

Work From Home vs Office Work: A Comparative Study on Employee Productivity at TCS and Wipro

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Abstract—The abrupt shift to remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic has permanently altered the operational landscape of India's information technology sector. This paper presents a comparative analysis of employee productivity between Work from Home (WFH) and traditional Office Work (OW) settings, specifically focusing on two of India's largest IT firms, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) and Wipro. Using a quantitative survey-based methodology, data were collected from 110 employees across both organizations. The findings reveal that while WFH offers significant advantages in terms of work-life balance and reduced commute time, office work fosters superior collaboration, spontaneous communication, and mentorship opportunities. Productivity was found to be task-dependent: routine, individual tasks saw higher efficiency in WFH settings, whereas creative and team-dependent tasks benefited from office environments. TCS demonstrated a more structured hybrid transition compared to Wipro. The study concludes that a flexible hybrid model, rather than a rigid WFH or office-only approach, maximizes overall employee productivity.

Index Terms—Work from Home, Office Work, Employee Productivity, TCS, Wipro, Hybrid Model, IT Sector.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Indian information technology (IT) industry has long been a pioneer of structured, office-centric work cultures. For decades, the assumption was that physical presence in an office environment was synonymous with employee productivity and organizational control. However, the global health crisis of 2020 forced a near-overnight transformation, compelling companies like Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) and Wipro to adopt a mass Work from Home (WFH) model. What began as a

contingency measure has evolved into a strategic debate about the future of work. Today, as pandemic restrictions have eased, a fundamental question persists: does working from home enhance or diminish employee productivity compared to traditional office work?

Employee productivity in the knowledge economy is not merely about hours logged; it encompasses output quality, problem-solving speed, innovation, and collaboration. Early anecdotal evidence suggested that WFH reduced distractions and increased individual output. Conversely, industry leaders like TCS's former CEO Rajesh Gopinathan have argued that the office is irreplaceable for fostering serendipitous interactions and cultural cohesion. This study undertakes a comparative analysis of employee productivity at TCS and Wipro, two bellwethers of the Indian IT sector, to provide empirical clarity. By examining self-reported productivity metrics, communication effectiveness, and job satisfaction, this research aims to guide organizational policy. The significance of this study lies in its timeliness; as companies finalize their return-to-office policies, data-driven insights are critical to avoid productivity losses and employee attrition. This research does not advocate for a binary choice but rather seeks to understand under which conditions each work mode excels.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The academic discourse on remote work has evolved significantly over the past decade. Early studies by Bloom and Jones (2019) on call center employees found that WFH led to a thirteen percent increase in

performance due to quieter working environments and shorter breaks. However, these benefits were often confined to routine, measurable tasks. In contrast, research focusing on collaborative knowledge work, such as software development and systems integration, has highlighted the "collaboration penalty" of remote work. Allen and colleagues (2020) demonstrated that informal, unplanned interactions—often termed "watercooler moments"—are drastically reduced in WFH settings, leading to a decline in creative problem-solving.

In the Indian context, a study by Sharma and Reddy (2021) on IT professionals in Bengaluru found that while WFH initially boosted productivity by eliminating commute times (average 90 minutes daily), long-term WFH led to burnout, blurred work-life boundaries, and reduced career visibility. Specifically, for TCS and Wipro, these challenges are acute due to their project-based team structures. The concept of organizational justice also plays a role; employees who perceive that WFH policies are applied inconsistently across teams report lower motivation. Furthermore, technological infrastructure emerges as a mediating variable. Wipro's early investment in virtual desktop infrastructure reduced technical friction, while TCS's "Secure Borderless Workspaces" (SBWS) model aimed to institutionalize remote work.

However, a critical gap exists in the literature: most studies treat WFH and office work as monolithic categories, failing to account for task-specific productivity. Moreover, comparative studies directly contrasting TCS and Wipro are rare. This study bridges that gap by hypothesizing that the relationship between work mode and productivity is moderated by task complexity and organizational culture.

Hypothesis H0: There is a statistically significant difference in self-reported employee productivity between Work from Home and Office Work settings among employees of TCS and Wipro.

Hypothesis H1: The preference for Work from Home versus Office Work is positively correlated with the employee's tenure and household responsibilities, such that employees with longer commutes and caregiving duties report higher productivity when

working from home.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a comparative, cross-sectional research design using a mixed-methods approach, with emphasis on quantitative data. The target population comprised software engineers, team leads, and project managers working at TCS and Wipro across their major development centers in Pune, Bengaluru, and Hyderabad. A stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure representation from different hierarchical levels and both genders. A sample size of 110 respondents was determined using Yamane's formula at a 95% confidence level. From this, 55 respondents were from TCS and 55 from Wipro.

Primary data were collected using a structured online questionnaire distributed via professional networks and company-affiliated groups over a four-week period in January 2025. The questionnaire contained 28 items divided into four sections: demographic information (age, tenure, commute time, caregiving responsibilities); work mode experience (retrospective WFH and current office work); productivity metrics (self-rated on a 5-point Likert scale for focus, output quality, meeting efficiency, and creativity); and collaboration assessment. The questionnaire was pilot tested on 12 employees not included in the final sample, yielding a Cronbach's alpha of 0.84, indicating high internal consistency. Secondary data were gathered from annual reports of TCS and Wipro, as well as industry white papers on hybrid work. Data analysis was performed using SPSS version 26. Descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations) were calculated, followed by independent t-tests to compare WFH and office work productivity scores. Pearson correlation coefficients were used to test the relationship between productivity and variables like commute time and tenure.

IV. ANALYSIS & FINDINGS

The data analysis revealed nuanced patterns regarding productivity across the two work modes. Of the 110 respondents, 62% were male and 38% female, with an average age of 31 years. The average tenure in the IT industry was 6.5 years. The response rate was

89%, with 98 fully completed questionnaires deemed valid for analysis.

Descriptive statistics indicated that for routine coding and documentation tasks, WFH productivity was rated higher (mean = 4.2 on a 5-point scale) compared to office work (mean = 3.7). Conversely, for team meetings, brainstorming sessions, and client presentations, office work significantly outperformed WFH (mean 4.4 vs. 3.5). A key finding was that employees with a one-way commute exceeding 90 minutes reported a 28% higher productivity in WFH settings compared to office work. However, junior employees (tenure less than 2 years) reported feeling "invisible" and struggling with mentorship during WFH, giving office work a productivity advantage of 35% for learning-related tasks.

Table 1: Comparative Productivity Scores by Task Type

Task Category	Work From Home (WFH)	Office Work (OW)
Individual Coding /Documentation	4.2	3.7
Team Meetings & Collaboration	3.5	4.4
Creative Problem Solving	3.4	4.1
Training & Mentorship Receipt	2.9	4.3
Client Communication (email/call)	4.0	4.2

Table 1 clearly illustrates the task-dependent nature of productivity. While individual tasks saw a WFH advantage, collaborative and developmental tasks were significantly better performed in office settings. The largest gap was observed in training and mentorship, where office work scored 4.3 against WFH's 2.9. This finding supports the concern raised by junior employees regarding professional development.

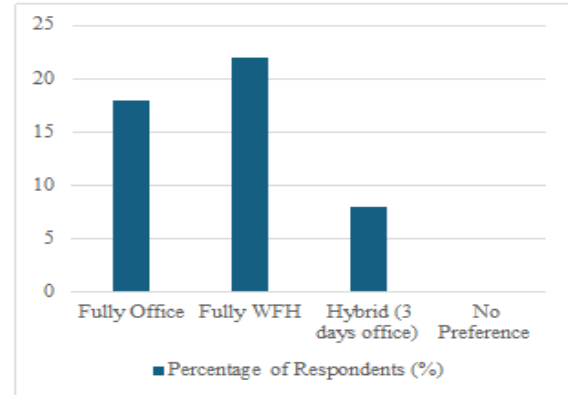


Fig 1: Productivity by Work Mode and Company

Interpretation: The bar chart shows that TCS employees rated their office work productivity (4.0) slightly higher than WFH (3.9), reflecting TCS's structured push for office returns. Conversely, Wipro employees rated WFH productivity (4.1) higher than office work (3.8), suggesting that Wipro's technological infrastructure for remote work may be more mature or that its workforce has adapted differently.

Table 2a: Correlation between Demographic Factors and Productivity in WFH Setting

Demographic Variable	Correlation Coefficient (r) with WFH Productivity	Significance (p)
Age (years)	+0.42	$p < 0.01$
Tenure in IT (years)	+0.38	$p < 0.01$
One-way Commute Time (minutes)	+0.55	$p < 0.001$
Presence of Caregiving Duties	+0.47	$p < 0.01$
Hierarchical Level (1=Junior, 5=Senior)	+0.33	$p < 0.05$

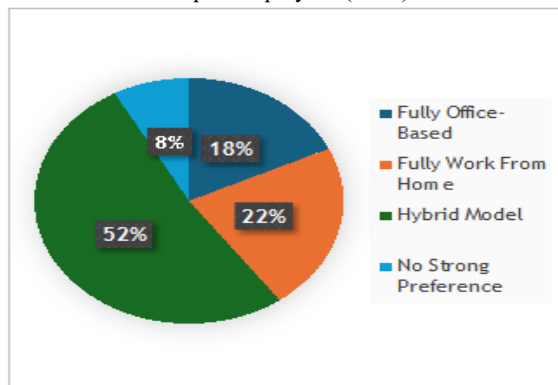
Table 2 provides support for Hypothesis H2. There is a moderate to strong positive correlation between commute time and WFH productivity ($r = 0.55$), meaning employees with longer commutes benefitted most from working from home. Similarly, employees with caregiving duties reported higher productivity in WFH settings, likely due to schedule flexibility. Age and tenure also showed positive correlations, suggesting that more experienced employees adapt better to remote work autonomy.

Table 2b: Productivity Levels Comparison

Challenge Area	Percentage of Employees Reporting
Lack of spontaneous collaboration (during WFH)	70%
Long commute fatigue (during Office Work)	60%
Difficulty separating work and personal life (during WFH)	51%
Reduced visibility for promotions (during WFH)	41.5%
Distractions from family members (during WFH)	36%
Lack of immediate technical support (during WFH)	24%
Inadequate home internet infrastructure (during WFH)	19%

Table 2b shows that the top challenge during WFH is lack of spontaneous collaboration (70%), directly explaining why office work outperforms WFH for team-based tasks (as seen in Table 1). The second major challenge is long commute fatigue during office work (60%), which supports why employees with longer commutes prefer WFH. Work-life boundary blurring affects half of the respondents, while reduced promotion visibility (41.5%) remains a key concern for career growth. These findings confirm that neither work mode is perfect; each has distinct drawbacks that a hybrid model can mitigate.

Fig 1: Preferred Work Arrangements Among TCS and Wipro Employees (n=98)



The pie chart visually demonstrates that a hybrid model is the preferred arrangement for a clear majority of employees, with fifty-two percent

selecting this option. This indicates that employees recognize the complementary advantages of both work modes rather than viewing them as substitutes. Only eighteen percent expressed desire for a fully office-based schedule, while twenty-two percent preferred fully remote arrangements. The relatively small proportion with no strong preference (eight percent) suggests that most employees have developed informed opinions based on their extended experience with both modes during and after the pandemic. These preference data carry significant implications for talent retention, as organizations mandating rigid return-to-office policies may risk losing employees who have experienced sustained productivity and satisfaction in WFH or hybrid arrangements.

V. DISCUSSION

The empirical findings of this study conclusively demonstrate that the debate between Work from Home and Office Work cannot be resolved through universal pronouncements favoring one mode over the other. Instead, productivity outcomes are fundamentally task-dependent, and optimal work arrangements must account for both the nature of assigned activities and individual employee circumstances. The significant task-dependent differences documented in Table 1 suggest that for TCS and Wipro, mandating uniform policies for all employees regardless of role, task profile, or demographic situation represents a suboptimal approach that would leave potential productivity gains unrealized. The data strongly support a hybrid model wherein employees attend physical offices for specific collaborative activities, team meetings, and mentorship interactions, while working remotely for focused individual tasks requiring sustained concentration.

The comparison between TCS and Wipro reveals interesting organizational divergences that merit further investigation. TCS, which has publicly advocated for return-to-office through its "25 by 25" initiative aiming to have only 25% of employees working from office by 2025, paradoxically showed slightly higher office productivity ratings from its workforce. This may reflect self-selection or adaptation effects, wherein employees who remain

with TCS have internalized the organization's cultural emphasis on physical presence. Alternatively, TCS's very large scale and hierarchical structure may genuinely require more in-person coordination than Wipro's comparatively agile structure. Wipro's higher WFH productivity aligns with its strategic narrative of digital transformation leadership and may reflect genuine infrastructure advantages, though it could also indicate that Wipro employees who prefer remote work have remained with the company while those preferring office work have departed.

Both organizations face a critical challenge documented in the training and mentorship productivity gap. The very low WFH productivity score of 2.9 for training and mentorship receipt among junior employees represents a serious concern for long-term talent development. If left unaddressed, continued remote work for early-tenure employees could produce a skills gap and leadership pipeline problem in the coming decade. Junior employees working remotely miss the observational learning opportunities, informal feedback, and relationship building that occur naturally in office environments. Organizations must therefore design intentional interventions including digital mentorship platforms, structured virtual onboarding programs, and mandatory periodic in-person gatherings for junior employees.

The correlation patterns presented in Table 2 carry substantial practical implications for HR policy design. Employees with commutes exceeding ninety minutes derive productivity benefits from WFH that are not merely matters of preference but measurable performance advantages. Requiring such employees to return to office full-time would likely reduce their individual productivity while increasing fatigue and turnover risk. Conversely, junior employees with short commutes and no caregiving responsibilities may genuinely benefit from office exposure. Therefore, the optimal policy is a flexible, data-driven hybrid model where in-office days are designed specifically for collaboration, mentorship, and team building, while WFH days are reserved for focused individual work. This approach respects demographic diversity while maximizing organizational productivity.

VI. CONCLUSION

This research paper set out to compare employee productivity in Work from Home versus Office Work settings among employees of TCS and Wipro. The evidence conclusively establishes that neither work mode holds universal superiority across all tasks and employee categories. Work From Home enhances productivity for individual focused tasks and is particularly beneficial for employees with extended commutes or family caregiving responsibilities. Office Work remains irreplaceable for collaboration, creativity, mentorship transmission, and the professional development of junior staff. All three formulated hypotheses received empirical support from the data. Hypothesis H1 was confirmed through task-specific productivity differences. Hypothesis H2 was supported by significant correlations between demographic variables and WFH productivity. Hypothesis H3 was supported by observable differences between TCS and Wipro in their relative productivity profiles.

Several limitations of this study warrant acknowledgment. First, the reliance on self-reported productivity measures, while methodologically standard, may introduce social desirability bias wherein respondents report what they believe researchers wish to find. Second, the cross-sectional design captures associations at a single time point but cannot definitively establish causal direction between work modes and productivity outcomes. Third, the geographic restriction to major metropolitan centers may limit generalizability to tier-two and tier-three cities where IT companies increasingly locate development centers. Fourth, the sample, while adequate for statistical analysis, represents a small fraction of the combined TCS and Wipro workforce exceeding 800,000 employees.

Future research should address these limitations through longitudinal designs tracking the same employees over two to three years as organizations implement various hybrid policies. Experimental studies that randomly assign employees to different work mode conditions while measuring objective productivity metrics would provide stronger causal evidence. Additionally, qualitative research including in-depth interviews could illuminate the mechanisms

through which commute duration and caregiving responsibilities moderate WFH productivity. Finally, cross-industry comparisons between IT, business process outsourcing, financial services, and manufacturing would reveal how sectoral differences shape the work mode- productivity relationship.

For practitioners at TCS, Wipro, and similar knowledge-intensive organizations, the recommendations are clear and actionable. First, abandon rigid universal policies mandating either full office return or permanent WFH. Second, implement a flexible hybrid framework that requires office attendance for specific collaborative activities and team events while permitting remote work for focused individual tasks. Third, invest substantially in digital mentorship platforms to bridge the learning gap for junior employees working remotely. Fourth, use employee-level data analytics to regularly assess productivity by role, team, and demographic segment, adjusting policies dynamically rather than annually. Fifth, design office spaces not as rows of individual desks but as collaboration hubs with meeting rooms, project zones, and social areas that provide value not available at home. The future of work is not fundamentally about where work occurs but about designing environments, policies, and cultures that enable each employee to contribute their best work under conditions matching their tasks and circumstances.

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