

A STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF DIGITAL WORK PRESSURE AND FLEXIBLE WORK OPTIONS ON WORK LIFE BALANCE AND MENTAL WELL-BEING

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ABSTRACT

The rapid digitization of modern workplaces has introduced hyper-connectivity, resulting in increased digital work pressure, constant availability expectations, and blurred boundaries between professional and personal spheres. While flexible work options (e.g., remote work, hybrid models, flex-time) are frequently introduced to counter these challenges, their overall efficacy in supporting employee well-being remains complex. This study investigates the impact of digital work pressure and flexible work options on employee work-life balance and mental well-being. Utilizing empirical data collected from 105 working professionals via survey, the study analyzes how the demands of digital overload—such as constant availability and message density—interact with structural flexibility such as remote and customizable work schedules. However, flexibility acts as a double-edged sword: without clear organizational boundaries regarding after-hours digital communication, flexible work can blur personal-professional lines and increase techno stress. The study concludes that flexible working policies must be paired with active digital detox policies and healthy boundary-setting to successfully enhance work-life balance and preserve employee mental health in the modern digital workplace.

Keywords: Digital work pressure, Flexible work options, Work-life balance, Mental well-being, Techno stress, Boundary management, Remote work

I. INTRODUCTION

Work is an important part of an individual's life but maintaining a proper balance between work and personal responsibilities has become increasingly important in the modern workplace. Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) explained that conflict can occur when the demands of work and family roles make it difficult for an individual's ability to maintain a satisfactory balance between professional and personal life.

At the same time, the rise of Digital technologies can create additional work pressure. Employees may remain connected to their workplace beyond the normal working hours and

keep responding to their work related messages, calls and emails even during their personal time.

In the modern Hustle culture, working outside the traditional workplace may provide flexible working benefits rather it may also end up in unhealthy work life balance. Therefore, this study focuses on the impact on digital work pressure and flexible work options on work life balance and mental well-being. This study seeks to understand the difficulties faced by the employees to balance their personal and professional life and how it is related to the mental well being.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To identify the sources of Digital work pressure.
2. To analyze the relationship between Digital work pressure & mental well-being.
3. To understand the challenges employees face in continuous Digital communication.
4. To suggest suitable strategies for managing healthier & balanced work environment.

III. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

1. The main focus of the study is to analyze the mental well being of the employees.
2. This study directly targets the SDG 3 (Good Health & Well-Being) and SDG 8 (Decent work & Economic Growth).
3. To help in identifying the key technological stressors (after-hours messaging, virtual fatigue).
4. This study helps to examine how flexible working options can manage the employee's responsibilities.

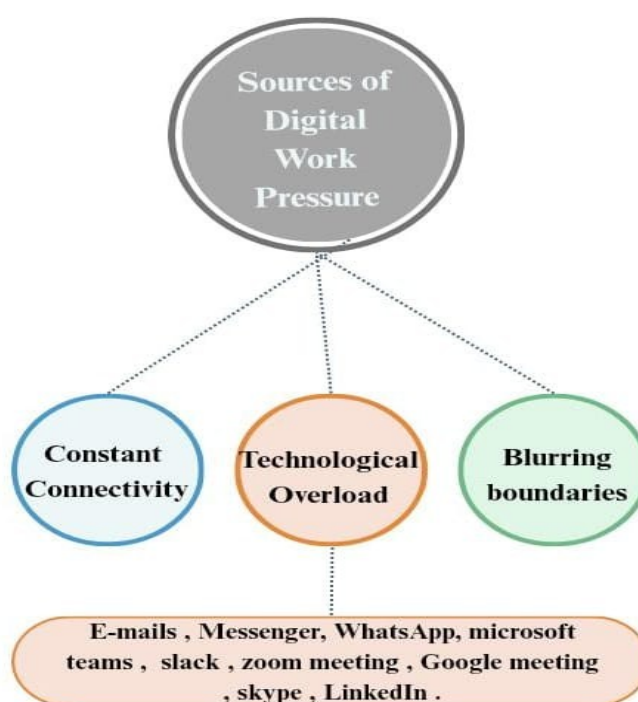


Figure 1: Conceptual framework of the study

Note: Created by the author

IV. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Dong-Jin Lee and M. Joseph sirgy (2019) work-life balance in the digital workplace: the impact of schedule flexibility and telecommuting on work-life balance and overall satisfaction found that schedule flexibility and telecommuting provide structural autonomy (Job Demands-Resources Theory; Bakker &Demerouti, 2007). However, without clear boundaries, digital modalities risk causing technostress and constant availability expectations (Mazmanian et al., 2013).Mediating Mechanism (WLB Strategies): Grounded in Sirgy& Lee's (2018) formative framework, structural flexibility empowers employees to deploy behavior-based (role engagement, enrichment; Greenhaus& Powell, 2006) and cognition-based strategies (boundary management, positive affect spillover; Ashforth et al., 2000).

Jadhav, A. L et al. (2026) Impact of digital workload on employee stress management finds that the empirical research highlights that high digital workload directly escalates technostress and mental fatigue. They found that continuous virtual meetings and pervasive online communication severely compromise work-life balance, demonstrating that structural organizational policies—such as flexible work policies and digital detox practices—are essential to protect employee mental well-being in digitally intensive environments.

Siva Kumar, V. S., et al. (2025). Impact of flexible work arrangements and digital tools on employee well-being: A gender and age analysis in the life insurance sector finds the structural flexibility and technological infrastructure play a vital role in shaping employee well-

being within high-stress corporate domains. According to Siva Kumar et al. (2025), work-life balance serves as a full mediator between flexible working arrangements—such as telecommuting and schedule flexibility—and employee well-being. However, their findings also highlight critical gender disparities, demonstrating that women experience lower overall work-life balance gains under flexible arrangements, which underscores the need for gender-responsive boundary management and supportive workplace policies.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Correlations test

Null Hypothesis (H_0)

There is no significant relationship between the frequency of digital communication and the pressure to response to the messages. ($r = 0$)

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1)

There is a significant relationship between the frequency of digital communication and the pressure to response to the messages ($r \neq 0$)

Correlations			
		Frequent messages	Pressure to response
Frequent messages	Pearson Correlation	1	.622**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	105	105
Pressure to response	Pearson Correlation	.622**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	105	105
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

There is a positive significant ($r = .622$ & $p < .001$) between the frequency of digital communication and the pressure to response to the messages, where the decision is to reject the null hypothesis (H_0)

Chi-square test

Null hypothesis (H_0)

There is no significant relationship between the work mode and the constant pressure in responding to be digitally reachable (the variables are independent).

Alternate hypothesis (H_1)

There is a significant relationship between the work mode and the constant pressure in responding to be digitally reachable (the variables are dependent).

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.970 ^a	8	.651
Likelihood Ratio	6.915	8	.546
Linear-by-Linear Association	.255	1	.614
N of Valid Cases	105		
a. 7 cells (46.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.20.			

There is no significant association between the two variables, therefore the decision is to accept the null hypothesis (H_0) / failed to reject the (H_0)

VI. FINDINGS

1. The work mode and the experience of the employees does not impact the pressure they feel in the workplace. Despite of this all the employees experience the same pressure and anxiety.
2. There was a partial association that half of the employees have the boundaries between the personal and professional life whereas others don't switch to the boundaries.
3. Most of the organizations provide the flexible working hours to the employees though they face the digital work pressure that fall after the normal working hours

VII. SUGGESTIONS

1. The organizations including all the sectors can follow the stipulated time period for the post working hour communications as the employee can differentiate the personal and professional life.
2. Researchers can focus on the other difficulties and challenges faced by the employees beyond the Health and mental well-being in the future study.
3. It can also highlight the common difficulties faced by the family members of the employees because of the digital work pressure.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that the digital work pressure and flexible working options have a significant impact on employees work life balance and mental well-being. After an hours of messages, continuous connectivity, digital communication and virtual fatigue can increase the employees stress over the work. It can make employees too difficult to manage both their professional and personal activities. And at the same time, the employee can also provide

flexible work options with greater freedom, convenience and better control for their work. The excessive flexibility without proper boundaries can may lead to stress. Therefore, the organization can make some suitable strategies to achieve employee's initiatives. The strategies are clear working hour boundaries, digital communication practices, reasonable workloads, etc... By maintaining a healthy life balance between digital work demands and personal responsibilities, can helps to contribute more productive, a healthier life and a sustainable work environment.

IX. REFERENCES

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