

Work–Life Balance Under Hybrid Work Arrangements: An Empirical Study

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Abstract

The rapid adoption of hybrid work arrangements has significantly transformed traditional employment structures, particularly in the post-pandemic period. Hybrid work, which combines remote and on-site working modes, has emerged as a strategic approach to enhance flexibility while sustaining organizational productivity. This empirical study examines work–life balance under hybrid work arrangements among employees in Kanyakumari District, Tamil Nadu. The study is based on primary data collected from employees engaged in hybrid work arrangements across selected organizations in Kanyakumari District. A structured questionnaire was used to gather information relating to work–life balance. The data were analyzed using appropriate statistical tools. The findings reveal that hybrid work arrangements have a significant positive influence on work–life balance, particularly by reducing commuting time, improving schedule flexibility, and enabling better integration of professional and personal responsibilities. However, the study also identifies challenges such as extended working hours, blurred work–family boundaries, and increased digital workload, which adversely affect some employees. The study concludes that while hybrid work arrangements offer considerable benefits for employees in Kanyakumari District, their effectiveness depends on supportive organizational policies, managerial trust, and clear work-time regulations.

Keywords: Hybrid, Work-Life, Employees, Flexibility, Productivity

I. INTRODUCTION

Introduction to Topic

The concept of hybrid work has gained significant scholarly attention in recent years, particularly in the context of changing employment structures following the COVID-19 pandemic. Hybrid work refers to a flexible work arrangement in which employees divide their working time between remote locations and the physical workplace, enabling organizations to balance flexibility with coordination and control (Allen, Golden, & Shockley, 2015). Hybrid work has become a strategic response to evolving employee expectations, digital transformation, and the need for organizational resilience in uncertain environments (Waizenegger et al., 2020).

Work–life balance is one of the most extensively examined outcomes of hybrid and flexible work arrangements in academic literature. Hybrid work can positively influence work–life balance by offering employees greater autonomy, reduced commuting time, and enhanced control over work schedules (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007). Flexibility supports employees in managing family responsibilities and personal commitments more effectively, thereby improving overall well-being and job satisfaction (Felstead & Henseke, 2017).

However, the outcomes of hybrid work arrangements largely depend on organizational policies, managerial trust, and clear communication of work expectations (Kossek, Thompson, & Lautsch, 2015). Regional and cultural contexts significantly shape employees' experiences of hybrid work, especially in developing economies where infrastructure and organizational readiness vary widely (Choudhury, Foroughi, & Larson, 2021). Hence, this study seeks to address this gap by examining the influence of hybrid work on employees' work–life balance in Kanyakumari District, Tamil Nadu.

Objectives

- To assess the benefits of hybrid work arrangements on employees' work–life balance
- To identify the key challenges associated with hybrid work arrangements

Hypothesis

- H₀₁ – There is no significant difference among age groups with regard to the perceived benefits of hybrid work arrangements.
- H₀₂ – There is no significant difference in the level of challenges faced by employees under hybrid work arrangements.

Research Methodology

For this study, the researcher employed a convenience sampling technique to collect data from 120 employees working under hybrid work arrangements in Kanyakumari District. Primary data were collected using a well-structured questionnaire designed to measure various dimensions of work–life balance, while secondary data were gathered from journals, books, research articles, reports, and online databases. The collected data were analyzed using appropriate statistical tools such as Percentage Analysis, One-Way ANOVA and Friedman Test with the support of SPSS software, to examine the impact of hybrid work arrangements on employees' work–life balance.

Review of Literature

Allen (2021), in the journal article "*Flexible Work Arrangements and Employee Well-Being: The Role of Hybrid Work*," examined the impact of hybrid work arrangements on employee well-being and work–life balance in the post-pandemic context. The primary objective of the study was to analyze whether combining remote and on-site work could enhance employees' ability to manage professional and personal responsibilities. The study found that hybrid work arrangements significantly improved work–life balance by reducing commuting stress and providing greater flexibility in work schedules. However, it also reported that the absence of clear working-hour boundaries led to longer working hours for some employees.

Wang (2021), through the article "*Achieving Work–Life Balance in Hybrid Work Settings*," aimed to explore how hybrid work models influence employees' work–life balance. The study focused on employees' ability to integrate work and family life effectively under hybrid arrangements. The findings revealed that hybrid work positively affected work–life balance by allowing employees more time for family and personal activities. At the same time, the study highlighted challenges such as constant digital connectivity and blurred work–family boundaries, which negatively impacted employees' overall well-being.

Kumar and George (2022), in their journal article "*Hybrid Work Culture and Employee Productivity in India*," investigated the relationship between hybrid work culture, employee productivity, and work–life balance in Indian organizations. The objective of the study was to assess whether hybrid work arrangements could improve both productivity and work–life balance. The study concluded that hybrid work had a significant positive influence on work–life balance by reducing stress and improving time management. The findings emphasized that organizational support and clearly defined work policies were essential to sustain these benefits.

Chopra (2022), in the article titled "*Work–Life Balance Challenges in the Era of Hybrid Employment*," sought to identify the major challenges faced by employees working under hybrid arrangements. The objective was to understand how these challenges

affect employees’ work–life balance. The study revealed that extended working hours, role overload, and digital fatigue were the major factors disrupting work–life balance. It suggested that managerial trust and structured hybrid work policies are crucial to minimizing these challenges.

Nair and Thomas (2023), in their journal article “*Organizational Support and Work–Life Balance in Hybrid Work Models*,” examined the role of organizational support in enhancing employees’ work–life balance. The objective of the study was to analyze how leadership support and flexible organizational policies influence work–life balance in hybrid work settings. The findings indicated that employees experienced improved work–life balance when organizations provided clear expectations, flexible work policies, and supportive management. Conversely, inadequate organizational support resulted in stress and work–life imbalance despite the flexibility offered by hybrid work arrangements.

Analysis and Interpretation:

Demographic Profile

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the respondents, highlighting their key personal and socio-economic characteristics. This analysis provides a clear understanding of the background composition of the sample selected for the study.

Table 1
Demographic Profile

Particulars	Frequency	Percent
Age (Years)		
20–29	26	21.67
30–39	44	36.67
40–49	30	25.00
50–59	14	11.66
60 and above	6	5.00
Total	120	100.00
Gender		
Male	70	58.33
Female	50	41.67
Total	120	100.00
Marital Status		
Married	76	63.33
Unmarried	44	36.67
Total	120	100.00
Educational Qualification		
SSLC	8	6.67
HSC	14	11.66
Undergraduate	38	31.67

Postgraduate	42	35.00
Professional Degree	18	15.00
Total	120	100.00
Designation / Job Level		
Junior Level	36	30.00
Middle Level	54	45.00
Senior Level	30	25.00
Total	120	100.00
Type of Organization		
Public Sector	22	18.33
Private Sector	58	48.34
IT / ITES	26	21.66
Service Sector	14	11.67
Total	120	100.00
Work Experience (Years)		
Less than 5 years	28	23.33
5–10 years	40	33.33
10–15 years	32	26.67
Above 15 years	20	16.67
Total	120	100.00
Monthly Income (₹)		
Below ₹30,000	24	20.00
₹30,000 – ₹50,000	46	38.33
₹50,000 – ₹70,000	30	25.00
Above ₹70,000	20	16.67
Total	120	100.00
Nature of Family		
Nuclear Family	72	60.00
Joint Family	48	40.00
Total	120	100.00
Area of Residence		
Urban	68	56.67
Semi-Urban	32	26.66
Rural	20	16.67
Total	120	100.00

Source: Primary Data

With regard to age, the majority of the respondents belong to the 30–39 years age group at 36.67 per cent (44), followed by those in the 40–49 years category at 25.00 per cent (30). Respondents aged 20–29 years account for 21.67 per cent (26), while 11.66 per cent (14) fall under the 50–59 years group. Only 5.00 per cent (6) of the respondents are aged 60 years and above.

In terms of gender, male respondents constitute 58.33 per cent (70), whereas female respondents account for 41.67 per cent (50).

Regarding marital status, a majority of the respondents are married at 63.33 per cent (76), while 36.67 per cent (44) are unmarried.

With respect to educational qualification, postgraduates form the largest group at 35.00 per cent (42), followed by undergraduates at 31.67 per cent (38). Respondents with professional degrees account for 15.00 per cent (18), while those with HSC and SSLC qualifications represent 11.66 per cent (14) and 6.67 per cent (8) respectively.

In relation to job level, middle-level employees constitute 45.00 per cent (54), followed by junior-level employees at 30.00 per cent (36) and senior-level employees at 25.00 per cent (30).

With regard to the type of organization, 48.34 per cent (58) of the respondents are employed in the private sector. Employees from IT/ITES organizations account for 21.66 per cent (26), while 18.33 per cent (22) work in the public sector. The remaining 11.67 per cent (14) are employed in the service sector.

Concerning work experience, 33.33 per cent (40) of the respondents have 5–10 years of experience, followed by 26.67 per cent (32) with 10–15 years of experience. Respondents with less than five years of experience constitute 23.33 per cent (28), while 16.67 per cent (20) have more than 15 years of experience.

With respect to monthly income, the largest proportion of respondents earn between ₹30,000 and ₹50,000 at 38.33 per cent (46), followed by those earning between ₹50,000 and ₹70,000 at 25.00 per cent (30). Respondents earning below ₹30,000 account for 20.00 per cent (24), while 16.67 per cent (20) earn above ₹70,000 per month.

Regarding the nature of family, 60.00 per cent (72) of the respondents belong to nuclear families, while 40.00 per cent (48) live in joint families.

Finally, in terms of area of residence, a majority of the respondents reside in urban areas at 56.67 per cent (68), followed by those from semi-urban areas at 26.66 per cent (32). Rural respondents account for 16.67 per cent (20).

Benefits of Hybrid Work Arrangements

Table 2 presents the results of the One-Way ANOVA conducted to examine whether there is a significant difference among age groups with respect to the perceived benefits of hybrid work arrangements among employees.

H₀₁ - There is no significant difference among age groups with regard to the perceived benefits of hybrid work arrangements.

Table 2
Benefits of Hybrid Work Arrangements

Benefits of Hybrid Work	Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F value	Sig.
Reducing Commuting Time	Between Groups	12.684	4	3.171	4.52	0.002**
	Within Groups	80.736	115	0.702		
	Total	93.420	119			
Improving Schedule Flexibility	Between Groups	10.912	4	2.728	3.89	0.005**
	Within Groups	80.708	115	0.702		
	Total	91.620	119			
Better Integration of Professional and Personal Responsibilities	Between Groups	14.356	4	3.589	5.14	0.001**
	Within Groups	80.294	115	0.698		
	Total	94.650	119			
Reduction in Work-Related Stress	Between Groups	11.248	4	2.812	4.06	0.004**
	Within Groups	79.672	115	0.693		
	Total	90.920	119			
Improved Job Satisfaction	Between Groups	9.864	4	2.466	3.54	0.009**
	Within Groups	80.156	115	0.697		
	Total	90.020	119			
Better Time Management	Between Groups	13.120	4	3.280	4.78	0.001**
	Within Groups	78.800	115	0.685		
	Total	91.920	119			
Improved Work Autonomy	Between Groups	8.996	4	2.249	3.21	0.015*
	Within Groups	80.504	115	0.700		
	Total	89.500	119			

Cost Savings for Employees	Between Groups	10.248	4	2.562	3.76	0.007**
	Within Groups	78.432	115	0.682		
	Total	88.680	119			
Improved Physical and Mental Health	Between Groups	13.864	4	3.466	4.98	0.001**
	Within Groups	79.936	115	0.695		
	Total	93.800	119			
Better Family Engagement	Between Groups	12.476	4	3.119	4.43	0.003**
	Within Groups	80.524	115	0.700		
	Total	93.000	119			

Source: Primary Data

** denotes significant at 1%, * denotes significant at 5%

The One-Way ANOVA results shown in Table 3.2 reveal that the significance values for all selected benefits of hybrid work arrangements are less than 0.05. This indicates that there is a statistically significant difference among age groups in their perception of benefits such as reduced commuting time, improved schedule flexibility, better integration of professional and personal responsibilities, reduced work-related stress, improved job satisfaction, better time management, increased work autonomy, cost savings, improved physical and mental health, and better family engagement. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted, confirming that age has a significant influence on employees' perception of the benefits of hybrid work arrangements.

Key Challenges

Table 3 presents the results of the Friedman Test conducted to rank the major challenges faced by employees under hybrid work arrangements.

H₀₂ – There is no significant difference in the level of challenges faced by employees under hybrid work arrangements.

Table 3
Key Challenges

Challenges	Mean Rank	Rank
Extended Working Hours	6.78	I
Blurred Work–Family Boundaries	6.21	II
Increased Digital Workload	5.84	III
Work-Related Stress	4.92	IV
Lack of Clear Work-Time Regulations	4.36	V
Reduced Personal Time	3.88	VI
Communication Gaps with Team/Management	3.41	VII
Technological Issues (Connectivity/Tools)	2.97	VIII
Feelings of Social Isolation	2.63	IX
N		120
Chi-Square		92.614
df		8
Sig.		<0.001**

Source: Primary data

** denotes significant at 1%

The Friedman Test results presented in Table 3.3 show a statistically significant difference among the challenges faced by employees under hybrid work arrangements, as the significance value is less than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. The ranking indicates that extended working hours is the most severe challenge faced by employees, followed by blurred work–family boundaries and increased digital workload. Other notable challenges include work-related stress, lack of clear work-time regulations, and reduced personal time. Challenges such as communication gaps, technological issues, and feelings of social isolation were ranked lower but remain relevant concerns.

II. CONCLUSION

The study reveals that hybrid work arrangements offer significant benefits to employees, with the One-Way ANOVA results indicating a statistically significant difference among age groups in their perception of benefits such as reduced commuting time, improved schedule flexibility, better integration of professional and personal responsibilities, reduced work-related stress, improved job satisfaction, better time management, increased work autonomy, cost savings, improved physical and mental health, and better family engagement. At the same time, the Friedman Test results show a significant difference in the challenges faced by employees under hybrid work arrangements, with extended working hours emerging as the most severe challenge, followed by blurred work–family boundaries and increased digital workload, while issues such as work-related stress,

lack of clear work-time regulations, reduced personal time, communication gaps, technological issues, and feelings of social isolation remain relevant concerns. The findings suggest that although hybrid work arrangements considerably enhance work–life balance among employees in Kanyakumari District, their effectiveness largely depends on supportive organizational policies, managerial trust, and clearly defined work-time regulations, which are essential to maximize benefits and minimize challenges, thereby ensuring sustainable and productive hybrid work practices.

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