

Four-Day Workweek as Post COVID-19 Alternate Work Arrangement : The Mediating Role of Organizational Commitment

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the post-COVID -19 role of perceived work-life balance and organizational commitment as antecedents to intention to stay in a four-day workweek (FDWW) arrangement. Organizational commitment was hypothesized as a mediator between perceived work-life balance and perceived work engagement. A descriptive approach with a cross-sectional design was adopted for this study. PLS-SEM was used to predict the relationship amongst exogenous and endogenous constructs. Convenience sampling – the snowball method – was used for data collection; owing to COVID-19, this appeared to be the only viable method. The study conceptualized that with pandemic-induced realization about the importance and centrality of familial ties, the employees are likely to have a strong drive towards having a work-life balance. The study, therefore, investigated the significance of a four-day workweek as a post-COVID 19 alternate work arrangement. The findings from the study indicated that with the adoption of a four-day workweek, the organizations could expect greater employee commitment and intention to stay. Another dimension of the study focused on the impact of work engagement on intention to stay, mediated by organizational commitment. The study, based on f^2 values, pointed towards a significant role of work engagement in predicting variance in organizational commitment.

Keywords : work-life balance, organizational commitment, intention to stay, work engagement, four-day workweek

JEL Classification Codes : J0,L2,M1

Paper Submission Date : May 10, 2021 ; **Paper sent back for Revision :** July 7, 2021 ; **Paper Acceptance Date :** October 25, 2021 ; **Paper Published Online :** January 15, 2022

The current pandemic caused by COVID-19 has shut down the normal working of governments, offices, recreational activities, schools, colleges, practically every outside-home activity throughout the globe (Li et al., 2020). As the world grapples to tide over this unprecedented crisis, the need for innovative and sustainable solutions to retain and enhance productivity, improve workplace flexibility, and employee welfare is extremely high. It has been almost 2 years since WHO declared the COVID-19 pandemic, yet it carries on blighting organizations spanning across countries. A lot of organizations have realized that the road to recovery might be long as they continue to embrace the new normal (Seetharaman, 2020).

While organizations across different geographical regions are looking for, designing or developing newer ways of doing work, the devastating impact of COVID -19 on our lives has brought into focus the importance of

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DOI : <https://doi.org/10.17010/pijom/2022/v15i1/167859>

familial ties and their centrality in our lives. Having realized the ephemeral nature of existence, it is anticipated that employees post-COVID -19 would prefer work-life balance. Since this realization of uncertainty in survival is not limited to any particular section of employees but pervades across different levels covering the entire population – from top management to a shop floor worker – in this regard, it is expected that many organizations may look for alternate work arrangements, like a four-day workweek, to satisfy the evolving needs of work-life balance of employees (Booth, 2020; Stronge & Harper, 2019). A four-day workweek is not just a form of a compressed workweek, but rather it is an evolution in the reduction and re-adjustment of the normal working hours pertaining to the needs of individual organizations (Facer II & Wadsworth, 2010).

Work-Life Balance (WLB)

WLB is creating and maintaining a characteristic equilibrium condition between professional life and individual or personal life by contributing and investing energy and time between them both (Chawla & Sondhi, 2016). Previous research has indicated that work-life balance is influenced by many factors such as workplace support, family support, and work overburden (Sudhindra et al., 2020).

Studies show that work-life balance positively affects both personal and organizational outcomes (Shankar & Bhatnagar, 2010). Research also shows that experiences and activities in the life domain can have a great influence on the work domain (Facer II & Wadsworth, 2008).

Work Engagement (WE)

The earliest, reliable definition of work engagement says that it is a quality that rests on the achievement of three psychological needs or conditions: availability, safety, and meaningfulness (Kahn, 1990). Some scholars state that work engagement depends on individual employees' enthusiasm, participation, and satisfaction (Harter et al., 2002). While some studies say work engagement is a multidimensional trait – behavioral, cognitive, and emotional in nature, with experience playing a key role (Macey & Schneider, 2008).

Work engagement is a crucial component and is treated as a top priority in the majority of organizations as it displays a strong association with performance, employee efficiency, employee retention, intention to stay, and organizational commitment (Jaharuddin & Zainol, 2019; Regy & Malini, 2019). Engaged employees tend to be more flexible, open-minded, and productive (Tims et al., 2013), while disengaged employees exhibit turnover intentions (Rajak & Chandra, 2017; Vashisht & Vashisht, 2020).

Research shows that work enrichment, inter-department cooperation, communication, human autonomy (Chug & Vibhuti, 2017), organizational justice (Sharma & Yadav, 2018), alternate work arrangements, or new work ways help in developing and enhancing work engagement (Gerards et al., 2018). Organizations with apt work engagement parameters have sufficient competitive advantage that is difficult to imitate casually (Macey & Schneider, 2008).

Review of Literature and Hypotheses Building

Work-Life Balance (WLB) and Organizational Commitment (OC)

OC is referred to as the strength of an employee's psychological attachment, involvement, attitude, and identification towards the organization (Porter et al., 1974). It is a factor that is reciprocal in nature. The loyalty, sincerity, and commitment of an employee towards an organization are reciprocated by the support and enhancement in lifestyle the organization provides and vice versa (Schein, 1996). The formation of an implicit contract, psychologically, between the employee and the organization occurs when the organization seems more

supportive (Rousseau, 1995). This further enhances the employee's work-life balance while increasing the sense of organizational commitment.

Organizational commitment and work-life balance have been reported to be interdependent. The increase in commitment to work at an organization leads to an increase in levels on achieving work-life balance and vice versa (Chawla & Sondhi, 2016). Many of the studies showed a strong relationship between decreased work-family conflict, increase in WLB levels, and development of favorable attitudes amongst the employees with respect to both the job and the coworkers, effectively strengthening the organizational commitment (Chawla & Sondhi, 2016). Hence, it is hypothesized :

↪ **H01** : Work-life balance has no impact on organizational commitment.

↪ **Ha1** : Work-life balance has a significant positive impact on organizational commitment.

Work-Life Balance and Intention to Stay (ITS)

Employers try to make sure to surge the level of intention to stay within all of their employees because when the turnover intention converts into an actual turnover, it becomes tremendously expensive for the organization owing to all the costs related to recruiting, onboarding, training, developing, and retaining employees (Lee et al., 2020). The intention to leave can be attributed to low WLB, poor work engagement, and low productivity (Heikkeri, 2010).

Research amplifies the fact that job satisfaction and organizational commitment have a huge impact on intention to stay (Deery & Jago, 2009). Further, it has been stated that by achieving satisfactory work-life balance, the organizational commitment increases with the increase in work engagement, which leads to an increase in the intention to stay amongst the employees (Puteh & Arshad, 2015). An organization devoid of work-life balance will lack OC, and consequently, ITS will be difficult to achieve (Noor, 2011). Hence, it is hypothesized :

↪ **H02** : Work-life balance has no impact on intention to stay.

↪ **Ha2** : Work-life balance has a significant positive impact on intention to stay.

Work Engagement and Organizational Commitment

OC has also been defined as an employee's attitude, welfare concern, and attachment towards an organization; whereas, work engagement is not an attitude but can be described as a state of being wherein it shows the level of an employee's awareness and absorption towards his/her work (Saks, 2006). While it is perceived that organizational commitment is reasonably steady over time, work engagement varies as employees deal and interact with environmental stimuli at the workplace (Kahn, 1990). Work engagement positively affects organizational commitment (Saks, 2006). Engaged employees are termed a synonym for committed employees (Gallup, 2001). Hence, it is hypothesized :

↪ **H03** : Work engagement has no impact on organizational commitment.

↪ **Ha3** : Work engagement has a significant positive impact on organizational commitment.

Work Engagement and Intention to Stay

Engagement with work generates fulfilling, positive experiences and leads to a state of mind that correlates with good health and vigorous work efforts (Bakker & Schaufeli, 2015). As a result of these positive experiences and

feelings, the employees exhibit more positive work-related outcomes, tend to hold their employers in high regard, and have less inclination to leave the organization (Bakker & Schaufeli, 2015; Saks, 2006). Hence, it is hypothesized :

- ↪ **H04** : Work engagement has no impact on intention to stay.
- ↪ **Ha4** : Work engagement has a significant positive impact on intention to stay.

Organizational Commitment and Intention to Stay

OC is a complex and continuous, multidimensional construct associated with a wide range of variables with many underlying implications (Robinson et al., 2004). Organization commitment plays a key role in improving an organization's functioning by acting as a lubricant in its social machinery and promoting employees' attitudes towards the organization (Pathardikar & Sahu, 2011). The social exchange theory states when employees are treated well by their organization, they tend to involve in organizational citizenship behavior, which in turn increases the employees' organizational commitment (Blau, 1964). Further, research shows that organizational commitment is strongly linked to occupational commitment as well as intention to stay (Major et al., 2013). Hence, it is hypothesized :

- ↪ **H05** : Organizational commitment has no impact on intention to stay.
- ↪ **Ha5** : Organizational commitment has a significant positive impact on intention to stay.

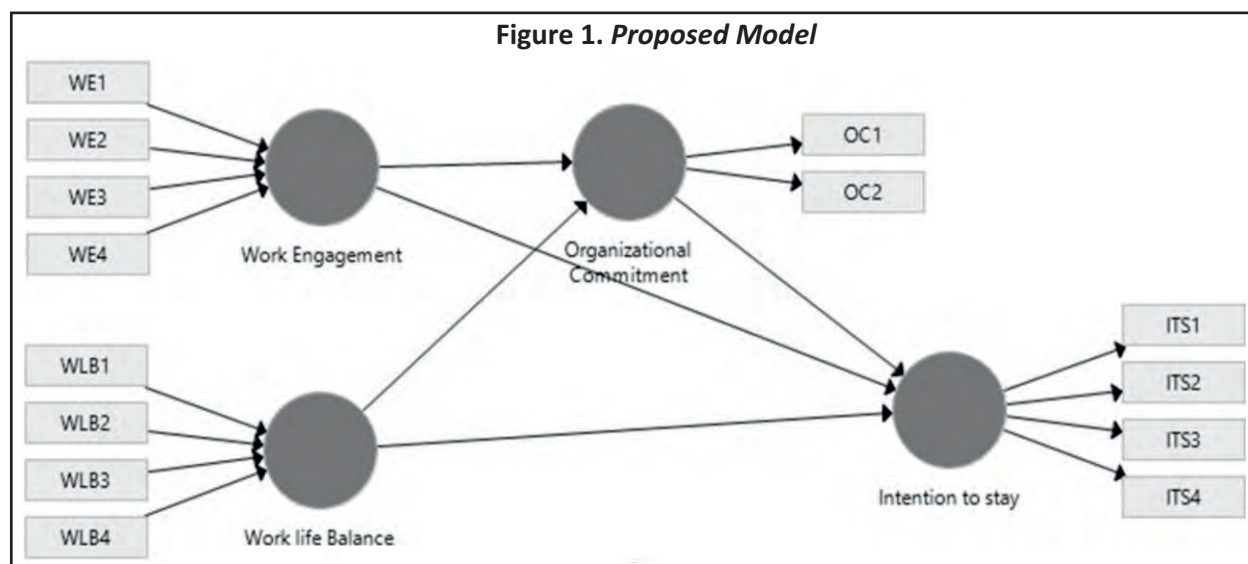
Organizational Commitment as a Mediator

Many studies have been carried out where OC acts as a mediator in a variety of work-related factors. Organizational commitment has been reported to mediate the relationship between leadership behavior and job satisfaction and performance (Yousef, 2000a), work ethic and organizational change (Yousef, 2000b), and job insecurity and turnover intentions (Lee & Jeong, 2017). Organizational commitment is seen as a core necessity for any organization to flourish (Robinson et al., 2004). Affective commitment with work-life balance as a precursor positively impacts employees' performance and productivity (Noor, 2011). Hence, it is hypothesized :

- ↪ **H06** : Organizational commitment does not mediate the relationship between work-life balance and intention to stay.
- ↪ **Ha6** : Organizational commitment mediates the relationship between work-life balance and intention to stay.
- ↪ **H07** : Organizational commitment does not mediate the relationship between work engagement and intention to stay.
- ↪ **Ha7** : Organizational commitment mediates the relationship between work engagement and intention to stay.

Research Gap

Previous studies found FDWW as having a positive relationship between productivity. However, these studies are limited to pre- COVID-19 times. The purpose of the study is to explore employees' perception towards post-COVID-19 four-day workweek alternate work arrangement. The study hypothesizes that the work-life balance and work engagement that an employee will experience shall significantly impact organizational commitment. The study further hypothesizes OC as a mediator between WLB, WE, and ITS (Figure 1).



Research Methodology

Research Design

Descriptive research with a cross-sectional study was adopted to investigate the relationship between dependent and independent constructs (Pannerselvam, 2016). The study was based on primary data collected from ICT professionals across India. Data collection was carried out between September and October 2020. The survey instrument comprised of 14 items measuring WE, WLB, OC, and ITS. The items corresponding to all of the above factors were adapted from established measures (see the Appendix).

Sampling Design

All the respondents assured confidentiality of responses, and it was clearly stated that responses would be used purely for academic purposes. After excluding incomplete survey instruments, the dataset comprised of 295 respondents. The sample comprised of 62% female and 38% male respondents; 65% of the respondents were unmarried and 35% were married; 71% were in the age group of 20 – 34 years, 15% in the age group of 35 – 49 years, and 14% were above the age of 50 years (Table 1).

Sampling Technique and Data Collection

The situation due to COVID-19 did not permit venturing out, and therefore, data for the research were collected through the online mode. The snowball sampling method was used for data collection through an online survey questionnaire accessible for three weeks (September – October 2020). Although convenient sampling has some limitations, it can be the method of choice for data collection under certain circumstances like those prevalent now due to COVID - 19. Further convenient sampling has some distinct benefits, such as it is more convenient and less expensive. Also, as this study uses PLS-SEM for analysis, the condition of data normality is not essential (Hair et al., 2017). The review of literature points to at least one study that has combined parametric tests with non-probability sampling (Chakraborty & Biswas, 2020).

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics (N = 295)

	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	112	38.0
Female	183	62.0
Age (in years)		
20–34	208	71.0
35–49	45	15.0
50 & Above	42	14.0
Marital Status		
Unmarried	193	65.0
Married	102	35.0

Table 2. Factor Loadings – Measurement Scale

	1	2	3	4	5
WLB1		.732			
WLB2		.666			
WLB3		.681			
WLB4		.735			
WE1	.724				
WE2	.654				
WE3	.643				
WE4	.600				
ITS1			.719		
ITS2			.768		
ITS3			.767		
ITS4			.737		
OC1					.691
OC2					.698

Construct Measures

Exploratory factor analysis confirms that all the items loaded significantly on their respective constructs and had factor loading above 0.5. Further, no cross-loading was reported (Table 2). The survey instrument was examined for common method bias, and the variance extracted was found to be less than 50%. The reliability and validity parameters for both individual constructs and the entire scale were found to be above the prescribed threshold levels. Exogenous constructs (WLB, WE) were measured formatively, while a reflective measurement model was adopted for mediating construct OC and endogenous construct ITS. The quality parameters associated with each of the constructs were found to be within the prescribed range.

Estimation Procedure and Data Analysis

PLS-SEM is used in the analysis of data on account of its ability to support prediction-oriented results (Hair et al., 2017). WLB and WE were formatively measured, while mediating construct OC and endogenous construct ITS were reflectively measured.

Estimation Procedure – Measurement Model

The measurement model comprised of two formatively measured constructs – FDWW perceived-work life balance and FDWW perceived-work engagement and one reflectively measured construct – FDWW perceived organizational commitment.

Formatively Measured Constructs

The convergent validity of a formatively measured construct is evaluated on the basis of its correlation with the same construct measured reflectively (Hair et al., 2017). The construct: work engagement was operationalized

through the statement, “I perceive that a four-day workweek will make the work more meaningful and purposeful to me,” and the construct: work-life balance was operationalized through, “I perceive that a four-day workweek will be more beneficial for my health.”

In PLS-SEM, the convergent validity is established on the basis of the strength of path coefficient between the same construct measured formatively and reflectively. A path coefficient of 0.7 and above is considered to be significant to establish convergent validity (Hair et al., 2017). All the formatively measured constructs satisfy the convergent validity criteria as detailed above. In order to rule out collinearity and common method bias, the variance inflation factor (VIF) associated with all the items corresponding to all the constructs were analyzed and reported to be within prescribed ranges. VIF values less than 5 and outer loadings greater than 0.5 (Hair et al., 2017) indicate the absence of collinearity and common method bias (Hair et al., 2017). Table 3 depicts the validity statistics.

Reflectively Measured Constructs

The endogenous constructs: organizational commitment (OC) and intention to stay (ITS) are measured reflectively. The item loadings and average variance extracted (AVE) for both the constructs were above the

Table 3. Validity Statistics – Formatively Measured Constructs

Constructs and Items	VIF Values	Outer Loadings	Convergent Validity	
			Path Coefficients	R ²
Work-Life Balance			0.744	0.55
WLB1	1.560	0.534		
WLB2	2.416	0.808		
WLB3	2.817	0.909		
WLB4	2.787	0.952		
Work Engagement			0.726	0.527
WE1	2.229			
WE2	2.046			
WE3	1.856			
WE4	1.802			

Table 4. Reliability and Validity : Reflectively Measured Constructs

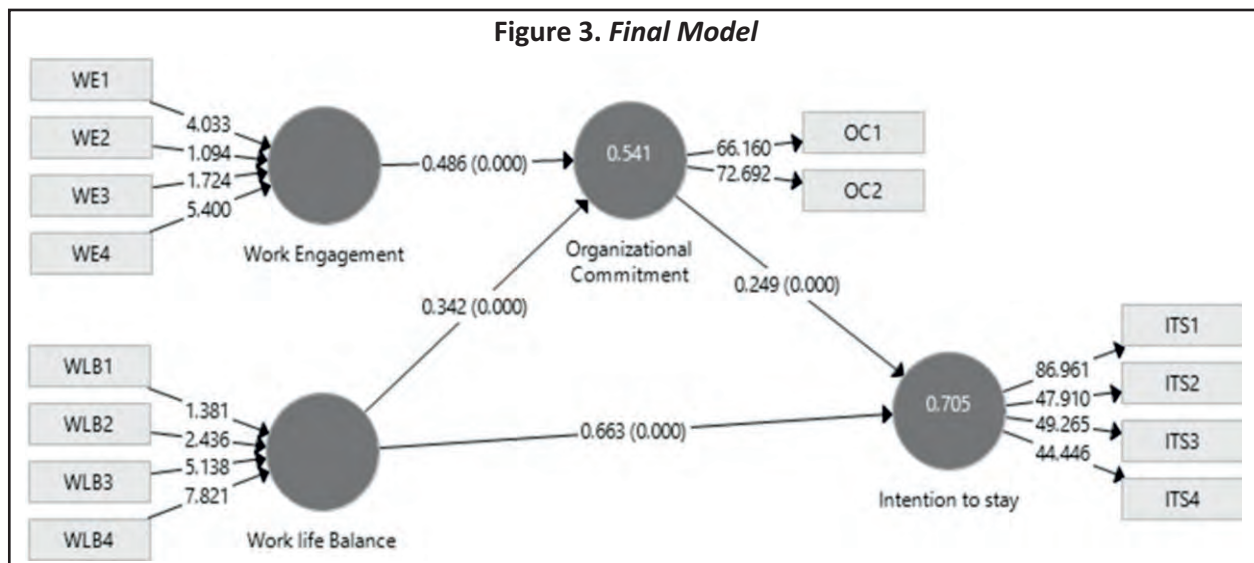
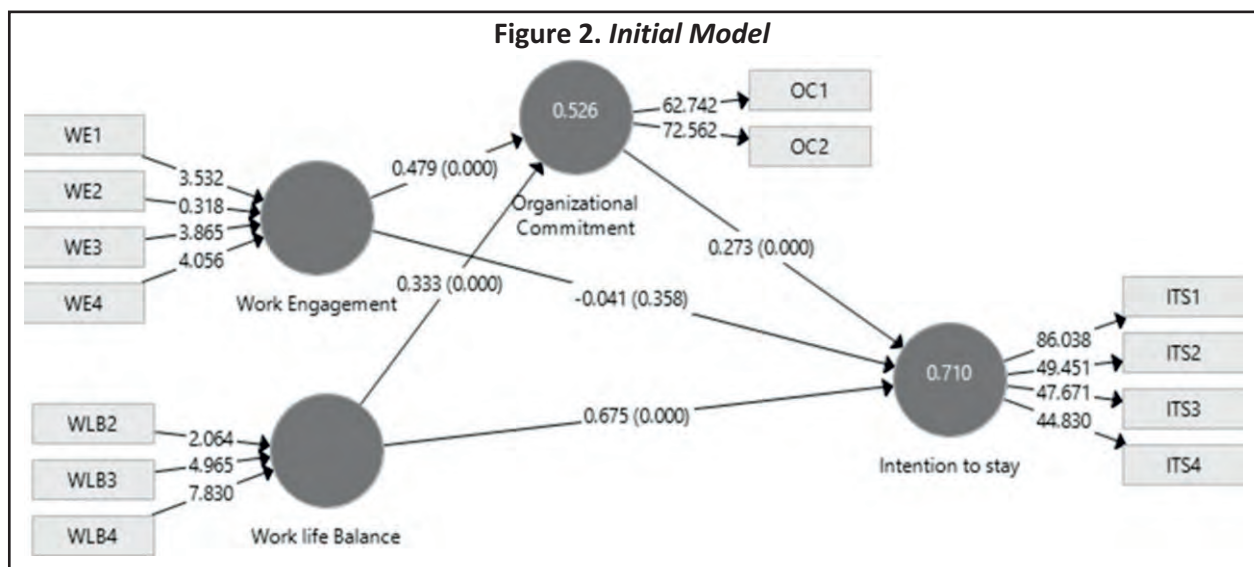
Constructs	AVE	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha	HTMT Ratio	Outer Loadings
Intention to Stay (ITS)	0.804	0.942	0.918		
Organizational Commitment (OC)	0.854	0.921	0.829		
OC → ITS				0.754	
OC1 → OC					0.922
OC2 → OC					0.926
ITS1 → ITS					0.922
ITS2 → ITS					0.890
ITS3 → ITS					0.895
ITS4 → ITS					0.877

prescribed value of 0.7 and 0.5, respectively, while the heterotrait-monotrait ratio for both the constructs was below the threshold value of 0.90, thus establishing discriminant validity. All the constructs satisfied the composite reliability criteria (Hair et al., 2017). The quality parameters of the reflectively measured constructs are presented in Table 4.

Estimation Procedure – Structural Model

Two exogenous constructs, namely work engagement (WE) and work-life balance (WLB), and one mediating construct – organizational commitment (OC) and one endogenous construct – intention to stay (ITS) make up the structural model (Figure 2).

As is evident from Figure 2, the relationship between WE and ITS, as indicated by the path coefficient, is not significant. The model was tested after discounting for the relationship between WE and ITS. There was a



marginal improvement in R^2 value corresponding to organizational commitment, while R^2 value for intention to stay was practically unaffected (Figure 3). Therefore, it is evident that the construct OC exhibits a full mediating effect between WE and ITS, while in the case of WLB, it exerts a complementary mediating effect (Table 5).

The quality parameters – the strength of path coefficients, total effects, total indirect effects, specific indirect effects – corresponding to relationships between exogenous and endogenous constructs were found to be significant. Table 5 represents the values corresponding to these parameters. Further, as indicated by the R^2 values, it is found that WE and WLB accounted for 54.1% variance in OC; WLB and OC as mediators between WE, WLB, and ITS accounted for 70.5% variance in ITS. Also, f^2 values corresponding to the relationship between all the constructs were found to be statistically significant. Significant f^2 values indicate the relative importance of path coefficients between the constructs (Table 6). The positive Q^2 values obtained by performing the blindfolding procedure established predictive relevance of the model ($Q^2_{ITS} = 0.558$; $Q^2_{OC} = 0.449$).

Table 5. Structural Model Statistics

Path Coefficients	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	p - Values	Significant/Non Significant ($p < .05$)
<i>OC → ITS</i>	0.249	0.244	0.000	Significant
<i>WE → OC</i>	0.486	0.488	0.000	Significant
<i>WLB → OC</i>	0.663	0.668	0.000	Significant
<i>WLB → ITS</i>	0.342	0.342	0.000	Significant
Total Indirect Effects				
<i>WLB-ITS</i>	0.085	0.084	0.000	Significant
<i>WE-ITS</i>	0.121	0.118	0.000	Significant
Specific Indirect Effects				
<i>WE → OC → ITS</i>	0.121	0.118	0.000	Significant
<i>WLB → OC → ITS</i>	0.085	0.084	0.001	Significant
Total Effects				
<i>OC → ITS</i>	0.249	0.244	0.000	Significant
<i>WE → ITS</i>	0.121	0.118	0.000	Significant
<i>WE → OC</i>	0.486	0.488	0.000	Significant
<i>WLB → ITS</i>	0.748	0.752	0.000	Significant
<i>WLB → OC</i>	0.342	0.342	0.000	Significant
F - Square Effect				
<i>OC → ITS</i>	0.131	0.131	0.014	Significant
<i>WE → OC</i>	0.351	0.368	0.000	Significant
<i>WLB → ITS</i>	0.924	0.969	0.000	Significant
<i>WLB → OC</i>	0.174	0.182	0.005	Significant
<i>ITS</i>	0.705	0.709	0.000	Significant
<i>OC</i>	0.541	0.548	0.000	Significant
Q-Square				
Q^2_{ITS}	0.558			
Q^2_{OC}	0.449			

Table 6. Hypotheses Testing

<i>R</i> ² Adjusted	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Bias	95% Confidence Interval	Hypothesis Accepted/ Not Accepted
	0.705	0.709	0.003	[0.625, 0.766]	
	0.541	0.548	0.009	[0.432, 0.614]	
Path Coefficients					
Work – Life Balance → Organizational Commitment	0.342	0.341	– 0.001	[0.239, 0.449]	Ha1 – Accepted
Work – Life Balance → Intention to Stay	0.663	0.665	0.002	[0.534, 0.739]	Ha2 – Accepted
Work Engagement → Organizational Commitment	0.486	0.492	0.006	[0.365, 0.579]	Ha3 – Accepted
Work Engagement → Intention to Stay	– 0.033	– 0.026	0.007	[– 0.136, 0.044]	H04 – Accepted
Organizational Commitment → Intention to Stay	0.249	0.246	– 0.003	[0.159, 0.364]	Ha5 – Accepted
Mediating Effect					
WE → OC → ITS	0.121	0.118	– 0.003	[0.076, 0.179]	Ha6 – Accepted
WLB → OC → ITS	0.085	0.085	– 0.001	[0.046, 0.147]	Ha7 – Accepted

The bootstrapping (bias-corrected and accelerated - BCa) procedure with 1,000 subsamples and using the “no sign change” option (Hair et al., 2017) was employed for the in-depth analysis of the data. As it is evident from Table 6 that none (except the relationship between WE and ITS) of the 95% confidence intervals includes zero for any of the parameters – path coefficients, total effects, and *R*² values, therefore, all the hypotheses, except alternate hypothesis H4, are accepted.

Discussion

A four-day workweek has been associated with increased productivity (Booth, 2020; Stronge & Harper, 2019), reduction in traffic congestion, and increased road safety (Desimone, 1972). In the present scenario, it might be an alternative work arrangement that provides some respite to both employees and employers to overcome the devastating impact of COVID -19 on business.

The study examines the association between WLB and ITS as well as the study of the same relationship being mediated by organizational commitment. Work-life balance has been researched widely, and previous findings have reported that workers have been adopting non-Monday to Friday workdays or some other alternate work arrangement that avoids working in a “standard shift” to balance work and personal life (Tausig & Fenwick, 2001). However, in many of the cases, the alternate work arrangement was a requirement from the employer rather than an exercise of choice by the employee (Presser, 1995).

The findings from this study suggest that the perceived work-life balance that employees envisage on account of a four-day workweek may lead to increased organizational commitment and enhanced intention to stay. These

findings echo with earlier findings linking WLB with organizational commitment (Kim & Ryu, 2017) and intention to stay (Noor, 2011; Puteh & Arshad, 2015).

Another dimension of the study focuses on the impact of WE on ITS, mediated by organizational commitment. While some studies treat work engagement as comprising both the elements of organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior (Heikkeri, 2010), others have regarded these as two distinct constructs (Hallberg & Schaufeli, 2006). In the context of the present study, work engagement is hypothesized as an antecedent to organizational commitment and conceptualized as positive, affective-motivational, work-related well-being (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). The study, on the basis of f^2 values, points towards the significant role of work engagement in predicting variance in organizational commitment. These results synchronize with earlier findings that associated work engagement with organizational commitment (Saks, 2006).

While a significant impact of WLB and WE on organizational commitment is anticipated, the relatively high value of R^2 is surprising, as is the R^2 value for intention to stay. It can be visualized that a four-day workweek may lead to increased perception of WLB, leading to a high R^2 value of organizational commitment and enhanced perception of work engagement can either be attributed to the 'Halo effect' arising out of the aura created due to job losses and impact upon the business of COVID - 19 affecting the attitude of people towards work.

The study further elaborates that post COVID-19 employees' intention to stay is influenced by FDWW perceived-WLB and FDWW perceived-WE mediated by FDWW perceived-OC. While WLB has a direct as well OC mediated impact upon intention to stay, the influence exerted by WE is mediated through OC. The results from the study are in line with findings from the earlier studies, indicating a positive relationship between WLB and ITS (Heikkeri, 2010; Noor, 2011) and organizational commitment and ITS (Uraon, 2018).

Theoretical Implications

The study leads to some significant theoretical contributions. Firstly, it adds to our knowledge about work engagement and work-life balance and their impact upon organizational commitment and intention to stay. Secondly, it explores post-COVID-19 workplaces on the basis of pandemic-induced realization of the centrality of familial ties and, consequently, the desire for work-life balance. Finally, the study investigates the significance of a four-day workweek in bringing about WLB, work engagement, and thus leading to organizational commitment.

Managerial Implications

The organizations, by adopting FDWW, can benefit as they will have the flexibility of staggered working and the opportunity to operate 24×7, leading to enhanced productivity and customer servicing and satisfaction. This may, however, entail increasing the staff strength from present levels. In case the companies decide to cap the staff strength, they can reap the benefits of lower overhead costs and considerable cuts in the travel time of the employees. Further, the findings from the present study indicate that with the adoption of a four-day workweek, the organizations can expect greater employee commitment and intention to stay as the employees perceive that a new work schedule will lead to better work-life balance and more engagement with work. Also, the availability of greater leisure time with family may fuel expenditure on entertainment, travel, and tourism, thereby leading to the revival of these sectors, which have been badly hit by COVID-19. Four-day workweeks maybe a stitch in time that may save nine stitches in the future. Earlier studies observed that organizational commitment and intention to stay increased productivity and efficiency (Bakker et al., 2008), reduced burnout (Hakanen et al., 2006), and resulted in a greater role fit (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

The demographic profile of the respondents indicated that the majority of them ; in fact, 71% of the respondents were in the age bracket of 20–34 years, and 65% were unmarried. The findings from the study assume

more significance as this generation represents the future workforce, and the importance and significance they attribute to work-life balance should make future employers take note of this factor while designing the work. This generation does not believe in the centrality of work in their life but is looking for a harmonious relationship between work and family/personal life. The employers, therefore, need to seriously think about adopting FDWW as an alternate work arrangement post-COVID – 19. The fact that employees' perception of work-life balance and higher work engagement that they expect to experience can predict approximately 70% variance in intention to stay is compelling enough for employers to earnestly implement a four-day workweek program.

Conclusion

The concept of work from home has become a norm rather than an exception. The companies understand that the road to recovery post COVID-19 may be long and arduous. Therefore, they are looking at adopting innovative work arrangements that ensure flexibility, productivity, and employee welfare.

This study examines the association between employees' perception of improved WLB, increased work engagement on a four-day workweek, and intention to stay with organizational commitment as a mediating variable. The study uses PLS-SEM for the analysis of data. The results indicate that endogenous constructs are able to predict 70% variance in intention to stay (mediated by organizational commitment). As it is evident from Table 6 that none of the 95% confidence intervals includes zero for any of the parameters – path coefficients, total effects, and R^2 values – therefore, all the hypotheses, except Ha4, are accepted. The predictive relevance of the model is established on the basis of Q^2 values obtained by the blindfolding procedure ($Q^2_{ms} = 0.558$; $Q^2_{oc} = 0.449$). Positive Q^2 values indicate that the model can predict the relationship between endogenous and exogenous variables.

Limitations of the Study and Scope for Future Research

There are some limitations of the study. Firstly, the study is limited to employees from the ICT sector, and the study results need to be further substantiated by focusing on other sectors like manufacturing, SMEs, etc. Secondly, and corollary to the first point, although a sample size of 295 may be adequate to study a single sector, a larger sample size involving multiple sectors may provide deeper insights into employees' perceptions towards a four-day workweek. Thirdly, this study only investigates the impact of improved work-life balance and increased work engagement on intention to stay; the inclusion of other antecedents like the impact of job satisfaction, employee involvement, and so forth should make future studies more interesting and enriching. Fourth, this study, while investigating the perception of employees, did not account for cultural differences in the construct, and a cross-cultural comparison may lead to differing findings and conclusions.

Authors' Contribution

Anannya Roshan conceived the idea, extracted highly reputed research papers, filtered these based on keywords, and generated concepts and hypotheses relevant to the study design. Dr. Prashant Mehta verified the analytical methods and did the numerical computations using PLS-SEM 3.0. Anannya Roshan and Dr. Prashant Mehta wrote the manuscript in consultation with each other.

Conflict of Interest

The authors certify that they have no affiliations with or involvement in any organization or entity with any financial interest or non-financial interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in this manuscript.

Funding Acknowledgment

The authors received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or for the publication of this article.

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Appendix

S.No.	Constructs/Items	Citations
Work Engagement		
<i>WE1</i>	I perceive working in a four-day workweek will make me more enthusiastic about my job.	Seppälä et al. (2009)
<i>WE2</i>	I perceive working in a four-day workweek will make me work more intensely.	
<i>WE3</i>	I perceive working in a four-day workweek will enable me to work continuously for long periods of time.	
<i>WE4</i>	I perceive working in a four-day workweek will make me more perseverant even when things will not go well.	
Work-Life Balance		
<i>WLB1</i>	I perceive working in a four-day workweek will enable me to spend more quality time with my family and friends.	Kacmar et al. (2014)
<i>WLB2</i>	I perceive working in a four-day workweek will enable me to stop worrying about work, even when I am not working.	
<i>WLB3</i>	I perceive working in a four-day workweek will enable me to delegate work more efficiently.	
<i>WLB4</i>	I perceive working in a four-day workweek will enable me to prioritize my professional responsibilities.	
Organizational Commitment		
<i>OC1</i>	I perceive working in a four-day workweek will make me strongly committed towards my organization.	Mowday et al.(1979)
<i>OC2</i>	I would not hesitate to recommend one of my close friends to join my organization.	
Intention to Stay		
<i>ITS1</i>	I can very happily spend my entire professional life in my current organization.	Ghosh et al. (2013)
<i>ITS2</i>	I may not feel comfortable leaving my current organization even if another offer is to my benefit.	
<i>ITS3</i>	A higher monetary offer by another employer may not make me think seriously about changing my job.	
<i>ITS4</i>	I perceive working in a four-day workweek will enable my personal goals to be more synchronized with my organizational goals.	

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