

A Study on the Impact of Remote Working on Work-Life Balance of Working Women in Ernakulam District

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a lot of problems around the world, and the rapid advancement of information and communication technology has changed traditional work structures in a big way. As a result, many people in different fields are now working from home. This change in thinking has had a big effect on workers, especially women who work and take care of their families at the same time. In this context, the current study seeks to investigate the influence of remote work on the work-life balance of employed women in the Ernakulam district of Kerala, a region noted for its elevated literacy rates, sophisticated digital infrastructure, and growing female workforce engagement.

The study's main goal is to figure out how working from home affects important aspects of work-life balance, such as stress levels, family time, productivity, job satisfaction, and role conflict. It also looks into how important factors like organizational support, workload, working hours, flexibility, and family support affect the experiences of women who work from home. The study uses a descriptive research design and has gathered primary data from working women in fields like information technology, education, banking, and other service industries where working from home is possible. We used the right statistical tools to look at the data and find patterns, connections, and big differences in work-life balance before and after people started working from home.

The study also stresses how important it is for organizations and families to support remote workers in order for them to be successful. Women who get enough help from their employers, like flexible hours, clear communication, and workloads that are easy to handle, are more likely to find a better balance between work and life. They also need help from family members with household chores. On the other hand, not having support systems can make stress worse and hurt overall health. The study also shows that while working from home can give women more power by allowing them to keep working and giving them more freedom, it can also strengthen traditional gender roles by raising expectations for housework.

Keywords: Remote Working, Work-Life Balance, Working Women, Job Satisfaction, Stress Level, Organizational Support, Family Support, Role Conflict, Flexibility, Ernakulam District

INTRODUCTION

Remote work has become a major change in how people work today, thanks to quick improvements in digital technology and the COVID-19 pandemic. It lets workers do their jobs outside of traditional offices, giving them more freedom in terms of when and where they work. This change has changed the way companies are set up and what employees expect in many fields. For women who work, especially in places like Ernakulam district, working from home can be both good and bad for their work-life balance.

The good news is that it cuts down on travel time, makes work less physically demanding, and gives people more freedom to set their own work hours, which means they have more time for family and personal activities. But it also makes it harder to tell the difference between work and home life, which can lead to longer hours at work, more responsibilities at home, and more stress.

In many cases, women are expected to do both their jobs and their household chores at the same time, which causes role conflict and makes them less happy. So, it's important to know how working from home affects women's work-life balance in order to create policies that help employees, promote gender equality, and make sure everyone is happy and healthy in the changing workplace.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The idea of work-life balance has become more significant in the context of the emergence of remote work, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic. Several research works have been conducted to explore the impact of remote and hybrid work arrangements on the professional and personal lives of women workers.

Recent research works on the impact of remote work on the professional and personal lives of women workers have revealed several challenges. According to a study by Jain and Malviya (2025), remote work has been found to offer flexibility but also poses several challenges to women workers. Similarly, Nair and Joseph (2025) found that while remote work increases family time, there is a blurring of boundaries between work and personal life, resulting in mental fatigue. Reddy and Kumar (2025) have identified hybrid work as effective for achieving work-life balance as it allows for flexibility as well as interaction at the workplace.

There are many studies that have focused on role conflicts faced by working women. Vijayalakshmi et al. (2023) found that women face more stress due to their role conflicts between home and work. Das and Banerjee (2024) have identified role conflicts as resulting in low productivity due to lack of a separate work space and high stress levels. Similarly, Patil et al. (2024) found that while remote work results in high job satisfaction for women, there is a high probability for role conflicts resulting in burnout.

Another important factor is the technological factor. Singh and Arora (2024) found that the technological factor is significant in the remote work environment. The "always-on" work culture is one of the key issues that need attention. The "always-on" work culture is characterized by mental exhaustion due to the constant need to be connected. Lakshmi and Gopinath (2017) found that the technological factor is both an enabler and a hindrance in the achievement of work-life balance.

RESEARCH GAP

Although various research has been conducted to explore the effect of remote working on work-life balance, certain aspects still remain to be researched. Previous research has been conducted on various employee groups and certain industries, like the IT sector. However, very few studies have been done specifically on working women. Although various studies have been done to explore the advantages and disadvantages of remote working, none have been done specifically from a working woman's point of view, taking into consideration their dual roles as working women and homemakers.

There is a lack of region-based research, especially concerning the region of Ernakulam, where factors like high female literacy and socio-cultural aspects affect work-life balance. Many research papers have been done comparing remote and hybrid working, but very few have been done comparing the same before and after the implementation of remote working.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To examine the impact of remote working on the work-life balance of working women in Ernakulam District.
- To analyze the effect of working hours, workload, organizational support and flexibility on the work-life balance of working women engaged in remote work.
- To identify the professional and personal benefits and challenges experienced by working women while working remotely.
- To compare the work-life balance of working women before and after the adoption of remote working based on factors such as stress level, productivity and family time.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

1. H01 (Null Hypothesis): There is no significant relationship between remote working and the work–life balance of working women in Ernakulam District.

H11 (Alternative Hypothesis): There is a significant relationship between remote working and the work–life balance of working women in Ernakulam District.

2. H02 (Null Hypothesis): Working hours, workload, organizational support, and job flexibility do not have a significant effect on the work–life balance of working women engaged in remote work.

H12 (Alternative Hypothesis): Working hours, workload, organizational support, and job flexibility have a significant effect on the work–life balance of working women engaged in remote work.

3. H03 (Null Hypothesis): Working women do not experience significant professional and personal benefits and challenges during remote work that influence their work–life balance.

H13 (Alternative Hypothesis): Working women experience significant professional and personal benefits and challenges during remote work that influence their work–life balance.

4. H04 (Null Hypothesis): There is no significant difference in stress level, productivity, and family time of working women before and after the adoption of remote work.

H14 (Alternative Hypothesis): There is a significant difference in stress level, productivity, and family time of working women before and after the adoption of remote work.

RESEARCH DESIGN

In this study, a **descriptive and analytical research design** has been adopted. the research design ensures a structured and scientific approach to studying the impact of remote work on employees' work-life balance.

Area of Study

The study was conducted in Ernakulam District, Kerala

Sample Size

130 respondents were selected.

Sampling Technique

Convenience sampling method was used.

ANALYTICAL ANALYSIS

This chapter is dedicated to data analysis and its interpretation for the sample of 130 respondents to find out the effects of remote working on the work-life balance of employed women in the district of Ernakulam. The increased use of remote work by virtue of technological development necessitates an assessment of its impact on both personal and professional aspects of people's life.

Data collection for this study has been done through structured questionnaires, which have been properly analyzed and interpreted using appropriate statistical methods. While descriptive statistics are used to give an account of the demographics of the respondents, the use of various tests like chi-square, regression, correlation, and paired t-test is done to test hypotheses.

In this chapter, an analysis of important variables like hours spent at work, workload, flexibility, organizational support, stress, productivity, job satisfaction, and time spent with family is undertaken. Findings are stated in a succinct and organized form through the use of tables. These findings form a very strong basis for making conclusions and recommendations about the success of remote working in promoting work-life balance amongst working women.

Chi-Square Analysis

Hypothesis 1

H01 (Null Hypothesis): There is no significant relationship between remote working and the work–life balance of working women in Ernakulam District.

H11 (Alternative Hypothesis): There is a significant relationship between remote working and the work–life balance of working women in Ernakulam District.

Chi-Square Test

Test	Value	df	Sig.
Pearson Chi-Square	105.326	4	0.000
Likelihood Ratio	142.658	4	0.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	93.203	1	0.000

Interpretation

The null hypothesis is rejected since $p < 0.05$. There is a correlation between remote working and work-life balance.

Regression Analysis

Hypothesis 2

H02 (Null Hypothesis): Working hours, workload, organizational support, and job flexibility do not have a significant effect on the work–life balance of working women engaged in remote work.

H12 (Alternative Hypothesis): Working hours, workload, organizational support, and job flexibility have a significant effect on the work–life balance of working women engaged in remote work.

Regression Summary

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Sig.
1	0.818	0.669	0.653	0.000

Coefficients

Variable	B	Beta	Sig.
Hours Defined	-0.258	-0.243	0.002
Scheduled Hours	-0.228	-0.240	0.001
Workload	-0.140	-0.110	0.100
Technical Support	-0.161	-0.166	0.024
Emotional Support	-0.123	-0.126	0.064
Flexibility	-0.138	-0.152	0.027

Interpretation

The regression is significant since $p < 0.05$. From R^2 (0.669), 66.9% of work-life balance can be predicted. More hours at work have a negative influence on balance, whereas flexibility and support have a positive effect on balance.

Correlation Analysis

Hypothesis 3

H03 (Null Hypothesis): Working women do not experience significant professional and personal benefits and challenges during remote work that influence their work–life balance.

H13 (Alternative Hypothesis): Working women experience significant professional and personal benefits and challenges during remote work that influence their work–life balance.

Correlation Matrix

Variables	Benefits	Challenges	WLB
Benefits	1	0.946	-0.187
Challenges	0.946	1	-0.171

Sig. = 0.033

Interpretation

As $p < 0.05$, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. Although there exists a significant relationship, yet the correlation is negative and weak.

Paired t-Test Analysis

Hypothesis 4

H04 (Null Hypothesis): There is no significant difference in stress level, productivity, and family time of working women before and after the adoption of remote work.

H14 (Alternative Hypothesis): There is a significant difference in stress level, productivity, and family time of working women before and after the adoption of remote work.

Paired t-Test Results

Variable	Before Mean	After Mean	t-value	Sig.
Stress	4.50	2.58	33.510	0.000
Productivity	2.50	4.33	-30.537	0.000
Family Time	2.50	4.50	—	0.000
Job Satisfaction	2.50	4.33	-30.537	0.000

Interpretation

As $p < 0.05$, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. Telecommuting has greatly improved stress reduction and productivity, along with satisfaction and family time.

CONCLUSION

The findings from the research regarding the effects of telecommuting on work-life balance among working women in Ernakulam District show a multifaceted effect. Telecommuting has greatly helped in ensuring flexibility whereby it has enabled women to be able to cope with their work-related duties together with their personal affairs. There has been a reduction in commuting time, and this has contributed to an increase in productivity.

However, the research findings have also pointed out various difficulties that arise as a consequence of telecommuting. The lack of distinction between the spheres of professional and private life has resulted in a tendency toward excessive work hours, higher stress levels, and a greater inability to switch off from job-related activities. It was noted that many female employees had to cope with role strain.

The inability to engage socially, insufficient organizational support, and inadequate home office space have further impacted their general well-being. Although telecommuting has enabled women in some ways, it has increased stereotypical gender norms within families, particularly when there is no joint domestic work.

To conclude, there are several ways in which remote working has both helped and hindered working women in terms of their work-life balance in the Ernakulam district. It is vital that organizations adopt certain favorable policies that will help to make remote working more effective. These include flexible schedules, defining work-life boundaries, providing support for mental health issues, and raising awareness about work-life balance. There must also be a shift in society to ensure that there is equal division of household chores among all family members.

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