

“The advance of technology is based on making it fit in so that you don’t even notice it, so it’s part of everyday life.” – Bill Gates

In this era of technology, there is a transformation in the workplace in several ways. New and innovative technologies have been an aid to the workplace for its connectivity. Every organization needs to connect for its functioning. The Internet has opened up new opportunities for companies to communicate within and outside the organization. It is no longer sufficient to have annual general meetings to build connectivity with the stakeholders. *Virtual communication favors the ability to see and hear one another in real time, simulating the experience of a physical visit.* In today's dynamic world, stakeholders may be geographically dispersed, necessitating virtual connections. Even when stakeholders are located in the same area, city, or country, virtual presence remains essential due to the demands of the modern era.

The current development in Human Resource Management has changed its periphery. The effect of the recent COVID-19 pandemic has introduced a new normal to the world. It has changed the working style of every organization in a significant way. Remote Working, working from home, and flexible timings were considered to be suitable for very few jobs and concepts that were relevant only to the West. This pandemic has widely highlighted that all these concepts have relevance beyond the limited sectors/industries/jobs. These current developments are to stay beyond the pandemic and play a huge importance in changing the role of Human resource management.

These new concepts in work settings require unique management tactics and new ways to address the concerns that tag along. Team leaders must grasp how virtual connectivity can enhance employees' communication, collaboration, and critical thinking skills. They need to simultaneously also acknowledge its potential drawbacks.

Virtual Connectivity is the way of connectivity with the use of virtual mediums with the aid of technology. Virtual connectivity or Virtual Communication allows a person to connect with anyone at any time without any geographical, physical, or time boundaries. Around the globe, there is a huge demand for Virtual Connectivity in the workplace post-Covid-19.

Virtual Connectivity has introduced an ease to communicate and to stay connected around the clock. In the work setting, Virtual Connectivity has changed the way we communicate. It has changed how organizations engage with their stakeholders.

Virtual connectivity is a critical component of modern work environments that enables individuals to collaborate and work together, regardless of their physical locations. Virtual Communication has expanded the level of international connectivity. It offers opportunities for employers to tap into a global talent pool, build relationships, and complete projects as a team. This all can be done while providing employees with the flexibility to work from a location of their choice. To be successful in virtual communication, organizations must invest in the right technology and establish clear communication protocols. They also need to adapt their management strategies to the unique dynamics of virtual teams.

The Impact of Technology on Business Communication

Communication over the world has been transformed and altered with the Digital Revolution. Business communication is evolving due to globalization, new media, and cultural shifts, requiring companies to adapt to remain competitive. The digital transformation of business communication has accelerated during the pandemic. The tools like video conferencing and collaboration platforms becoming essential for remote work. This trend was already emerging, but the pandemic rapidly increased remote work adoption.

In the past decade, technology has significantly transformed business connectivity. Traditional methods like phone calls, emails, and in-person meetings have given way to digital communication tools, enhancing decision-making and productivity. The widespread adoption of smartphones and mobile devices has altered company communication by enabling employees to remain connected while on the move. Mobile applications, voice conversations, and messaging platforms facilitate instantaneous communication and decision-making, hence improving productivity and responsiveness.

Enterprises are implementing unified communication systems that merge diverse communication channels, including audio, video, messaging, and conferencing, onto a solitary platform. This optimizes communication procedures, diminishes intricacy, and enhances collaboration among teams.

Businesses are leveraging technology to analyze communication data and derive insights that inform decision-making and improve performance. Data analytics tools can track communication metrics, identify trends, and optimize communication strategies to enhance efficiency and effectiveness.

These Virtual tools have also fuelled the growth of the gig economy and remote work, especially in a post-pandemic world. Virtual connectivity offers numerous benefits, including remote collaboration, global connectivity, and reduced environmental impact. However, challenges such as the absence of nonverbal cues and feelings of isolation may arise.

INFLUENCE OF VIRTUAL CONNECTIVITY ON HEALTH & WELL-BEING

Companies with the futuristic approach are consumed by automation, changing workforce demographics & all the other developmental opportunities. All of these are important, but worker well-being has to be prioritized to meet any ends meet. The Internet has changed the way businesses operate by enhancing global communication and information dissemination. Virtual Connectivity has significantly influenced the work environment for most of the industries across the globe. There is a huge increase in the concern of mental health & wellbeing because of virtual media. It is highly important to emphasize employee well-being as it becoming a major concern for HR.

Good health and wellbeing is also one of the Sustainable goals of the United Nations for sustainable development

Effect of covid-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has created a new environment for each life on this earth. The Kids, youth, working class, and older generation all have been hit by the pandemic at different Levels. There has been an uncertainty attached to the pandemic, the fear of the unknown. None of us knew when or how it could hit us or our family or near or dear ones. The uncertainty isn't limited to catching the viral, there is uncertainty about the overall way of living life. There is a new way of doing work, a new way of schooling, a new way of socializing, etc. Uncertainty is an integral part of Change. This Change can bring a lot of anxiety and stress to individuals. The mental health of individuals may be affected in an unknown way.

Human beings a social animals and a lack of socializing might hit a few individuals in a very hard way. Especially the extroverts as they derive their energy from others. In the Covid-19 situation, for safety precautions, social distancing was encouraged. Some people

felt isolated and lonely because of their anti-social life. Working from home has become the new normal but so has deteriorated sleeping cycle, eating pattern, and exercise schedule.

Many are still dealing with health issues post-pandemic. Many are still grieving the lives of their loved ones and many are still adjusting themselves to the new work settings. The pandemic has only and only highlighted how much health can affect not just a being but society and the world at large and how important is to take care of one's health.

Digital Wellbeing

Digital wellness is a crucial concept in the modern workplace, as it has a significant impact on employee engagement, productivity, and overall well-being.

Digital wellbeing is an individual's subjective experience of finding the right balance between the benefits and drawbacks of mobile connectivity. This balance involves a mix of emotional and cognitive assessments regarding how digital technology integrates into everyday life. People attain digital wellbeing when they feel maximum controlled pleasure and functional support while minimizing loss of control and functional impairment. The goal is to make technology enhance life rather than distract from it, and tools are provided to help individuals find their sense of digital wellbeing, keeping life at the forefront.

Importance of digital wellbeing:

Digital wellness is required in the workplace as it not only enhances productivity and engagement but also supports the overall well-being of employees. By adopting mindful technology practices and using tools designed to promote digital wellness, individuals can strike a healthier balance between their work and personal lives, reduce stress, and prevent burnout. Companies that invest in digital wellness initiatives can expect more satisfied and productive employees.

-  **Enhanced Engagement and Productivity:**
-  **Reduced Exhaustion and Distraction:**
-  **Mitigating Anxiety and Stress:**

Initiatives by Organization:

Organizations can promote digital wellness by establishing rules and practices that encourage employees to disconnect during non-working hours, limit non-essential

communications, reduce the frequency of online meetings, address eye strain, and be mindful of the potential mental health impacts of digital technology. These efforts contribute to a healthier and more balanced work environment.

Digital Awareness:

Employers should be aware of the potential adverse mental and Physical health impacts of digital technology. Features like the endless scroll on social media platforms can contribute to internet addiction and are associated with anxiety, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, depression, poor time management, and impulsiveness. Employers can support their employees' mental health by promoting awareness and providing resources for digital wellness.

Digital Solutions:

Some companies are recognizing the need for Digital wellbeing and are responding by developing features and applications that are less disruptive. This includes the ability to turn off distracting notifications and features that track screen time and app usage. These tools help users make more deliberate and mindful choices about how they use technology.

Optimal Usage Patterns:

Studies have shown that employees who check their mobile devices a few times a day are more productive than those who constantly check their smartphones.

- **Reduce Online Meetings-**
- **Address Eye Strain-**
- **Mental Health Awareness-**

Employers can **set specific hours** during which employees are not expected to be available, allowing them to switch off and have dedicated personal time. It's important to urge co-workers to refrain from contacting each other for work-related matters outside of these hours, except for urgent issues.

Review of Literature

A review of Literature is vital in understanding and conceptualizing any study. Different studies and articles related to the topic have been found and examined. Critically Identifying and examining what studies have been done in the field of Present study and what is the further scope.

The Following Chapter of the Review of Literature attempts to understand the various studies done on different aspects/factors related to virtual connectivity and health & well-being. The study will also dig into the effect of COVID-19. The review of literature is drawn from studies and articles from various national and international journals available.

Several reputed journal databases such as Google Scholar, Shodhganga, Wiley Online Library Taylor & Francis Online, Emerald Insight, Taylor and Francis Online, Research Gate, IEEE Xplore

The chapter draws on various literature based on various factors/Terms undertaken in the present study related to Virtual Connectivity. The studies about the same factor are clubbed under the same head.

Research Gap:

The researcher has attempted to analyze various articles and reports on various variables of virtual connectivity like virtual work, remote working, work-life balance, digital well-being, health and wellbeing in virtual work, and related factors. The literature included scholarly editorials, commentaries, and research articles from multiple disciplines, offering rich and multidisciplinary information.

It was observed from the literature reviewed that maximum research relating to virtual work, remote working, and WFH were during the phase of COVID-19. The pandemic played an evident role in bringing virtual connectivity as a new normal but the studies findings are limited to the period of Covid-19.

Most articles did not heavily contribute to theory-building, possibly due to the evolving nature of the pandemic's impact on workplaces. The association between virtual work and well-being

faces challenges in both conceptual models and empirical approaches. The Present study will also include the aspect of COVID-19. It attempts to understand how COVID-19 has changed the mode of work and work & personal life and the balance in between.

Earlier it was just virtual teams now it's the traditional team as well which are virtually connected. The present study also attempts to understand how virtual connectivity is affecting the traditional team not just the virtual team. It also attempts to provide Strategies that management can implement to increase employees' health & well-being with virtual connectivity.

Advocating for the development of an innovative theoretical structure for promoting digital well-being. The theory aims to redirect attention towards transient instances of equilibrium between connectivity and disconnection in the interplay between an individual's professional and personal life. The current study seeks to discern the factors that affect the effectiveness of digital wellbeing interventions, including initiatives such as digital detox programs or screen time management tools.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter of Research Methodology contains a clear statement of the objective of the research and an explanation of the methodology adopted in accomplishing the research. It brings forth the methods used for data collection as well as the methods used for the analysis of the data.

The Chapter explains the significance of the study in the social work profession and Human Resource Management. It also outlines the sources of data collection and the materials used in this study and discusses matters of reliability and validity. The scope of the study along with various limitations should is also stated in this part.

Title: *Influence of Virtual Connectivity on Employees Health & Wellbeing*

Objectives of the Study:

1. To study the benefits & drawbacks of virtual connectivity for employees.
2. To understand the impact of virtual communication on work-life balance.

3. To evaluate the impact of virtual connectivity on the physical and mental health of employees.
4. To analyze the opportunities and the new trends that virtual connectivity introduces (work from home, flexible timings, etc.).

Rational of the study

The latest technology has changed the dynamics between corporations and their stakeholders. The emergence of the internet and modern communication tools are creating a shift from traditional communication. The recent environmental trends are forcing organizations to give greater importance to virtual communication for its existence and sustainability.

Organizations are aware that need to gear up to sustain in this competitive era. The competitive edge can bring sustainability and it's important if there is good communication between the internal stake holders (interpersonal relationship) and also with external stakeholders. **Virtual connectivity** plays an important role in safeguarding and enhancing the corporate image of the organization.

This 24*7 connectivity with the work and world at large has its share of consequences as well. It also brings a great deal of stress, anxiety, and rush along with other health-related issues. These issues can't be ignored so is the use of virtual connectivity. It is important to understand and address these issues to prevent any health issues and develop good wellbeing.

As human resources is an important asset of the organization and their Health and wellbeing are also of utmost importance for their functioning it has become one of the important functions of Management.

This study will be beneficial for the employees, organization, and community at large. It will try to understand the Latest trends like work from home, and flexible timings that virtual connectivity introduces. The influence on health and wellbeing will be highlighted.

Significance of the Study:

Social work believes that people who make the society are in turn shaped by the society itself. They are the most crucial asset for the very survival and sustained growth of the society. One of the fields of Social work is **Human Resource Management**. One of an organization's most valuable resources is its people. The **management** in the present times has realized that the process and practice of corporate need constant enrichment with the support of technology.

Virtual connectivity has changed how the traditional organization works and has a great impact on the employees' lives. It is critical to comprehend the various opportunities/trends this virtual world brings to the organization and its people.

Covi-19 Pandemic has disrupted the lives of the individuals and society at large. It was Virtual Connectivity which has arrived to rescue the livelihood of the whole wide world.

The third goal of Sustainable Development Goals is Good Health and Wellbeing. The study focuses on enhancing this goal in the working Professional.

The study will evaluate various modern factors of virtual connectivity that influence the Health and wellbeing of employees. The suggestions and recommendations based on the study can be significantly used to develop action modules for enhancing the Health and wellbeing of the employees.

Hypotheses of the Study

The present study is based on the following set of hypotheses. They include:

1. There is no relationship between Virtual Connectivity and health and wellbeing.
2. There is no association between Virtual Connectivity and Work-life balance.

Study Variables

Independent Variables

Include all personal information of the employee such as Age, Gender, Marital status, Education qualification, Experience in industry, Experience in the present firm, and type of industry.

Dependent Variables

Include various aspects related to Work-life balance, Work from home, Flexi timing, mental health, Physical Health, Lifestyle, and Digital Wellbeing.

Research Design

The Research Design undertaken for the present study is Exploratory cum Descriptive study. The study is explorative in nature as it attempts to explore various aspects of Virtual connectivity that influence the health and wellbeing of employees. It also attempts to explore

the opportunities and new trends the Virtual connectivity introduces. It's a descriptive study as the study also attempts to describe various aspects like Work-life balance, work from home, lifestyle, physical & mental health, and other parameters in relation to Virtual Connectivity.

Universe of the study: IT/Virtually/Web enabled Organization that has a presence in Gujarat.

Study Sample

Total number of samples: **385 samples** - This means 385 or more samples are needed to have a confidence level of 95% that the real value is within $\pm 5\%$ of the measured/surveyed value.

The sample size Is Determined with 95% confidence and a margin of error of 5%. Assuming a population proportion of 50%, and unlimited population size. z for a 95% confidence level is 1.96.e is within $\pm 5\%$ of the measured/surveyed value.

Cochran formula for unknown population:

$$n = \frac{z^2 \times \hat{p}(1-\hat{p})}{\epsilon^2}$$

Where,

z is the z score

ϵ is the margin of error

N is the population size

\hat{p} is the population proportion

Nonprobability sampling is used in the study. It is a non-random sampling where the samples are drawn in a subjective manner. The sampling for the present study will be **purposive sampling**. A purposive sample, also referred to as a judgmental or expert sample, is a type of nonprobability sample. The main objective of a purposive sample is to produce a sample that can be logically assumed to be representative of the population.

Inclusive Criteria: Working professional in IT/Virtually/Web enabled Organization who has a presence in Gujarat.

Primary Data Collection

The tool is the way to collect the required data.

The primary tool of data collection was a Questionnaire, structured questionnaire consisting of close and open-ended questions

Reliability & Validity of Tool:

This tool is developed by referring to the various standardized tools available on the relevant subject. The tools were sent to 4 experts for content validation and changes as per their suggestions and expertise were made to the tools.

A pilot sample is studied and the sample data is treated on Cronbach's Alpha Test to assure of the reliability and validity of the tool.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.957	.954	54

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
192.10	831.679	28.839	54

The Cronbach's Alpha test score for the tool for parents tool was 0.95, indicating that the score was good according to the reliability standard and valid to be considered as a tool for data collection.

Secondary Data Collection

The sources of secondary data were published journals, articles, books, reports, newspapers, journals, magazines, and other published and unpublished sources in this field.

Statistical treatment

The researcher has used editing, coding, tabulation, and interpretation of data. The collected data will be correlated with the various dependent and independent variables. Hypotheses will be verified using appropriate statistical tools (chi-square & correlation) with the help of Excel / SPSS.

Period of the Study

The duration of data collection was November 2022- May 2023

Ethical Consideration of the data:

The following ethical considerations were taken care of during the carrying out of this research study:

- ❖ Informed consent- Sufficient information regarding the objectives of the study was communicated and they are free to choose whether they want to participate or not or can withdraw in between.
- ❖ Voluntary participation – There was No force or pressure was used on any participant to participate in the study.
- ❖ Anonymity - Personal information related to either the employees or the organization is not revealed in the study.
- ❖ Confidentiality- The confidentiality of the data and the respondent profile will be maintained.
- ❖ All the information collected through the questionnaire will be only used for Academic purposes.

Limitations of the Study

These were certain difficulties that were faced during the study which might affect the study:

- ❖ The pandemic had delayed the data collection process. There were Difficulties in getting permission; it was a time-consuming process which increased the duration of data collection.

- ❖ Experienced that respondent took a long time to complete questionnaire even after constant reminders.
- ❖ As the area of studies is new it was difficult to get secondary data on a lot of factors included in the study.

Explanation of the Terms Used in the Study

- ❖ **Virtual**

Not existing physically, but technologically or software-generated to appear to do so.

- Virtual connectivity**

Being connected to work, Personal life & World at large Using Virtual Medium.

- ❖ **Virtual Medium**

The medium of communication is Virtual. i.e. it can be any website, domain, social network account (including WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, etc.), blog, feed, email address, email distribution list, or other Internet account or presence that incorporates the usage of the Internet.

- ❖ **Work-life balance**

The equilibrium created between work, personal interest & family life with the intervention of virtual media

- ❖ **Flexible work (flexi timings)**

Leverage in working timings to complete the allotted working hours i.e. exempting employees from working in traditional timings

- ❖ **Work from home**

Employees can do his or her job from home with the aid of a virtual connection.

- ❖ **Health**

“Health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity”. (World Health Organization)

❖ **Physical Health**

It means the condition of one's physical body taking into consideration everything from the absence of disease to fitness level.

❖ **Mental health**

Mental health is a state of well-being in which an individual realizes his or her abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively, and can make a contribution to his or her community. State of being able to think, feel, and act.

❖ **Wellbeing**

Experience of feeling well with good health, happiness, and perceiving positive prosperity.

❖ **Lifestyle**

The way an individual is leading a normal day or life.

❖ **IT/Virtually/Web/Telecom enabled Organization**

Organizations using information technology/ Virtual medium/web/telecom to enable their communication functioning

DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

PART A:

Presentation of Data Analysis:

Section-I: Personal and Occupational Details

Independent Variable includes personal profile such as age, marital status, educational qualification, and work experience.

Section-II: General Information about Virtual connectivity

Choice of Virtual Medium, Working Mode, Effect of Covid-19 Pandemic on Working Mode.

Section-III: Perception of Virtual connectivity (Benefits & Drawbacks)

Techno Overload, Work Overload, Privacy Invasion & Monitoring, Interruption of Work, Communication & Coordination, Productivity.

Section-IV: Impact of virtual communication (WFH & FLEXI TIMINGS) on WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Work Family Conflict, Family Work Conflict- Interfere With Personal Life, Virtual Work/ Flexi Timings/Work from Home.

Section-V: Health & Wellbeing

Lifestyle, Physical Health, Mental Health, Initiatives for the wellbeing, Health Problems

PART B:

This section covers various statistical tests used to analyse the data collected from the Respondents considering the objectives of the study in mind. Interpretation of the table is also presented below each table. chi-square test for showing an association between the factors.

Major finding & Implications:

PART A:

SECTION 1: PERSONAL & OCCUPATIONAL DETAILS

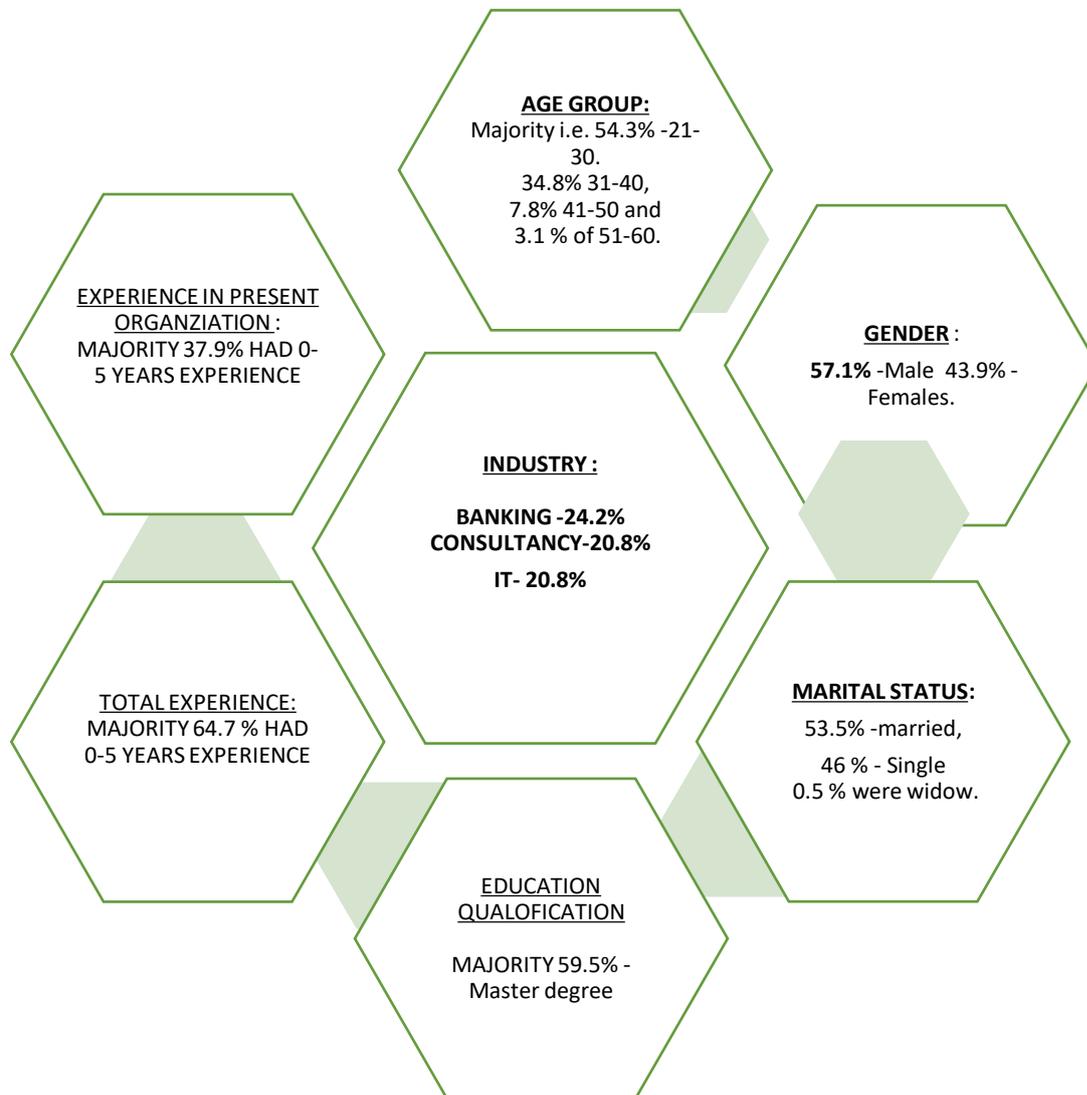


Fig: 5.1 Personal & Occupation details

SECTION-II: GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT VIRTUAL CONNECTIVITY

- The majority of respondents choose a virtual medium to connect based on how formal or informal the medium is.
- 82.9% of respondents choose the virtual medium according to how fast they get the response.

It can be implied that promptness to the response and type of medium affect the choice of Virtual Medium to Connect

- 79.7% of respondents working mode was changed during COVID-19.
- There were 30.6% who had a permanent change of working mode after COVID-19, while 69.6% of working mode did not change permanently.
- 44.4% of respondents had the facility of flexi timings
- 42.3% of respondents have a WFH facility

The findings of the study imply there has been a crucial role of the Pandemic towards making Virtual Connectivity as new normal in Work life. Flexi timings and WFH are now prominent in most of the industry. It is evident that Virtual Connectivity is here to stay and we will see it explore and unfold the traditional work structure.

Section-III: Perception of Virtual connectivity (Benefits & Drawbacks)

Techno Overload

- Forced by Virtual connectivity to work much faster is agreed the majority of respondents 34.3% i.e. 132 agreed and 10.6% i.e. 41 respondents strongly agreed.
- Forced by Virtual connectivity to do more work than can handle, most of the respondents 30.6% i.e.118 agreed & 11.2% i.e. 43 respondents strongly agreed.
- Most of the respondents 126 i.e. 32.7% are neutral to the statement ‘ I am forced by Virtual connectivity to work with very tight time schedules’ & 24.9% of the respondents agreed

- Forced to change my work habits to adapt to new technologies, most of the respondents 36.4% i.e. 140 agreed & 15.6% i.e. 60 of the respondents strongly agreed.

The findings of the study imply Technical connectivity has its drawbacks. There is a Constant force to adapt to new technologies and work in tight schedules with more promptness than traditionally. These drawbacks need to become challenges to make it into an advantage for the organization and also for the individuals.

Work Overload

- Most of the respondents 48.8 % i.e. 188 Agreed on the statement ‘There is always a Connectivity Pressure with easy access to Virtual media’ 17.7 % i.e. 68 of the respondents strongly agreed.
- Most of the respondents 48.8% i.e. 188 Agreed on the statement ‘There has been increased response expectation to work calls/mail’ 23.6 % i.e. 91 of the respondents strongly agreed.
- Most of the respondents 39.7 % i.e. 153 Agreed on the statement ‘There is Constant accountability of work even on odd hours’ 23.1% i.e. 89 of the respondents strongly agreed.
- Most of the respondents 36.1 % i.e. 139 Agreed on the statement ‘Increased Virtual Meetings/training after working hours’ 23.4% i.e. 90 of the respondents strongly agreed.

The findings imply Virtual Connectivity has its share of Work Load weather it is connectivity pressure increased response rate or constant accountability.

Privacy Invasion & Monitoring

- The majority of the respondents 44.7% i.e. 172 Agreed on the statement ‘Using Virtual connectivity blurs boundaries between my out-of-home and my home life’ and 22.6 % i.e. 88 of the respondents strongly agreed.
- Most of the respondents 39.7 % i.e. 153 Agreed on the statement ‘I feel my personal life is being interrupted by Virtual connectivity’ and 18.7% i.e. 72 of the respondents strongly agreed.

- Most of the respondents 29.1 % i.e. 112 Agreed with the statement ‘I feel uncomfortable that with Virtual connectivity my work can be easily monitored’ and 10.6% i.e. 41 of the respondents strongly agreed.
- Most of the respondents 33.2 % i.e.128 Agreed with the statement ‘It bothers me that the information created by current technology be traced even years from now’ 14 % i.e. 54 respondents strongly agreed
- Most of the respondents 39.5 % i.e. 152 Agreed with the statement ‘I feel that my use of virtual connectivity makes it easier to invade my privacy’ 15.3 % i.e. 59 respondents strongly agreed

The findings of the study imply there is constant monitoring of work & work can easily be traced & scrutinized. There is a fear of Privacy invasion while using Virtual mediums to connect.

Interruption of Work

- Most of the respondents 42.6 % i.e. 164 Agreed with the statement ‘My work routine is disturbed by Internet/network disturbance’ 20 % i.e.77 of the respondents strongly agreed
- most of the respondents 36.1% i.e.139 Agreed on the statement ‘Social Media is a distraction while working virtually’ 25.7% i.e. 99 of the respondents strongly agrees
- Most of the respondents 36.9% i.e. 142 Agreed with the statement ‘Advertisement and instant popups are a distraction while working virtually’28.3 % i.e. 109 respondents strongly agreed

The findings imply there is a constant distraction while working, internet connectivity, social media, and advertisement popups can interrupt the work while working Virtually.

Accessibility & Flexibility

- Most of the respondents 48.6% i.e. 187 Agreed with the statement 'I can Instantly access my work' 33.8 % i.e. 130 respondents strongly agree
- Most of the respondents 46.2% i.e. 178 Agreed with the statement 'I can access my work outside of regular work hours' 30.9% i.e. 119 respondents strongly agreed
- Most of the respondents 48.3% i.e. 186 Agreed with the statement 'There is Remote access to information' 28.6% i.e. 110 respondents strongly agreed
- Most of the respondents 42.3 % i.e. 163 Agreed with the statement 'It is easy Flexibility to reschedule work meetings' 25.2% i.e. 97 respondents strongly agreed

The findings of the study imply that there is an advantage of Accessibility & Flexibility while working virtually.

Communication & Coordination

- Most of the respondents 49.9% i.e. 192 Agreed with the statement 'I have co-worker/team members connecting after work hours' 16.6% i.e. 64 respondents strongly agreed
- The majority of the respondents 51.2 % i.e.197 Agreed with the statement 'It has been easy to interact with work team /Coworker with Virtual Connectivity' 21.8 % i.e. 84 of the respondents strongly agreed
- The majority of the respondents 48.8 % i.e. 188 Agreed with the statement 'Managing information flow has been easy with Virtual Connectivity' 24.9% i.e. 96 respondents strongly agreed
- Most of the respondents 47.5 % i.e. 183 Agreed with the statement 'There is no Geographical boundary when connecting virtually' 33.2 % i.e. 128 respondents strongly agreed
- Most of the respondents 32.2% i.e. 124 Agreed on the statement 'There is Lack of informal Discussion and advice' 19.5 % i.e.75 of the respondents strongly agreed.

The findings of the study imply there is an advantage of improved Communication and coordination with the use of Virtual Connectivity. On one had there is an ease of interaction & geographical boundaries on another hand there is a drawback of connectivity after work hours.

Productivity

- Most of the respondents 39.2 % i.e. 151 Agreed with the statement ‘Virtual connectivity has improved my Quality of work’ 14.8 % i.e. 57 respondents strongly agreed
- Most of the respondents 39 % i.e. 150 Agreed with the statement ‘Virtual connectivity has improved my accuracy at work’ 9.9 % i.e. 38 respondents strongly agreed
- Most of the respondents 43.1 % i.e. 166 Agreed with the statement ‘There is Quiet time for uninterrupted work with Virtual connectivity’ 11.7% i.e. 45 respondents strongly agree

The findings of the study imply there is an increase in productivity with Virtual Work.

Section-IV: Impact of virtual communication (WFH & FLEXI TIMINGS) on WORK-LIFE BALANCE

- There was the majority of 255 i.e. 66.2% respondents are exhausted in managing the balance between work, personal & family life with the usage of Virtual Connectivity.
- There was a majority of 248 i.e. 64.4% who responded yes, they can discuss challenges and concerns of using Virtual Connectivity with their immediate manager.
- There were 229 i.e. 59.6% who responded yes, the Immediate manager creates an environment where mental health can be discussed
- There was the majority of 193 i.e. 50.1% of respondents who favor Hybrid mode & 21% i.e.81 who preferred WFH (Work from home).

The implication of the above findings implies there is an exhaustion in maintaining the work-life balance & Hybrid mode is the preferred mode for work-life balance.

Conflict in work-life with family connectivity:

- Family worries or problems distract you from your work, 43.1 % i.e. 166 Agreed & 16.4% i.e. 63 respondents strongly agreed with the statement.
- Family activities stop you from getting the amount of sleep you need to do your job well 30.9% i.e.119 Agreed & 8.8% i.e. 34 of the respondents strongly agreed
- Family obligations reduce the time you need to relax or be by yourself, 35.6% i.e. 137 Agreed & 12.2 % i.e. 47 of the respondents strongly agreed.

The implication of the above findings implies there is a conflict in work-life because of family distraction as there is constant connectivity.

Conflict in family life with work connectivity:

- Most of the respondents 41.3 % i.e. 159 Agreed with the statement ‘Work demand of WFH or while working virtually often put issues in personal life "on hold’ & 11.4 % i.e.44 of respondents strongly agreed.

- Most of the respondents 37.1 % i.e. 143 Agreed with the statement ‘Thoughts of work with WFH/Virtual connectivity makes me Unable to enjoy other non-work related activities’ 11.2% i.e. 43 of the respondents strongly agreed.

- Most of the respondents 39 % i.e. 152 Agreed with the statement ‘Problems of Virtual work make you irritable at home.’ & 13 % i.e. 50 of the respondents strongly agreed
- Most of the respondents 39.2 % i.e. 151 agreed on the statement ‘Find it difficult to schedule vacation time with WFH/ Virtual connectivity’ & 13.5% i.e. 52 of the respondents strongly agreed.

- Most of the respondents 41.3% i.e. 159 Agreed with the statement ‘With WFH/ Virtual connectivity, constantly feel too tired after work to engage in non-work activities’ & 15.1% i.e. 58 of the respondents strongly agreed

The implication of the above findings implies there is a conflict in family life because of work as there is constant connectivity. Work becomes a priority while working from home or virtually even after working hours, it becomes difficult to enjoy non-work-related activities. It sometimes becomes difficult to take a break and prioritize family life.

VIRTUAL WORK/ FLEXI TIMINGS/WORK FROM HOME

- The majority of the respondents 60.3 % i.e. 232 Agreed with the statement ‘Easy to take short work breaks with Virtual Work’ & 20.8% i.e. 80 the respondents strongly agreed.
- The majority of the respondents 51.2% i.e. agreed on the statement ‘Spending more time in planning things than doing things while working virtually /Flexi timings/WFH’ &16.1% i.e. 62 of the respondents strongly agreed.
- Most of the respondents 45.7% i.e. 176 agreed on the statement ‘There is more time for recreational activities while working Virtual’ &14.8% i.e. 57 of the respondents strongly agreed.
- Most of the respondents 42.5% i.e. 162 Agreed on the statement ‘Trouble scheduling meetings within flexible starting and quitting time’ and 9.9% i.e. 38 of the respondents strongly agreed.
- Most of the respondents 51.7 % i.e. 199 Agreed on the statement ‘Can Multitask official and home duties with ease with Virtual work /Flexi timings/WFH’ & 12.2% i.e. 47 of the respondents strongly agreed.
- Most of the respondents 43.9% i.e. 169 Agreed on the statement ‘Flexi timing/ Virtual connectivity/WFH improved Job satisfaction’ &15.1 % i.e. 58 of the respondents strongly agreed.
- Most of the respondents 44.4% i.e. 171 Agreed with the statement ‘Travelling/ commuting time has reduced to a great impact with Virtual work /Flexi timings/WFH’ 31.7% i.e. 122 of the respondents strongly agreed.
- Most of the respondents 44.9% i.e. 173 Agreed with the statement ‘Comfortable clothing while attending virtual meetings or WFH’ & 33.2% i.e. 128 of the respondents strongly agreed.

The implication of the above findings indicates there are a lot of opportunities that Virtual connectivity has introduced for new ways of working. On the one hand, there are opportunities and advantages like reduction in commuting time, multitasking work, and improved job satisfaction. On the other hand, there are certain disadvantages or drawbacks like more time in planning and no time for recreational activities.

Section-V: Health & Wellbeing

Lifestyle

- The sleeping schedule has been hampered, 33% i.e. 127 Agrees & 17.1% i.e. 66 of the respondents strongly agree.
- There is a Change in Appetite/ diet pattern, 36.9% i.e. 142 Agreed on the statement &16.6% i.e. 64 strongly agrees.
- There is Increased Procrastination, 34.8% i.e. 134 Agreed & 15.8% i.e. 61 of the respondents strongly agrees.
- There is Increased Mood swings, 37.1% i.e. 143 Agreed & 13.2% i.e. 51 of the respondents strongly agree.
- There is a Sedentary lifestyle, 39.2% i.e. 151 Agreed & 21.3% i.e. 82 of the respondents strongly agree.

It can be inferred that the Lifestyle of the employees working has deteriorated in terms of Health and wellbeing. The sleeping schedule has been hampered, Changes in Appetite/ diet pattern, increased Procrastination & Mood swings and a Sedentary lifestyle have affected Health and wellbeing

Burnout

- There 35.8 % i.e., 138 Sometimes face Burnout, 32.7% i.e.,126 of the respondents often face burnout because of virtual connectivity, and 9.4% i.e.,36 respondents always face burnout. There is frustration of working virtually, physical & mental exhaustion, & feeling of worn-out

Initiatives for the wellbeing

- There were 82.3% i.e. 317 respondents who disagreed with initiatives of digital wellbeing implying there are No initiatives towards digital wellbeing.
- The majority 7.9% i.e. 300 of respondents's organization do not use any app or a feature that forces you to take breaks during your working hours.
- The majority 321 i.e. 83.4% of respondents's organization didn't set a time limit for social media screen time during working hours.
- The majority 236 i.e. 61.3 % responded their organization doesn't follow set working hours for Virtual connectivity.

- The majority 73% i.e. 281 responded the organization did not encourage to enforcement of gadget-free meals.
- The majority 68.8% i.e. 265 did not put their phone in do not disturb' mode when they sleep.

Digital Wellbeing still being the most important initiative for virtual connectivity was not taken by most of the organization. There is no provision to set limits for social media screen time during work hours nor do organizations follow set working hours for Virtual connectivity. Organizations are also not encouraging gadget-free meals or using any app or feature that takes breaks during working hours

Health Problems

- There is a maximum number of respondents 71.2% i.e. 274 who are facing Eye Strain, 63.9% i.e. 246 are facing Neck Pain, 50.1% i.e.193 facing Shoulder pain,49.1% of respondents i.e. 189 who has Back Strain, 45.7% i.e.176 are facing Headache, 40.8% i.e. 157 of the respondents each are facing Weight gain and are Snacking More respectively.
- There were also 28.8% i.e. 111 respondents who were facing Muscle aches, 27.3% i.e. 105 Eating More, 19.5% i.e. 75 Mindless Eating, 18.7% i.e. 72 Insomnia, 15.3% i.e. 59.
- Eating less, 9.4% i.e. 176 Hearing loss, and 3.6% i.e. 14 are facing Weight loss. There are 1.8% i.e. 7 respondents who say they aren't facing any problems.

It implies that the majority of the respondents faced some or other health problems due to the use of virtual connectivity proving there is a negative influence of Virtual Connectivity over health.

PART B

- HYPOTHESIS (H1) There is no relationship between Virtual Connectivity and health and wellbeing is **REJECTED**.

The p-value is less than the significance level, **suggesting that there is a significant association.**

Hence, we can imply there is a significant association between health and wellbeing and virtual connectivity.

- HYPOTHESIS 2: There is no association between Virtual Connectivity and Work-life balance is **REJECTED**.

The p-value for lifestyle, digital wellbeing, and burnout is less than the significance level **suggesting that there is a significant association**.

Hence, we can imply there is a significant association between work-life balance and virtual connectivity.

Chi-square- Association Between Variables :

- There is a significant association between "Total Years of Experience" and "Techno Overload" perceptions, while no significant associations were found for the other personal variables.
- There is a significant association for the variable "Age group & Total years of experience at the current organization" with Work Overload perceptions respectively, while no significant associations were found for the other personal variables.
- There is a significant association of the variable "Gender" with "Privacy invasion & Monitoring" perceptions, while no significant associations were found for the other personal variables.
- There is no significant association found between the above-mentioned "Personal variables" and "Interruption of work" perceptions.
- There is a significant association between the variables "Total years of experience" and "Industry" with Accessibility & Flexibility perception, while no significant associations were found for the other personal variables.
- There is no significant association between the above captioned personal variables and "Communication & Coordination" perception.
- There is no significant association between "Personal variables" and "Productivity" perception.

- There is a significant association between "Total years of experience", "Total years of experience at the current organization", "Industry" and "Lifestyle" perception, while no significant associations were found for the other personal variables.

- There is a significant association between "Age group, Total years of experience, Total years of experience at the current organization and Industry" and "Health & well-being: Burnout" perceptions, while no significant associations were found with gender & Education variables.

- There is no significant association between "Personal variables" and "Digital well-being" perception.

Conclusion

By and large, it can be said the objective set to study the *benefits & drawbacks* of virtual connectivity for employees has been achieved. It can be concluded from the study that respondents perceived there was Technical Overload and work overload because of Virtual Connectivity. The majority of the respondents also perceived there is Privacy Invasion and increased monitoring because of Virtual Connectivity. There is an agreement among the respondents that social media, advertisement pop-ups, and internet disturbance interrupt the work. Though there is always a positive side to Virtual Connectivity it can be observed that most of the respondents agree as they can access the work instantly and remotely and also scheduling meetings virtually brings flexibility. Managing information flow and meetings & interaction with team members is an advantage for communication and coordination while there is a lack of informal discussion & team members connecting after work timings is a drawback to virtual connectivity. Quality and Accuracy of work with quiet time for uninterrupted work has improved and added to Productivity.

Concerning analyzing the new trends/opportunities of Virtual Connectivity - the implication of the findings of the study indicates there are a lot of opportunities that Virtual Connectivity has introduced for new ways of working. On the one hand, there are opportunities and advantages like reduction in commuting time, multitasking work, and improved job satisfaction. On the other hand, there are certain disadvantages or drawbacks like more time in planning and no time for recreational activities.

Work-life balance - Hybrid mode is a preferred mode to work for work-life balance. There is exhaustion in managing the balance between work, personal & family life with the usage of Virtual Connectivity. Though yes there are employees who can discuss challenges and concerns of using Virtual Connectivity with immediate manager. The immediate manager creates an environment where mental health can be discussed. The implication of findings also implies there is a conflict in work-life because of family distraction as there is constant connectivity.

Concerning the Impact of virtual connectivity on the physical and mental health of employees-
- *The lifestyle* of the employees working has deteriorated in terms of Health and wellbeing. The sleeping schedule has been hampered, Changes in Appetite/ diet pattern, increased Procrastination & Mood swings and a Sedentary lifestyle have affected Health and wellbeing. There are a lot of factors that are adding to the Burnout of the employees. Working virtually

frustrates and wears out the employees. They often are tired, physically & emotionally exhausted because of working virtually.

-*Digital Wellbeing* still being the most important initiative for virtual connectivity was not taken by most of the organization. There is no provision to set limits for social media screen time during work hours nor do organizations follow set working hours for Virtual connectivity. Organizations are also not encouraging gadget-free meals or using any app or feature that takes breaks during your working hours.

- It can be concluded, that there are *health issues* faced while using Virtual Connectivity. Eye Strain, Neck Pain, Shoulder pain, Back Strain, and Headache are the most common problems faced. Weight gain, snacking more, Muscle aches, Eating More, Mindless Eating, and Insomnia follow the list of problems. There are Problems like Eating Less, Hearing loss and Weight loss also faced by some minor sections.

The hybrid mode of work emerges as a promising middle ground in the current dynamic scenario. However, the primary challenge is establishing robust support systems and nurturing a culture that fully harnesses the benefits of this approach. Tailoring work modes according to demographic and personality traits, as well as considering industry-specific factors, can provide valuable insights into optimizing productivity and collaboration.

Suggestions

These are the segregated suggestions by the respondents

- The majority of respondents have suggested Hybrid mode is much better for work-life balance. (50.1%)
- It is important to take short breaks while working virtually. The time limit should be scheduled for any meeting. Breaks in between the work should be made mandatory.
- There should be fixed working hours while working virtually. Limited hours- Auto shutoff mode should be there to limit prolonged time on virtual media. A screen time reduction mechanism needs to be put in place.
- Exercising is very important in the sedentary lifestyle because of Virtual Connectivity. Minor breaks for a quick walk/run/workout/eye rest.
- When working from home it is recommended to have a separate place for work at home. It lowers distraction and improves concentration.
- Well-being workshops for employees should be incorporated by the organization for the awareness of digital wellbeing. Awareness related to ergonomics should be encouraged. Boundaries created between professional life & personal life should not be condemned by management, it should be encouraged.
- The organization should encourage their employees to take regular breaks not just because of their health but also to increase productivity and there should be fixed times during virtual connectivity
- Blue ray protective screens
- Proper facilities and supportive devices should be provided while working virtually.

ACTION PLAN & MODULE

**Figure 6.1: Action Module
Intervention through social Work method**



Figure 6.2: At Individual Level- Applying Social Casework

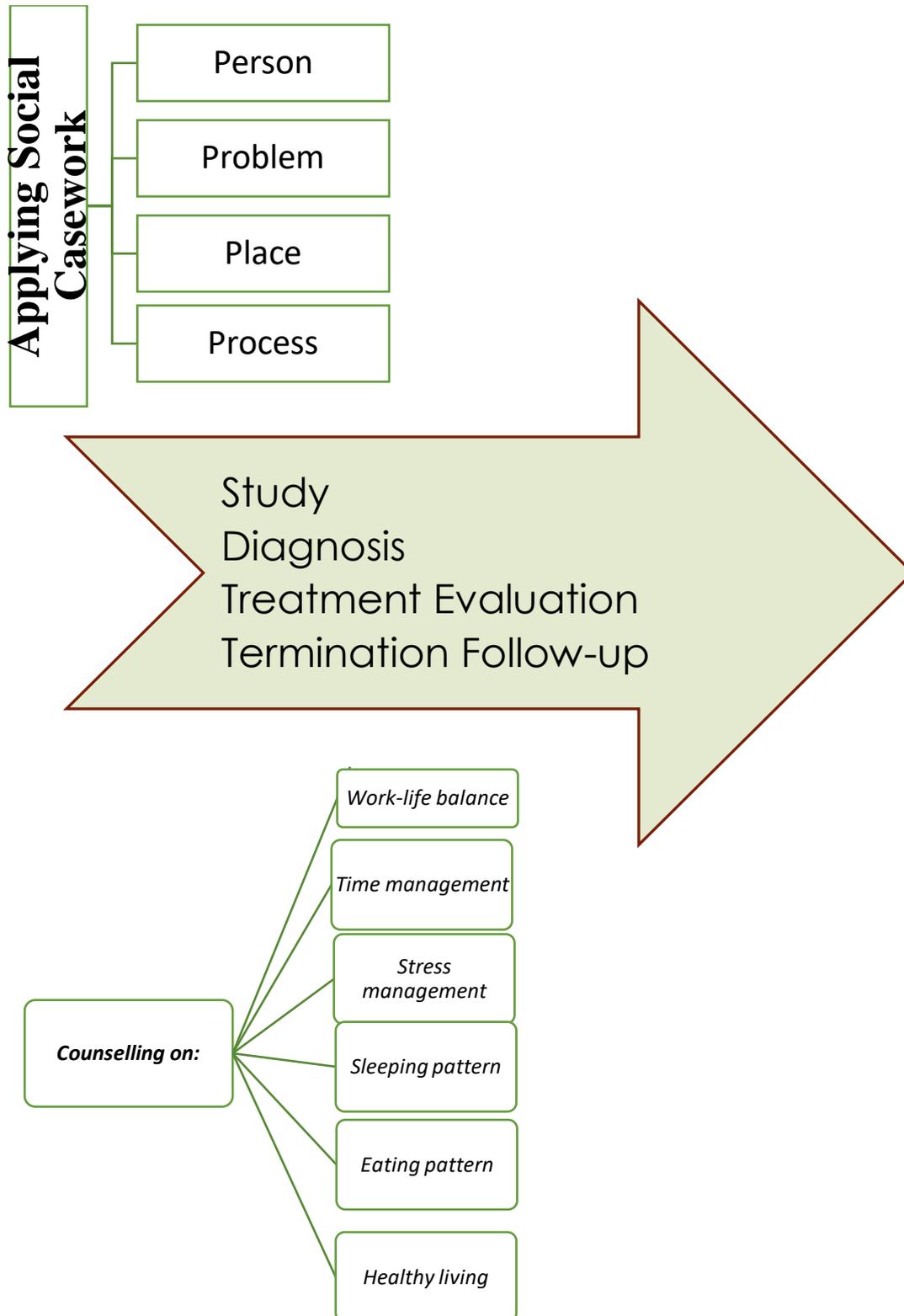


Figure 6.3: At group level- Application of Social Group Work:

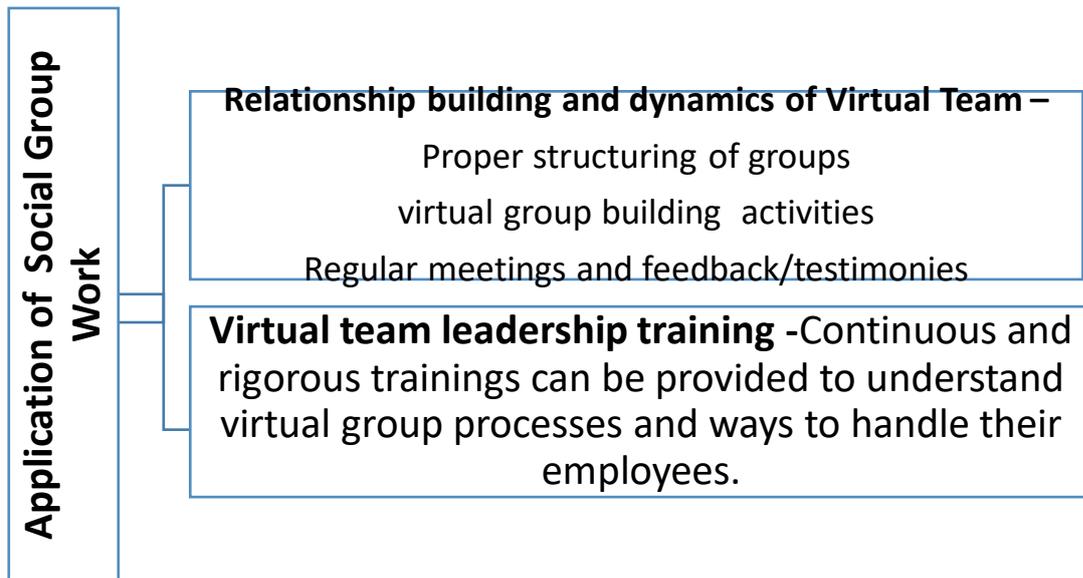


Figure 6.4: Application of Community organization, Social work Research and Social Action

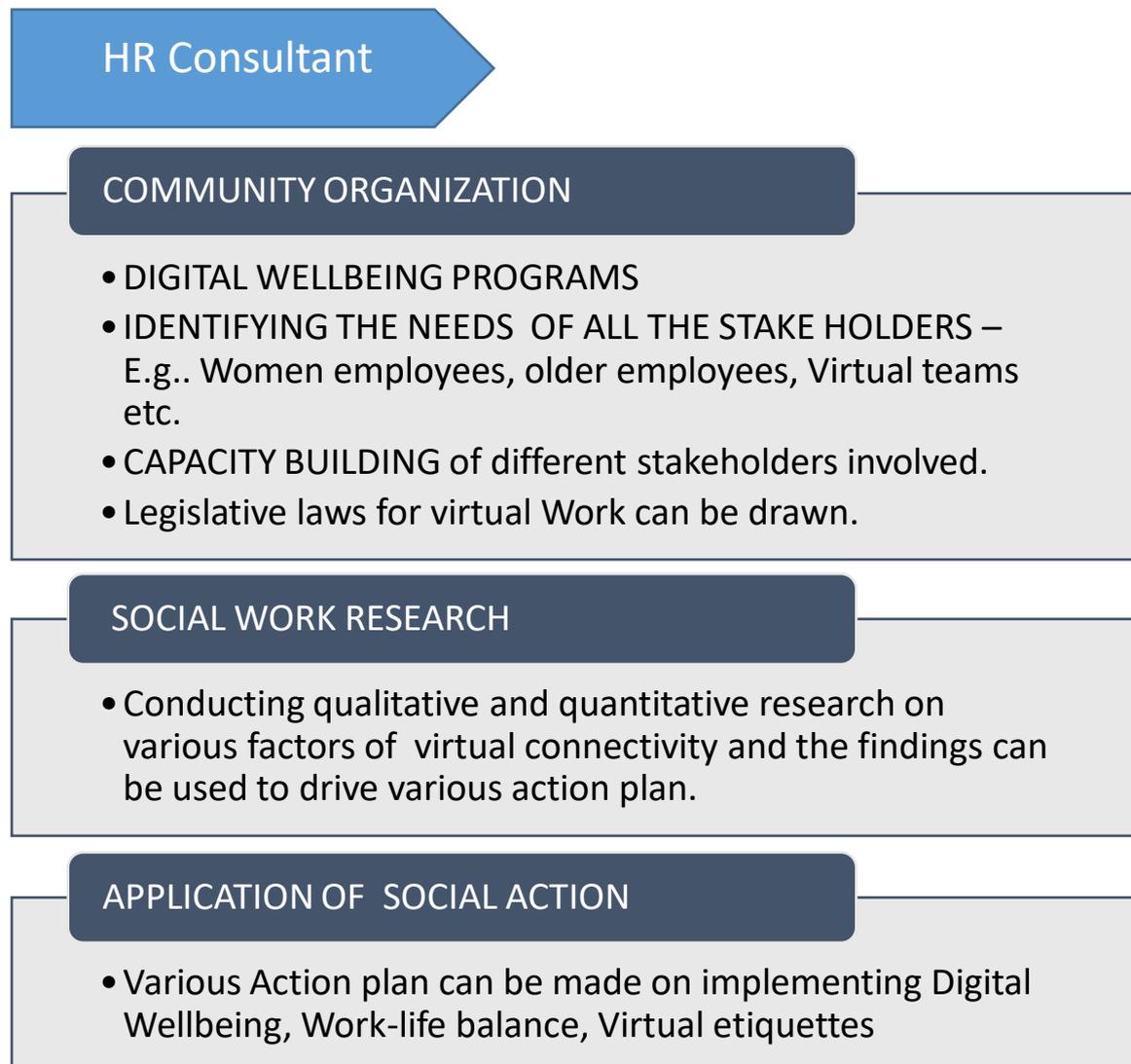
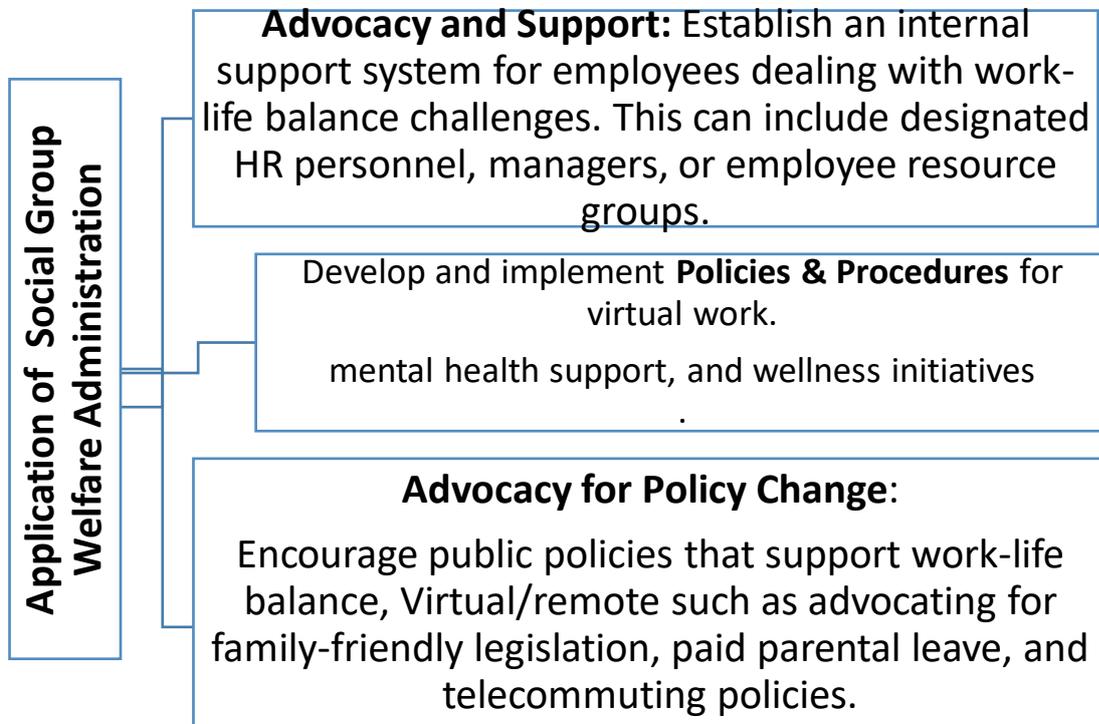
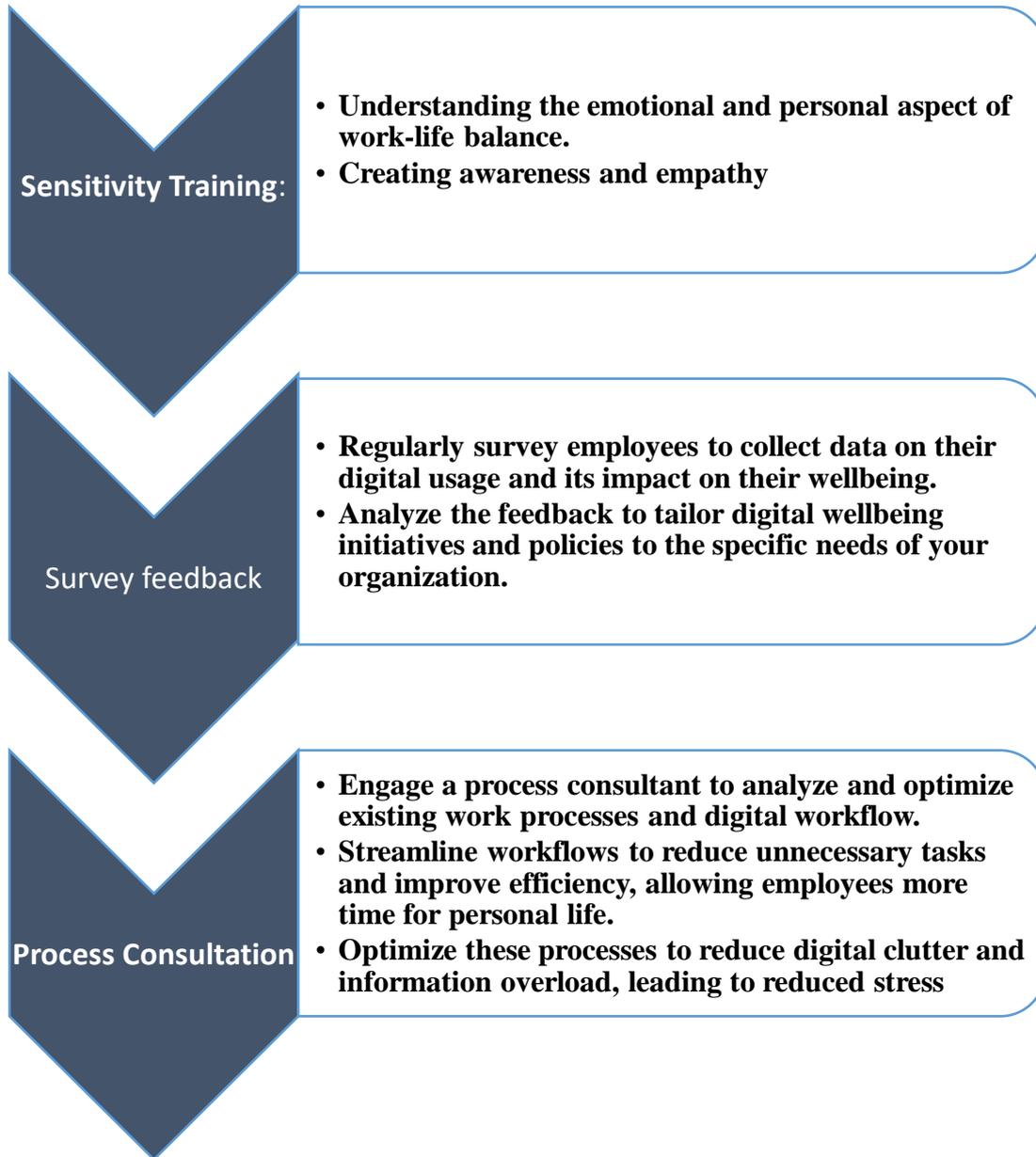


Figure 6.5: Application of Social welfare administration method:



**Figure 6.6: OD intervention action module
for improving work-life balance while working virtually**



**Figure 6.6 : OD intervention action module
for improving work-life balance while working virtually (continued)**

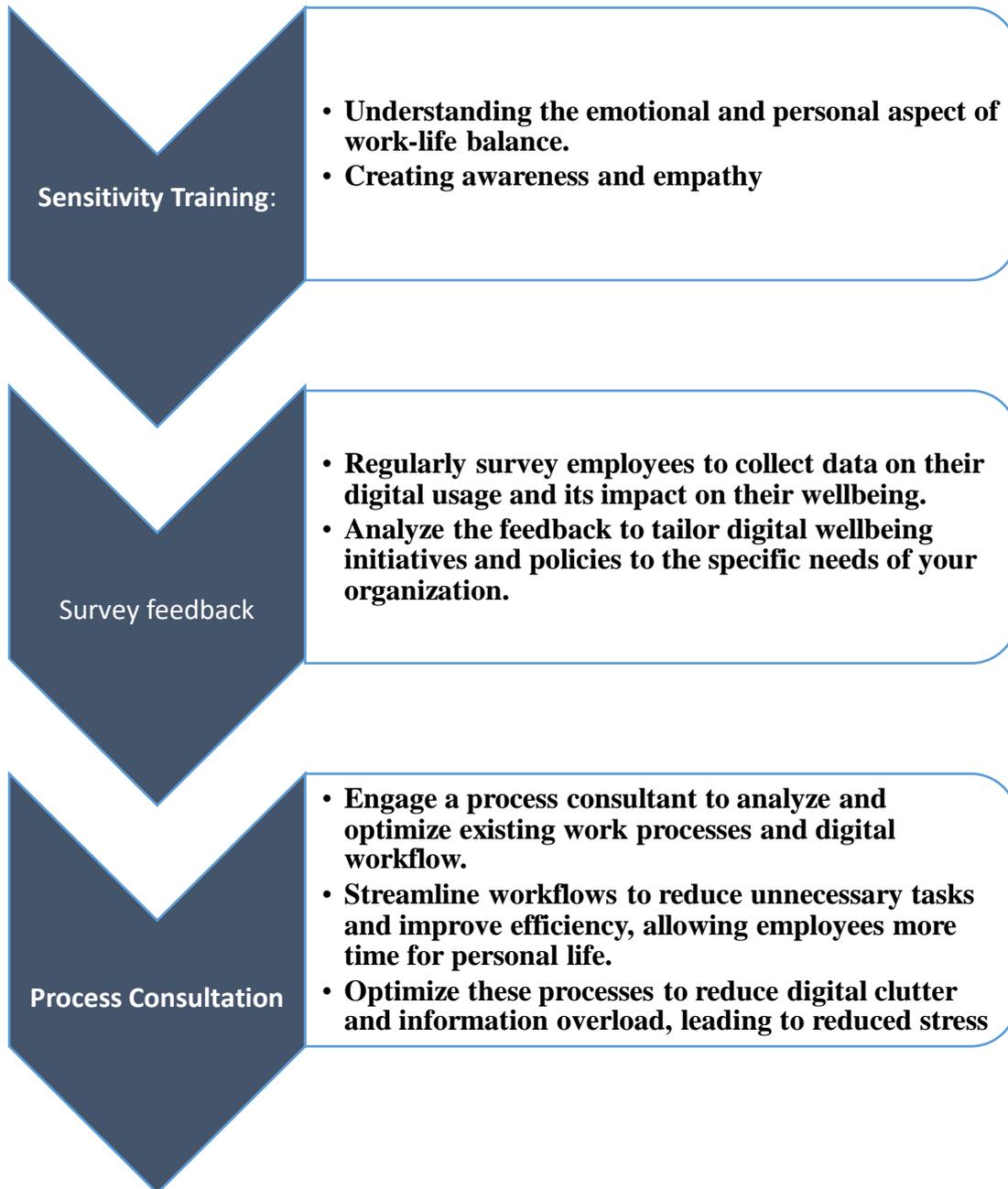


Figure 6.7: Action Module for Improving Virtual Work

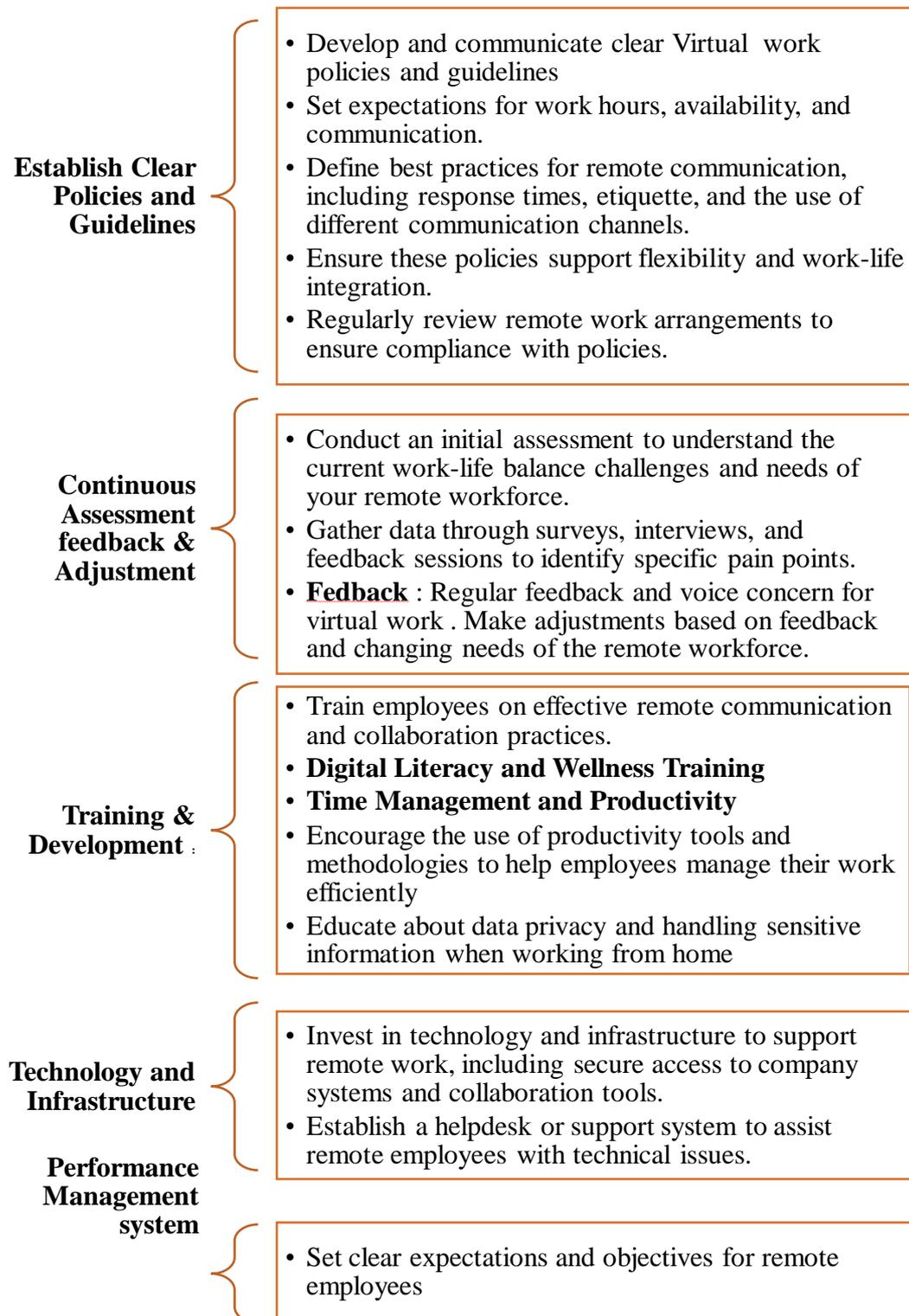
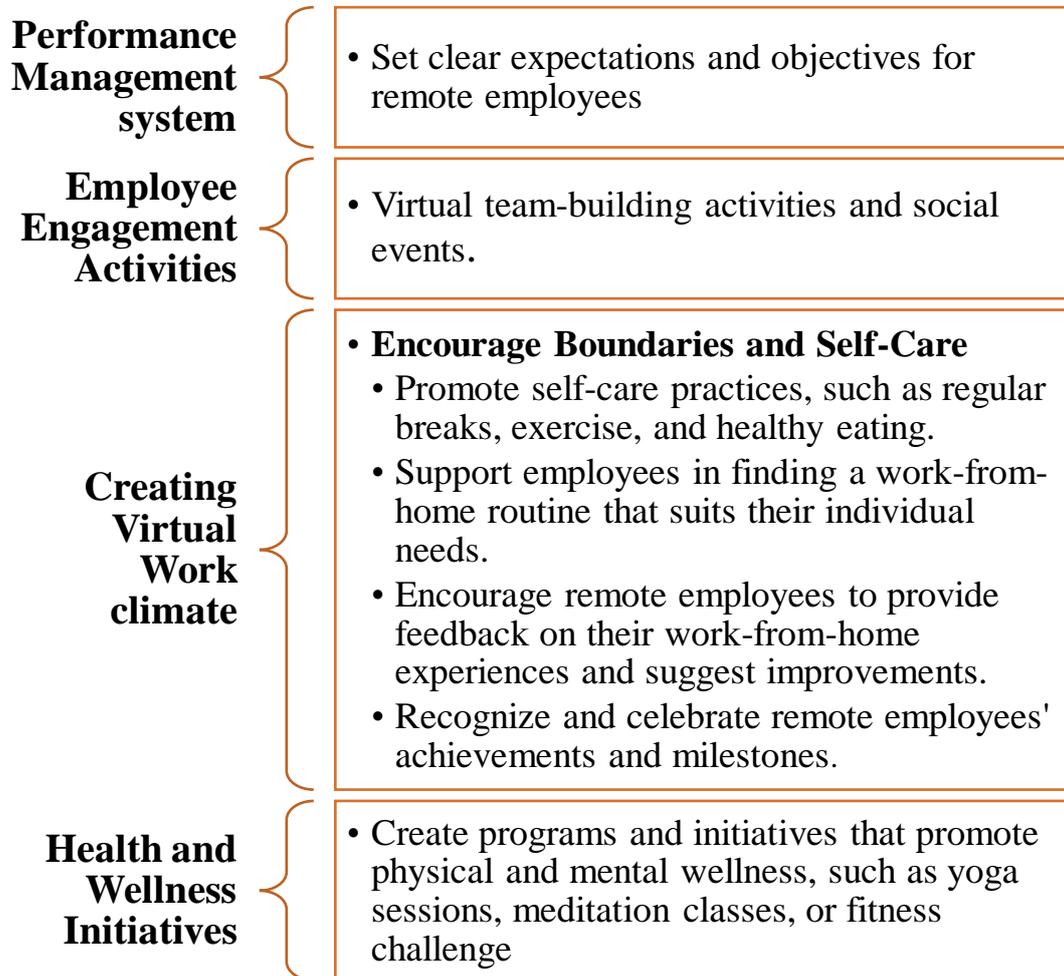


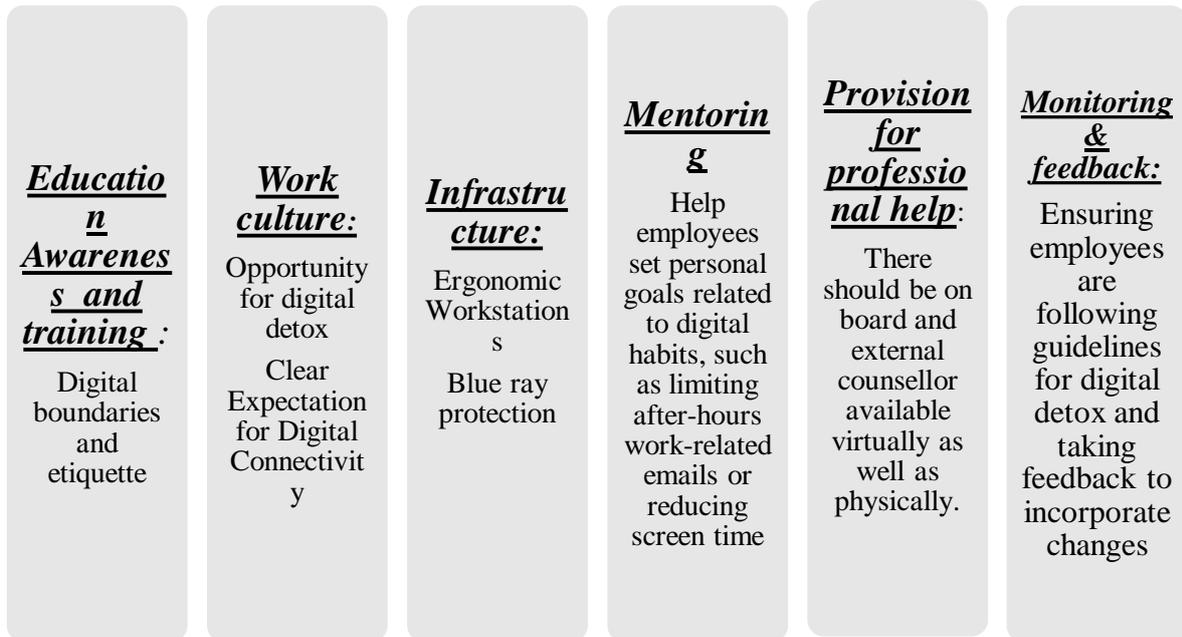
Figure 6.7: Action Module for Improving Virtual Work (continued)



PART A

Figure 6.8: Framework for improving Digital Wellbeing: organization initiative

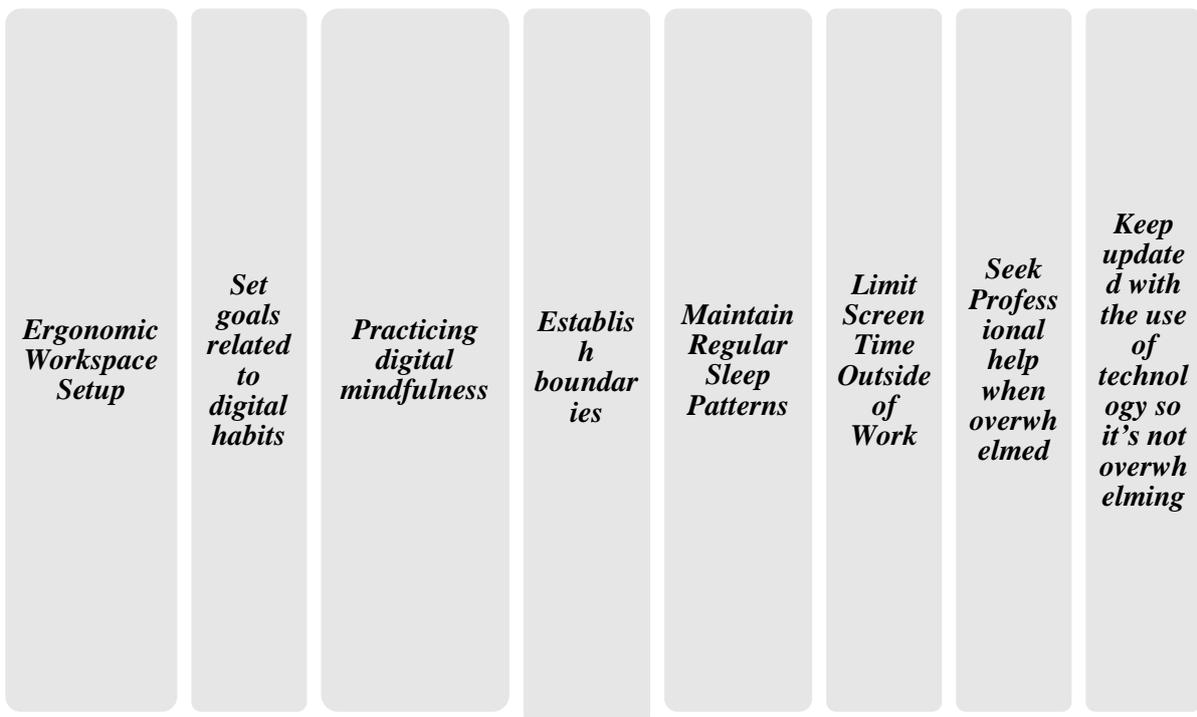
Figure 8: DIGITAL WELLBEING - INITIATIVES BY ORGANIZATION



Part B

Figure 6.9: Framework for Improving Digital Wellbeing

Figure 9: DIGITAL WELLBEING- INITIATIVES BY EMPLOYEES



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