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Flextime Work Arrangements as a Moderator of the Relationship between Work-Family Conflict and Turnover Intentions in Pakistan's Information Technology Industry

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Received: 21 November 2022; Accepted: 15 December 2022; Published: 30 December 2022.

Abstract: The purpose of this study is to determine the correlation between work-family conflict and intention to leave with moderating effect of flextime work arrangements. The quantitative research paradigm was used with sample size of 394 individuals working in Pakistan's private IT sector (software developers) were analyzed using SPSS. The findings of this study indicate that WFC has a favorable impact on intention to leave among (software developers) in Pakistan's information technology sector and that the effect may be moderated by firms' use of flex time arrangements. Additionally, this study indicated that work-family conflict had a considerable beneficial influence on workers' inclinations to leave. This turnover intention provides the basis for real employee turnover, which results in increased costs and time for the firm. Organizations should develop policies that mitigate the negative consequences of work-family conflict.

Keywords: Work-family conflict, WFC, turnover intentions, flextime work arrangements.

1. Introduction and Preliminaries

The modern era had ushered the organizations in a competitive environment, where acquisition and retention of competitive resources plays a pivotal role for their success. One such resource is human resource i.e. a well-trained, skilled and experienced employee. It takes a long time for any individual to acquire the level of expertise and become an important segment at the work place. Beside time, it involves a lot of financial, physical and supervisory guidance to achieve the level where he/she become a competitive resource. When that employee leaves the organization it creates a gap of knowledge and skill, which takes long time and resources to be replaced, because there is no shortcut to experience. On the other hand, this competitive environment had not only affected the organizations, but the employees as well. There is a continuous demand of "do more" from employers to the employees which had increased the time spent in the office by the employee, increase the level of stress and keeping them pre-occupied mentally even when they are with their families. The targets to be achieved are increased and the period to achieve that targets are reduced which had also created a stressful environment at work and this stress just not stay at work, rather travel at home also. Besides, time and stress, there is another factor of behavior difference between work and family, which creates a conflict in the personality of an individual. A person who is a loving father / mother or husband / wife at home has to act a hard pushing and tough manager at work. These all factors create interference in the family life of employees thus creating work-family conflict. This conflict creates stresses in the life of an employee which results in less investment of physiological involvement in their work and they quit the organization for some better opportunity.

There seems to be a logical relationship among work family conflict and the turnover intentions of the employees, where increasing work family conflict will raise the turnover intentions. Therefore, organizations are finding ways to arrest this menace by all possible ways. One such effort is through introducing flextime work arrangements. There was a time when only one member of the house was bread earner, he used to work in a fixed schedule and still maintain the work - family life balance easily. However, with the change in an

environment, where both members of the family are working, there is a dire requirement of managing the work timings. This would allow the person to cater for emergencies at home e.g. taking care of a sick child, dropping or picking kids from school etc. and spend quality time with family. This is possible with flextime work arrangement, where the employee can plan their work timings, while minimum/ requisite members are available during specific time of the day. As this factor give the freedom to an individual to manage their own time, therefore it is assumed that it should have moderating effect in the relation of work family conflict, where increasing flextime work arrangements should weaken the relation of WFC and intentions to quit.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Work-Family Conflict (WFC)

Greenhaus & Singh, (2004) defined work as the main activity which is meant to provide services and goods for support of life or create something, which is of value to others. During most of the researches this is taken as employment or paid work. Family is defined as "An emotional and passionate unit which is based on affection, care and love that provides nurturance and psychological security to its members". This generally includes the presence of parents, spouse, kids or kin at the house. The members of the family go well beyond biological, martial or adopted ties and include all those people who are related to the individual by obligation, affection, dependence or cooperation. It is an emotional unit which provides security, love and nurturance, psychological and physical support to its members. Numerous nations have created a diverse range of family configurations, including two-parent families, large families, single-parent families, homosexual families, and cohabiting families. However, during research mostly two parent families are taken as sample to research and identify the work family interface.

The WFC is defined as "The instantaneous pressures on the employee, which is exerted from both work and family roles that are mutually incompatible with each other in some respect such that meeting the demands of one role makes it difficult to meet the demands of the other role" [1]. Furthermore, this role conflict is mainly due to the reason that an individual have limited resources available with them, which they have to utilize in managing work and family life [2]. Rather it is a continuous competition for limited resources of an individual, which he / she had to dedicate for work role and family role, which creates work family conflict [3].

[4] had concluded that work and family requirements remain in conflict with each other, if both the domains are not compatible to each other and interfere in each other domain. It was recognized that there is an extensive pressure which is arising at work environment in conjunction with the increasing pressure from family environment. This increase in pressure at work place and family life had created a conflict in the life of an employee, where they are divided in between these two domains. This clash of work demand and family demand had produced high level of work family conflict among a lot of individuals, thus creating work family conflict. It had resulted in difficulty in contribution to one role, due to the participation in other role. There are three major domains of work-family conflict, according to the study: Time-based conflict, Strain-based conflict, and Behavior-based conflict.

2.1.1. Time based Conflict

This domain is concerned with how time spent in one area makes it more difficult to cope in another; as more time is spent at work, time spent with family decreases, resulting in work-family conflict in that individual's life [5]. This conflict may arise as a result of lengthy work hours, frequent travel, irregular shift work, or frequent overtime. When individuals are faced with this struggle, they are unable to devote the necessary time to their family and so miss important family occasions such as their children's birthday parties or the weddings of close relatives. This creates a clash between family demands and job demands.

2.1.2. Strain based Conflict

This is origin of stress / strain, which initiate at one place and spill over to other domain and detract the quality of life in that field [1]. [7] Investigated job stress has negative effect of employee's intention to leave. The stresses which are created at work travel to home with the individuals and effect his / her behavior, attitude at home and results in symptoms of depression, touchiness and fatigue [8]. For instance an individual whose

day at work was filled with stress would result in unsatisfied expectations at work place/ job and result in frustration, tension and fatigue, thus making it problematic for that individual to chase a happy, satisfying and a satisfied life at home.

2.1.3. Behavioral based Conflict

Behavioral based conflict fall in the sphere of behavior incompatibility between two places. In this the specific behavior required at one role is not well-matched with the behavior expectation at extra role [9]. For example an individual has to be an aggressive and focused manager at work, while at home he has to be a loving father, a cooperative husband and an obedient son while interacting with family. Now if an individual who have to adopt different characters at work and home, is not able to cope up with both the roles and cannot switch from one role to another effectively, then there would be a conflict in his roles. This conflict of roles is known as behavior based conflict.

2.2. Flex Time Work Arrangements

The term "flexible work arrangement" refers to "the advantage offered by a company to their workers who have some control over their working hours and can manage them independently" [10]. As a result, many firms have implemented flextime work arrangements to assist employees in striking a balance between work and family life [11]. Flextime work arrangements are one of the several types of flexible work schedules that many firms globally include.

Now a day's organizations are continuously adapting to the deviations created in environment to stay competitive and ahead of other organizations in their respective markets, otherwise their survival would become very difficult [12]. As the organizations endure to implement the changing business environments, the smart organizations are actively seeking methods to reduce the cost of workspace - as they can keep a control on ever rising expense of business expansion in term of space management - thus shifting to more flexible working schedule. There are a number of advantages when an organization shifts to flexible work schedule, such as improvement of employees' motivation, productivity, retention, heating/ cooling and light saving along with saving in real estate expenses [13]. Regus had further observed that each individual in service industry (on average) generates equivalent to 2 tons of greenhouse emissions per year, therefore flexible working schedule also support the sustainable development. Also, no organization would prefer wastage of energy consumed at unused spaces at work area.

Flexible work arrangement is one of the many ways to improve work life balance among the employees [14]. The company adopts these rules to assist employees in balancing work and family obligations. The work family balance policies can also be referred as a family friendly work place practices, because these practices allow the employees to schedule their working time in such a manner that they can spend quality time with family and attend the family commitments such as taking or picking up children from school, attending parent teacher meeting, taking care of elderly at home or attending the repairman at home.

According to Cooper (2008) the people living in developed countries are working for extended hours and this increment in work is increasing with every passing of time. This increase in work is evident by the deteriorating health of the individuals along with degrading family life. To cater for these aspects the organizations have adopted to flex-time work arrangements, however the effectiveness of these flextime work arrangements is dependent on actual arrangements applied by the organization, type of industry in which flextime work arrangements is used along with the culture in which these are implemented along with the comparative flexibility about the nature of job itself. The above mentioned variables would affect the success of outcome in implying flextime work arrangements [15]. FWA would help the employees to advance in their professional life while managing their personal life, thus would result in employees who would be more productive, committed and loyal to the organization [16].

2.3. Turnover Intentions

Turnover is defined as the termination of an organization's employment connection with a person. There are two types of turnover: voluntary and involuntary. Turnover is the rate at which employees leave a company [17]. Price and Mueller (2001) had also worked extensively on the construct of turn over intentions and had defined that turnover intentions concept can be alternatively measure to calculate actual turnover.

Additionally, numerous studies have shown that turnover intentions are the most important predictor of actual employee turnover in an organisation [18], experiencing financial expenses [19], increasing injury risk in the organisation [20], and lowering the quality of customer service [21].

It is one of the most significant issues confronting companies today. Whenever a well-trained employee leaves the organization, he/she leave a vacuum of knowledge, skill and expertise which cause a serious threat for the organization in achieving its goals. Many organizations are faced with the threat of increasing turnover and it consumes most of the time of higher management [22].

2.4. Work-Family Conflict and Turnover Intentions

There is a constant dispute among academics doing work-family studies about the nature of work-family conflict and the associated consequences (Amstad et al., 2011). Similar to the previous theory, each domain (that is, job and family) has a domain-specific effect. For instance, although the work family domain has a large impact on job happiness, the family work domain has a big impact only on marital life satisfaction. Whereas, according to cross domain theory, each domain has a significant influence on the other sphere of existence. For example, WFCs predominantly influence marital life, whereas family work conflicts mostly impair an individual's job happiness. The majority of research on the association between WFC and desire to leave is quiet on the realities and disadvantages of both views, owing to the researchers' failure to evaluate WFC and family work conflict concurrently [23].

Most of the researchers had argued that matching hypothesis seems to be the most logical theory out of the two [24]. According to this theory, WFC has a disproportionate impact on the person at work domain, whereas family work conflict has a disproportionate impact on the family domain. The impression behind this notion is based on the appraisal theories. The appraisal theory suggests that once the self-relevant role of any individual is threatened, then to evaluate the reason of that threat people react negatively [25]. For instance, if an employee's job role interferes with his or her family role, the employee will see the work role adversely (which is the point of contention). According to [26] work-life interference considerably promotes burnout, which relates to both increased turnover intentions. Therefore, according to matching hypothesis theory the WFC is the main factor which is related to the turnover intentions of the employees, as it reduces the job satisfaction which results in the increase in level of turnover intentions.

Employees who have encountered an increased degree of work family conflict at work will attempt to alleviate this conflict by resigning their jobs and leaving the organisation in search of one with a lower level of WFC. Burnout and turnover intentions, absenteeism, and intention to leave are some of the consequences that have been repeatedly established in research in non-academic work contexts as it pertains to work-life interference. Thus leaving the organization is a defense mechanism in the individuals against the incompatible demand from work and family. When the level of conflict between work life and family life crosses the threshold of the employee, then he/ she leave that job and search for a new job where it is possible to successfully accomplish the demands from work place and simultaneously achieve quality family time [28]. The Meta analysis of many researches had confirmed that there is a positive relationship between both work family conflict and family work conflict among the employees with their turnover intentions [29].

According to Hobfoll's (1989) conservation of resources theory, individuals are interested in maintaining or acquiring various sets of resources, which include "energies, conditions, personal characteristics, or objects that are perceived as valuable to that individual or that may assist in achieving these energies, conditions, personal characteristics, or objects". Additionally, the idea implies that an individual would experience negative emotions such as stress when there is a possibility of perceived or actual loss of such resources. To protect the perceived or any sort of actual loss of these resources the individual would try to gain and maintain alternatives or new resources. However, this act of gaining alternatives or new resources require more energies (which is also a resource) to be consumed by the individual that is, to gain/ restore new resource the individual has to deplete one or more of already available resource thus the individual enters the "loss spiral" [30] of the resources. According to the above mentioned theory "conservation of resource" whenever WFC change, especially once it is toward rise the individual feels threaten of potential or actual loss of available critical resources e.g. time, energies etc. which increase the level of stress in that individual [31]. For example increase in work conflict can increase the stress of individual as the quality time with family is compromised which will harm his/ her family life or the increase in family work conflict can be stressful for the individual as his/

her status in office is at the risk. In return this stress which is created due to WFC would affect the decision making of individual whether he/ she have to continue work or quit this job.

3. The Research Model and Hypothesis

In SPSS, Process by Andrew F. Hayes was used to establish the bond between WFC and turnover intentions, along with deterring the moderation effect of Flextime work arrangements on the relation of WFC and intentions to leave. For the result analysis model No. 1 was selected as it provided the relationship between independent variable "WFCs" (which is sub-divided into 3 dimensions i.e. time based, strain based and behavior based work-family conflict) and dependent variable "turnover intentions" along with the moderating effect of moderator "flextime work arrangements" as shown in the Figure 1.

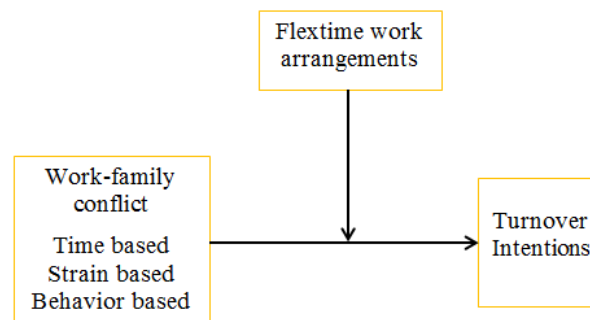


Figure 1. Conceptual Diagram of first Model

3.1. Hypothesis No 1

Work family conflict has effect on turnover intentions among employees (software developers) in the IT field of Pakistan.

3.2. Hypothesis No 2

Flex time work arrangements have a moderating influence on the effect of work family conflict on turnover intentions.

4. Methodology

The outcome was determined using quantitative research technique, and data were gathered using a specifically created questionnaire to assess flextime work arrangements, work-family conflict, and intention to leave.

4.1. Population and Sample

Since the percentage of female employment in Pakistan climbed from 12.41 percent in 1995 to 24.93 percent in 2017 (World Bank Survey), the study was aimed towards Pakistan. Within Pakistan IT field is one of the most blooming field as per Pakistan economist (2018, July 9) information technology had shown the positive growth rate trends for the past few years. During the year 2016 - 2017 Pakistan's IT export were initially \$ 3.3 billion, which had increased to \$ 5 billion in 2018 and it is estimated to even rise beyond \$ 6 billion in coming years. Therefore, the turnover intentions would severely damage the progress of Pakistan in general and IT sector in particular. Thus, employees of the private IT sector were selected as the target population. Convenience sampling technique was used during the study, because non-availability of access to all the available population, also the companies are reluctant to share the data of their employees, therefore exact number of population cannot be ascertained. Hence the sample size of infinite population was taken for the purpose of study. Following formula was used to determine the sample size

$$SS = \frac{[Z_2 p(1-p)]}{C_2} \quad (1)$$

where, SS=Sample size, Z = Given Z value (1.96 for 95% confidence level), p = Percentage of population, C = Confidence level, Pop = Population. Using the given formula the sample size of 384.16 was required. Therefore, data was collected from 390 employees (software developers) in Private IT sector of Pakistan.

4.2. Data Collection and Analysis

The Questionnaire was used to collect data as it is the most efficient and economical way to gather quantitative data from a huge sample size. The questionnaire was designed to collect data on three factors relevant to research: flextime work arrangements, work-family conflict, and personnel intention to quit. A five-point Likert scale was used to quantify each variable, and the data were analysed with IBM SPSS .

4.2.1. Questionnaire Composition

[32] nine-item questionnaire was used to assess flextime work arrangements. The questions mentioned in survey inquire about the degree of flextime available to the employees like, whether they are allowed to change their working hours, or are they allowed to work on off duty hours and days in a week. Work-family conflict was quantified using nine questions from Carlson, Kacmar, and Williams (2000) questionnaire. The nine questions are equally divided into 3 items for each dimension i.e. time based, strain based and behavior based work-family conflict. Whereas, employees turn over intentions would be measured by 3-items developed by [33]. The questions inquired if the individual is actively seeking for any other job or he/ she is planning to leave this job and lastly if they are seeking any alternative jobs.

4.2.2. Reliability of Questionnaire

The Chronbach's Alpha value of more than 0.5 is sufficient to establish the reliability of the research data gathering tool [34]. In the designed questionnaire, reliability of all the variables is above the Cronbach's Alpha 0.5. Flextime work arrangements Chronbach's Alpha is .0868 and for Work-Family conflict and Turnover intentions Chronbach's Alpha value is 0.899 and 0.861

5. Analysis of Result

5.1. Model Summary

In the model summary Table 1 the value of R is 0.7623 which shows strong relationship between model and the dependent variable. The value of P is .0000 (less than .05) thus depicting the significance of the model. The R square value is 0.5812, indicating that the model accounts for 58.12% of the total variation in the reliable variable, turnover intentions.

Table 1. Model Summary

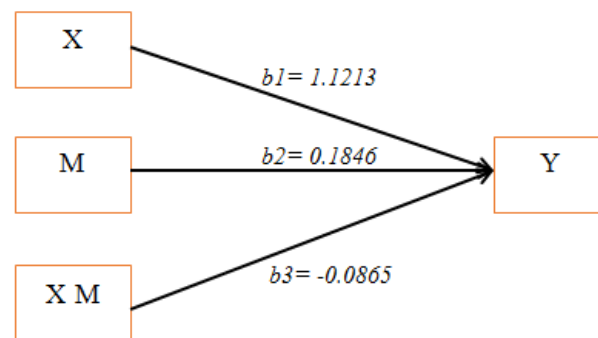
Model Summary				
R	Rsqr	MSE	F	P
0.7623	0.5812	0.4241	180.3921	0

5.1.1. Hypothesis No 1

This study confirms [34] finding that there is a substantial association between WFC and workers' plans to leave. In Table 2 we can observe that there is a significant relationship between Work Family Conflict (WFC) and Turnover intentions with coeff of 1.1213 and the p value is .0000 which less than the required value of .05, thus WFC is directly related to Turnover Intentions. The interaction between Flextime work arrangements and WFCs had reduced the coeff to -0.0865 with p value of 0.0448 (less than 0.05). This shows a significant impact of flextime work arrangements on the relation of WFC and turnover intentions

Table 2. Correlation Coefficients of IV, MV and Interaction of IV and MV with DV

Model						
	Coeff	se	T	p	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	-0.2320	0.5694	-0.4074	0.6840	-1.3515	0.8876
WFC	1.1213	0.1613	6.9502	0.0000	0.8041	1.4385
Int_1	-0.0865	0.0430	-2.0134	0.0448	-0.1710	-0.0020

**Figure 2.** Statistical diagram of Correlation Coefficients of IV, MV and Interaction of IV and MV with DV

Thus, the coefficient value of 1.1213 among the independent variable (WFC) and dependent variable (turnover intentions) with p value of 0.000 shows a strong significant relation between WFC & employees intention to quit. Hence the hypothesis No 1 which states that "WFC has positive impact on turnover intentions among employees (software developers) in the IT field of Pakistan".

5.2. Hypothesis No 2

5.2.1. Interaction of Moderator

In Table 3 it can be observed that the moderator variable (flextime work arrangements) have a significant moderating impact on the relationship of independent variable (Work-family conflict) and dependent variable (Turnover intentions of employees). The p value of the interaction is 0.0448 which is less than 0.05 and thus prove the significance of the moderator. The coeff value of -0.0865 shows that the flextime work arrangements reduces the impact of turnover intentions with work family conflict.

5.2.2. Conditional Effect of X on Y at values of Moderator

The primary influence of the independent variable (WFC) on the dependent variable (turnover intentions) is represented by b_1 , and the moderating effect of the moderator (flextime work arrangements) on the connection between WFC and turnover intentions is represented by b_3 . As a result of conditional effect, the moderator's value is altered by one standard deviation (SD) in order to see how it influences a relationship between two variables. With increasing moderator value, if the value of the effect grows, this indicates that the moderator has an influence on how strong IV and DV are; with decreasing moderator value, this indicates that the effect is weakening. A p value of 0.00 indicates that the moderator Flexible Work Arrangements has a significant conditional impact. The conditional impact of IV on DV is 0.8914 at the minimal moderator value, which is the mean minus one standard deviation. The conditional effect decreases to 0.8237 at medium moderator value (mean values of moderator), and finally to 0.7559 at mean plus one standard deviation. Flextime work arrangements have a moderating influence on the link between WFC and turnover intentions, as seen by the decline in effect and rise in moderator value. Flextime employment arrangements weaken the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable when they increase.

Table 3. Conditional effect of X on Y at min, center and max values of the moderator

Conditional effect of X on Y at values of the moderator(s)						
Flex	Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
2.6574	.8914	.0621	14.3538	.0000	.7693	1.0135
3.4408	.8237	.0479	17.1885	.0000	.7294	.9179
4.2241	.7559	.0548	13.7981	.0000	.6482	.8636

Thus, the acquired results support Hypothesis No. 2, which claims that "the influence of WFC on turnover intentions is mitigated by flexible work arrangements."

Discussion and Recommendations

This study established a very significant relation between WFC & employee's intentions to quit in Pakistan's commercial IT industry. This can be utilized by the managers to arrest the turnover intentions among the employees. WFC had become reality in today's fast pace life. Need for more had indulged people in extended working hours and accordingly the organizations had also started to demand more from the individuals, without realizing that how would it affect their family life. This study had proved that the family life of an employee is no more his/her problem only, rather it would affect the work life and performance at job also. If the employee leaves the organization due to the conflict in between work and family life, then its price would be paid by that company also. As discussed above IT is a growing field in Pakistan and setbacks like turnover can affect this industry adversely.

Additionally, several firms in Pakistan have begun to use flextime work arrangements. This reflects a growing understanding among senior managers of the critical nature of flexible work schedules. PTCL is one of these firms that has implemented flextime work arrangements for its workers, allowing them to select their start and finish times for work. Additionally, they let working moms to work from home two days each month. This step would alleviate employee-employer friction and help employees to better balance their personal and professional lives. These initiatives would result in a decrease in employee turnover intentions and an improvement in the organization's efficiency.

Theoretical and Practical Recommendations

This research had contributed in the body of knowledge about the role of WFC in the life of the employees, how it effects their turnover intentions and can act as the forecaster of the turnover rate among the organization; depending on the level of WFC experienced by those employees. The outcome of the study would also assist the organizations facing problem of high turnover to understand the underlying cause; if it is due to high WFC then how to moderate this problem by adopting the flextime work arrangements. This study is in line with the previous study done by [35] that there is a significant correlation between the WFC and the turnover intentions of the employees. The results are in line with the findings of study carries out by [36]. (2013) that there is a significant and positive impact of WFC on the turnover intentions of the employees in banking sector of Pakistan. Also [37] found that when the work family balance of the employees are increased than there is reduction in the turnover intentions among the Academics in Malaysian Public Higher Education Institutions. The findings regarding the moderating effect of flextime work arrangements are also supported by a study conducted by [38], who concluded that organisations with family-friendly policies and a supportive culture have increased utilisation of flexible work arrangements, low psychological strain, high work engagement.

This study provide the insight for the organizations to carry out surveys to determine the level of WFC experienced by their employees. The knowledge of this aspect would be very beneficial for the managers as they would be able to forecast the turnover of the employees. The increasing level of WFC would warn the managers about the working environment and allow them to take remedial actions in time. The organizations can also look into the type of flextime work arrangements which could suit their working schedule and can also give leverage to the employees to better manage their professional life and family life.

Another theoretical addition of this research is that it was done in Pakistan's nascent IT sector, which is growing at a rapid pace and is geared toward the private sector. Although a few studies have been undertaken

on the association between work-family conflict and employee turnover intentions, they have largely been conducted in western nations. However, no research has been undertaken in Pakistan's private sector of the information technology sector. Additionally, there was a knowledge vacuum on the moderating effect of flextime work arrangements on the relationship between work-family conflict and desire to leave. As a result, this study would make a significant contribution to the body of knowledge by addressing the aforementioned gap.

6. Conclusion

The contribution of this research must be viewed in light of a few limitations. Firstly, this study is conducted for only private IT sector of Pakistan. In future a broader research can be conducted including both public and private sector with the comparison of both domains for better understanding of the impact of WFC on turnover intentions with moderating effect of FWA. Secondly, other domains may also be explored like pay and promotion, supervisor attitude, job satisfaction and establish their effect on the relation of WFC and Turnover intentions. . During this study only one domain of the flexible work schedule (i.e. flextime work arrangements) is used. However, other measures of flexible work schedules such as, compress work week, work sharing etc. should also studied and the comparison of efficacy of different types of flexible work schedules on the relation of WFC and turnover intentions could also be determined.

Author Contributions: All authors contributed equally to the writing of this paper. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

Conflicts of Interest: "The authors declare no conflict of interest."

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