

Original Article

A Study of Work–Life Balance Trends Post-Covid-19

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly transformed workplace structures, employment patterns, and employees' perceptions of work-life balance (WLB). The rapid transition to remote and hybrid work created both opportunities and challenges for employees attempting to balance professional and personal responsibilities. This study examines emerging trends in work-life balance during the post-COVID-19 period and analyzes their effects on employee well-being, job satisfaction, performance, and organizational commitment. A mixed-method research approach was adopted, combining quantitative survey data with qualitative feedback from employees across sectors such as information technology, education, healthcare, manufacturing, and public administration. The study identifies key factors influencing work-life balance, including flexible work arrangements, digital workload, psychological stress, family role integration, organizational support, and technology dependency. Findings reveal that hybrid work models improve flexibility and reduce commuting time but also increase risks of work overload, burnout, and social isolation. Gender differences were also observed, with women experiencing greater role conflict due to family responsibilities during remote work. The study highlights the importance of supportive organizational culture, leadership, and employee assistance programs in improving WLB outcomes. It recommends structured hybrid work policies, digital detox practices, mental health support, and employee-centered strategies to promote sustainable work environments. Overall, the research suggests that the post-pandemic era represents a shift toward work-life integration rather than a return to traditional work models.

KEYWORDS

Work–Life Balance, Post-Covid Workplace, Remote Work, Hybrid Work Model, Employee Well-Being, Organizational Support, Job Satisfaction, Digital Transformation, Human Resource Management.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

Work life balance is a traditional research field in the field of organizational psychology and human resource management, which mainly involves the decision making of the employees in balancing between their professional lives and personal life and family life. In preliminary research, researchers focused on how workplace structures, job demands and organizational culture affect employee satisfaction, productivity and mental health outcomes. The old workplace culture was normally marked with predetermined work schedule, central offices, and strict work and personal life distinction, which usually restricted flexibility, but offered predictability. Nevertheless, with the development of economies and the shift in the demographics of the workforce, organizations started to see the role of flexible schedule and autonomy coupled with supportive work culture in enhancing job satisfaction and retention. The new trends like telecommuting, flexible working hours, and family friendliness became the strategies to decrease work-family discord and improve the well-being of the employees. Another consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic was that it enhanced these changes that were already taking place at a brisk pace, where a strong distinction between work and personal life was necessary, it becomes more integrated where the two spheres exist within the same physical and time space. Remote and hybrid work arrangements became commonplace, and employees were left to perform professional duties at the same time they had to perform duties both at home and to take care of other people, usually in the same space. It brought with it new challenges such as new blurry boundaries, digital overload and role conflict in addition to creating new possibilities of greater autonomy and time saving. Due to this, companies are currently forced to rethink the old ways of running things and establish new policies that would focus more on the welfare of the employees, their flexibility, and their psychological needs. The change of work-life balance to work-life integration signals the further transformation of workplace culture that promotes the adaptive leadership, technology management approach, and people-oriented organizational structure in the contemporary working conditions.

1.2. Importance of Studying Post-COVID Trends

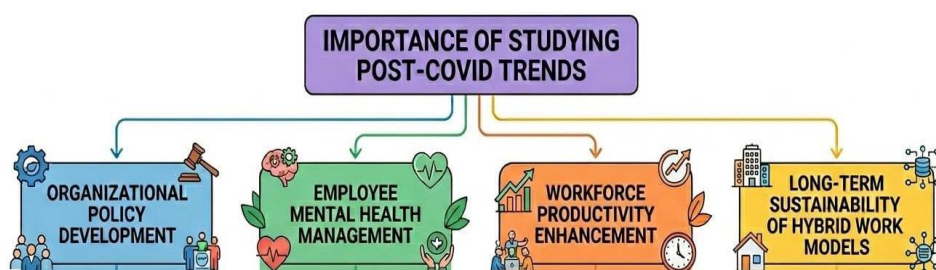


Fig 1 - Importance of Studying Post-COVID Trends

1.2.1. Organizational Policy Development

The trends in the post-COVID workplace require a deeper investigation to create successful organizational policies and policies that correspond to the work nature transformation. The shift towards the remote and hybrid work arrangements has demonstrated the vacuum of the old policies

in the area of working time, performance monitoring, working protocols and employee support. Studying the new work trends and the requirements of the employees, the organizations can develop the flexible policies that would be advantageous, inclusive, and productive. The development of evidence-based policies also assists the organizations to adjust to the future disruptions and continue its operations as well as employee satisfaction.

1.2.2. Employee Mental Health Management

The aftermath in the workplace has focused more on the mental well-being of the employees with a majority of them displaying signs of stress, anxiety, burnouts and social isolations following the remote working hours. The insight of the post-COVID trends helps organizations to determine the psychological risk factors like digital tiredness, work overload, and work family clash. This information can help with the establishment of mental health programs, counseling activities, stress management programs, and well-being interventions that would evolve staff resilience and emotional equilibrium. Mental health management is an important aspect that should be considered first as a way of keeping employees engaged at work and minimizing absenteeism and emigration.

1.2.3. Workforce Productivity Enhancement

The analysis of post-COVID work trends can help to obtain valuable information on the effects of various work arrangements on the productivity and performance of employees. The hybrid work models present the possibilities of better efficiency due to flexible schedules, less commuting time, and better work autonomy. Nonetheless, the process of productivity can be different with respect to organizational support, technological infrastructure, and work habits. Examination of these factors assists organizations to determine the best practices, which maximize performance without sacrificing the well being of employees. Being able to understand the trends of productivity also allows the managers to adopt outcome-based systems of performance evaluation instead of the traditional methods of time-based monitoring.

1.2.4. Long-Term Sustainability of Hybrid Work Models

The sustainability of hybrid work models relies on the fact that issues related to organizational goals and employee needs would be balanced in the long term. Surveys on post-COVID trends assist in knowing whether it is feasible to keep productivity, team work, creativity, and job satisfaction high in the hybrid setup without bewilderment or dissociation. It also gives insights into issues like the lack of communication between staff, unity in the team, and disproportional opportunities available to remote and on-site employees. Through such dynamics, organizations can come up with strategies that will make hybrid work efficacious, adaptable, and sustainable in the future of work that is rapidly changing.

1.3. Work-Life Balance Trends Post-COVID-19

The changed work-life balance patterns in the post-COVID-19 world are extensively due to the promotion of remote and hybrid working patterns, a greater emphasis on digital technologies, changing employee expectations on flexibility and well-being. Among the most prominent are the

changes in the understanding of the concept of work-life balance, where rigid boundaries concerning the professional and the personal sphere are observed to a more flexible, integrated form of the relationship between the work and the sphere of family, where both parties live. The hybrid working situations have offered the employees more freedom in the timing, shortened the commuting period and provided them with more chances of balancing family and work life, which has positively impacted on job satisfaction and perceived quality of life of many. Simultaneously, the heightened use of communication technologies, online work meetings, and other tools of online collaboration has led to longer working hours, constant connectivity, and digital fatigue, which obstructs employees to break their connection to work. The second significant tendency is the increasing organizational focus on employee health, mental health, and flexible policies as a strategic focus instead of non-essential benefits. In response to the competitive labor markets, companies are now adopting wellness programs, mental health programs and flexible work scheduling so that they can attract and keep talented employees. Also, individual work preferences are more well-understood, and some employees work best at a distance, whereas other workers need face-to-face interaction. The gender associated difficulties have also become more pronounced especially with working parents and caregivers who have an added responsibility at home. In addition, performance appraisal strategies are moving towards the use of outcome-based schemes as opposed to time-based monitoring, due to the changing standpoints of productivity. Comprehensively, the post-pandemic work-life balance patterns suggest the necessity of adjustive organizational practices aiming to incorporate flexibility, technological management, and conducive leadership practices to maintain the long-term organizational effectiveness and sustainable employee well-being in the future of the work.

2. LITERATURE SURVEY

2.1. Pre-COVID Work-Life Balance Studies

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, studies on the concept of work life balance (WLB) were mainly focused on workplace policies and employee autonomy, and the supportive leadership of the leader in balancing between professional and personal commitments. The researchers highlighted the significance of flexible working conditions such as telecommuting, flexible working hours and compressed work hours that were reported to have a very strong positive effect on job satisfaction, employee commitment, and the general well-being of employees. The organizational culture was also important with other factors such as providing friendly supervisors and being family-friendly policies that helped in decreasing the work-family conflict. Nevertheless, research also found out that there were continued obstacles connected with boundary management, especially to those employees who needed to have a caregiver in charge or those households that are generating two incomes. The segmentation integration theory postulated that individuals who found it hard to set the boundaries between work and personal sphere were more prone to stress and emotional burnout. As well, gender differences were apparent where women had more complications with professional life and domestic life since they were expected to act according to social norms. To the overall, literature this route developed WLB as a multidimensional concept, contingent on both organizational, personal, and social conditions; nevertheless, it was mostly based on the assumption of stable workplace set ups within physical separation of work and home.

2.2. Work-Life Balance During COVID-19

The COVID-19 crisis caused a radical change in the nature of working conditions, have to say that, in just a few days, the entire world was forced to switch to the model of remote work. At this time, scholars noted that there were major attention shifts on the traditional work-life lines, when employees were able to conduct their work, household and their care giving obligations all within one physical space. The high prevalence of online communication tools intensified the nature of workload and increased length of working time, which added the sense of being constantly in touch, and lacking chances to mentally disconnect with work. The Reports indicated increased stress, anxiety, burnout, and emotional exhaustion, especially when the employees lacked adequate space facilities or those who had family support mechanisms. Women and working parents were not equally affected because more domestic work was imposed by lockdowns. Moreover, organizational uncertainty and job insecurity exacerbated the mental pressure, among disadvantages on the productivity and motivation of the employees. Nevertheless, these difficulties were not the only directions of some studies, and positive outcomes were also observed by some groups, like less time spent on commuting, more flexibility, and better interaction with family. In general, the study conducted during the pandemic showed that remote work proved to be flexible, but there were no structured lines that posed new challenges to sustainable work-life balance.

2.3. Post-COVID Work Trends

During the post-pandemic era, companies have shifted more to the hybrid types of work arrangements that include remote and in-office working arrangements. Recent sources of literature indicate that hybrid work would give employees high levels of autonomy, flexibility, and control over their schedules, which can promote job satisfaction and work-life integration. The transition, however, has come with its own difficulties, among them being higher expectations of digital access, complicated coordination issues, and any gap existing between remote and on-site workers. In the hybrid workplace, leadership communication, organizational trust, and supportive workplace policies have become important requisites of successful WLB outcomes. Research shows that the employees favor guideline of performance expectations, freedom of time schedules and access to digital working tools that facilitate their output without being overly monitored. Moreover, organizations are also appreciating the necessity of mental health programs, employee assistance programs and well being plans as a way of maintaining employee engagement at work. The post-COVID studies also show how workplace culture changes, prioritizing performance based on results and not time, therefore transforming the traditional views of work-life balance into work-life integration paradigms.

2.4. Research Gaps

Although the related body of literature on the topic of work-life balance has been already broadened and is especially extended in the backdrop of COVID-19, there are a number of research gaps that are still open. A major gap is the lack of knowledge on long-term WLB outcomes of hybrid work settings and especially the exclusive outcomes of these work patterns on the companies employee growth, company loyalty and long-term psychological well-being. There are also limited

cross-industry comparative studies because of the vast majority of studies, that have been conducted on knowledge-based industries, including information technology and education, the manufacturing industry, the healthcare industry, as well as service industry has not been adequately researched. Additionally, gender disparities and social-cultural aspects also need more research, particularly in those countries, which are still developing, and work-family relations might entirely be different as compared to the Western ones. The other gap is connected with the contribution of technological overload and digital fatigue to employee wellness and performance in a hybrid environment. There is also a lack of longitudinal studies into adaptive coping strategies, interventions in an organization and leadership approaches. Answering those gaps would give us a more in-depth insight into sustainable work and life balance methods in the changing post-pandemic work environment.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design



Fig 2 -Research Design

3.1.1. Employee Perception Analysis

Acknowledging work-life balance perceptions and experiences of employees in remote and hybrid workplaces is the subject of an employee perception study. This element investigates the attitudes of employees towards the workload, flexibility, job satisfaction, autonomy and their psychological well-being. The subjective perceptions are normally done through surveys and structured questionnaires since these views can be used to determine whether the organizational policies are responsive to the personal as well as professional needs of the employees. The study of employee perception is also helpful in identifying the level of motivation, sources of stress, and engagement as well, which is critical in determining the outcome of work-life balance.

3.1.2. Organizational Support Evaluation

Organizational support assessment is a measure that determines the level at which organizations offer resources, policies and managerial practices that promote work-life balance. This involves review of flexible working policies, leadership communication, mental health programs and supervision support as well as access to employee support programs. The perceived organizational support theory postulates that the more employees feel importance and supported by their respective organizations, the more they tend to encounter less work life conflict and find more job satisfaction.

Thus, the assessment of the organizational support assists in defining how workplace culture and organizational management practices affect the well-being and productivity of employees in the workplace during the post-pandemic period.

3.1.3. Technology Usage Assessment

Assessment of the usage of technology explores the impact of digital instruments and communication platforms on the work patterns and lives of employees. As more people turn to using virtual collaboration tools, instant messaging and remote connectivity systems, technology serves two purposes in bringing in flexibility as well as causing digital overload and non-stop connection. This aspect will look at the frequency of technology use, its use purpose and intensity, and its influence on productivity, efficiency and stress levels. This knowledge on technology usage patterns is important in determining not only those positive consequences, e.g., enhanced efficiency, but also those negative consequences, e.g., technostress and disappearance of work and home life boundaries.

3.1.4. Work-Life Conflict Measurement

Work-life conflict measurement involves determining the degree of interference between the professional duties and personal and family lives and the other way round. This dimension measures time-based conflict, strain-based conflict and behavior-based conflict on standardized measurement scales. The information gathered in this region assists in establishing the contribution of work load, role requirement and family related issues to stress and burnout among the employees. The work-life conflict measure is critical in both determining the success of the organizational interventions and formulate some work and life balance strategies that ensure that the hybrid and remote job environment portends a higher degree of healthiness in the work and personal life contexts.

3.2. Data Collection

The data related to this research were via a structured questionnaire that interested capturing of the work experiences and perceptions of the workers in the changing post-pandemic working scenario, in terms of work-life balance. The questionnaire was sent to the employees in five largest industries, such as information technology, education, healthcare, banking and manufacturing, as a way of making it diversified and enhance the generalisation of results. An online and offline distribution strategy was implemented to ensure that the highest possible response rates and availability to the respondents, especially those who have different technological access. The questionnaire that was used was divided into several categories (Demographic, work arrangements (remote, hybrid, or on-site), organizational support, technology usage patterns, stress level, job satisfaction and perceived work-life balance). The attitudes and perceptions of the respondents towards the key variables were measured with the help of a five-point Likert scale between strong disagree and strongly agree in order to perform the quantitative analysis of the subjective experience. The Likert scale method helped measure psychological constructs of stress, emotional exhaustion, work load pressure, flexibility satisfaction and well being. The questionnaire was pilot tested involving a small sample of respondents before it was distributed in large scale to guarantee the comfort of the response and reliability or validity of the measurements. The ethical concerns were

upheld as well by showing the participant anonymity, volunteering participation, and ensuring the privacy of responses. The data obtained were coded and ready to be analyzed statistically to learn the connections between organizational support, use of technology, work-life conflict, employee satisfaction. This sequential collection of data offered a series of complete data that contributes to the goal of the study to come up with the factors affecting work life balance in various industries in the post-COVID period, and also enables the comparative analysis of the various work models and demographic groups.

3.3. Sample Size

This study involved 300 respondents, which was considered the right sample, as it is based on a reliable representation of the employees that operate in various company settings and in the various company business sectors. The sampling was made using five large industries that included: information technology, healthcare, education, banking and manufacturing so that there is a variation in work setting, work position, and work life balancing experiences. The research found that a sample of 300 would be sufficient to statistically analyze because it will include strong comparisons between demographic factors, industries, and work strategies of remote, hybrid, and on-site employment. The respondents were selected based on convenience and purposive sampling strategy, which involved people who have observed transformation in work patterns as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. There was also an attempt to ensure diversity on the basis of age, gender, marital status, job position and years of professional experience because this has been proved to affect the perception on work-life balance. The selected sample size also promotes the application of quantitative analytical methods that include correlation analysis, regression modelling and comparative statistical tests that require adequate points of data in order to help gain the validity and reliability of the results obtained. Moreover, the involvement of multiple industries increases the generalizability of the findings and enables the research to determine sector and industry-specific issues and patterns of the work life balance. The process of participation was voluntary and the respondents were made aware of the purpose of the research thereby ascertaining that there was ethical compliance and informed consent. Though one may argue that a larger sample would allow gathering a more comprehensive range of data, the current sample size of 300 is a viable one both in terms of reliability of the data retrieved and the time and resources available as well as the time and resources needed to manage the data. Comprehensively, the sample offers a thorough foundation of the systemic analysis of the connection between organizational support, the use of technologies, and the well-being of the employees on the post-pandemic working environment.

3.4. Variables Considered

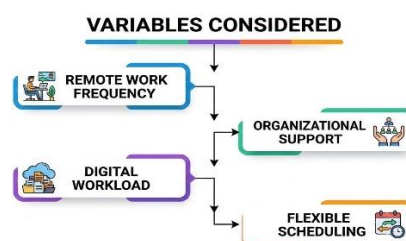


Fig 3 - Variables Considered

3.4.1. Remote Work Frequency

The Remote work frequency is used to describe the amount of days or hours that the workers do their own job duties at home or some other place other than the office. This variable is significant to know how such degrees of remote engagement affect the work-life balance of different employees, their productivity, and stress levels of workers. Those with an increased rate of remote work can find more flexibility and freedom; nevertheless, they might also face the problem of isolation, communication issues, and work-family unidentification. The measurement of such a variable is useful to be able to identify whether the notion of remote work positively or negatively influences the well-being of employees on the whole.

3.4.2. Organizational Support

Organizational support illustrates the level at which workers feel that their organization appreciates them and their overall welfare. These are supportive leadership access, flexible policies, mental health access, effective communication, and employee assistance programs. Good rates of perceived organizational support are normally linked with enhanced job satisfaction, stress reduction, and organization loyalty. Organizational support can be relevant to post-pandemic work settings, as it would contribute to the adaptation of employees to hybrid or remote working models without disrupting the balance in their work and life.

3.4.3. Digital Workload

The digital workload can be defined as the variety and quantity of tasks the employees handle with the use of digital tools emails, virtual meetings, collaboration tools, and communication apps. As the pandemic has brought more people together and further together deploying technology, employees may find themselves constantly connected with information overload and interruptions, which can be the sources of mental exhaustion and burnout. The outcome of the measurement of digital workload is to determine the ways in which demands associated with technology affect the productivity of the employees, their level of stress, and their capacity to engage in non-work activities during their working off-hours.

3.4.4. Flexible Scheduling

Flexible scheduling can be explained by the level of the control of the working time of employees, when they are able to choose among the opportunities to start and finish their working day any time, to have a compressed working week or a personal order of work. This variable plays a pivotal role during the assessment of the impact of autonomy of time management on the ability of the employees to balance work and personal issues. Workers with family or caregiving duties can be better characterized by the fact that flexible scheduling can help increase job satisfaction, decrease commuting stress, and work to integrate with their lives. Nonetheless, overly flexible work schedules with no clear boundaries can also result in overworking or breaking of normal routines, it is worthwhile to consider the overall effect it has on the overall well being of employees.

3.5. Mathematical Model

Work-Life Balance Index (WLBI) is created as a quantitative tool to determine the balance between the employee in their professional and personal life, by combining positive and negative affecting factors. In the given model, the flexibility, organizational support, and satisfaction are viewed as positive factors of work-life balance, whereas digital workload and work-life conflict are regarded as negative ones. Simply explained, the WLBI is devised by summing the score of flexibility, organizational support, and employee satisfaction and difference to the scores of digital workload and conflict combined. The result obtained is then divided by the number of respondents to get an average index figure that implies the overall level of work life balance amongst the sample population. Mathematically, the formula will be as follows in words. All variables of the model are crucial aspects of the work-life balance model. The flexibility score describes the capacity of the employees to balance between the work schedules and personal commitments. The scores on the organizational support measure the degree of support, encouragement, and resources that the employer offers. Satisfaction score is the final score that shows how satisfied employees are with work and job. Digital workload score on the other hand reflects the number of tasks and communication needs imposed by technology, whereas conflict score reflects how work impacts the personal life domain as opposed to the other. The WLBI offers a representation of enabling and challenging factors on the well-being of employees using a combination of these variables to offer a balanced representation of the same. The comparison between different sample sizes and organizational settings is facilitated by the fact that it has been normalized using the number of respondents. On the whole, this mathematical model presents a more systematic and quantifiable method of evaluating the work-life balance and allows using statistical analysis to determine the links between the workplace variables and the outcomes of employees in the post-pandemic setting.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Key Findings

The data analysis results have demonstrated that a number of noteworthy results connected to work-life balance in the post-pandemic work setting were found. Among the most glaring findings was that flexible scheduling had a very positive effect on job satisfaction and overall employee satisfaction. The more employees exercised a greater control over their work hours, the higher were their motivation rates, the less stress was experienced, and the better they were able to balance their personal lives with their professional ones. Flexibility enabled people to adjust their working hours to meet the family needs, personal health habits and preferences to level of productivity thus increasing the level of satisfaction. The research has however found negative effects related to the heightened screen time and extended application of the digital communication devices. The personnel that spent longer hours in virtual meetings, answered emails and were online in the virtual collaboration platforms reported more fatigue, mental exhaustion and burnout symptoms. Being always connected posed a challenge in being able to disconnect with work and thus being able to mix work and personal life. One more valuable observation was that organizational support is incredibly important in determining the outcomes of work-life balance. Workers who felt that the administration was significantly supportive of them, i.e., by providing good communication channels, helping in

workload management, providing mental health support, and flexible work habits, were found to have better work-life integration and reduced stress. Leadership also had a supportive effect on the increased organizational commitment and job engagement. Also, some gender-specific differences were observed in the study as women reported more work-family conflict than men. This imbalance was highly explained by the presence of more domestic tasks, care giving duties, and social demands which overburdened more female workers, especially in the remote work environments. Women acknowledged to be facing more difficulties according to boundaries between the areas of work and family had led to an increase of stress and less time with personal interests. In general, the results of this work demonstrate the role of flexibility, organizational support, and policies that are gender sensitive in ensuring sustainable work-life balance in contemporary workplaces.

4.2. Work-Life Balance Trends

Table 1: Work-Life Balance Trends

Factor	Improved (%)	No Change (%)	Declined (%)
Flexible Work Satisfaction	68%	20%	12%
Work Stress Levels	35%	30%	35%
Productivity	60%	25%	15%
Family Time Availability	55%	28%	17%
Mental Well-being	40%	32%	28%
Job Satisfaction	62%	23%	15%

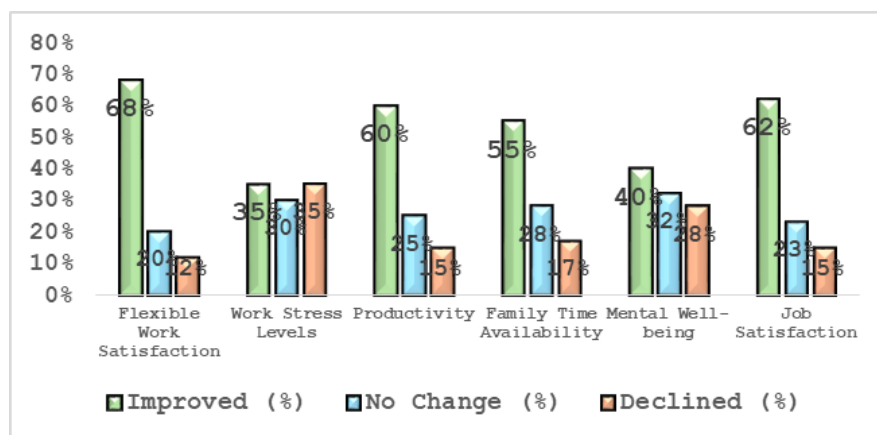


Fig 4 - Work-Life Balance Trends

4.2.1. Flexible Work Satisfaction

Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that the flexible work satisfaction increased in 68 percent of respondents, which implies that the presence of remote and hybrid working facilities positively affected the perception of autonomy and convenience in the work by employees. Approximately a fifth stated that there was none and this may be because of the employees whose jobs were flexible to an extent prior to the pandemic or the nature of their jobs prevented them to afford being flexible. Nevertheless, 12% felt a decrease, maybe because of more workload expectations, having difficulties with communication, or lack of organized daily routines through

working at home. Altogether, the results indicate that the issue of flexibility is one of the greatest sources of employee satisfaction in the presence of efficient organizational policy.

4.2.2. Work Stress Levels

The level of work stress had a mixed response, with 35 percent of the employees indicating improvement, 30 percent indicating no change and remaining 35 percent indicating the increase in the stress level. The increase in some respondents can be explained by less commuting and more possibilities to organize schedule whereas more stress in others can be explained by more digital workload, less division between work and personal life and increased performance expectations. This equal distribution is an indication that remote and hybrid work affect for stress levels differently across different situations, and different people, based on job roles and availability of supportive organizational systems.

4.2.3. Productivity

About 60 percent of the surveyed individuals said that their productivity was enhanced which means that flexible work set up and fewer workplace distractions were both positively oriented towards work performance. Approximately a quarter did not show any difference, which implies that it is possible that the level of productivity did not vary according to the setting of work. In the meantime, 15% were showing a downward trend, possibly they were distracted with home matters, absence of privacy, or inefficient communication. The results show that remote and hybrid working models have the potential to boost efficiency in the workplace of a number of employees, but the quality of their performance relies on individualized working conditions and organizational infrastructures.

4.2.4. Family Time Availability

The availability of family time bettered by 55% of the respondents, which was evident as to the benefits of working at home, the shortened commuting, and more time spent with the family members. Approximately, 28% had no report of any (not) much change, maybe because of workload or other more or less reasons as pre-pandemic habits. Nevertheless, 17% reported that their time together with a family was reduced, possibly due to longer job, always-interconnected or more household chores. The findings indicate that telecommuting can strengthen the lives of families, although boundaries of work have to be appropriately addressed.

4.2.5. Mental Well-being

Flexibility and autonomy enhanced the mental health of 40 percent of employees, which shows that flexibility and autonomy these factors led to decreased stress among a segment of the workforce and improved emotional health in workers. Nevertheless, a quarter (32%) reported no improvement, and quarter (28) found a reduction in mental well-being, with isolation, digital fatigue, job insecurity, and workload-related issues being the concerns. Such differences underline the significance of organizational mental health programs and employee welfare programs to guarantee sustainable well-being in flexible working settings.

4.2.6. Job Satisfaction

The satisfaction with the job increased among 62 percent of the participants indicating that flexibility of work arrangements, supportive management, and better work-life integration positively affected the attitude of employees towards the jobs. Approximately 23 of them stated that they have not changed whereas 15 reported that they are less satisfied, which may be connected to a lack of communication, heightened expectations, and reduced career development opportunities in remote locations. On the whole, the results are that the level of job satisfaction is highly dependent on the organizational support, flexibility, as well as the ability of employees to maintain the state of a healthy balance between work and personal life.

4.3. Discussion

The results of this paper validate that the notion of hybrid work environments is not a transient solution to the pandemic but it actually is a structural change in the modern way of organization. It is the transition toward work-life flexible and technology-supported arrangements that have fundamentally changed the way employees handle their professional duties and personal life obligations. As much as hybrid models are characterized by key benefits such as enhanced autonomy, less commuting time, and enhanced job satisfaction, they also come with complicated issues that employers are expected to cope up with in order to maintain the welfare of the employees. Among the major issues outlined is the phenomenon of digital fatigue that is caused by extended screen time, video calls, and the entire connectivity of people on digital communication platforms. The continuous use of technology might drive mental burnout, loss of focus and burnout unless one is careful to manage it. Moreover, role conflict is still a major problem, especially among employees who have to juggle duties at work and family and caregiver roles since there is no clear line between work and home settings, thus challenging to unravel of professional obligations. The discussion further indicates the importance of an organizational leadership in determining positive work-life balance outcomes. The supportive types of leadership practices, such as effective communication, reasonable expectations of tasks, understanding the employees issues, etc., should play an important role in stress reduction and job satisfaction. The communication channels are clear thus allowing employees to know about their performance expectations and organizational goals hence reducing uncertainty and anxiety. In addition, it will have flexible working schedules through adaptable work hours, mental health aid schemes and performance appraisal processes based on outcomes allowing staff to cope with work at a convenient time. Companies that actively invest in employee well-being programs have higher chances of keeping workforce engagement, productivity, and retention high in the hybrid environment. Altogether, the paper stresses that sustainable hybrid models of work should take a balanced course that restores to technological effectiveness level and humanized management practices, making sure that the continuation of organizational goals does not put a strain on employees on health and work-life balance.

5. CONCLUSION

This paper explored the post-COVID trends in work-life balance (WLB) with the reversal of the work-life balance that represented significant shift in the workplace structures, workforce

expectations, and organizational behavior that became evident after the pandemic. The results illustrate that the shift to the hybrid job is a new pattern of employment that creates opportunities and problems to be solved by workers who have to find a balance between their professional and personal life-related obligations. On the one hand, the presence of flexible time schedules, as well as the shortened commuting distance, have had a significant effect on job satisfaction, increased productivity, and the freedom of choice on the management of work activities. Most workers have said that when allowed to control their work environments, they were in a better position to manage their time, interact with more people, and have more motivation. Nevertheless, these benefits are also connected with the significant issues, such as the enhancement of digital workload, exposure to screens, and the loss of the distinction between the workplace and personal life, all of which generate stress, fatigue, and burnout. Digital technologies have facilitated the integration of all aspects of life to the extent that employees can no longer psychologically disengage with work, so employees require explicit organizational boundaries and expectations. The study also shows that organizational support systems are important towards the development of work-life balance outcomes. Workers who felt that the managerial assistance had been positive, there were clear communication, lenient policies and availability of mental health services indicated that they felt much better and were more satisfied with their jobs. One of the determinants was leadership behavior: empathetic and realistic performance expectation decreased the amount of anxiety and work-family conflict. Besides, the research observed a difference based on gender where women had experienced greater conflict between their work and family because of the unequal amount of caregiving effects and expectations on women by the society. These results imply organization should introduce inclusive and gender sensitive policies to provide fair assistance to each employee. Reflecting on the future, the new workplace structures need to embrace the concept of employee-centered operations that put emphasis on well-being coupled with productivity and organizational performance goals. To achieve sustainable hybrid work systems, there must be a harmonious combination of the flexibility, good management of technology and an organizational culture of support. Organizations that actively cover the problem of digital fatigue, workload control, and employee mental wellness will be in a more favorable position to retain talent, increase engagement, and sustain productivity in the long term. In the final analysis, a company that manages to involve work-life balance as a strategic issue and not as a marginal topic will have a competitive edge in the new world of work and achieved employee fulfillment and sustainability of organizational success.

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