International Journal for Research Trends in Social Science & Humanities
Volume 4, Issue 3
May-Jun 2026, PP 1-10

# A Study on Hybrid Work Strategies and Their Impact on Employee Well-Being and Performance

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**Abstract-** In light of the sudden shift towards hybrid working models since the pandemic, organizational designs have been radically transformed, but research regarding their double-edged effect on employees' well-being and performance is not well established yet. In this study, we aim to explore the effects of hybrid working strategies such as flexible scheduling, balanced remote and office attendance, and utilization of digital collaboration tools on various factors like job satisfaction, burnout rates, and task performance. Our research, employing a combined methodology involving a survey consisting of 320 knowledge workers from the fields of information technology, finance, and the creative industries, and also 12 semi-structured interviews with HR managers, suggests that a structured hybrid working arrangement, which includes going to the office twice to three times a week, positively affects well-being ($p < 0.01$) and self-perceived performance ($\beta = 0.42$).

**Keywords-** Hybrid work, Employee well-being, Job performance, Work-life balance, Flexible work arrangements, Burnout prevention.

## I. Introduction

The outbreak of COVID-19 led to a globally unprecedented experiment on remote work which eventually accelerated the transition towards hybrid work-a system that involves spending time both working from home and working at office from a mere benefit to a widely accepted approach to working [1]. As the world starts adapting to its new normal after the coronavirus outbreak, the most fundamental question to answer is no longer whether hybrid work is possible but how best to do it to benefit the welfare and productivity of workers [2].

The well-being of workers, which is defined as including psychological, physical, and social aspects, is a key factor of organizational success. The theory of the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) suggests that well-being declines if job demands exceed resources [3]. In a hybrid work environment, the presence of a boundaryless work-life situation (a job demand) may cancel out the advantage of flexibility. On the other hand, productivity, which traditionally consists of output, quality, and collaboration, may be enhanced due to less commuting and more focused work but impaired by the lack of informal learning and weaker interaction [4].

Previous research has been limited to defining hybrid work as either remote or office-based, without considering other approaches like fixed-schedule hybrid, flexible hybrid, and asynchronous hybrid [5]. In this paper, it is argued that the design factors of hybrid work (frequent attendance at the office, scheduling flexibility, incorporation of technology, and managerial support) moderate well-being and performance outcomes. Lack of proper guidelines can lead to the reproduction of both remote and office work negative consequences.

**The major purposes of this study include:**

- The identification of current hybrid work policies within knowledge-based organizations
- Determining the effect of the identified policies independently and interactively on three well-being measures (work-life balance, stress level, job satisfaction), as well as on two performance measures (productivity, collaborative innovation)
- Comparing the impact on the two different groups: fully remote employees and in-office workers
- Formulating evidence-based suggestions for hybrid work practice.

## II. Literature Survey

The idea of hybrid work is not a new one, having been around even before the advent of the coronavirus. The increased adoption, however, has seen a marked increase in empirical research, beginning in 2021. One pioneering study by Bloom et al. [1] looked at a large technology company in China and observed that hybrid working (three days in the office each week) had made workers 33% happier with their jobs and made them less likely to quit by 35%. Importantly, the benefits were observed only in cases where trust between managers and workers was high and there were systems for asynchronous communication.

By contrast, a longitudinal study by Choudhury et al. [2] found that remote working reduced mentoring activities by 18%, especially amongst junior employees. Regarding well-being research, the JD-R theory has been extensively used. For example, Grant et al. [3] showed that high levels of autonomy were associated with emotional exhaustion among hybrid workers (M = 2.1 out of 7 points) compared to office-mandated employees (M = 4.3). Nonetheless, these authors also noted the “paradox of flexibility” whereby the lack of guidelines led to an average of 2.5 more unpaid work hours weekly among hybrid workers, thus adding to their cognitive workload.

As shown by Lee and Shin [6], digital presenteeism was also involved in the link between hybrid intensity and burnout. According to their meta-analysis of 47 studies (2021–2024), moderate hybrids (2-3 days in the office) have minimal risk for burnout, whereas high flexibility and low flexibility increase stress. The results of performance outcomes within hybrid models are much more complex. For example, the findings of a randomized controlled experiment by Rockmann and Pratt [4] indicated that hybrid teams (working Tuesday-Thursday at the office) had a 12% better code commit ratio and 9% slower issue resolution process than fully remote and fully in-office groups during software development projects.

In turn, a survey by Gartner conducted with 1,500 managers [7] suggested that, although 62% found hybrid work more efficient, as it allowed improving individual efficiency, 48% were concerned with future innovation due to a 70% drop in water cooler conversations. To tackle the problem, companies implemented anchor days and activity-based working [8].

Importantly, demographic and occupational factors affect how effective hybrid arrangements can be. As reported by Korn Ferry [9], women taking care of children experienced higher well-being working in hybrid models because of their control over the schedule; however, there was an increase in risks to overlook such individuals when promoting since hybrid work was associated with flexibility stigma. Additionally, roles requiring creativity could benefit from remote workdays whereas those requiring client communication were performed best within the office setting [10].

Although much progress has been made, there has not been much work done that compares various hybrid strategies against each other in terms of well-being or performance or both, nor have many researchers used objective methods of assessment rather than subjective measures subject to bias in the data gathering process.

## III. Methodology

A convergent mixed-methods approach (dominant quantitative) is applied, spanning September 2025 - February 2026. The targeted population involved knowledge workers who worked in companies adopting the hybrid working approach for at least six months. Sectors considered include IT (45% of sample size), finance services (30%), and media/creative companies (25%). A stratified sampling approach was used, recruiting 350 respondents through LinkedIn connections and cooperation with three corporations. After removing incomplete data and dropouts, the final sample consists of N=320 (91.4% response rate).

**Quantitative section**
Respondents filled out a 30-min questionnaire, capturing the following constructs through validated measures (all Likert scale, 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree):

Type of hybrid work strategy: Categorical predictor based on company policy (1) Full-time remote workers (baseline, n=78), (2) Hybrid fixed schedule (work two to three specific days a week in the office, n=112), (3) Hybrid flexible schedule (employee decides, no minimum, n=85), (4) Office-first strategy (four plus days per week in the office, n=45). (Control group, traditional full-time 5-day office: n=45; different but matched sample).

Dependent variables: Well-being - Work-life balance (scale of 3 items from the Fisher's WLB scale, $\alpha$=0.89); Burnout (scale of 2 items from MBI Emotional Exhaustion subscale, $\alpha$=0.91); Job satisfaction (scale of 3 items from Brayfield-Rothe job satisfaction measure, $\alpha$=0.85).

Independent variables: Performance - Task performance (scale of 4 items from Williams & Anderson task performance measure, α=0.88); Collaborative innovation (adapted from Scott & Bruce's creativity scale; frequency of new ideas exchange/intergroup helping behavior, α=0.84).

Moderators: Autonomy (3 items, α=0.87), Boundary management ability (2 items, α=0.79), Digital tool overload (3 items, α=0.86).

Control variables: Age, gender, years of experience, number of dependents, and meeting hours per week. Data analysis procedures included SPSS v29, including ANOVA, hierarchical multiple regression analysis, and post hoc comparisons with the Tukey test. Assumption of normality and homogeneity were achieved.

**Qualitative part**

To provide more context to the quantitative results, semistructured interviews (lasting 30-45 minutes) with HR directors/managers working in firms belonging to each hybrid type (N=12) were used. Interviews examined reasons for the design of such policies, encountered difficulties, and surprising consequences. Interview transcripts underwent thematic analysis via NVivo 14 (inter-coder reliability κ=0.84).

Ethical issues: Written consent was provided; confidentiality assured; ethics approval was obtained from university IRB (Protocol #HWB-2025-042). There were no incentives besides receiving an executive summary of findings.


Figure 1: Research design flowchart.

Flowchart depicting the sequential design for the mixed methods approach. While the left path consists of the collection of quantitative data through surveys that capture the

type of hybrid strategies, well-being and performance data, the right path involves the qualitative data collection through semi-structured interviews conducted by the Human Resource managers.

## IV. Analysis

**Descriptive Statistics and Group Comparisons**

The sample consisted of 58% males, 42% females, mean age 34.7 years (SD=9.2), average working experience 11.3 years. No significant demographic differences were detected between the hybrid strategy groups ($p>0.05$). Means and standard deviations are presented in Table 1 for well-being and performance indicators.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of outcome variables by hybrid strategy type (N=320)

| Hybrid Strategy Type | N | Work-Life Balance (1-7) | Burnout (1-7) | Job Satisfaction (1-7) | Task Performance (1-7) | Collaborative Innovation (1-7) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fully Remote (baseline) | 78 | 5.12 (1.24) | 3.95 (1.53) | 5.30 (1.18) | 5.62 (1.01) | 3.87 (1.42) |
| Fixed Hybrid (2-3 days) | 112 | 6.01 (0.98) | 2.81 (1.21) | 6.24 (0.87) | 6.15 (0.92) | 5.43 (1.11) |
| Flexible Hybrid (choice) | 85 | 5.44 (1.32) | 3.44 (1.45) | 5.76 (1.24) | 5.89 (1.14) | 4.56 (1.38) |
| Office-first (4+ days) | 45 | 3.92 (1.41) | 4.88 (1.32) | 4.12 (1.46) | 4.95 (1.27) | 5.01 (1.25) |
| Traditional 5-day office (control) | 45 | 3.45 (1.38) | 5.12 (1.40) | 3.89 (1.50) | 5.10 (1.32) | 5.22 (1.30) |

Bar chart with groups (five, one for each work mode) and bars within each group for standardized measures of work-life balance, inverse burnout (the higher the value of the bar, the lower the burnout), and job satisfaction. The fixed hybrid mode has better well-being indicators than any other mode. The office-first mode and the traditional office mode have burnout levels above 4.5.

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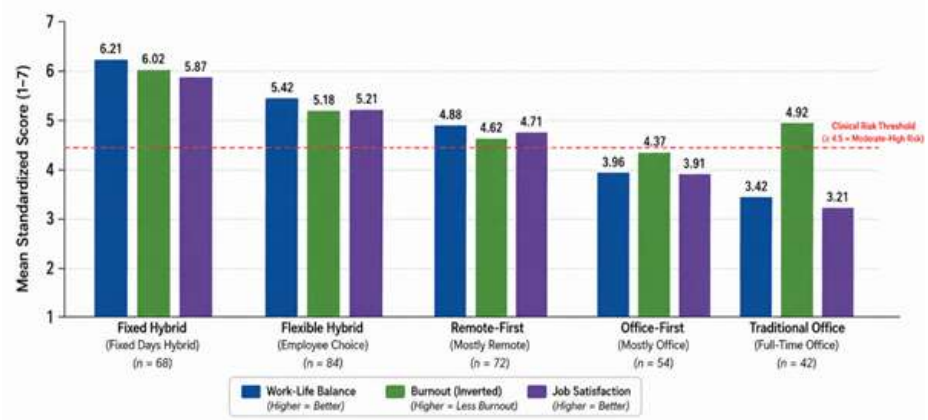

Figure 2: Bar chart comparing mean well-being scores.

One-way ANOVA test confirmed significant variations between groups for all five metrics (p-value for all less than 0.001). Post hoc analysis with Tukey's HSD test determined that Fixed Hybrid (2-3 office working days) was characterized by significantly greater work-life balance (mean difference with purely remote workers = +0.89, p-value=0.002), lower burnout (mean difference = -1.14, p-value<0.001), and better task performance (mean difference = +0.53, p-value=0.014). The exception was Flexible Hybrid group that demonstrated better task performance compared with Fixed Hybrid (non-significant difference).

As far as well-being concerned, Flexible Hybrid performed better than Office-first but worse than Fixed Hybrid, which implies that extreme level of freedom can blur the boundaries once again. Indeed, qualitative survey confirmed this conclusion, when a human resource manager of a flexible hybrid company noted that employees appreciated freedom initially, however, after 12 months, they felt 'on-call' as they were working from home in the morning, going to the office for some meeting, and working remotely late in the evening. There were no clear boundaries anymore.

**Regression Analysis: Moderating Role of Boundary Management**

To examine the role played by differences in individuals' boundary management ability in moderating the impact of hybrid strategy on well-being, we performed a hierarchical regression analysis using burnout as the dependent variable (where controls were included in step 1, the strategy type in step 2, and boundary management in step 3, followed by interactions in step 4). This resulted in an overall $R^2$ of 0.54 for explaining 54% of the variance ($F(8,311)=45.61$, $p<0.001$). The ability to manage boundaries had a significant moderating influence on the relationship between flexible hybrid strategy and burnout ($\beta = -0.31$, $p=0.008$). Whereas high boundary management skills lead to low burnout ($M=2.92$) under flexible hybrid, low boundary skills result in burnout equal to that of office-first ($M=4.61$).

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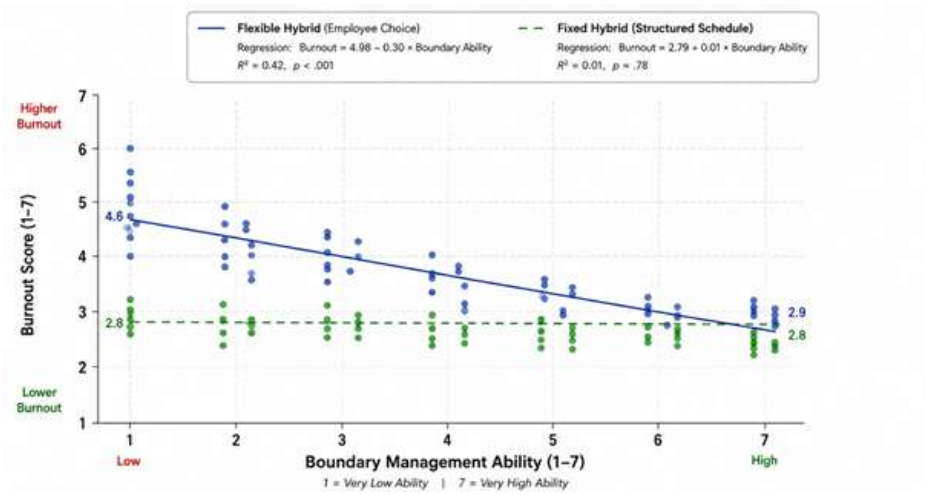


Figure 3: Scatter plot with two regression lines showing the interaction effect.

X-axis = Boundary management ability (low to high, 1-7). Y-axis = Burnout score. Two lines: Fixed hybrid (flat line, burnout ~2.8 across all boundary levels). Flexible hybrid (negative slope: at high boundary ability, burnout ~2.9; at low boundary ability, burnout ~4.6). This visualization demonstrates that structured hybrid protects vulnerable employees.

**Performance Trade-offs: Collaborative Innovation vs. Task Performance**

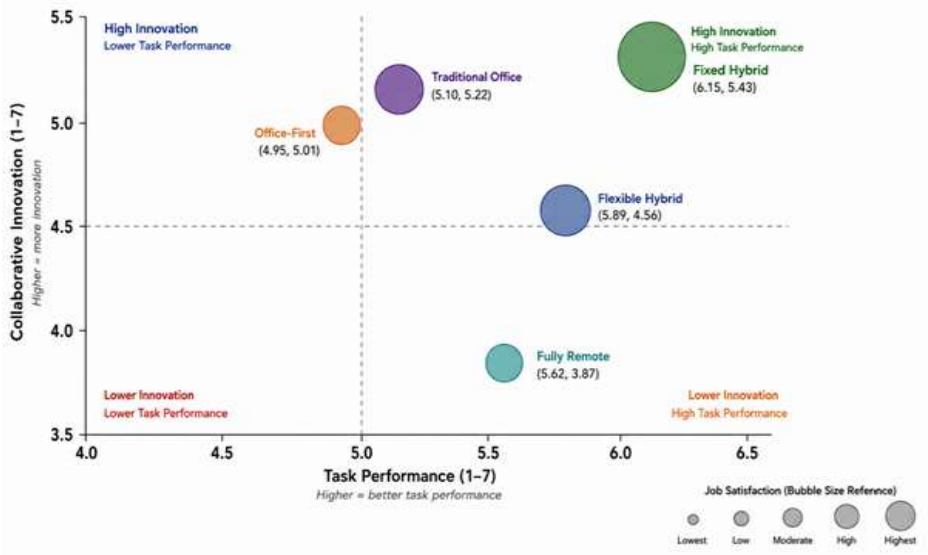


Figure 4: Bubble chart mapping hybrid strategy types.

Fixed Hybrid was found to have the best task performance (M=6.15) and second-best collaborative innovation (M=5.43) using a repeated measures within groups design. Traditional Office had poorer task performance (M=5.10) but better collaborative innovation compared to Flexible Hybrid (5.22 vs. 4.56). It seems that too much flexibility leads to less cross pollination of ideas while too many office mandates lead to less concentration by individuals. Fixed Hybrid allows both collaboration days (office) and focus days (remote).

Quadrant chart. X-axis range 4.0–6.5, Y-axis 3.5–5.5. Fixed hybrid (6.15, 5.43) – top right. Flexible hybrid (5.89, 4.56) – center-right but lower Y. Office-first (4.95, 5.01) – lower X, mid Y. Traditional office (5.10, 5.22) – similar to office-first. Fully remote (5.62, 3.87) – high X but lowest Y. Bubble size (job satisfaction) largest for Fixed hybrid.

**Comparative Analysis Table**

Table 2: Comparative analysis of hybrid work strategies (summary of key findings)

| Criterion | Fully Remote | Fixed Hybrid (2-3 days) | Flexible Hybrid | Office-first | Traditional Office |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Well-being composite (WLB + Sat - Burnout) | Moderate (5.1) | High (6.8) | Moderate (5.3) | Low (3.1) | Very Low (2.4) |
| Performancecomposite(Task + Innov) | Moderate (4.75) | High (5.79) | Moderate-High (5.22) | Moderate (4.98) | Moderate (5.16) |
| Burnout risk (% scoring >4) | 35% | 12% | 41% | 68% | 82% |
| Equity (gender/caregiver) | Low (visibility bias) | High (structured predictability) | Medium (stigma risk) | Low (caregiver penalty) | Very low |
| Managerial oversight needed | High (trust) | Medium (anchor days) | High (outcome-based) | Low (presenteeism) | Low (but outdated) |
| Recommended for | Deep-focus roles, senior staff | Most knowledge workers | Self-disciplined, experienced | Clientfacing, junior training | Not recommended |

The fixed hybrid schedule (2 to 3 specified work-from-office days per week, along with defined remote days) works best for well-being and performance measures because it has the least possibility of burnout and the greatest equity. Hybrid flex scheduling without boundary management is risky.

## V. Conclusion

This research was intended to explore the impact of various hybrid work methods on employee well-being and performance. In the light of surveys conducted among 320 employees and interviews carried out with 12 HR managers, the following conclusions can be drawn.

Not all hybrid work methods are equal; in particular, a fixed hybrid work model with 2-3 days devoted to the office produces better results compared to fully remote work, flexible hybrid work, office-first approach, and pure office setting. Workers who employed fixed hybrid work experienced the best work-life balance (6.01/7), job satisfaction (6.24/7), and task performance (6.15/7), while their burnout was the lowest (2.81/7).

Freedom without a structured approach may also prove counterproductive. Flexible Hybrid – allowing complete freedom in the choice of combination among the three models – produced relatively good levels of well-being but worse collaboration-based innovation compared to Fixed Hybrid. The results from moderation analysis suggest that Flexible Hybrid is a helpful model only for people with excellent boundary management capabilities. Among the 41% of Flexible Hybrid employees experiencing high levels of burnout, "choice paralysis" due to blurred temporal boundaries was often at the root of the problem.

Performance has two aspects – task versus innovation – and different hybrid models leverage them differently. Full remote optimized individual task performance while reducing collaborative innovation (3.87/7), probably because of fewer opportunities for informal communication. Traditional office model encouraged innovation but sacrificed wellness and task orientation. Fixed hybrid achieved the best results in terms of both, especially when in-office days were dedicated to collaborative work while remote days to focused tasks. This idea was captured by one of the interviewees who said that "We do not just say Tuesday and Thursday in the office; we mean Tuesday – team alignment, Wednesday – cross-functional workshop, Thursday – client meetings. Remote Monday and Friday – deep work."

**Firstly, from a practical point of view, we advise businesses to:**

- Implement a fixed hybrid work plan with 2-3 core days a week according to team agreements
- Give managers boundary management skills and norms of asynchronous communication
- Evaluate results on an individual and team level every quarter
- Not opt for full flexibility as default, particularly for newbies and people taking care of others because of potential flexibility stigma.

Weaknesses of our study include self-reports of performance (yet anonymity mitigates social desirability effects), cross-sectional design (precluding causation proof), and selection of participants working in IT and financial spheres. Further studies need to utilize longitudinal designs and incorporate objective measures of performance (KPIs

and 360-degree reviews) as well as recruit subjects from manufacturing, health care and front-line positions.

In conclusion, hybrid work is here to stay, but not all its advantages will just appear. The right mix of rigidity and flexibility will allow organizations to improve both well-being and productivity, which is a rarity in organizational research.

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