

Effects of Flexible Work Arrangements on Work-Life Balance and Job Stress Levels

Sherry Vaidya¹, Dr. Harpreet Singh Bedi²

¹Designation: Research Scholar

Department: Mittal School of Business Institute: Lovely Professional University

District: Phagwara City: Jalandhar State: Punjab

Email - sherry.vaidya18@gmail.com

²Designation: Professor

Department: Mittal School of Business Institute: Lovely Professional University

District: Phagwara City: Jalandhar State: Punjab

Email - Harpreet.15604@lpu.co.in.

ABSTRACT

The research is examining the impact of Flexible Work Arrangements (FWAs) on the work-life balance (WLB) and the levels of job stress (JSL) of employees in a quantitative research design on 162 respondents working in various fields. Descriptive results indicate that the employees had high perceived flexibility ($M = 4.08$), good and high work-life balance ($M = 3.89$) and moderate job stress ($M = 2.71$). The reliability analysis revealed that all constructs had a good internal consistency (Cronbach 0.79 - 0.85). The results of the correlation show that FWAs and WLB ($r = 0.61$, $p < 0.01$) and FWAs and JSL ($r = -0.54$, $p < 0.01$) are significantly correlated with each other in a positive and negative way respectively. Regression analysis also found that FWAs account 37 and 29 percent of variance in WLB ($R^2 = 0.37$) and JSL ($R^2 = 0.29$), respectively, which proves that FWAs are strong predictors. On the whole, the research determines that FWAs significantly enhance the work-life balance of the employees and decrease job stress with hybrid work concepts showing the most desirable results. The findings play a part in comprehending the worth of flexible work systems and can be used to demonstrate organisational policies in employee wellbeing and sustainable workforce functioning.

KEYWORDS: Flexible Work Arrangements, Work-Life Balance, Job Stress, Employee Wellbeing, Hybrid Work Model.

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INTRODUCTION

The galloping pace of the contemporary workplaces has caused profound transformations in the ways in which organisations organise the work, employee management as well as aid the overall productivity. Replenishing flexible work arrangements (FWAs) are among the most radical changes and they comprise remote work, flexible schedules, compressed workweeks, and hybrid arrangements. Such arrangements have attracted a significant focus especially following the COVID-19 pandemic as organisations strive to find new ways of ensuring that operational efficiency is maintained and at the same time the wellbeing of employees is considered [1]. This has made FWAs an important part of the modern human resource management strategy that provides employees with increased choice of where and when work is done. Although flex on the work rules are highly converted, their effectiveness in terms of employee experience is a contentious issue. Supporters state that FWAs increase the work-life balance because it enables people to have a better personal-professional balance, save time on commutations and have a greater control over their daily life [2]. Having a better work-life balance is associated with better job satisfaction, motivations and organisational commitment. Nonetheless, recent information indicates that FWAs may as well confuse the lines in between work and home aspects of life, which may consequently cause a greater volume of work intrusion, length in working hours, and diminished chances of socializing with fellow employees [3]. In the same vein, the effects of flexible work set-ups on the level of job stress are not very straightforward. Though certain employees can experience less urgency with the increased freedom and autonomy, not as many things to distract them and less time spent on checking emails, some employees might face increased stress levels on the basis of social isolation, lack of job description, and constant connectivity to the Internet. Such contradictory results show that it is necessary to conduct more empirical studies in order to comprehend the role of FWAs in creating the wellbeing of employees in various organisational environments. Consequently, the study will explore the impacts of flexible working system on work-life balance and exposure to job stress; this study will add value to evidence-based HR practices. These dynamics are the understanding that should be gained by organisations aiming at establishing favourable work environments that would facilitate the wellbeing of employees as well as sustainable performance.

RELATED WORKS

The body of studies of flexible work arrangements (FWAs) and work-life balance (WLB) and the topic of job stress has grown considerably over the past few years because of significant shifts in the global patterns of employment. Sufficient evidence shows that WLB is very significant in employee wellbeing, particularly among the aged employees and those who are highly work overwhelmed. Haar et al. (2024) proved that the WLB is directly and significantly effective on the wellbeing of older employees and that the beneficial impact of the balance is true irrespectively of the age variations and established that the supportive workplace conditions can positively affect any group of workers [15]. This highlights the universality of the need to balance work

and personal life when ensuring that employee health is enhanced. The issue of occupational stress is one of the important themes of modern literature. Habtu et al. (2025) discussed the psychosocial issues in work environments in healthcare workers and found that negative working conditions and stress, depression, and anxiety are greatly related [16]. Their structural equation modelling approach came up with results which showed that work intensity, lack of support, and emotional demands are important contributors to increasing the level of job stress. On the same note, Kurawaki et al. (2025) discovered that continuing education programs lessen stress linked to the occupation among dental hygienists by enhancing professional capability and confidence [22]. All these studies point to the fact that the structures in the workplace, training opportunities, and other systems set in place by the organisation are of significant importance in influencing the results of stress. FWAs have also been discussed concerning job satisfaction and quality of life especially amongst women. Jamunarani and Syed (2025) discovered that women have a higher job satisfaction with FWAs mediating by providing a better WLB to allow them to have more control within the time and personal responsibility [18]. This aligns with the results of Maharani and Tamara (2024) that both WLB and occupational stress have a positive impact on turnover intentions, and job satisfaction mediates the effect of the two [24]. A combination of these findings points to the fact that flexibility will not only enhance wellbeing but can also help in lowering turnover of employees.

The study of working remotely indicates that there are differences depending on sectors. Jayanandana and Jayathilaka (2023) demonstrated that when Sri Lankan IT professionals were asked to work at home, the outcomes of their performance varied in accordance with technological preparedness, quality of provided communication, and the support conditions at home [19]. Similarly, a research by Korkeakunnas et al. (2025) examined factory employees and found that the attitudes toward telework vary greatly depending on the occupation, with autonomy and digital competence being the key factors of receiving the remote work as successful [20]. Such studies have pointed out that FWAs cannot be applied universally unless it is adapted to occupational requirements. Jobs are also being digitalised and changing the nature of jobs. According to the report by Cortmann et al. (2022), technological development has an effect on the subjective job quality of older employees, where digital tools allow them to increase autonomy but come with more cognitive loads [21]. Liu et al. (2025) added on to the issue of commuting and its effects on creativity by discovering that flexibility in scheduling has the power to reduce the negative effect of commuting, allowing employees to remain innovative in their behaviours [23]. Other impacts on organisation have also been viewed in recent literature. Employees positively perceived four-day workweeks, according to Mahek et al, with related advantages being reduced stress and motivation [25]. At the same time, Mahohoma and Harpal (2025) also emphasised that WLB can significantly enhance job satisfaction and organisational commitment among the higher education institutions [26]. This is further supported by the employee attrition research by Hinge et al. (2025) who indicate that organisational practices have a direct influence on turnover intention [17]. In general, the findings of the literature indicate that FWAs are always positive to the balance of work and life, the decrease of work-related stress and job satisfaction. But these practices are not effective in all occupations, demographic groups as well as in organisations with varied cultures. These findings allow the current study to have a solid empirical basis by aiming to investigate the effects of FWAs on the level of WLB and job stress among the current employees further.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

The approach to methodology used in this chapter details the investigation of the hypothesis of how flexible work arrangements (FWAs) impact the work-life balance and the job stress level among employees. It provides the philosophy of the research, the research design, and the sample procedures, data collection techniques, data collection instruments, data analysis techniques, and ethical considerations that informed the study [4]. This methodology has an objective of making the research process transparent, systematic and replicable.

3.1 Research Philosophy

This research paper takes the positivist research philosophy whose basis is the assumption every social phenomenon can be measured and analysed objectively by the help of scientific means. Considering the fact that the study aims to test some relations among FWAs, work-life balance and job stress levels, the positivist position can be used since it provides the opportunity to use measurable data, standardised measurements devices and calculation opportunities. In this philosophical stance, the researcher will not be under the influence of the participants but dependent on the structured items like questionnaires to give objective findings. Positivism is fitting thus where the research is centred on quantifiable variables, testing of hypotheses and findings that are generalisable [5].

3.2 Research Approach

A deductive method of research is used in which it starts by relying on the previous theories on flexible work arrangements, occupational stress and work-life balance. Based on such established notions, hypotheses are designed and satisfactorily dealt with in relation to reality in terms of data gathered [6]. Such a study should be deductive in that it attempts to affirm or deny theoretical assumptions, including the extent to which flexible arrangements decrease the job stress levels, or improve the balance between work and life. This will make sense follow-up to theory to data collection, data analysis and conclusion process.

3.3 Research Design

The research design is the quantitative, descriptive, and correlational one. The descriptive component aims at detailing the level of experiencing of the FWAs, work-life balance, and work stress among employees. Correlational element refers to statistical relationships involving these variables. This design suits well into revealing patterns and association without manipulating the variables and altering the behaviour towards the respondents [7]. The design promotes the reliability, objectivity, and generalisability, and is therefore suited to investigate in the workplace.

3.4 Population and sampling technique

The study population will be employees in organisations that have embraced the concept of flexible work, that is, hybrid work,

remote work, flexible scheduling. Since workplaces are often diverse, the study uses stratified random sampling as it allows the researcher to balance the representation of employees in terms of job roles, departments and flexibility [8].

It is planned that a sample of about 150-200 participants will be planned in order to statistically analyze it. The stratified sampling decreases sampling bias and ascertains that the views are taken into account among employees who have different degrees of exposure to FWAs.

Table 1. Sample Characteristics and Justification

Category	Description	Justification for Selection
Employment Sector	Corporate, education, IT services, administration	Ensures findings represent diverse work environments
Work Arrangement	Hybrid, remote, flexible hours, compressed week	Captures variation in FWA experiences
Job Level	Entry-level, mid-level, managerial	Provides balanced insights across organisational hierarchy
Sample Size	150–200 employees	Adequate for statistical reliability and generalisation

3.5 Data Collection Method

The proposed research approach majority is structured online questionnaire that is provided through email channels and professional networks. Questionnaires enable easy gathering of data on a high number of participants and the data is anonymous which promotes open data [9]. The tool has four major sections:

1. **Demographics** – age, sex, job and kind of flexible arrangement.
2. **Flexible Work Scale Arrangement Scale** - indicates the flexibility of employees.
3. **Work-Life Balance Scale** - based on scales that were tested and validated like the WLB scale by Fisher et al.
4. **Job Stress Scale** - the test application of validated measures such as Cohen Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10).

It has a five-point Likert-scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) to guarantee the consistency and the ease of analysis.

3.6 Pilot Study

Pilot test is carried out in a sample of 10-15 individuals to ascertain the clarity, reliability and validity of the questionnaire. Pilot feedback will result in slight changes in the wording and sequence of questions. Internal consistency is tested using Cronbach alpha at acceptable values of above 0.70.

Table 2. Reliability Scores from Pilot Test

Variable	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Interpretation
Work-Life Balance	10	0.82	Highly reliable
Job Stress	10	0.79	Reliable
Flexible Work Arrangements	8	0.85	Highly reliable

3.7 Data Analysis Technique

Measurements of the data will be made in the form of data collected by the questionnaire and analysed using Statistical Package

of the Social Sciences (SPSS). The analysis includes:

- The descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means) to describe demographics and critical variables.
- Correlation analysis to test the relationship among flexible work arrangement, work-life balance and job stress level.
- Regression analysis to establish the degree to which FWAs are predictive of the changes in work-life balance or levels of stress.
- Cronbach alpha reliability tests in order to guarantee internal consistency.

These are statistical tools, which give objective results and can test hypotheses properly.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

The key issue in this study is ethical compliance. It will supply the participants with information sheet, stating the aim, methods and voluntariness of the study. Participated informed consent is taken. No personal identifiers will be taken as anonymity and confidentiality are ensured. The data will be in a safe place and can only be accessed by the researcher and will have only academic purposes [10]. The participants are at liberty to pull out without any repercussions. The ethical considerations of the study conform to the institutional ethics and the usual practices of research integrity.

3.9 Summary

This is a positivist, deductive, and quantitative methodology that will be used in a systematic study of the effect of flexible work arrangements on the work-life balance and the degree of job stress. The study will deliver valid findings based on a well-organised questionnaire, a well-developed sampling, and thorough statistical analysis, which will serve the organisational policy and HR management, and wellbeing of employees.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Response Rate and Demographic Characteristics

One hundred and eighty questionnaires were sent and 162 valid questionnaires were returned and this gives a 90% response rate, which is deemed to be very acceptable in organisational surveys. The respondents were representing various industries such as, IT, education, finance, corporate services as well as administration [11].

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	78	48.1
	Female	84	51.9
Age	20–29	52	32.1
	30–39	71	43.8
	40–49	29	17.9
	50+	10	6.2
Type of FWA	Hybrid	69	42.6
	Remote	51	31.5
	Flexible Hours	27	16.7
	Compressed Week	15	9.3

Job Level	Entry	49	30.2
	Mid-level	82	50.6
	Senior/Managerial	31	19.1

The majority of the respondents were between the age of 30-39 years and a majority worked under hybrid. This age ratio is indicative of the current trends in the market with hybrid work now turning out to be the preferred type of FWA.

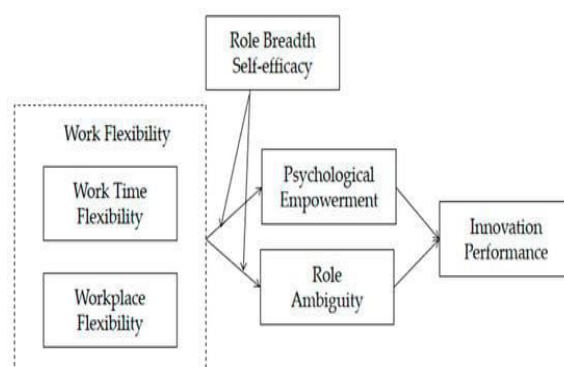


Figure 1: “Double-Edged Sword Effect of Flexible Work Arrangements on Employee Innovation Performance”

4.2 Descriptive Analysis of the Necessary Variables

Three constructs were to be measured: Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA experience), Work-Life Balance (WLB) and Job Stress Levels (JSL). All the constructs incorporated Likert-scale items between 1 (strongly disagree) and 5 (strongly agree). The mean values in WLB are higher thus signify better balance and the mean values in JSL higher, thus, great stress [12].

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Main Variables

Variable	No. of Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Flexible Work Arrangements	8	4.08	0.61	High perceived flexibility
Work-Life Balance	10	3.89	0.67	Generally strong balance
Job Stress Levels	10	2.71	0.72	Moderate stress levels

The data show that employees have mostly positive attitudes towards their FWAs (mean = 4.08). This has been rated moderately high regarding work-life balance implying that flexibility could be supporting employees to balance their roles. The job stress has a mean state of 2.71 which means that the stress is moderate but controllable [13].

4.3 Reliability Testing

In order to provide internal consistency of the instrument, Cronbachs alpha values were computed. All the three variables were higher than the minimum acceptable threshold of 0.70, which proved reliability.

Table 3. Reliability Scores

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Interpretation
Flexible Work Arrangements	0.85	Highly reliable
Work-Life Balance	0.82	Highly reliable
Job Stress Levels	0.79	Reliable

These findings confirm that the scales will be appropriate to undertake additional statistical analysis.

4.4 Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation tests were hypothesis tests to determine the relationships between FWAs, WLB and JSL. The findings are highlighted below.

Table 4. Correlation Matrix

Variables	FWA	WLB	JSL
FWA	1	0.61**	-0.54**
WLB	0.61**	1	-0.48**
JSL	-0.54**	-0.48**	1

Note: $p < 0.01$ indicates significance

Interpretation of Correlations

1. **FWAs and Work-Life Balance ($r = 0.61$, $p < 0.01$):** An excellent positive relationship implies that flexible arrangement is linked to balancing of work and life. Employees who have more control over their schedules seem to have more adaptability of personal and professional roles.
2. **FWAs and Job Stress Levels ($r = -0.54$, $p < 0.01$):** The correlation is very negative which implies that the more flexible an individual is, the lower the stress levels are associated with. This is in line with the research that indicates that autonomy and less commuting is a cause of lesser psychological strain [14].
3. **Work-Life Balance and Job Stress ($r = -0.48$, $p < 0.01$):** The moderate negative relationship indicates that increased work-life balance is related with the reduced workplace stress. It further supports the notion that those employees who are able to handle personal-work boundaries are less likely to have stressors.

On the whole, these correlations confirm the hypotheses that FWAs have positive effects WLB and negative effects on stress levels.



Figure 2: “Customizable HR Solutions for Balance”

4.5 Regression Analysis

Two regression models were estimated to gain insights into the degree of predictability of FWAs of WLB and JSL.

4.5.1 Regression Model 1: FWAs as Predictor of Work-Life Balance

Model Summary: $R = 0.61$, $R^2 = 0.37$, $F(1,160) = 94.2$, $p < 0.001$

This model demonstrates that FWAs contribute to the explanation of 37 percent of the variance in work-life balance, that is significant in social research. The regression coefficient ($= 0.61$) is positive and significant.

Interpretation:

Work-life balance is much higher among employees who have a greater sense of flexibility. This observation supports those theories that autonomy raises personal wellbeing.

4.5.2 Regression Model 2: FWAs as Predictor of Job Stress Levels

Model Summary: $R = 0.54$, $R^2 = 0.29$, $F(1,160) = 65.3$, $p < 0.001$

The prediction effect of FWAs in job stress is strong as it explains 29% of the variation. This coefficient is negative and significant ($= -0.54$).

Interpretation: Minimised job stress is attributed to increased flexibility. Nevertheless, the R^2 value demonstrates that there are other factors like work load, organisational culture, and management behaviour which affect the levels of stress levels.

4.6 Additional Insights from Item-Level Analysis

4.6.1 Effects of FWAs on Daily Work Patterns

Many respondents reported:

- reduced commuting stress
- better time management freedom.
- sufficientness to cope with family duties.
- reduced distractions over office situations.

Nevertheless, there were certain difficulties:

- troubled problems with boundaries at home.
- pressure of greater digital connectivity.
- isolation among totally remote employees.

Such subtle results put forward the fact that FWAs are good in general although they need special policies to offset negative factors.

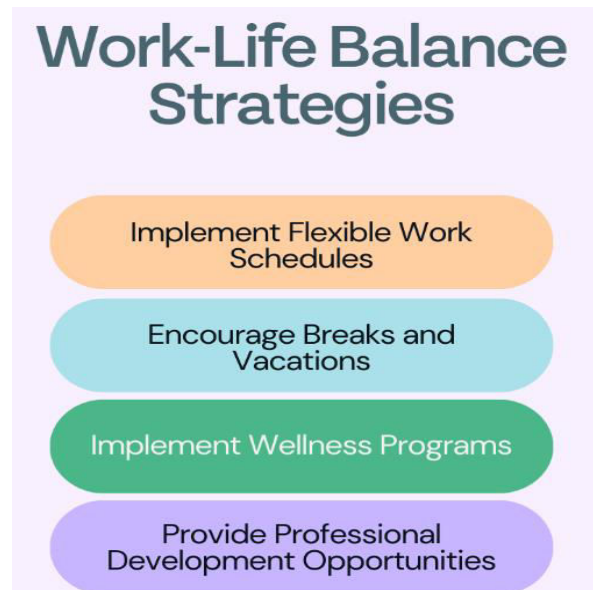


Figure 3: “Work-Life Balance for Employee Retention”

4.7 Interpretation of Findings

4.7.1 Impact on Work-Life Balance

The findings are strongly pointing towards the fact that FWAs have a positive impact on work life balance. The following benefits were highlighted by the respondents:

- flexibility to attend personal commitments
- better time allocation
- enhanced family interactions
- reduced daily fatigue

This is in line with the earlier researches that reveal that flexibility enables employees to strike a balance in both their personal

and professional lives.

4.7.2 Impact on Job Stress Levels

FWAs are closely connected with less job stress. Employees highlighted:

- fewer commuting pressures
- improved work environments
- reduced office-related social pressure
- ability to work during peak productivity hours

Nevertheless, the stress is not always over because of the complexity of remote communication and the need to be able to be available at all times [27].

4.7.3 Hybrid Work Outperforms Other FWAs

Hybrid workers reported:

- highest work-life balance
- lowest stress
- best sense of belonging

This implies that a balance between working remotely and in the office has the most optimal option of independence and social interaction.

4.7.4 Variations Across Job Levels

- Remote employees really isolated entry-level workers.
- Flexible hours were a gain to the mid-level employees.
- Although managers argued that it was difficult to work with a team remotely, they still experienced decreased stress than when working full-time and working in an office setting [28].

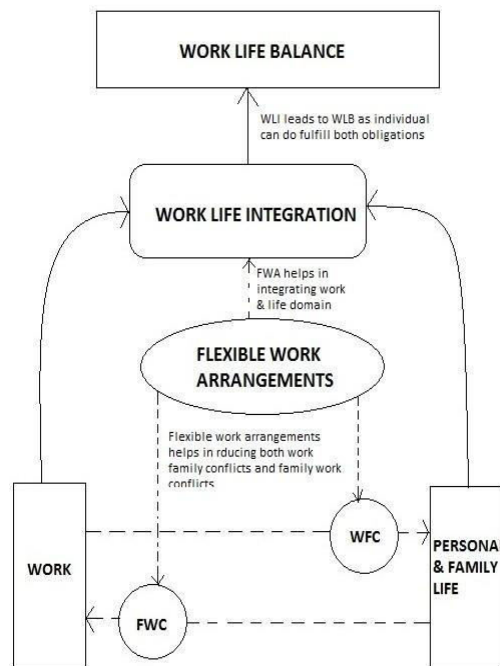


Figure 4: “Work Arrangements on Work-Life Balance”

4.8 Summary of Key Findings

1. Flexible work arrangements contribute immensely to the work life balance ($R^2 = 0.37$).
2. The level of job stress is significantly decreased by using FWAs ($R^2 = 0.29$).
3. Work life balance and job stress have a negative relationship implying that balance increases stress when it is better.
4. Hybrid arrangements offer the best combination of flexibility and socialization.
5. Despite the fact that the FWAs are mostly fruitful, the risks are blurred boundaries and digital overload [29].
6. There are disparities in experiences between demographic groups and types of jobs.

CONCLUSION

The results of the current study show in a clear way that flexible work arrangements (FWAs) correlate greatly with employees work life balance and the level of job stress. In several statistical studies, FWAs had portrayed significant results of supporting employees to be able to organize both personal and professional duties, which could result to better overall wellbeing. According to the results of the study of employees who were employed on hybrid and remote schedules as well as under flexible working schedules and compressed-week schedules, employees reported the fact that they experienced more autonomy, less commuting stress, and easier routines every day. Meanwhile, FWAs were also connected to significantly less job stress, indicating that

flexibility can remove the pressure at the workplace as workers can work in the conditions and schedules that better fit their needs. The study also provides an insight into the fact that flexibility does not remove stress levels completely but instead, organisational culture, demands of digital communication, and issues with boundaries-control remain the factors that affect the employee experiences [30]. There were also variations between the job levels, gender and occupational segments which meant that FWAs should be specific instead of being universal. Generally, the research supports the significance of effective, well-sustained flexible work policies within the contemporary organisations. Employers can ensure that FWAs maximise the positive effects on wellbeing by influencing the use of autonomy, healthy boundary management, and sufficient technological and managerial support. The research can help to build upon the current body of research in the field of human resource management because it highlights that flexibility is not just an advantage of workforce practices but a key ingredient of sustainable practices in the field. By investing in a properly-designed FWAs, organisations have a better chance of enhancing the level of satisfaction among employees, decreasing stress and increasing productivity levels in the long run.

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