: The impact of FWA on WLB is the same for both males and females.

H_{B1}: The impact of FWA on WLB differs between males and females.

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Indexed_WLB

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	30.572[a]	29	1.054	5.712	.000
Intercept	685.367	1	685.367	3713.576	.000
Flexible_Working_Arrangements	24.290	19	1.278	6.927	.000
Gender	.402	1	.402	2.180	.143
Flexible_Working_Arrangements * Gender	4.925	9	.547	2.965	.004
Error	18.087	98	.185		
Total	1397.173	128			
Corrected Total	48.659	127			

a. R Squared = .628 (Adjusted R Squared = .518)

The overall F test is significant (F=5.712, p<.001), which implies that there are significant mean differences among the groups formed by the independent variables (FWA, Gender) on the dependent variable (WLB). For FWA, the effect on WLB is significant (F=6.927, p<.001). It indicates the different categories/levels of flexible working arrangements have a significant influence on WLB.

The effect of Gender on WLB is non-significant. It means gender on its own does not significantly impact WLB index. Interaction Effect (FWA * Gender) is significant (F=2.965, p=.004). It suggests the effect of flexible working arrangements on WLB differs across the categories of gender. So, there is moderation effect happening by gender. Adjusted R^2 of .518 means 51.8% of variance in the relationship between FWA and WLB could be attributed to the Gender of the respondents.

In summary, the results support flexible working arrangements and its interaction with gender having significant effects on work-life balance, while gender alone does not.

Hypothesis 3:

H_{C0}: The impact of FWA on WLB is the same across different working hours.

H_{C1}: The impact of FWA on WLB varies based on working hours.

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Indexed_WLB

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	41.870[a]	48	.872	10.151	.000
Intercept	589.125	1	589.125	6855.764	.000
Daily_Working_Hours	4.137	5	.827	9.628	.000
Flexible_Working_Arrangements	21.824	19	1.149	13.367	.000
Daily_Working_Hours * Flexible_Working_Arrangements	12.495	24	.521	6.059	.000
Error	6.789	79	.086		
Total	1397.173	128			
Corrected Total	48.659	127			

a. R Squared = .860 (Adjusted R Squared = .776)

The Model presented above is statistically significant ($F(48, 79) = 10.151$, $p < .001$). Both Daily Working Hours and Flexible Working Arrangements are individually significant predictors of Work-Life Balance ($p < .001$ for both). This implies that each of these factors has a statistically significant impact on WLB. Moreover, the interaction term (Daily Working Hours * Flexible Working Arrangements) is also significant ($p < .001$). This indicates that the impact of FWA on WLB is not consistent across all levels of Daily Working Hours, supporting the alternate hypothesis (H_{C1}). The Adjusted R-squared value for the model is 0.776, suggesting that the model explains a substantial proportion (77.6%) of the variance in Work-Life Balance.

Further, the Intercept and Daily Working Hours have high F-values and very low p-values, indicating their strong impact on WLB. The main effect of Flexible Working Arrangements is also significant, highlighting its importance in predicting WLB. The interaction effect's significance implies that the combined impact of Daily Working Hours and Flexible Working Arrangements is not simply additive. In summary, the results support the Alternate Hypothesis, indicating that the impact of Flexible Working Arrangements on Work-Life Balance varies based on different working hours. The model overall is highly significant and explains a substantial amount of the variance in Indexed Work-Life Balance.

Hypothesis 4:

H_{D0}: The impact of FWA on WLB is the same across all career stages.

H_{D1}: The impact of FWA on WLB varies based on the career stages of employees.

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Indexed_WLB

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	33.760[a]	34	.993	6.198	.000
Intercept	509.306	1	509.306	3179.176	.000
Flexible_Working_Arrangements	25.628	19	1.349	8.420	.000
Work_Experience	.292	2	.146	.913	.405
Flexible_Working_Arrangements * Work_Experience	8.290	13	.638	3.980	.000
Error	14.899	93	.160		
Total	1397.173	128			
Corrected Total	48.659	127			

a. R Squared = .694 (Adjusted R Squared = .582)

The model examining the impact of FWA on WLB across career stages is statistically significant ($F(34, 93) = 6.198$, $p < .001$). FWA is a significant predictor ($p < .001$), while Work Experience alone is not significant ($p = .405$). However, the interaction term (FWA * Work Experience) is significant ($p < .001$), supporting the alternate hypothesis (H_{D1}) that the impact of FWA on Work-Life Balance varies based on career stages. The model explains a substantial proportion of variance (Adjusted R-squared = 0.582), indicating practical significance. In summary, results support H_{D1}, emphasizing the importance of tailoring FWA strategies to different career stages for optimal Work-Life Balance.

Hypothesis 5:

H_{E0}: The impact of FWA on WLB is the same across all Marital Status Categories.

H_{E1}: The impact of FWA on WLB varies based on the Marital Status of the employees.

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Indexed_WLB

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	29.854[a]	33	.905	4.522	.000
Intercept	274.000	1	274.000	1369.637	.000
Flexible_Working_Arrangements	23.370	19	1.230	6.148	.000
Marital_Status	.925	3	.308	1.542	.209
Flexible_Working_Arrangements * Marital_Status	4.074	11	.370	1.851	.056
Error	18.805	94	.200		
Total	1397.173	128			
Corrected Total	48.659	127			

a. R Squared = .614 (Adjusted R Squared = .478)

The model assessing the impact of FWA on WLB across Marital Status Categories is statistically significant ($F(33, 94) = 4.522$, $p < .001$). FWA is a significant predictor ($p < .001$), while Marital Status alone is not significant ($p = .209$). However, the interaction term (FWA * Marital Status) is marginally significant ($p = .056$), supporting the alternate hypothesis (H_{E1}) that the impact of FWA on WLB may vary based on marital status. The model explains a substantial proportion of variance (R-squared = 0.614, Adjusted R-squared = 0.478). In summary, results suggest a potential interaction effect, indicating that the impact of FWA on WLB might differ across various marital status categories.

Hypothesis 6:

H_{F0}: The impact of FWA on WLB is the same across all Parental Status Categories.

H_{F1}: The impact of FWA on WLB varies based on the Parental Status of the employees.

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Indexed_WLB

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	32.568[a]	36	.905	5.116	.000
Intercept	357.672	1	357.672	2022.727	.000
Flexible_Working_Arrangements	24.307	19	1.279	7.235	.000
Parental_Status	2.397	4	.599	3.389	.012
Flexible_Working_Arrangements * Parental_Status	4.194	13	.323	1.825	.051
Error	16.091	91	.177		
Total	1397.173	128			
Corrected Total	48.659	127			

a. R Squared = .669 (Adjusted R Squared = .538)

The analysis investigating the influence of Flexible Working Arrangements on Work-Life Balance across Parental Status Categories reveals statistical significance ($F(36, 91) = 5.116$, $p < .001$). FWA significantly predicts WLB ($p < .001$), and Parental Status is also a significant factor ($p = .012$). Moreover, the interaction term (FWA * Parental Status) shows a marginally significant impact ($p = .051$), supporting the alternative hypothesis (H_{F1}) that the impact of FWA on WLB may vary based on the parental status. The model accounts for a substantial proportion of variance (R-squared = 0.669, Adjusted R-squared = 0.538). In summary, the results suggest that FWA may have a differential impact on WLB depending on parental status, highlighting the need for differentiated strategies in fostering work-life balance in employees with diverse parental responsibilities.

Hypothesis 7:

H_{G0}: There is no significant impact of Post Covid FWA on the overall WLB of MNC employees in Delhi NCR.

H_{G0}: There is a significant impact of Post Covid FWA on the overall WLB of MNC employees in Delhi NCR.

Sub-hypothesis 1:

H_{G10}: FWA have no significant impact on the Nature of Work of MNC employees in Delhi NCR.

H_{G11}: FWA have a significant impact on the Nature of Work of MNC employees in Delhi NCR.

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.319[a]	.102	.095	.58249	2.393

a. Predictors: (Constant), Flexible_Working_Arrangements

b. Dependent Variable: Nature_Of_Work

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4.847	1	4.847	14.287	.000[b]
	Residual	42.751	126	.339		
	Total	47.599	127			

a. Dependent Variable: Nature_Of_Work

b. Predictors: (Constant), Flexible_Working_Arrangements

The Durbin-Watson statistic in the model is 2.393. The Durbin-Watson test assesses the presence of autocorrelation in the residuals of a regression analysis. The statistic has a range from 0 to 4, with a value around 2 indicating no significant autocorrelation. In this case, the Durbin-Watson value of 2.393 suggests a lack of substantial autocorrelation in the residuals, indicating that the independence assumption of the regression model is reasonably met. The analysis evaluating the impact of FWA on the Nature of Work for MNC employees in Delhi NCR is statistically significant ($F(1, 126) = 14.287$, $p < .001$). The model explains a modest proportion of variance (R-squared = 0.102, Adjusted R-squared = 0.095). The positive regression coefficient (R = 0.319) supports the alternate hypothesis (H_{G11}), indicating that FWA has a significant positive impact on the Nature of Work. In summary, results suggest that FWA plays a significant role in influencing the nature of work for MNC employees in Delhi NCR.

Sub-hypothesis 2:

H_{G20}: FWA have no significant impact on the Workload of MNC employees in Delhi NCR.

H_{G21}: FWA have a significant impact on the Workload of MNC employees in Delhi NCR.

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.402[a]	.161	.155	.81282	1.915

a. Predictors: (Constant), Flexible Working Arrangement

b. Dependent Variable: Work Load

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	16.023	1	16.023	24.252	.000[b]
	Residual	83.246	126	.661		
	Total	99.269	127			

a. Dependent Variable: Work Load

b. Predictors: (Constant), Flexible Working Arrangement

The analysis investigating the impact of Flexible Working Arrangements on the Workload of MNC employees in Delhi NCR is statistically significant ($F(1, 126) = 24.252$, $p < .001$). The model accounts for a moderate proportion of variance (R-squared = 0.161, Adjusted R-squared = 0.155). The positive correlation coefficient (R = 0.402) supports the alternate hypothesis (H_{G21}), indicating that FWA has a significant positive impact on the Workload. The Durbin-Watson statistic of 1.915 suggests a lack of substantial autocorrelation in the residuals, supporting the independence assumption of the regression model. In summary, the results suggest that FWA significantly influences the workload of MNC employees in Delhi NCR.

Sub-hypothesis 3:

H_{G30}: FWA have no significant impact on the Compensation of MNC employees in Delhi NCR.

H_{G31}: FWA have a significant impact on the Compensation of MNC employees in Delhi NCR.

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	22.655	1	22.655	33.300	.000[b]
	Residual	85.723	126	.680		
	Total	108.378	127			

a. Dependent Variable: Compensation

b. Predictors: (Constant), Flexible Working Arrangement

The analysis examining the impact of Flexible Working Arrangements on the Compensation of MNC employees in Delhi NCR is highly statistically significant ($F(1, 126) = 33.300$, $p < .001$). The model explains a substantial proportion of variance (R-squared = 0.209, Adjusted R-squared = 0.203). The positive correlation coefficient (R = 0.457) supports the alternate hypothesis (H_{G31}), indicating that FWA has a significant impact on Compensation. The Durbin-Watson statistic of 1.802 suggests a lack of substantial autocorrelation in the residuals, supporting the independence assumption of the regression model. In summary, the results suggest that FWA significantly influences the compensation of MNC employees in Delhi NCR.

Sub-hypothesis 4:

H_{G40}: FWA have no significant impact on the Organizational Support offered to the MNC employees in Delhi NCR.

H_{G41}: FWA have a significant impact on the Organizational Support offered to the MNC employees in Delhi NCR.

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.269[a]	.072	.065	.78154	1.580

a. Predictors: (Constant), Flexible Working Arrangement

b. Dependent Variable: Organizational Support

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5.999	1	5.999	9.822	.002[b]
	Residual	76.961	126	.611		
	Total	82.960	127			

a. Dependent Variable: Organizational Support

b. Predictors: (Constant), Flexible Working Arrangement

The analysis investigating the impact of Flexible Working Arrangements on the Organizational Support offered to MNC employees in Delhi NCR is statistically significant ($F(1, 126) = 9.822$, $p = .002$). The model accounts for a modest proportion of variance (R-squared = 0.072, Adjusted R-squared = 0.065). The positive regression coefficient (R = 0.269) supports the alternate hypothesis (HG41), indicating that FWA has a significant impact on Organizational Support. The Durbin-Watson statistic of 1.580 suggests a lack of substantial autocorrelation in the residuals, supporting the independence assumption of the regression model. In summary, the results suggest that FWA significantly influences the level of Organizational Support offered to MNC employees in Delhi NCR.

Sub-hypothesis 5:

H_{G50}: FWA have no significant impact on the Personal Life of the MNC employees in Delhi NCR.

H_{G51}: FWA have a significant impact on the Personal Life of the MNC employees in Delhi NCR.

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.711[a]	.505	.501	.60710	1.917

a. Predictors: (Constant), Flexible Working Arrangement

b. Dependent Variable: Personal Life

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	47.455	1	47.455	128.756	.000[b]
	Residual	46.439	126	.369		
	Total	93.895	127			

a. Dependent Variable: Personal Life

b. Predictors: (Constant), Flexible Working Arrangement

The analysis examining the impact of Flexible Working Arrangements on the Personal Life of MNC employees in Delhi NCR is highly statistically significant ($F(1, 126) = 128.756$, $p < .001$). The model explains a substantial proportion of variance (R-squared = 0.505, Adjusted R-squared = 0.501). The positive regression coefficient ($R = 0.711$) supports the alternate hypothesis (HG51), indicating that FWA has a significant impact on Personal Life. The Durbin-Watson statistic of 1.917 suggests a lack of substantial autocorrelation in the residuals, supporting the independence assumption of the regression model. In summary, the results suggest that FWA significantly influences the Personal Life of MNC employees in Delhi NCR.

Sub-hypothesis 6:

H_{G60}: FWA have no significant impact on the Overall Work-life Balance of the MNC employees in Delhi NCR.

H_{G61}: FWA have a significant impact on the Overall Work-life Balance of the MNC employees in Delhi NCR.

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.582[a]	.339	.334	.50530	1.759

a. Predictors: (Constant), Flexible Working Arrangement

b. Dependent Variable: Overall WLB

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	16.488	1	16.488	64.574	.000[b]
	Residual	32.171	126	.255		
	Total	48.659	127			

a. Dependent Variable: Overall WLB

b. Predictors: (Constant), Flexible Working Arrangement

The analysis investigating the impact of Flexible Working Arrangements on the Overall Work-Life Balance of MNC employees in Delhi NCR is highly statistically significant ($F (1, 126) = 64.574$, $p < .001$). The model explains a substantial proportion of variance (R-squared = 0.339, Adjusted R-squared = 0.334). The positive regression coefficient ($R = 0.582$) supports the alternate hypothesis (H_{G61}), indicating that FWA has a significant impact on Overall Work-Life Balance. The Durbin-Watson statistic of 1.759 suggests a lack of substantial autocorrelation in the residuals, supporting the independence assumption of the regression model. In summary, the results suggest that FWA significantly influences the Overall Work-Life Balance of MNC employees in Delhi NCR.

FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

This section presents the key findings of the statistical analysis conducted to examine the impact of post-COVID FWA on WLB of MNC employees in Delhi-NCR. The first hypothesis (H_A) assessed the impact of FWA on WLB across age groups. The significant two-way interaction effect ($F=3.301$, $p<0.01$) supported variation in FWA benefits for WLB by age. This aligns with life stage models (Schulz & Zacher, 2020), highlighting that evolving responsibilities shape the utility employees gain from flexibility over their careers. Considering the ongoing hybrid work models, companies must proactively modify policies to address changing lifecycle priorities. Next, the second hypothesis (H_B), on the moderating influence of gender was partially supported. While the individual effect of gender was non-significant, its marginal interaction with FWA ($F=2.965$, $p=0.004$) pointed to potential differences in relevance and adoption of FWA between males and females. As evidenced by Buehrer (2022) as well, women may derive more advantages from location flexibility while men value flexible scheduling, especially later in careers with parental duties. Thus, ensuring inclusivity of flexible work programs is vital for the future success of

these work models.

The hypothesis H_C on differential impacts of daily work hours on the FWA WLB relationship was strongly supported (Interaction Effect: $p<0.01$). This highlights the substantial influence that daily work hours exert on the dynamics between FWA and WLB. It aligns with the findings of Luo et al. (2021), suggesting that prolonged or intensive work hours can hinder the potential benefits derived from FWA. In light of these results, it becomes crucial to establish and enforce stringent availability expectations and workload caps to mitigate the risks associated with overwork. This emphasizes the importance of a balanced approach to ensure that FWA positively contributes to employees' work-life balance without being undermined by excessive work hours. H_D results indicated the career cycle changes FWA utility, similar to Rudolph et al. (2020). Specifically, the results suggest that the mid-career stage may experience diminished gains from FWA, potentially attributed to peak demands during this phase. In response, it becomes imperative for companies to proactively monitor and understand employee preferences, tailoring policies and communication strategies to boost relevance across diverse professional maturity levels. This nuanced approach ensures that FWA initiatives remain adaptive and effectively cater to the evolving needs of employees throughout their career trajectories.

The potential variations highlighted in hypotheses H_E and H_F, focusing on marital and parental status, underscore the necessity for customized offerings that address the unique needs of individuals in caregiving roles, including responsibilities related to child and elder care. This aligns with the recommendations put forth by Chung and van der Lippe (2020), advocating for tailored approaches that acknowledge the distinctive challenges faced by employees with family responsibilities. The marginal interaction effects observed in the study further emphasize that family concerns significantly shape the adoption of Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA). In response to these insights, implementing dedicated policies akin to those at Cisco (Bell et al., 2012) becomes paramount. Prioritizing schedule flexibility and remote work options for working parents not only aligns with the specific needs of employees but also enhances perceived organizational support. This strategic approach fosters an organizational culture that actively supports individuals in balancing their work and caregiving responsibilities, contributing to overall employee satisfaction and well-being.

Coming to the facet-wise impacts, FWA displayed significant positive influences on all five aspects of WLB - Nature of Work (H_{G1}), Workload (H_{G2}), Compensation (H_{G3}), Organizational Support (H_{G4}) and Personal Life (H_{G5}). The high explanatory power (over 50% for personal life dimensions) align with advantages of boundary control and autonomy highlighted in prior Indian studies as well (Chatterjee & Kulshrestha, 2022). The overall boost in Work-life Balance too validates that Flexible Arrangements can continue to foster employee wellbeing post-pandemic. However, companies must remain cognizant that excessive autonomy risks work intensification and poor psychological detachment after hours (Dambitzer et al., 2021). Thus, monitoring workload via digital tools and clearly communicating availability expectations will help prevent burnout. Confidential employee feedback channels shall allow for continually enhancing policies' relevance.

To put it succinctly, the findings outlined above provide a detailed, data-backed assessment of FWA's role in improving MNC employees' Work-life Balance in the post-COVID era if tailored suitably to individual, family and career stage needs. The implications can guide global corporations in sustaining a healthy, empowered workforce through empathetic and tailor-made Flexibility policies.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

The following represent some potential limitations of this research:

1. The scope of this study was restricted to MNC Financial Consultants in Delhi-NCR region only. Expanding the target population to professionals across sectors and geographic regions would boost external validity.

2. Sampling technique used was non-probability Purposive Sampling. While relevant for current objectives, probability sampling would allow more robust statistical inferences about the target population.

3. Sample size of 128 may be adequate but is relatively small. Future studies could aim for larger sample sizes to improve generalizability.

4. Potential confounding variables like Organizational Culture, Employee Personalities etc. were not controlled for. Future studies could measure and statistically control for such factors.

CONCLUSION

This research examined the relationship between Flexible Work Arrangements implemented during the post-COVID era and Work-life Balance outcomes among MNC employees in Delhi-NCR. The primary objective was assessing the impact of FWA adoption on employees' overall ability to integrate their work and personal responsibilities. Additionally, moderating effects of demographics were tested along with detailed investigation of influences on specific WLB aspects. The findings strongly validated the overarching hypothesis on the positive, significant impact of post-pandemic FWA on WLB. Regression analysis demonstrated enhanced abilities to manage work and personal responsibilities with facets like schedule control and remote working options. Significant interactions with age, gender, marital status, parental status, career stage and work hours emphasized tailoring custom solutions aligned to

evolving responsibilities across career and varying family milestones.

As hypothesized, FWA positively affected all studied WLB dimensions including Nature of Work, Workload, Compensation, Organizational Support and Personal Life. This affirms that postmodern flexible policies can foster worker wellbeing. However, a cautionary note was sounded, urging companies to monitor workload, prevent burnout, and maintain psychological detachment after working hours. Concerns of increased permeability require mitigation strategies like workload caps and availability norms. But overall, aligned flexible arrangements simultaneously benefit employees and global corporations adapting to hybrid models. Finding the optimal balance necessitates continuous co-creation between diverse individual needs, management objectives and changing realities.

Essentially, this study provides robust empirical evidence and actionable insights regarding a defining feature of the new normal. The research offers profound implications for organizations seeking to sustain a healthy, empowered workforce through empathetic and tailor-made FWA policies in the post-COVID era. The findings advocate customizing FWA via lifecycle considerations as a sustainable people-first strategy to nurture an empowered, satisfied workforce amidst uncertainty. The detailed insights provided guide organizations in shaping their FWA strategies to align with individual, family, and career stage needs, fostering a culture of flexibility and resilience in the post-COVID work landscape. There remain rich avenues for furthering investigations into optimal policy structures as revolutionary workplace transformations continue apace.

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