

**FWAs (Flexible Work Arrangements): Advantages and disadvantages for Employer**

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**Abstract**

This article provides different information about the FWAs (Flexible Work Arrangements) and its advantages and disadvantages for businesses. However, the article illustrates purpose, methods, analysis and some discussions about the results that were taken by the methods. The main purpose of writing this article is to identify the benefits and drawbacks of FWAs in today's business. When it comes to methods, only two types of methods were used, which are primary and secondary. In the primary research article, survey results are illustrated, while on the other hand, secondary research provides more information through various articles and websites. At the end of the article, a conclusion is given as a recommendation.

**Key words** – primary, illustrate, on the other hand, various

**Introduction**

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, most people prefer to work or do their tasks remotely and in places that they want. That's why FWAs (Flexible Work Arrangements) are becoming increasingly popular in today's businesses. In this article, some research will be given below based on reliable sources and other articles. In the beginning, a literature review gives information about the first adjustment and current acceptance of FWAs, after those types of FWAs will be given such as, remote work, hybrid work, flextime, compressed work and job sharing. In addition, some theories will be added which are related to flexible work arrangements and overall HR and Management. Especially, benefits and drawbacks will also be provided to compare them at the end of the article by taking results. One of the most important sides of this article is to identify current gaps in other articles and give them real case information and find solutions if there are challenges of FWAs for both employer and employee. Discussion will be the last important part, because in this part there will be a comparison between real case results and findings.

**Literature Review**

**Thematic Approach:**

**The beginning of Flexible Work Arrangements throughout history**

**First adjustment**

According to Morgan, 2021, in the end of the 20th century Flexible Work Arrangements were introduced to use them. Primarily, it was used in 1967 by an aerospace company of Germany that is named Messerschmitt-Bölkow-Blohm (MBB). This approach helped to solve some problems such as traffic jam, delays to work and so on. In addition, this also helps workers to select suitable work

time like starting and finishing hours of their work. There are different concepts of FWAs, which are called “flextime” or “gleitzeit” these are first example of recent FWAs (Morgan, 2021) [1].

Morgan, 2021 stated that in the UK way of the flextime was not common and in 1971 this concept was just known as a trademark. Firstly, individual companies started to use flexible working by creating their own requirements, standards and rules. In the beginning of 2000s, governments started to combine flexible working arrangements (Morgan, 2021) [2].

### **Contemporary Acceptance**

According to Amirul and Shaari, 2021, Flexible Work Arrangements have used significantly and accepted in businesses over the past 20 years. In today’s 21<sup>st</sup> century, technologies play a huge role in people life, for example mobile phones, laptops and internet make a chance to work remotely. This type technologies can make a process effective in remote working (International Workplace group, 2019) [3].

### **Types of FWAs and definitions of them**

#### **1. Remote Work**

This type of work gives more opportunity to employees to work from somewhere that they want, such as at their home or even abroad. Nowadays, Remote work is becoming more popular with the help of development in technologies and after the COVID-19 pandemic (ActivTrak, 2023) [4].

#### **2. Hybrid Work**

Hybrid work is that involves both works remotely and in the office. Employee that works with that type some day at his or her home, another day he or she comes to office (Joyner, 2021) [5]. For instance, employee works from Monday to Wednesday at his or her home, and comes to office from Thursday to Friday or Saturday it depends on working days.

#### **3. Flextime (Flexible hours)**

This type of working approach makes a chance for employees to choose their comfortable times that are start and finish times (Team, 2022) [6]. Besides this is so helpful for workers to manage and keep well their work and life balance and do some hobbies at their free time.

#### **4. Compressed Workweeks**

Employee works for longer hours in a short day is called Compressed Workweeks (Joyner, 2021) [7]. For example, employee works 12 hours every day in 3 days instead of 6 hours every day in 5 days.

#### **5. Job Sharing**

Job sharing works like this, two or more workers divide the responsibilities of one single task or work and do these tasks one by one (ActivTrak, 2023) [8]. For example, from Monday to Tuesday one employee works and other one works from Wednesday to Friday by dividing single job.

### **Different theories that is related flexibility**

#### **1. Contingency Theory**

Contingency theory shows that there is no only one way to control an organization. Instead, practices of management should be suitable for clear business needs and situations. This way helps to control different challenges effectively (Smirti, 2021) [\[9\]](#).

#### **2. System management theory**

Systems management theory is that in organization all departments connected with each other and work together. That's why, flexibility is main side to adjust different parts of organization when it come across changes in its environment (Bijisha Prasain, 2023) [\[10\]](#).

#### **3. Strategic Flexibility**

According to Xiu et al., 2017, this theory shows us that ability of organization to adjust challenges and changes in the external environment with its way of operations and strategies [\[11\]](#). Strategic Flexibility is more important for practices of HR. For example, HR managers uses this theory for trainings, hiring process and teams that self-managed.

#### **4. Flexible Firm Model**

In 1984 Flexible Firm Model suggested by Atkinson for hiring and adjusting combination of constant and temporary employee to achieve flexibility in organization. This concept also plays a huge role in adopting HR practices with organizational goals (Dettmers, Kaiser and Fietze, 2013) [\[12\]](#).

### **Benefits of FWAs for Employers**

Based on the researches on Indeed Editorial Team, 2023, Flexible work arrangements can improve noticeably productivity and efficiency through giving opportunity to workers to work at places that they feel comfortable and relaxed themselves. In addition, there are another benefit sides for both employee and employer that are working at FWAs will be healthy and successful at their work, because FWAs can help to employee to reduce stresses and finish their work faster. However, employers have enough chance to save money throughout cutting expenses such as, rents, electricity and related this type of expenses. By FWAs companies can keep their employee loyal for a long time, by creating job satisfaction (Indeed Editorial Team, 2023) [\[13\]](#).

### **Drawbacks of FWAs for Employers**

On the other hand, Flexible Work Arrangements introduce a bunch of difficulties for employers. According to Birt, 2021, Companies should add new strategies and approaches for team building, rewarding performance and make better communicational concepts to feel responsibility seriously and develop productivity [\[14\]](#). There is another drawback for managers that is mistake and oversights in checking employee tasks, responsibilities of them and keep constant and perfect results in work (Schooley, 2022) [\[15\]](#). Another important point is that there will be more cyber-attacks for remote worker, because networks and devices at home like PC,

laptop and gadgets are more unprotected. That's why, unique and secret information will be spread and it will bring more damage for company (Lahiri and Schwartz, 2018) [16].

There are several findings and results of research about Flexible Work Arrangements, but as coin has two sides there are enough information that require more studies. While 85% information was provided as general conclusion, remaining 15% studies shows that researched areas about services of finance, hospitality and manufacturing. As you can see the result, it requires more exact information that is covered fully and comprehensive understandings about unique benefits and challenges of FWAs (Brecheisen, 2023) [17].

### **Methodology**

#### **Primary Research**

In this article, survey was shared among students and people that worked or working now to identify and collect real opinions about Flexible Work Arrangements and its pros and cons. In addition, survey has a 13 questions and respondents are around 37 people.

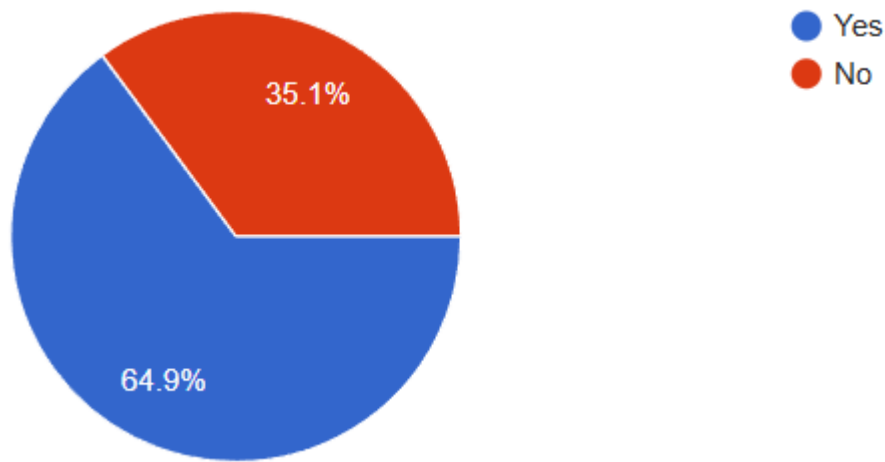
#### **Secondary Research**

For the secondary research various data was collected throughout different articles, websites and books. However, all data written based on real and reliable sources.

### **Results**

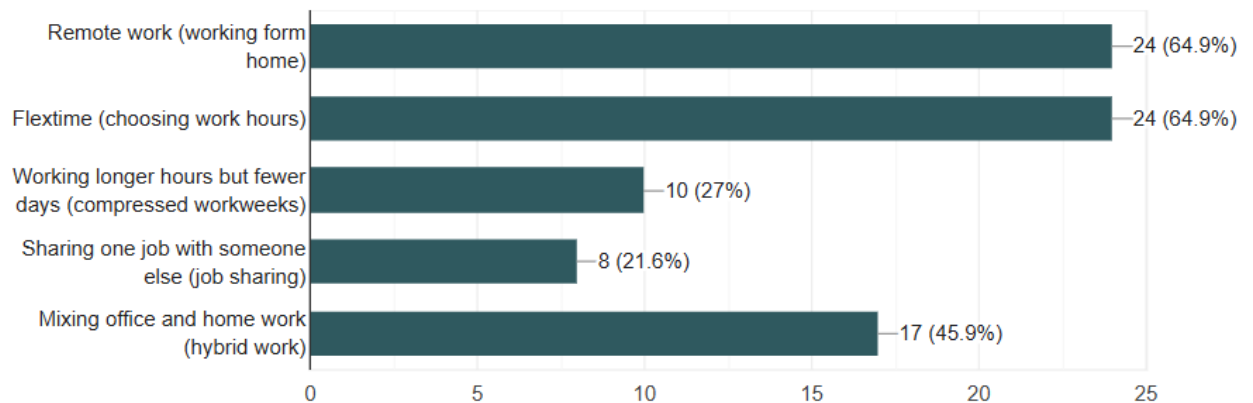
Results show that there are different opinions and recommendations about the FWAs and its prospects. Among respondents 59.5% are young people around 18-20 years-old. 13.5% and 16.2% voters are 21-23-years-old and 24-26-years-old as well. In addition, most of the voter's field is Business Management with 48.6% result and two rest of them work or study on Information Technology and English Language Teaching field with 5.4% and 35.1% as well. Results also show that 64.9% respondents have understanding about FWAs. However, most respondents prefer to work in flexible working environment, while less people are rejecting flexible work arrangements. If you pay attention questions about negative aspects of this, it shows less results about agreed answers rather than disagreed with 13.5% and 40.5% as well, rest of them answered as a neutral.

**Fig.1. Have you worked in a job with FWAs?**



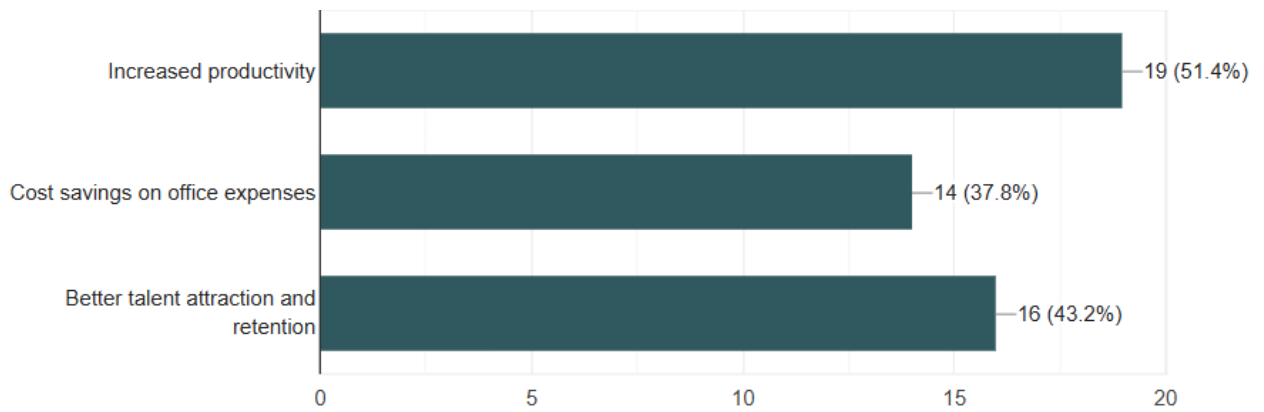
As you can see most of the participants have worked in jobs with flexible work arrangements with 64.9% result.

**Fig.2. Which of the examples do you know about FWAs?**



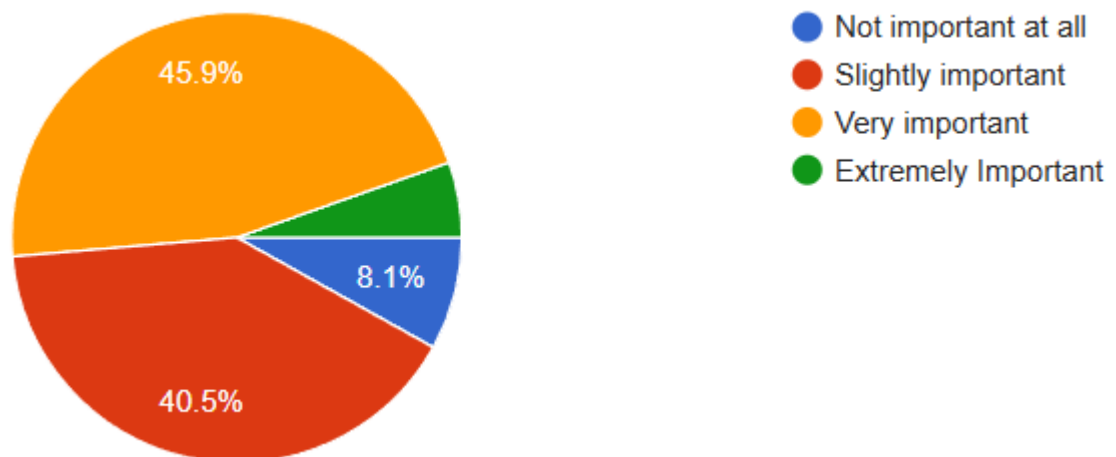
Among 37 respondents both Remote work and Flextime are more well-known with 24 respondents and 64.9%. It means there will be more demand for them.

**Fig.3. What is the significant advantage of FWAs for employer?**



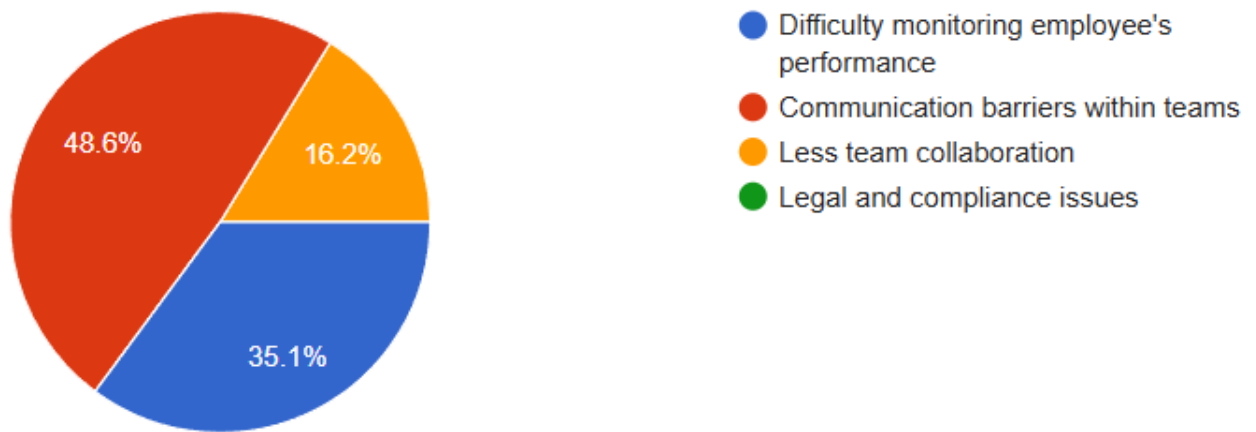
51.4% participants were selected first option and it shows that a lot of people do excellent work with comfortable environment.

**Fig.4. How important are FWAs in today's business?**



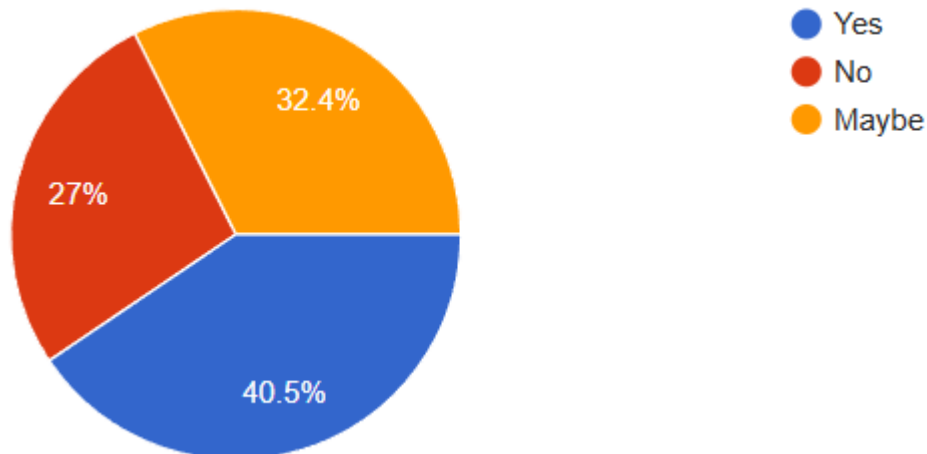
Only two options show almost same results with 40.5% and 45.9% by selecting slightly and very important option as well.

**Fig.5. What is the biggest difficulty when offering FWAs?**



Based on the pie chart, there are difficulties in communication and monitoring performance with 48.6% and 35.1% results as well.

**Fig.6. Should all employer offer FWAs?**



As result shows that among three options, answer yes shows enough result rather than others.

### Analysis

As a results of survey, more difficulties and benefits are identified by many people who are students, teachers and businessman. The first thing I should mention is that among participants most people worked and working in job with flexibility with 64.9%, while 35.1% do not working with flexible work arrangements. It means that, nowadays a lot of people prefer to work with flexible environment. In addition, survey shows that people who know and understand about FWAs with the same results 64.9% and 35.1% as above.

### Types of FWAs that people know

According to the surveys result, only two types of FWAs took a high result that are remote working and flextime with 64.9% respondents among 37 respondents. Mixing office and home work shows slightly lower result with 45.9% and 17 respondents. There also two types of examples which are compressed workweeks and job sharing by showing result among voter with 27% and 21.6% as well. These numbers give an information about the demand for FWAs especially remote work and flextime in today's world (International Workplace group, 2019) [18].

### **Benefits of FWAs**

There are three different plus sides of FWAs on survey and let's look at the votes that participants have responded. Firstly, respondents chose the option that FWAs will increase productivity with result of 51.4%, it means this percentages are point of voters need that FWAs will be beneficial for both employee and employer. Secondly, most people have selected the option that given as a better talent attraction and retention with 16 respondents among 37. This result gives information about people who can their best approaches and talents when they work at home or somewhere that they want rather than office or workplace. Cost savings on office expenses shows low result among mentioned two benefits and only 14 people chose that option. But this option is very helpful if someone think as an employer.

On the other hand, FWAs have an importance level in today's business. By sharing out the survey, various opinions are collected and among them 45.9% and 40.5% participants thought that FWAs are very important and slightly important as well. Only 3 voters chose an option that is named not important at all with 8.1% result.

### **Biggest challenges for employer when offering FWAs**

There are different challenges for employers that they will come across when offering FWAs. Most people chose the section on the survey that is named difficulty monitoring employee's performance through 35.1% result. That means if employer give chance for employee to work remotely, employer or managers will not check their workers performance during the tasks. Besides, less team collaboration shows stable result with 16.2% among 37 participants. Throughout the survey Communication barrier within teams will highly create challenges to employers, because pie chart shows significant high result with 48.6% among 37 participants. Interesting side is that there is an option which called legal and compliance issues, but no one did not choose that option it shows 0% on the survey.

In addition, most of our participants answered to the question that do FWAs can negatively affect company culture by selecting Maybe and No with 45.9% and 40.5% as well. This result means that, a lot of people think FWAs are helpful and create comfortability for both sides employer and employee. Only 13.5% respondents chose the option Yes.

One thing identified by open ended question among participants which they wrote good sides and benefits of FWAs by answering yes, it creates comfortable environment for us in general. And most of them want that all employers should offer FWAs for employee with 40.5% result.

## **Discussion**

### **Theoretical comparison or frameworks**

Throughout the different research about FWAs (Flexible Work Arrangements) put in order with various HR and Management theories. According to Smirti, 2021, there is no one size fits all approaches of management, instead of industries should identify gaps in FWAs that can fit the main and unique challenges of various sectors [19]. This finding suggested that employers or companies should offer flexible jobs for employee and find the solutions to problems that will arise upcoming tasks. As before mentioned, among respondents of survey most of them have worked in job with FWAs and they are happy their jobs, because almost 87% of respondents wrote positive feedback about future job with flexible work arrangement. In addition, 40.5% participant wants to work flexible job and they thought most employer must suggest FWAs to new workers.

Moreover, there is another theory which Flexible Firm Model presented by Atkinson (1984) suitable for the gaps in demographic sides [20]. The model supports of temporary and permanent employee to achieve effective flexibility in the business. In addition, this concept is flexible and suitable for everyone such as, students, male and female.

### **Implications**

To improve the benefits and minimize the minus sides of Flexible Work Arrangements, there are bunch of practices step by step that employers can use it. Primarily, business or employer should identify the needs of industry to overcome future problems. For instance, hybrid model can be good example for that by mixing remote and on-site working concepts. This also guarantee that FWAs approaches will meet unique demands and needs of various industries.

Second practice is that employers should pay more attention on security of their workers who is working remotely. Because, if someone works as remote worker, he or she cannot ensure keeping data secure, by this more secret data will be shared out and it will bring big damage to the company. So, managers should provide special devices, communicational channels and some training for protecting companies' information.

According to survey result, 86.4% participants wrote about comfortability, suitable aspects and beneficial sides for health. That is why most employer try to more focus on well-being of their workers through offering flextime works. If managers identify the needs of various demographic teams, they can create a job satisfaction among employees.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, this article shows that FWAs (Flexible Work Arrangements) are becoming more popular among different industries, in addition survey that was mentioned before can be reliable source for that. Most people moving and choosing works that give them flexible time during the tasks and make them feel comfortable and satisfied, while less people prefer to work on-site, so as a recommendation, companies and employers of them must use helpful approaches

to offer FWAs as soon as possible. Lastly, this article can be helpful for employers to identify needs of FWAs among employee.

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