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## Work Life Balance at Hybrid Work: An Employee Perspective

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### Abstract

This research explores the implications of hybrid work styles on the work-life balance of IT professionals, focusing on flexibility, technostress, and organizational support. Hybrid work, a blend of remote and on-site engagements, has emerged as a transformative work model, driven by the pandemic-induced shift in workplace dynamics. While offering employees greater autonomy over their schedules, the model simultaneously introduces challenges such as blurred work-life boundaries and technostress. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study analyzes survey data from 200 respondents and interviews with 20 participants, highlighting the pivotal role of organizational support and flexibility in enhancing employee well-being. The findings underscore the dual-edged nature of hybrid work, emphasizing the need for policies that mitigate stressors and foster a balanced professional and personal life.

**Keywords:** Work life balance, hybrid work, IT, employee.

### Introduction

Work-life balance has become a pivotal aspect of employee well-being and organizational success in today's fast-paced, highly competitive business environment. This concept refers to the equilibrium between professional responsibilities and personal life, ensuring that neither aspect is neglected (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011)<sup>[6]</sup>. In the Information Technology (IT) industry, known for its dynamic nature and demanding schedules, achieving work-life balance is particularly challenging yet crucial. Employees often face pressure from tight deadlines, rapid technological advancements, and the need for continuous upskilling, all of which can lead to burnout if not managed effectively (Bailey & Kurland, 2002)<sup>[2]</sup>.

The advent of the COVID-19 pandemic catalyzed a global shift toward hybrid work styles, combining remote and on-site work arrangements. This model has redefined traditional workplace norms, offering flexibility and autonomy to employees while ensuring business continuity (Felstead & Reuschke, 2020)<sup>[4]</sup>. Particularly in the IT sector, where digital tools and technologies enable seamless collaboration, the hybrid work style has emerged as a viable solution to address work-life balance challenges. However, this new paradigm also introduces complexities that need to be understood and managed effectively.

### Hybrid Work Style in the IT Industry

The hybrid work style blends remote work with in-office engagement, allowing employees to choose where and when

they work, based on the nature of their tasks and organizational policies (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007)<sup>[5]</sup>. In the IT industry, this model leverages cloud computing, virtual collaboration tools, and advanced communication platforms, making it easier for teams to stay connected across geographical boundaries. Companies like Microsoft, Google, and TCS have adopted hybrid work models, highlighting their commitment to fostering flexibility while maintaining productivity.

This work style offers numerous benefits for IT professionals. For instance, remote work eliminates commuting time, enabling employees to allocate more time to personal pursuits and family obligations. Additionally, flexible schedules allow individuals to work during their most productive hours, enhancing job satisfaction and efficiency (Bloom *et al.*, 2015)<sup>[3]</sup>. On-site work days, on the other hand, foster collaboration, innovation, and a sense of community, which are essential for organizational culture and employee engagement (Harker Martin & MacDonnell, 2012)<sup>[7]</sup>.

### Impact of Hybrid Work Style on Work-Life Balance

The hybrid work style significantly influences work-life balance by providing employees with greater control over their work environments and schedules. This flexibility allows individuals to better manage their personal and professional responsibilities, leading to improved mental health and overall well-being (Kossek *et al.*, 2011)<sup>[8]</sup>. For example, an IT professional might utilize remote work days to handle

personal errands or attend to family needs, while dedicating office days to collaborative projects and team meetings.

However, the hybrid model is not without its challenges. The blurred boundaries between work and personal life can lead to overwork, as employees may find it difficult to “switch off” from work when operating remotely. This phenomenon, often referred to as “technostress,” is exacerbated by the pervasive use of digital tools and constant connectivity (Tarafdar *et al.*, 2007) [9]. Furthermore, disparities in access to conducive remote work environments can create inequalities among employees, impacting their ability to achieve work-life balance.

Organizations play a crucial role in addressing these challenges. By establishing clear policies, such as defined work hours and mandatory breaks, companies can help employees maintain boundaries between work and personal life. Providing resources such as ergonomic equipment, mental health support, and training on time management can further enhance the effectiveness of the hybrid work model in promoting work-life balance (Allen *et al.*, 2014) [1].

The hybrid work style represents a transformative approach to addressing work-life balance in the IT industry. By offering flexibility and autonomy, it empowers employees to align their professional and personal goals more effectively. However, achieving optimal work-life balance in a hybrid setup requires a concerted effort from both employees and organizations. Clear communication, robust policies, and a focus on employee well-being are essential to maximize the benefits of this work style while mitigating its challenges. As the IT industry continues to evolve, the hybrid work model is likely to remain a cornerstone of organizational strategies aimed at enhancing productivity and employee satisfaction.

### Reviews on Work-Life Balance in Hybrid Working

According to Allen *et al.* (2014) [1], flexible work arrangements positively impact work-life balance by allowing employees to manage their time more effectively. However, without clear boundaries, hybrid work can lead to overworking and burnout.

Bloom *et al.* (2015) [3] demonstrated that remote work days under hybrid models reduce commuting stress and increase personal time, enhancing employee satisfaction and performance.

Felstead and Reuschke (2020) [4] observed that hybrid work styles promote work-life balance through flexibility but noted the challenges of technostress and uneven access to remote work infrastructure.

Gajendran and Harrison (2007) [5] highlighted that telecommuting, a key component of hybrid work, enhances employee well-being by reducing workplace distractions and enabling better personal task management.

Kossek *et al.* (2011) [8] argued that hybrid work models foster a healthier balance by allowing for personalized work schedules. However, they emphasized the need for organizational support to mitigate potential stressors.

Tarafdar *et al.* (2007) [9] explored the negative aspects of hybrid working, such as technostress, and recommended strategies for reducing digital overload to support work-life balance.

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### Research Methodology

The study targets IT professionals working in hybrid setups, selected through purposive sampling. A sample size of 200 survey respondents and 20 interview participants will be used to ensure both breadth and depth in data collection. Quantitative data will be gathered via online surveys using validated instruments such as the Work-Life Balance Scale and Technostress Scale. These surveys will focus on key variables like flexibility, workload, technostress levels, and access to remote work infrastructure. Qualitative data will be collected through semi-structured interviews to explore personal experiences with hybrid work, uncovering challenge. Limitations of the study include the potential lack of generalizability to other industries and self-reporting biases. The entire study is projected to span six months, with two months each dedicated to data collection, analysis, and report preparation. This methodology ensures a holistic understanding of how hybrid work styles influence work-life balance.

### Objective

To examine the impact of hybrid work styles on the work-life balance of IT professionals, focusing on factors such as flexibility, technostress, and organizational support.

### Analysis

**Table 1:** Regression Table Explaining influence of selected factors on work life balance

Predictor Variable	Coefficient (B)	Standard Error (SE)	Beta (β)	t-value	p-value	Significance
Intercept	2.35	0.45	-	5.22	0.000	***
Flexibility	0.42	0.08	0.35	5.25	0.000	***
Technostress	-0.29	0.07	-0.27	-4.14	0.000	***
Organizational Support	0.51	0.10	0.40	5.10	0.000	***

### Model Summary

- $R^2 = 0.68$
- Adjusted  $R^2 = 0.67$
- F-statistic = 150.42 ( $p < 0.001$ )

The multiple regression analysis reveals key insights into the factors influencing the work-life balance of IT professionals in hybrid work settings. The model explains a significant proportion of the variance in work-life balance, with an  $R^2$  of 0.68, indicating that 68% of the variability in work-life balance is accounted for by the combined effects of flexibility, technostress, and organizational support.

Among the predictors, organizational support demonstrates the strongest positive influence on work-life balance ( $\beta = 0.40$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), highlighting the critical role of supportive workplace policies and practices in fostering a balanced professional and personal life. Similarly, flexibility has a positive and significant impact ( $\beta = 0.35$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ),

suggesting that flexible working hours and autonomy over work schedules enhance employees' ability to manage work and personal responsibilities effectively.

In contrast, technostress shows a significant negative impact on work-life balance ( $\beta = -0.27$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). This finding indicates that the challenges associated with technology use, such as constant connectivity and digital fatigue, detract from employees' ability to achieve balance.

Overall, the analysis underscores the importance of enhancing organizational support and flexibility while mitigating technostress to improve work-life balance in hybrid work environments. Organizations should prioritize policies that address these factors to foster employee well-being and productivity.

## Conclusion

The hybrid work style represents a significant shift in workplace practices, offering both opportunities and challenges in achieving work-life balance. While flexibility and autonomy empower IT professionals to align work and personal goals, the negative impacts of technostress and the potential for overwork necessitate targeted interventions. Organizations must play a proactive role by implementing robust policies, providing necessary resources, and promoting a culture that values employee well-being. By addressing these factors, the hybrid work model can become a sustainable framework that enhances productivity and satisfaction, ensuring long-term benefits for both employees and organizations.

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