

A STUDY ON TALENT MANAGEMENT OF MILLENNIALS AND GEN Z IN INDIA THROUGH WORK FROM HOME (WFH) INITIATIVE POST COVID-19

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ABSTRACT

The study aims to understand the sentiments of the Millennials and Gen Z professionals in India towards Work from Home (WFH). It aims to expand understanding on the impact of WFH on their personal and professional life, whether WFH should be part of the workforce strategies and will it affect the employer Brand of the company. The study is descriptive in nature, with data being collected through questionnaire from professionals across various industries. The analysis of data highlighted the findings that WFH can have a positive effect on the personal and professional life of the professionals, but it would require proper planning as per the type of business. Also, flexible working can be initiated as the first step towards WFH, which should eventually lead to WFH being part of the human resource (HR) policy. Finally, companies that initiating WFH will have better retention and will be preferred as employer.

Keywords: Talent Management, Work from Home, Millennials, Gen Z, India, COVID-19

INTRODUCTION

The concept of WFH was a concept the world would have heard in the future, spanning over many years. The global pandemic situation, however, brought the entire world to early entry to the WFH trend. It becomes preferable mainly during lockdown situations around the world. Businesses had their own challenges in facing the pandemic situation in keeping their business running. On one side, the business was concerned about how to keep the business going and on the other side, they were also concerned about the wellness of the employees. The companies took the required efforts to ensure the continuity of their business and minimize the damage to the finances of the company. In many cases, the operations of the business were managed remotely by implementing innovative ideas and maintaining communication and coordination virtually in the best possible way. Now that the situation is a little under control, with the vaccines also in the distribution phase, it is important to study the possibility of the continuation of remote working, flexible working and permanent WFH in the years to come. The previous research conducted by the researcher highlighted the benefits achieved by companies from WFH initiatives. It also highlighted the future

benefits seen by experts in continuing the innovative ways of running the business. It would not make sense to go back to the traditional ways, when we know that the new ways have brought positive changes for various businesses across different industries. The businesses have already implemented innovative ways of doing things which have taken them 5 years ahead in implementing practices related to work activities. Taking a U-turn to restore the old way of doing things would not make any sense for the business.

To understand the possibility of the businesses to continue with the new way of doing things, it is important to know the opinion of the professionals working with them. The main change-makers and initiators would be these professionals in the period post COVID-19. Hence, the research topic has been selected for the study.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There are various studies conducted on millennials and Gen Z and their experiences with WFH during the pandemic. The studies have been mainly conducted in the US. Many articles and research reports also have been proposed on the work and life experiences of the generations during the pandemic and what lies ahead for them and the companies at large. One of the studies showed that it has been more difficult for millennials to get things done from employees than their older counterparts during COVID-19. Sleeplessness is one of the major issues faced by them. They also faced difficulty while communicating with teams, gathering work updates, or getting the required information for the projects (Agovino, 2020). Remote working has affected the work life balance of Gen Z and they expect better tools from the company for making remote working smoother. Gen Z needs their managers to be well informed, while millennials want their managers to be more candid. There is discrepancy in the experience and opinion on remote working. It is important for companies to understand it as there are employees from multiple generations working in their office who are managed remotely. The presence of Gen Z will embark the new changes in the hybrid mode of working. The pandemic had mainly affected Gen Z. Their outlook and their expectations are informed. Employers need to provide faulty for mental wellness and financial stability. Gen Z also does not prefer WFH. They like to work and communicate in person. They feel isolated and hence they feel the need to reconnect and interact. They all expect training to be in person. (Gurchiek,2020). Millennials are more concerned about their older parents and have uncertainty about the future. Gen Z too have concerns about balancing their work, life, and family. They are the ones who are more disrupted by the pandemic because this time is most crucial for them to grow personally and professionally. Millennials have been less productive during the pandemic, due to a major problem, a lack of connectivity. Gen Z is starting their experience at work with remote working, which will show ramifications on turnover and their engagement in the long run. (Schawbel, 2020). Gen Z would prefer less time commuting or would commute in off peak hours as this would allow them to spend more time on other things that they love apart from work. Focus on employees' well-being will be required even in the post-pandemic era. The employees will expect the companies to continually provide care, which they showed during the pandemic. The right rewards for the work and loyalty of employees will also pay returns for the

companies in the days to come. Also, the drastic change towards WFH will help Gen Z to live in the outskirts or small cities and will help them to follow their passion. WFH has proven to be productive from any location which has good network connectivity (Wilson, 2020). The fortune Survey Monkey pool which covered 2802 US adults showed that productivity of Gen Z decreased ever since they were following WFH. It could have been difficult for them without in person direction or proper onboarding of remote employees. (Lambert, 2020).

The Gallop survey data highlights that remote work is among the give variables of millennials' engagement. 75% of millennials would like to contribute with remote working. Millennials are the future professionals who will also eventually be responsible for management. Their needs matter and employee engagement are one of the most important ones among their needs. Fulfilling this need would enhance their employee experience very quickly, leading to better performance and business results. (Robinson, 2021). The 3 main areas the companies need to focus on during the pandemic situation for Gen Z are skill development, stress management, and emotional intelligence. Gen Z has seen the tested times and hence has a blend of resiliency and humanity. Hence companies can take benefits out of this by providing structured support to them. They are new in the corporate world and would require proper training and support to make them face the work challenges. It will ensure their smooth transition to become competent employees (Rikleen, 2020). Millennials mainly started the terms of remote work and had expressed their interest in it for a long time. However, companies did not pay due attention to it until pandemic situation. For Millennials, sitting at a desk doesn't ensure accountability but it's the performance that matters. Flexibility, trust, transparency, and engagement will lead to loyalty and enhanced performance. (Fuscaldo, 2021). Working remotely will be a big deal in the days to come. Millennials will have a different way of managing their work and life. It is important that home office, office, anywhere else and virtual space all fit together in companies so that anyone can work at any time by being happy and productive, which is easily missing currently across companies. (Dr. Burkhart, 2020). Many Millennials will not be willing to return to the 40-hr week working from office or to less paid vacations and leaves. They prefer flexibility in deciding the work hours and do not mind if that leads to working at odd hours or even more hours. Employees may also adapt to the thought that such flexibility could reduce employee attrition in a big way. Also, the companies will become better in terms of attracting the best talent. (Bouquet, 2020).

A survey of 1,800 employees showed that 16% will switch to the WFH pattern at least two day/week because of COVID-19. It would bring change in the workplace norms, affecting the company, its employees, and its policy makers. (Senz, 2020). A survey conducted by Kentik showed that 47% believed their productivity enhanced the whole WFH during COVID -19. However, 51% also felt concerned about their work-life balance (Press, 2020). According to the CEO of Slack, Mr. Stewart Butterfield, companies who have better digital transformation will have better engagement, agility, alignment and teamwork across all disciplines and locations. This will also provide them a competitive advantage. Rosanna Durruthy, VP of LinkedIn, mentions that leaders will require to understand the problems of working parents and need to offer flexibility by changing the traditional 9 to 5 trend of working, promote transparency and check-ins between

colleagues about their availability and work schedule. (Fogarty, 2020). Millennials and Gen Z are not just expecting to have a better world after the pandemic but are also looking forward to lead that change. Their opinions will play a major role in creating a better future. The leaders need to get inputs from them on how to make the workplace more flexible and accommodative. They also need to give them training and help them realise their personal and professional ambitions (Deloitte Global Human Capital Trends, 2020).

The research gap identified is that lack of extensive study conducted on sentiments of Millennial and Gen Z working professionals in India about WFH. The literature mainly highlights similar studies conducted in western countries, mainly US. There is need of extensive study on the pattern of the WFH experience of Millennial and Gen Z working professionals in India during and post lockdown in COVID-19 situation. The literature highlights some important steps to be taken by leaders in companies. It is required to study whether those steps would be applicable to Indian employees. The research problem for the study is to understand the sentiments of the Millennials and Gen Z professionals in India towards Work from Home (WFH) and should the companies in India take cognizance of these sentiments to update their workforce strategies? The study would focus on answering four research questions. The first question would be to understand what impact WFH would have on the personal wellbeing of respondents viz. quality of life, health, and career growth. The second question would focus on understanding what impact WFH would have on the professional wellbeing of respondents viz. quality of work, quantity of work and work performance. The answer to these two questions needs to be checked against the respondents' demographic factors viz. gender, job level, annual income and family type. This would lead to the third question of whether respondents believe that workforce strategies need to be updated i.e., should ROTA system, Flexi hours and WFH be included in the policies of the companies. Finally, this leads to the fourth question of whether it will affect the employer branding of the company i.e., companies will have better talent availability, will become a good place to work and will have better employee retention. The study of literature highlights that there is variation in the outcomes of various research studies conducted in the US on young professionals. While on the one hand it shows a decrease in productivity while WFH, on the other hand, it shows the need of WFH and flexibility as an expected option by Millennials and Gen Z as it would provide them more free time for other important activities in their life. Hence, it reflects the inconsistency expressed by young professionals of a country towards the WFH pattern.

The literature study also highlights that there are several measures required to be taken by companies to ensure that the employees find it convenient and productive to be working. The companies and their leaders will require to focus on the care for their employees and would accordingly require planning initiatives as per the expectations of the employees. The research topic hence becomes important as it will provide extensive insights to the business leaders in India about what the Millennials and Gen Z, who are either part of their company or going to be part of their company, are expecting from their employers and what would help the businesses to outshine in the competitive world and become a better employer brand as compared to their competitors. It also mentions the importance of employee engagement, trustworthiness, changing the definition

of accountability, and digital transformation. The researcher has hence selected the topic to understand if there are similar expectations of Indian employees from their companies or are there any variations. Last but not the least, the literature study continuously emphasizes how important it is to study and understand the opinions of the millennials, who are going to move to management soon, and of Gen Z, who are new to the company because then only will the business go in the right direction in terms of designing policies, framing strategies, and achieving the goal. Due to all the aforesaid reasons, and the importance of the outcome of the study to the Indian employees, the business leaders, and the business at large, the research topic has been selected for the study.

Research objectives

To study the sentiments of Millennials and Gen Z professionals in India towards WFH, encompassing its effect on the personal wellbeing, professional wellbeing, workforce strategies and employer branding

To analyse the sentiments of Millennials and Gen Z professionals in India towards WFH against their gender

To analyse the sentiments of Millennials and Gen Z professionals in India towards WFH against their job level

To analyse the sentiments of Millennials and Gen Z professionals in India towards WFH against their family type

To understand the possibility of WFH be made part of the workforce strategies of companies To understand the effect of WFH on employer branding of the companies

Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: WFH would lead to personal wellbeing of employees across all annual income groups

Hypothesis 2: WFH would lead to professional wellbeing of employees across all annual income groups

Hypothesis 3: WFH would lead to personal wellbeing of employees across gender

Hypothesis 4: WFH would lead to professional wellbeing of employees across gender

Hypothesis 5: WFH would lead to personal wellbeing of employees across all job levels

Hypothesis 6: WFH would lead to professional wellbeing of employees across all job levels

Hypothesis 7: WFH would lead to personal wellbeing of employees across all family types

Hypothesis 8: WFH would lead to professional wellbeing of employees across all family types

Hypothesis 9: The workforce strategies of the companies should be updated with rota system, flexi hours and WFH in it

Hypothesis 10: WFH would enhance employer branding of companies leading to better talent availability, good place to work and better employee retention

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study has started with an exploratory literature review. The extensive literature review is done for work from home based on the research papers published in foreign journals during the period and a research paper on it is presented in the month of February 2021 at a research conference by the authors. Moreover, the research gaps and research problems are identified on this topic. To take the study further, a descriptive research design is used. The primary data is collected with the help of a Structured Questionnaire. The 5-point Likert scale has been used for the opinion of the participants related to concerns about Work from home. The convenience sampling method is used for the data collection. The Sample size of the study is 327. Frequency distribution tables are used for the basic classification of the data, for Demographic variables (Annual Income, Gender, Job Level, Family Type). The Chi-square test of independence of attributes is used for testing the dependency of various factors affecting work from home and corresponding tables and graphs are included in the study. The data is analysed with the help of IBM SPSS 22.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data analysis is done using IBM SPSS 22. Chi-square Test is used to study the sentiments towards WFH, encompassing its effect on the personal life, professional life, workforce strategies and employer branding, against the demographic variables, viz. Annual Income Group, Gender, Job Level and Family Type.

Data Analysis

Frequency distribution for Demographic variables (Annual Income, Gender, Job Level, Family Type.)

Table 1: Frequency of Demographic Variables

Annual Income				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	14	4.3	4.3	4.3
Less than 5 Lac	183	56.0	56.0	60.2
5 to 10 Lac	85	26.0	26.0	86.2
More than 10 Lac	45	13.8	13.8	100.0
Total	327	100.0	100.0	
Gender				
Female	160	48.9	48.9	48.9
Male	166	50.8	50.8	99.7
Prefer not to say	1	.3	.3	100.0
Total	327	100.0	100.0	
Job Level				
Entry Level	156	47.7	47.7	47.7
Middle Level	133	40.7	40.7	88.4

Senior Level	38	11.6	11.6	100.0
Total	327	100.0	100.0	
Family Type				
Joint Family	80	24.5	24.5	24.5
Nuclear Family	247	75.5	75.5	100.0
Total	327	100.0	100.0	

Table no. 1 reveals that 56% of the respondents were in the annual income group of less than 5 lac, 26% of the respondents were in the annual income group of 5 lac to 10 lacs, and 13.8% of the respondents were in the annual income group of more than 10 lacs. Majority of the respondents were in the annual income group of less than 5 lac. 48.9% of the respondents were females, 50.8% of the respondents were male and, 0.3% of the respondents preferred not to say. There are almost equal percentage of males and female respondents. that 47.7% of the respondents were at the entry level of job, 40.7% of the respondents were at the middle level of job and, 11.6% of the respondents were at the senior level of job. Majority of the respondents were at the entry level and middle level of the job. 24.5% of the respondents were from joint family and 75.5% of the respondents were from nuclear family. Majority of the respondents are from nuclear family.

Hypothesis testing

Table 2: Chi Square Test P values

The data presented below provides answers to each research questions

Impact of WFH on personal wellbeing

Variable s	Statements (WFH helps in....)	Annual Income	Gender	Job Level	Family Type
Personal Life variables (2A to 2K)					
2 A	Spend more time with family	.840	.970	.453	.694
2 B	Spend more time with your relatives and friends	.842	.431	.374	.315
2 C	Pursue your hobby	.288	.065	.269	.067
2 D	Maintain a peaceful and happy mood	.618	.833	.011	.640
2 E	Reduce mental stress	.613	.322	.194	.370
2 F	Focus on your diet	.077	.419	.744	.306
2 G	Focus on your daily workout regime	.222	.715	.261	.474
2 H	Reduce your fatigue	.555	.301	.026	.737
2 I	Upgrade your skills	.719	.652	.459	.587
2 J	Learn new skills	.812	.917	.250	.904
2 K	Have better career growth opportunities	.423	.806	.060	1.00
Professional Life variables (3A to 3K)					
3 A	Focus more on office work	0.00	.592	.140	.193
3 B	In improving teamwork	.017	.759	.214	.231
3 C	Improve Inter-personal communication	.234	.940	.668	.054
3 D	Reduce the number of delays	.751	.578	.369	.428

3 E	Reduce unnecessary interferences	.839	.360	.316	.061
3 F	Maintain appropriate workload	.791	.655	.125	.230
3 G	Maintain flexibility in doing the work	.027	.338	.447	.859
3 H	Maintaining realistic deadlines	.275	.762	.175	.373
3 I	Improve your Individual work performance	.326	.892	.342	.076
3 J	Improve team's work performance	.354	.869	.174	.165
3 K	Complete the Projects / Deadlines	.857	.622	.023	.409
Workforce Policies variables (4A to 4E)					
4 A	Companies can follow Rota system wherein Team A& B are called on rotational basis	.949	.875	.159	.499
4 B	Companies can begin with flexi work hours as initial step towards WFH	.723	.896	.086	.178
4 C	WFH can lead to cutting costs of the company invarious ways	.221	.996	.143	.006
4 D	Companies should give importance to employee sentiments about WFH	.688	.923	.581	.063
4 E	WFH should become part of the HR policy of thecompany	.077	.564	.020	.062
Employer Branding variables (5A to 5C)					
5 A	WFH will help the companies with better Talentavailability with limited location restriction	.889	.972	.426	.031
5 B	WFH will help the companies to have betteremployee retention	.526	.519	.354	.206
5 C	Companies having WFH will be preferred byapplicants	.525	.965	.071	.165

Hypothesis 1: WFH would lead to personal wellbeing of employees across all annual income groups

The P-values with respect to annual income group and variables of personal wellbeing are greater than 0.05 (Refer Table 2) and hence null hypothesis is accepted. Respondents across all annual income groups agree that WFH will help them spend more time with family relatives and friends, pursue your hobby, maintain a peaceful and happy mood, reduce mental stress, focus on diet, focus on daily workout regime, reduce fatigue, upgrade their skills, learn new skills, and have better career growth opportunities. Hence WFH would lead to personal wellbeing of employees across all annual income groups.

Hypothesis 3: WFH would lead to personal wellbeing of employees across gender

The P-values with respect to gender and all variables of personal wellbeing are greater than 0.05 (Refer Table 2) and hence null hypothesis is accepted. Respondents across gender agree that WFH will help them spend more time with family, relatives, and friends, pursue hobby, maintain a peaceful and happy mood, reduce mental stress, focus on diet, focus on daily workout regime, reduce fatigue, upgrade their skills, learn new skills and have better career growth opportunities. Hence WFH would lead to personal wellbeing of employees across gender.

Hypothesis 5: WFH would lead to personal wellbeing of employees across all job levels
The P values with respect to job level and 9 variables of professional life (2A, 2B, 2C, 2E, 2F, 2G, 2I, 2J, 2K) are above 0.05 and 2 variables (2D, 2H) are below 0.05 (Refer Table 2) and hence null hypothesis is accepted. Respondents agree that WFH will help them spend more time with family, spend more time with relatives and friends, pursue your hobby, maintain a peaceful and happy mood, reduce mental stress, focus on your diet, focus on daily workout regime, reduce fatigue, upgrade their skills, learn new skills, and have better career growth opportunities. Hence WFH would lead to personal wellbeing of employees across all job levels. The P Value with respect to job level and variable 2D - WFH helping in managing peaceful and happy mood is 0.011 (Refer Table 2) indicating that entry and middle job level professionals were able to maintain a peaceful and happy mood during WFH. It means that employees from senior job level were not able to be at peace and were not happy during WFH. They faced problems managing their mood during WFH.

Table 3: Maintain a peaceful and happy mood against job level

		Q1. F. Job Level			Total
		Entry Level	Middle Level	Senior Level	
Q2. According to you, what would be the effect of WFH on your quality of life? (WFH will provide you a chance to...) [D. Maintain a peaceful and happy mood]	Strongly Disagree	2	1	4	7
	Disagree	20	17	1	38
	Neutral	52	39	12	103
	Agree	36	41	12	89
	Strongly Agree	46	35	9	90
Total		156	133	38	327

The P Value with respect to job level and variable 2H – WFH helping in reducing fatigue is 0.026 (Refer Table 2) indicating that Entry and middle job level professionals were able to reduce their fatigue during WFH. It means that WFH increased the fatigue of employees from

senior job level. This may be due to managing teams virtually and getting things done and on the other hand being answerable to the management.

Table 4: Reduced fatigue against job level

		Q1. F. Job Level			Total
		Entry Level	Middle Level	Senior Level	
Q2. According to you, what would be the effect of WFH on your	Strongly Disagree	3	1	3	7
	Disagree	14	21	4	39

quality of life? (WFH will provide you a chance to...) [H. Reduce your fatigue]	Neutral	42	45	5	92
	Agree	63	44	17	124
	Strongly Agree	34	22	9	65
Total		156	133	38	327

Hypothesis 7: WFH would lead to personal wellbeing of employees across all family type
The P-values with respect to family type and all variables of personal wellbeing are greater than 0.05 (Refer Table 2) and hence null hypothesis is accepted. Respondents across all family type agree that WFH will help them spend more time with family, relatives, and friends, pursue hobby, maintain a peaceful and happy mood, reduce mental stress, focus on diet, focus on daily workout regime, reduce fatigue, upgrade their skills, learn new skills and have better career growth opportunities. This indicates that WFH would lead to personal wellbeing of employees across all family type.

Impact of WFH on professional wellbeing

Hypothesis 2: WFH would lead to professional wellbeing of employees across all annual income groups

The P values with respect to annual income group and 8 variables of professional life (3C, 3D, 3E, 3F, 3H, 3I, 3J, 3K) are above 0.05 and 3 variables (3A, 3B, 3G) are below 0.05 (Refer Table 2) and hence null hypothesis is accepted. Respondents agree that WFH will improve inter-personal communication, reduce the number of delays, reduce unnecessary interferences, maintain appropriate workload, maintain realistic deadlines, improve individual work performance, improve team's work performance, and complete the projects / deadlines. Hence WFH would lead to professional wellbeing of employees across all annual income groups.

The P Value with respect to annual income group and variable 3A - WFH will help to focus more on office work is 0.00 (Refer table 2) indicating that lower and middle level Annual Income Group professionals have more focus on office work during WFH. It means that respondents from higher income level do not agree that they have more focus on office work during work from home faced distractions at home during WFH pattern of work. These may be the employees managing and coordinating with team of employees and may have faced a problem getting the work done while balancing the home and life activities.

Table 5: Focus on office work against annual income

		Less than 5 Lac	5 to 10 Lac	More than 10 Lac
Q3. According to you, what would be the effect of WFH on your professional Life? (WFH will help you to...) [A. Focus	Strongly Disagree	0	0	3
	Disagree	21	8	0
	Neutral	52	23	10

more on office work]	Agree	67	38	17
	Strongly Agree	43	16	15
Total		183	85	45

This P Value with respect to annual income group and variable 3B - WFH will help in improving teamwork is 0.017 (Refer table 2) indicating that lower and middle level Annual Income Group professionals will have improvement in teamwork during WFH. It means that respondents with higher income level had problems coping with the WFH pattern for improvement in teamwork. These may be the employees managing and coordinating with team of employees and may have faced a problem getting the work done.

Table 6: Improved teamwork against annual income

		Q1. G. Annual Income		
		Less than 5 Lac	5 to 10 Lac	More than 10 Lac
Q3. According to you, what would be the effect of WFH on your professional Life? (WFH will help you to...) [J. Improve team's work performance]	Strongly Disagree	4	2	3
	Disagree	24	14	7
	Neutral	52	27	11
	Agree	59	33	13
	Strongly Agree	44	9	11
Total		183	85	45

This P Value with respect to annual income group and variable 3G – WFH will help to maintain flexibility in doing the work is 0.027 (Refer table 2) indicating that lower and middle level Annual Income Group professionals will have flexibility in doing the work during WFH. It means that employees from higher level annual income group did not believe that WFH would provide them flexibility in doing the work.

Table 7: Flexibility in doing the work against annual income

		Q1. G. Annual Income		
		Less than 5 Lac	5 to 10 Lac	More than 10 Lac
Q3. According to you, what would be the effect of WFH on your professional Life? (WFH will help you to...) [G. Maintain flexibility in doing the work]	Strongly Disagree	6	0	3
	Disagree	10	12	1
	Neutral	30	7	8
	Agree	78	39	15
	Strongly Agree	59	27	18
Total		183	85	45

Hypothesis 4: WFH would lead to professional wellbeing of employees across gender

The P-values with respect to gender and all variables of professional wellbeing are all greater than 0.05 (Refer Table 2) and hence null hypothesis is accepted. Respondents across gender agree that WFH will help to focus more on office work, improve teamwork, improve inter- personal communication, reduce the number of delays, reduce unnecessary interferences, maintain appropriate workload, maintain realistic deadlines, improve individual work performance, improve team’s work performance, and complete the projects / deadlines. Hence WFH would lead to professional wellbeing of employees across gender

Hypothesis 6: WFH would lead to professional wellbeing of employees across all job levels

The P values with respect to job level and 10 variables of professional life (3A, 3B, 3C, 3D, 3E, 3F, 3G, 3H, 3I, 3J) are above 0.05 and 1 variable (3K) is below 0.05 (Refer Table 2) and hence null hypothesis is accepted. Respondents agree that WFH will help them focus more on office work, improve teamwork, improve inter-personal communication, reduce the number of delays, reduce unnecessary interferences, maintain appropriate workload, maintain flexibility in doing the work, maintain realistic deadlines, improve individual work performance, and improve team’s work performance. Hence WFH would lead to professional wellbeing of employees across all job levels.

This P-Value with respect to job level and variable 3K – WFH helping in complete the projects / deadlines is 0.023 (Refer Table 2) indicating that entry and middle job level professionals were able to complete their projects/deadlines during WFH. It means that respondents from higher job level faced problems in meeting deadlines and were not able to complete projects on time. This may be due to lack of coordination and communication between the team or the overall attitude of the team members.

Table 8: Completion of Projects / Deadlines against job level

		Q1. F. Job Level			Total
		Entry Level	Middle Level	Senior Level	
Q3. According to you, what would be the effect of WFH on your professional Life? (WFH will help you to...) [K. Complete the Projects / Deadlines]	Strongly Disagree	2	2	2	6
	Disagree	5	15	0	20
	Neutral	47	33	7	87
	Agree	67	46	18	131
	Strongly Agree	35	37	11	83
Total		156	133	38	327

Hypothesis 8: WFH would lead to professional wellbeing of employees across all family type The P-values with respect to family type and all variables of professional wellbeing are above 0.05 (Refer Table 2) and hence null hypothesis is accepted. Respondents across gender agree that WFH will help to focus more on office work, improve teamwork, improve inter-personal

communication, reduce the number of delays, reduce unnecessary interferences, maintain appropriate workload, maintain realistic deadlines, improve individual work performance, improve team's work performance, and complete the projects / deadlines. Hence WFH would lead to professional wellbeing of employees across all family type.

WFH becoming part of companies' workforce strategies

Hypothesis 9: The workforce strategies of the companies should be updated with ROTA system, flexi hours and WFH in it

The P-values with respect to annual income group and gender and all variables of updated workforce strategies are above 0.05 (Refer Table 2) and hence null hypothesis is accepted. Respondents agree that companies can follow Rota system wherein team A & B are called on rotational basis, can begin with flexi work hours as initial step towards WFH, leading to cutting costs of the company in various ways. They agree that companies should give importance to employee sentiments about WFH, and it should become part of the HR policy of the company. Hence the workforce strategies of the companies should be updated with ROTA system, Flexi hours and WFH in it.

The P values with respect to Job Level and variables of updated workforce strategies (4A, 4B, 4C, 4D) are above 0.05 (Refer Table 2) and hence null hypothesis is accepted. Respondents agree that companies can follow Rota system wherein team A & B are called on rotational basis, can begin with flexi work hours as initial step towards WFH, leading to cutting costs of the company in various ways. They agree that companies should give importance to employee sentiments about WFH.

The P-Value with respect to Job Level and variable 4E - WFH becoming part of the HR policy of the company is 0.020 (Refer Table 2) indicating that Entry and middle job level professionals believe that WFH should be part of the HR policy of the company. However, professionals at higher job level are not in favour of WFH becoming part of the HR policy of the company. The reasons for the same may be difficulty in coordinating with teams, work pressure and deadlines.

Table 9: WFH to be part of the HR policy of the company against job level

		Q1. F. Job Level			Total
		Entry Level	Middle Level	Senior Level	
Q4. According to you, should WFH become part of the workforce strategy? [E. WFH should become part of the HR policy of the company]	Strongly Disagree	1	4	2	7
	Disagree	8	1	0	9
	Neutral	29	21	3	53
	Agree	60	39	12	111
	Strongly Agree	58	68	21	147
Total		156	133	38	327

The P values with respect to family type and variables of updated workforce strategies (4A, 4B, 4D, 4E) are above 0.05 (Refer Table 2) and the null hypothesis is accepted. Respondents agree that companies can follow Rota system wherein team A & B are called on rotational basis, can begin with flexi work hours as initial step towards WFH, should give importance to employee sentiments about WFH, and WFH should become part of the HR policy of the companies.

The P-Value with respect to family type and variable 4C - WFH can lead to cutting costs of the company in various ways is 0.006 (Refer Table 2) indicating that professionals staying in nuclear family believe there is possibility of cutting costs of the company in various ways during WFH. The respondents from joint family however believe that WFH would not help the companies in cutting their costs. This may be because employees from nuclear family are more

flexible changing their current location which would mean that companies can cut down on infrastructure costs. This may not be possible for employees from joint family.

Table 10: Cutting costs of the company in various ways against Family Type

		Q1. K. Family Type		Total
		Joint Family	Nuclear Family	
Q4. According to you, should WFH become part of the workforce strategy? [C. WFH can lead to cutting costs of the company in various ways]	Strongly Disagree	1	1	2
	Disagree	4	6	10
	Neutral	19	23	42
	Agree	20	89	109
	Strongly Agree	36	128	164
Total		80	247	327

Effect of WFH on employer branding of the companies

Hypothesis 10: WFH would enhance employer branding of companies leading to better talent availability, good place to work and better employee retention

The P values with respect to annual income group, gender, job level and all variables of employer branding are above 0.05 (Refer Table 2) and hence null hypothesis is accepted. Respondents agree that WFH will help the companies with better talent availability with limited location restriction, will help in better employee retention and will be preferred by applicants. Hence WFH would enhance employer branding of companies leading to better talent availability, good place to work and better employee retention.

The P values with respect to family type and variables of employer branding (5B, 5C) are above 0.05 (Refer Table 2) and hence null hypothesis is accepted. Respondents agree that WFH will help the companies in better employee retention, and they will be preferred by applicants. The P-Value with respect to family type and variable 5A - WFH will help the companies with better talent availability with limited location restriction is 0.031 (Refer Table 2) indicating that respondents

staying in nuclear family believe there will be better talent availability with limited location restriction during WFH. The employees from joint family however believe that WFH would not provide better talent availability with limited location restriction. This may be because employees from nuclear family are more flexible changing their current location which would mean that companies can cut down on infrastructure costs. This may not be possible for employees from joint family.

Table 11: Better talent availability with limited location restriction against Family Type

		Q1. K. Family Type		Total
		Joint Family	Nuclear Family	
Q5. According to you, can WFH help the companies in improving their Employer brand? [A. WFH will help the companies with better Talent availability with limited location restriction]	Strongly Disagree	3	0	3
	Disagree	4	11	15
	Neutral	13	30	43
	Agree	27	92	119
	Strongly Agree	33	114	147
Total		80	247	327

Findings

The study provides answers to the four research questions. Each of them highlights the positive aspects of the overall analysis of study and the critical aspects which would require due consideration. The respondents from all annual income groups believe that WFH will have a positive effect on their personal life. They also agree that WFH should become part of the workforce strategies and will help the companies in improving employer branding. However, the respondents falling in the higher annual income group (more than 10 lacs) do not believe that they will be able to focus on office work during WFH. Also, they do not feel that WFH will enhance teamwork and flexibility. This contrast in response, in comparison to lower and middle annual income group, highlights those professionals with higher package face obstacles in professional life during WFH. They eventually may also face more problems if they get into a leadership position. The respondents across gender have shown a positive response towards WFH. They believe that WFH will positively affect their personal and professional life and hence it should be considered as a permanent part of the workforce strategy. It will also enhance the employer branding of the companies. This also highlights an important changing trend in Indian society, where sentiments are not necessarily varying as per the gender of the respondents.

The respondents falling in the senior job level do not believe that they will be able to maintain a peaceful and happy mood while working from home and neither do they believe that WFH would help in reducing their fatigue. Also, WFH would not help them in completing the projects / deadlines. Hence, they are not in agreement that WFH should become part of the HR policy. All these points raise a question on the leadership style of these respondents and the culture they have created in their team. It also raises a question on the leadership style of their superiors and the kind

of culture they have created in the company. The respondents from both nuclear family and joint family agree that WFH will have a positive effect on their personal and professional life. They also believe that WFH should become part of the workforce strategies. However, respondents from joint family believe that WFH would not help in cutting costs of the company in various ways and nor will it help the companies to have better talent availability with limited location restrictions. Maximum of the respondents across all demographic variables believe that WFH should be made part of workforce strategies in a step- by-step process. It should be initiated with ROTA system and flexible hours. Based on the regular check of employee sentiments, it could be thought of making WFH a part of the HR policy of the company. Maximum of the respondents across all demographic variables believe that WFH will enhance employer branding as it will help in attracting and retain better talent and make it more appealing for future applicants.

CONCLUSION

The study aimed to expand understanding of the sentiments of millennials and Gen Z towards WFH, encompassing the variables of personal life, professional life, workforce strategies, and employer branding. It also aimed at studying these sentiments against the four demographic variables viz. annual income, gender, job level, and family type and understanding whether WFH should be made part of the workforce policies and its effect on employer branding. The data was collected from the questionnaire of 327 respondents across India. The analysis of data highlights that maximum respondent across all four demographic variables have shown positive responses towards WFH. They believe that WFH will have a positive effect on their personal and professional life. It also shows a positive response towards WFH becoming part of the workplace strategies and eventually enhancing employer branding.

Certain points, however, need to be taken into consideration. The concerns of the respondents in higher-income groups and senior job level need to be given due consideration. This is important because they are currently holding a senior position in the company or are going to be soon in that position. Hence, a further study and analysis of their sentiments need to be conducted. Another interesting conclusion from the study is that there is a change in the trend of seeing variation in responses based on gender. This study observes that there has been very minimal variation in responses across gender which further highlights the changing expectations and mindsets of the generations. The study concludes that companies can initiate WFH in a step-by-step process with the ROTA system, flexible hours as an initial step in this direction leading to making WFH part of the HR policy and eventually reaping its benefits of becoming a better employer brand in the days and years to come.

Limitations and Implications on further research

The study was limited to the four demographic variables viz. annual income, gender, job level, and family type. There are other demographic variables like industry type, marital status, age group, geographical location, number of children on which the data is available but due to the size and the extensiveness of the data, it was not possible to include them under one study. Hence, a separate

study will be presented on the said demographic variables. Structural Equation Modelling can be derived for this study will decide the effect of various demographic variables on WFH for millennials and Gen Z professionals in India.

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