

Work–Life Balance in Hybrid Work Environments: Impact on Employee Engagement and Performance

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ABSTRACT

Work–life balance has emerged as a significant factor influencing employee engagement, satisfaction, and overall performance, particularly in the context of evolving hybrid work environments. The shift towards hybrid work models, which combine both remote and on-site working arrangements, has transformed the way employees manage their professional and personal responsibilities. This study aims to examine the impact of work–life balance on employee engagement and performance among employees of Accent Techno Soft, Coimbatore. A descriptive research design was adopted for the study, and primary data was collected from 120 respondents using structured questionnaires. The study focuses on understanding employee perceptions regarding flexibility, workload, communication, and organizational support in a hybrid work setting. Statistical tools such as percentage analysis, chi-square test, correlation, and ANOVA were employed to analyze the collected data and to identify relationships between key variables. The findings of the study indicate that hybrid work environments offer greater flexibility and autonomy, which positively influence employee satisfaction and engagement levels. At the same time, challenges such as workload imbalance, difficulty in maintaining boundaries between work and personal life, and communication gaps were observed among employees. The analysis further reveals that organizational support, effective communication, and proper workload management play a crucial role in maintaining a healthy work–life balance.

Keywords: *Work–life balance, Hybrid work, Employee engagement, Employee performance, Job satisfaction, Organizational support, Productivity*

INTRODUCTION

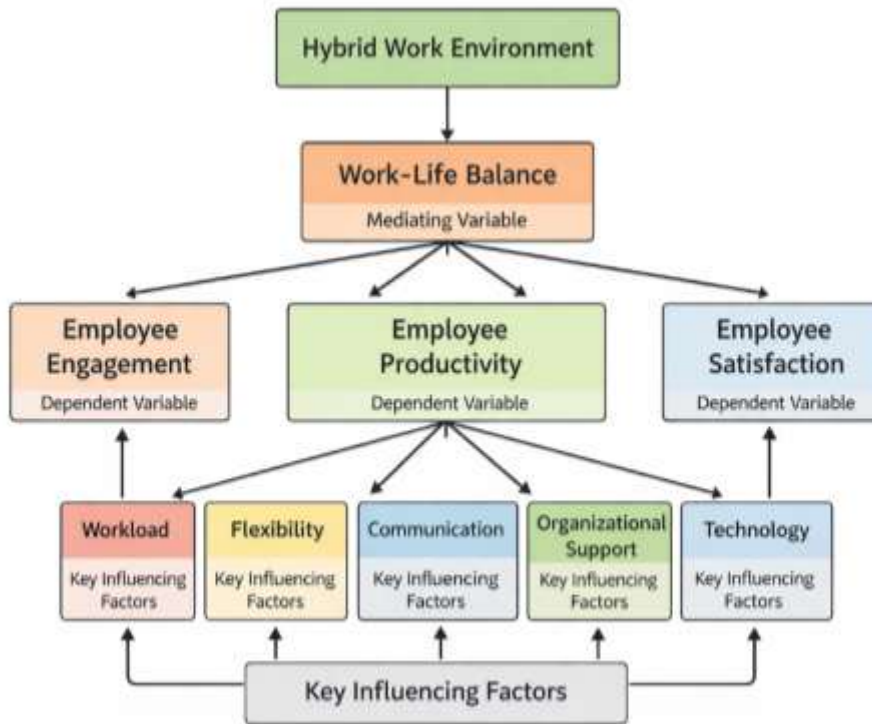
The idea of work life balance involves keeping a balance between job duties and personal life. In recent years, hybrid work arrangements have gained popularity, enabling staff to work both from home and in the office. This change has notably affected employee involvement and productivity. Hybrid work provides flexibility and independence, allowing employees to manage their time more effectively. However, it also creates challenges like unclear distinctions between work and personal life, higher levels of stress, and difficulties in communication. This research seeks to examine these factors and how they influence employee engagement and performance at Accent Techno Soft. This research examines how work-life balance affects employee engagement and performance within the workforce of Accent Techno Soft in Coimbatore.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Reddy (2023) examined communication practices in hybrid work environments. The study found that clear and effective communication between employees and management plays a crucial role in improving coordination, teamwork, and overall performance. Kumar (2022) analysed the impact of workload in hybrid work settings. The study found that increased workload and the lack of clear boundaries between work and personal life can lead to employee burnout. This negatively affects both job satisfaction and overall performance. Singh (2022) highlighted the importance of organizational support in maintaining employee well-being. The study concluded that employees perform better when they receive proper guidance, support, and encouragement from management, especially in flexible work environments. Brown (2021) examined the challenges faced in hybrid work models. The study found that while hybrid work offers flexibility, it also creates issues such as communication gaps and feelings of isolation among employees. These

challenges can reduce employee engagement and overall efficiency if not addressed properly by the organization. Sharma and Verma (2021) focused on flexible working arrangements and their effect on productivity. Their findings indicated that flexibility in work schedules improves employee satisfaction and performance. However, the study emphasized that effective time management is essential for maintaining a healthy work–life balance in such environments. Mehta (2020) conducted a study on work–life balance and its impact on employee performance. The study revealed that employees who are able to maintain a proper balance between their personal and professional lives experience lower levels of stress and higher job satisfaction. It also highlighted that organizations that support employee well-being tend to achieve better productivity and performance outcomes

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



The hybrid work environment has a direct effect on employees' work life balance. When employees can achieve a good balance, it results in increased engagement and better productivity. Nevertheless, elements like heavy workload, poor communication, and insufficient support can adversely impact this balance. Hence, controlling these elements is crucial for improving employee performance and satisfaction. However, several factors such as a heavy workload, communication gaps, and insufficient organizational support can negatively impact this balance. Flexible hybrid work arrangements can help employees manage their time more effectively, but without well-defined limits, they might lead to extended working hours and higher stress levels. Technology aids in communication and coordination, and clear roles along with an even distribution of tasks help minimize confusion. Thus, effectively handling these factors is crucial for enhancing employee well-being, happiness, and overall productivity.

WORK-LIFE BALANCE THEORY

Work–Life Balance Theory stresses the importance of achieving a balance between an individual’s life and career responsibilities. In today’s fast paced and work competitive environment, employees are required to play multiple role at the same time by attending their professional duties, family duties and social duties. If these various roles that a person plays are not balanced well with each other, it will lead to stress, dissatisfaction and a reduced quality of life. Proper balance of work and personal life is not only necessary for the well being of an individual employee but is also critical to an organization’s success.

The theory implies that employees who devote enough time and energy to the two components of life, work and personal life, are most likely to experience greater satisfaction, a healthy mind and body, and greater productivity. The balanced lifestyle keeps individuals focused, motivated and emotionally balanced thus having a positive impact on their work

performance. However, in case of imbalance, where work is allowed to dominate personal life or where personal issues are allowed to interfere with work matters, burnout and emotional exhaustion is inevitable, and thus the employees efficiency is reduced. Such individuals may have their work and personal life suffer due to fatigue and tension.

The theory also points out that maintenance of this balance is not only an individual's responsibility but also can be dependent on the organizational support and policies like flexible working conditions and work environment. In today's evolving work culture, especially with the rise of hybrid work systems, this balance is harder and more critical to strike as the boundary between working and personal life is much thinner.

In modern work settings, especially with the rise of hybrid and flexible work models, work–life balance has become more and more difficult to achieve. There are often no clear boundaries between work and personal life, and as a result, employees find it hard to log off or leave work behind. It increases the risk of overworking and cuts down on the time available for other activities, thereby impacting work-life balance negatively. Therefore, both sides(GTK vs Qt (Widget toolkit) | Mozilla Developer Network.” n.d., para.

FINDINGS AND INTERPRFETATION

The correlation analysis conducted in this study strongly supports the principles of Work–Life Balance Theory with respect to the relationship between work–life balance, job demands, job resources, and employee outcomes. The findings illustrate that work–life balance correlates positively with employee performance, suggesting that employees who strike a balance between their personal and professional lives perform more effectively and report higher job satisfaction. The findings indicate a significant positive relationship between work-life balance and performance, indicating that an employee with balanced personal and professional life performs more effectively and demonstrates high job satisfaction; the relationship further suggests that maintaining balance keeps one's mind at ease and body reenergized, thus boosting efficiency and decision-making powers.

At the same time, the analysis identifies a negative correlation between job demands and work–life balance. Negative Correlation Between Job Demands and Work–Life Balance The negative effects of poor work life balance on job performance have a direct impact on individual productivity and organizational performance due to work stress, fatigue, and diminished motivation. A negative correlation signifies the disruption of balance and unfavorable results for employees.

Overall, the correlation findings provide further support for the notion that work–life balance is interrelated to different variables of the workplace and impacts employee outcomes. Job demands and job resources need to be in proper balance to maintain employee well-being and improve performance. Therefore they suggest that organizations should work on reducing excessive job demands and balancing these with job resources to foster a healthier, informative work environment. This ensures higher levels of employee satisfaction, reduced levels of stress, and ensures long term success of organizations.

Correlation analysis is significant in this case as it gives a clear picture of data patterns and trends, aids in evidence-based decisions and helps in developing the right kind of organizational strategies to boost employee satisfaction and engagement coupled with productivity.

JOB DEMANDS-RESOURCES (JD-R) THEORY

The Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Theory is a widely recognized framework used to understand employee well-being, motivation, and performance in the workplace. According to this theory, every job has specific demands and resources, and the balance between these two factors determines an employee's level of stress, engagement, and productivity. It provides a comprehensive approach to analyzing how workplace conditions affect employees both positively and negatively. Job demands refer to the physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of a job that require sustained effort. These may include heavy workload, tight deadlines, high pressure, emotional demands, and long working hours. While some level of job demand is necessary to keep employees challenged and productive, excessive demands can lead to stress, burnout, and decreased performance. For instance, employees who are constantly under pressure to meet unrealistic targets may experience mental exhaustion and reduced job satisfaction

The JD-R Theory is also widely applicable in human resource management practices, and especially in job design and workload management. HR professionals can base on this framework to structure roles in a way that balances responsibilities and adequate support systems. For example, if a job demands high-levels of effort and responsibility, an organization can compensate by giving them more autonomy, recognition, or support with technology. This ensures that employees do not get overwhelmed and that they are able to complete their assignments efficiently. The theory is additionally useful in formulating training and development programs that prepare employees with the necessary skills to respond to job demands.

Also, the JD-R model proves critical for mitigating employee stress, burnout, and turnover. By identifying high job demands coupled with appropriate resources, organizations can avert negative outcomes such as fatigue, dissatisfaction, and disengagement. Such employees tend to also be loyal to the organization, thus reducing the rate of employee turnover and promoting retention (Schaufeli & Taris 2014; Karasek & Theorell 1990; Halbesleben 2010). This aside not only benefits the employees but also benefits organizations on costs incurred in recruiting and training new staff. The theory also helps in formulating employee wellness programs that address both physical and mental health to ensure long-term sustainability of employees.

ANOVA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) is used in this study to examine whether there are significant differences in employee outcomes such as work–life balance, stress levels, and employee performance. They are mostly related to work model, job role, and level of experience. Hence the purpose of the ANOVA is to help identify key factors influencing employee outcomes.

The ANOVA's results indicate that there are significant differences in work–life balance among employees working under different work models. Employees in hybrid work environments experience better balance than those working fully from the office. This is due to the flexibility in hybrid systems, which employees can plan their schedules and take care of their personal and work-related matters without being overwhelmed. Employees working from the office may not face a flexible schedule and may be subjected to time wastage on commuting, which is likely to affect work–life balance.

CHI-SQUARE TEST ANALYSIS

The Chi-Square test is one of the most common statistical tools used by researchers for analyzing the relationship between two categorical variables. It works splendidly when you have survey data and the responses are divided into categories like levels of satisfaction, agreement, or demographics. Basically, the test takes the observed frequencies that were actually recorded from the respondents and compares them with the expected frequencies that would be there if the variables were not related. This comparison makes it possible to figure out if the differences between observed and expected values are statistically significant or just a matter of random fluctuation.

Most probably, the Chi-Square test in this research paper is used as a method of finding out the relationship between worklife balance factors and different employee-related outcomes such as engagement, satisfaction, and performance within a hybrid work environment. Using this test, the author of the paper would be able to tell if factors like flexibility, workload, and support from the organization really make a difference in the lives of the employees. When a result is significant, it means that there is a connection between the variables, whereas when it is not significant, it means that the variables do not affect each other.

This study will utilize the Chi-Square Test due to its lack of complex assumptions regarding the data being distributed and therefore being appropriate for non-parametric data. Furthermore, the Chi-Square test provides a very basic means of confirming hypotheses through quality statistics and supporting overall analysis with clear statistical evidence. As such, utilizing the Chi-Square Test will improve reliability and accuracy for the research conducted along with providing clarity of how work-life balance is affected by the various factors involved in hybrid workplaces.

CONCLUSION

Hybrid work significantly affects employees' work-life balance, involvement, and productivity. Although it offers flexibility, it also leads to challenges such as stress, heavy workloads, and difficulties in communication. Achieving a good balance between work and personal life is crucial for boosting employee happiness and efficiency. Organizational support, straightforward communication, and efficient management of workloads are essential in reaching this balance. In general, an effectively managed hybrid work setup can improve employee well-being and contribute to the success of the organization.

Moreover, this article sheds light on the necessity of support from the company to create a positive hybrid working environment. When employers offer employees flexible policies, communication tools, and the proper amount of resources, it gives employees the ability to perform at a higher level while decreasing overall work-related stress. Additionally, effective workload management and regular interaction between team members and management will reduce miscommunications and improve coordination. Finally, when employers take the time to address employee concerns, the engagement levels of employees increase, and employees develop a greater sense of belonging.

Finally, the results of this study indicate that hybrid work models must be continuously monitored and improved to ensure they are sustained. Companies must develop employee-centred strategies, foster a healthy culture, and encourage work/life integration to help prevent employee burnout. In addition to these initiatives, training programs, feedback mechanisms, and supportive leadership will improve the wellbeing of employees and the performance of employees.

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