

# A Study on the New Normal of Employee Challenges and Effectiveness of Hybrid Work Culture (With Special Reference to Amravati City)

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## Abstract

The hybrid work culture has become a prominent employment model in the post-pandemic period by integrating remote and office-based work. Although widely implemented in metropolitan cities, its adoption in semi-urban areas like Amravati remains relatively under-researched. This study examines the effectiveness of hybrid work culture in Amravati City, with a focus on employee productivity, work-life balance, job satisfaction, organizational support, and access to technology.

Using a descriptive research design, primary data were collected from 100 hybrid employees through a structured questionnaire, supported by secondary data from journals and reports. The findings indicate that hybrid work improves productivity, flexibility, and work-life balance when supported by proper technology and organizational policies. However, challenges such as weak internet connectivity, communication gaps, mental fatigue, and reduced visibility persist. The study concludes that while hybrid work is effective in Amravati, its long-term success depends on structured policies, leadership support, and strengthened digital infrastructure.

## Keywords

*Hybrid Work Culture, Employee Productivity, Work-Life Balance, Organizational Support, Amravati City*

## Introduction

The 21st century has brought a major transformation in the way work is organized and performed. Advances in digital technology and changing employee expectations have reduced dependence on physical offices and rigid hierarchies, giving rise to flexible and connected work environments. A key outcome of this shift is the hybrid work culture, which combines remote and on-site work

through digital tools and flexible management practices. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated this transition, proving that remote work could be both sustainable and productive, leading organizations to adopt hybrid models as the “new normal.”

Hybrid work allows employees to split their time between home and office, improving productivity, job satisfaction, and work-life balance, while organizations benefit from cost efficiency, talent retention, and wider talent access. Supported by platforms like Microsoft Teams and Zoom, hybrid work enables collaboration despite physical distance. However, it also demands adaptive leadership, strong digital infrastructure, and outcome-based performance management. Globally and in India, many organizations have successfully adopted hybrid systems, making it a long-term strategic shift. This model has also supported regional development by enabling professionals to work from smaller cities like Amravati, highlighting hybrid work as both a structural and cultural transformation in modern employment.

Additionally, the success of hybrid work culture largely depends on organizational readiness and employee adaptability. Clear hybrid work policies, regular communication, and continuous training are essential to address challenges such as coordination issues, employee isolation, and performance monitoring. Organizations that invest in digital infrastructure, mental well-being initiatives, and inclusive leadership practices are better positioned to sustain hybrid models effectively. In semi-urban regions like Amravati, strengthening internet connectivity and providing technical support can further enhance the effectiveness of hybrid work, ensuring that flexibility translates into long-term productivity and organizational growth.

## Review of Literature

### IWG (2025) – The Global Rise of Flexible Workspaces

IWG (2025) explains how hybrid and flexible workspaces are transforming modern employment by reducing dependence on traditional offices. The study highlights increased employee autonomy, reduced commuting stress, and improved job satisfaction. It emphasizes that hybrid work promotes regional inclusion by enabling employees to work from non-metropolitan areas. The research concludes that decentralized workspaces are a sustainable and efficient future model for organizations.

### Harvard Business Review (2025) – Hybrid as the Default Model

Harvard Business Review (2025) presents hybrid work as the standard model for knowledge-based organizations. The study highlights that hybrid systems improve performance, retention, and inclusivity when supported by clear communication and fair evaluation. It also warns that lack of transparency may lead to isolation and inequality. The article provides a strong theoretical foundation for understanding hybrid work effectiveness.

### Bloom et al. (2024) – Productivity in Hybrid Workplaces

Bloom et al. (2024) conducted empirical research showing that hybrid employees are 8–13% more productive than fully remote or office-based workers. The study attributes this improvement to reduced commuting and better work–life balance. It also notes improved mental health but highlights challenges in mentoring and learning. The research confirms hybrid work as a viable long-term productivity model.

### Kumari (2023) – Employee Wellbeing in Hybrid and Remote Work

Kumari (2023) reviews literature on the psychological impact of hybrid work on employees. The study finds that hybrid work improves mental well-being through flexibility and autonomy. However, it also highlights risks such as loneliness and lack of recognition. The

author stresses the need for wellness programs, engagement strategies, and empathetic HR practices.

## Objectives of the Study

To examine and evaluate the impact and effectiveness of hybrid work culture on employees in the post-pandemic “new normal,” with special reference to Amravati City, by analyzing key employee-related factors such as productivity, work–life balance, job satisfaction, and workplace challenges, and to test whether hybrid work has a significant positive impact on employees as stated in the formulated hypotheses.

## Research Methodology

### Data Collection

Data collection is the process of collecting and evaluating information or data from multiple sources to find answers to research problems, answer questions, evaluate outcomes, and forecast trends and probabilities. It is an essential phase in all types of research, analysis, and decision-making. For the study undertaken we have primary and secondary data.

#### 3.6.1 Primary Data

Primary data are collected directly from employees working under hybrid arrangements using a structured questionnaire.

- Demographic section: capturing respondent profile (age, gender, education, sector, and job role).
- Thematic section: covering aspects of job satisfaction, communication, technological access, motivation, productivity, and work–life balance.

The questionnaire is distributed electronically through email and Google Forms, ensuring accessibility to respondents from both in-office and remote setups.

#### 3.6.2 Secondary Data

Secondary data are obtained from reliable and authentic sources such as:

- Research papers, journals, and academic publications related to hybrid work culture.
- Company reports, government documents, and labour market studies.
- Online databases and professional websites such as Deloitte Insights, Harvard Business Review, and Statista.

These sources provide contextual and comparative information to support the primary findings and enrich the overall interpretation of results.

### Data Analysis and Interpretation (Applied on Five Key Variables)

For analysis, five most important statements related to hybrid work effectiveness were selected from the questionnaire. Responses were measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree).

#### General Hypothesis Framework

- Null Hypothesis ( $H_0$ ): Hybrid work has no significant impact on employees.
- Alternative Hypothesis ( $H_1$ ): Hybrid work has a significant positive impact on employees.

A One-Sample t-test was applied by comparing the mean response of each statement with the neutral value 3.

#### 1. Productivity in Hybrid Work

Statement: *"I feel more productive when working in a hybrid environment."*

- $H_0$ : Hybrid work does not significantly improve employee productivity.
- $H_1$ : Hybrid work significantly improves employee productivity.

Result:

The mean score was above 3, indicating agreement. The calculated p-value was less than 0.05.

Decision: Reject  $H_0$

Interpretation: Hybrid work significantly improves employee productivity.

#### 2. Time Flexibility

Statement: *"Hybrid work gives me flexibility to manage time better."*

- $H_0$ : Hybrid work does not improve time flexibility.
- $H_1$ : Hybrid work improves time flexibility.

Result:

Mean value exceeded the neutral point and p-value < 0.05.

Decision: Reject  $H_0$

Interpretation: Hybrid work provides better time management flexibility to employees.

#### 3. Managerial Support

Statement: *"My manager/supervisor supports hybrid work challenges."*

- $H_0$ : Managerial support has no significant role in hybrid work effectiveness.
- $H_1$ : Managerial support significantly influences hybrid work effectiveness.

Result:

The average response was positive and statistically significant.

Decision: Reject  $H_0$

Interpretation: Managerial support plays a crucial role in successful hybrid work culture.

#### 4. Mental Health and Well-Being

Statement: *"Hybrid work positively affects my mental health and well-being."*

- $H_0$ : Hybrid work has no significant effect on employee mental health.
- $H_1$ : Hybrid work positively affects employee mental health.

Result:

Mean score was above 3 with a significant p-value.

Decision: Reject  $H_0$

Interpretation: Hybrid work positively influences employees' mental health and well-being.

#### 5. Overall Satisfaction

Statement: *"I am satisfied with my overall experience in hybrid work culture."*

- $H_0$ : Employees are not significantly satisfied with hybrid work culture.
- $H_1$ : Employees are significantly satisfied with hybrid work culture.

Result:

The test result showed strong agreement and statistical significance.

Decision: Reject  $H_0$

Interpretation: Employees show high satisfaction with the hybrid work culture.

#### Overall Interpretation of Hypothesis Testing

The hypothesis testing results clearly indicate that hybrid work culture has a significant positive impact on productivity, flexibility, managerial support, mental well-being, and overall employee satisfaction. Hence, the alternative hypothesis is accepted for all five variables, validating the effectiveness of hybrid work culture in the study area.

#### Findings and Discussion

- Most employees reported improved work-life balance under hybrid work culture.
- Hybrid work reduced commuting stress and increased flexibility.
- Organizational support and digital tools positively influenced productivity.
- Major challenges included poor internet connectivity, communication gaps, and mental fatigue.
- Employees working remotely felt reduced visibility and recognition compared to office-based employees.

The findings suggest that hybrid work is effective but requires structured policies and continuous employee engagement.

#### Conclusion

The study concludes that hybrid work culture has a significant positive impact on employees in the post-pandemic era, even in semi-urban areas like Amravati City. The findings confirm improvements in productivity, time flexibility, mental well-being, managerial support, and overall job satisfaction, leading to the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis. Hybrid work has proven to enhance work-life balance and reduce commuting stress when supported by effective organizational policies and digital tools.

Despite these benefits, challenges such as weak internet connectivity, communication gaps, mental fatigue, and reduced employee visibility remain. Therefore, the long-term success of hybrid work culture depends on structured policies, strong leadership support, reliable digital infrastructure, and continuous employee engagement. When these factors are addressed, hybrid work can serve as a sustainable and effective model for modern organizations.

#### Suggestions / Recommendations

Organizations should develop clear and formal hybrid work policies to ensure consistency, transparency, and fairness in implementation. Adequate investment in reliable internet connectivity and advanced digital tools is essential to support seamless communication and productivity. Managers should shift towards outcome-based performance evaluation systems rather than relying on physical presence, while regular virtual engagement activities and mental health initiatives should be introduced to reduce isolation and burnout. Additionally, organizations must ensure equal opportunities for growth, recognition, and career advancement for both remote and on-site employees to maintain motivation and inclusivity.

#### Limitations of the Study

The study is geographically limited to Amravati City, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other regions. The sample size of 100 respondents may not fully represent the diverse experiences of all hybrid employees. Responses collected through questionnaires are subject to personal bias and individual perceptions. Moreover, time constraints prevented a longitudinal

analysis, limiting the ability to assess long-term effects of hybrid work culture.

### Scope for Future Research

Future research can conduct comparative studies between metropolitan and semi-urban cities to identify contextual differences in hybrid work effectiveness. Sector-wise analyses may provide deeper insights into how hybrid models function across different industries. Longitudinal studies can examine the long-term impact of hybrid work on employee career growth, retention, and organizational commitment. Additionally, further research can explore the role and effectiveness of mental health interventions in enhancing employee well-being and productivity within hybrid work environments.

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