



A Literature Review on Women's Work-Life Balance in Hybrid Working Mode

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Abstract: This study examines the work-life balance for women within hybrid working models. It identifies the benefits of increased flexibility that these arrangements provide, allowing women to better manage professional responsibilities and personal commitments. However, challenges remain, such as longer work hours and blurred boundaries between work and home life. Through qualitative and quantitative analysis, the research underscores the necessity for organizational support, including flexible policies and mental health resources. Ultimately, the findings call for a collaborative approach to create inclusive work environments that empower women to succeed in both their careers and personal lives. The objective of the present study is to reviews the literature review related to perception of working women and to understand the impact of work-life balance on employee's performance and also challenges faced by women and factors affecting women's work life balance in hybrid mode.

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Introduction

Hybrid work is a flexible work model that supports a blend of in-office, remote, and on-the-go workers. It offers employees the autonomy to choose to work wherever and however they are most productive. Hybrid work policies are a long-term strategy that can help companies adapt to the changing needs of the modern workforce. By creating a more flexible and inclusive work environment, companies can attract top talent, boost productivity, improve retention and many other benefits. It's time to run over the hybrid work software that will power your working model and help transform your workplace. There are primarily three categories of hybrid work models to consider: work environment, scheduling, and division of employees. Depending on where your company is coming from, you can consider one of those categories as a starting point. (<https://builtin.com/remote-work/hybrid-work-model>).

Types of Hybrid Work Models

• Flexible Hybrid Working Mode

Employees choose their location and working hours based on their priorities for the day. For example, if they need to spend time focusing on a project, they can choose to work from home or in a coffee shop. If they want a sense of community, need to meet with their team, attend a training session, or join a town hall, they can choose to go into the office. This model offers freedom and flexibility for individuals to determine where and when they work. It builds a trust-based relationship with employees, which increases

loyalty and job satisfaction and expands the talent pool, leading to more diverse thinking and improving the bottom line due to cost savings on office space and travel. The main challenges are it is difficult for employees to find a suitable day or time for in-person teamwork, lack of visibility into how many people are going to the office on any given day, and if the building can support them. (Menon d. A., 2022)

- **Fixed Hybrid Work Mode**

The organization sets the days and times employees are allowed to work remotely or go into the office. For example, it could be that certain teams go into the office on Mondays and Wednesdays, while others go in on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Or an organization could allow everyone to work from home on pre-determined days each week. This model increases the opportunity for in-person collaboration and team building, gives employees the option to schedule appointments or run quick errands on certain days of the week and provides the ability to easily forecast office capacity. There are challenges too, lack of individual choice, which could lead to a loss of productivity if employees aren't in the optimal setting for the work that needs to be done and the inability to reduce office space. (Menon D., HYBRID WORK MODEL AND WORKING, December 2022)

- **Office-First Hybrid Work Mode**

Employees are expected to be on-site but have the flexibility to choose a few days a week to work remotely. Google plans to adopt this type of model where employees work in the office three days a week but have the option to choose two days for working remotely. This model allows flexibility and individual choice and helps maintain company culture and community but there is a lack of visibility for employees around who will be in the office and when the inability to accurately forecast how many employees will be in the office on a given day. (Menon D., HYBRID WORK MODEL AND WORKING, 2022)

- **Remote-First Hybrid Mode**

Employees work remotely most of the time with occasional visits to coworking spaces or the office for team building, collaboration, and training. In this model, the company may not have an office space and instead relies on team members in the same area to get together when they see fit. This increases productivity and job satisfaction for employees who want to work remotely most of the time and provides the ability to reduce costs by reducing or eliminating office space. The challenges are that there is potential for employees to feel isolated and increased challenges maintaining the company culture and community. Working parents, and mothers in particular, have spent decades trying to juggle their personal and professional lives. The louder call for work-life balance and flexibility is a more recent phenomenon, previously stifled by the fear from working mothers of having employers deem them less capable or less committed than their male counterparts (Stroh, 2004). Extensive research findings have established that women are often disadvantaged relative to men in the workplace (Williams, Blair-Loy, and Berdahl, 2013). There's currently less research about the effects of working remotely, but it's becoming clear that hybrid work arrangements often create power differences between those who are in and out of the office, and there are good reasons to expect that people who work remotely are likely to be disadvantaged, regardless of their gender. So, women who work remotely can find themselves disadvantaged. This research tries to find out the consequences of the hybrid work model on working mothers. (Menon D., HYBRID WORK MODEL AND WORKING, December 2022)

Achieving work-life balance has always been a challenge for working women, and the COVID-19 pandemic has intensified this issue, particularly in the IT sector. A McKinsey & Company study reveals that women in the US are more likely than men to experience burnout during the pandemic, as they grapple with work and caregiving responsibilities. The hybrid work model, which blends remote and in-office work, complicates these challenges by blurring the lines between work and personal life, often leading to longer hours and increased stress. However, it also offers women greater flexibility in managing their schedules and eliminates commuting time. While women in India face distinct difficulties in balancing their roles, addressing these challenges positively is crucial. This article emphasizes the need for supportive strategies from employers and employees alike to foster a conducive work environment for women navigating the hybrid model. We can say Work-life balance is the equilibrium between professional and personal life.

Statement of the Problem

India is one of the largest countries in manufacturing and service sectors with an almost equal proportion of men and women employed in these sectors. With the Industrial Revolution and

modernization, the proportion of working women has been increasing year on year. With recent developments in working culture, more and more beings prefer to engage in hybrid work made with perception, factors affecting work-life balance, challenges faced by working women to maintain work-life balance, and the impact of work-life balance on job performances.

Objective of the Study

To review the literature studies which has been done so far on work-life balance on working women in hybrid working mode to understand women's perception on WLB in hybrid mode, factors affecting, challenges which have been faced by working women and what is the impact on job performance in hybrid work mode.

Research Methodology

Present study is descriptive in nature. Secondary data have been used to review the available literature. Research methodology consists the articulation of the problem, collection of the facts, and analysing of those facts, after analysing provide the solution to certain problems to society. conclusion of the research either in the form of the solution to the concerned problems or cooperation to serve the society. Research methodology entails the discussion of data collection and sampling procedures. It will describe the methodological tools adopted to fulfil the research objective of the present study.

Scope of the Study

The present study includes qualitative research on recognizing the advantages and challenges of Hybrid work culture, a perspective of working women, and factors affecting their performance in the same. This research will focus mainly on working women. This study will focus on getting information about the insights, perspective benefits, and limitations of the work mode and subjective norms of the working women regarding the work style.

Literature Review

• Perception of Working Women Regarding Work-Life Balance

The perception of working women regarding work-life balance in a hybrid working mode is a multifaceted issue influenced by individual priorities and circumstances. Recent research indicates that, on the whole, women tend to view hybrid work positively due to its flexibility, which allows them to better manage both work and personal responsibilities. They appreciate the elimination of commuting time and expenses, which enhances their overall time management. For instance, a study by Cisco (2022) highlights the time-saving advantages of hybrid work but also underscores concerns regarding reduced participation in workplace discussions, limited career growth opportunities, and adverse effects on physical fitness and stress levels. Similarly, Rajkumari (2022) notes that the hybrid shift can relieve some of the pressures women face in fulfilling multiple roles, emphasizing that the pandemic has shown that productivity is possible when splitting time between home and office. Jangra (2015) finds significant positive relationships between work-life balance, job satisfaction, and work engagement, although relationships between work-life balance and engagement were not statistically significant in their study. This points to the complexity of the interactions between these factors. Additionally, qualitative research by Sarah Johnson (2019) provides insights into the experiences of working women in hybrid settings, identifying common themes related to work-life balance. Studies analyzing working mothers have also evidenced mixed benefits and challenges; for instance, James (2017) discusses the unique pressures faced by working mothers in a UK-based IT firm, illustrating the varying impacts on this demographic. Historical research by Casio (1998) and Hill et al. (1998) indicates that blurring work-life boundaries is not a new trend; technology and telecommuting have long been reshaping these dynamics. Scholars like White et al. (2003) and Maxwell and McDougall (2004) suggest that work-life balance should encompass all employees, regardless of their personal circumstances, while also highlighting the need for adjusting work patterns to foster better integration of professional and personal life. Recent findings by McKinsey & Company (2021) and LinkedIn (2021) reveal a notable divergence in perceptions between genders, indicating that while women generally embrace remote work, they are more likely to report challenges with work-life balance. Flexibility is a key desire among working women; for example, studies have shown that a significant majority believe a flexible job would alleviate stress and enhance happiness. Aishwarya Joshi (2023) further analyses this perception, noting that, while many hybrid workers value the time saved from commuting, there are notable downsides such as reduced involvement in workplace discussions, potentially impacting career opportunities. Moreover, issues such as declining physical

fitness and increased stress levels have been highlighted, alongside feelings of isolation and a lack of organizational culture, particularly among younger workers. These findings together paint a comprehensive picture of the evolving landscape of work-life balance for women in hybrid working environments. Numerous factors significantly influence the work-life balance of working women in a hybrid mode of employment. Research has consistently indicated that elements such as flexible work arrangements, effective communication with managers and colleagues, self-efficacy, and both emotional and instrumental support from family and peers play pivotal roles. Adhikar and Gautam (2010) highlight that quality of work life fosters motivation, loyalty, and flexibility, which are essential for enhancing organizational competitiveness and reducing absenteeism. Furthermore, Meenakshi and Ravichandran (2012) emphasize the challenges faced by women teachers in juggling their professional and personal lives, advocating for structured time management strategies. Supporting this, Aggarwal (2012) asserts that work-life balance initiatives should be a mutual responsibility between employers and employees, while Devi and Pandian (2011) reveal that the absence of formal work-life balance policies often forces women educators to manage work responsibilities at home. The dissatisfaction with current arrangements is echoed by Soi and Massey (2011), who report widespread unhappiness among respondents due to an imbalance between work and personal life. Doble and Supriya (2010) further explore common factors such as flexible schedules, childcare availability, and the urgency of addressing home emergencies. Emily Anderson's (2016) comparative study reflects how cultural and institutional factors across the US and Sweden shape women's experiences with hybrid work. Deloitte's 2022 report shows a worrying trend of burnout among women, although recent improvements in workplace inclusivity have been noted. Meanwhile, Leung et al. (2020) establish that robust family support enhances work-life harmony, a finding corroborated by Ferguson et al. (2012), who argue that genuine family encouragement helps working mothers maintain balance. Moreover, research by Golden et al. (2020) highlights the necessity of social support and quality communication in managing work-life demands effectively. Bouziri et al. (2021) further point out the critical roles that technology access and job demands play in shaping women's ability to sustain a healthy work-life balance. Alon et al. (2020) identify self-efficacy as a crucial personal factor, illustrating that women's belief in their ability to manage multiple responsibilities significantly affects their overall work-life balance. Other studies stress the importance of organizational support systems and family dynamics, as demonstrated by Kochhar and Parker (2021) and Maharshi and Chaturvedi (2015). They emphasize that supportive workplace policies and a dedicated family network are crucial for women to effectively navigate their roles in both work and home environments. Consequently, addressing the complexities behind work-life balance is vital to foster gender equality in the workplace, providing women with equitable opportunities to succeed both professionally and personally. This body of research sheds light on the need for holistic policy frameworks that empower women through flexible work arrangements and a supportive organizational culture, ultimately enhancing job satisfaction and overall well-being.

- **Impact of Work-Life Balance on the Employee Performance**

The investigation of work-life balance's influence on the employee performance of working women in hybrid work environments is increasingly relevant in today's workforce. As more women undertake the dual responsibilities of professional and personal roles, understanding how their work-life balance affects performance becomes critical. This research aims to provide insights that can guide the formulation of supportive workplace policies, fostering an environment conducive to enhanced productivity and overall employee performance. Empirical evidence, such as Nadesan's (2018) findings, emphasizes that a robust work-life balance is integral to human resource management (HRM) and significantly affects employee output. In the context of Sri Lanka's recent work-life policy implementations, these findings can inform practitioners about how work-life balance directly influences job performance. Additionally, Wheatley (2012) argues for a mutually beneficial relationship between employers and employees that hinges on prioritising work-life balance to prevent productivity declines. Numerous studies, including those by Konrad & Mangel (2000) and Wang & Walumbwa (2007), affirm that effective work-life balance fosters low turnover, enhanced job satisfaction, and increased organizational commitment. Furthermore, research by Naithani et al. and Karatepe emphasises the crucial role of work-life balance in improving organizational performance and morale. The relationship between employee engagement and work-life balance, as clarified by Witriaryani et al. (2022) and Fakhri et al. (2020), indicates that supportive policies can mediate and magnify employee performance outcomes. Robbins (2006) and Rivai et al. (2005) further delineate performance metrics, such as quality, quantity, and effectiveness, illustrating that a holistic and engaged workforce is paramount for optimal

organizational success. Collectively, these studies underscore the imperative for organizations to enhance work-life balance, particularly for women, to elevate job performance and achieve competitive advantage in a complex business landscape.

- **Challenges Faced by Working Women in a Hybrid Work Model**

Studies have identified a range of challenges and difficulties encountered by women as they navigate the demands of a hybrid work environment, including role conflict, lack of recognition, organizational politics, gender discrimination, elderly and child care issues, quality of health, problems in time management, lack of proper social support, and difficulty in separating work and personal life. Furthermore, the research highlights technology-related challenges, such as unreliable technology, poor internet connectivity, and difficulty accessing resources and support from employers. Research by Mani (2013) highlights pervasive issues such as role conflict, gender discrimination, and inadequate social support, which thwart women's efforts to achieve a satisfactory work-life balance. Nam (2013) and Bratton & Gold echo the importance of balancing professional responsibilities with personal life, emphasizing the need for flexible organizational structures. Additionally, studies by R. Jain and S. K. Singh (2016) reveal technological and infrastructural challenges that hinder effective participation in hybrid work. D. J. Lee et al. (2018) further explore the isolation and communication barriers faced by women, potentially affecting career advancement. Bouziri et al. (2021) and Kochhar & Parker (2021) note that the hybrid work model can strain women's time management abilities, particularly when faced with unequal household responsibilities, leading to heightened stress and burnout. Alon et al. (2020) and Golden et al. (2020) also underscore difficulties in separating work from personal life and building workplace relationships, respectively. This research aims to articulate these challenges, thereby informing the development of targeted support mechanisms and policies that enhance the work-life balance and overall well-being of women in hybrid working environments. By addressing these barriers proactively, organizations can help foster a more equitable and productive work atmosphere for their female employees.

- **Factors Affecting the Work-Life Balance**

Past research studies have examined the factors affecting work-life balance for women in hybrid work mode- identified some of these factors, which include the availability of flexible work arrangements, women's self-efficacy, social and cultural factors support from family, friends, and colleagues, demographic factors, the nature of job demands, and women's personal factors. Following are the past research/studies: Forson (2013), Golden et al. (2020), Kochhar and Parker (2021), Leung et al. (2020), Agha, Azmi, and Irfan (2017), Cinamona and Rich (2005), Gani and Ara (2010), Gani and Ara (2010), Di Fabio and Kenny (2016), Malek, Hassan, and Sabil (2019), Rottenberg (2018), Ferguson et al. (2012) all these researchers have mentioned about family support in their research. Social factors that can impact work-life balance include the level of social support from family and friends, cultural norms and expectations regarding work and family life, availability of affordable and high-quality childcare, and the overall work culture within an individual's social and professional network. These factors can influence an individual's ability to effectively manage their work and personal responsibilities. Few researchers like Forson (2013), Golden et al. (2020), Kochhar and Parker (2021) have taken demography factors in their research to analysis the work-life balance in women life depending on their age, race, ethnicity, marital status, education level, income, occupation, and geographic location in various fields such as marketing, sociology, and economics. Samuel and Mahalingam (2016) researcher have worked on multiple variables in their research to analysis work-life balance in women life. Deloitte (2022) highlighted personal behaviour change in working women, Maharshi and Chaturvedi's (2015), Ronald J. Burke, Mustafa Koyuncu, and Lisa Fiksenbaum's (2010) have mentioned about personal productivity, performance, time management, dedication towards work and Psychological well-being respectively, we can these are the psychological factors includes stress levels, emotional well-being, job satisfaction, motivation, resilience, and the ability to manage and cope with competing demands from both work and personal life.

Finding and Suggestion

Past Researchers were able to identify various factor, challenges which is affecting women's work-life balance but with the rise of hybrid work models, must focus on the factors that can make it a more effective and equitable mode of work for women various factors like sociographic, social and cultural factors and demographic factors etc, for overall growth in women's life family support plays an

important role. moreover, social, demographic and cultural factors also affect the overall job performance and personal satisfaction as well.

Additionally, there is a need to explore hybrid work can be leveraged to promote gender diversity as employees, proper training female employees for their respective work, team support for guidance and to understand new AI tools, uniform criteria for promotion all employees, discipline and time management by employees in working hours etc these changes and practices can be implemented to support women in hybrid work environments.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the majority of women perceive hybrid work positively, largely due to the inherent flexibility it offers, which facilitates a more effective management of both professional and personal responsibilities. The significant reduction in commuting time and expenses has been a notable advantage, enabling better time management and overall well-being. The hybrid work model has the potential to alleviate some of the pressures women experience in juggling multiple roles, particularly highlighted during the pandemic, which has proven that productivity can indeed thrive in a balanced environment encompassing both home and office settings. However, the experiences of mothers and women in general reveal a complex interplay of mixed benefits and challenges that accompany this hybrid work arrangement. This body of research underscores the urgent need for comprehensive policy frameworks that empower women through flexible work structures and cultivate a supportive organizational culture. Such frameworks are vital not only for enhancing job satisfaction but also for contributing positively to the overall well-being of female employees. The increasing significance of work-life balance in influencing employee performance among working women in hybrid environments cannot be overstated, especially as more women undertake the demanding dual responsibilities of professional and personal life. Understanding the intricate ways in which their work-life balance impacts performance outcomes is critical for organizations striving for success in today's fast-paced business landscape. Performance metrics—encompassing quality, quantity, and effectiveness—illustrate the necessity of fostering a holistic and engaged workforce that is essential for optimal organizational success. The collective insights from various studies highlight the imperative for organizations to prioritize the enhancement of work-life balance, particularly for women, as a strategy to elevate job performance and gain a competitive edge in an increasingly complex environment. Nevertheless, it is crucial to acknowledge the myriad challenges women face while navigating the demands of a hybrid work setting. These challenges encompass role conflict, lack of recognition, organizational politics, gender discrimination, and issues related to elder and child care. Additionally, women often contend with difficulties in time management, insufficient social support, and challenges in segregating their work from personal life. Moreover, technology-related hurdles, such as unreliable tech tools, poor internet connectivity, and limited access to resources and support from employers, further complicate the hybrid work experience for women. The various influencing factors, including the availability of flexible work arrangements, women's confidence, cultural support from family, friends, and colleagues, demographic elements, job demands, and personal attributes, must be addressed comprehensively. Ultimately, a concerted effort is required from organizations to recognize and mitigate these challenges, ensuring that women can thrive in hybrid work environments. By investing in policies that support work-life balance and foster an inclusive culture, organizations will not only enhance their workforce's overall performance but also contribute to a more equitable and prosperous business landscape. Researchers can take the above research to analysis further.

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