



A Study On Work–Life Balance: Hybrid Vs Remote Vs On-Site Work With Special Reference To Delhi-NCR

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ABSTRACT

The increasing adoption of flexible work arrangements has transformed traditional employment structures, particularly in the post-pandemic era. Organizations across the globe have shifted towards hybrid and remote work models alongside conventional on-site work to enhance employee productivity and well-being. This study examines the impact of hybrid, remote and on-site work environments on the work–life balance of employees in the Delhi National Capital Region (Delhi NCR), India. Using a quantitative research approach, primary data were collected from 55 working professionals across IT and service sectors in Delhi NCR. The findings reveal that hybrid and remote work environments significantly improve work–life balance by offering flexibility, reduced commuting time, and better personal time management, whereas on-site work provides structure and collaboration but often results in higher stress levels due to rigid schedules and long travel hours. The study emphasizes the need for flexible, employee-centric HR policies and outcome-based performance evaluation systems to promote sustainable work–life balance in metropolitan regions.

Keywords: Work–Life Balance, Hybrid Work, Remote Work, On-Site Work, Delhi NCR

I. INTRODUCTION

Work–life balance (WLB) has emerged as a critical factor influencing employee satisfaction, productivity, and organizational commitment. It refers to an individual’s ability to balance professional responsibilities with personal, family, and social life. In highly urbanized regions such as Delhi NCR, employees often face extended working hours, intense performance expectations, and long commuting times, making work–life balance a major challenge.

The rapid advancement of digital technologies and communication tools has enabled organizations to adopt remote and hybrid work models, fundamentally altering the way work is performed. These models offer increased flexibility and autonomy, allowing employees to work beyond traditional office boundaries. However, they also introduce challenges such as blurred work–life boundaries, increased screen time, and potential social isolation.

On-site work, while facilitating collaboration and supervision, often restricts flexibility and contributes to commuting-related stress, particularly in large metropolitan areas. Despite the widespread adoption of hybrid and remote work models, there remains limited empirical research comparing their impact on work–life balance in the Indian urban context. This study seeks to address this gap by analyzing the effects of hybrid, remote and on-site work environments on employees’ work–life balance in Delhi NCR.

RESEARCH GAP

While global studies emphasize the benefits of flexible work arrangements, there is limited comparative research focusing on hybrid, remote and on-site work models in Indian metropolitan regions, particularly with respect to commuting stress and work–life balance. This study addresses this gap by providing empirical evidence from Delhi NCR.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To evaluate work–life balance among employees working in hybrid, remote, and on-site environments in Delhi NCR
- To identify factors influencing work–life balance in each work model
- To compare the advantages and limitations of different work arrangements
- To examine the impact of commuting time on employees’ work–life balance

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How does work–life balance differ among employees working in hybrid, remote, and on-site environments?
- What factors enhance or hinder work–life balance across different work models?

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Recent studies indicate that flexible work arrangements have a significant influence on employee well-being and organizational outcomes. Allen, Golden, and Shockley (2021) found that remote and hybrid work enhances autonomy and job satisfaction but requires effective boundary management to prevent work overload. Wang et al. (2021) highlighted that work-from-home arrangements improve productivity when supported by clear role expectations and managerial trust.

Ipsen, van Veldhoven, Kirchner, and Hansen (2022) reported that hybrid work models improve work–life balance by reducing commuting stress while maintaining social interaction. However, they also noted challenges related to coordination and communication. Schieman, Badawy, Milkie, and Bierman (2021) emphasized that excessive digital connectivity increases work–family conflict, particularly in knowledge-intensive jobs.

Oakman et al. (2022) examined the impact of remote work on employee health and well-being and found that flexibility positively affects mental health when employees have control over their schedules. Choudhury, Larson, and Foroughi (2021) demonstrated that hybrid work arrangements increase employee productivity and job satisfaction without negatively affecting career outcomes.

In the Indian context, Narayanan, Menon, and Spector (2023) highlighted that long commuting hours significantly reduce work–life balance among urban employees. ILO (2023) emphasized the importance of flexible work policies in promoting decent work and employee well-being. OECD (2024) further noted that

hybrid work models are likely to become a permanent feature of modern employment, necessitating policy reforms focused on employee well-being.

The literature reveals a need for city-specific empirical studies examining hybrid, remote, and on-site work environments in Indian metropolitan regions such as Delhi NCR.

CONCEPTUAL MODEL

Work Environment (Hybrid / Remote / On-Site Work)



Key influencing factors

- Commuting Time
- Organizational Support
- Digital Connectivity
- Workload and job autonomy
- Work Flexibility



Employee Outcome

- Stress level
- Job satisfaction
- Productivity
- Stress level
- Time Management
- Mental Well-being



Work–Life Balance
(Employee Well-being and
Personal–Professional Harmony)

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a quantitative research approach to examine the impact of hybrid, remote, and on-site work environments on employees' work–life balance in the Delhi NCR region.

Research Design:

A descriptive and comparative research design was used to analyze differences in work–life balance across the three work models.

Data Collection:

Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire distributed among working professionals in the IT and service sectors. The questionnaire included close-ended questions related to work environment, stress levels, productivity, commuting time, and work–life balance.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique:

A total of 55 respondents were selected using the convenience sampling method from Delhi NCR. The sample included employees working in remote, hybrid, and on-site work settings.

Data Analysis Techniques:

The collected data were analyzed using percentage analysis and tabular representation to compare responses across different work models. Basic statistical tools were used to interpret patterns related to work–life balance, stress, and productivity.

IV. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF THE STUDY

The statistical analysis is based on responses collected from 55 employees working in hybrid, remote, and on-site work environments in the Delhi NCR region. Percentage analysis was used to interpret the data and understand the relationship between work environment and work–life balance.

1. Distribution of Respondents by Work Model

Work Model Number of Respondents Percentage (%)

Remote Work	18	32.7%
Hybrid Work	21	38.2%
On-Site Work	16	29.1%
Total	55	100%

Interpretation

The table shows that the largest proportion of respondents (38.2%) work in a hybrid environment, followed by remote workers (32.7%) and on-site workers (29.1%). This indicates that hybrid work is becoming a common work arrangement among employees in Delhi NCR.

2. Perceived Work–Life Balance Across Work Models

Work Model Good Work–Life Balance Moderate Poor Total

Remote	13	4	1	18
Hybrid	16	4	1	21
On-Site	5	7	4	16
Total	34	15	6	55

Percentage Representation

Work Model Good (%) Moderate (%) Poor (%)

Remote	72%	22%	6%
Hybrid	76%	19%	5%
On-Site	31%	44%	25%

Interpretation

The data indicates that employees working in hybrid and remote environments report significantly better work–life balance compared to on-site employees. Nearly 76% of hybrid workers and 72% of remote workers reported good work–life balance, whereas only 31% of on-site workers experienced similar levels.

3. Impact of Commuting Time on Work–Life Balance

Commuting Time	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
No commuting (Remote)	18	32.7%
Less than 1 hour	14	25.5%
1–2 hours	15	27.3%
More than 2 hours	8	14.5%
Total	55	100%

Interpretation

A significant number of employees (41.8%) spend more than one hour commuting daily, which negatively affects their personal time and energy levels. Employees working remotely avoid commuting completely, which contributes to better work–life balance.

4. Stress Levels among Employees

Stress Level	Remote	Hybrid	On-Site	Total
Low	10	12	3	25
Moderate	6	7	8	21
High	2	2	5	9
Total	18	21	16	55

Percentage Interpretation

- **Low Stress: 45.5%**
- **Moderate Stress: 38.2%**
- **High Stress: 16.3%**

Interpretation

Employees working remotely and in hybrid models report lower stress levels compared to on-site employees. The highest stress levels are observed among employees who work fully on-site, mainly due to commuting pressure and rigid schedules.

5. Employee Productivity across Work Models

Work Model	Increased Productivity	Same Productivity	Decreased Productivity	Total
Remote	11	5	2	18
Hybrid	14	5	2	21
On-Site	6	6	4	16
Total	31	16	8	55

Percentage Results

- **Increased Productivity: 56%**
- **Same Productivity: 29%**
- **Decreased Productivity: 15%**

Interpretation

More than half of the respondents (56%) reported increased productivity, particularly in hybrid and remote work environments. Reduced commuting time and flexible schedules contribute to improved focus and efficiency.

6. Organizational Support for Flexible Work

Level of Support	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
High Support	23	41.8%
Moderate Support	21	38.2%
Low Support	11	20%
Total	55	100%

Interpretation

Most respondents (80%) believe their organizations provide moderate to high support for flexible work arrangements, which plays a crucial role in improving employee satisfaction and work–life balance.

V. DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

The findings indicate that employees working in remote and hybrid environments experience significantly better work–life balance compared to those working exclusively on-site. Respondents reported that flexible working hours and the ability to work from home helped them manage personal responsibilities, reduce stress, and maintain healthier daily routines. Remote work, in particular, allowed employees to exercise greater control over their schedules, leading to improved time management and reduced work–family conflict.

Hybrid work emerged as the most balanced work arrangement, as it combines the advantages of remote flexibility with the benefits of in-person collaboration. Employees working in hybrid settings reported higher satisfaction due to periodic office interactions that facilitated teamwork, mentoring, and communication, while still allowing sufficient personal time.

Role of Commuting Time

Commuting time was identified as a major determinant of work–life balance in the Delhi NCR region. A significant number of respondents indicated that long daily commutes contributed to fatigue, stress, and reduced personal time. Employees working remotely or in hybrid models benefited from reduced travel, which positively influenced their mental well-being and energy levels. In contrast, employees in on-site roles experienced higher levels of exhaustion and time pressure due to commuting, negatively affect their work–life balance.

Stress Levels and Mental Well-Being

The analysis shows that stress levels were comparatively lower among remote and hybrid workers. Reduced exposure to traffic congestion, flexible scheduling, and fewer workplace interruptions contributed to lower psychological strain. However, some remote workers reported challenges such as extended screen time and difficulty disconnecting from work, indicating the need for effective boundary management.

On-site employees reported higher stress levels due to rigid schedules, commuting demands, and workload pressure. These findings suggest that while on-site work supports structure and supervision, it may also intensify stress if flexibility is limited.

Productivity and Organizational Support

Respondents working in hybrid and remote settings reported equal or higher productivity levels compared to on-site workers. The absence of commuting fatigue and greater autonomy enabled employees to focus more effectively on their tasks. However, productivity gains were strongly linked to organizational support, including clear communication, defined work expectations, and supportive leadership.

Lack of managerial clarity, frequent unplanned meetings, and excessive monitoring were reported as factors that negatively affected work–life balance, particularly in remote settings. This highlights the importance of outcome-based performance management rather than time-based supervision.

Discussion in Relation to Existing Literature

The findings align with recent studies that emphasize the benefits of flexible work arrangements for work–life balance and employee well-being. Similar to earlier research, this study confirms that hybrid work offers an optimal balance by addressing both professional and personal needs. The results reinforce the view that work–life balance is not solely dependent on the work model but also on organizational culture, leadership support, and policy design.

VI. IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. **Implications for Organizational Policy**

The findings suggest that organizations should move towards flexible and employee-centric work policies. Hybrid and remote work models, if well structured, can significantly enhance work–life balance and reduce employee stress.

2. **Implications for Human Resource Management**

HR managers can use the results to design work–life balance initiatives, such as flexible working hours, mental health support programs, and reduced meeting overload, especially for employees working remotely or in hybrid settings.

3. **Shift toward Outcome-Based Performance Evaluation**

The study highlights the limitations of traditional time-based performance measurement. Organizations should focus on outcome-based evaluations, which encourage productivity without increasing work pressure.

4. **Reduction in Commuting-Related Stress**

For metropolitan regions like Delhi NCR, reducing commuting through hybrid work can improve employee well-being. This can lead to lower absenteeism, improved morale, and higher retention rates.

5. **Support for Mental Health and Well-Being Programs**

The study underscores the importance of integrating mental health and well-being initiatives into organizational strategies to address burnout, digital fatigue, and work–life imbalance.

6. **Guidance for Policymakers**

The findings can help policymakers frame guidelines related to flexible work arrangements, urban mobility, and sustainable employment practices in large metropolitan regions.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Expansion of Sample Size and Coverage**

Future studies should involve a larger and more diverse sample, covering multiple industries and cities, to enhance the reliability and generalizability of findings.

2. **Adoption of Longitudinal Research Design**

Long-term studies can help track changes in work–life balance over time and assess the sustainability of hybrid and remote work models.

3. **Inclusion of Qualitative Research Methods**

Future research should incorporate in-depth interviews, focus groups, or case studies to gain richer insights into employees' lived experiences and coping mechanisms.

4. **Industry-Specific Comparative Studies**

Comparative research across sectors such as IT, healthcare, education, and finance can reveal industry-specific challenges and best practices related to work–life balance.

5. **Gender and Demographic-Focused Studies**

Further research should explore how hybrid work affects women employees, working parents, and different age groups, as work–life balance experiences may vary significantly.

6. **Examination of Mental Health Outcomes**

Future studies should focus on burnout, emotional exhaustion, techno stress, and digital fatigue, particularly in technology-driven work environments.

7. **Evaluation of Organizational Interventions**

Researchers should assess the effectiveness of specific HR interventions, such as flexible scheduling, wellness programs, and manager training, in improving work–life balance.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that work–life balance is significantly influenced by the nature of the work environment, particularly in metropolitan regions such as Delhi NCR. Among the three work models examined, remote work provides the highest level of flexibility, hybrid work offers the most balanced approach, and on-site work ensures structure but often compromises personal well-being due to commuting and rigid schedules.

Hybrid work stands out as the most sustainable work model, as it allows employees to benefit from flexibility while maintaining essential social interaction and collaboration. Remote work, while highly effective in improving work–life balance, requires clear boundaries and organizational support to prevent burnout and work overload. On-site work, though necessary for certain roles, requires policy interventions to reduce stress and improve employee well-being.

The findings emphasize that commuting time plays a critical role in shaping work–life balance, particularly in urban regions with heavy traffic and long travel distances. Reducing commuting through flexible work arrangements can significantly enhance employee satisfaction, mental health, and productivity.

From an organizational perspective, the study highlights the need to redefine traditional work practices. Employers should adopt employee-centric and outcome-based performance systems, promote mental health initiatives, and encourage flexible scheduling to support sustainable work–life balance.

In conclusion, the study underscores that there is no one-size-fits-all work model. The effectiveness of hybrid, remote, or on-site work depends on job roles, organizational culture, leadership practices, and individual employee needs. Organizations that prioritize flexibility, trust, and employee well-being are more likely to achieve higher productivity, engagement, and long-term retention in the evolving world of work.

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