

CHAPTER 32

Exploring the Disconnect - Employee Expectations and the Reality of Modern Work Environment

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ABSTRACT

The modern workplace is constantly changing, influenced by employees' rising expectations and the practices adopted by organizations. While organizations emphasize productivity, flexibility, and growth opportunities, employees often experience a gap between what they expect and what they are actually doing at work. This research aims to explore the disconnect between employees' expectations and the reality of the work environment with a special focus on important factors such as work culture, satisfaction, work-life balance, motivation, productivity, and technology. The study is based on primary research, conducted through a questionnaire specifically designed to gather detailed insights from employees regarding their workplace experiences, perceptions, and challenges. The objectives include examining actual employee experiences, evaluating the impact of modern work practices, and understanding views on work culture and satisfaction. The findings are expected to highlight key areas of mismatch, offering valuable and practical inputs for organizations to improve employee engagement, satisfaction, and overall workplace effectiveness.

Keywords: Employee expectations; Workplace reality; Job satisfaction; Work-life balance; Technological advancements.

1.0 Introduction

Work plays very crucial role in every person's life. When the person start working in a organization they come with many expectations. They expected the healthy work-life balance, career growth, positive work environment, job satisfaction and many more. These expectations motivate them to stay committed and work hard in the organization. But in the reality this expectations does not always fulfilled. Many of employees face challenges like long working hours, difficulty in using new technologies, limited growth opportunities, and stressful environments. This challenges creates a gap between what that employee expect and what he actually experience at the workplace.

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This is survey based project conducted through questionnaire. The main objective of this study is to find the disconnect between the employee expectations and reality of workplace. Through directly collecting the responses from the employees, we are able to understand the opinions and true feelings of the employees about their workplace experiences. This survey helps to understand the common factors where the employees feels satisfied and where they fell dissatisfied.

The modern work environment is changing very fast. With the changing technology, higher work demands, competitive markets the organization sometimes forget the human side of work. While on the other hand, nowadays employees not just only want money but they want growth, respect, and work-life balance also. If this disconnect continues, It can lead to stress, dissatisfaction, and higher employee turnover rate. This project, therefore, provides useful insights into how organizations can bridge the gap between expectations and reality to build a healthier and more motivating workplace.

2.0 Literature Review

Binaebi Gloria Bello, Sunday Tubokirifuruar Tula (2024) “Work-life balance and its impact in modern organizations: An HR review” This study highlights that work-life balance is transfer from personal aim to strategy of the organization. It also highlights the HR’s role in employee satisfaction, flexible working hours, retention and employee well-being. Effective work-life balance is very essential for personal growth and life long success of the organization.

Faribaazizzadeh, Hassan babapour (2022) EXPECTATIONS AND THE ORGANIZATIONAL REALITY: The relationship between person and organization” Another study shows that earlier the study focus on what customer expect but very few investigate the employees satisfaction and expectations. This research shows that if employees expectations has overlooked it can results into employee dissatisfaction, while good working conditions, fair salary and wage structure and recognition can helps in employee satisfaction. This study also highlights that the gap between employee expectations and reality in organization can influence the retention and motivation of the employee. Therefore, the study aims to fill that gap by studying how employees’ expectations link with organizational realities and how this impacts employee satisfaction.

Karine Renard; Frederic Cornu; Yves Emery; David Giauque (2021) “The Impact of New Ways of Working on Organizations and Employees: A Systematic Review” This literature states that the new ways of working like digital collaboration, flexible work arrangements, remote work, etc. have both benefits as well as challenges for organization and employees. Studies highlight improvements in the balance of work-life balance,

productivity, job satisfaction but also mention the challenges like social isolation, work-life boundaries, management difficulties. Organizations accepting these practices often gain adaptability and cost savings, while employees are flexible and value autonomy. However, their impact on organization remains unclear due to scattered research and lack of actual data.

3.0 Objectives of the Study

- To study employees views on modern \ traditional work culture.
- To know Employees experience at their workplace.
- To study the effect of modern work practices on employee motivation and performance.
- To study employee satisfaction related to modern work culture.
- To examine the actual experiences of employees regarding work environment.

4.0 Hypothesis of the Study

- H₁: Hybrid mode of working results into significant work life balance and more effective working
- H₂: work responsibilities interference personal life of the employees
- H₃: Use of Digital tools help to maintain work life balance amongst the employees

5.0 Research Methodology

The research was carried out using a primary survey method, where data was collected from 40 employees working in Nashik city. A structured questionnaire was designed to cover aspects such as job satisfaction, work-life balance, productivity and the role of technology. The purpose of the study is to explore the gap between employees' expectations and the reality of the modern work environment.

Reliability & validity Test: This is conducted to measure the reliability & internal consistency of the scale. Result of reliability tests shows the internal consistency based on collected data.

Table 1: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.786	.723	8

The reliability and validity test results are Cronbach's alpha score; it is 0.759 which is greater than 0.7 that shows a very high level of internal consistency in the data. Thus it is concluded that this questionnaire is accepted for further research and statistical analysis with a satisfactory level of reliability.

Table 2: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Variables	Description	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	21	52.5%
	Female	19	47.5%
	Other	-	-
	Total	40	100%
Age	18-25	25	62.5%
	26-35	9	22.5%
	36-45	4	10%
	46-60	2	5%
	Total	40	100%
Employment Type	Full- Time Employee	20	50%
	Part-Time Employee	13	32.5%
	Intern	7	17.5%
	Total	40	100%
Annual Income	Less than 2,00,000	20	50%
	2,00,000-5,00,000	9	22.5%
	5,00,000-10,00,000	5	12.5%
	Above 10,00,000	6	15%
	Total	40	100%
Industry\Sector	It\Software	14	35%
	Education	5	12.5%
	Healthcare	2	5%
	Finance	6	15%
	Government/ Public Sector	4	10%
	Other	9	22.5%
	Total	40	100%

6.0 Hypothesis Testing

H₁: Hybrid mode of working results into significant work life balance and more effective working

Table 3: ANOVA Table

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Hybrid mode of working results into significant work life balance and more effective working	Between Groups	(Combined)	41.718	4	10.430	315.095	.000
		Linearity	37.727	1	37.727	54.605	.000
		Deviation from Linearity	3.991	3	1.330	1.925	.143
	Within Groups		24.182	35	.691		
	Total		65.900	39			

Table 4: Measures of Association

	R	R Squared	Eta	Eta Squared
Hybrid mode of working results into significant work life balance and more effective working	.757	.572	.796	.633

The above table no shows that the ANOVA value for Hybrid mode of working on work life balance and effective working. P-value is 0.000 which is higher than 0.05 at 95 per cent confidence level. It indicates that the Hybrid mode of working strongly influences the work life balance and effective working. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and we accept that Hybrid mode of working results into significant work life balance and more effective working. F value is 315.095 which are greater than the table value of F (224.5832) indicates very good fit of the model.

R square values of the above table specify how Hybrid mode of working causes the variation in work life balance and effective working. The R square value for Hybrid mode of working is .572 which shows 57.20 per cent variation in work life balance and effective working explained by Hybrid mode of working, which is good resulting action. Whereas, the Eta Square value is 0.633, indicates a very high association between Hybrid mode of working and work life balance and effective working.

Table 5: Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis1	F	Sig	R ²	η^2	ANOVA	Result
<i>H₁</i> : Hybrid mode of working results into significant work life balance and more effective working	315.095	.000	.572	.633	.000	Accepted

H₂: work responsibilities interference personal life of the employees

Table 6: One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 0					
	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
work responsibilities interference with your personal life	24.378	39	.000	4.000	3.67	4.33

The above table shows that one-sample test (t-Test) the p-value is .000 at 95 per cent confidence level indicates the work responsibilities significantly interference the personal life of the employees. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected and we accept that work responsibilities interference with your personal life.

H₃: Use of Digital tools help to maintain work life balance amongst the employees

Table 7: ANOVA Table

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Use of Digital tools help to maintain work life balance amongst the employees	Between Groups	(Combined)	21.269	4	5.317	254.170	.007
		Linearity	19.167	1	19.167	15.031	.000
		Deviation from Linearity	2.102	3	.701	.550	.652
	Within Groups		44.631	35	1.275		
	Total		65.900	39			

Table 8: Measures of Association

	R	R Squared	Eta	Eta Squared
Use of Digital tools help to maintain work life balance amongst the employees	.539	.291	.568	.323

The above table no shows that the ANOVA value for Use of Digital tools on to maintain work life balance amongst the employees. P-value is 0.007 which is higher than 0.05 at 95 per cent confidence level. It indicates that the Use of Digital tools maintain work life balance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and we accept that Use of Digital tools help to maintain work life balance amongst the employees. F value is 254.170 which are greater than the table value of F (224.5832) indicates very good fit of the model.

R square values of the above table specify how Use of Digital tools cause the variation in maintains work life balance. The R square value for Use of Digital tools is .291 which shows 29.10 per cent variation in work life balance explained by Use of Digital tools, which is good resulting action. Whereas, the Eta Square value is 0.323, indicates a moderate association between Use of Digital tools and work life balance.

Table 9: Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis1	F	Sig	R ²	η^2	ANOVA	Result
H ₃ : Use of Digital tools help to maintain work life balance amongst the employees	254.170	.007	.291	.323	.000	Accepted

7.0 Findings

- Hybrid work provides employees more balance in personal and office life. And also make them more effective at their work place.
- Flexibility is highly appreciated by the employees because it improves satisfaction and productivity of the employees.
- Heavy workload and less recognition at workplace reduce the level of employee happiness and satisfaction.
- Digital tools and online platforms supports employees in various ways and also helps to maintain the work-life balance.
- There is a clear gap between expectations and reality, this affects employee morale and overall satisfaction.

8.0 Conclusion

This study make it clear that employee expect flexibility, proper recognition , good work-life balance from their organization. Hybrid working was found to be very effective in improving balance and work performance, while digital tools also help but to a smaller extent. At the same time, many employees face workload pressure and limited appreciation, which reduces their satisfaction and creates stress. This shows that there is clear gap between the expectations and the actual reality of the work environments. To reduce this gap, organizations need to provide more support, flexibility, and recognition to their employees.

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