



The Hybrid Work Experience: A Study of Productivity Challenges and Well-Being Gaps

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Abstract:

Hybrid work has become a game-changer, combining remote and in-office setups to give employees more flexibility, control over their schedules, and a better balance between their work and personal lives. Although hybrid work improves job satisfaction and productivity, it also introduces challenges that organizations must overcome to achieve sustainable success. This study looks into the challenges around productivity and well-being that come with hybrid work, diving into issues like how work is divided, obstacles to teamwork, and the mental and emotional effects of juggling remote and in-office work. The research explores how things like conflicting schedules, time zone differences, and limited access to resources can get in the way of teamwork and decision-making. It also sheds light on the dangers of burnout and isolation that remote employees often face. By providing practical solutions to tackle these challenges, the study hopes to help organizations build more effective, inclusive, and supportive hybrid work environments. The findings of this study play a key role in shaping more balanced strategies that not only drive organizational success but also prioritize the well-being of employees. By highlighting the importance of both efficiency and a healthy work environment, the research provides valuable insights that can help organizations create sustainable work models that support long-term growth while ensuring that employees feel valued, engaged, and supported in their roles.

**Introduction:**

Hybrid work has redefined the modern workplace by seamlessly blending remote and in-office arrangements, allowing employees to enjoy greater flexibility and autonomy in how they manage their work. This shift empowers individuals to balance professional responsibilities with personal commitments more effectively while also enabling organizations to adapt to evolving workforce expectations. By integrating both virtual and physical workspaces, hybrid models offer a more dynamic and personalized approach to work, fostering increased job satisfaction and productivity. However, this transformation also brings new challenges that require thoughtful strategies to ensure long-term success for both employees and employers. Companies across the globe have adopted this approach to keep up with changing employee expectations and advancements in technology. Although hybrid work offers better work-life balance and higher job satisfaction, it also brings distinct challenges that can affect both productivity and employee well-being.

One of the biggest challenges in a hybrid work environment is ensuring smooth and effective communication among team members spread across different locations. Unlike traditional office settings where interactions happen naturally, hybrid teams often rely on digital tools like emails, video calls, and messaging platforms to stay connected. However, these virtual channels can sometimes lead to misunderstandings, delays in response, and a lack of clarity in conveying ideas. Additionally, the absence of face-to-face interactions can make it harder to build rapport, collaborate effectively, and maintain a strong sense of teamwork. While virtual collaboration tools help teams stay connected, they lack the spontaneity and natural flow of in-person interactions, which are often more effective for brainstorming, problem-solving, and building relationships. Employees may struggle with communication barriers, limited knowledge exchange, and challenges in developing strong professional relationships, which can impact teamwork and overall workplace cohesion. Additionally, digital fatigue—a byproduct of prolonged screen exposure and excessive virtual meetings—can diminish employee engagement, cognitive performance, and overall job satisfaction.

In a hybrid work environment, managing workload distribution effectively is crucial to maintaining productivity and ensuring fairness among employees. Likewise, obstacles to collaboration—such as mismatched work schedules, time zone differences, and restricted access to essential resources—can disrupt teamwork and slow down decision-making



processes. These challenges can lead to project delays, decreased efficiency, and hinder overall team performance.

Employee well-being is a crucial concern in the hybrid work model, as the lines between work and personal life often become blurred, leading to longer hours and a higher risk of burnout. Remote employees, in particular, may struggle with feelings of isolation, which can negatively impact their motivation, mental health, and overall job satisfaction. To address these challenges, organizations must take proactive steps to create an inclusive work environment, provide mental health support, and establish clear boundaries to promote a healthy work-life balance.

This study explores the hybrid work experience, focusing on the major productivity challenges and well-being concerns that arise in a mixed remote and in-office work environment. By examining aspects like workload distribution, collaboration challenges, and the psychological impact of hybrid work, this research seeks to offer practical insights that help organizations improve their workplace strategies. The insights gained from this study will contribute to developing a well-balanced hybrid work model that enhances both organizational efficiency and employee satisfaction.

Objectives:

1. To examine the impact of hybrid work models on employee experience.
2. To assess the well-being challenges in hybrid work.
3. To propose strategies to improve employee well-being.

Review of Literature:

Baker (2021) highlights the profound disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, affecting even fundamental aspects of daily life, such as commuting to work. The shift to remote and hybrid work models introduced both opportunities and challenges, accelerating the adoption of digital services for meetings, webinars, and professional interactions at an unprecedented pace. Before the pandemic, the conventional perception of work emphasized in-office presence.



However, in Sweden, nearly 75% of workplaces had to swiftly transition to remote operations, leading to discussions on potential long-term transformations in office designs. While many employees still prefer working in offices, the future work environment is expected to demand greater flexibility. Research suggests that organizational and job-related factors have a stronger correlation with productivity and job satisfaction compared to individual work styles or household-related influences. This is advantageous for organizations, as structural and policy-driven factors are easier to modify through human resource strategies than personal or social factors.

Javed Iqbal et al. (2021) emphasize that the concept of a hybrid workplace has become a central topic in global industry discussions. The increasing normalization of digitalization across various industries necessitates workplace adaptation to overcome challenges and embrace innovations. The COVID-19 pandemic significantly accelerated the shift towards hybrid work models, prompting businesses to adopt flexible work arrangements. While some companies have transitioned to hybrid work environments, others continue to operate fully remotely. The pandemic underscored the importance of preparedness, planning, and adaptability in workforce management. As businesses prioritize the future of work, adopting a hybrid model has become essential, with strong indications that it will define the long-term workplace landscape.

Choudhury, Khanna, Makridis, and Schirmann (2022) explore hybrid work as an emerging global trend in work organization. Their research presents causal evidence on how the extent of hybrid work—measured by the proportion of remote workdays to office-based workdays—affects work outcomes. A randomized study conducted with employees in an Indian organization over nine weeks in 2020 found that an optimal balance of remote and in-office work resulted in higher email activity, an expanded professional network, and increased innovation in work outputs. The findings suggest that hybrid work offers the best of both worlds by enhancing work-life balance without isolating employees from workplace interactions.

Sokolic (2022) examines the widespread adoption of remote work, particularly from home, which has become a defining feature of the 21st-century work environment. Initially an experimental practice within select industries such as IT, remote work became a necessity during the COVID-19 pandemic, fundamentally altering workplace dynamics. Key aspects such as communication patterns, office perceptions, and social interactions have undergone significant transformation. Organizations and employees were compelled to explore alternative



working methods, including managing virtual teams, ensuring technological infrastructure, and redefining workspaces. The study highlights critical factors influencing work performance at both organizational and individual levels, emphasizing how technological advancements and evolving management approaches are reshaping the perception of human resource management. It also discusses potential pitfalls in telework policies, providing insights into the broader implications of workplace flexibility for both employers and employees.

Wontorczyk and Roznowski (2022) investigate how various work arrangements influence employee behaviour in light of economic and organizational disruptions caused by the pandemic. The study focuses on work engagement—a fundamental construct in organizational psychology—by analysing stress factors and employee attitudes toward remote work. Using standardized survey tools such as UWES-9, Stress Management Standards, and Attitudes Toward Remote Work questionnaires, the researchers found no significant differences in work engagement levels across different work models. However, the underlying determinants of engagement varied. For remote workers, social relationships and digital communication played a crucial role, while for in-office employees, key factors included managerial support and role clarity. These findings underscore the importance of tailored workplace strategies to sustain high levels of engagement when employees transition to different work arrangements.

Research Methodology:

The study on "The Hybrid Work Experience: Assessing Productivity Challenges and Well-Being Gaps" is based on primary research. Data was collected through a structured questionnaire designed to evaluate the experiences, challenges, and well-being of employees working in different work setups. Our population are the people who have experienced the hybrid work culture in their life time experience. A total of 110 response was needed. After getting the responses for the required number we closed the google form. Our targeted population were individuals who have worked on hybrid or work from home model. The survey was done based on a set of questionnaires which was shared through google form. The questionnaire comprised 15 questions, each addressing key aspects such as Demographics, the Hybrid work experience, Work Productivity, Challenges in Hybrid Work, and Employee Well-Being.



The sampling method used was convenience sampling, ensuring accessibility to respondents who are currently and in past engaged in hybrid work models and in our professional or personal networks. Data was analysed through Percentage Analysis of the responses to derive meaningful insights and to know their perspectives.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The survey results indicate a substantial shift towards hybrid and remote work arrangements. A significant portion of respondents (53.6%) work remotely for 4-5 days a week, demonstrating a strong preference for flexibility. Another 30.9% follow a hybrid schedule, working 2-3 days in the office, striking a balance between in-person and remote collaboration. Meanwhile, only 10% of employees are fully remote, and a smaller segment of 5.5% works from home just once a week. This distribution suggests that organizations are accommodating flexible work arrangements while still ensuring some level of office presence.

Regarding the duration of hybrid work experience, the survey shows that 38.9% of employees have been working in a hybrid setup for six months to a year, indicating that many are still adapting to the model. Meanwhile, 34.3% have been hybrid for 1-2 years, representing a phase of stable adaptation. A smaller segment (14.8%) has been working hybrid for over two years, showing that some employees have well-established routines. These patterns reflect a growing preference for long-term hybrid work as organizations refine their policies to support flexibility.



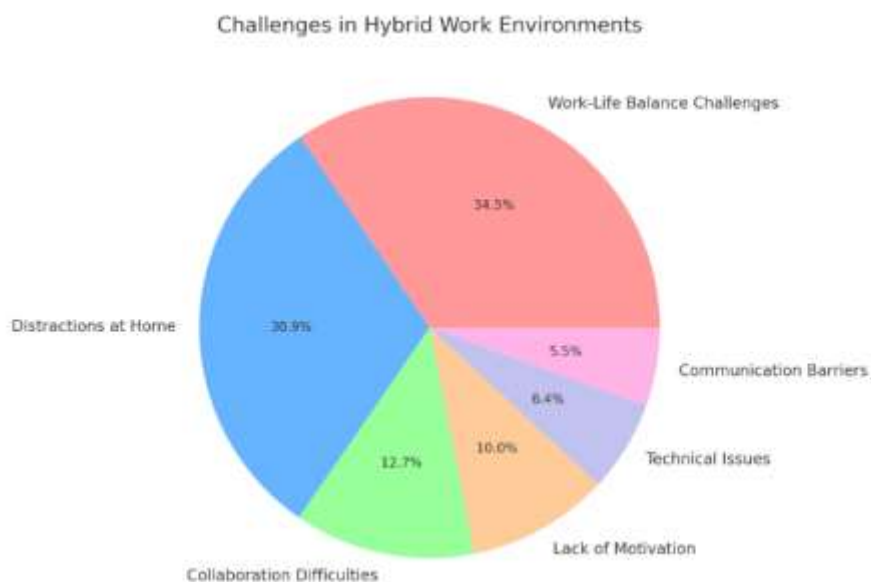
While hybrid work provides flexibility, it also brings challenges. One of the most notable difficulties is meeting deadlines. The survey reveals that 45.5% of employees have seen no change in their ability to meet deadlines, suggesting that hybrid work does not inherently impact task completion for most workers. However, 32.7% of employees find it harder to meet deadlines due to coordination difficulties and distractions at home. On the other hand, 21.8% report increased efficiency, attributing their productivity to fewer office disruptions and greater autonomy. This highlights the need for structured communication and digital tools to support those facing challenges in remote collaboration.

Coordination remains a significant issue in hybrid work environments. More than half of the respondents (52.7%) sometimes experience difficulties in synchronizing tasks and schedules with colleagues, while 18.2% often struggle with coordination. In contrast, only 21.8% rarely face such issues, and 4.6% never encounter coordination problems, suggesting that some teams have successfully adapted. The primary causes of these difficulties include scheduling conflicts, digital miscommunication, and the lack of spontaneous workplace interactions. Addressing these challenges requires structured check-ins, better collaboration tools, and clear communication protocols.

Another critical issue is workplace connection and team engagement. The survey finds that 73.7% of employees feel some level of disconnection from their colleagues, with 47.3% occasionally experiencing isolation and 20.9% often feeling disconnected. This can be attributed to the lack of informal office interactions, which play a crucial role in team bonding and morale. While virtual meetings help bridge communication gaps, they do not fully replace



in-person collaboration. Employers can enhance engagement by organizing structured team-building activities, frequent check-ins, and occasional in-office meetups to foster a sense of belonging.

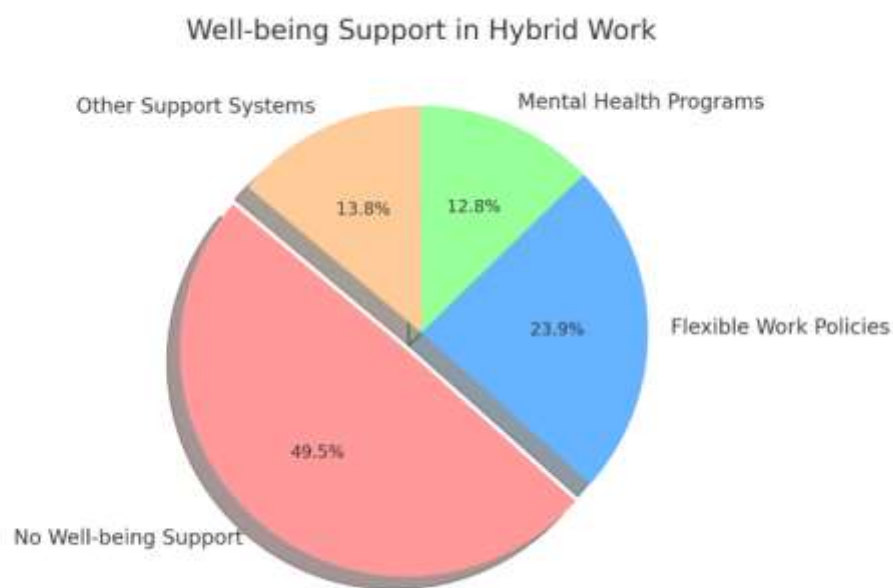


Digital fatigue emerges as one of the most concerning issues in hybrid work environments, affecting 87.3% of employees. Nearly 50.9% frequently experience digital fatigue due to prolonged screen time and continuous virtual meetings, while 8.2% always feel fatigued. Only a small portion of employees report no fatigue, highlighting the widespread impact of excessive digital engagement. To counter this, organizations should implement strategies such as meeting-free days, scheduled screen breaks, and increased use of asynchronous communication to minimize unnecessary virtual meetings.

The impact of hybrid work on work-life balance is mixed. While 43.1% of employees feel that their work-life balance has improved—30.3% slightly and 12.8% significantly—another 38.5% report no change. However, 18.3% of respondents feel that their work-life balance has worsened, citing blurred boundaries between personal and professional responsibilities as a key concern. Employees struggling with work-life balance often find it difficult to disconnect from work, leading to increased stress and burnout. Organizations can address this by setting clear work-hour policies, promoting flexible schedules, and offering mental health support programs.



Despite the well-being challenges in hybrid work, nearly half of the respondents (49.5%) feel that their organizations do not provide adequate well-being support. Although 23.9% benefit from flexible work policies and 12.8% receive mental health support, there remains a significant gap in employee assistance programs. Expanding wellness initiatives, providing mental health counselling, and fostering a culture that prioritizes employee well-being are crucial steps that organizations must take to ensure long-term productivity and satisfaction.



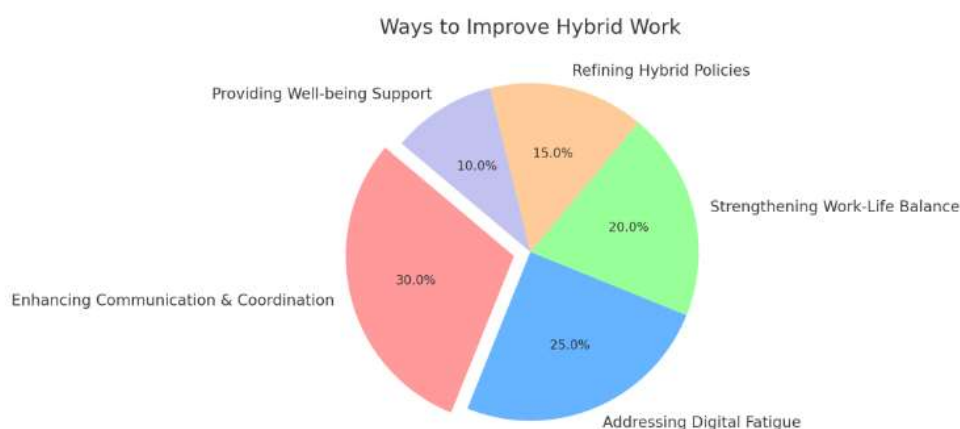
Given the challenges identified in the survey, several improvements can enhance the effectiveness of hybrid work. One of the key areas for improvement is communication and coordination. Organizations should implement structured workflows and optimize collaboration tools such as Slack, Zoom, and Microsoft Teams to ensure seamless task management and communication. Establishing clear communication protocols, setting expectations for remote and in-office collaboration, and scheduling regular check-ins can help address coordination difficulties.

To combat digital fatigue, companies should introduce policies that encourage screen breaks, meeting-free days, and more asynchronous communication methods to reduce excessive virtual meetings. Employees can benefit from structured work routines that allow them to disconnect from digital platforms periodically, thereby preventing burnout.



Improving work-life balance is also essential for hybrid work success. Employers should set clear boundaries regarding work hours, prevent employees from feeling pressured to be constantly available, and offer flexible work arrangements. Mental health programs, wellness initiatives, and stress management workshops can further support employees' well-being. Regular employee feedback sessions will also be helpful in refining hybrid work policies to align with workforce expectations.

Future work model preferences indicate that employees have diverse opinions about their ideal work setup. While 38.5% of employees prefer a fully in-office model, 28.4% favor hybrid work with modifications, suggesting that changes in policy, technology, and work structures are necessary. Another 16.5% support the current hybrid model without modifications, while 16.5% prefer a fully remote setup, valuing autonomy and the elimination of commute times. These responses indicate that a one-size-fits-all approach is ineffective, and organizations must develop flexible policies that accommodate different work preferences.



Findings and Recommendations on the Hybrid Work Experience

Findings

Most employees (52.3%) work entirely from the office, while 37.6% follow a hybrid model, and only 10.1% work fully remotely. Among hybrid workers, 38.9% have been in this setup for six months to a year, while 34.3% have followed it for one to two years. However, only



14.8% have worked in a hybrid model for over two years, indicating ongoing adaptation. Work preferences vary, with 38.5% favouring full office work, 28.4% seeking hybrid adjustments, and 16.5% preferring full remote work, showing a growing demand for flexibility.

Employee productivity differs based on work environments, with 39.1% feeling equally productive in both office and remote settings. While 45.5% say hybrid work has had no impact on deadlines, 32.7% find it harder to stay on track, and 21.8% feel it improves efficiency.

Key concerns in hybrid work include maintaining work-life balance (34.5%), home distractions (30.9%), collaboration challenges due to limited face-to-face interaction (12.7%), lack of motivation outside a structured office setting (10%), and technical issues (6.4%). Communication barriers also persist, with 5.5% reporting that limited spontaneous conversations hinder effective teamwork. Coordination difficulties remain a challenge, with 18.2% frequently struggling to collaborate, while 52.7% encounter these challenges occasionally.

Additionally, 50.9% of employees experience digital fatigue due to excessive virtual meetings and screen exposure. Maintaining workplace connections is also an issue, as 20.9% of employees frequently feel isolated, while 47.3% occasionally struggle to stay connected with colleagues.

Work-life balance perceptions vary—38.5% see no change, 30.3% report improvement, and 18.3% find it more difficult to manage. Despite increasing awareness of employee well-being, 49.5% feel their company isn't providing enough support. Furthermore, only 12.8% have access to mental health programs, highlighting the need for organizations to strengthen their employee well-being initiatives. Addressing these challenges will be essential in ensuring that hybrid work remains a sustainable and effective model.

Recommendation:

In order to help employees maintain a healthy work-life balance, organizations should set clear working hours that define when work begins and ends. Encouraging flexible work arrangements can make it easier for employees to manage both their work and personal responsibilities, leading to a healthier balance. To strengthen teamwork, companies can use collaboration tools like Slack, Microsoft Teams, and Asana, while also fostering regular team check-ins. Encouraging asynchronous communication can help reduce digital fatigue and cut



down on unnecessary virtual meetings, making work more efficient and less overwhelming. Helping employees develop better time management, self-discipline, and remote work skills through training can boost their productivity and make their work more manageable.

To better support employees' well-being, companies can introduce mental health initiatives like wellness days, stress management programs, and access to counselling services. Creating opportunities for social interaction, both online and in person, through team-building activities can help employees feel more connected and reduce feelings of isolation. Companies can improve their hybrid work strategies by actively listening to employee feedback and acknowledging that everyone has different work preferences.

To create a fair and supportive hybrid work environment, companies should establish clear career growth opportunities for remote employees, ensuring they have equal chances for advancement. Regularly updating hybrid work policies based on employee feedback will also help improve the overall work experience and keep employees engaged. By embracing these strategies, organizations can build a well-balanced hybrid work model that promotes both productivity and employee well-being while staying adaptable to the changing needs of the modern workplace.

Conclusion:

The study *The Hybrid Work Experience: A Study of Productivity Challenges and Well-Being Gaps* emphasizes how workplace dynamics are changing and how hybrid work affects workers' well-being, productivity, and teamwork. Although many people find that the hybrid model provides flexibility and a better work-life balance, it also comes with a number of serious drawbacks, including communication difficulties, digital fatigue, and difficulties integrating work and life.

According to the findings, some employees find that hybrid work increases their autonomy and efficiency, while others have trouble with motivation, coordination, and connections at work. Many employees still strongly prefer working in offices, which means that companies need to improve hybrid policies to strike a balance between flexibility and the requirement for face-to-face interaction.



The study's main conclusion is that there isn't a single, universal strategy for mixed work. Employers must embrace a tailored hybrid model that takes into account worker preferences while tackling shared issues using digital collaboration tools, well-being initiatives, and structured communication tactics. Long-term sustainability of hybrid work will depend on lowering virtual overload, maintaining clear work boundaries, and improving employee engagement.

In order to promote productivity and job happiness, companies will need to take a proactive approach to employee assistance, technological integration, and flexible work arrangements as they continue to improve their hybrid work practices. In an increasingly hybrid-driven corporate landscape, companies can establish a work environment that fosters productivity, engagement, and well-being by putting certain initiatives into practice.

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