Perception and Preference of IT Employees towards Moonlighting in the IT Industry

Dr.R.Satheeshkumar[1], Ms. Sahana Suresh G[2], Ms.Shobha K[3]
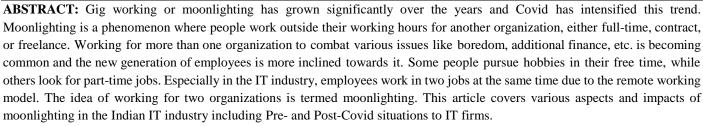
[1]Professor, Department of M.B.A & Research Centre, Surana College,Kengeri Campus, KST, Bangalore, Karnataka. ORCID: 0000-0003-2426-2331.

[2]Administrative Supportive Staff, Surana College, Kengeri Campus, KST, Bangalore, Karnataka.

[3]Assistant Admin, Avin International School, Bangalore.

ABSTRACT: Gig working or moonlighting has grown significantly over the years and Covid has intensified this trend. Moonlighting is a phenomenon where people work outside their working hours for another organization, either full-time, contract, or freelance. Working for more than one organization to combat various issues like boredom, additional finance, etc. is becoming common and the new generation of employees is more inclined towards it. Some people pursue hobbies in their free time, while others look for part-time jobs. Especially in the IT industry, employees work in two jobs at the same time due to the remote working model. The idea of working for two organizations is termed moonlighting. This article covers various aspects and impacts of moonlighting in the Indian IT industry including Pre- and Post-Covid situations to IT firms.

A survey questionnaire was the main tool used by the researcher to collect the data. 100 respondents over the age of 20 years and above were chosen randomly from IT sectors. Questions on their perception and preference towards moonlighting such as interest, familiarity, engagement, challenges, and impacts were included in the questionnaire. While a significant percentage of respondents were aware of the term moonlighting and the advantages of taking second jobs. Moreover, the study found that there is a positive impact on the respondents who were involved in moonlighting.

KEYWORDS: Moonlighting, IT employees, Familiarity, Perception, Freelancers.

1. INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Moonlighting is the practice of taking on a second job outside of regular business hours to earn additional income. For instance, an individual with a regular 9-to-5 job might work at another job during evenings or nights to supplement their earnings. Private businesses may have their own policies regarding moonlighting, some of which might restrict or allow employees to take on additional jobs. Public organization employees, such as those working for federal government agencies, need to be mindful of agency regulations and federal laws concerning holding two jobs. For instance, federal government employees are generally not allowed to receive two sources of income from the federal government simultaneously.

In recent years, researchers have shown a growing interest in studying job satisfaction. As time passes, professionals are increasingly seeking second jobs. Moonlighting, or taking on additional employment, has gained popularity due to its association with several important employee behaviors, particularly job happiness. The workforce plays a vital role in an organization's success and smooth operations. Moonlighting serves as an indicator of employees' satisfaction levels with their organization. By analyzing the relationship between job satisfaction and moonlighting, we can explore the reasons behind employees choosing to take on second jobs. When employees lack sufficient motivation or are dissatisfied with their work hours or conditions in their primary job, they may decide to pursue additional employment alongside their current job. It has been observed that the motives of employees who seek or continue with a second job are linked to their level of job satisfaction within the organization. Understanding this relationship can help organizations identify areas for improvement in work conditions, motivation, and overall job satisfaction, leading to a more content and productive workforce.

An individual is considered moonlighting or said to be moonlighted if he is still attached to the primary job but at the same time, he has another job to earn more money. Normally, in the discussion of moonlighting, there are two issues debated. Firstly, employees who moonlight with the approval by the employer and secondly, they do it illegally. Most employees engage in moonlighting without telling their main employer.

Perception and Preference of IT Employees towards Moonlighting in the IT Industry

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In American usage, moonlighting can refer to a high school music teacher who gives private lessons, a doctor who takes on shifts at multiple locations, or a software developer who spends after-work hours on a startup. In some cases, moonlighters seek extra income. Others moonlight for professional and personal development. Some moonlight as an opportunity for innovation and to experiment with new ideas.

For some, moonlighting is necessary, and even admirable. However, when professionals undertake additional work *as* professionals, they encounter ethical and legal risks. Employees may encounter a conflict of interest, if their 'moonlighting' activities conflict with the goals of their employer, or if moonlighting influences their performance. Some employment contracts have moonlighting clauses. These clauses vary, some restricting employees from secondary employment and others claiming ownership of intellectual property. When employment could be done remotely (Work from Home) and employees were obtaining adequate time saved from commuting, the practice of moonlighting gained attention during the pandemic.

Additionally, a lot of little tasks that didn't demand full-time involvement and had the potential to increase someone's income were accessible because of the nationwide lockdown. Work from home was the new normal and companies could no longer judge the productivity of their resources through clock in-clock out time sheets, which also gave a boost to moonlighting. Impact of Covid-19: In the year 2020, with the onset of Covid-19 leading to lockdown, the economy started stalling and hence thousands of employees were laid off. This also led to employees searching and/or working for multiple jobs to maintain job security and a steady flow of income with as many as 70% of remote workers working on second jobs.

Employees also opt for a second job for additional income if they have low pay at their primary jobs and need additional source of income to meet their needs or the primary income may not be sufficient to take care of the demands of their lavish lifestyle. Employees may also consider a second job to gain additional skills or indulge in work profiles they are more passionate about. Employees also opt for moonlighting to utilize the free time at hand when they do not have enough work to keep them occupied at their primary jobs or to keep themselves busy throughout the day.

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

(Ashwini, 2017) Multiple-job holding has increased particularly in recent days. This phenomenon is more prevalent in IT companies because of the flexible working hours and work from home options offered by most of them. In this article, the authors examine drivers of multiple job holding and their association with the demographic profile of IT professionals. The authors have examined the intentions for moonlighting and have suggested an empirical model.

(Dr. A. Shaji George1, 2022) The global environment and economy are experiencing rapid changes, which have led to shifts in work patterns. Remote work and inflation have prompted some workers to take on secondary jobs, either to meet their basic needs or to earn additional disposable income. Alongside these changes, human resource management (HRM) practices are also evolving. In recent years, there has been a rise in the number of individuals holding multiple jobs. This trend is primarily attributed to the availability of flexible work hours and the option to work from home, which are commonly offered by IT companies.

(Adelugba, 2020) This research study aimed to examine the impact of moonlighting on job satisfaction among academic staff and medical doctors in Southwest Nigeria. The study utilized a descriptive research design and employed a multi-stage sampling technique to select participants. A questionnaire was used as the research instrument, and a total of 393 academic staff members and 348 medical doctors from different universities and hospitals in Southwest Nigeria were surveyed.

(Seema, 2021) In the age of Industry 4.0, working online, gig working, freelancing, and moonlighting have all come to signify the same thing. Finding and pursuing alternative jobs is essential for tracking the development of workers' withdrawal cognitions (WC). In the past, workplace conflict has mainly been studied in relation to job attitudes for the ultimate consequence of turnover, but in the digital age, it is equally important to investigate the relationship of job attitudes with this crucial cognition sequenced before turnover stage, i.e. moonlighting, which may ultimately lead to turnover. By exploring how job happiness impacts moonlighting intentions and how organizational commitment functions as a mediating factor between the two, the aim of this paper is to fill the vacuum in the research.

(Rosie Campbell, 2015) Less is known about how voters react to such behavior than the effects of politicians working second jobs or moonlighting on their performance and recruiting. The public may regard Members of Parliament (MPs) who make additional income either adversely, considering it as a conflict of interest or a distraction, or positively, seeing it as a connection to the "real world" outside of politics. We examine the reactions of British residents to MPs working second jobs through a series of survey studies. We show preferences that are more complicated than those that conventional survey methods reveal. Both size and funding source elicit reactions from the public.

(Susan L, 2010) This study looks at the prevalence and causes of moonlighting with a gender- specific focus. A bivariate probit model of labor supply and the choice to hold several jobs is specified and estimated in the study. It has been shown that the reasons why men and women moonlight are identical. According to a wage decomposition analysis, only a small correlation exists between an individual's human capital and their moonlighting wage, with 93 percent of the difference between male and female moonlighters' wages not being explained by differences in features. Finally, it is discovered that part-timers are less likely to disclose their earnings.

Perception and Preference of IT Employees towards Moonlighting in the IT Industry

(Baah-Boateng, 2013) When public-service physicians are allowed to refer patients to their private practices, we examine the work incentives associated with moonlighting. While some doctors in the public health system are devoted and conduct themselves honorably, others—the moonlighters—are utility maximizers. While allowing moonlighting always improves overall consumer welfare, equilibrium public-care quality may rise or fall; if it does, moonlighting raises expected utility for individual consumer. Unchecked moonlighting may have a negative impact on consumer welfare due to unfavorable behavioral reactions, such as moonlighters skipping more work and devoted doctors acting dishonestly. Private market price control limits such harmful behaviors in the public system and enhances consumer welfare.

(Banerjee, October 2012) The economy and the environment around the world are changing extremely quickly. Practices for managing human resources are likewise evolving and expanding in scope. Employees are much more worried about how they will prosper financially in this time of economic transformation than they are about how they will excel professionally. This has led to the addition of additional work with additional remuneration with a different Moonlighting or taking on additional work outside of one's principal job, has grown increasingly widespread in a variety of areas, including the information technology sector. However, the perception of moonlighting among IT employees raises issues and needs a closer look at the situation.

(Dr. Sunetra Gaitonde) Moonlighting refers to the situation where an employee simultaneously works for two different companies. This can occur due to various reasons, such as dissatisfaction with current wages or the need to supplement existing income. The COVID-19 pandemic had a profound effect on the economy, employment opportunities, and employees' salaries. Additionally, the increased practice of remote work created opportunities for professionals to engage in multiple employment. Although these opportunities persisted beyond the pandemic, they presented challenges for HR managers in ensuring employee commitment to their organizations.

3.1 Statement of Problem
Moonlighting has a variety of implications on an employee's work life as well as the employers' compliance policies. Organizations can design strategies and rules that correspond with their employees' needs and expectations by investigating their perceptions of moonlighting and its impact on work performance, job satisfaction, and retention. The difficulty is knowing IT personnel' perceptions of moonlighting and the potential influence it has on their professional lives, work performance, and overall job happiness on top of their primary job. This is nothing more than what we may refer to as employee moonlighting. This knowledge can result in a more supportive work environment and a good balance between employees' personal goals and professional obligations.

3.2 Objectives of the study
1. To understand the concept of moonlighting in the IT Industry.
2. To identify the perceptions and preference of IT employees towards moonlighting.
3. To assess the ways and means that would make moonlighting acceptable to both employees and employers.

3.3 Limitations of the study
This study is based on the opinion level of IT employees, and it is subject to respondent bias.
This study is applicable to IT Industries.

3.4 Research Methodology
Research Type: Descriptive Research is used to describe characteristics of a population or phenomenon being studied. It does not answer questions about how/when/why the characteristics occurred.

3.5. Source of Data
Primary Data and Secondary Data
- Primary data is information gathered directly from primary sources by researchers.
- Secondary data is information gathered from primary sources and made easily available for researchers to use in their study.

3.6 Data collection tool methods
The Sampling Technique used in this study is Quota Sampling. 100 responses are collected using this sampling. The data collection tool used in this study is Structured Questionnaire prepared using google form and sent to the respondents. Data has been analyzed using statistical tools like ANOVA and Chi-square.

3.7 Sample Size
The Sampling Technique used in this study is Quota Sampling. 100 responses are collected using this sampling.

Perception and Preference of IT Employees towards Moonlighting in the IT Industry

4. DATA ANALYSIS

4.1. Whether moonlighting is acceptable in the IT sector.

Particulars	No. of. Respondents	Percentage
Yes	31	31%
No	40	40%
Maybe	29	29%
Total	100	100%

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation: This table illustrates that will moonlight is generally acceptable in the IT sector. 31% of the respondents believed that the IT sector will accept moonlighting where 40% of the respondents perceived that they may not accept moonlighting, while 29% are fall between those both they may accept or might not be.

4.2. Employees Opinion on whether you engaged in moonlighting or held a second job while being employed.

Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	39	31%
No	61	61%
Total	100	100%

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation:

From the above figure, it is found that maximum respondents in this study are not engaged in moonlighting or held a second job while being employed only 39% of the respondents are engaged in moonlighting out of 100 respondents.

4.3. Circumstances leading to taking on a second job or moonlighting.

Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Financial Reasons	55	55%
Personal Interest	42	42%
Professional Development	36	36%
Flexible working hours	34	34%
Limited opportunities	22	22%
Others	8	8%

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation:

In the above table survey displays the circumstances might cause to consider taking on a second job or moonlighting. 55% of the respondents have taken moonlighting for financial reasons and 42% of the respondents have taken for personal interest. While 36% go with professional development and the other 34% of respondents go with Flexible working hours. Whereas another 22% of the respondents found that there will be only limited opportunities if they are not involved in moonlighting.

4.4. Employees' Perceptions on Moonlighting.

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Opportunity for additional Income	44	44%
Career advancement	48	48%
Lack of job satisfaction	31	31%
Skill development	53	53%
Increased work life balance	24	24%
Negative impact on performance	15	15%

Conflict of interest	12	12%
Not applicable ethically	10	10%
Others	8	8%

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation:

It is inferred from the table that 44% of employees perceived moonlighting as an opportunity for additional income. 48% of respondents perceived career advancement. 31% of respondents go with lack of job satisfaction in primary employment where majority of respondents go with skill development that is 53% of respondents. 24% of respondents perceived of increased work life balance. 15% of respondents are having negative impact on performance in primary job. 12% respondents are having conflicts of interest, while 10 and 8% of respondents are not acceptable ethically.

4.5. Employees on the impact of moonlighting on their professional growth and skill development.

Particulars	No. of. Respondents	Percentage (%)
Highly beneficial	21	21%
Beneficial	23	23%
Neutral	46	46%
Unbeneficial	7	7%
Very Unbeneficial	3	3%
Total	100	100%

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation:

This survey shows how moonlighting has impacted on professional growth and skill development. Most of the respondents are in between where there may or might not be beneficial and 23% of the respondents benefited. While 21% of the respondents are highly benefited, 7% of the respondents are benefited while only minority respondents that is 3% of them are unbenefited on their professional growth and skill development.

4.6. Employees' Level of agreement on whether moonlighting provides additional income opportunities.

Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	7	7%
Agree	20	20%
Neutral	43	43%
Disagree	11	11%
Strongly Disagree	19	19%
Total	100	100%

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation:

The survey shows that moonlighting can provide additional income opportunities. 43% of the respondents believe that additional income opportunities are neutral. 20% of the respondents agree with the additional income opportunities. 19% of the respondents said that they will strongly disagree and 11% of the respondents will only disagree with the additional income opportunities with moonlighting.

4.7. Employees' Level of agreement on whether moonlighting opportunities provides the flexible work schedules.

Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	28	28%
Agree	12	12%
Neutral	39	39%

Disagree	13	13%
Strongly disagree	8	8%
Total	100	100%

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation:
From the above table the survey displays those moonlighting opportunities with flexible work schedules. 39% of respondents are chosen neutral where 12% of the respondents agreed that moonlighting opportunities with flexible work schedules. 8% of the respondents strongly disagreed while 13% of the respondents disagreed that moonlighting opportunities with flexible work schedules. Only 28% of the 100% respondents strongly agreed.

5. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Many survey participants did not think that moonlighting in the IT industry would be acceptable rather than accepted.

In contrast to 39% of the employees out of 100 IT employees, most of the employees who took part in this survey are not into moonlight.

The bulk of the respondents are thought to be moonlighting for financial reasons. While most responders take them for their own personal interests, some do so for professional advancement. While some of them have opted to moonlight, others prefer flexible work schedules and other alternatives.

The greater value of research participants thinks that skill development, not conflicts of interest, a better work-life balance, or a lack of job satisfaction in one's primary occupation, is the key to professional success.

Most respondents agree that doing a second job has a positive or negative impact on their professional development and skill acquisition, while the minority of respondents disagree. Only a small percentage of respondents experience professional development and skill progress.

5.1 Suggestions:

Moonlighting, or having a second job, can impact both the organization and the employee's perception.

For Employees
Financial Benefits: Moonlighting can provide additional income, helping employees achieve financial goals or cope with rising living costs.

Skill Development: A second job may offer opportunities to develop new skills or gain diverse experiences, enhancing the employee's overall skill set.

Work-Life Balance: Be cautious about potential burnout. Balancing two jobs can strain personal time and affect overall well-being.

Confidentiality issues: Ensure there's no conflict of interest or breach of confidentiality between the two jobs, especially if they are in related industries.

For Organization's
Productivity Concerns: Moonlighting might lead to fatigue and reduced productivity, affecting the employee's performance in their primary job role.

Policy implementation: Establish clear moonlighting policies to address any potential issues and maintain transparency in the employment relationship.

CONCLUSIONS

In the corporate sector, moonlighting is regarded as a high-value competitive advantage. Organizations should permit their employees to work a second job to gain a competitive edge and be adaptable to the present and future standard of life. As a result, this study draws the conclusion that implementing moonlighting in an organization is a hard issue for employers and that it takes time to grasp. This conclusion is based on the findings of the quantitative technique. Regardless of the motivation, an employee can desire to do so because of a financial hardship, a high cost of living, the state of the economy, or a compelling need. The outcome of this study also demonstrates the considerable and favorable association between personal and environmental factors and employees' participation in jobs. Responses from the respondents were likewise in line with the qualitative method's findings.

REFERENCES:
1) Ashwini, 2. M. (2017). Moonlighting Intentions of Middle Level Employees. Vels University, Tamilnadu, India.
2) Dr. A. Shaji George1, A. H. (July-September 2022). A Review of Moonlighting in the IT Sector and its Impact. Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India.
3) Adelugba, I. (2020). Effects of Moonlighting on Job Satisfaction in Public Institutions. Ekiti State university: February 29th, 2020.

4) Seema, V. C. (January–April 2021,). Effect of Job Satisfaction on Moonlighting Intentions: Mediating Effect of Organizational Commitment.

5) Rosie Campbell, P. C. (10, Febraury 2015). Attitudes to Moonlighting Politicians: Evidence from the United Kingdom. Cambridge University Press.

6) Susan L, A. (4, October 2010). Moonlighting: multiple motives and gender differences.

7) Banerjee, S. (October 2012). Effect Of Employee Moonlighting: A Challenging Task for Managers.

8) Baah-Boateng, W. (2013). Determinants of moonlighting in Ghana: an empirical investigation.