"A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON WORK LIFE BALANCE OF EMPLOYEES: BEFORE AND DURING COVID-19"

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Abstract:- During this pandemic, we've seen vast ups and downs in the professional and personal life of each and every individual. Because of this pandemic different sectors in this whole world faces many unexpected changes, challenges and losses and to overcome that many industries have adopted a new concept of work from home.We have seen this changes in the IT sector as well. But previously also IT sector's employees worked virtually from their respected workplace and now during covid-19 also they are doing their work virtually but from their respected home. So in recent times it is necessary to know whether the work-life balance of IT employees was affected during covid-19 than before. This study shows the positive and negative impact on work life balance of employees before covid19 and during covid19.

Keywords:- work-life balance,work from home, before covid19, during covid19, IT sector

I. INTRODUCTION

Work-life balance is a concept including proper prioritizing between work career and ambition and lifestyle health pleasure leisure family and spiritual development/meditation this is often associated with the thought of a lifestyle selection. More work-life balance brings physical and mental health as well as a better relationship at work life and personal life. The corona virus crisis increased the number of people working from home avoiding traffic tie-ups and long commutes may give us extra time but for many people that time might be going back into the workday stealing from personal commitments' thronging that work-life balance. It is really hard to achieve a work-life balance in today's lifestyle while we are facing the crisis of the corona virus. As we are growing fast with this world of technology /social media it's really hard for us to maintain a work-life balance. This pandemic brought the conversation around mental health which is important nowadays because mental health issues cause so many uncertain things like depression etc. If you're not mentally fit then how are you going to manage your work with your personal life. This pandemic makes everyone do their work from home and nobody is preparing for that. This global shift to remote work has made many people understand the importance of work-life balance, even as it has made it hard to achieve that. And I guess that the IT sector is the only sector that was not fully affected by the pandemic. It also shows that companies are now preparing to match their health and safety measures which help their employees cope better with the situation. Companies not only providing remote work but they are also concerned about their health. They are increasing generosity by providing flexible working hours for their employees. But at the same time, this pandemic makes it less hard to achieve work-life balance as compared to previously, as working from home erased all boundaries in-between time that was dedicated to working at the same time which was reserved for families and for one-selves.

II. OBJECTIVE

1. To study how employees maintain WLB by doing work from home.

2. To identify the factors that impact the employees work life balance during Covid19.

3. To know the relationship between an employee's job and its impact on their personal life.

III. BACKGROUND

The surprising shift to remote working during COVID-19 is taking a toll on workers' psychological state with several unable to find respite, even in the comfort of their own homes. The pandemic has triggered stressors in careers, personal finances, and family life so that's why it is necessary to balance work and personal life.

IV. RATIONALE OF THE PROPOSED STUDY

An attempt in this research study will be made to do comparative study on work life balance of employees before and during covid19.

V. LITERATURE REVIEW

1.Ashwini A Yarnal. (2020), she encountered Work life balance (WLB) is the modern distinctive issue of the healthcare industry, since employees consistently need to succeed at the workplace and fulfill the desires of family. Balancing these two boundaries is the reason for exhaustion of employees and thus the employers perceive that there is a need to introduce the work life balance strategies, plans and policies to boost employee morale, motivation and productivity.This paper illuminates the wide options for employers and employees to interface work life balance practices for organizational and personal performance.

2.Manoj Kumar and Sankar S (2019), finds that in the past two decades the issue related to work life balance and mainly in the IT sector have received significant attention from employers and employees.They carried out this study to know the causes of disproportionate work life balance and to find out benefits of enabling proper work life balance for an individual and an organization.

3.Khaled adnan Bataineh (2019), he inspected the relation of work-life balance, happiness, and employee performance. The end results show that employees' performance is highly affected by work life balance,positively and negatively.

4.Pradhan and Hati, (2017), they carried out to examine the impact of employee well-being on psychological empowerment.Attempts have been made to explore the intervening role of happiness with relationship between employees' well-being and empowerment.The final outcome of the study unveiled that employee well being was positively associated with employee empowerment.

5.Parikh and Gandhi (2014) have described how the recent technological changes invaded our home, bedrooms, and even social functions. In this study suggestions have been offered by authors to employees and organizations. One of the suggestions offered to organizations states that organizations might offer "core hours" when an employee should be present and work around completely different beginning and end times. Organizations could also help increase the time by a few hours so that an extra day off can be provided at the weekend.

6.Sinha (2013) observed that employees who were more favourable towards their organization's efforts to support work-life balance also indicated a much lower intent to depart the organization, greater pride in their organization, a willingness to recommend it as an area to work and better overall job satisfaction.

7.Clutterbuck (2013) explained work/life balance does not mean striking a perfect balance between work and personal life. It is more about spending qualitative time and having the feeling of well-being. One cannot clearly divide the issues affecting the work and personal life. These two are interdependent. Striking perfect balance always depends on various issues like one's perception of success and failure in life and developing strategies to bring balance between achieving organizational goals and personal goals.

8.Meenakshisundaram & Panchanatham, (2012) depicts that WLB is "defined as the perfect amalgamation among work and life". To reduce interruptions employees are striving hard by giving their best for work-life balance which is generating massive pressure and henceforth they need compulsory finish their work regardless of time.

9.Diljot Soin (2011) found that the careful designing, personal effort, and training in the skills and competencies of emotional intelligence which is able to assist in developing one's awareness resulting in an amendment towards more adaptive attitudes and the augmentation of more positive perceptions of one's work life balance.

10.Mc Dowell (2010) observes that the well-being of employee's is related with satisfaction and happiness is derived from the optimal functioning of organization. Good working environment can provide satisfaction to the employees resulting in optimization of the organizational performance effectively.

11.Major and Lauzun (2010) asserts that various issues related to WLB are linked with diminished organizational commitment, job satisfaction, life satisfaction and increased stress and turnover intentions in an organization as a whole.

12.Reynolds (2005) analyses that work-life conflict is a greater source of work-family conflict. In which personal and family lives interfere with work is for few hours but when work interfere it last in life .When work becomes overload or not manageable it interfere in personal life ,thus it become difficult to attain a balance between the work and life .The employees should always manage their work in time to avoid such conflicts.

13.Laursen (2005) depicts that both genders are of the opinion that in order to have a successful WLB there should be a supportive work environment. An organization that provides a formal friendly working environment enables the employees to work hard, loyal and committed to their work wholeheartedly, sincerely which will increase the performance of employees and can reduce stress, conflicts among the employees in the organization.

14.Clutterbuck (2003) in his book states that overwork leads to absenteeism, poor retention levels, low creativity, unethical employee's behaviour. A better WLB policy of the organization creates shorter absences by folks even on maternity leave. Employees wish to work in an environment that provides a friendly atmosphere with attainable workload in stipulated time period.

VI. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

➢ **Research Design:** Research design of the proposed project work, considering its objectives, scope and coverage will be exploratory and descriptive in nature.

➢ **Source of Data:** The research would make the use of both Primary Data as well as Secondary Data sources of information as the case may be.

   Primary Data: The primary data will be collected through surveys, by preparing questionnaires, meeting respondents personally and gathering information from them. Hence the questionnaire is the main source of primary data.

   Secondary Data: The secondary data collected from publishing by search engine, newspapers, books, magazines, journals, websites and other relevant information.

➢ **Population:** Employees working in the IT sector.

➢ **Sampling Frame:** The sample unit in appropriate and justified size would be conveniently drawn from employees working in the organization.

➢ **Sample Size:** The sample size of our survey will include a minimum 30 responses of employees working in the IT sector.

➢ **Sample Media:** Sample media would be Google form for filling up of structured non-disguised close ended Questionnaire.

➢ **Sampling Method:** A representative sample will be drawn from the population based on non-probability convenience sampling methods in this type of sampling items for which the sample is selected deliberately by the researcher.

➢ **Data collection Instrument:** We will use structured non disguised close ended questionnaires to get the responses from the employees of the organization.

➢ **Data Collection Method:** Data was collected through Google form.

VII. FINDINGS

Data Analysis

32 responses were gathered for the study. Out of 32 responses received, 12 were male and 20 were female. Among them 90.6% respondents fall under the age group of 21 to 30 while rest fall under the age group of 31 to 40.

During covid19, I feel more responsible for my work through work from home mode. *
32 responses

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

46.9% — 9.4% — 12.5% — 31.3%
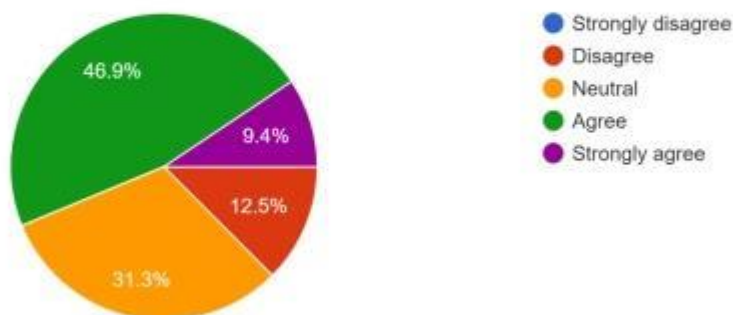
The above chart shows that out of 32 respondents,15 respondents agree that they are now more serious about work even after staying at home.

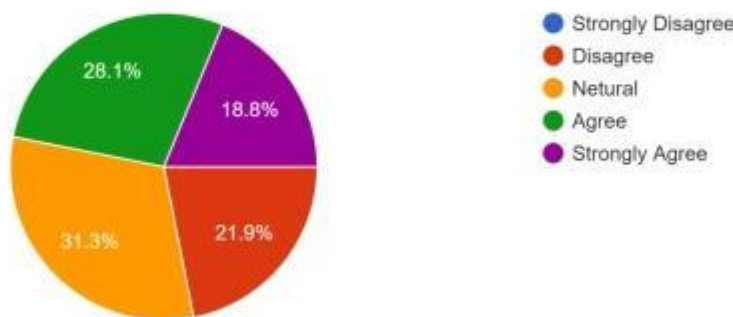**I can do my office work more efficiently due to work from home. ***
32 responses
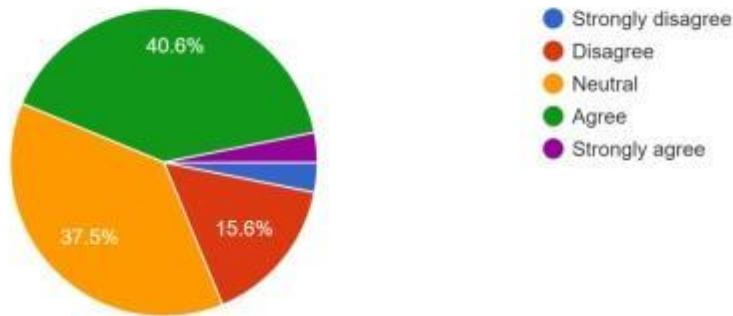
The above charts shows that out of 32 respondents, 40.6% employees agreed with the statement because they can work in the comfortable environment at their home and as such they don't have any physical work, they just have virtual work.

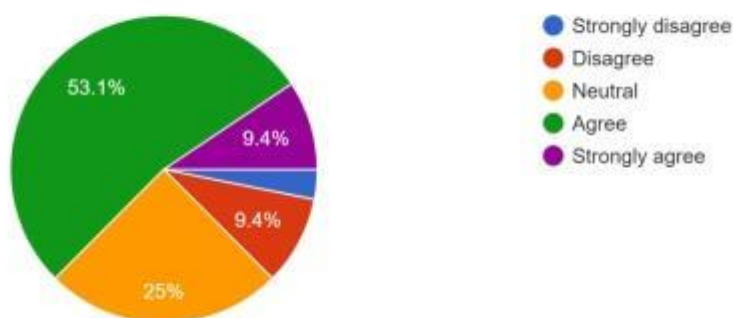**I faced more work load during Covid-19**
32 responses

IT sector was least affected by the pandemic which creates less workload to the companies and that's why 31.3% don't have any opinion on it while 28.1% feel workload due to some companies were affected at some point by this pandemic.

I feel that the company is more concerned about me during covid19.
32 responses

The above chart shows 53.1% respondent are agreed with this statement because in this pandemic organization is more concerned about their human assets which make employees more secure but in some huge organization where they have more and more numbers of the employee so they are less concerned and that's why 25% respondent does not have any opinion on it.

I experienced better concentration at work due to the extended work from home because of the corona crisis. *

32 responses
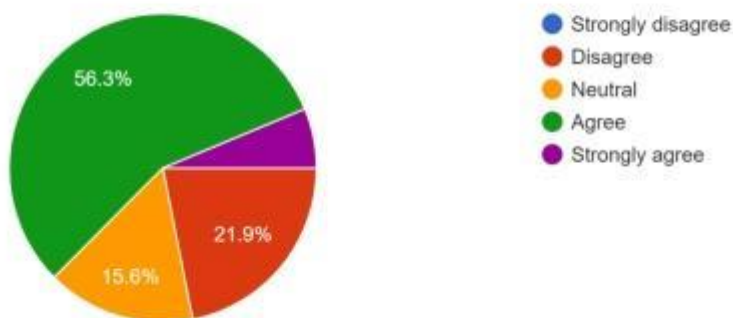
The above chart shows that out of 32 respondents,56.3% respondents agree with the statement as they have flexible timing to work which makes them more efficient and more concentrated towards work.

I face Lack of enthusiasm in work during covid-19 ?

32 responses
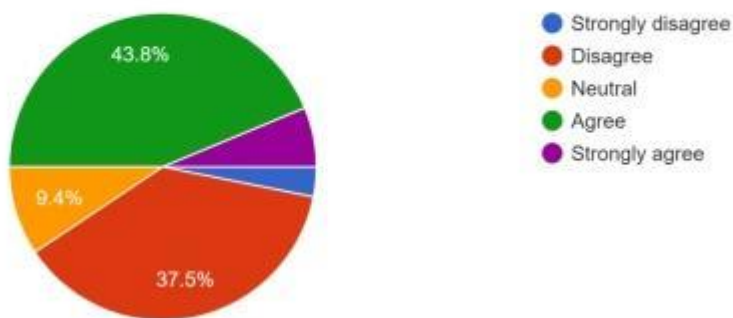
37.5% of respondents disagree that they feel a lack of enthusiasm because employees are found more comfortable doing work from home at their preferred time while on the other side 43.8% respondents agree as they feel lazy because of the comfortable environment at home.

Decrease in the level of professionalism in work during covid -19 ?

32 responses
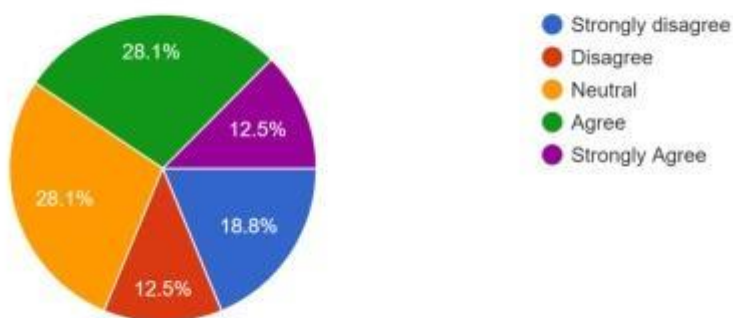
There is very little ratio between strongly disagreeing and strongly agree because the level of professionalism differs from organization to organization and that makes increase and decrease in professionalism as per their company.

I experienced decrement in productivity during covid-19
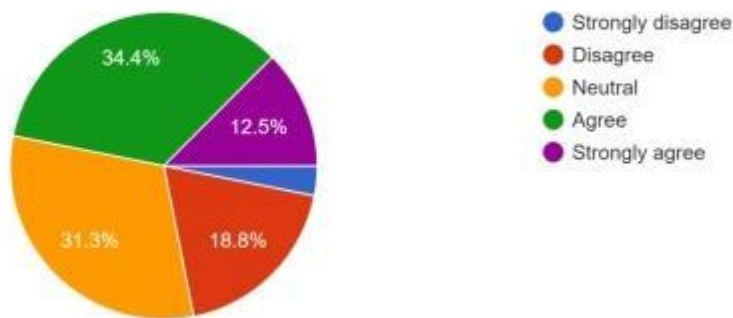32 responses
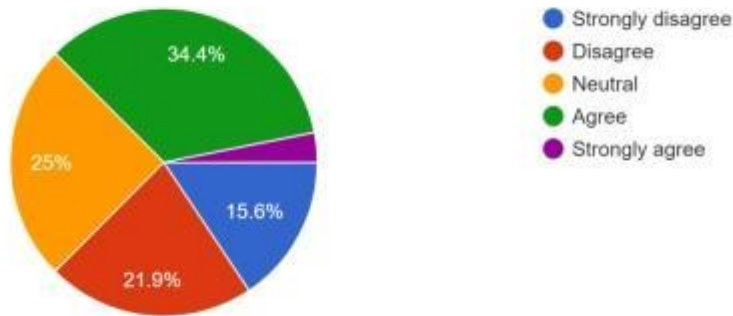
34.4% of respondents feel a decrease in productivity due to lack of professionalism and work from home makes them create a lack of concentration to the employees who are living in a family of more than 4 members.

I experienced that there were better concentration at work before covid -19
32 responses

Employees feel better concentration at work before covid19 because at the workplace they get the work climate which makes them work even if they are tired while at home they get more comfortable climate which makes some employees lazy while that peaceful environment at home make some employee more efficient

I feel organization is more supportive during work from home
32 responses
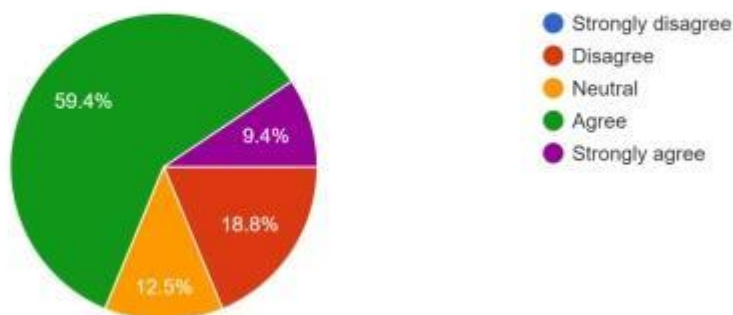
Employees feel the organization is more supportive to them during work from home because it's a new concept to everyone and many companies treat employees as an important part and an asset of the company so they are very supportive to them at every stage.

I find my colleague to be supportive during working from home.
32 responses
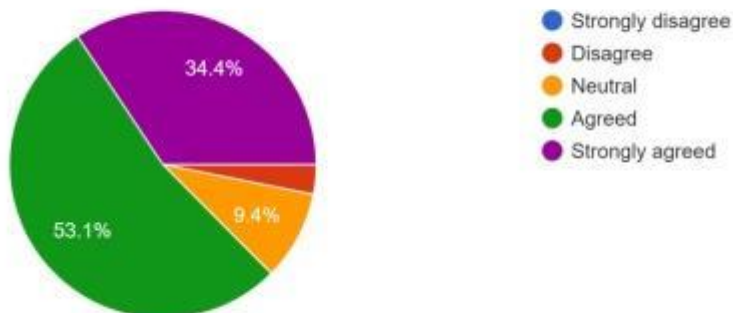
87.5% of employees find their colleagues supportive during work from home as this concept is new for all and they can stand against the challenges by sharing knowledge about the new thing with each other. Support makes them work efficiently.

Is it easy to maintain professional and personal life via work from home mode?
32 responses
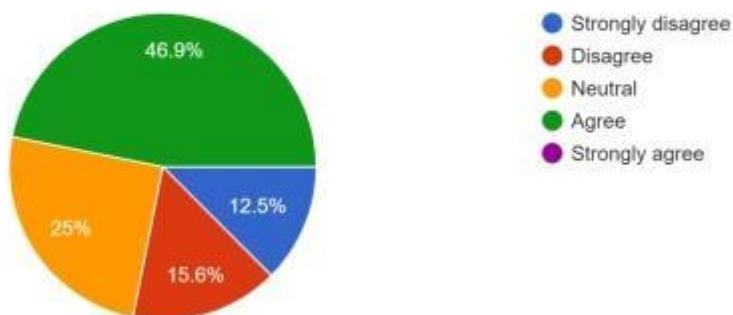
46.9% of respondents feel that it was easy to maintain professional and personal life via work from home. If the company is giving less burden or workload to the employee plus if they get flexible timing to work that makes the balance between professional and personal life.

I feel that family interruption hampers my work during Work from home ?
32 responses
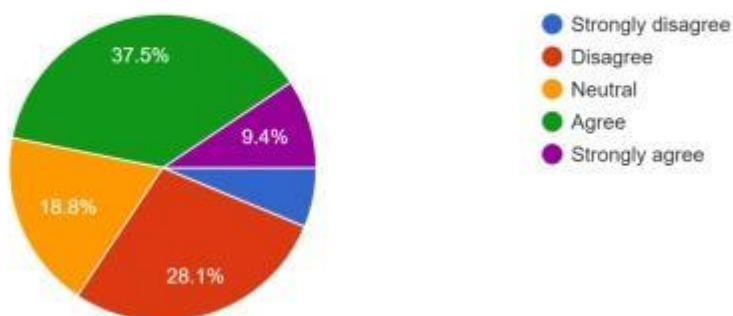
37.5% of respondents feel that family interruption hampers their work while 28.1% disagree. It finds that family size differs from respondents to respondents, some live in a joint family of 5 to 6 members and that makes the interruption in the work while some respondents are only 2 members in the family, there we can not see any interruption.

My company is overburdening me in WFH mode during covid -19 ?
32 responses
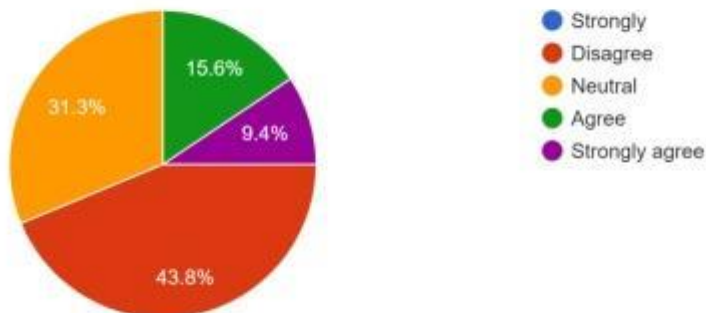
Due to lockdown, we had seen that pending works are increasing but the IT sector is less affected by the lockdown that's why many respondents disagree that their company is overburdening them.

It is also found that IT employees work in virtual mode which affects their health and eyes company tries not to give more work to the employee. But 15.6% of respondents agree with the statement because some companies have deadlines to complete pending works.

I am able to spend enough time with my family in this new normal
32 responses
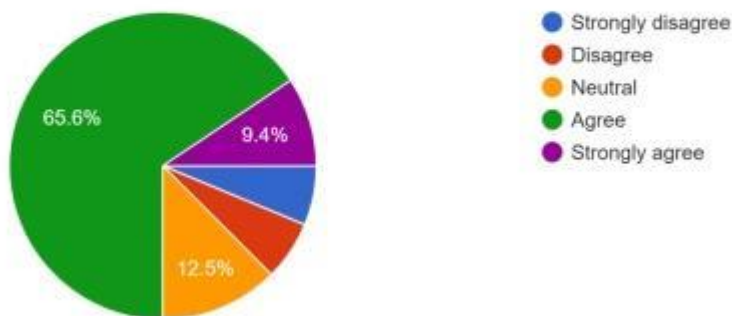
65.6% of respondents feel that they are spending enough time with their family in this new normal as work from home saves traveling time, break time, and overtime. Employees are doing these things at home only which makes them stay with their family 24*7.

I can do office work on my comfortable time during work from home.
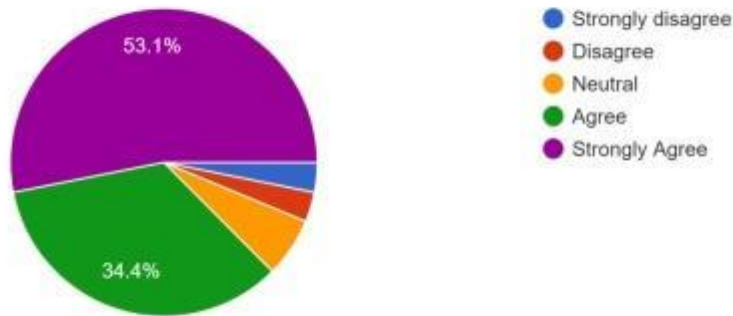32 responses
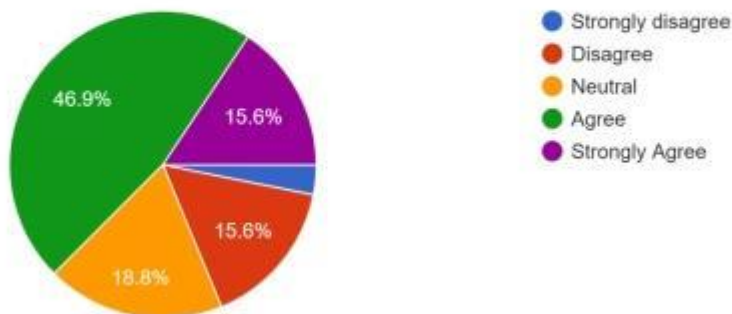
46.9% of respondents agree because many companies have given flexible time to their employees and which makes them comfortable to do work when they are fresh and this affects positively on their efficiency level.

Work from home saves my travelling time and I can spent that time with my family.
32 responses

53.1% of respondents strongly agreed that work from home saves their traveling time and they can spend their time with their family and that makes them happier to do work from home.

VIII.CONCLUSION:-

✓ This pandemic taught us a lot of things about how to balance work with personal life.

✓ After the study of work life balance before and during COVID -19 in IT sectors, we've concluded that there is a very little negative impact on work-life balance of the IT employees.

✓ The reason is the WFH (Work From Home) model hasn't made much difference for the IT employees and their working pattern.

✓ The only issue they faced while adapting to Work From Home is not getting the enthusiasm they always got from their colleagues, work environment, and team-work.

✓ The survey of work-life balance before and during COVID -19 in IT Sectors give insight that the impact on work-life balance in IT Sectors is almost positive.

✓ The reason behind it is people feel more responsible for their work. Because of that, even if there is a ton of workload over their heads, they can do their office work more efficiently with comfort, better concentration through the WFH (Work From Home) model as previously they are doing the same work virtually but from home.

✓ Also, the IT Companies seemed to be more concerned and supportive about their employees during COVID-19. Besides this, the employees who weren't able to spend time with their families can maintain their professional and work-life.

✓ The neutral conclusion of the work-life balance survey in IT Firms before and during the COVID -19 can show you that every person has their perspectives for every different situation.

✓ Some might be comfortable working from their home, while others may have some personal issues. Some might think their company is overburdening themselves whereas, others can easily manage their time in their comfort. Like these, the work-life balance's impacts vary from person to person.

✓ The overall conclusion of work-life balance in the IT Sectors before and during the COVID -19 varies from person-to-person. But it seems that people like to work from their home and have adapted to this new work style.

✓ There are boundless positive impacts from almost every employee working in an IT Company. So, maybe it's a better work style for some people because this also opens countless employment opportunities and the benefits of work from home for employees of the IT sector.

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