

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMMERCE, IT & MANAGEMENT

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EMPLOYEE ATTITUDE TOWARDS PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATIONS AT WORK FAMILY NEXUS: A STUDY IN SELECT IT ORGANIZATIONS IN HYDERABAD

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ABSTRACT

The Advancement of Internet & Communication technologies in new millennium transformed the Work & Life interfaces of the Urban Societies into a new dimension. It has the vast array of both advantages & disadvantages together. In the wake of such changing paradigm of Work & Family Microsystems, Humanities research through its various interdisciplinary studies during the past few decades tried to inquire more in these areas of Work Life research which has formed into a new discipline all together now. This study tries to focus more into some mediating aspects at Nexus points of Work Family domains & The subsequent spillover effects on Individuals during the vanishing boundaries by virtue of Technological advancements & virtual Work & Family Microsystems & their positive & negative influences on Employees is observed in this study. Hyderabad, India a bustling & thriving IT & ITes economic hub with more of MNC working community is taken as focus area for this study. The study followed the Spill Over theory models for its questioner framing & conducted over a mixed group of MNC employees across different IT & ITes organizations in Hyderabad, India.

KEYWORDS

work life balance, work-family nexus, professional communications, new work environments.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 IT & ITES INDUSTRY COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES AT WORK LIFE NEXUS

Today's globally integrating work environments are commonly perceived downsizing the workload of employees by virtue of the most advanced Information & Communication Technologies. The connected networks at all places, Telecommuting facilities of working environments, cloud based network systems are enabled by new communication technology interfaces such as Mobile computing devices, tele-computing devices, email, smart-phones, videoconferencing etc. These provide employees various options for communicating & performing their daily work tasks & also for effective communications with co-workers, supervisors and/or clients any time anywhere making the work environments more virtual than real. The widely believed thought is that this flexibility can give individual workers the opportunity to better balance their work and home domains, as they can allocate their time over work and family activities in a way that suits their situation best (Parasuraman & Greenhaus, 2002). The birth of the technological age has resulted in drastic changes in employee work patterns, including the possibility of job sharing, flexible working, and career breaks (Patterson, 2001). So accordingly organizations have increasing expectations regarding employee availability that indirectly triggers employees sometimes feel compelled to work-related messages even during non-work times also (Derks & Bakker, 2012). In addition, technological advances have also resulted in a trend of rise in non-standard work schedules, including evening, night & week end work schedules Hurme, P. (2005). So in the onset it is noted that employees feel compelled to immediately respond to work related messages even during leisure time (Davis, 2002). Also a few studies have reported that some of the downside effects of usage of smart technologies is associated with common understanding that employees are obligatory to be available at any time & any place (Green 2001). In the same lines many employees commonly opine that the Flexible working conditions, Internet & Information technologies in a way blur the distinctions between the Work & Life domains, integrating them together for both positive & negative effects exchanged to each other domains.

2. NEED FOR STUDY & STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

India now being a growing hub for MNC Work Culture & International clients service systems due to the availability of adequately trained manpower (IACC 2005) & HR constitute the most important factor in this IT services' growth. The major challenges being expressed by the IT industry HR in India today is the low motivation & high attrition rates.

Many researches so far have already projected that Work Family Balance plays a pivotal factor in managing Employee Motivation, engagement, Job satisfaction & thereby minimizing attritions. The Propensity of employees towards work & Work inclinations are challenged mostly by virtue of extended office hours, Virtual Work Microsystems with 24*7*365 pattern of employee professional connectivities, disengagement & engagement of Employees between Work Life domains, boundaries distinctions of Work or Family systems are identified as primary factors challenging basic Work Life Harmony in recent times.

2.1 NEW WORK ENVIRONMENTS & CLOUD NETWORK STATIONS

The disengagement of Employees from work during personal times to harmonize Work Life domains is becoming harder to achieve by these "any time connected" work culture, one of the significant reasons is by virtue of the advanced Mobile, Internet & communication technologies. Their penetrations at homes, while in commute & almost everywhere, especially in the bigger cities across India. So the prevalence & usage of smart technologies by which typically Employees can log into work any time any place like *Telecommuting, Remote-Work Stations, Work from Home, permalancing* etc. These are redefining the paradigm of conventional Work Systems. This though has got a vast variant of benefits & facilitations both for organizations & employees & is also having its flip side effects. Because of these new advancements in Work cultures psychological challenges are becoming more prevalent than the traditional factors of illness (Peter & Siegrist, 2000). This in turn can affect employee recovery and as a consequence, influences health in a more negative way. Working is no longer limited to specific hours at a specific location. At the same time modern technology facilitates employees to be productive & contribute to work qualitatively even outside the office setup and outside conventional working hours makes it both convenient at the same time stressful & counter productive sometimes also as they are adding both positive & negative dimensions to the issue. So, the present study wants to focus on this aspects of disengaging of Employees, Levels of Employee propensity towards work related communications during personal times & the aspects of interventions of Internet & communication technologies in Work life harmonizing during the Personal times / Out of Office hours / Holidays / Leave/Vacation times in growing IT Cities like Hyderabad, India.

3. HYPOTHESIS TO BE TESTED

H0: There is No significant correlation between Employee attitude towards professional communications during week ends personal times & Initial hours of a professional week.

Ha: There is a significant correlation between Employee attitude towards professional communications during week ends personal times & Initial hours of a professional week.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 THE THEORETICAL MODEL OF WORK LIFE BALANCE RESEARCH

Based on Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) & elaboration through many such research frame works, theorists proposed an expanded multidimensional model of positive and negative spillover of affect, values, skills, and behaviors in Work Life Research during the past few decades. This comprehensive model of work-family interface that considers a range of positive and negative inter domain influences with the factor structure is considered widely for Work Life research. It comprises of the two distinct Independent variable Microsystems that are 1. Family MicroSystem 2. Work Microsystem. The present Study would like to focus more on the effects of Work Microsystems on family micro system particularly at the Work to personal time nexus.

4.1.1 The Work Microsystems

As proposed in Work Life Balance model (Dr. Joseph Grzywacz,19999), the major Work related contributing factors on family Microsystems include

- Role ambiguity
- Role conflict
- Number of hours worked
- Work schedule flexibility
- Decision latitude/Task autonomy

These are often discussed as predominant factors that are linked to work-family outcomes. Assess the amount of control the individual has over their work environment, Job pressure, assessing the amount of psychological strain associated with working, was measured by summing responses support at work assessing the extent to which relationships with co-workers and supervisors are perceived as supportive is assessed using these aspects.

4.2 PRIMARY DATA

The nature of this particular study is correlatory in nature & was conducted on a sample of 76 IT & ITes professional at entry & managerial levels in Hyderabad, India selected on random selection bases. The survey was carried us with both qualitative face-face inquiry & a quantitative questioner with factors sited in spillover theory were used in framing the questioner.

- The questions are scaled on 5 Point *likert* scale.
- *SPSS 20* Software was used to study the Primary Data & analyze the results.

4.3 QUESTIONER DESIGN

- Questions are divided into two fundamental themes & coded accordingly for SPSS loading, *M Theme* – Mondays / Initial times of work week’s *S Theme* – Work-Off times /personal times, Oalong with other demographic questions like Gender, Experience, company etc. All the questions are coded unidirectional.

4.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- Professional Communications during out of office hours & Employees inclination to respond
- Nature of Work-Family nexus, pre-occupancy & temperament of employees during initial hours of Working Weeks is observed.
- Mode of effective communications to convey a message & its influence during the Work Life nexus points is observed
- Employees’ camaraderie, colleagues support & its positive effectiveness during out of office hour communications is studied.

4.5 LIMITATION AND SCOPE FOR FURTHER STUDY

Like any study, there are limitations that must be acknowledged. First, this study was cross-sectional and based on self-report data, which has the potential to inflate correlations and limits the ability to make causal inferences. The nexus point at end of the working week hours could also show some significant confluence on Work Life & could be inquired more into in further studies.

4.6 ASSUMPTIONS MADE

1. Survey predominantly focused on Work Microsystems’ spillover into the Family Microsystems & Balance parameters.
2. Familial Harmony is assumed as an uninfluential aspect& independent with any family to family spillovers being generalized & left to the respondent’s view point be it positive or negative on a typical Week End/ Holiday personal times.
3. Also the Work – Work Microsystems’ spillovers both positive &negative with in the Work micro system & its subcultures is assumed negligible (Ex: Some colleague’s mood induced into others’), being the volume of the time change over in the early hours of working Week is reported generally a short span.

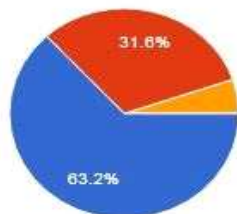
5 RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The typical aspects of IT professional’s attitudes in developing cities like Hyderabad, India project various aspects of Work Family nexus in developing countries globally.

The study was conducted across different professionals, including Women Workforce considering worklife concerns seeming more prevalent in Women employee’s empowerment & inclusion in the recent past. The broad level gender distribution of respondents is shown in the below diagram.

EXHIBIT 1

Gender



Male	63.2%
Female	31.6%
Want to stay anonymous	5.3%

The aspects of individuals’ disengagement levels & role of professional communications in such Work life scenarios in IT industry derive following inferences as follows.

The Professional Communication scenerios of Employees at work Family nexus points are themed into 2 catogeries (S1,S2,S3,S4,S5,S6 & M1,M2,M3) Personal Times & office Initial hours respectively and responses were loaded into SPSS for analysis. A bivariate two tailed correlation matrix is plotted accordingly. The correlation of the questionner & alignment of employees’ responce is broadly plotted in the following tabels & is discussed through the inferences & generalised discussion further below

EXHIBIT 2

Descriptive Statistics			
Questions	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
S5	3.42	1.968	76
S6	2.76	1.018	76
S1	2.79	1.247	76
M1	4.13	0.957	76
M2	3.66	1.040	76
S2	2.58	1.123	76
M3	3.61	0.994	76
S3	3.95	0.862	76
S4	3.50	0.856	76

PEARSON'S CORRELATION METRIX

The Pearson's Correlation metrix below reflects correlations between following scenerios.

EXHIBIT 3

Pearson Correlations Matrix										
		S5	S6	S1	M1	M2	S2	M3	S3	S4
S5	Pearson	1	0.077	-0.007	-0.171	-0.007	-0.064	-0.214	0.202	0.222
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.508	0.953	0.139	0.953	0.586	0.064	0.081	0.054
	N	76	76	76	76	76	76	76	76	76
S6	Pearson	0.077	1	0.044	-0.104	-.355**	-0.065	-.410**	-.227*	-0.076
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.508		0.704	0.369	0.002	0.576	0.000	0.049	0.511
	N	76	76	76	76	76	76	76	76	76
S1	Pearson	-0.007	0.044	1	-0.111	-0.159	.336**	0.147	-0.085	0.100
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.953	0.704		0.342	0.170	0.003	0.205	0.466	0.391
	N	76	76	76	76	76	76	76	76	76
M1	Pearson	-0.171	-0.104	-0.111	1	.260*	-.419**	.504**	-0.218	-0.081
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.139	0.369	0.342		0.023	0.000	0.000	0.059	0.485
	N	76	76	76	76	76	76	76	76	76
M2	Pearson	-0.007	-.355**	-0.159	.260*	1	-0.057	.487**	0.218	0.105
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.953	0.002	0.170	0.023		0.628	0.000	0.059	0.368
	N	76	76	76	76	76	76	76	76	76
S2	Pearson	-0.064	-0.065	.336**	-.419**	-0.057	1	0.040	-0.023	0.055
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.586	0.576	0.003	0.000	0.628		0.730	0.842	0.634
	N	76	76	76	76	76	76	76	76	76
M3	Pearson	-0.214	-.410**	0.147	.504**	.487**	0.040	1	0.131	0.204
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.064	0.000	0.205	0.000	0.000	0.730		0.260	0.078
	N	76	76	76	76	76	76	76	76	76
S3	Pearson	0.202	-.227*	-0.085	-0.218	0.218	-0.023	0.131	1	0.181
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.081	0.049	0.466	0.059	0.059	0.842	0.260		0.119
	N	76	76	76	76	76	76	76	76	76
S4	Pearson	0.222	-0.076	0.100	-0.081	0.105	0.055	0.204	0.181	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.054	0.511	0.391	0.485	0.368	0.634	0.078	0.119	
	N	76	76	76	76	76	76	76	76	76

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
 * . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

5.1 POSITIVELY CORRELATED

M1- Mondays/ Initial hour of your working week are Good Times to convey any office communications &

M2- Meetings (of any form) during 1st hours of a week convey communications Clear & precise

Pearson's Correlation (r) =.260* at a Sig value (p)= 0.023

S2- Pre-occupancy levels at office during the initial hours of a professional week are more by family

S1- often employee opt to ignore the communications from office on week off days to respond flexibly while back once at work

Pearson's Correlation (r) =.336** at a Sig value (p)= 0.003

M3- Initial Hours of the week are highly effective & productive for any Professional Work /Job task.

M1- Mondays/ Initial hour of your working week are Good Times to convey any office communications

Pearson's Correlation (r) =.504** at a Sig value (p)= 0.000

M2- Meetings (of any form) during 1st hours of a week convey communications clear & precise

M3- Initial Hours of the week are highly effective & productive for any Professional Work /Job task.

Pearson's Correlation (r) =.487** at a Sig value (p)= 0.000

5.2 NEGATIVELY CORRELATED:

S6- Inclination to take Office communications during Personal Times (Holidays /Out of Office Hours)

M2- Meetings (of any form) during 1st hours of a week convey communications clear & precise

Pearson's Correlation (r) = -.355** at a Sig value (p) = 0.002

S6- Inclination to take Office communications during Personal Times (Holidays Out of Office Hours etc)

M3- Initial Hours of the week are highly effective & productive for any Professional Work /Job task.

Pearson's Correlation (r) = -.410** at a Sig value (p) = 0.000

S6- Inclination to take Office communications during Personal Times (Holidays Out of Office Hours etc)

S3- While at time of some major challenge at family, if you receive a Promotion message /Hike in Salary during week-off days changes the day to good

Pearson's Correlation (r) = -.227* at a Sig value (p)= 0.048

S2- Pre-occupancy levels at office during the initial hours of a professional week are more by family

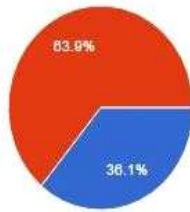
M1- Mondays/ Initial hour of your working week are Good Times to convey any office communications

Pearson's Correlation (r) = -.419** at a Sig value (p)= 0.000

Further analysis into the qualitative data yielded following observations that a vast majority of IT professionals have frequent extened office obligations than structured working hours reflecting in segmentation issues & disengagement challenges between Work & Family domains, reitirating the influence of professional communications on Work Family nexus points.

EXHIBIT 4

How many additional hours you work on average in a typical week (if any)



Nil (My nature of Work practices absolute Working Hours)	36.1%
My Job is Work Drive & Not Time driven (Might have to stretch)	63.9%

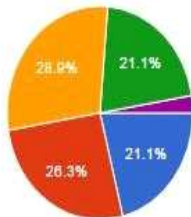
Here while Employees who said “Yes” in a Nominal Scale inquiry to *interest in office communications in personal time*, they rated Low Scores of inclination in other similar themed Ordinal Scaled questions, showing interestingly that they only feel obligatory to take Office communications at personal hours but need not be positively inclined.

Familial/personal influence on the Employee Work Microsystems is also reported very significant than work communications on Personal/Familial times where the employee’s propensity to any work related response at personal times is mostly low.

A considerable majority of respondents opined familial/personal pre-occupancy during initial hours of a professional week at Office Microsystems.

EXHIBIT 5

Pre-occupancy levels at office during the initial hours of a professional week are

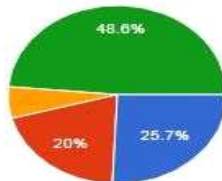


Nil (Move totally into work mode the moment enter office)	21.1%
25%	26.3%
50%	28.9%
75%	21.1%
100% (tailed by personal agendas for some time)	2.6%

So, also a majority of respondents feel Face-Face communications are most effective to communicate any tone of communication Positive / Challenge.As most opine that any other mode of communication sans the completeness in conveying the exact message & distracts the content adding to ambiguity & anxiety.

EXHIBIT 6

What would be a good communication mode during initial hours of a week to convey any important message



e-Mail	25.7%
Phone Call	20%
Phone SMS/ OC chat messenger	5.7%
Face to Face	48.6%

On the contrary, irrespective of the variables the major respondent’s groups across levels opined that week-end office communications be it positive or negative will be mostly be prioritised for response & actioned the next working day of the week & showed lesser spillover on the personal time harmony. Same is observed during the Holidays & Leave times, no matter how professionally inclined the respondent is.

Also, a significant volume of respondents expressed peer level support has a great positive effect on professional communications during out of office hours, reiterating the importance of camaraderie at work & its positive effects on Work Life balance.

So from the above observations & correlations seen,It is evident that irrespective of the expected mood of the communication received Work to family positive spillover during personal times is responded less compared to Family to work Positive spillover being more effective.However, overall in this context it can be summarised that employees are following a sort of segmentation practice while making distinctions & priorities between Work to Family Microsystems and vice versa inorder to disengage & transcend between different Work Life domains for a wholistic harmony.

CONCLUSION

The study reiterates that the ever changing era of Technology create many job opportunities & facilitated with new virtual work environments but the same has also created some persistent issues with respect to working conditions &work life harmonizing challenges that Individuals express through this study.Because of increased workload, insecurity in job and pressures to reach targets, many individuals are working more hours a week that could lead to an increase in stress behaviors resulting in poor Work Life enrichment. On the other hand, it is also highlighted that though telecommuting work systems provide higher levels of job fulfillment & convenience they also create stress as employee’s experience conflicting demands on their time and energy because of demands from family microsystem creating a confused segmentation issues. It is also explained by respondents that modern communication technologies are associated with less recovery and disengagement from Work Microsystems which is an imperative for individuals being humans & as psychological disengagement is usually by transcendence & does not work as a switch. Though the study clearly showed a significant attitude of employees practicing Segmentation of Work /Family domains in the New trending work environments, employees opine it is imperative to be not only physically away from their workplace, but they also need to mentally avoid work related thoughts and activities to recover from stressful thought process during *No-work times*. No matter how much ever the trending technologies radicalise our NewWold View of "Work", fundamentally Human Resources at any degree of professionalism tend to perseive Work to be only in Objective Parameters & other personal domains to be more Subjective in nature tending towards intangible easthetic angels. So, to summarize it is observed that,Employees emphasises considerable reluctance to Professional Communications during Work communications at Personal domain Nexus. So, also it is suggested that having a complete

involvement in Work or Family Microsystems by unplugging from one domain to another to a large extent can have positive effects on role fulfillments & positive psychological enrichment gains for overall Work Life happiness.

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