

## A Study on Employees' Monetary Rewards during Work from Home of IT Employees in Chennai City

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**Abstract:** In the context of the home-working era in Chennai City, this research investigates the perspectives of information technology professionals regarding monetary incentives. The increase in the number of people working from home due to the COVID-19 pandemic led to a rise in demand for monetary incentives as a means of motivating and retaining employees. Within the context of an online organisation, the purpose of this study is to assess the impact of monetary incentives on the enhancement of productivity and the level of satisfaction experienced by workers. The data collection process consisted of conducting interviews and administering questionnaires to information technology specialists employed by organisations based in Chennai. The study's findings address several key discussions, including the appropriateness of compensation, the connection between rewards and performance measures, and the impact of monetary rewards on job satisfaction and the ability to maintain a sustainable work-life balance. Following the conclusion of the study, recommendations are provided for the development of reward systems that are compatible with the organisation's aims and meet the ever-changing demands of teleworkers. This research provides business leaders and HR experts with information on how to establish effective and well-planned incentive programs in a post-pandemic world.

**Keywords:** Remote Work Compensation; Work From Home (WFH); Employee Perception; Monetary Incentives; Chennai City; IT Professionals; Augmentation of Productivity; Job Satisfaction.

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### 1. Introduction

One result of the development of business practices and employee engagement was observed during the COVID-19 pandemic, which brought about an unprecedented shift toward remote work, as hypothesised in the pandemic-creates-home-work research by Anilkumar and Pravitha [1]. Although a transient trend towards telecommuting existed before the pandemic, the sudden and wholesale adoption of WFH prompted colossal changes in traditional work, as evidenced by organisational change scenarios

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studied by Mahalakshmi and Thaiyalnayaki [2]. Since it relies heavily on online infrastructure and can adapt easily to changing conditions, the information technology (IT) industry was unusually resilient in a battered sector, as noted by Malik and Malik [3]. One of India's major IT centres, Chennai, spearheaded this shift, empowering its human resources to work from anywhere while operating within some infrastructural and socio-cultural constraints, as explored in indigenous remote work changes researched by Chidambaram et al. [4]. Monetary compensation will also significantly change how they attract and invest it to motivate and encourage employees after the transformation, as in the employee motivation strategy developed by Sumalatha et al. [5]. Rewards, motivation, and pay have consistently topped the list of factors driving employee motivation, productivity, and commitment to the company, according to Tirta and Enrika [6], who have studied reward and motivation programs. Perception and awareness of these benefits among workers, however, have been influenced by the remote work culture, as seen in employee psychology research by Rai et al. [7].

Increased electricity bills, buying ergonomic chairs, and more expensive technology to facilitate home-office environments are among the additional costs many have had to bear since the enactment of WFH, as evidenced by cost-burden research studies [8]. A decent and fair wage is much more important nowadays than before, due to factors such as reduced social interaction with other workers, fewer personal managers, and the inability to live and work, as emphasised by wage adequacy models [9]. Financial rewards are higher in the information technology industry because of the generally enormous workload and the always-looming deadlines imposed by performance expectations [10]. IT professionals are typically presented with dynamic situations that call for out-of-the-box thinking, flexibility with new technology, and successful teaming in virtual settings, as demonstrated by research on virtual collaboration models Jain et al. [11].

Increasingly more challenges concerning telecommuting continue to emerge, including reducing isolation, managing virtual burnout, and improving productive coexistence among geographically dispersed populations, as examined in emotional well-being studies by Bairi et al. [12]. These are complemented by local conditions, such as diverse cost of living, varied infrastructure, and socio-economic factors that influence money needs and expectations among IT professionals residing in Chennai, as evident in urban inequality studies by Rao et al. [13]. Economic rewards are therefore an intervention into the underlying problems of teleworking, payment, and recognition of quality production, as determined by reward optimisation models studied by Jayashree [14]. Based on relevant criteria, this research aims to investigate whether IT professionals who telework from home in Chennai consider monetary rewards, using empirical survey models supported by Chakrapani et al. [15]. Firstly, an effort is made to analyse whether monetary rewards are justified and sufficient to compensate for the additional telecommuting costs, as investigated in compensation-gap studies by Beulen [16]. It concludes with an examination of the effects of monetary incentives on presence, satisfaction, and performance, based on a teleworker sample and on satisfaction-performance relationships researched by Panchanadeswaran et al. [17].

## **1.1. Background**

Monetary incentives have played a core role in enticing and placating employees within organisations, as evidenced by research on work incentives conducted by Anilkumar and Pravitha [1]. Bonus, allowance, compensation, and other monetary rewards have served as a vehicle for harmonising employees' efforts with those of the firm, as organisational alignment models utilised by Bairi et al. [12] indicate. Not only are employees paid for their work, but they are also rewarded with success awards, which motivate them to generate even higher-quality output and keep them employed, as explained in the motivation theories reviewed by Rai et al. [7]. The expansion of telecommuting, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, transformed payment methods, as explained in compensation redesign models reviewed by Jayashree [14]. Both employees and employers began to appreciate new challenges and opportunities with the sudden, enigmatic adoption of work-from-home (WFH), which disrupted the conventional work environment, as Rao et al. [13] found.

The IT sector shift was less complicated, as remote employees were already accustomed to the industry's widespread use of digital platforms and tools, according to digital workforce readiness models analysed by Tirta and Enrika [6]. Perceptions of organisational reward and support have, to a great extent, been driven by the same, especially in Chennai, where infrastructure shortages and socio-economic diversity were evident, as shown in regional transformation studies by Panchanadeswaran et al. [17]. Private outlays on private demand, such as electricity, home office equipment, and technological growth, have increased over the years, continuing to drive issues, as noted by Sivapragasam and Raya [8]. Most workers have also suffered from alienation due to poor face-to-face communication, teamwork, and recognition on the premises, which has led to such gaps being filled by additional financial investment, as alleged in employee experience paradigms studied by Malik and Malik [3].

## **1.2. Organisational Monetary Rewards History**

Organisational designs have long employed monetary awards as one of the most effective tools for worker recruitment, motivation, and retention, as indicated by studies on compensation scheme design [7]. The nature of the job, social norms, and economic conditions have all contributed, in some way or another, to such rewards over the years, as indicated by sociological

compensation studies [12]. The actual growth of the IT industry, competitive business ventures, and the demand for high-level human resources have all contributed to the evolving nature of financial rewards in the industry, as discussed in the sectoral growth literature employed by Kotteeswari and Sharief [9]. IT companies reengineered their compensation schemes to attract and retain high-level, high-quality, and even mobile personnel, as outlined in the Strategic models of compensation discussed by Chidambaram et al. [4]. The initial emphasis was on base pay, but broader talent retention requirements led to the introduction of equity and incentive pay, based on models of incentive structure development utilised by Chakrapani et al. [15]. Project- completion or innovation bonuses. They were brought to the centre stage in linking worker effort to corporate objectives, as evident in performance-based reward plans examined by Tirta and Enrika [6]. Stocks and stock options were widely prevalent, especially in new ventures, to foster ownership feelings and extended membership, as analysed in equity-based reward schemes adopted by Rai et al. [7]. Such practices were applied not just to staffing choices but also to turn turnover around and create organisational membership, as fostered in retention-effect research by Sivapragasam and Raya [8].

### **1.3. Monetary Rewards and Their Impact on Involvement and Retention**

Financial rewards were among the top qualities for recruiting and retaining IT employees, even before the pandemic's shift to remote work, as seen in retention policies studied by Beulen [16]. Competitive pay was necessary in the global labour market to secure skilled workers, especially those in information technology, as Mahalakshmi and Thaiyalnayaki [2] demonstrated in their application to employee buying strategies. Budget incentives were also found to be successful as productivity drivers, motivating workers to deliver project targets, be innovative, and work at optimal productivity levels, as shown in a reward-performance relationship study by Rao et al. [13]. Drawing on the pre-WFH predecessor setup, compensation packages were established based on performance bonuses, joining bonuses, and salary increases, which formed the core of job satisfaction as articulated in job-choice-effect research by Jayashree [14]. The sudden shift to WFH during COVID-19 recontextualised these expectations best, as post-pandemic expectation surveys by Sumalatha et al. [5] confirm. Staff began requesting flexible benefits, well-being allowances, and coverage for digital infrastructure to support remote working arrangements, as observed in hybrid work compensation systems utilised by Gooptu [10].

Transparency-based performance bonuses were especially sought after because workers believed there was less transparency in performance in virtual environments, as evidenced by feedback loop studies conducted by Panchanadeswaran et al. [17]. Remote and hybrid work patterns for longer periods also became habits that were practised and integrated into pay packages, with flexibility as a far greater valued benefit in itself, offered in newer paradigms of work culture embraced by Sivapragasam and Raya [8]. Even for on-site and off-site workers, differences in workers' compensation began to arise due to local variations in the cost of living and resource availability, as dissected in remote-local equity models researched by Kotteeswari and Sharief [9]. A shift is surely underway, and there is much to be debated. All such progress in the ITT suggests that economic incentives are now necessarily tied not only to performance and participation but also to well-being, affiliation, and sustainability in the new IT regime, especially in post-pandemic city spaces like Chennai, as shown by the composite compensation outcome research of Gooptu [10].

The drawback is that some employees contend their compensation needs to be recalculated relative to the regional price level where they are employed, especially if they are in a region with a lower price level than the HQ region. Although office employees were formerly rewarded based on company performance, current remote employees want more individually tailored rewards for their personal work or project success. Remote workers' ideal incentive is a performance-based award that recognises both individual and team performance, as there are no person-to-person interactions every working day. Additionally, their off-site colleagues will automatically expect profit-sharing arrangements or stock options, as are common in the information technology sector, to align employees' goals with the company's success. Wellness programs, on-site health clubs, and medical coverage tied to physical locations were commonplace employee benefits for in-site staff. Telehealth benefits, such as mental health treatment, home physical therapy, or reimbursement for home office expenses, became a necessity for employees with the onset of remote work. Employers had to offer home or virtual benefits to help employees maintain their physical and mental health, as work-life balance was a major concern for remote employees.

## **2. Literature Review**

Specifically, the study above places employees' compensation attitudes in the Chennai IT industry, organisational behaviour, and the impact of external factors, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, in perspective, aligning with labour economics studies by Kotteeswari and Sharief [9]. To sustain a willing and consistent workforce, employee retention strategies in the information technology sector are given the utmost priority, as it is assumed that cash incentives and non-cash rewards must balance each other, as in the case of retention models implemented by Bairi et al. [12]. Competitive compensation packages, opportunities for personal growth, and a strong business culture are regarded as the chief motivators for retaining great employees, as cited in books on human resource development by Malik and Malik [3]. We learned that employee turnover is more prevalent in organisations in competitive, dynamic fields such as IT when opportunities for growth or rewards for their work are not

provided, as revealed by studies on employee turnover intention by Jayashree [14]. Based on these findings, the Chennai IT organisation's employee retention strategy includes rewards such as performance-based recognition, public praise, and a balance between statutory work-life policies, all of which have been proven effective in fostering long-term employee commitment, as shown in regional HR reports [5]. The research also states that workers prefer rewards such as career development and job satisfaction over just money, as revealed by participation and motivation studies utilised by Panchanadeswaran et al. [17].

HRM practices and organisational support beliefs have been examined to validate their efficacy in influencing workers' behaviour and organisational performance, as highlighted by behavioural HR models developed by Rai et al. [7]. In an effort to mitigate the risk of adverse organisational deviations, such as productivity loss or demotivation, the HR policy support function is instrumental, as discussed in strategic HR interventions by Sivapragasam and Raya [8]. As long as HR policies are recognised as ethically transparent and relatively employee-focused, and workers do not face a higher likelihood of responding negatively to organisational stress, as discussed in trust and policy continuity studies by Kotteeswari and Sharief [9]. This research clearly showed that, in the context of industrial transformation, such as the IT industry, employees are more likely to be inspired and devoted when they are valued, respected, and cared for by the organisation, as organisational commitment theories also emphasised [2]. The impact of COVID-19 on remote work, stress, and employee motivation was also properly addressed, with emphasis on the growing trend towards remote work, as documented in transformation studies conducted during the crisis by Anilkumar and Pravitha [1]. Although telecommuting provides flexibility, there are also other sources of stress, e.g., from those charged with household and formal duties, as explained by workload-stress response models discussed in Bairi et al. [12]. The study shows that compensation perception is rising; workers are now seeking rewards not just for work products but also for the enabling bodily and affective labour put into off-site work, as outlined in pandemic remuneration revaluation frameworks developed by Chidambaram et al. [4].

These estimates indicate that businesses must reengineer their reward systems to address the unique challenges of telecommuting and close the incentive gap between business and employee expectations, as per a reward restructuring analysis by Jayashree [14]. Large-scale labour market analysis reveals that external shocks, such as COVID-19, reshape employee reward expectations across sectors, including IT, according to a socio-economic vulnerability analysis by Chakrapani et al. [15]. Although targeted first and foremost at the off-book economy — i.e., domestic workers — the study recognises the importance of financial security and rapid relief during insecurity — norms that must be extended to all official sectors as well. This is evidence in support of the argument that companies should be aware of pressures on staff and respond by adjusting their incentive programs, as in the flexible compensation policy gains realised by Anilkumar and Pravitha [1]. Providing appropriate compensation, especially in uncertain times, makes employees feel valued, respected, and secure in their jobs. In addition, the convergence of rewards, work-life balance, and retention, especially among millennials, has been unclear, to the point of suggesting a generation-augmented change in the workplace, corroborated by millennial engagement surveys [17]. Turnover rates and job satisfaction levels were most favourable when employees were rewarded with both external and internal rewards. Work-life balance was also a top concern, as employees often choose jobs — particularly IT jobs — that require technical skills and diligence. Such firms that are interested in retaining their brains will need to implement wide-ranging reward schemes that extend beyond compensation, including flexibility, respect for people's time, and support for mental well-being.

Staff motivation has also been researched as a mediator in converting money rewards into performance, in-role and extra-role. Empirical evidence confirms that motivated employees will meet and exceed performance goals and creative outputs, while also meeting expectations for their job tasks. In open virtual environments where openness is minimised, maintaining employee motivation is even more significant to keep them energised and devoted to their work. These findings support the premise that financial rewards are necessary but become more effective when combined with significant work, recognition, and a pleasant work environment—especially when framed in the context of telework or hybrid work in the information technology industry. In addition, worker wellbeing research, as an HRM initiative, confirms that emotionally stable and engaged employees work more efficiently and are less likely to leave the firm. Job security programs, flexible working hours, and psychosocial support contribute significantly to employee commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover. Within the information and technology industry, where stress and burnout are high, these HRM practices become most valuable. There is empirical support for integrating welfare within reward and compensation mechanisms to create a sustainable, high-performance, and high-commitment employee who works remotely and in the office to the maximum extent possible.

### **3. Methodology**

To determine the mindset regarding monetary benefits among Chennai-based remote work IT employees, a descriptive cross-sectional survey design will be utilised in the current study. The current study aims to collect data intensively at a single point in time, providing a snapshot of the effect of homework on employees' compensation mindset. To ensure the sample is representative and diverse enough to accurately represent IT professionals, we will use stratified random sampling based on job title, years of work experience, and other relevant demographics. So, we will have an unbiased opinion from all IT staff categories. These will be gathered through an online survey with open- and closed-ended questions, Likert scales, and multiple-

choice options. For teleworkers, they will assess the level of comfort they have with the pay, bonuses, and other economic benefits they receive, and whether they consider these benefits adequate. Descriptive and inferential statistics shall be employed to examine the information to ascertain trends and relationships between demographic variables and employee attitudes. The sample population will aim to comprise at least 200 individuals to provide statistical strength. Therefore, the study aims to demonstrate how the remote work trend has influenced the salary demands and job satisfaction of IT professionals in Chennai.

The theoretical frameworks used in the current study include Expectancy Theory, Equity Theory, and Social Exchange Theory. The three theories offer different explanations of how individuals perceive money as a reward. Expectancy Theory assumes that effort leads to good outcomes, which in turn drive human behaviour. This hypothesis will be used in studies of the perception of economic relations between effort and reward, such as raises or bonuses, among telecommuting IT workers. Employees perceive their wages in relation to those of other employees performing similar job tasks, based on the perceived value they contribute through their work, as stipulated by Equity Theory. This theory can be used to determine whether IT staff, particularly telecommuters, believe they are being compensated equally for their effort. Social exchange theory is also concerned with the mutual nature of the employer-employee relationship and with employees anticipating the same rewards for their efforts. In the context of the shift to remote work, the theory will be employed to analyse how IT remote workers judge the reasonableness and sufficiency of their remuneration. In general, these concepts will illuminate how monetary incentives influence motivation, satisfaction, and perceptions of fairness in WFH.

It is only through keeping research up to date with ethical standards in terms of its integrity and credibility that it depends. Participants' informed consent will be obtained to ensure the study meets ethical standards. Participants will be informed of the purpose of their study, that they can withdraw at any time without penalty, and that they are voluntary participants. Since no participant names or other identifying information will be removed or otherwise published, participant confidentiality will be maintained throughout the study. To the extent necessary to ensure that participants' identities cannot be identified, data will be anonymised and outcomes reported in aggregate. The study is voluntary only; participants may withdraw at any time without penalty. To ensure the research meets all such ethical standards, the relevant ethics committee or institutional review board (IRB) should be approached. All these measures will ensure that the research is conducted with full regard for participants' rights and privacy, thereby enhancing the validity and reliability of the findings.



**Figure 1:** Monetary and nonmonetary rewards framework influence

Figure 1 presents a model of how different types of rewards influence employee performance and organisational outcomes. The organisation node at the initial level uses the reward system element, which can be further classified into two major modules: monetary rewards and nonmonetary rewards. The monetary rewards unit includes bonuses, salary increases, and cash awards. These rewards are remitted to employees' remuneration systems or bank accounts and are concrete economic rewards with direct effects on workers' job satisfaction and retention. The non-financial reward module encompasses reward platforms, flexible working hours, self-development opportunities, and tailored reward plans. These are offered through HR and feedback processes to foster intrinsic motivation, job satisfaction, and commitment. Each reward stream is linked to an "Employee Response" node, which gauges the impact of rewards on employee morale, motivation, loyalty, and productivity. The subsequent employee behaviour is then input through the "Performance Output" node, gauging efficiency, innovation, and teamwork gain. This is entered into the "Organisational Outcome" unit to gauge the impact of rewards on retention, organisational growth, and overall performance. The model components are linked via safe communication links that enable smooth data transmission between systems and decision centres. White represents simplicity and a focus on architecture, and colour is applied to distinguish each functional block, emphasising the significance of the in-depth, integrated application of monetary and nonmonetary incentives to produce strategic outcomes.

#### 4. Result

The study provides qualitative and descriptive data on IT employees' attitudes towards monetary compensation in work-from-home (WFH) settings in Chennai. It identifies key determinants of employee satisfaction and expectations. Although most participants were overall satisfied with their minimum wage, research findings revealed a wide range of opinions when performance-based incentives, such as bonuses, were involved. Most of the workers felt they were not valued for the additional work and stress they experienced under the homework system. Moving away from a non-traditional office system to a homework system created a sense of not feeling valued, as prompts and inducements were lacking, as well as appreciation in an office setting. This lack of direct contact between managers and workers left some of them unaware that they were being compensated for their work, even when they worked every time. Therefore, the workers complained about the performance-based compensation they received, as the reward did not sufficiently acknowledge their effort under the telework regime. Reward Satisfaction Index (RSI) can be framed as:

$$RSI = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N (cx_1 MRS_i + cx_2 IMPM_i + cx_3 PR_i + cx_4 PA_i) \quad (1)$$

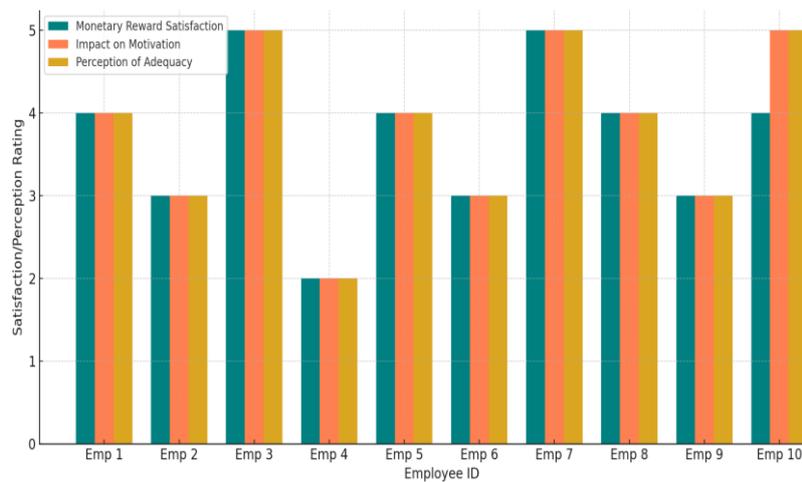
The population sample comprises eight employees from various age groups, genders, and levels of experience, with annual earnings ranging from INR 5,00,000 to INR 18,00,000. They have all been working from home for at least 60% of the time, and a few of them have been working 100% from home. The money reward satisfaction ratings range from 2 to 5, and thus, no remote employees are satisfied with money rewards. There are more tenure- and compensation-level employees (Employee IDs 003 and 007) who report higher satisfaction (rating of 5) and a greater influence of monetary rewards on motivation. Interestingly, despite high reported satisfaction, no monetary-reward contract exists—for instance, for Employee ID 003—despite his desire for nonmonetary rewards, even when highly rated. Lower-paid, less-experienced workers earn fewer dollars and have less experience (e.g., Employee ID 004), resulting in lower satisfaction and lower monetary rewards. This aligns with earning level and career experience, as well as moderate sufficiency reports and motivational efficacy. Overall, across the sample, respondents who had cited money as a financial reward found it pleasing and reported greater satisfaction and a sense of adequacy. The Table demonstrates a clear correlation between telecommuting frequency and employees' expectations for financial rewards. Overall, this data provides valuable insights into the occupational and demographic variables that influence perceptions of financial rewards under a flexible work regime in the IT industry.

**Table 1:** Employee perception of monetary rewards during work from home among IT employees in Chennai city

Employee ID	Age Group	Gender	Years of Experience	Salary Range (INR)	Work from Home Frequency	Monetary Reward Satisfaction (Scale 1-5)	Impact of Monetary Reward on Motivation (Scale 1-5)	Preference for Monetary Reward (Yes/No)	Perception of Adequacy of Monetary Reward (Scale 1-5)
001	25-35	Male	5	8,00,000 - 10,00,000	100%	4	4	Yes	4
002	35-45	Female	10	6,00,000 - 8,00,000	75%	3	3	Yes	3
003	45-55	Male	15	12,00,000 - 15,00,000	50%	5	5	No	5
004	25-35	Female	3	5,00,000 - 7,00,000	100%	2	2	Yes	2
005	35-45	Male	12	10,00,000 - 12,00,000	100%	4	4	Yes	4
006	25-35	Female	7	7,00,000 - 9,00,000	60%	3	3	No	3
007	45-55	Male	18	15,00,000 - 18,00,000	90%	5	5	Yes	5
008	25-35	Female	5	6,00,000 - 8,00,000	100%	4	4	Yes	4

Table 1 shows employee attitudes towards monetary incentives in work-from-home scenarios for IT employees based in Chennai. Additionally, the research aimed to show that telecommuting had led to increased financial expectations from employees, to the extent that most participants reported expecting such compensation for the inconveniences of working away from the office. Home-working experience also raised some issues, such as work-life balance, the psychological and emotional cost of isolation, and the economic cost of utilising personal assets, such as data allotment and home office equipment. Such additional challenges, together with the overlap of professional and personal life boundaries generated by home working, convinced most employees that their wages should cover these additional costs and accountabilities (Figure 2). The shift to remote workspaces altered employees' work mindset, heightening anticipation of rewards. Motivation Score under Work-from-Home Conditions is:

$$\text{Motivation}_i = \left( \frac{\text{Effort}_i \cdot \text{Exp}_i}{1 + e^{-(\beta_1 \text{WFH}_i + \beta_2 \text{Comm}_i + \beta_3 \text{Isolation}_i)}} \right) \cdot R_i \quad (2)$$



**Figure 2:** Comparative analysis of employee perceptions of rewards and motivation

The chart is a comparative group bar chart showing the responses of 10 employees (Emp 1-10) to three significant factors: Monetary Reward Satisfaction, Effect on Motivation, and Perceived Satisfactoriness. The three separate colours—teal for coral, teal for goldenrod—are applied to the chart to visually distinguish the response scales. The y-axis indicates satisfaction or perception scores ranging from 0 to 5, and the x-axis lists employee IDs. Emp 3 and Emp 7 had the highest scores (5) in both areas and strongly agreed that their monetary incentives were sufficient and that they were highly motivated by them. On the other hand, Emp 4 also had the lowest (2), suggesting dissatisfaction or a feeling of being shortchanged in reward structure and motivational vigour. A noticeable trend emerges: employees who rated cash satisfaction highly also reported high motivation and job satisfaction, and these variables were positively correlated. Employees such as Emp 1, Emp 5, and Emp 8 reported average satisfaction scores (4), indicating that they appreciate money rewards but find them somewhat unpleasant. Consistency across all dimensions for all employees suggests that the three measures are highly interrelated in employee perceptions. A graphic presentation is relatively easy to compare across individuals and provides areas for improvement within the reward system. Finally, the graph highlights the importance of fair and equitable reward systems in developing worker motivation and perceived equity. It is thus an excellent graphical tool for human resource planning and performance measurement. Perceived Equity Index (Equity Theory Model) will be:

$$\text{Equity}_i = \left( \frac{\text{Outcome}_i}{\text{Input}_i} \right) - \left( \frac{\text{Outcome}_{\text{ref}}}{\text{Input}_{\text{ref}}} \right) \quad (3)$$

Table 2 presents the frequency of use and quality of IT employees' financial and non-financial rewards for six reward categories. Among the Table's most important parameters — frequency of use, satisfaction, motivation effect, retention effect, preference, and perceived effectiveness — each was scored on a 1-5 scale, with frequency expressed as percentages. Financial incentives are the most prevalent (80%) and most popular with employees, with higher satisfaction and motivation ratings (4 out of 5) and a higher retention impact (5 out of 5). Bonuses also receive high satisfaction ratings in terms of motivation, retention, satisfaction, and perceived usefulness, indicating a strong positive impact. Among the various types of money, incentives are also effective, especially for motivation, with a score of 5. Among the non-money types, recognition schemes rank highest, with a score of 4 across all categories. Flexibility and work-life balance, while paramount, remain relatively low in quantity and influence as drivers of engagement, and are not yet fully ingrained.

**Table 2:** Monetary and nonmonetary rewards comparison for the employees

Reward Type	Frequency of Use	Employee Satisfaction (Scale 1-5)	Impact on Motivation (Scale 1-5)	Retention Impact (Scale 1-5)	Employee Preference (Monetary /Nonmonetary)	Perceived Effectiveness (Scale 1-5)
Monetary Rewards	80%	4	4	5	Monetary	4
Nonmonetary Rewards	60%	3	3	4	Nonmonetary	3
Bonuses	70%	5	5	5	Monetary	5
Recognition Programs	65%	4	4	4	Nonmonetary	4
Incentives	75%	4	5	4	Monetary	4
Flexibility & Work-life Balance	50%	3	4	3	Nonmonetary	3

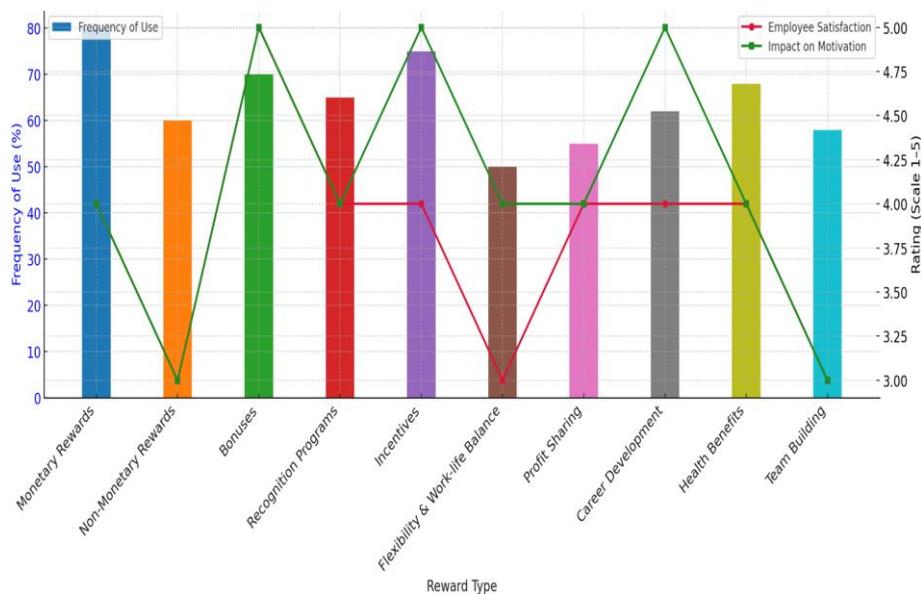
The Reward Preference Index (RPI) is:

$$RPI = \frac{1}{T} \sum_{t=1}^T (\gamma_1 \cdot \text{Salary}_t + \gamma_2 \cdot \text{Bonus}_t + \gamma_3 \cdot \text{Benefits}_t + \gamma_4 \cdot \text{Flexibility}_t) \quad (4)$$

Motivation Strength Score (MS) is:

$$MS_i = \frac{1}{Z} \sum_{j=1}^Z (\delta_1 \text{Freq}_j + \delta_2 \text{Sat}_j + \delta_3 \text{Ret}_j + \delta_4 \text{Eff}_j) \quad (5)$$

Staff value for money, as a whole, again proves that investing in it remains immensely worthwhile for retaining employees and keeping them satisfied. Yet, the fact that average scores for non-cash items exist proves that they contribute immensely to employee engagement, if done correctly as well.



**Figure 3:** Diagram of reward usage, satisfaction, and effect on motivation

The study concludes that an integrated reward system would include high-impact financial incentives, such as bonuses and recognition, while also utilising non-monetary motivators to achieve total workplace motivation. The Table shows the contrasting yet complementary roles that both reward sources play in improving workforce performance. Aside from this, perceived equitable pay also had a strong relationship with employees' experience, particularly in terms of rank and organisational status. Figure 3 is a combined bar-line graph, colour-coded, that shows a retrospective comparison of the relative frequencies of use, effectiveness, and satisfaction for 10 different employee reward types. The colour bars, one colour per bar,

display the percentage frequency of use for each reward type. The two overlapping line graphs above the bars show employee satisfaction (red) and the motivation effect (green), both scaled 1–5. Among reward types by category, monetary types such as bonus (70%), incentive (75%), and financial reward (80%) exhibit the highest usage frequency and similarly high motivation effects and satisfaction ratings, with bonus being the highest (5) in both categories. Nonmonetary ones, such as career development and reward schemes, have similarly high impact, with equivalent usage frequency and relatively high satisfaction and motivation ratings (4–5). On the contrary, rewards such as teamwork and flexibility have moderate worker perception scores and lower usage rates (50–58%), suggesting underperformance or negative effects. The two-axis graph presentation is more straightforward and demonstrates that while some rewards are high in usage and ranking (e.g., incentives and bonuses), others may offer untapped benefits (e.g., health coverage and career development) if leveraged effectively. The distinct colour enhances vision, and performance trends across reward types can be identified. Overall, this chart highlights the strategic significance of leveraging the synergy between high-frequency redeemed rewards and those of the highest motivational value for employees to maximise retention and engagement performance.

## 5. Discussion

The older workers, who were higher in rank and managerial types, enjoyed advantages, as they were familiar with the company's reward systems and financial plans, and seemed more content with their rewards. Their experience enabled them to base their remuneration on merit, and they testified that some of them were happier with their rewards. The junior members, particularly the new entrants, complained about their remuneration. They did not feel their work was valued without hands to manage it, and their hunger for constructive reward and appreciation wasn't given fair consideration alongside that of their experienced counterparts. These employees, accustomed to direct feedback and open career paths, resented the absence of typical office politics that stood between them and their work being noticed. Therefore, they were not content with their compensation as much as with feeling appreciated and noticed for their work, and they cared more about the money. Another principal conclusion of the study was the growing significance of non-economic rewards within the WFH perspective. The document observes that economic rewards remain a principal driver of satisfaction at work, but notes that the majority of the labour force, especially ICT personnel, are placing greater value on non-economic rewards, such as increased flexibility in working life, increased autonomy, and the integration of work and life.

These telework culture drivers topped employees' lists and moved away from traditional monetary rewards toward more packaged, lifestyle-based rewards. Offsite work flexibility, control over time, and reduced travel time were the greatest benefits of offsite work, leading to net job satisfaction. It is a movement that responds to the reality that IT workers are highly sensitive to work-life balance and value flexibility as a priceless element of their compensation package. However, the study also acknowledged that, despite the considerable emphasis on non-monetary incentives, monetary incentives were at the root of workers' job satisfaction. They would like financial and non-financial incentives. Though they enjoyed working at home with no stringent timetables or overseers on their shoulders, they wished their pay would adequately recognise their toil and the challenges they faced. Overall, this research emphasises that IT employees in Chennai are balancing on a tightrope between financial aspirations and the pursuit of nonmonetary rewards, and both have played crucial roles in maintaining their reward perceptions and job satisfaction intact. A bifocal focus on both monetary and nonmonetary rewards will continue to drive changes in satisfaction among IT employees as telecommuting becomes an increasingly integral part of business life. Results of this research, after careful descriptive examination of employees' data (Table 1 and Table 2) and presented in Figure 2 and Figure 3, depict fascinating results regarding monetary incentives' perception among IT professionals in Chennai in the work-from-home (WFH) environment and how and if these perceptions influence motivation, satisfaction, and turnover.

Table 1 presents varied employee profiles by age, gender, experience, and salary levels, along with corresponding satisfaction rates with remuneration. More experienced and better-paid employees will be more satisfied and motivated. In contrast, younger or less experienced employees are at a greater risk of dissatisfaction, especially when working from home full-time. For example, 100% WFH workers and meagre wages indicated lower satisfaction and perceived inadequacy of reward, the former attributing this to the fact that the reward scheme is not treating all equally. Figure 2 also illustrates this: differential states of motivation do correlate with reward perception, and line graphs consistently depict differences in satisfaction between individuals. From an Equity Theory perspective, this impact shapes one's pay and effort relative to others, and perceived inequity—especially when homework is additional effort—is the source of discontent. Psychological dissonance, resulting from differential treatment or perceived unequal rewards, can erode morale and lead to disengagement. Table 2 and Figure 3 illustrate this principle by contrasting monetary and non-monetary rewards.

The highest rewards and incentives are reflected in satisfaction ratings, motivation ratings, and turnover rates, indicating that employees value tangible rewards for their efforts. Nonmonetary rewards, such as reward systems and work-life balance programs, are rated as medium in terms of perceived justice and emotional attachment. The Expectancy Theory is operational here—employees must see effort as leading to something worthwhile. In an offshore environment, prompt knowledge and physical visibility reduce the linkage between reward and performance. The graphical pattern in Figure 3 depicts the gap:

money levers are applied at high levels and are highly potent, while others are under-leveraged, and nonmonetary rewards are dispersed unevenly. Some employees feel invisible, especially when rewards have no obvious connection to their outcomes. It is demotivating and affects the intensity of their participation in organisational goals. To achieve this, firms need to bridge procedural and psychological gaps by implementing open, performance-based reward systems for home and office workers. Feedback loops, virtual check-in meetings, and rewards for performance—both monetary and nonmonetary—need to be implemented more actively. The study's findings also suggest that in the WFH mode, the role of nonmonetary rewards is more important. With fewer face-to-face opportunities and less social positive reinforcement, employees increasingly value work-life balance, flexibility, and self-reinforcement over extrinsic rewards. These results confirm the value of combining monetary rewards with emotional, job, and social rewards to create an integrated reward system. An integrated strategy that addresses genuine performance improvement and virtual work environment issues is necessary to enhance morale, retain employees, and boost productivity. As teleworking reshapes the workplace, those firms that are ready to change their pay systems in kind—how they measure and account for quantifiable effort and alter employees' wants—are going to be well down the road toward building long-term satisfaction and commitment.

## 6. Conclusion

The present study offers insight into IT professionals' attitudes toward money rewards in the post-work-from-home (WFH) era in Chennai. The research findings suggest that, though compensation is a top priority, workers are valuing other forms of incentives — such as greater freedom, flexibility, and work-life balance via telecommuting — more highly. Despite this shift in focus, workers were still not satisfied with compensation, especially given other inconveniences of working at home, e.g., doing housework and remaining productive outside regular working hours. The employers think that most of their employees perceive their benefits as being disproportionately spent on on-site and off-site employees, according to the research. This could lead to dissatisfaction and lower efficiency on their end. Junior employees, particularly those who are younger and inexperienced, are most notably undervalued and underappreciated compared to their more experienced and veteran colleagues. This is why companies must ensure that their compensation packages are transparent, fair, and equitable in the virtual workplace. And because employees' expectations have shifted due to remote work, the results underscore the importance of aligning compensation with those expectations. For businesses to keep their teleworkers motivated, they must reward them with both monetary and intangible rewards so they receive their rightful share. Companies that can align their payback strategies with these new mindsets will certainly see increased productivity, morale, and reduced turnover. The study finds that, among this sample of teleworkers, businesses must redesign their payback approaches. Firms can retain the best minds and continue to perform well by listening to their voices, offering competitive compensation, and recognising the importance of non-financial rewards.

### 6.1. Limitations

The study on employees' financial incentives for working from home (WFH) among IT staff in Chennai City has certain limitations. The study is primarily confined to a specific geographical region, and therefore, its applicability to other regions or industries may be limited. Additionally, the participants' samples might not represent all the human resources engaged in the Chennai IT sector. The research also focuses solely on monetary compensation, without considering nonmonetary rewards that can enhance employee satisfaction and performance in a WFH environment. Moreover, the data collection method relies on employees' self-reports via a questionnaire. It is prone to bias, as employees may respond in a manner that aligns with perceived expectations or social desirability. A cross-sectional design captures the moment employees' perceptions are measured and cannot assess long-term change or trends in employee attitudes towards WFH rewards. These are bound to constrain the richness and overallizability of the results together.

### 6.2. Future Scope

Future studies can examine a broader set of determinants of employee satisfaction, beyond monetary compensation, such as work-life balance, emotional well-being, and opportunities for career advancement. The same study conducted in other nations or cities will help identify cross-city or cross-country variation to assess the benefits of WFH. Longitudinal studies would also determine trends in worker needs as WFH grows. In addition, the blend of monetary and nonmonetary incentives can best clarify what motivates worker performance and loyalty. Finally, an examination of differences across professions and organisational types in workers' perceptions of rewards in the WFH context can be particularly helpful in designing reward programs tailored to a specific company.

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