

Offices reopen, but WFH roles remain top choice

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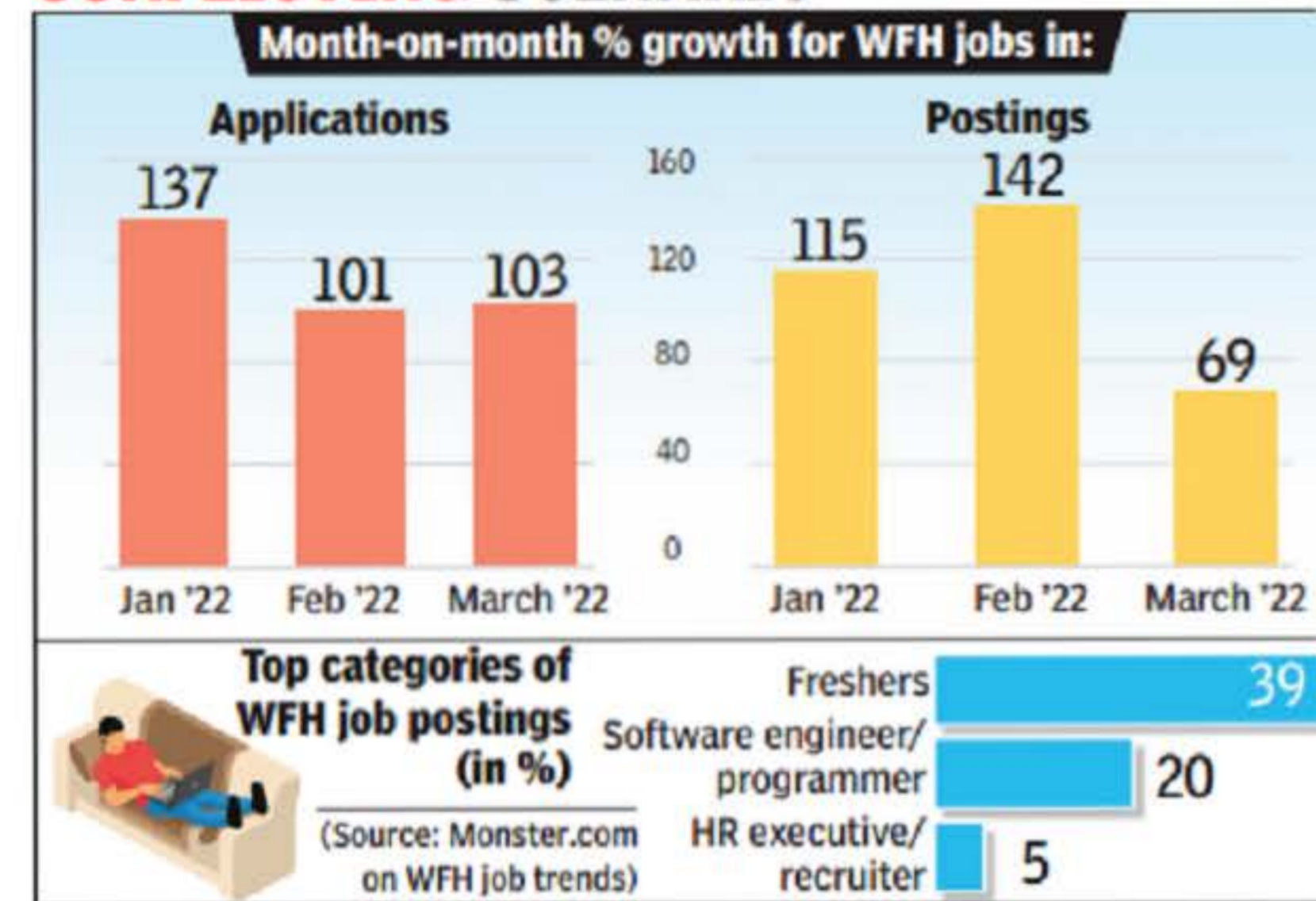


Is it commuting relief or the comfort of a home office? After the third Covid wave subsided, there may have been a reset in the way people work — either from office or in a hybrid way — but WFH remains a hot favourite among job applicants.

According to a study, applications for work-from-home (WFH) jobs continued to grow at over 100% month-on-month (MoM) in March. However, postings for WFH jobs have moderated to 69% from 142% in February 2022. The data from global employment platform Monster's WFH job trends, shared exclusively with TOI, suggests that while most organisations have adopted a hybrid model, which is also said to be a preferred choice, a large section of workers is still opting for WFH mode.

Monster.com CEO Sekhar Garisa said, "There has been a radical change in perspective. Today, if employees choose to work onsite, the key reasons are for a change of scenery, to team up face-to-face, or to avoid situations that aren't contributing to profound and collaborative work. This arrangement has given them a sense of control and freedom over their own schedules, which can directly be attributed to enhanced productivity and high level of job satisfaction."

CONFLICTING SCENARIO



According to the data, the MoM growth rate in job applications has come down from 137% in January 2022. However, WFH job trends could change depending on external factors.

"The past two years were those of unintended remake and regenerate, but 2022 is where it gets discretionary. This year will be all about the workforce and workplace. Although employee sentiment is inclined more towards WFH, a hybrid model that will balance the constructed communicate with concerted support is key," said Garisa.

Several organisations have adopted the hybrid work culture, which has emerged as the future of work. Considering the decline in the number of Covid cases over the past few weeks, Hindustan Unilever (HUL) moved to hybrid ways of working. A company spokesperson said, "We have encouraged our people to join us in the office/work the market for at least three days a week and we have received a good response. Those who are vulnerable or have exceptional circumstances that prevent them from coming into the office have the option to discuss their work arrangements with respective managers and team members."

Assessment technology provider Mercer-Mettl's CEO Siddhartha Gupta said, "While one reality is that face-to-face interactions are more creative and problem-solving, WFH is a time-saver. It also allows for deep thinking, which usually you would not get in an office environment. Both have their pros and cons."

Some organisations continue to offer work-from-anywhere (WFA) for employees. Travel tech firm Sabre is one such to introduce a global WFA programme that provides their team members with a selection of flexible work arrangements.

Talent scarcity is expected to continue. According to the Monster data, 39% of total WFH jobs were posted for freshers, which accounted for the highest share across functions.