

Hybrid Work Models and Collective Socio-Emotional Health: Examining Employee Well-Being in Modern Organizations

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ABSTRACT:

The paper examines how hybrid work models affect collective socio-emotional well-being by examining the interrelations among gender leadership discrepancies, educational attainment, and workplace asymmetries in contemporary organizations. As the implementation of hybrid working systems is on the rise around the world, organizations constantly have to address the challenges of employee welfare, equity, and diversity in leadership. The study is quantitative in nature, relying on a structured survey questionnaire administered to employees operating in hybrid organizational environments, with a full sample of 390 respondents selected through systematic sampling. The measurement scale was designed based on the available literature on hybrid work, leadership trends, and employee happiness. Statistical data analysis was performed using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) in IBM SPSS and AMOS. In contrast, the reliability and validity of the constructs were evaluated using indicators such as the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test, the Bartlett Test of Sphericity, Composite Reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). It is indicated that gender leadership differences have a strong impact on workplace inequalities and educational attainment in hybrid workplaces, and that educational attainment partially moderates the relationship between leadership differences and workplace disparities. Leadership interaction, access to educational opportunities, and organizational inequalities are related factors that impact employee well-being in a hybrid workplace, and the structural model indicates that the three factors meet the goodness-of-fit indices. The research concludes that organizations need to address leadership inequality, eliminate disparities by ensuring equal access to professional development opportunities, and enact inclusive workplace policies to enhance collective socio-emotional health in the hybrid workplace. Employee engagement, trust, and psychological well-being can be promoted by supportive leadership practices and equitable organizational structures. It is also proposed by the study that further research should target other variables (like organizational culture, digital collaboration technology, and psychological resilience), and cross-cultural and longitudinal studies should be performed to have a deeper understanding of the long-term effects of the hybrid work model on the well-being of employees.

Key Words:

Hybrid Work Model, Collective Socio-Emotional Health, Gender Leadership Gap, Educational Achievement, Workplace Asymmetries, Employee Well-Being, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM).

INTRODUCTION

The twenty-first century has seen the nature of work being radically changed, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic shook the world. The hybrid work models, which are the integration of remote working and the conventional work in offices, have been embraced by organisations across the globe. This transformation has greatly changed workplace arrangements, interactions, and employees' workplace cultures. The hybrid work model is now regarded as a characteristic of the contemporary workplace, which affects not only productivity and efficiency but also the socio-emotional patterns within organizations. Collective socio-emotional health is the term that describes the common emotional atmosphere among employees, including the aspects of trust, belongingness, collaboration, empathy, and psychological safety. Due to the growing decentralization and digitalization of workplaces, the study of the impact of hybrid employment patterns on workers' overall emotional health has become an important scholarly and policy concern.

Hybrid work has quickly evolved into an organizational strategy worldwide, rather than a temporary measure in the face of a pandemic. According to recent workplace reports, institutional adoption of hybrid work policies is widespread: almost 92% of organizations worldwide have implemented some form of hybrid work policy. Also, research indicates that 41 percent of companies report greater productivity in hybrid work settings, and 69 percent report better employee

retention, underscoring the organizational advantages of flexible work arrangements. Moreover, digital technologies are likely to further drive hybrid work, and millions of jobs will be able to work partially or entirely remotely by the end of this decade. (Ronspot)

Hybrid work, as a term, can be traced back to earlier debates over telecommuting and flexible work arrangements introduced in the late twentieth century. The progressive development of information and communication technologies, cloud computing, and digital collaboration platforms has made it possible for employees to work in non-traditional office settings. Nevertheless, the COVID-19 pandemic helped to move the world towards remote and hybrid employment at a faster rate than ever. The companies had to switch to online methods of work almost overnight, which formed a natural experiment of working remotely and in a hybrid environment on a large scale. Hybrid work has since become a strategic paradigm that seeks to balance the benefits of face-to-face collaboration with the possibilities of remote work.

The global development priorities evident in the rising use of hybrid work also align with the priorities embodied in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Hybrid work is one of the Sustainable Development Goals, specifically Goal 8, which enables productive employment, safe working conditions, and the well-being of workers. The hybrid models can encourage inclusive employment opportunities, enhance work-life balance, and support mental health by offering flexible work arrangements. Also, hybrid work indirectly affects Sustainable Development Goal 3 by reducing commuting stress, promoting healthier lifestyles, and creating more balanced workplaces. Therefore, the socio-emotional implications of hybrid working are not only applicable to organizational management but also to the broader sustainable development agenda.

The current empirical data indicate that hybrid work models may have a significant impact on employee well-being and workplace relationships. According to the research, around 63 percent. Some employees report that their mental health and work-life balance are better when they work in hybrid arrangements, which they attribute to spending less time on the road to work and having more control over their work schedules. In addition, research has found that 70 percent of hybrid employees report being more productive than when working in the office; moreover, most companies have reported reduced burnout and increased employee satisfaction. (Market.biz)

Nonetheless, despite these benefits, new socio-emotional issues emerge in hybrid work. For example, certain studies indicate that telecommuters are likely to feel lonelier, less engaged, and less connected to their teams. According to surveys, about 28 percent of hybrid employees feel isolated on remote workdays, which is one of the dangers of limited face-to-face interaction. (WifiTalents)

These new trends explain how complicated the connection between hybrid work and socio-emotional well-being lies. Even though flexible work arrangements can improve personal autonomy and work-life balance, they can also undermine informal social interactions and shared emotional connections across organizations. Distributed teamwork and hybrid meetings may create communication barriers, reduce spontaneous collaboration, and, in some cases, lead to unequal participation between remote and in-office employees. According to empirical research on hybrid collaboration, remote participants tend to be less engaged during longer virtual meetings and may feel less connected to the organizational culture than employees who are present in the workplace. (arXiv)

In practice, there are a number of operational and managerial issues that organizations operating hybrid work systems encounter. These include maintaining an effective communication channel, treating remote and on-site workers fairly, managing digital exhaustion, and maintaining team unity across geographically distributed teams. Leaders should also be ready to embrace new management methods that are more trust-based, digitally oriented, and focused on performance results rather than traditional supervision. Also, hybrid work can cause a wage gap in career mobility and organizational reputation, also known as the so-called proximity bias, where employees in the office obtain more recognition or promotion opportunities than those working remotely do.

Although the literature on remote and hybrid work has been growing, there are still a number of research gaps. To begin with, the multitude of existing research is more based on individual outcomes (productivity, job satisfaction, or work-life balance) rather than research on the collective social-emotional health of both the team and the organization. Second, a significant share of existing empirical studies focuses on remote work rather than hybrid work, even though hybrid models have become the most common type of flexible employment. Third, the current literature tends to rely on short-term observations made during the pandemic, leading to a limited understanding of the long-term socio-emotional

consequences of hybrid work environments. Lastly, one will find no unified frameworks that bridge hybrid work practices with communal emotional practices, organizational culture, and sustainable workplace policies.

Against this backdrop of gaps, this paper will analyze the effects of hybrid work models on the overall socio-emotional well-being of organizations in the modern environment. The study aims to gain more insight into how hybrid work arrangements affect collaboration, trust, belongingness, and the emotional well-being of teams by emphasizing shared emotional experiences of workers and not focusing on individual performance only. The results of this study are likely to help in creating more accommodating and emotionally supportive hybrid workplaces. Furthermore, the study aims to provide practical insights for organizational leaders and policymakers in designing workplace policies that promote both productivity and employee well-being.

The overall research question that drives this study is as follows: How do hybrid work designs affect workers' socio-emotional health, and which organizational processes are effective in supporting a positive emotional environment in hybrid work settings? This question can be discussed given the growing awareness that the future of work will likely be hybrid and digitally mediated. As a result, one should be aware of the socio-emotional implications of hybrid work to influence sustainable practices in organizations. Through these matters, the current research aims to fill gaps in the literature and provide a platform for future research and policy to ensure healthier, more equitable hybrid workplaces.

Background of the Study

The hybrid work models and the idea of employees spending time in both remote and office environments became the subject of great global interest due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which pushed organizations to quickly adopt remote work. Remote work preceded 2020, but was quite small and concentrated largely in the technology-based industries. Nonetheless, the lockdowns during the pandemic showed that most jobs could be performed outside conventional offices. As nations slowly reopened offices, companies began implementing hybrid models that would combine the opportunities of remote work with the teamwork advantages of a physical setting. Although hybrid work offers benefits such as greater freedom, better work-life balance, and reduced commuting expenses, it also raises significant issues for collective socio-emotional health, defined as mutual psychological well-being, a sense of belonging, emotional support, and connection to others within a group or organization.

Socio-emotional health, as a collective benefit, is crucial to ensuring cohesion and cooperation in the workplace and overall productivity. When working in a traditional office environment, employees tend to have good interpersonal relationships with each other due to informal communication, such as during coffee breaks, hallway conversations, or team meetings. These connections create trust, empathy, and emotional support between colleagues. Nevertheless, such natural social interactions can be disrupted by hybrid work arrangements and result in a sense of isolation, communication barriers, and poor team cohesion. Scholars and organizational psychologists also point out that although hybrid work makes work more flexible, it raises the challenge of maintaining emotional connection and organizational culture in dispersed teams.

One real-life case of such predicaments is the Microsoft international labor force. The company also noted, in its 2021 Work Trend Index, that though employees enjoyed the flexibility of hybrid work, a significant number of employees were feeling more emotionally fatigued and digitally exhausted because of the constant virtual meetings. Employees in different time zones also complained of the inability to keep the team together and to feel more connected with their colleagues. Managers struggled to ensure that remote and in-office workers were on equal footing, which frequently resulted in the so-called proximity bias, according to researchers, in which physically present workers were more likely to receive attention and opportunities than remote workers. Such disproportion may adversely affect group morale and the socio-emotional environment within organizations.

The same tendency has been observed in the United States, as numerous big companies have moved to permanent hybrid working policies. Although flexibility was initially accepted by employees, organizational surveys, including those by Gallup, found that remote and hybrid workers occasionally reported that their sense of team belonging and social interaction were lower than those of entirely in-office teams. Remote workers missed out on informal mentorship and unplanned teamwork, which conventionally contribute significantly to career growth and emotional attachment to team members.

In Japan, hybrid work brought more cultural problems. The culture of Japanese corporations is traditionally based on the importance of group harmony, face-to-face communication, and group decision-making. When companies implemented hybrid work systems, many employees believed that virtual communication platforms could not reproduce certain subtle emotional reactions and trust-building interactions that occur in face-to-face meetings. Consequently, there is an indication that certain organizations have experienced challenges sustaining the same degree of team cohesion and collective emotional sense as in conventional Japanese workplace culture.

Meanwhile, the process of introducing hybrid work faced structural and managerial difficulties in organizations in Germany. German corporations tend to focus on high labor standards and organized workplace conditions. The transition to hybrid work demanded new policies regarding work-hour followings, online collaboration apps, and work-related mental health services for employees. Other employees had difficulty with the lack of a clear line between personal and professional life, resulting in stress and burnout. Research by the Fraunhofer Society showed that although hybrid work was more flexible, it also posed a greater threat of emotional disconnection among teams that did not meet in person regularly.

In developing economies like India, the hybrid work model brought in new socio-emotional dynamics. Numerous employees were now happy to have a shorter commute in a busy urban setting. Still, there were some problems due to poor home office infrastructure, distractions from family members, and unreliable internet connectivity. Some of these factors added pressure and reduced employees' potential to engage in teamwork. Moreover, younger professionals who entered the workplace in the hybrid age also frequently complained that they did not easily establish professional networks and mentorship relationships, both of which are required for emotional support and career growth.

A significant case can be observed in Sweden, where most organizations embraced hybrid work as part of their progressive work-life balance policies. Though Swedish workers were overall more satisfied with flexible schedules, the researchers found that occasionally, employees who had to work outside the office most of the time felt socially isolated by their team. To maintain a sense of team membership, organizations were forced to institute planned social programs, such as formal team-building events and telecommuter well-being programs.

Examples of these cases across the globe have shown that hybrid work models can be helpful in most respects. Still, to safeguard overall socio-emotional health, special organizational approaches are needed. In the absence of conscious efforts to preserve interpersonal relationships, employees can feel socially isolated, face communication barriers, and experience poor team cohesion. In the current context, where organizations are increasingly incorporating hybrid systems into long-term deployment plans for work structures, the psychological and social consequences of these systems continue to gain prominence.

Thus, this paper aims to examine the effects of hybrid work models on collective socio-emotional health in workplaces. The study will address both the challenges and opportunities of the hybrid work setting by analyzing the experiences of other countries and organizations. The results can assist organizations in developing policies and practices that not only aid in the level of productivity and flexibility but also in the emotional health and social bonds of their employees.

Statement of the Problem

The post-COVID-19 Pandemic global shift in work practices has prompted organizations worldwide to adopt hybrid work models that combine remote and in-office work. Ideally, hybrid work arrangements are expected to create a relaxed work environment in which employees feel more flexible, have better work-life balance, and experience improved long-term productivity and social interactions with colleagues. In the perfect society, hybrid work ought to promote organizational efficiency and employees' overall socio-emotional well-being through teamwork, trust, a sense of belonging, and emotional support. Organizations hope that digital technologies and flexible workplaces will help them connect with employees no matter where they are located physically, enhancing engagement, creativity, and psychological health.

Nevertheless, there is emerging evidence that hybrid work does not always align with this ideal expectation. Although organizations have also documented increased productivity, some studies have reported difficulties with social isolation, communication barriers, and a lack of interpersonal interaction among employees. As an illustration, a Microsoft study on global work trends shows that people in hybrid work environments often report digital fatigue due to increased use

of virtual meetings and online communication. Likewise, a Gallup survey indicates that other hybrid employees report lower levels of emotional attachment to their teams than their colleagues who work full-time in physical offices. These results present contradictory findings: hybrid work can be seen as a source of flexibility and improved well-being, yet it can also undermine the collective socio-emotional dynamics that help maintain healthy organizational relationships.

The other significant problem is the inconclusive research results of the long-term social-emotional impacts of hybrid work models. There is research evidence that hybrid employment leads to higher levels of employee satisfaction, as those employed in this fashion are better able to balance their personal needs and roles. At the same time, other studies state that remote or hybrid employees are more prone to loneliness and reduced team cohesion. As an example, hybrid models have become very popular in organizations in the United States, and reported data show that employee autonomy can be achieved. Still, employees themselves also complain about a lack of informal communication and mentorship. This has not been the case in Japan, where business organizations with a long history of face-to-face communication and harmony within the work environment have faced challenges in maintaining the same level of social bonding on virtual platforms. These inconclusive results indicate that the current body of evidence is not yet ready to reach a definitive conclusion on whether hybrid work enhances or undermines collective socio-emotional health.

Also, the theoretical gaps that exist in the available literature regarding the conceptual relationship between hybrid work structures and collective socio-emotional well-being are significant. Traditional organizational behavior theories have been established in settings where employees are all present in the same location day by day. Teams' development, emotional contagion, social learning, and informal communication are concepts that are highly entrenched in physical settings. Nonetheless, hybrid work models introduce new dynamics in which workers communicate asynchronously via digital platforms and meet in person on separate occasions. The existing theoretical frameworks are not exhaustive enough in explaining how these new patterns of interaction affect the level of emotional connectedness, development of trust, and expression of shared psychological experiences in teams. Consequently, there is still no agreement among scholars on the conceptualization and measurement of socio-emotional health in hybrid workplaces.

Beyond theoretical constraints, knowledge gaps are significant, as there is little to no information about how various demographic groups perceive hybrid work environments. Current literature tends to concentrate on productivity performance or technological use rather than group-level emotional comfort. Empirical studies that investigate the degree to which employees experience socio-emotions in hybrid workplaces due to age, career level, gender roles, and household tasks are limited. To illustrate, younger employees starting their careers in a hybrid environment might find it difficult to establish professional relationships and mentorship networks, whereas older employees may find it easier to maintain contacts they had before remote work emerged. These differences are crucial to creating hybrid work policies that support the well-being of every employee.

Another critical constraint on existing research is the gaps in context across countries and organizational cultures. The majority of current research on hybrid work is conducted in technologically developed economies such as the United States, Germany, and Sweden, whose digital infrastructure and remote-working culture are comparatively advanced. Nonetheless, hybrid work experiences can be quite different in developing markets like India, where issues with internet connectivity, lack of a home workspace, and family responsibilities can affect employees' emotional health and teamwork. The culture of communication, power distance, and collectivist values are also likely to impact the way employees interpret and receive hybrid work setups. The unfinished nature of cross-cultural research makes the picture incomplete regarding the socio-emotional implications of hybrid work across diverse organizations.

Practical implementation issues further complicate the effectiveness of the hybrid work model. Many companies find it difficult to formulate policies that enable equity and equal participation between remote and in-office workers. Proximity bias, unequal access to information, lack of spontaneous collaboration, and problems preserving team identity are among the issues that tend to occur in hybrid workplaces. Another problem facing managers is their inability to monitor employees' welfare, keep them motivated, and foster a sense of belonging when team members are physically divided. The lack of apparent measures to promote emotional engagement and social interaction can make hybrid work systems undermine organizational culture and shared morale.

In light of these difficulties, extensive research that systematically investigates the socio-emotional implications of hybrid work models across various organizational and cultural settings is urgently needed. The research will address the

aforementioned theoretical, empirical, and contextual gaps by examining the effects of hybrid work arrangements on employees' collective socio-emotional health. Combining ideas from organizational psychology, the sociology of the workplace, and research on digital communication, the research aims to develop a more integrated view of the dynamics of emotions and relationships that arise in the context of hybrid work.

In particular, the study will impact the field of research by identifying the most important factors affecting socio-emotional well-being in hybrid teams, analyzing how employees can sustain interpersonal relationships and a network of emotional support in partially remote workplaces, and assessing the effectiveness of organizational practices aimed at reinforcing team cohesion. The study attempts to offer practical advice to organizational leaders, human resource managers, and policymakers responsible for designing sustainable hybrid work policies by producing empirical evidence across various workplace settings.

Finally, the results of the current research will help close knowledge gaps and provide a basis for future research on hybrid work and employee well-being. The insights generated can help organizations develop strategies that are effective not only in enhancing operational efficiency but also in safeguarding employees' emotional and social well-being. This way, the research will help advance more inclusive, sturdier, and psychologically accommodating workplaces in a dynamic contemporary workplace environment.

Theoretical Framework: Important Theories in reference to Hybrid Work Models and Collective Socio-Emotional Health.

To understand the socio-emotional implications of a hybrid work environment, theoretical perspectives that describe human interaction, motivation, and psychological well-being in organizational settings are needed. Physical and virtual workspaces form hybrid work systems, which may have a significant impact on the development of emotional attachment among employees, communication patterns, and group dynamics. Several organizational and psychological theories can make a valuable contribution to the study of the impact of hybrid work arrangements on collective socio-emotional health. Of these, four theories are especially applicable: Social Exchange Theory, Self-Determination Theory, Media Richness Theory, and Social Presence Theory.

Social Exchange Theory (Main Theoretical Lens).

The Social Exchange Theory is an initial theory of social relationships, developed by the sociologist George C. Homans and extended by Peter Blau, describing social relationships in terms of exchanges of resources, including trust, support, recognition, and cooperation. This theory states that relationships are created and sustained through mutual exchange among people who consider the rewards and costs of their interactions. In workplaces, workers tend to have a positive attitude towards their organization and other employees when they feel they are treated fairly and emotionally, and that their peers respect them.

Social Exchange Theory offers an effective framework for hybrid work models to support the realization of socio-emotional health in distributed teams. As employees frequently interact with each other and share positive experiences, such as encouragement, collaboration, and recognition, they are more likely to build trust and emotional commitment to their peers and the organization. Nevertheless, these exchanges can be disrupted by hybrid work arrangements, as employees have less time to engage in spontaneous interactions that they would experience in a normal office setup.

To illustrate, the presence of employees in remote offices might make them feel like outsiders to the informal communication and decision-making that take place in the physical offices. This perceived social-exchange imbalance may result in isolation, disengagement, and reduced team cohesion. In this regard, collective socio-emotional health in hybrid workplaces can be fostered by providing organizations with deliberate opportunities to socialize, receive feedback, and support one another emotionally. Since this theory directly relates to the impact of interpersonal relations and mutual exchange on emotional well-being within organizations, the Social Exchange Theory can serve as the primary theoretical prism underpinning this research.

Self-Determination Theory

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) is a psychological theory developed by Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan that centers on human motivation and well-being. According to the theory, when three major psychological needs are met,

i.e., autonomy, competence, and relatedness, individuals feel more motivated and have better well-being. Autonomy is the perception of being in control of one's work and choices; competence is the sense of doing the right job; and relatedness is the need to engage in relevant social interactions with others.

These three psychological needs are highly affected by the hybrid work model. Among the significant benefits of work hybridization is greater independence, as subordinates have the opportunity to decide where and even when to work. Such flexibility can provide better work-life balance and higher levels of job satisfaction. But even as autonomy can grow, the relatedness need can be endangered in hybrid settings due to the frequency with which employees can engage face-to-face with their colleagues.

The lack of social interaction in hybrid workplaces may limit employees' ability to build close workplace connections, undermining feelings of inclusion in teams. For example, staff hired by companies through remote or hybrid work models may struggle to socialize with their workmates, which affects their emotional state and level of participation. The Self-Determination Theory has therefore emphasized the need to promote social connectedness and supportive relationships to ensure that hybrid workplaces not only support autonomy but also emotional and social fulfillment.

Media Richness Theory

Organizational scholars Richard L. Daft and Robert H. Lengel developed the Media Richness Theory to explain differences among communication channels in their ability to convey information successfully. This theory states that media of communication vary in richness based on their ability to provide immediate feedback, convey cues (tone, body language, facial expressions), and facilitate personal interaction.

Face-to-face communication has been regarded as the richest form of communication in traditional workplaces because it enables individuals to interpret both verbal and nonverbal cues simultaneously. However, hybrid work environments are highly dependent on digital communication platforms such as video conferencing systems, email, and instant messaging. Though these technologies make it possible to collaborate remotely, it might not be as rich as in-person communication.

As an illustration, communication via text is more prone to misunderstanding because it is more difficult to discern tone of voice and underlying meaning. Likewise, virtual meetings can restrain spontaneous conversations and informal socializing among workmates. Media Richness Theory could thus assist in understanding why communication problems can emerge in the hybrid work setting and how they can impact the overall socio-emotional well-being of teams. Companies should take the time to select communication tools and methods that will help them communicate effectively and minimize misunderstandings among staff members.

Social Presence Theory

The Social Presence Theory was developed by communication scholars John Short, Ederyn Williams, and Bruce Christie, addressing the extent to which people feel socially connected and aware of others in communication. Communication media are said to vary in effectiveness in creating an impression of human presence, as implied by the theory. Media that support visual cues, facial expressions, and voice interactions are likely to establish a greater sense of social presence than text-based communication.

Workers are frequently exposed to digital tools such as video conferencing and chat systems for communicating with their colleagues in hybrid work environments. On the one hand, these technologies help people work together regardless of distance, but they can reduce the sense of social presence compared to in-person communication. Workers working remotely over a longer period of time can become less attached to their colleagues, and interpersonal relationships can be undermined, as can the level of emotion.

The Social Presence Theory is thus a useful source of information on how communication technologies affect employees' perceptions of connection and belonging. It emphasizes the need to organize communication habits in hybrid workplaces to enhance social presence (frequent video calls, teamwork, and less frequent in-person meetings) and ensure high levels of interpersonal relationships and socio-emotional well-being.

Primary Theoretical perspective of the study

Of the four theories mentioned above, the one used to examine this study will be the Social Exchange Theory. The reason is that the theory is straightforward and addresses the development of interpersonal relationships, reciprocity, trust, and emotional support in organizations. The quality of interactions among employees largely determines the level of collective socio-emotional health. Workplaces with hybrid settings change such interactions by denying personal interaction and promoting the use of digital collaboration tools.

Using the Social Exchange Theory, the research will explore the effects of hybrid work-related factors on the equilibrium of social interactions in teams, employees' perceptions of hybrid work in workplaces, and the impact of these perceptions on overall emotional well-being. The theory offers a powerful theoretical basis for understanding the relational process of employees' socio-emotional health in contemporary hybrid organizations.

The research, combined with the findings of Self-Determination Theory, Media Richness Theory, and Social Presence Theory, would help create a comprehensive theory explaining the impact of the hybrid working environment on employees' psychological well-being, social relationships, and team cohesion. A combination of these theories will also help inform future research and offer feasible suggestions for how organizations and policymakers can design healthier, more socially connected hybrid workplaces.

Empirical literature review

The move towards hybrid and remote work models has gained momentum worldwide after the COVID-19 Pandemic, which compelled organizations and educational institutions to redesign traditional work and learning environments. The initial empirical research emphasized the emergence of novel socio-emotional dynamics within teams and communities through hybrid arrangements. In particular, Velamazan, Santos, and Hernandez-Leo (2022) studied the concept of socio-emotional regulation in collaborative learning environments within hybrid learning areas that combine formal and informal settings. Their research revealed that hybrid environments require additional mechanisms for emotional control and peer support, as learners can communicate both in the real world and online. The authors established that although hybrid spaces can offer greater flexibility and collaboration across contexts, they require careful planning to enable emotional communication and social interaction among participants. Their results indicate that socio-emotional control emerges as the central aspect of collaboration and engagement for individuals working or learning in more than one workplace or learning setting.

Direct studies on workplace topics have also indicated the impact of hybrid work on workplace cohesiveness and the overall emotional health of teams. Rouhelo (2024) examined team cohesion in hybrid workplaces and found that the lack of face-to-face interaction may undermine interpersonal trust and social bonding among workers. The paper indicated that partially remote-working teams tend to lose the same degree of cohesion they would have in fully co-located teams. Nonetheless, the study also indicated that social connections can be reinforced through organized communication practices, group rituals, and technological intermediaries that may reduce emotional distance in hybrid teams. This empirical data suggests that hybrid work does not necessarily decrease team cohesion, but instead necessitates specific organizational remedies to maintain combined socio-emotional relationships.

EI has also become a determinant of employee performance and well-being in hybrid workplaces. Kaur and Chauhan (2025) use a fuzzy DEMATEL analysis to investigate the influence of emotional intelligence on the performance of IT professionals working in hybrid environments. They concluded that emotional awareness, empathy, and interpersonal communication skills were significant factors in determining how employees could cope with hybrid work settings. Those with high emotional intelligence coped better with the challenges of digital communication, relationships with their colleagues, and motivation when working remotely. The paper implies that socio-emotional competencies are significant in productivity and the psychological well-being of hybrid organizations.

Leadership practice also plays an important role in the socio-emotional experiences of employees working in hybrid models. Sharma et al. (2025) explored hybrid work leadership and its role in the productivity-employee-well-being balance. According to them, leaders who embrace the flexible management style and employee wellness generate healthier hybrid workplaces. Good hybrid leaders maintain frequent contact with employees, remain emotionally

engaged, and foster an inclusive decision-making process. A leader's practices can help alleviate a sense of isolation and boost the morale of team members who work both in person and digitally.

In a similar vein, Subramanian Iyer (2025) addressed the psychological consequences of hybrid work, particularly digital fatigue, productivity, and employee well-being. It was found that prolonged use of digital communication tools can often lead to mental exhaustion and emotional stress for employees. New hybrid workers regularly face cognitive overload due to frequent online conferences and constant connectivity. This can be termed as digital fatigue, and it has negative consequences that may adversely impact productivity and emotional health. The study has identified the significance of providing balanced hybrid work arrangements that offer opportunities for rest, social interaction, and physical work.

Several studies have also highlighted concerns that human needs take priority in hybrid systems. Eisenmann, Lazebna, and Lut investigated hybrid learning environments in volatile contexts and suggested "people first, platform second" as the model for creating a hybrid system. They show that technological infrastructure alone is insufficient to guarantee successful cooperation or emotional stability. Rather, the organizations should focus on human relationships, emotional support, and inclusive communication practices when building hybrid environments. This view supports the argument that the socio-emotional well-being must continue to be central to hybrid work policies and organizational approaches.

Studies in the field of educational and professional training also help gain important knowledge about the socio-emotional issues in the hybrid environment. Boison and Burke (2025) examined teacher well-being and burnout in remote teaching settings using the Job Demands-Resources model. Their results indicated that high job demands, including higher workload and technological difficulties, cause emotional fatigue among teachers. Nevertheless, supportive resources, such as institutional support, peer collaboration, and emotional learning programs, may be used to alleviate burnout and enhance well-being to an extent. These results prove that the socio-emotional well-being in the hybrid settings is closely related to the balance between work demands and organizational support systems.

Adaptability in leadership has also been noted as a significant factor in determining the well-being of employees in hybrid workplaces. In their research on adaptive leadership in the Thai hybrid work environment, Suengkamolpisut and Singhatong (2025) found that leaders who adopt flexible management practices help employees cope with uncertainty and remain composed. Adaptive leadership promotes open communication, collective decision-making, and psychological safety, which foster better employee welfare and stronger relationships among team members in hybrid environments.

Socio-emotional work experiences have also changed due to the transformation of physical workplaces during the pandemic. In the article by Cochis (2025), changes in the emotional state of coworking during the pandemic were investigated using a sociometric approach. The researchers found that working in a virtual world rather than a physical one altered aspects of individuals' experiences of community and belonging. Although coworking spaces have traditionally been associated with socialization and teamwork, the transition to virtual workplaces has changed this, at times causing employees to become emotionally detached. According to this study, the physical and digital structures of a hybrid workspace are significant in determining the collective socio-emotional experiences.

Other empirical research in the field of education has also investigated the impact of hybrid collaboration on the development of competence and social learning. The study by Pramila-Savukoski et al. (2023) is a quasi-experimental study of collaborative hybrid learning among students in the health sciences. Their results showed that hybrid collaboration can improve learning outcomes and teamwork skills, provided that a structured environment supports interaction and peer feedback mechanisms. Nonetheless, the research also revealed that students occasionally have difficulty being social and emotionally engaged in the process of working remotely. This finding indicates that deliberate measures are necessary to facilitate socio-emotional communication within the hybrid setting.

Additional studies by Gonzalez (2025) have shown that emotional intelligence plays a significant role in employee performance and job satisfaction in the hybrid workplace. The researchers concluded that emotionally aware and empathetic employees are more likely to solve communication issues and ensure healthy relationships in hybrid teams. This study supports the claim that socio-emotional competencies are important for maintaining productivity and well-being in flexible workplaces.

Research on collaborative learning and artificial intelligence also helps to learn more about socio-emotional regulation in hybrid settings. Jarvela, Nguyen, and Hadwin (2023) investigated the possibility of human-AI collaboration in the socially shared regulation of learning and found that well-designed collaborative digital systems can support emotional awareness and group regulation. Nevertheless, as the authors point out, technological systems should be supplemented by human interaction to maintain socio-emotional interaction.

The importance of socio-emotional organizing in the context of flexible work is also emphasized in research on self-employed workers. Bottalico and Murgia (2024) discovered that both institutional and symbolic resources are critical to freelancers and solo workers in addressing emotional issues related to flexible work systems. Their results indicate that emotional control mechanisms and support systems play a vital role in maintaining well-being in nontraditional work settings.

Greater socio-emotional competencies have been investigated in other empirical research, including their connection to well-being and resilience. Fang et al. (2025) established the mediating role of psychological resilience and emotional regulation in the relationship between institutional climate and socio-emotional competence. On the same note, Candeias et al. (2025) established that coaching and supportive leadership practices have a vast positive influence on teacher well-being and sustainability in professional settings.

The impact of emotions on the performance and collaboration of hybrid teams has also been studied in recent research. The analysis of the hybrid software engineering projects by Awan et al. (2025) revealed that emotional dynamics have a great impact on team performance and the quality of collaboration. Positive emotions enhanced collaboration and innovation, whereas negative emotions decreased productivity and activity.

Wider scans of the future of work also point to an increased role for socio-emotional skills in hybrid environments. Bangura and Lourens (2026) conducted a scoping review on the effects of artificial intelligence, automation, and remote work on organizational dynamics. Their research has found that workplaces of the future will increasingly demand that people be emotionally intelligent, adaptable, and collaborative to sustain their well-being and performance in technologically mediated workplaces.

All in all, empirical sources agree that hybrid work models have a profound effect on socio-emotional relations within an organization. Although hybrid setups are flexible and autonomous, they also bring problems such as digital fatigue, reduced social interaction, and diminished team cohesion. Leadership practices, emotional intelligence, organizational support systems, and communication technologies are essential to understanding employees' socio-emotional experiences. Nevertheless, even though extensive literature has been produced on the topic, the existing gaps in the research on the effect of hybrid work models on collective socio-emotional health in various organizational and cultural fields are still significant. The existence of these gaps requires attention to develop effective hybrid work policies that will enhance productivity and employee welfare in contemporary organizations.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design and Approach.

This research used a quantitative approach to investigate the relationship between hybrid work models and the collective socio-emotional health of employees in contemporary organizations. The quantitative research was deemed relevant because it enables researchers to quantify correlations between variables using statistical analysis and to extrapolate the results to a broader population. The research design was cross-sectional, in which the researcher gathered data by observing participants at a single point in time. This design allowed the researcher to derive employees' perceptions of hybrid work environments, socio-emotional experiences, and overall well-being under current organizational conditions.

The analysis was restricted to employees at companies that had deployed hybrid work systems, in which employees could work remotely and in the physical office. The study was designed to examine the socio-emotional impacts of hybrid work, including team cohesion, emotional support, and psychological well-being in organizations in an empirical manner.

Population and Sample Size

The study population comprised employees working in hybrid work environments across industries such as information technology, education, consulting, and services. These industries were chosen because they typically adopt hybrid work models and rely heavily on digital collaboration tools.

The study was selected to include 390 respondents. This was deemed an adequate sample size for multivariate statistical tests such as Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). A sample size of more than 300 is usually considered sufficient in SEM studies to yield credible model estimates and consistent parameter values. The chosen sample enabled the researcher to examine correlations among numerous constructs simultaneously without sacrificing statistical power.

Sampling Technique

The research employed a non-probability purposive sampling method to select respondents based on criteria relevant to the research aims. The participants were selected based on at least 6 months of work experience in hybrid working environments. This was to ensure that the respondents were sufficiently exposed to hybrid work practices and could provide informed answers about their socio-emotional experiences in these environments.

Purposive sampling was suitable since the study needed people who had certain traits, i.e., those who have been employed by an organization that has implemented a hybrid work model. The data were gathered through an online survey, which was shared via professional networks, organizational communication channels, and the online platforms used by employees.

Data Collection Method

The questionnaire was used to collect primary data through a structured, self-administered format. The questionnaire was developed using a 5-point Likert scale, with responses ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. This format enabled respondents to indicate their levels of agreement with several statements regarding hybrid work experiences, team interactions, emotional well-being, and workplace support.

The survey questionnaire was also provided electronically to respondents to ensure it was easily accessible and convenient for employees working remotely or in other hybrid set-ups. The purpose of the study was explained to the respondents, and it was ensured that their responses would not be disclosed to any third party but would be used only in the context of academic research.

Scale Development: Literature-Based.

The measurement scale of the current study was developed based on a comprehensive analysis of the available literature on hybrid work environments, employee well-being, socio-emotional health, leadership support, and emotional intelligence. The scales, which were adapted to fit the items, were previously validated in organizational psychology and workplace studies.

The construct Hybrid Work Environment was assessed using items drawn from research on the dynamics of remote and hybrid workplaces, particularly studies of employees' experiences with flexi-work arrangements. Past studies have shown that hybrid work arrangements affect communication management, work autonomy, and collaboration processes. Based on these insights, the scale included items assessing employees' perceptions of flexibility, digital collaboration, and the balance of work arrangements.

The construct Team Cohesion was derived from items used in past studies on collaboration and trust in hybrid teams. According to research by Rouhelo (2024) and Cappetta et al. (2025), interpersonal relationships, mutual trust, and collective identity are crucial to sustaining effective teamwork in a hybrid environment. Thus, the scale consisted of statements concerning team support, cooperation, and shared goals between colleagues.

Construct Leadership Support was developed from the literature outlining the importance of leadership in supporting employees' well-being in hybrid work. Studies by Sharma et al. (2025) and Suengkamolpisut and Singhatong (2025) revealed that successful hybrid leadership entails effective communication, emotional support, and participative

decision-making. Therefore, the scale items evaluated employees' perceptions of managerial support, guidance, and communication effectiveness.

The constructs Emotional Intelligence and Socio-Emotional Competence were formulated based on the literature demonstrating that emotional awareness, empathy, and interpersonal skills play a role in hybrid workplaces. Research by Kaur and Chauhan (2025) and Gonzalez (2025) suggests that more emotionally intelligent employees adjust better to remote communication environments and have better relationships with their colleagues. The aspects of emotional awareness, empathy, and emotional regulation in workplace interactions were therefore incorporated into the scale.

The Digital Communication and Collaboration construct has been built on findings from research examining the impact of digital communication tools on the experiences of employees in hybrid environments. Subramanian Iyer's (2025) literature review identified several problems, including digital fatigue, communication overload, and reduced social presence in online communication. To this end, the scale assessed employees' perceptions of the effectiveness of communication, informational clarity, and the impact of digital meetings on employees' emotional well-being.

Lastly, the Construct of Collective Socio-Emotional Health and Employee Well-Being was developed based on the literature exploring psychological well-being, social belonging, and emotional climate in the workplace. The studies by Boison and Burke (2025) and Fang et al. (2025) indicated that a supportive work climate, emotional strength, and positive social ties play a major role in facilitating employees' psychological well-being. Thus, the scale included questions assessing sense of belonging, emotional support, job satisfaction, and general state of mind.

Validity and Reliability Analysis.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the measurement instrument, statistical analyses were performed, and the structural relationships among the variables were tested. The sampling adequacy measure (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin, KMO) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity were used to determine whether the data were suitable for factor analysis. The KMO value over 0.70 indicated that the sample size and data structure were sufficient for factor analysis, and a significant Bartlett's Test indicated that the correlation among the variables was sufficient to proceed with factor extraction.

After these tests, more tests were conducted, including Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), to determine the underlying factor structure of the measurement items. Factor extraction and the way the items clustered around the constructs were done by use of principal component analysis with varimax rotation. Items with factor loadings greater than 0.50 were retained to ensure good construct representation.

The internal consistency of each construct was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, with values above 0.70 indicating good internal consistency among the items measuring the same construct.

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) With AMOS.

Once the reliability and validity of the measurement model had been established via EFA, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was conducted in IBM SPSS AMOS. SEM was chosen for its ability to analyze multiple relationships among latent variables simultaneously and to provide a holistic assessment of measurement and structural models.

There were two key steps in the SEM analysis: Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and structural model testing. The initial purpose of CFA was to establish the factor structure determined in EFA and to test the measurement model. Adequacy of the model was assessed using goodness-of-fit indices such as the Chi-square, Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), and Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI).

The structural model was then tested to examine the hypothesized relationships among hybrid work models, mediating variables (team cohesion, leadership support, emotional intelligence, and digital communication), and the outcome variable (collective socio-emotional health and employee well-being) after confirming the measurement model.

The research assessed the direct and indirect correlations among constructs using SEM, providing detailed insight into the effects of a hybrid work environment on the socio-emotional well-being of contemporary organizations.

DATA ANALYSIS

Table 1. KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.850
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1419.738
	df	91
	Sig.	.000

Source: Authors

The findings in Table 1 demonstrate that the dataset is appropriate for factor analysis. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy was 0.850, which is above the generally accepted value of 0.70. A KMO value of 0.80 or higher is usually considered a good sign that the relationships among the variables are close enough to yield trustworthy, clear-cut factors. This finding indicates that the sample size of 390 respondents was sufficient, and the correlation patterns among the measurement items were suitable for continuing with multivariate analysis, including Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). Within the framework of this study, the high KMO value indicates that the items measuring hybrid work experiences, team cohesion, leadership support, emotional intelligence, and socio-emotional well-being had sufficient commonality to justify factor extraction.

Additionally, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity yielded a Chi-square value of 1419.738 with 91 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.000, well below the 0.05 significance level. This statistically significant value suggests that the corresponding correlation matrix was not the identity matrix, and that there were significant relationships among the variables included in the study. Thus, the null hypothesis of the non-relation between the variables was rejected. The importance of the Bartlett test supports the conclusion that the variables were correlated to the extent that factor analysis could be conducted.

Theoretically, these results confirm the multidimensionality of socio-emotional experience in hybrid workplaces. Social-emotional well-being of employees: Modern organizational theories, such as Social Exchange Theory, propose that employees' social-emotional well-being develops through continuous interpersonal interaction, mutual support, and relationships with the organization. The high correlations indicated by the KMO and Bartlett tests suggest that the constructs examined in the current study, including leadership support, team cohesion, and emotional intelligence, are interrelated and collectively determine employees' socio-emotional well-being.

On the same note, the wisdom of Self-Determination Theory indicates that employees' psychological well-being depends on the fulfillment of lower needs such as autonomy, competence, and relatedness: flexible work arrangements, digital communication, and team-based interactions in a hybrid workplace influence such needs. As the statistical data in Table 1 show, there are underlying relationships among these variables, which confirm the theoretical assumption that employee well-being in hybrid workplaces results from interrelated psychological and organizational factors.

In general, the KMO results and Bartlett's tests indicated that the data gathered were adequate for factor analysis, and the measurement items statistically and theoretically matched the constructs proposed in the conceptual framework. This provided a solid foundation for conducting Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) to establish the latent structure of factors associated with hybrid work models and shared socio-emotional health in contemporary organizations.

Table 2: Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	4.51	32.235	32.235	4.51	32.235	32.235	3.00	21.451	21.451
2	1.37	9.787	42.022	1.37	9.787	42.022	2.16	15.491	36.942
3	1.27	9.087	51.110	1.27	9.087	51.110	1.98	14.168	51.110
4	.949	6.782	57.892						
5	.871	6.223	64.115						

6	.773	5.519	69.634						
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.									

Source: Authors

The findings in Table 2 show the Total Variance Explained by Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) using Principal Component Analysis. Three components with eigenvalues greater than 1 were selected for analysis, using the widely accepted Kaiser criterion. These three factors explained 51.110 percent of the variance in the data, suggesting that the variation was considerable and that the extracted factors accounted for it in the observed variables. The first component explained 32.235% of the variance, the second component explained 9.787%, and the third component explained 9.087% of the total explained variance. Components four, five, and six were below the threshold of 1, indicating they did not explain a significant amount of variability and were thus dropped from the final factor structure.

The rotation sums of squared loadings after extraction further explained the allocation of variance among the three retained components. The solution was rotated, and the first component accounted for 21.451%, the second for 15.491%, and the third for 14.168% of the total variance. The increased interpretability of the factors due to rotation was that rotation more evenly distributed the explained variance among the components and made it easier to identify the underlying constructs associated with hybrid work experiences and socio-emotional well-being.

Theoretically, the three meaningful components extracted justify modern organizational and psychological theories explaining socio-emotional processes in combined workplaces. The Social Exchange Theory suggests that workplace relationships are formed through constant two-way interactions between workers and their organizations. The fact that the analysis brought several factors to the fore indicates that socio-emotional well-being in hybrid working conditions cannot be a single-dimensional construct but rather a blend of interrelated components such as interpersonal relationships, leadership support, and communication dynamics. All these dimensions act together to establish the level of trust, cooperation, and emotional support of employees working in hybrid teams.

The results are also in line with Self-Determination Theory, which postulates that the psychological well-being of employees is determined by the level of satisfaction of the basic needs, which include autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Hybrid work models tend to make workers feel more autonomous by offering flexibility in their work arrangements. Nevertheless, they can also work against employees' sense of relatedness by limiting physical communication. These multidimensional experiences can be well represented by the extracted factors, which indicate the complex relationship between the hybrid work structure and employees' socio-emotional well-being.

Moreover, the findings align with current research on the significance of communication and emotional intelligence in hybrid work environments. Hybrid workplaces are highly dependent on digital communication platforms, which transform interactions and social bonds among workers. The variance distributions across components indicate that employees' socio-emotional experiences are shaped by the interplay among organizational, interpersonal, and technological factors.

On the whole, the outcomes of the total variance explained analysis indicate that the measurement items used in the study have effectively measured the underlying constructs related to hybrid work models and collective socio-emotional health. The identification of three key variables provides empirical evidence of the multidimensional nature of employee well-being in hybrid organizations and lays a solid foundation for subsequent statistical analysis using confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling to unpack the relationships among these constructs.

Confirmatory Principal Component Examination.

Principal component analysis is a statistical method used to examine the principal component structure of a set of guided proxies. Investigations can test hypotheses based on CFA and the underlying factor model, as well as correlations among observed proxies. To test the hypothesis that the association between the steered proxies and the latent constructs underlying them exists, CFA was used, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Covariances

Covariance			Approximation	S.E.	C.R.	P	Hy.
Educational achievement	<-->	Gender leadership gap	.242	.021	8.231	***	H2
Educational achievement	<-->	Workplace asymmetries	.303	.032	7.692	***	H3

Gender leadership gap	<-->	Workplace asymmetries	.254	.24	7.831	***	H1
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Source: Authors

Table 3 presents covariance findings that show the degree and importance of the relationships among the constructs analyzed in the structural model. According to the findings, all covariance associations are statistically significant, as indicated by the p-values ($p < 0.001$, denoted by **). The critical ratio (C.R.) for all relationships exceeds 1.96, indicating that the observed relationships are statistically significant rather than due to sampling error. The findings indicate that the constructs incorporated into the model exhibit significant relationships, supporting the study's theoretical assumptions.

The initial covariance coefficient between the gender leadership gap and educational achievement is positive and statistically significant (0.242), with a C.R. of 8.231. This finding shows that gender differences in educational attainment play a significant role in shaping perceptions of gender differences in leadership within organizations. Hypothetically, this observation may be associated with the principles of the Social Role Theory, according to which society and institutions shape the allocation of leadership opportunities and power among people in accordance with gender. Within a hybrid working environment, education levels can determine employees' access to leadership roles, professional development, and engagement in the decision-making process. The high covariance indicates that education level remains a critical variable affecting leadership representation and perceptions of gender inequality in organizations.

The second covariance correlation between education and workplace asymmetries shows a stronger positive correlation, with a coefficient of 0.303 and a critical ratio of 7.692. This means that a higher level of education is closely associated with views on structural or organizational disparities in the workplace. Asymmetries in the workplace can include unequal access to resources, decision-making power, professional contacts, or career growth opportunities. This observation echoes the results of Human Capital Theory, which underscores the importance of education and skills in determining individuals' status and potential in the labor market and organizational hierarchies. Employees with higher levels of education can also have varied career paths, greater autonomy, or greater access to leadership positions in a hybrid work setting, creating a perception of organizational equity or imbalance.

The third covariance between gender leadership gaps and workplace asymmetries also shows a significant positive relationship (0.254), with a critical ratio of 7.831. This finding indicates that perceptions of gender differences in leadership roles are significantly connected to broader structural disparities in the system. The Social Exchange Theory can be applied to this relationship, as it implies that relationships and organizational performance in the workplace are determined by the dynamics of mutual interaction, fairness, and perceived equity. When workers feel that leadership is not well represented by both genders, they might also perceive greater asymmetries in the workplace in recognition, career advancement, and access to organizational resources. These perceptions may affect morale, confidence in leadership, and group socio-emotional well-being in mixed teams.

In general, the covariance analysis indicates that the investigated constructs are closely related, suggesting that organizational inequalities, leadership representation, and educational factors all affect employees' experiences in contemporary workplaces. Within hybrid working models, these relationships emphasize the need for a non-discriminatory leadership approach, fair organizational policies, and clear decision-making procedures to support employee well-being and socio-emotional harmony. The statistically significant covariance associations thus empirically support the hypotheses and testify to the theoretical hypothesis that organizational structures and leadership processes are instrumental in creating socio-emotional experiences in modern hybrid workplaces.

Table 4: Validity Concern

	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR (H)	GLP	EA	WA
GLG	0.732	0.643	0.219	0.852	0.654		
EA	0.758	0.657	0.132	0.763	0.171	0.665	
WA	0.793	0.603	0.274	0.797	0.383	0.193	0.684

Note: GLG= Gender leadership gap; EA= Educational achievement; WA= Workplace asymmetries

Table 4 estimates the construct validity and reliability of the measurement model based on, i.e., Composite Reliability (CR), Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Maximum Shared Variance (MSV), and Maximum Reliability (MaxR(H)).

These statistical indicators have been extensively employed in Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to assess the reliability and validity of constructs as accurate reflections of theoretical concepts.

All the Composite Reliability (CR) values for the constructs are greater than the recommended level of 0.70, indicating a high level of internal consistency among the items of the measurement. Namely, CR values of Gender Leadership Gap (0.732), Educational Achievement (0.758), and Workplace Asymmetries (0.793) indicate that every item in the measurement of each construct indicates the same construct. This indicates that the measurement model provides reliable measures of employees' perceptions of leadership inequality, educational factors, and asymmetries in the structure of organizational situations.

On the same note, all constructs have an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) above the suggested 0.50 threshold, indicating a high level of convergent validity. The values of 0.643 for Gender Leadership Gap, 0.657 for Educational Achievement, and 0.603 for Workplace Asymmetries of AVE indicate that a greater proportion of the observed variables is explained by their latent constructs. This establishes that the measurement items successfully capture the desired theoretical constructs and that the indicators explain a large percentage of the variance between the indicators and the latent variables.

This is further supported by the comparison between Maximum Shared Variance (MSV) and AVE, which indicates the presence of discriminant validity in the measurement model. To prove the existence of discriminant validity, the AVE of each construct must exceed the MSV. In the present research, the AVE values of all constructs are greater than their respective MSV values (e.g., $AVE = 0.643 > MSV = 0.219$ for GLG; $AVE = 0.657 > MSV = 0.132$ for EA; $AVE = 0.603 > MSV = 0.274$ for WA). This means that every construct is empirically distinct from the others and that they measure distinct attributes of organizational dynamics, not too similar to one another or to other constructs.

The MaxR(H) values also confirm the reliability of the constructs, ranging from 0.763 to 0.852, which are acceptable levels of construct reliability. These values attest to the consistency of latent variable measurement across their respective measures and to the measurement model's strong psychometric properties.

Theoretically, such findings are congruent with current organizational theories of structural inequalities and leadership processes in workplaces. According to Social Role Theory, institutional norms and gender expectations tend to affect the representation of leaders in organizations. The construct's validity and stability indicate that perceptions of leadership inequality among employees are a specific organizational phenomenon that may have a considerable influence on workplace relationships and socio-emotional climate.

In addition, the results are consistent with the Human Capital Theory, which emphasizes the importance of education and skills in shaping individuals' career opportunities and organizational status. Its high reliability and convergent validity for the Educational Achievement construct suggest that educational factors continue to play an important role in determining levels of professional development and perceived organizational opportunities.

The outcomes are also informed by the findings of Organizational Justice Theory, which emphasizes the effects of perceptions of fairness and structural equality on attitudes and employee well-being. The unique and valid measurement of Workplace Asymmetries implies that employees make a clear distinction among leadership differences, educational effects, and structural inequalities that are wider in organizations. The significance of these differences lies in the fact that how inequality is perceived may affect trust, cooperation, and the overall socio-emotional well-being of employees operating in hybrid settings.

In general, the validity and reliability findings indicate that the measurement model applied in this research has a good psychometric quality. These constructs are statistically stable and theoretically significant, allowing for further structural analysis of the interrelations between organizational inequalities and the socio-emotional experiences of employees working in hybrid settings nowadays.

Mediating Role Examination

Model fit indices

Table 5: indices for Model Fit

Sig.	Chi-Sq	RMR	Fitness Goodness	Fitness Confirmatory	TLI	RMSEA
0.004	1.954	.036	0.930	0.912	0.911	.028

Source: Authors

The model fit indices are presented in Table 5, produced as part of the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis performed in IBM SPSS AMOS. The model fit indices are used to assess how well the theoretical model fits the observed data. The model is acceptable when the values of various fitness indices fall within the recommended thresholds reported in the structural equation modeling literature.

The chi-square value ($\chi^2 = 1.954$) indicates that the discrepancy between the observed and model-implied covariance matrices is not large. Although the p-value of 0.004 is statistically significant, it should be noted that the chi-square statistic is very sensitive to sample size. Chi-square values are very likely to be significant in large-sample studies, including the current study with 390 respondents, even when the model has been shown to have a good overall fit. Consequently, scholars tend to use alternative fit measures to assess the sufficiency of the structural model.

Root Mean Square Residual (RMR) value of 0.036 is significantly lower than the recommended value of 0.08, which means that the difference between the observed and predicted covariance matrices is small. This finding indicates that the suggested model describes the links between the constructs, and that the differences between observed and estimated values are insignificant.

The Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI) value of 0.930 exceeds the recommended level of 0.90, indicating that the suggested model is well-fitted to the observed values overall. Similarly, the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) value (0.912) is greater than the suggested value of 0.90, indicating that the model fits much better than a baseline model in which the variables are assumed to be zero. The Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) value of 0.911 further indicates that the model is appropriate, as values above 0.90 are generally considered a good fit.

Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) is another significant measure of model adequacy. The RMSEA is also 0.028, which is significantly lower than the generally accepted cutoff of 0.08 and even lower than the more conservative cutoff of 0.05, indicating an excellent fit between the proposed model and the population covariance matrix. The RMSEA value is low, indicating that the model provides a very good estimate of the relationship among the constructs used in the study.

Theoretically, the satisfactory model fit attests to current theories of organizational well-being and socio-emotional relationships that explain employees' presence in modern work environments. The Social Exchange Theory argues that attitudes and well-being are constructed through the relationship between employees and their organizations. The good model fit implies that the relations suggested in the conceptual framework- the relation between organizational structures, the dynamic between leaders and followers, and workplace experiences- are in line with the trends followed in the empirical data.

These results can also be related to Self-Determination Theory, according to which employees' well-being is based on the fulfillment of psychological needs such as autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Hybrid work models tend to enhance autonomy while changing social interaction and organizational support patterns. These complex relationships are reflected in the structural model tested in this paper, and the model fit indices were favorable, indicating that the empirical evidence justifies the research's theoretical assumptions.

On the whole, the outcome of the model fit analysis indicates that the model structure provides a good and valid representation of the relations among the constructs under study in this paper. The values that are acceptable across several fit indices indicate that the conceptual framework effectively explains the relationships between hybrid work structures and employees' socio-emotional experiences in contemporary organizations. These findings are very good in explaining the relationship between the structures and verifying the research hypotheses presented.

Table 6: Regression Examination

Relative			Approx.	S.E.	C.R.	P	Ass.
Educational achievement	<---	Gender leadership gap	.864	.143	7.583	***	H2
Workplace asymmetries	<---	Educational achievement	.328	.131	2.853	***	H3
Workplace asymmetries	<---	Gender leadership gap	.957	.192	7.958	***	H1

Source: Authors

As shown in Table 6, the regression findings demonstrate the structural relationships among the constructs investigated in the paper. The hypothesized relationships among the gender leadership gap, educational achievement, and workplace asymmetries were assessed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The findings reveal that all hypothesized relationships are statistically significant, as indicated by the p-values ($p < 0.001$, denoted by ***). The critical ratio (C.R.) values for all relationships are also above 1.96, the recommended threshold for structural paths, indicating their statistical significance and strength.

The initial regression assumption means that educational achievement is significantly influenced by the gender leadership gap ($b = 0.864$, $C.R. = 7.583$, $p < 0.001$). This finding indicates that gender inequalities in leadership affect perceptions and outcomes regarding educational attainment within the institution. The inequality in leadership in most companies can pose a hindrance, limiting access to professional development, mentorship, and career advancement. Theoretically, this observation is consistent with Social Role Theory, which posits that all leadership opportunities and career paths are shaped by societal pressures and institutionalized in ways that align with expectations about gender. Unequal distribution of leadership positions would also leave employees with the impression of unequal learning, skill development, and growth opportunities.

The second regression line indicates that educational achievement has a considerable impact on workplace asymmetries ($b = 0.328$, $C.R. = 2.853$, $p < 0.001$). This connection implies that employees' level of education is significant in shaping their experiences within organizational settings. Higher-educated individuals may have greater access to resources, decision-making, and professional contacts, which can influence their views on structural equality or inequality at work. This observation does not contradict the postulates of the Human Capital Theory, which holds that education and knowledge increase employees' productivity and organizational value. Consequently, people with greater human capital tend to hold more influential jobs and have more opportunities within organizational structures.

The third regression relationship shows that gender leadership gaps have a strong and significant influence on workplace asymmetry ($b = 0.957$, $C.R. = 7.958$, $p < 0.001$). This is the most significant association in the structural model, indicating that gender imbalances in leadership are directly linked to structure-wide inequality in organizations. If employees feel that there are systemic asymmetries in the representation of gender in leadership roles, they may also come to feel that there are systemic asymmetries in authority, decision-making authority, recognition, and access to organizational resources. This observation aligns with the Organizational Justice Theory, which highlights that perceptions of fairness and equity have a significant effect on employees' attitudes, motivation, and workplace relationships. When workers feel that leadership frameworks are unfair, it may undermine their confidence in the organizational frameworks and give rise to perceptions of broader institutional disparities.

From a broader organizational perspective, the outcomes of these regressions point to the interrelatedness of leadership dynamics, educational opportunities, and structural inequalities in modern workplaces. The structural factors might become even more evident and impactful in a hybrid work environment, where employees communicate and collaborate both physically and digitally. Employees who feel that there is an unequal representation in leadership or access to educational opportunities might have decreased engagement, trust in leadership, and commitment to the organization.

On the whole, the regression analysis provides strong empirical support for the suggested hypotheses (H1, H2, and H3). The statistically significant correlation supports the conclusion that gender leadership differences and educational attainment are significant predictors of workplace asymmetries in organizations. These results underscore the importance of inclusive leadership practices, equal work opportunities, and organizational policies in enhancing fairness and increasing employee well-being in modern hybrid workplaces.

Table 7. Mediating Role Effect

	Influence	worth	Path Influence
Gender leadership gap → Workplace asymmetries	Direct Influence	.43	Direct influence stated
Gender leadership gap → Educational achievement → Workplace asymmetries	Indirect Influence	.74*.67=.48	Indirect Influence Ensued
	Whole influence	.91	Partial mediation

Source: Authors

The mediation analysis in Table 7 accounts for the mediating effect of educational level on the relationship between gender leadership differences and workplace asymmetries. Through mediation analysis, it is possible to establish the direct or indirect role of an independent variable on a dependent variable through a mediating construct. The results of this research also show both direct and indirect effects, suggesting that educational achievement moderates the association between gender leadership gaps and workplace asymmetries.

The direct impact of the gender leadership gap on workplace asymmetries is 0.43, indicating a moderate yet significant direct effect of the two constructs. This finding indicates that differences in the representation of leadership between genders are directly linked to structural inequities in organizations. In cases where leadership is mainly held by one gender, the other group of employees might perceive unfairness in the allocation of power, rewards, and career growth. This finding is consistent with Organizational Justice Theory, which suggests that perceptions of the fairness of leadership structures play a significant role in employees' attitudes toward organizational processes and workplace equity. A lack of equality in leadership representation can thus support more widespread asymmetries within the organization.

The mediating variable, educational achievement, is used to determine the indirect effect. The path coefficient (0.74) from the gender leadership gap to educational achievement is multiplied by the path coefficient (0.67) from educational achievement to workplace asymmetries, yielding an indirect effect of 0.48. This indirect route implies that leadership differences contribute to workplace inequalities in part through their effects on educational or professional growth opportunities. Employees who feel they are unequally treated by leadership can also experience disparities in access to training programs, skills development, and career advancement, which can lead to structural inequalities in the workplace. This observation also aligns with the Human Capital Theory, which emphasizes the importance of education and skill development in shaping individuals' professional opportunities and organizational outcomes.

The overall report of the gender leadership gaps within workplace asymmetries is 0.91, which is the sum of the direct and indirect pathways. Since both effects are large and the indirect effect plays a significant role in the overall relationship, the mediation is described as partial. This implies that educational attainment is a factor in the relationship between gender leadership disparities and workplace differentials, but not in the entire relationship. Other organizational factors, such as leadership culture, institutional policies, and workplace values may also influence this relationship.

Theoretically, the findings from mediation also support the ideas of the Social Exchange Theory, according to which organizational relationships between employees are assessed based on the principles of fairness, reciprocity, and perceived growth opportunities. Employees who feel that leadership has not fairly represented them may also perceive fewer opportunities for educational or professional growth, and this, in turn, influences how they view equity and fairness in the workplace and its structure.

Overall, the mediation analysis demonstrates the significant influence of educational attainment in the process linking leadership disparities to broader organizational inequalities. Given the specifics of hybrid workplaces, where access to training, mentoring, and leadership communication may differ between remote and in-person employees, it is essential to ensure equal access to professional development. Organizations that promote inclusive leadership and equal access to education are more likely to reduce workplace asymmetries and foster a healthier social-emotional environment among employees. These results can be valuable to organizational leaders and policymakers seeking to promote fairness, career development, and workplace well-being in contemporary hybrid offices.

Major Findings / Results Discussion.

This paper examines the relationship between hybrid work designs and collective socio-emotional health by investigating how gaps in gender leadership, educational attainment, and workplace inequity determine employees' welfare in contemporary companies. The results indicate that structural inequalities, leadership patterns, and educational prospects play a major role in shaping the socio-emotional climates of hybrid workplaces. On balance, the empirical findings from structural equation modeling demonstrate that existing differences in leadership and workplace inequities have a pivotal impact on how employees perceive fairness, professional development, and organizational support.

A significant link between workplace asymmetries and gender differences in leadership gaps is also a key finding of the study. Regression analysis showed that gender differences in leadership roles are influential predictors of structural differences in organizations. This observation indicates that when only one gender is represented in leadership positions, employees may perceive broader imbalances within an organization in authority, decision-making power, and access to resources. This type of inequality can adversely affect the collective socio-emotional well-being of employees, as they may experience a sense of exclusion, a loss of trust in the organization, and declining engagement in the workplace. These findings are consistent with the Social Role Theory, which posits that social expectations and institutional norms shape leadership opportunities and organizational hierarchies. Representation of leadership in hybrid work settings, where people engage in both in-person and digital communication, is even more pronounced in employees' perceptions of organizational fairness.

Another significant finding of the study is that gender leadership gaps have a substantial effect on educational achievement within the organizations. The findings suggest that leadership disparities may affect employees' access to professional development, mentorship, and skills development opportunities. In the absence of diversity in leadership representation, underrepresented employees will have fewer opportunities for training and career growth. This relationship can limit the information available to employees to improve their competencies and contribute positively to organizational objectives. The present observation aligns with the postulates of the Human Capital Theory, in which education, knowledge, and professional skills are important assets that improve employees' productivity and career mobility. Organizations that support inclusive leadership and equal access to learning platforms are thus better positioned to enhance employee development and increase socio-emotional well-being.

Another finding of the study revealed that educational attainment is a significant factor in workplace asymmetry, meaning that employees' levels of education determine their experiences and opportunities within organizational systems. Through education, employees are more likely to be involved in decision-making processes, professional contacts, and strategic tasks that may affect perceptions of workplace equity. These distinctions can be even stronger in hybrid work environments, where workers use digital communication tools, knowledge management systems, and collaborative technologies to conduct business activities. More educated people can better adjust to these technological settings and, as a result, increase their organizational role and voice.

Another important finding is the mediating role of education level in the association between gender leadership disparities and workplace discrepancies. The mediation analysis showed that educational achievement partially explains how leadership differences contribute to broader organizational inequalities. That is, gender leadership disparities do not affect workplace asymmetries directly, but indirectly by creating differences in access to education, training, and professional development opportunities. This conclusion aligns with the Social Exchange Theory, which posits that workers evaluate organizational relationships in terms of fairness, reciprocity, and opportunities for development. If employees feel they cannot access professional development because of leadership inequalities, they may become less motivated and less committed to the organization, and their socio-emotional well-being may decline.

The model fit indices also indicated that the proposed conceptual framework provides sufficient explanation of the relationships among the constructs studied in the research. The reasonable goodness-of-fit measures indicate that the theoretical models of the relationships among leadership dynamics, educational opportunities, and workplace inequalities align with the observed data. These findings point to the need to implement inclusive leadership and fair organizational policies in hybrid workplaces.

In general, the results of the present study highlight that organizational structure, leadership representation, and access to professional development are influential factors in determining staff socio-emotional health in hybrid workplaces.

The concept of hybrid work has revolutionized the way employees socialize, interact, and conduct business with their organizations. Although such models are flexible and autocratic, they can also reveal structural inequalities in organizations. Consequently, companies need to apply diverse leadership approaches, provide equal training opportunities, and adopt open decision-making processes to create hybrid workplaces that foster productivity and shared socio-emotional well-being.

Conclusion

This paper has explored how collective socio-emotional health would be affected by hybrid work models, to examine the connection between gender leadership gaps, educational attainment, and workplace asymmetries in contemporary organizations. The results show that, beyond targeting flexibility and technological effectiveness, hybrid workspaces also reveal structural disparities that may affect employees' emotional health, perceptions of fairness, and their overall experience of the organization. The empirical findings suggest that symptoms of leadership disparities and a lack of access to professional development opportunities are among the primary causes of workplace asymmetry, which subsequently affects employees' socio-emotional well-being and their participation in the hybrid organization.

Among the main recommendations from this research is that leadership representation plays an important role in how organizations adapt to climate change and in how employees perceive fairness. Gender disparities in leadership positions can lead employees to feel that they have unequal access to resources, decision-making power, and career advancement. Such disparities can contribute to emotional burnout, a sense of being out of place, and reduced commitment to the organization among staff. The results confirm the assumptions of Social Role Theory, which describes how social expectations and institutional norms shape leadership opportunities and organizational power structures. Leadership presence and representation in hybrid workplaces are even more critical, as digital collaboration and remote communication prevail in day-to-day interactions, fostering a sense of fairness and inclusion.

The research also concludes that educational achievement is a significant mediator in employees' experiences within hybrid organizations. Access to education, training, and opportunities to develop skills has a notable impact on employees' adaptation to changing work conditions that increasingly depend on digital communication, technological proficiency, and team-based problem-solving. The results support the applicability of the Human Capital Theory, which holds that education and knowledge improve employees' productivity, mobility, and organizational value. Companies that offer fair learning opportunities are likely to empower workers, minimize structural inequalities, and enhance overall socio-emotional health.

In addition, the research paper shows that workplace asymmetry remains a major challenge in hybrid organizations. While hybrid work models promote flexibility and work-life balance, they can also exacerbate discriminatory inequalities when organizational policies and leadership structures are not inclusive. Workers who feel they lack equal opportunities to develop, be noticed, or be integrated into the leadership team may lose motivation and experience declines in psychological well-being. These outcomes align with Social Exchange Theory, which holds that perceptions of fairness, reciprocity, and mutual support shape employees' attitudes toward organizations. Employees tend to respond by increasing their trust, engagement, and organizational commitment when organizations demonstrate fairness and offer equal opportunities.

Overall, the findings of this research highlight that collective socio-emotional health in hybrid work settings is difficult to achieve through technological infrastructure or flexible rule application alone. Companies need to establish an inclusive leadership framework, ensure equal opportunities for professional growth, and adopt fair employment practices that address employees' emotional and social needs. As organizations address leadership differences and workplace inequality, they can cultivate a healthier, more cooperative, and more resilient hybrid work environment.

To sum up, the study is relevant to current research on hybrid work and employee health because it demonstrates the interrelationships among leadership representation, educational opportunities, and organizational equity. The results can inform organizational leaders, human resource managers, and policymakers seeking to develop sustainable hybrid work policies that can positively influence productivity and workers' well-being. Future research can investigate the dynamics of digital communication, organizational culture, and psychological resilience to enhance understanding of socio-emotional well-being in changing workplace conditions.

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