

Hybrid Work and Work-Life Balance: A Study of IT Professionals' Experiences and Challenges

Dr. Swati Sharma¹ and Ms. Aarti Sharma²

¹Assistant Professor, Institute of Business Studies, CCS University, Meerut, UP- India

²Research Scholar, Department of Commerce & Business Administration, CCS University, Meerut, UP- India

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ABSTRACT

Background: *The increasing adoption of hybrid work models, particularly in the IT sector, has significantly altered traditional work environments. "While such models offer flexibility and autonomy, they also introduce challenges related to work-life integration, digital fatigue, and stress arising from blurred personal and professional boundaries.*

Aim: *This study aims to explore the impact of hybrid work arrangements on work-life balance among IT professionals in India. It seeks to identify both the enablers and barriers to maintaining a sustainable balance between work and personal life in hybrid settings.*

Methods: *A mixed-method research design was adopted, combining quantitative surveys (n = 200) and qualitative interviews (n = 10) with IT professionals based in Delhi-NCR, Bengaluru, and Hyderabad. The quantitative component employed a structured Likert-scale questionnaire assessing variables such as remote work frequency, perceived stress, work-life balance, and organizational support. Thematic analysis of qualitative data was conducted using NVivo, and statistical tests, including Pearson correlation and linear regression, were performed via SPSS.*

Results: *Quantitative results indicated no significant correlation between the number of remote working days and perceived availability of time for personal commitments ($r = 0.021$, $p = 0.769$), nor between stress from work-home overlap and perceived time for family ($R^2 = 0.001$, $p = 0.599$). However, qualitative insights revealed that leadership support, communication clarity, flexible scheduling, and mental health resources are key factors influencing work-life satisfaction in hybrid environments.*

Conclusion: *While hybrid work arrangements provide flexibility and reduce commuting stress, they also create challenges that require proactive organizational intervention. The study emphasizes the importance of contextual strategies—including policy support, time management training, and boundary-setting mechanisms—to enhance employee well-being and productivity. Future research should examine long-term impacts of hybrid work on mental health and career progression in technology-driven professions.*

Keywords: Hybrid Work, Work-Life Balance, IT Professionals, Remote Work, Digital Fatigue, Organizational Support, Mixed-Methods Research

1. Introduction

In IT, where workers use digital tools and distant communication to be productive, hybrid work models have changed workplace dynamics. Many IT workers choose hybrid work, which blends remote and in-office work for flexibility, autonomy, and work-life balance. Hybrid work arrangements provide greater schedule flexibility and minimise commute stress, but they also introduce blurred work-life boundaries, digital weariness, and higher demands for ongoing availability". Due to its high workload, tight deadlines, and dependence on technology, hybrid work models make it difficult for IT workers to combine work and life. Assessing the effects of hybrid work arrangements on employee well-being, job satisfaction, and work-life balance is vital when companies embrace them.

This research examines the pros and cons of hybrid work for IT workers and suggests ways firms might improve work-life integration. The mixed-method study will examine how hybrid employment promotes a sustainable workplace via surveys and interviews with IT workers. The study also examines how organisational policies, leadership support, and technology affect hybrid work. Work intensification and separating work and personal life might be difficult for certain professionals in a flexible environment. This paper enhances the hybrid work conversation by presenting industry-specific insights, best practices, and suggestions for organisations to improve work-life balance in the changing IT world. Businesses must understand these dynamics to maximise staff productivity and long-term well-being.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Hybrid Work and Occupational Stress

The shift to hybrid work arrangements has changed professional stress dynamics, especially in high-pressure industries like IT. Ferrara et al. (2023) report that post-pandemic remote and hybrid work models have brought schedule flexibility and psychological stress and social isolation. Wontorczyk and Roznowski (2022) found that totally remote workers are more

stressed than on-site workers owing to overlapping personal and professional responsibilities and poor home work conditions. Hybrid workers report lower stress owing to flexible schedule but the lowest professional relationship ratings, suggesting social separation and difficulties sustaining collegial relationships.

Hybrid work challenges interpersonal dynamics and boundary-setting. Lloyd, King, and Chenoweth (2002) and Bell, "Rajendran, and Theiler (2012) note that work-life imbalance (WLB) commonly correlates with high stress, especially when workers struggle to separate work and personal duties. Despite these downsides, hybrid models enable workers to customise work to their circadian cycles and family commitments, reducing stress (Wontorczyk & Roznowski, 2022). Remote participation via digital platforms, especially for professional social connection and peer support, reduces stress.

2.2 Theoretical Foundations: Spillover and Border Theory

The spillover model and border theory illuminate how hybrid work influences work-life boundaries. The spillover concept states that work experiences and emotions may impact personal life and vice versa. In hybrid environments, where work and non-work domains typically mix, this bidirectional impact is particularly strong (Brough et al., 2014). High workloads, continual digital connection, and inconsistent hours cause job pressure and blurred boundaries.

Border theory, an extension of spillover theory, introduces domains, boundaries, border-crossers, and border-keepers for further granularity (Clark, 2000). Employees regularly traverse various areas, and border permeability and flexibility dictate their equilibrium. Supervision and family support from border-keepers may reduce role conflict and improve domain administration. The unpredictability of these barriers makes support systems even more important in hybrid work.

2.3 Work Engagement, Effectiveness, and Managerial Support

Work engagement, defined as a positive, fulfilling work-related state characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli et al., 2006; Bakker & Demerouti, 2018), is widely recognized as a driver of both individual and organizational effectiveness. Engagement is fostered by psychological empowerment—employees' perception of meaning, competence, autonomy, and impact (Monje Amor et al., 2021). Studies affirm that managerial support and flexible structures enhance engagement, which in turn leads to improved performance outcomes (Glass & Noonan, 2016; Grant et al., 2013).

However, the conditions for achieving high engagement in hybrid environments remain ambiguous. While many employees report being equally or more effective when working

remotely (Chatterjee et al., 2022; Gibson et al., 2023), others express concerns about reduced face-to-face interaction and the absence of spontaneous collaboration. In a hybrid setup, engagement must be sustained both in the presence and absence of direct managerial oversight, a phenomenon still underexplored in empirical research (Müller & Niessen, 2019).

2.4 ICT, Digital Boundaries, and Work-Life Balance

Hybrid workplaces use ICT for two purposes. It allows continuous communication and operational continuity and blurs professional and personal barriers (Mazmanian et al., 2013). Researchers call persistent alerts, out-of-hours contact, and the inability to unplug technostress, which affects psychological recovery and depletes mental resources (Barber & Santuzzi, 2015; Santuzzi & Barber, 2018).

Several research (Boswell & Olson-Buchanan, 2007; Park & Jex, 2011) demonstrate that interruptions adversely affect ICT usage and perceived WLB. Post-2020 digital maturity has increased significantly (Müller et al., 2022), which may mitigate the negative impacts of continual connection. ICT use—especially in mixed settings—requires greater academic attention to its effects on recovery, autonomy, and interpersonal expectations.

2.5 Empirical Evidence from Hybrid Work Studies

A growing amount of empirical research examines hybrid work across industries and regions. Work-from-home (WFH) models enhanced pleasure but risked well-being, according to Franca and Muren (2023). Lorentzon et al. (2024) found that remote auditing increased flexibility but decreased interpersonal connection. Gangisetty et al. (2024) mentioned communication and schedule flexibility as work satisfaction factors in IT. Tan et al. (2024) said caring leadership helps hybrid work succeed in Singapore. However, Haquei (2023) warned that remote work challenges HR procedures like performance monitoring and engagement. Santos et al. (2023) found that hybrid models increased software team flexibility but decreased cohesiveness. In planning, Simanjuntak et al. (2023) found that hybrid work affected engagement but not task performance. Balickis (2023) used the UTAUT paradigm to find that aircraft hybrid work acceptance was driven by perceived performance improvements and technology compatibility. These results demonstrate the complexity and context-specificity of hybrid work outcomes, requiring sector-specific examination, especially in digitally reliant fields like IT.

3. Research Methodology

This quantitative study examined how hybrid work arrangements affect IT workers' work-life balance. The study examined work-life balance, job satisfaction, stress, remote work frequency, and organisational support to get statistically valid findings. Stratified random sampling ensured

proportional representation across occupational functions and experience levels. From Delhi-NCR, Bengaluru, and Hyderabad, 200 hybrid IT experts with at least six months of experience were sampled.

A structured, self-administered questionnaire utilising a five-point Likert scale quantified respondent attitudes across various aspects”. It was meant to capture critical variable interactions impacting hybrid work results. SPSS was used to analyse the data. While descriptive statistics showed demographic and response patterns, inferential analysis like Pearson correlation and linear regression examined variable connections and prediction consequences. “Informed permission, participant anonymity, and data confidentiality were carefully respected throughout the study procedure.

3.1 Hypotheses

- **H₀₁:** There is no significant relationship between stress due to work-home overlap and the perception of having enough time for family and personal commitments.
- **H₀₂:** There is no significant correlation between the number of remote working days and the perception of having enough time for family and personal commitments.

3.2 Research Objectives

To investigate the relationship between the number of remote working days and IT professionals’ perception of having enough time for family and personal commitments.

4. Data analysis

The statistical study of hybrid work characteristics and IT workers' work-life balance is presented here. IBM SPSS analysed 200 valid replies. To summarise demographics and response distributions, descriptive statistics were calculated. Then, Pearson correlation and linear regression analysis were used to test the hypothesised relationships between work-home overlap stress, remote workday frequency, and personal and family time perception. The results and interpretations are tabulated below.

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.87 ^a	.757	.003	1.341

a. Predictors: (Constant), Stress due to work-home overlap						
ANOVA^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.499	1	.499	.277	.000 ^b
	Residual	356.496	198	1.800		
	Total	356.995	199			
a. Dependent Variable: Perception of having enough time for family and personal commitments.						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Stress due to work-home overlap						

A simple linear regression was conducted to examine the relationship between stress due to work-home overlap and the perception of having enough time for family and personal commitments. The model summary revealed a moderate R value of 0.87, suggesting a strong correlation between the predictor (stress due to work-home overlap) and the dependent variable (perception of time for family commitments). However, the R² value of 0.757 indicates that approximately 75.7% of the variance is explained by the model, which contradicts the low significance observed in the ANOVA.

The ANOVA results showed a very low F-value of 0.277 with a p-value of 0.000, which is unusually low and should be treated with caution due to the conflicting high R² and low p-value. The p-value suggests that the regression model is statistically significant, but this discrepancy, coupled with the low Adjusted R² value of 0.003, implies that the predictor variable (work-home stress) does not have a meaningful impact on the dependent variable. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H₀₁) is retained, indicating no significant relationship between stress and the perception of work-life balance among IT professionals in this sample.

Correlations

Correlations	
	Number of remote working days per week
	Perception of having enough time for family and personal commitments

Number of remote working days per week	Pearson Correlation	1	.769
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.00
	N	200	200
Perception of having enough time for family and personal commitments	Pearson Correlation	.769	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	200	200

A Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to assess the relationship between the number of remote working days per week and the perception of having enough time for family and personal commitments. The study found a significant positive association ($r = 0.769$, $p < 0.001$), showing that workers with greater remote work experience felt more time for personal and family obligations. The null hypothesis (H_{02}) is rejected due to statistical significance, indicating a link between remote work frequency and perceived work-life balance among IT professionals.

Conclusion

This research examined how hybrid work arrangements affect work-life balance in IT workers, focussing on work-home overlap stress and weekly remote working days. The results illuminate shifts in flexible work settings in the post-pandemic digital economy.

The first hypothesis (H_{01}) suggests no correlation between work-home stress and perceived family and personal free time. The regression analysis showed no significant connection, as shown by a low R^2 value and non-significant F-test. Although work-home stress is present in this group, it does not independently predict perceived work-life balance (H_{01} was preserved).

The second hypothesis (H_{02}) was rejected". A robust and statistically significant positive link was found between remote working days and the feeling of having enough time for personal and family duties. This suggests that remote work flexibility might help people balance work and life.

Stress alone may not directly affect work-life balance, but mixed work schedules—particularly remote working—do. These findings emphasise the need for hybrid work rules that manage job allocation, employee autonomy, and time regulation to improve work-life integration.

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