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# IMPACT OF 3+2+2 WORK SCHEDULE ON ITES SECTOR

**Dr. Guru Basava Aradhya S[1], Mr Ankit Sharma[2], Ms Neha Ghrutakaushik[3], Ms Shefali Chandra[4]**

[1]**Associate Professor, Department of Marketing & IB, ISBR Business School, Bengaluru, India**
**guru@isbr.in**
[2]**PG20057, PGDM, ISBR Business School, Bengaluru, India.**
**ankitsharma.pg20009@isbr.in**
[3]**PG20064, PGDM, ISBR Business School, Bengaluru, India.**
**nehagk.pg20079@isbr.in**
[4]**PG20013, PGDM, ISBR Business School, Bengaluru, India.**
**shefali.pg20125@isbr.in**

## ABSTRACT
Several covid cases are increasing day by day, putting the life of working mass in a danger. While some of the workforces are eagerly waiting to return to the office and improve their work-life while many are finding the comfy corner of their house to be more comfortable and productive. Though previously working remotely was just an option, but Covid had provided an opportunity to work remotely. But still completely working remotely won't be the optimum solution in the given state. The proposed model of 3+2+2 is 3 days' work from the office, 2 days' work remotely, and 2 days off. This hybrid model will enable the employees to choose and schedule their work life around their personal life; making their work-life flexible than before. This structure is a balance between traditional work and remote work and its counter-checks the demerits of both the work schedule. The result of qualitative analysis of the collected data along with correlation analysis of the factors that support different models of work structure indicated the corresponding factors are the reason for accepting or rejecting the particular mode of work structure. On a detailed discussion with participants, several other aspects of work structure and its effect on their life also came into the picture. The current scenario of increasing lockdown and uncertainty of the future has also made the workforce think about how they would want to work. Location of work always had played a major role in accepting a job or crafting the career path of many youngsters. Since options are available for location and mode of work, they can also plan and explore the career options, which were earlier not

considered.

## Introduction

Working hours is a term that defines the time in hours an employee spends to complete their task in their job. These working hours are measured on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis based on the employment terms. Salary or the remunerations were the concern of the jobs in the past but at present qualitative work is more appreciated than quantitative works by the workers. For a quality job by the employees, their happiness and sound mind is more required. Due to this the working hours at present plays an important role in employees deciding to take a job or not. There are several provisions in the Factories Act, 1948 to safeguard the workers from exploitation based on working hours.

Talking about the traditional working hours of 9 to 5 has been challenged over the past year because of lockdown for COVID-19. Gone are the days where you have to go to the office from Monday to Friday and follow the typical office environment, many employees started working from home, even some companies are promoting by providing all the office facilities like table, chairs and other essentials things to their employees at their remote workplace.

## Problem statement

### *What is 3+2+2?*

There is a new concept of working hours is rising that could become our new normal i.e. 3-2-2, where people would opt to work three days in the office, two from home, and off for the other two. This can be the beginning of new normal and change the definition of working schedules and shifts. Some see this as a positive as it allows them a ton of flexibility with their personal and professional lives while others question if it should work based on factors like objectives, industry, and the individual companies themselves.

Now businesses think about the office and its role in their operations. Moving forward companies are more focused on how to make people most productive. For a lot of businesses, this will lead to empowered employees with greater flexibility to choose when, how, and where they work to motivate. The 3-2-2 concept is one solution that will become even more popular. It will be a balance between traditional and virtual offices.

Recent data from LinkedIn's Workforce Confidence Index shows nearly half (47%) of US professionals believe their companies may follow this kind of work schedule structure. Some industries like Tech and Finance even more likely to expect flexibility (73% and 67%), where the role of infrastructure is a little less.

Organizations who tried this kind of approach (i.e. 3+2+2) long before the pandemic have recorded happier employees, higher productivity, and reduced absenteeism. This kind of work structure provides an employee to spend more time with their families and for companies apart from the productivity company also get the benefit in term of employees costs like electricity, Wi-Fi and maintenance.

Here, we have considered the workforce which can work remotely. IT sector, previously had the concept of work from home or working remotely. They were the first ones to adopt this new normal quickly. Since they have already gone through the work model both before and through the pandemic, which provides us more

insight into the objectives of the study.

Right in the scenario of the pandemic of Covid-19, now lockdown can't be an option considering the economic fall. Hence, we need a work schedule model, where the safety concerns in terms of Covid and productivity can go hand in hand. Work from home and work from the office have their pros and cons. The hybrid model has a chance to work in this current situation It is anticipated that around 47% of the US professionals believe that their work may be a hybrid one. Neither both the model can be implemented in a stand-alone way, after the hit of Covid-19.

Before the Covid pandemic, many organizations were using the 3+2+2 work structure and witnessed higher productivity and lower absenteeism among the employees. Literature also suggests firms give options of work from home for two or more days a week to their employees. This structure, on one hand, makes the employees follow guidelines but on the other hand, empowers them to choose a comfortable schedule to manage work and personal life. This helps the employees to enjoy both the office encounters and connections along with their commitments. This structure helped the employees manage their personal and professional lives in the mid of the year 2020 during the pandemic. Tech and finance companies popularly enjoyed this structure.

There may exist some resistance and difficulty among the employees who are working in the office and few others are working from home and are following another schedule. That is why for such schedules to work, a team effort has to be there in planning and coordinating the employees on theory workdays and work hours. There is no clear differentiation between work and home in the flexible work schedules, and that creates some issues in communications and performances.

**Literature Review**

Bathini and Kandathil (2015) in their study discussed the work from the home situation in the Indian and global contexts. They highlighted the ongoing debate on work from home as employees benefit and employer costs. They suggested few measures to protect the interests of the employees while they work from home are adopted and implemented in the organization. The study proposed to consider the employee cost in the case of work intensity and also proposed to have legislation that allows the employees to request work from home in the organization.

Mas and Pallais (2017) in their study employed a choice experiment to analyze the employment process in a call center to evaluate the willingness of employees to pay for alternative work arrangements distribution in comparison to traditional work arrangements. There were mixed responses from the employees but there was resistance for paying for the flexible work scheduling from the majority of the employees.

In a study by Krantz-Kentkrantz (2019), the author attempted to examine the workplace of the workers and the change in their workplaces in recent times. The author stated that more workplace flexibilities are being facilitated by the advancing technological developments across the world. The study examined the when, where, and for how long the employees from management and allied professions have worked at their workplaces.

A study on **"How are working time and practices changing as a result of covid-19"** (2020) from this, I get to know that there some interviews happened with the

business organizations, individual businesses, and unions. the response that came says that social distancing is important, many manufacturing companies introduced the changes in shift patterns. and also reduced the numbers of workers and did it in an alternative way. One manufacturing firm started part-time working, by introducing three weeks cycles. In white-collar jobs, working from home has become commonplace. Especially for workers with caring responsibilities, more flexible working hours practices were widespread. We also heard about increased trust and recognition between those working on the frontline and those working from home.

**Research Methodology**
*Introduction*
 Several covid cases are increasing day by day, putting the life of working mass in a danger. While some of the workforces are eagerly waiting to return to the office and improve their work-life while many are finding the comfy corner of their house to be more comfortable and productive. Though previously working remotely was just an option, but Covid had provided an opportunity to work remotely. But still completely working remotely won't be the optimum solution in the given state. The proposed model of 3+2+2 is 3 days' work from the office, 2 days' work remotely, and 2 days off. This model will enable the employees to choose and schedule their work life around their personal life; making their work-life flexible than before. This structure is a balance between traditional work and remote work and its counter-checks the demerits of both the work schedule.

*Conceptual Framework*
 In this framework, there are 2 types of work models that are now available in practice, and we have considered our proposed flexible model, hence the inputs we have considered are the 3 types of work models here, and analyzed the factors which make them desirable or undesirable. The desirable factors are the advantages and the preferable factors for each mode of work. The undesirable factors and the disadvantages and non-preferable factors foe the same. Upon considering those factors the impact of those work models was understood and how it is perceived by the sector is analyzed.
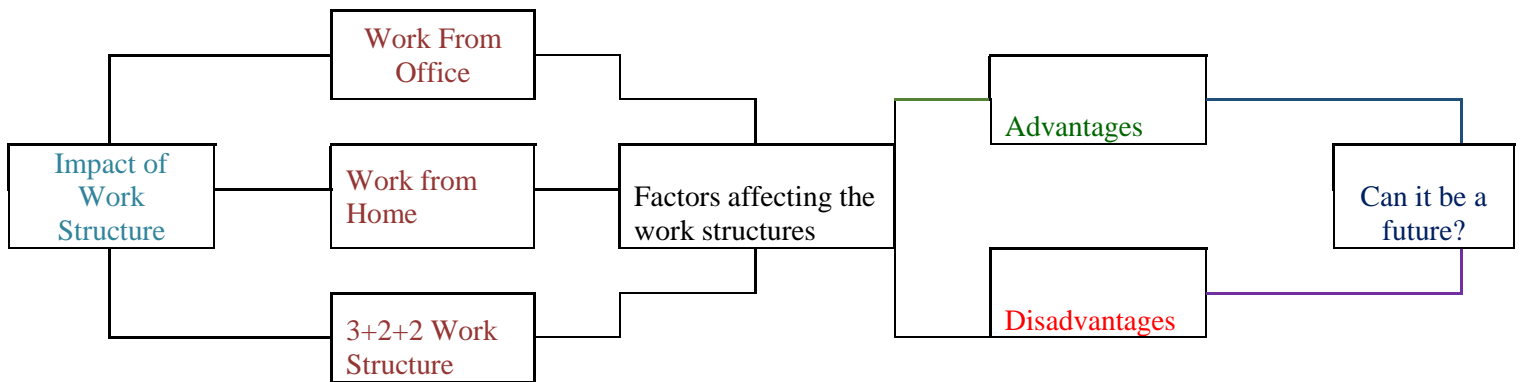


*Research* **Design**
*Objectives*
1.    To analyze the variable factors affecting flexible work structure.

2.    To study the effectiveness of flexible work structure in the ITES sector.

*Data Collection Method*

A questionnaire in the form of google-form was circulated in various IT industries (Wipro, TCS, and Infosys). The questionnaire was only shared with the target group through WhatsApp and other social media messaging platforms.

*Sample Size and Frame*

60 response was collected, which were focused and aligned to the objective of the research in correspondence to the type of job-roles and sector they are working. The focused group has only taken part in this research i.e. the employees of the ITeS sector.

*Hypothesis*

In our research we tried to establish relationships of the factors, that we had considered had an impact on the different types of work structure. Hence, we considered that the relationship between the supporting and inhibiting factors in correspondence to the mentioned work structure can be established or not, and if the relationship exists, how it affects and are related to each other.

*Statistical Tools Used*

MS-Excel was used to understand the statistical parameters and understand the central-tendency of the data collected. The relationship between the factors was established through correlation analysis using PSPP Software.

**Analysis**

In this study, descriptive statistics used to analyze the collected data to establish a relation between the factors and the work structure. The relation and their preference to the particular work model were considered through grid analysis of the facilitating and inhibiting factors. With the mean, standard deviation, and CV of the collected data, we understood the preference of the target group.

*Demographic factors*

| Variables | | Frequency (No. of respondents) | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | Male | 26 | 43.3% |
| | Female | 32 | 53.3% |
| | Prefer not to say | 2 | 3.4% |
| Marital Status | Married | 6 | 10% |
| | Unmarried | 54 | 90% |
| Working Hours | Less than 8 Hours | 9 | 15% |
| | 8-10 Hours | 43 | 71.7% |
| | 10-12 Hours | 6 | 10% |
| | 12-14 Hours | 2 | 3.3% |
| | 14 Hours and more | 0 | Nil |
| Experience | 1-4 years | 53 | 88.3% |
| | 5-8 years | 2 | 3.4% |
| | 8 and above | 8 | 8.3% |

The following table given below shows that 43.3% of respondents are males and 53.3% are females in a total of 60 responses. Employees working in IT industry 10% are married and 90% are unmarried, 15% of employees are working for less than 8 hours whereas 71.7% people are working for 8 to 10 hours 10% people are working for more than 10 hours i.e. 10-12 hours, 3.3% people are working for 12 to 14 hours.

While studying the responses we got to know that people who are working in cooperate have experience of 1 to 4 years in total 60 responses 88.3% have experienced less than 4 years. Some people have experience of 5 to 8 years 3.4% people have it, 8.35 people have experience of more than 8 years. As the major portion of the respondents is freshers, the study aimed to understand the preference of youngsters and their adaptability, with this new model.

*Descriptive Analysis:*
*Work from Office Structure*
On the scale of 1 to 5 (1- lowest rating and 5- highest rating), 46.7% out of 60 responses have rated 4 which tells that they like **work from the office** but not strong like it. There are some reasons due to which people like work from the office.28.3% of people have chosen to work from the office so that can experience peer-to-peer learning.33.3% of people have chosen to work from the office because of their focused environment over there. 33.3% of people like it because of comprehensive communication. 31.6% said that they can do better teamwork in the office.28.3% like offices because they get clarity in their working hours.26.6% said that there are fewer technical glitches in the office.25% agree for better infrastructure in offices. 23.3% likes office because of clear guidelines and instructions. The average liking for work from the office is 3.75 out of 5. Upon research, it is found that all the supporting factors are rated 3.2 out of 5, at an average with a Coefficient of variance be 0.38. 33.3% of employees said that they don't like work from the office due to traveling costs in reaching to the office from their respective homes.35% of employees don't like work from the office because they are not getting family time.26.6% experienced health issues. 30% found work from the office time-consuming. 33.3% don't like work from the office because they have to shift from their respective residencies. An average work from home idea is disliked by the rating of 2.98 out of 5, considering all the factors with a coefficient of variance of 0.44.

**Work from Home Structure**
On the scale of 1 to 5 (1- lowest rating and 5- highest) rating 40% out of 60 responses have rated 4 which tells that they like **work from home** but do not strongly like it. There are certain reasons why people like work from home. 43.3% of employees found work allows them to save more of their income as they are not supposed to travel. 46.6% of employees said that work from home gives them a location independent they can work from any part of the world. 35% are getting a better work-life balance. 45% like work from home due to their customized offices in their home. 31.6% found less stress in their life while working from home.33.3% like work from home because they are getting better health benefits. The average liking for work from home is 4.03 out of 5. Upon research, it is found that all the supporting factors are rated 3.63 out of 5, at an average with a Coefficient of variance be 0.38.

23.3% of employees don't like work from the office as they are feeling less motivated in their homes.26.6% are not liking they are experiencing 24 hours burden.31.6% don't like work from home due to a lack of communication and teamwork. 26.6% are not liking due to unmonitored performance and frequent breaks.25% are saying that they are facing huge technical and internet issues while

working from home.30% are not able to focus on their work they are distracted. An average work from home idea is disliked by the rating of 2.86 out of 5, considering all the factors with a coefficient of variance of 0.45.

**3+2+2 Flexible Work Structure**

On the scale of 1 to 5 (1- lowest rating and 5- highest), 55% out of 60 responses strongly agree with the **hybrid (3+2+2) work structure** and give 5. 31.6% of employees are saying that they are getting flexible working hours.28.3% found they are motivated enough for their work.25% agree due to less risk of productivity.33.3% said their performances are monitored which allows them to achieve their goals. 33.3% asses to resources optimally. 31.6%Found balance in their personal and professional life. The average liking for work from home is 4.01 out of 5. Upon research, it is found that all the supporting factors are rated 3.37 out of 5, at an average with a Coefficient of variance be 0.38.

35% said that they got distracted. 33.3% faces problems in scheduling their shifts. 36.6% said they are burned out with switching online and offline.28.3% are facing issues in setting time for their personal and professional lives.30% said in implementing this kind of work structure there are lots of problems. An average hybrid work structure (3+2+2) idea is disliked by the rating of 2.59 out of 5, considering all the factors with a coefficient of variance of 0.43. Sometimes the geographical factors for Work from home (Coastal area prone to thunderstorms, power cuts, etc.), home infrastructure, and life cycle of the employee should also be taken into account, which can also have an adverse effect too.

*Statistical Analysis*

**Hypothesis**

As the objective to achieve the factors which affecting flexible work structure in the 3+2+2 system, the below hypothesis formed to determine whether any correlation between those said factors. Since then the correlation was adopted to validate the claim

$H_0$: there is no positive correlation among the factors affecting flexible work structure.

$H_a$: there is a positive correlation among the factors affecting flexible work structure.

| | Flexible Working Schedule | Better Motivated | Lower risk in productivity | Monitored performance | Assess to Resources Optimally | Balance in personal and professional life |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Flexible Working Schedule | 1 | | | | | |
| Better Motivated | 0.8871 | 1 | | | | |
| Lower risk in productivity | 0.78531 | 0.837285 | 1 | | | |
| Monitored performance | 0.82666 | 0.847787 | 0.81195353 | 1 | | |
| Assess to Resources Optimally | 0.83452 | 0.84484 | 0.83090708 | 0.88484233 | 1 | |
| Balance in personal and professional life | 0.88411 | 0.889641 | 0.79673895 | 0.85741301 | 0.898715 | 1 |

| | Distractions | Problems in scheduling Shifts | Burn-out with Switching online and offline | The problem in scheduling personal and professional time | Problems in implementing initially |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Distractions | 1 | | | | |
| Problems in scheduling Shifts | 0.694485992 | 1 | | | |
| Burn-out with Switching online and offline | 0.67911344 | 0.818452556 | 1 | | |
| Problem in scheduling personal and professional time | 0.5767679 | 0.610460372 | 0.741036955 | 1 | |
| Problems in implementing initially | 0.595704356 | 0.715698235 | 0.649237337 | 0.746522511 | 1 |

From the above correlation analysis, we can conclude that all variables having a positive correlation. Hence, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis 'there is no positive correlation among the factors which affecting flexible work structure'

It can be further inferred that there are positive and high correlation factors affecting flexible work structure.

**Findings**

• As the sample size got more focused on the freshers, they found the hybrid model quite effective along with Work from home.

• On detailed discussion with some of the participants, it's observed that a hybrid structure can provide a space to the ones who have an experience of 1-4 years for growth in their career and to upgrade their skill set or self-development through learning or spending time for hobbies.

• A blended work from office and home is required to combat the stress level that employees undergo as they live in a nuclear family.

• It resolves the issue to use the infrastructure and getting clear instruction along with time and money saver for both employer and employee.

• For bachelors, this work structure provides scope for better personal space to take care of needs and have a motivated life.

• For employers and organizations, this 3+2+2 structure rolls out several headaches like internet connectivity, storage, and maintenance.

• But at the same time, it kills the essence for work from home according to today's scenario, i.e. working from any corner of the world.

**Suggestions**

• Although the hybrid structure provides a space between professional and personal life and balances the same. But still, a thoroughly scheduling of the 3+2+2 structure is required.

• The shifts in the organizations should also be taken into consideration. Inspirations can be taken from the shifting schedule of the manufacturing sector.

- The salary structure can be revised, based on the projects and availability of the employees and response time of the employees.
- Strict working hours can be followed and properly monitored to reduce the burden on employees. A separate emergency team can be ready to take up any sudden challenges and sudden demands of clients. This will reduce employee turn–over and improve the brand image in terms of recruitment.
- The structure can be implemented for female employees, after their maternity leaves, which would allow them to complete their work and monitor their kids thoroughly.
- The performance of employees has got into multiple factors; hence the reward and penalty system can be improved.
- Employees Social Time and well beings can be promoted, through virtual gatherings and events.

**Conclusion**

Though both the work-structure has their advantages and disadvantages, the hybrid (3+2+2) work structure has ample scope too in the given situation. The advantages of 3+2+2 have their perks in the given situation. This type of work structure is expected to combat stress levels to the employees, motivating them for work. It also provides time to the nuclear and bachelors to maintain their work-life balance and an extra time to learn or for hobbies. The factors we have considered also helps the employees at different phases of their life cycle allowing them to maintain a better quality of life.

The flexible work structure can also help to reskill the employee and also allow them to upgrade them. It can also improve the training methods provided by the company allowing them to have multiple and optimized training methods. But still, it does not address the very requirement of work from home for employees, to work from anywhere or any corner with the internet. It also hinders certain upcoming ideas like work vacation – working from a vacation place and exploring at the same time.  However, the concept of 3+2+2 is growing popular in the ITES sector.

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