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"Beyond the Office Walls: The Effects of Hybrid Work on Employee Engagement and Productivity"

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## **Declaration**

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

Signed: Omkar Sudarshan Lagad (candidate)

Date: 27th September 2024

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## **STATEMENT 1**

This work is the result of my own investigations except where otherwise stated. Other sources are acknowledged by footnotes giving explicit references. A bibliography is appended.

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## **Abstract**

The COVID-19 epidemic has expedited the use of hybrid work paradigms, integrating remote and on-site work. This dissertation examines the effects of hybrid work on employee engagement, motivation, productivity, work-life balance, and accountability through a mixed-methods approach comprising surveys and interviews. The results are analysed via the framework of Self-Determination Theory (SDT), emphasising the need for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Data from a survey of 85 respondents indicated that hybrid work typically improves engagement, motivation, and work-life balance, while posing issues in sustaining team cohesion and accountability. Interviews with three participants elucidated these themes, emphasising the advantages of autonomy in enhancing individual productivity while simultaneously noting the detrimental impacts of communication delays and isolation on team collaboration. The study reveals that hybrid work provides considerable flexibility, enabling employees to optimise their job and time management. Nevertheless, it underscores the necessity for organisations to confront the intrinsic constraints of the hybrid model, particularly in promoting social connectivity, immediate cooperation, and prompt feedback. The study's conclusions offer actionable recommendations for organisations to improve their hybrid work strategies, assuring employee motivation, productivity, and connectivity.

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## **Chapter:1 Introduction**

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Hybrid work models, integrating aspects of conventional in-office employment and remote work, have become a prevalent organisational framework in recent years. Traditionally, most organisations mandated the physical presence of employees to execute tasks and promote teamwork. Although telecommuting was more prevalent due to digital technologies, it was the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 that rendered remote work a global imperative, drastically transforming work arrangements on an unparalleled scale (Armour et al., 2020).

Throughout the outbreak, governments instituted lockdowns and social distancing protocols that compelled businesses to rapidly adjust. Remote work became the norm, enabling organisations to sustain operations while prioritising employee safety. Nevertheless, as the pandemic persisted, both businesses and employees recognised the benefits of remote work. This prompted a reassessment of traditional work arrangements, resulting in the adoption of hybrid work models as a balanced answer (Dobbins, 2021).

#### **The Development of Hybrid Work**

The hybrid work approach, in which employees alternate between remote work and office attendance, provides flexibility that enables individuals to harmonise their personal and professional responsibilities. A PwC research (2021) indicated that more than 80% of firms intended to provide hybrid work as a permanent option following the pandemic. This indicates a sustained transformation in working practices, as organisations acknowledge the prospective advantages of this model for productivity and employee contentment.

Hybrid work enables employees to experience the independence of remote work while also gaining the advantages of in-person connections, which are essential for collaborative activities, innovation, and problem-solving. Recent studies indicate that employees value the flexibility of hybrid work, with elevated levels of job satisfaction and engagement relative to exclusively in-office arrangements (Gratton, 2022).

Moreover, hybrid work models correspond with wider cultural trends that prioritise work-life balance, decreased commuting duration, and environmental sustainability. Permitting workers to work remotely on a part-time basis enables organisations to diminish their office space requirements, resulting in decreased operating expenses (Crawford, 2024).

### Obstacles of Hybrid Employment

Although hybrid work offers certain benefits, it also poses certain obstacles. Communication and collaboration may be more challenging in remote environments, leading employees to feel isolated or excluded from team dynamics. Moreover, certain employees may encounter challenges in delineating boundaries between professional and personal life while telecommuting, potentially resulting in heightened stress and burnout. Moreover, hybrid employment presents the potential of "proximity bias," wherein managers may preferentially promote in-office staff for career progression, thus marginalising remote workers (Tsipursky, 2022).

A significant issue is the inequitable access to technology and workspace resources, which may result in differences in productivity and experience between remote and in-office employees. Organisations are progressively allocating resources to digital tools and platforms, such virtual

meeting software and cloud-based project management systems, to address these disparities and facilitate uninterrupted communication between remote and in-office employees (Goyette, 2022).

### The Prospects of Hybrid Employment

Hybrid employment is anticipated to become a permanent element of the global workforce. Atwal (2023) forecasts that by 2025, more than 75% of organisations will have implemented a hybrid work paradigm, indicating a substantial and enduring transformation in workplace dynamics. As organisations advance their hybrid strategy, they must prioritise the formulation of inclusive policies that tackle the complexities of overseeing remote and in-office teams, guarantee parity in career progression, and enhance employee well-being.

The hybrid work paradigm signifies a substantial advancement in work organisation, offering flexibility, improving productivity, and facilitating work-life balance. To properly harness its promise, organisations must address its intrinsic challenges, especially in communication, collaboration, and equity.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

In reaction to the COVID-19 pandemic, some organisations embraced the hybrid work model; yet, its enduring impacts on employee engagement, productivity, and well-being remain ambiguous. The inconsistency in work experiences, influenced by assignments, industry, and individual job preferences, is a significant issue. Numerous organisations lack a strategy to reconcile autonomy with oversight and assistance in hybrid situations. There is a lack of adequate research about the productivity, accountability, and professional development of remote workers (Crawford, 2024).

The impact of hybrid work models on organisational culture and team dynamics remains ambiguous. Employees spread across many locations complicate the maintenance of a cohesive culture. Collaboration, invention, and communication, which rely on physical interaction, are impeded. The hybrid approach prompts enquiries on equitable professional development chances, particularly for distant employees who may experience a sense of disconnection from workplace social interactions and informal conversations (Hancock, Schaninger, and Weddle, 2021).

Ultimately, the technical infrastructure and the facilitation of hybrid work require additional examination. Organisations find it challenging to emulate the spontaneity and originality of in-person collaboration using digital tools. The hybrid work model provides flexibility; nonetheless, it prompts enquiries over its sustainability and the necessary organisational, technological, and policy adjustments to guarantee its enduring success.

### **1.3 Research Aims and Objectives**

The study will use Self-Determination Theory to examine how hybrid work arrangements affect employee performance and well-being. This study examines how hybrid work experiences affect intrinsic motivation, autonomy, competence, and relatedness at work. This research seeks to uncover hybrid work environment variables that boost employee engagement, motivation, and productivity. The SDT underpins our investigation. Hybrid work models may help or impede people's professional aspirations and work-life balance (Ryan and Deci, 2017).

Additionally, the study examines how digital tools and platforms boost productivity and participation in hybrid workplaces. This study will evaluate how organisational culture and industry type affect hybrid model efficacy. This study suggests how companies might improve

employee satisfaction and performance through hybrid work practices. Examining these factors will give advice. Understanding these characteristics will help companies optimise hybrid work arrangements. This will satisfy employees' flexibility needs while meeting the company's efficiency goals (Howard et al., 2016).

## **1.4 Research Questions**

This dissertation investigates the effects of hybrid work models that integrate remote work with one to two days of on-site presence. The principal enquiries directing the research encompass:

1. How does the hybrid work model impact employee engagement and productivity?
2. In what ways do digital tools and platforms facilitate or hinder productivity and engagement in a hybrid work environment?
3. How do organisational culture and industry type influence the effectiveness of hybrid work models?
4. What differences exist between employee and management attitudes toward hybrid work, and how do these perspectives shape organisational policies?
5. How does the hybrid work model affect employees' work-life balance and overall job satisfaction?

This research seeks to investigate the intricate dynamics of hybrid work, emphasising the equilibrium between freedom and structure, and how organisations might refine this model to improve employee results while aligning with organisational goals. The enquiries aim to furnish a thorough comprehension of hybrid work and its impact on people and the workplace collectively.

## **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This study is significant due to its emphasis on hybrid work arrangements, which have gained prominence in contemporary workplaces. As organisations globally investigate flexible work arrangements, it is essential to comprehend the effects of hybrid work on employee engagement, productivity, and overall job satisfaction. This research examines critical enquiries related to the implementation of hybrid work, including the function of digital tools in facilitating remote collaboration, the impact of organisational culture on the efficacy of hybrid models, and the difficulties in sustaining team cohesion across diverse work settings (Igi Global and Information Resources Management Association, 2020).

This study theoretically expands the implementation of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) to hybrid work environments, elucidating how elements such as autonomy, competence, and relatedness affect employee motivation and engagement in this novel situation. The research examines how hybrid work can simultaneously satisfy and complicate psychological requirements, providing a comprehensive insight into employee experiences and the essential conditions for maintaining motivation and well-being in a flexible work setting (Ryan and Deci, 2017b).

The results of this study have considerable relevance for organisations developing or enhancing their hybrid work strategies. This research provides insights that can assist firms in formulating strategies to boost employee engagement, enhance productivity, and promote a better work-life balance, all essential for long-term organisational success. Furthermore, the study's analysis of the disparities between employee and management viewpoints on hybrid work will facilitate the

reconciliation of possible discrepancies, ensuring that hybrid models are efficient and congruent with both organisational goals and employee requirements (Consulting, 2021).

This research seeks to enhance the existing information on hybrid work and offer practical advice for organisations to refine their work practices, fostering more welcoming, productive, and interactive work environments in the post-pandemic context.

## **1.6 Structure of the Dissertation**

This dissertation is structured to carefully examine the research topics and objectives related to the hybrid work model. Chapter 1: Introduction commences by presenting the contextual framework of hybrid work models, delineating the problem statement, and defining the research aims, objectives, and questions that direct the study. This chapter emphasises the importance of the research and finishes with a summary of the dissertation's organisation.

Chapter 2: research Review examines the current academic and industrial research about hybrid work patterns, employee engagement, productivity, digital tools, and organisational culture. The study is anchored in Self-Determination Theory (SDT), establishing a theoretical base within recognised scholarship.

Chapter 3: Methodology delineates the research plan, encompassing a mixed-methods approach that integrates quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews. This chapter delineates the data gathering and analysis methodologies, with the sample tactics and ethical considerations pertinent to the study.

Chapter 4: Findings delineates the results from the survey and interviews, examining critical issues including engagement, productivity, and work-life balance within hybrid work environments.

Chapter 5: Discussion analyses the findings in connection to the study questions and literature review, exploring the theoretical and practical consequences, juxtaposing the results with current studies, and providing recommendations.

Chapter 6: Conclusion encapsulates the principal findings, acknowledges the study's limits, and proposes avenues for future research.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

### **1. Introduction to Hybrid Work Models**

- **1.1 Definition and Evolution of Hybrid Work Models**

Employees can split their time between the office and their home with hybrid work models that combine aspects of regular office work and remote work. In the past, workers had to be physically present at work. However, the COVID-19 pandemic sped up remote work, which moved jobs to people's homes. Now, hybrid models have come on the scene as an option that can be used in a variety of situations. This model is popular because it helps people balance their job and personal lives, keeps them productive, and lowers operational costs. It also meets the need for face-to-face collaboration and teamwork (Krajčík and Schmidt , 2023).

- **1.2 Impact of COVID-19 on Work Practices**

The COVID-19 pandemic sped up the adoption of remote and hybrid work methods by a huge amount, which completely changed the way people work around the world. As governments put in place lockdowns and social distance rules, businesses had to quickly switch to online work to keep their businesses running. At first, this change was seen as a short-term fix, but it led to a lot of people accepting online and hybrid work as long-term options (Kniffin, 2021). In the short term, the quick switch to online work came with a lot of problems, such as limited technology, not being ready, and problems with how people usually communicate and work together. To stay linked and keep working, both employees and employers had to quickly learn how to use new digital tools and platforms (Nurhas et al., 2021). Although these problems existed, many

businesses found unexpected benefits, like lower operating costs, better work-life balance for workers, and more freedom.

As the pandemic went on, hybrid work models became common as a way to balance the pros and cons of working from home with the need for face-to-face interaction. With this model, employees could work from home but still come into the office for certain jobs that needed to be done with other people or with access to resources. Because of this shift, standard office space is being rethought, and many companies are downsizing or reusing their physical offices to support hybrid work (Aleem et al., 2023). Also, the pandemic has made people rethink the way they work, putting more value on results and freedom than on being physically present. This change is likely to keep having an effect on how people work, with hybrid models likely to stay the most common way to organise work. To support these new ways of working, companies are now putting money into digital infrastructure, changing policies, and focussing on the health and happiness of their employees. This shows that the way work is done has permanently changed (Grey, 2023).

- **1.3 The Emergence and Importance of Hybrid Work Models**

Hybrid work models, characterised by a combination of remote and on-site employment, enable employees to allocate their time between working from home and at the office. This model provides versatility in the methods, timing, and locations of work, merging the advantages of remote work such as enhanced independence, decreased travel time, and improved work-life equilibrium with the benefits of face-to-face collaboration, which is essential for tasks that necessitate teamwork and access to tangible assets (Krajčák, Schmidt and Barath, 2023). The rise of hybrid work models has been propelled by the necessity for organisations to adjust to the

evolving requirements of the contemporary workforce, especially in light of the COVID-19 epidemic. Amidst the epidemic, businesses discovered that adopting a hybrid work model might provide a more sustainable and balanced answer to the difficulties posed by remote employment. This model accommodates various work styles, catering to employees who excel in a remote setting as well as those who derive advantages from the organisation and social engagement of an office environment (Makridis and Schloetzer, 2022).

Nevertheless, hybrid work is not without its obstacles. Ensuring effective communication and collaboration across geographically separated teams can be challenging, which may result in remote workers feeling isolated and disconnected from their colleagues working in the office. In addition, hybrid work necessitates a strong digital infrastructure and explicit regulations to guarantee that all employees have equitable access to resources and opportunities, irrespective of their geographical location (Choudhury et al., 2022). Regardless of these obstacles, the advantages of hybrid work models, such as enhanced employee contentment, enhanced efficiency, and the capacity to allure and keep exceptional personnel, render them an increasingly vital element of the contemporary workplace. As organisations further develop their hybrid work strategies, they may expect to experience enduring improvements in both employee engagement and overall business performance (Wu, Antone and DeChurch, 2023).

## **2. Theoretical Framework: Self-Determination Theory (SDT)**

- **2.1 Overview of Self-Determination Theory**

Self-Determination Theory (SDT), formulated by psychologists Edward Deci and Richard Ryan, is a famous psychological paradigm that centres on the study of human motivation and personality. Self-Determination Theory (SDT) proposes that humans possess an innate drive to

develop and reach their maximum capabilities, provided that their fundamental psychological needs are satisfied. These requirements encompass autonomy (the desire to have control over one's actions), competence (the want to feel successful and capable in one's activities), and relatedness (the desire to feel linked to others) (Ryan and Deci, 2017). SDT is important in psychology because it provides a thorough comprehension of how internal and external motivations impact behaviour. Contrary to other theories that mostly concentrate on external incentives, SDT prioritises the significance of internal motivations and how satisfying fundamental psychological needs can result in improved well-being, heightened involvement, and enduring motivation (Deci and Ryan, 2000, pp.3–33).

Within the realm of employment, Self-Determination Theory (SDT) posits that when individuals have a sense of autonomy, competence, and relatedness, they are more inclined to exhibit higher levels of engagement, productivity, and job satisfaction. This theory has been extensively utilised in diverse domains, such as education, health, and organisational behaviour, to create settings that promote motivation and well-being. SDT, or Self-Determination Theory, offers a valuable perspective in hybrid work environments. It helps us understand how to establish circumstances that foster employee motivation and engagement, assuring the success of both remote and on-site workers (Slemp, Lee and Mossman, 2021).

- **2.2 Core Components: Autonomy, Competence, and Relatedness**

The three foundational elements of Self-Determination Theory (SDT)—autonomy, competence, and relatedness—are crucial for intrinsic motivation and engagement in various environments, including the workplace.

Autonomy is the ability to govern one's actions and judgements. Workplace autonomy enhances employees' sense of ownership, creativity, satisfaction, and purpose. Hybrid work approaches prioritise autonomy, enabling employees to determine their work schedule and location, hence enhancing motivation (Kristin Severinsen Spieler, 2024). Competence is the motivation to be effective and capable. Individuals who possess confidence in their professional competencies are more inclined to embrace challenges, surmount obstacles, and achieve high performance. Both remote and on-site employees require essential tools, resources, and training to excel in hybrid work settings. Relatedness is the desire to experience connection and value. This section emphasises social participation and inclusivity. Fostering elevated engagement in hybrid work settings necessitates robust colleague relationships and a cohesive organisational culture (Ryan, 2023).

The SDT principles provide a supportive atmosphere that enhances intrinsic motivation, hence augmenting employee engagement, contentment, and productivity. Comprehending and enhancing these elements can assist hybrid work organisations in devising strategies to motivate and engage people irrespective of their location (Deci and Ryan, 1985).

- **2.3 Application of SDT in Work Settings**

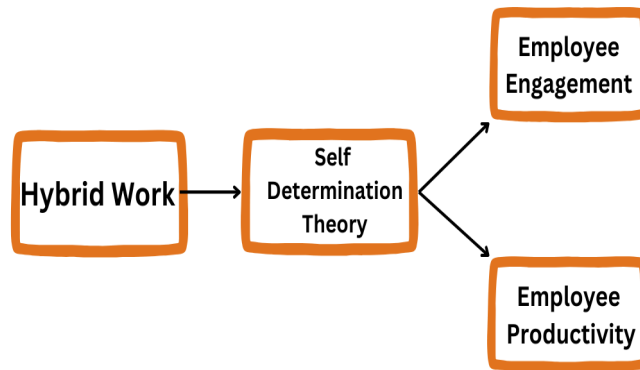
The application of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) has been extensive in both conventional and remote work settings, with the aim of improving employee motivation and productivity. Organisations that foster autonomy by granting employees the authority to make decisions on their work processes have observed a rise in both job satisfaction and performance. Granting staff autonomy over their schedules or participation in decision-making cultivates a feeling of ownership and proficiency (Deci, 2012).

The principles of SDT (Self-Determination Theory) are equally applicable in remote work settings. Equipping employees with the necessary tools and resources to excel in remote work fulfils their requirement for proficiency, while promoting frequent communication and team-building events fosters a sense of connection. Moreover, the independence provided by remote work, including the flexibility of working hours and the opportunity to design personalised work environments, can greatly enhance intrinsic motivation. The focus of SDT on meeting psychological demands enables organisations to create work environments that sustain high levels of engagement and productivity, regardless of whether people are working on-site, remotely, or in a hybrid model (Gagné and Chong, 2019).

- **2.4 Relevance of SDT to Hybrid Work Models**

The Self-Determination Theory (SDT) is particularly applicable to hybrid work models, since it enables organisations to uphold fundamental psychological demands, namely autonomy, competence, and relatedness, in diverse work settings. Hybrid environments facilitate autonomy by implementing flexible work arrangements, granting employees the freedom to determine their own work schedule and location. Sustaining competence is achieved by ensuring availability of essential tools and resources, irrespective of geographical location. Regular virtual and in-person contacts promote relatedness among employees, ensuring they stay connected and engaged, which ultimately boosts motivation and productivity (Vansteenkiste and Ryan, 2013).

The conceptual framework shown below delineates the correlation between hybrid work, the components of Self-Determination Theory (SDT), and their influence on employee engagement and productivity:



## 2.3 Impact of Hybrid Work on Employee Engagement

- **2.3.1 Definition and Importance of Employee Engagement**

Employee engagement refers to the emotional and psychological dedication that individuals exhibit towards their work and organisation. It demonstrates employees' motivation, commitment, and alignment with the organisation's objectives and principles. Organisations prioritise high engagement as it enhances productivity, job satisfaction, and employee retention, hence decreasing turnover and associated costs (Van Wingerden, Derks, and Bakker, 2017). Given that diverse work styles complicate employee affiliation with the organisation, fostering employee engagement is essential. Engaged individuals are more inclined to adjust to hybrid work, sustain productivity, and enhance team dynamics while working remotely (Saks, 2006).

Employers utilise diverse techniques to evaluate employee engagement. Employee satisfaction, retention, and productivity are prevalent quantitative metrics. Surveys and questionnaires are employed to evaluate employees' job responsibilities, work conditions, and contacts with colleagues and supervisors. These questionnaires frequently enquire about job satisfaction, sense of belonging, and organisational ideals. Qualitative methods, such as individual interviews and focus groups, facilitate a profound comprehension of employee engagement by examining personal experiences and perceptions (Robinson, Perryman and Hayday, 2004). Employers may monitor attendance, voluntary activities, and collaboration to evaluate engagement.

Hybrid workplaces necessitate technology to evaluate and sustain engagement. Digital platforms and solutions provide regular evaluations, feedback mechanisms, and real-time monitoring of employee sentiment. These measures and methodologies enable organisations to avert challenges that may impact employee engagement, maintaining worker interest and connectivity regardless of their work environment, whether remote or in-office (Sonnentag et al., 2012).

- **2.3.2 Enhancing Engagement through Hybrid Work**

To improve employee engagement in hybrid work settings, it is necessary to specifically prioritise essential elements that tackle the distinct difficulties and advantages of this work structure. Engagement in a hybrid work environment, where employees divide their time between remote and on-site work, can be affected by several factors, such as autonomy, flexibility, and connectivity. Enhancing participation in hybrid work is greatly influenced by autonomy and flexibility. Granting employees autonomy in determining their work schedule and location can enhance their sense of agency over their work-life equilibrium, leading to a substantial increase in their motivation and job contentment (Trépanier et al., 2020). Granting

employees autonomy enables them to organise their work according to their individual and professional requirements, resulting in increased levels of involvement as they perceive their employers' trust and empowerment. Enhanced adaptability, especially in hybrid work arrangements, might enable employees to more efficiently handle their task, thereby mitigating stress and averting burnout. Organisations may cultivate a more engaged and motivated workforce by facilitating the seamless integration of work obligations and personal life for individuals (Thomaz Teodorovicz et al., 2023).

Establishing and nurturing robust relationships with team members and management is an additional crucial element for fostering engagement in hybrid work situations. Consistent communication, whether via virtual meetings, collaborative platforms, or occasional face-to-face engagements, is crucial to prevent employees from experiencing isolation or disconnection from their teams. The implementation of hybrid work arrangements can occasionally result in sentiments of isolation, particularly among individuals who devote a greater portion of their work hours to remote work (Gill, 2011). In order to address this issue, organisations must give priority to maintaining regular and significant communication that ensures all team members are well-informed, actively engaged, and in agreement with the aims of the organisation. Furthermore, leadership is essential in sustaining participation in a hybrid environment. Managers should take the initiative to regularly communicate with employees, provide assistance, and acknowledge their achievements, irrespective of their location of work. This strategy facilitates the establishment of trust and loyalty, guaranteeing that employees have a sense of worth and recognition (Edmondson, 2018).

Technology enhances engagement by enabling effortless communication and collaboration across diverse work environments. Project management tools, video conferencing systems, and

instant messaging apps enable teams to maintain connectivity and collaborate efficiently, even when geographically separated. These technologies facilitate the preservation of a sense of community and belonging, which is crucial for maintaining engagement. To summarise, increasing participation in hybrid work environments depends on offering independence and adaptability, fostering strong relationships, and utilising technology to facilitate collaboration (Mazmanian, Orlikowski and Yates, 2013). By prioritising these aspects, organisations may establish a hybrid work model that effectively addresses the requirements of the business while also cultivating a deeply committed and driven staff, resulting in improved results for both people and the organisation.

- **2.3.3 Challenges to Engagement in Hybrid Work**

Hybrid work approaches, whilst providing flexibility and autonomy, nevertheless pose substantial obstacles to employee engagement. Isolation and disconnectedness, as well as blurring work-life boundaries, are two prevalent concerns that can impair engagement if not effectively addressed. Isolation and disconnectedness are especially noticeable in hybrid work situations, where individuals may spend significant amounts of time working remotely. Due to the absence of regular in-person encounters in conventional office environments, employees may have a sense of isolation from their coworkers and a lack of connection to the organisational culture (Golden, Veiga and Dino, 2008). The feeling of isolation can result in less motivation, decreased job satisfaction, and a diminished sense of belonging, all of which have a negative effect on engagement. The absence of impromptu exchanges, which frequently facilitate originality and cooperation, can likewise impede team unity and ingenuity.

Blurred work-life borders provide a notable obstacle in hybrid work structures. The ability to work remotely might pose challenges for individuals in maintaining a clear distinction between their professional obligations and personal life. The lack of clear boundaries between work and personal life can result in excessive workload, exhaustion, and psychological strain, since employees may struggle to disengage from work responsibilities. When work intrudes upon personal time, it can reduce job satisfaction and engagement, as employees may feel overwhelmed and unable to maintain a harmonious work-life balance (Ellen Ernst Kossek and Lambert, 2005). In order to surmount these obstacles and uphold elevated levels of involvement, organisations can adopt various techniques. Frequent contact and regular check-ins with employees are essential for maintaining their connection and keeping them well-informed, hence reducing feelings of isolation. Engaging in virtual team-building events and providing chances for face-to-face interaction can enhance connections and solidify a feeling of community (Ellen Ernst Kossek and Lambert, 2004).

Establishing explicit boundaries and expectations around working hours is crucial in order to avoid experiencing burnout. Promoting the establishment of a designated workstation at home and the adherence to consistent work hours might facilitate the maintenance of a distinct boundary between professional and personal life. Offering mental health tools and assistance, such as providing access to counselling services or stress management courses, can additionally aid employees in effectively managing the difficulties associated with hybrid employment (Management Association, Information Resources, 2017). By directly confronting these difficulties, organisations can cultivate a supportive hybrid work environment that encourages ongoing engagement and productivity.

- **2.3.4 Case Studies and Practical Examples**

Multiple organisations have effectively used hybrid work models, showcasing how this strategy can improve employee engagement when properly managed. An exemplary instance is Microsoft, which implemented a versatile hybrid work policy that permits employees to work remotely for a maximum of 50% of their working hours. Microsoft has made significant investments in digital collaboration solutions like Microsoft Teams to promote smooth communication and cooperation, regardless of geographical location. This method has not only preserved but also improved employee engagement by offering freedom while assuring connectivity and collaboration (Microsoft, 2021).

Another instance is Salesforce, which implemented the "Success from Anywhere" framework. This model provides employees with the flexibility to select their preferred work arrangement, including the options of working entirely remotely, working in the office, or adopting a combination of both. Salesforce has also prioritised the significance of preserving a robust corporate culture by organising frequent virtual events, implementing wellness programs, and conducting leadership check-ins. These measures have effectively ensured that staff remain actively involved, connected, and in agreement with the company's beliefs and objectives.

Spotify's "Work From Anywhere" policy grants employees the liberty to choose their work location based on their preferences, be it their residence, the workplace, or even other cities. Spotify facilitates this paradigm by offering support in setting up home offices and allowing for flexible working hours, leading to elevated levels of employee contentment and involvement (Davenport, 2018). The case studies demonstrate how customised hybrid work models, along with robust support systems and an emphasis on culture, may effectively enhance employee engagement and happiness.

## **2.4 Employee and Management Perspectives on Hybrid Work**

- **2.4.1 Diverging Views of Employees and Management**

Within hybrid work structures, employees and management frequently possess contrasting viewpoints, influenced by their distinct priorities and experiences. Employees typically like the flexibility provided by hybrid work, as it offers advantages such as enhanced work-life balance, autonomy, and reduced travel time. A significant number of employees perceive the hybrid model as a means to enhance their productivity and job satisfaction, as it caters to their individual demands and work preferences. However, management frequently has ambivalent attitudes on hybrid work. Managers often have worries about sustaining productivity, controlling performance, and encouraging team cohesiveness with a distributed workforce, despite recognising the advantages of flexibility. Managers may find it difficult to evaluate progress and foster strong, collaborative teams because of the absence of direct supervision and spontaneous in-person contacts (Microsoft, 2021b).

The fundamental reasons for these contrasting perspectives can be attributed to the inherent disparities in positions and obligations. Employees place a high importance on their own well-being and achieving a balance between their personal lives and work, whereas managers are primarily concerned with achieving organisational goals, ensuring accountability, and managing team dynamics. To bridge these gaps, it is necessary to have transparent communication, establish trust, and create efficient techniques that balance employee autonomy with managerial supervision (Heath and Heath, 2010). By comprehending and resolving these divergent viewpoints, organisations can establish a hybrid work model that fulfils the needs of both employees and management, resulting in a more cohesive and efficient work environment.

- **2.4.2 Impact on Organisational Policies and Practices**

The differing perspectives of employees and management on hybrid work have a significant impact on the development and adaptation of organisational policies and practices. These policies are often designed to balance the flexibility that employees desire with the structure and oversight that management requires, leading to a more effective and harmonious work environment.

**Influence on Organisational Policies:** The need to accommodate both employee preferences and management concerns has led many organisations to develop flexible work policies that cater to diverse work styles. For instance, companies are increasingly adopting flexible hours and location-agnostic work arrangements, allowing employees to choose when and where they work, as long as they meet performance expectations. However, these policies also include mechanisms for ensuring accountability, such as regular check-ins, performance reviews, and clear deliverables (Giampietro, Carlier and Grant, 2024).

**Adapted and New Policies:** In response to the hybrid work model, organisations have introduced various policies to address specific challenges. For example, some companies have implemented "core hours" policies, where employees must be available for meetings and collaboration during certain hours, regardless of their location. Others have established guidelines for maintaining work-life balance, such as limiting after-hours communications and encouraging the use of paid time off. Additionally, many organisations have enhanced their digital infrastructure to support remote work, investing in collaboration tools and cybersecurity measures to ensure seamless and secure operations (Ernst and A., 2020).

Role of Management: Management plays a crucial role in bridging the gap between employee needs and organisational goals. Effective managers must be adept at communicating expectations, providing support, and fostering a culture of trust and transparency. This includes setting clear objectives, offering regular feedback, and ensuring that all employees, regardless of their work location, have access to the resources they need to succeed. Managers also need to be flexible and open to feedback, adjusting policies and practices as necessary to address the evolving needs of their teams (Gilley, Gilley and McMillan, 2009).

By recognizing and addressing the differing perspectives on hybrid work, organisations can create policies that support both employee satisfaction and organisational performance. The role of management in this process is pivotal, as it requires balancing the autonomy employees seek with the structure and accountability that ensures the organisation's success. This balanced approach leads to a more engaged, productive, and satisfied workforce (Iqbal, Khalid and Barykin, 2021).

- **2.4.3 Case Studies and Practical Recommendations for Bridging Gaps**

Case Studies: A noteworthy example is the case study of Cisco, a technology business that effectively resolved the differing requirements of employees and management in its hybrid work model. At first, the management had concerns about upholding efficiency and teamwork, whereas the employees prioritised flexibility. Cisco adopted a "hybrid-first" strategy, granting employees the freedom to select their work environments while maintaining effective communication and defined expectations. The organisation implemented digital technologies to enhance communication and instituted frequent check-ins to sustain team cohesion. This strategy resulted in a high level of employee satisfaction and sustained productivity, indicating that by

implementing appropriate solutions, both management concerns and employee requirements may be successfully harmonised (Morgan, 2020).

PwC (PricewaterhouseCoopers) is another example of a company that implemented a flexible work policy, enabling employees to work remotely for the majority of their time. In response to management's concerns over the preservation of company culture and the provision of mentoring opportunities, PwC implemented "in-person collaboration days" during which employees might convene for the purpose of engaging in team-building exercises and training sessions. This hybrid method facilitated the connection between employee independence and the necessity for face-to-face communication, guaranteeing the preservation of organisational culture and learning prospects (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2021).

Practical Suggestions: In order to enhance hybrid work practices, organisations should prioritise transparent communication, adaptability, and ongoing feedback. Implementing regular communication channels between employees and management helps effectively address concerns as they arise. It is essential to invest in technology that facilitates smooth collaboration and guarantees equitable access to resources. In addition, organisations should contemplate adopting hybrid work policies that are flexible, enabling frequent evaluations and modifications based on input. Ultimately, fostering a culture that values trust and autonomy, and provides employees with a sense of empowerment and support, can effectively bridge the divides between diverse viewpoints, resulting in a more unified and efficient workplace (Bloom, 2021).

## **Chapter 3: Research Methodology**

### **3.1 Research Design and Approach**

- **3.1.1 Overview of Research Design**

A mixed-methods approach combines quantitative surveys and qualitative in-depth interviews to examine the effects of hybrid work on employee engagement and productivity. Quantitative surveys provide quantifiable insights, documenting trends and patterns among a large population, whereas qualitative interviews offer a more profound knowledge of individual experiences and viewpoints within a specific setting. The combination enables a comprehensive examination, encompassing both statistical significance and the fundamental causes of trends. This approach is crucial for thoroughly assessing the intricate dynamics of hybrid work, guaranteeing a comprehensive and profound understanding (Creswell, 2010).

- **3.1.2 Quantitative Research (Surveys)**

Surveys are a valuable quantitative research instrument for collecting quantifiable data on employee satisfaction and efficiency in different work situations, such as flexible, hybrid, and on-site workplaces. They enable researchers to effectively access a wide and varied pool of people, assuring comprehensive representation and applicability of findings. Surveys provide the ability to collect standardised replies, which makes it easier to compare trends and correlations. Due to their scalability and capacity to evaluate several variables concurrently, they are an optimal approach for assessing the intricate impacts of mixed employment on workplace achievements (Maddox-Daines, 2023).

- **3.1.3 Qualitative Research (In-depth Interviews)**

Partially organised, deep interviews are employed in qualitative studies to get comprehensive and subjective information about the experiences of staff with hybrid employment. This approach enables the freedom to ask questions that prompt participants to express their personal viewpoints on engagement, liberty, and efficiency. Interviews delve into the intricacies of personal experiences, revealing intricate feelings and reasons that surveys may overlook. They are crucial for comprehending the underlying context of quantitative data, offering profound insights into the impact of hybrid work on people both personally and professionally (Stein, 2022).

- **3.1.4 Justification for Mixed-Methods**

A combination of methods integrates the wide-ranging scope of survey data with the profound insights gained from qualitative interviews, resulting in a holistic comprehension of the effects of hybrid work. Surveys yield quantifiable data regarding satisfaction with work and efficiency among broad groups, emphasising overall trends and patterns. Conversely, interviews focus on individual experiences, examining the nuances of employee independence, contentment, and the dynamics of the workplace. This combination guarantees the inclusion of both comprehensive statistical observations and specific individual viewpoints, resulting in a more comprehensive and nuanced investigation of the impact of hybrid work on varied labour situations (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011).

## **3.2 Research Philosophy**

- **3.2.1 Pragmatism as a Philosophical Approach**

Pragmatism is chosen as a research philosophy due to its adaptable nature, which integrates elements of both positivist (quantitative) and interpretive thinking (qualitative). The approach prioritises tangible results and practical use cases, enabling researchers to employ the most appropriate methodologies to meet individual research enquiries. Pragmatism promotes mixed-methods techniques to analyse the influence of hybrid work on staff satisfaction and efficiency, by emphasising problem-solving through inquiry. This approach ensures a well-rounded and thorough analysis (Kaushik and Walsh, 2019).

- **3.2.2 Positivism in Quantitative Research**

Positivism in quantitative research emphasises the acquisition of objective, numerical data via surveys. This philosophy posits that reality is quantifiable and can be comprehended through empirical evidence. Structured surveys enable researchers to collect unbiased, replicable data, facilitating the detection of trends, correlations, and generalisable conclusions. Positivism underscores the need of scientific rigour, allowing researchers to get dependable results regarding employee engagement and productivity in mixed work settings (Godfrey and Hill, 1995).

- **3.2.3 Interpretivism in Qualitative Research**

Interpretation in qualitative studies prioritises the comprehension of subjective experiences and individual insights via comprehensive interviews. This methodology recognises how reality is socially produced and influenced by human viewpoints. Interpretivism enables researchers to acquire profound insights into intricate matters, such as staff participation and freedom in hybrid work environments, by examining participants' ideas, emotions, and experiences. It emphasises

the intricate, context-dependent characteristics of human behaviour, enhancing the analysis beyond quantitative data (Dickson-Swift et al., 2007).

- **3.2.4 Rationale for Pragmatic Approach**

Pragmatism is particularly effective for examining the effects of hybrid work on employee engagement and productivity, as it emphasises real results and problem-solving. Incorporating qualitative as well as quantitative techniques enables researchers to tackle complicated, real-world situations from several angles. Pragmatism offers the adaptability to investigate quantifiable trends and personal experiences, yielding a thorough and practical comprehension of the impact of hybrid work on various employee behaviours and workplace dynamics (Gillespie and Glăveanu, 2024).

### **3.3 Data Collection Methods**

- **3.3.1 Quantitative Data Collection (Surveys)**

The collecting of quantitative data via surveys entails the creation of organised questions to obtain measurable insights into employee engagement and productivity in hybrid work settings. The survey may include proven instruments, such as the Utrecht Scale for Work Engagement (UWES), to evaluate engagement and particular productivity measures to measure work performance. The poll additionally assesses characteristics like autonomy, competence, and relatedness, encapsulating essential elements of the employee experience. Digital systems, such as Google Forms or SurveyMonkey, facilitate the effective dissemination of surveys to a diverse array of personnel operating in remote, hybrid, and on-site contexts. This guarantees a varied and representative sampling (Bakker and Leiter, 2017).

A pre-testing or pilot research is undertaken to improve survey quality by assessing the simplicity, legitimacy, and dependability of the questions. This process facilitates the identification of potential flaws, guaranteeing that the final questionnaire is meticulously constructed and capable of yielding precise, useful data. By utilising these tactics, researchers can efficiently gather substantial quantitative data regarding the influence of mixed work on employee engagement and productivity (Bryman, 2012).

- **3.3.2 Qualitative Data Collection (In-depth Interviews)**

Qualitative collection of information via in-depth interviews use a semi-structured framework using open-ended questions to investigate the experiences of employees with hybrid employment. This approach enables participants to convey comprehensive perspectives on critical subjects, including problems encountered, work-life equilibrium, perceptions of involvement, and the impact of hybrid work on their productivity. The semi-structured methodology provides flexibility, enabling interviewers to explore particular topics more thoroughly while preserving uniformity between interviews (King and Horrocks, 2010). The interview protocol delineates the methodology for conducting interviews, either over Zoom or in-person, contingent upon volunteer availability and preference. Interviews generally last 30 to 60 minutes, allowing ample time for substantive dialogue. Participants are chosen according to their expertise with hybrid work, guaranteeing a pertinent sample to obtain insights into this particular working approach.

Collecting and transcribing are essential components for data precision. Interviews are recorded with participant agreement using dependable techniques to guarantee that no detail is overlooked. Subsequently, recordings are transcribed, producing written records for

comprehensive qualitative analysis. This process guarantees the precise collection of all viewpoints, facilitating a comprehensive examination of themes and patterns about the influence of hybrid work on employee engagement and productivity (Creswell and Poth, 2016).

- **3.3.3 Justification for Data Collection Methods**

The utilisation of surveys and interviews in data collecting is warranted by the necessity to get both measurable data and comprehensive personal perspectives. Surveys are optimal for collecting quantifiable data on employee engagement, productivity, and other essential aspects from a broad and varied sample. Surveys utilise verified scales and structured enquiries to furnish statistical proof, enabling researchers to discern patterns, associations, and trends about the impact of hybrid work on employee outcomes. This statistical information is crucial for comprehending the extensive effects of hybrid work (Creswell and Clark, 2017).

Conversely, in-depth interviews provide a comprehensive examination of personal experiences, providing insights into the intricacies and subtleties of employee perceptions of hybrid work. Interviews elucidate individual viewpoints on autonomy, engagement, and the particular obstacles encountered by employees, which surveys alone may not comprehensively disclose. This approach guarantees that the internal and external dimensions of the mixed work experience are adequately acknowledged. By integrating these methodologies, researchers can attain a more thorough examination. Surveys deliver extensive coverage and statistical validity, whereas interviews furnish depth, context, and a more profound comprehension of the actual circumstances underlying the data, resulting in more significant conclusions (Brennan, 2005).

### **3.4 Sampling Strategy**

- **3.4.1 Sampling for Quantitative Study (Surveys)**

The quantitative survey employs a random sampling technique to guarantee representativeness across various industries, job positions, and work environments (remote, hybrid, on-site). This method reduces selection bias and improves the generalisability of the results. The number of respondents is established using the power of statistical analysis, guaranteeing the study have adequate ability to identify significant associations. A sample size of 150-300 individuals is often advised to facilitate precise statistical analysis and minimise the likelihood of Type I and Type II errors. This guarantees that the survey findings are dependable and relevant in diverse circumstances (Babbie, 2020).

- **3.4.2 Sampling for Qualitative Study (In-depth Interviews)**

In qualitative research, selective sampling is employed to pick individuals with varied blended work experiences, guaranteeing a spectrum of opinions. This approach targets individuals capable of offering comprehensive insights into essential themes including engagement, autonomy, and productivity. An optimal sample size of approximately 3-5 participants facilitates a comprehensive and nuanced examination of individual experiences while preserving analytical depth. This methodology allows the research to obtain detailed insights into the effects of hybrid work, while maintaining the relevance and significance of the findings for wider organisational contexts (Boddy, 2016).

- **3.4.3 Criteria for Participant Selection**

Participants in both surveys and interviews must possess at least a period of six months of expertise in a hybrid work environment to guarantee enough familiarity with the work paradigm. This period enables them to offer significant insights into the effects of hybrid work on their engagement, productivity, and overall job satisfaction. Supplementary criteria may encompass multiple job titles, industries, and degrees of responsibility to encompass a wide array of experiences and perspectives, so guaranteeing the data is relevant and represents wider workforce characteristics in hybrid work settings (Bethany Morgan Brett and Wheeler, 2021).

### **3.5 Data Analysis Techniques**

- **3.5.1 Quantitative Data Analysis (Surveys)**

The analysis of quantitative information for surveys generally employs software such as SPSS, Excel, or comparable tools to do statistical analysis. The descriptive statistics (mean, median, standard deviation) are employed to encapsulate and delineate the data, offering a synopsis of employee engagement, productivity, and additional characteristics (Field, 2018). Correlation analysis investigates the correlations among various factors, such as the correlation between engagement and production. Regression analysis is used to examine the predictive capacity of one or more independent factors (e.g., autonomy, work environment) on variables that are dependent (e.g., engagement, performance). These tools allow academics to extract insights from extensive datasets, guaranteeing strong, data-driven findings about the effects of their work (Pallant, 2020).

- **3.5.2 Qualitative Data Analysis (In-depth Interviews)**

The method of thematic analysis is utilised in qualitative data analysis to discern reoccurring themes associated with employee engagement, productivity, and autonomy in hybrid work environments. This approach is a systematic analysis of interview transcripts to identify patterns and insights. The coding process commences by allocating codes to text segments pertinent to particular themes or notions (Vanover, Mihas and Saldaña, 2022). Researchers may utilise software such as NVivo to facilitate the organisation and management of extensive qualitative data, hence enhancing the efficiency and accuracy of analysis. Alternatively, manual coding may be employed for smaller datasets, facilitating a more tactile methodology. Thematic analysis reveals profound, contextual insights that quantitative data may overlook, offering a sophisticated comprehension of employee experiences (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

- **3.5.3 Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings**

The combination of quantitative (surveys) and qualitative (interviews) data provides a comprehensive insight into the effects of hybrid work on employee engagement and productivity. Quantitative data offers measurable insights, revealing trends and correlations among a large sample, but qualitative data enriches understanding by examining individual encounters and contextual subtleties (Lund, 2011). The data are synthesised via a triangulation process, wherein findings from both approaches are compared to corroborate essential themes. This mixed-methods approach guarantees that statistical trends from the surveys are enhanced by the detailed insights from interviews, facilitating a more thorough study. By integrating both methodologies, researchers can elucidate the overarching effects and personal experiences of hybrid employment on employee outcomes (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2018).

### **3.6 Ethical Considerations**

- **3.6.1 Informed Consent**

Informed consent will be secured from volunteers (both questionnaire and interview) by a comprehensive elucidation of the research's objective, aims, and methodologies. Participants will be apprised of their privileges, including their own consent, the opportunity to withdraw at any moment, and the confidentiality of their responses. Consent forms, provided in digital or physical formats, will delineate these particulars and request express consent prior to participation. This guarantees ethical adherence and transparency, conforming to protocols for research involving human participants (Wiles, 2013).

- **3.6.2 Anonymity and Confidentiality**

To guarantee participant privacy and secrecy all personal information will be eliminated or anonymised prior to data analysis. Responses from participants will be assigned unique identifiers, eliminating any direct association with identifiable information. Data shall be securely stored with encrypted digital retrieval systems, with access limited to authorised personnel exclusively. Agreements on confidentiality will be established to safeguard personal information during the research process. These methods conform to ethical standards to protect participants' privacy and ensure data security (British Psychological Society, 2021).

- **3.6.3 Voluntary Participation**

Participants will be explicitly informed that their participation in the study is entirely up to them and that they possess the right to leave at any moment without incurring any costs or penalties. This information will be included in the request for consent and reaffirmed throughout the data

collection process. Participants will be guaranteed that their choice to withdraw will not impact their relationship with the researcher or any affiliated institutions, thereby upholding an ethical framework throughout the study.

- **3.6.4 Ethical Approval**

Ethical approval for the research will be secured from the appropriate university ethics committee upon submission of a comprehensive Ethical Approval Form. This document delineates the study's objectives, methods, and ethical considerations, encompassing informed consent, confidentiality, and data security. Data collection may commence solely following the committee's evaluation and approval, thereby guaranteeing compliance with established ethical principles and standards for safeguarding participants' rights and well-being during the study (Bryman, 2021).

### **3.7 Limitations of the Methodology**

- **3.7.1 Limitations of Quantitative Methods**

Quantitative procedures, especially surveys, are prone to self-report bias, as respondents may offer socially acceptable responses or misinterpret enquiries. Moreover, obtaining a representative sample might be difficult, particularly with online distribution methods, which may distort results. Surveys provide limited depth, as they fail to capture the subtleties and nuanced nature of people's experiences that qualitative methods can reveal (Fowler, 2013).

- **3.7.2 Limitations of Qualitative Methods**

Qualitative interviews are constrained by interpretative subjectivity, as replies may be swayed by the personal biases of both participants and researchers. The limited sample size commonly employed in qualitative research may lack representativeness, hence rendering findings less applicable to broader populations. Moreover, the enormous amount of data gathered might render analysis and comparison among many participants both time-consuming and complex (Silverman, 2020).

- **3.7.3 Generalizability of Findings**

The generalisability of the findings may be constrained, as the study's results might be more relevant to particular industries, job functions, or organisational settings where hybrid employment is common. Elements such as organisational size, culture, and job characteristics may influence the applicability of conclusions to various sectors. This indicates that the insights derived from the information may not be entirely applicable to industries with dissimilar labour structures or surroundings (Yin, 2018).

## **Chapter 4: Findings**

### **4.1 Overview of Data Collected**

This study utilised a mixed-methods approach to investigate the impact of hybrid work on employee engagement, motivation, productivity, work-life balance, and accountability. The two principal data sources comprised a survey administered to 85 participants and semi-structured interviews with three employees from various organisations.

The poll included scaled questions (from 1 to 5) and open-ended questions to facilitate both quantitative analysis and qualitative insights into employees' experiences with hybrid work. The scaled questions offered insights into employees' overall contentment, motivation, and productivity, while the open-ended questions enabled employees to expound on the specific challenges and opportunities associated with hybrid work.

Alongside the survey, three comprehensive interviews were performed to collect qualitative data. The interviews aimed to explore the intricate, personal experiences of employees across diverse professions, offering a thorough knowledge of the impact of hybrid work on multiple aspects of job performance and well-being. The three participants were a Senior Software Engineer, a Team Leader, and a Project Manager. Each provided distinct viewpoints influenced by their roles and the particular issues encountered in their hybrid work environments.

According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2018) the integration of these two data sets—survey responses and interview transcripts—offers a comprehensive perspective on the impacts of the hybrid work paradigm across various industries and job functions. The survey data provided

general insights, but the interview data furnished more specific examples of daily experiences in hybrid work .

This chapter will examine the principal themes derived from the data, concentrating on employee engagement, motivation, productivity, work-life balance, and accountability. The findings will be examined via the framework of Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which emphasises the significance of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in enhancing employee motivation and well-being as mentioned by Ryan and Deci (2017).

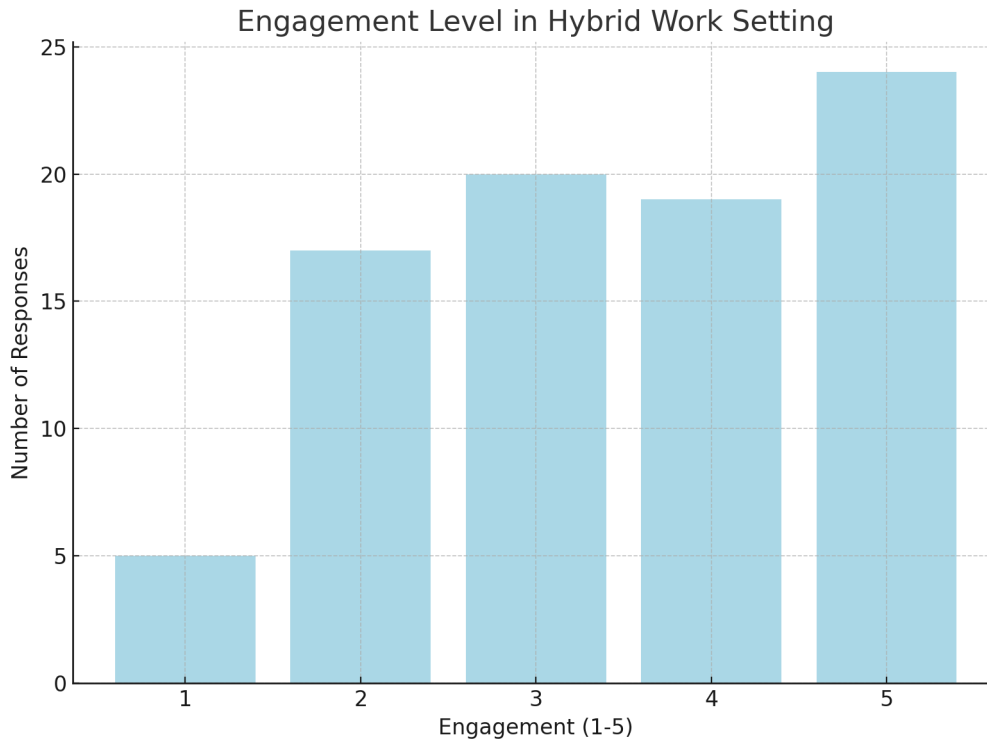
## **4.2 Analysis of Key Themes and Patterns**

This section provides an examination of the principal commonalities and trends that appeared from the data. It utilises both quantitative survey responses and qualitative interview data to offer a thorough understanding of the effects of hybrid employment on employees. The analysis is structured around the principal topics: engagement, motivation, productivity, work-life balance, and accountability.

### **4.2.1 Engagement in Hybrid Work**

#### **Survey Findings:**

The survey data indicated that the majority of respondents assessed their engagement in a hybrid work style as between 4 and 5 on a scale of 1 to 5. This indicates that, in general, mixed work fosters moderate to high levels of involvement. Employees emphasised the advantages of customising their work surroundings to suit their own tastes, which facilitated sustained focus and engagement during work hours.



A minority of respondents assigned lower engagement ratings (scores of 2 or 3). These people often reported feelings of isolation and alienation from the larger team as significant factors influencing their involvement. The adaptability of hybrid work, although predominantly regarded as beneficial, may result in a deficiency of informal relationships commonly found in a traditional office environment. These impromptu discussions are often essential for cultivating a sense of belonging and promoting cooperation among team members (Blount and Gloet, 2017).

The survey's open-ended responses provided further complexity to these conclusions. Numerous employees indicated that although they valued the opportunity to concentrate on solitary duties at home, they lamented the absence of spontaneous encounters that typically transpire in the office environment. These informal chats frequently facilitate the generation of innovative ideas, expedite problem-solving, and enhance awareness of overarching organisational developments

(Whitter, 2019). In a hybrid paradigm, such contacts occur less frequently, perhaps resulting in feelings of disengagement, particularly on faraway days.

### **Interview Insights:**

The interview results corroborated the themes that surfaced from the survey. Employee 1, a Senior Software Engineer, indicated that they were significantly engaged while performing concentrated tasks at home, however their engagement diminished during remote collaborative assignments. They highlighted that the absence of spontaneous in-person contacts hindered rapid alignment with colleagues, hence diminishing their overall sense of connectedness to the team.

Employee 2, the Team Leader, expressed analogous worries. Team members who frequently worked remotely reported lower levels of engagement compared to those who were consistently present in the office. Employee 2 stated that sustaining engagement was more manageable through direct communication and on-site collaboration. Despite utilising digital communication platforms such as Slack and Zoom, they encountered difficulties in replicating the sense of community and sense of belonging inherent in a physical setting.

To address this, Employee 2 instituted virtual team-building events and promoted increased frequency of check-ins with remote colleagues. Nonetheless, they acknowledged that these initiatives were only partially effective in closing the engagement gap between on-site and remote employees. Employee 3, the Project Manager, had a comparable viewpoint, observing that distributed teams frequently encounter difficulties in sustaining the same degree of involvement as entirely on-site teams.

### **Summary:**

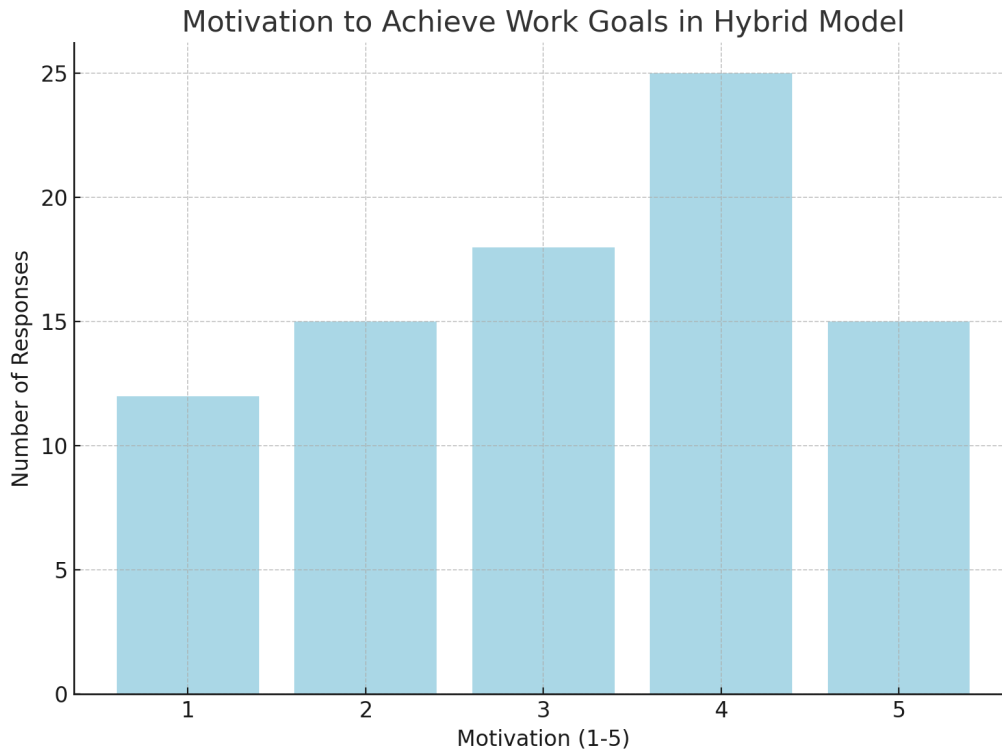
The findings indicate that although hybrid work offers considerable flexibility and fosters high

involvement among several people, it also presents issues in sustaining team cohesion and mitigating feelings of isolation. Employees who excel in collaborative settings and social interactions may have diminished engagement while working remotely. Organisations may need to invest in online communication techniques, including team-building activities, increased check-ins, and cultivating an inclusive culture that encompasses both on-site and remote employees.

#### **4.2.2 Motivation to Achieve Work Goals**

##### **Survey Findings:**

When enquired about their drive to attain work objectives in a hybrid model, the majority of respondents assessed their motivation levels as 4 or 5. The flexibility provided by hybrid employment was often identified as a crucial element in sustaining or even improving motivation. Employees indicated that the capacity to regulate their work environment and timetable enhanced their productivity and sustained their motivation (Gajendran and Harrison, 2007). Numerous respondents indicated that they could operate during their peak productivity periods or modify their schedules to meet personal obligations, resulting in enhanced autonomy and professional satisfaction.



The open-ended responses indicated that the removal of transportation and office interruptions considerably enhanced employee motivation. Numerous respondents indicated that they could concentrate more successfully on their responsibilities while working from home, as they were not subjected to continuous interruptions from coworkers or the overall office environment. This heightened sense of autonomy in their workplace resulted in elevated motivation and satisfaction levels (Kossek, Thompson and Lautsch, 2015).

Nonetheless, not all employees reaped these advantages. A minority of respondents assessed their motivation as diminished, attributing this to obstacles including communication delays and insufficient immediate feedback from management. These issues hindered certain employees' ability to remain aligned with their job objectives, especially for tasks necessitating teamwork or collective contribution.

**Interview Insights:**

The interview data offered additional insights on the significance of motivation in mixed work. Employee 3, the Project Manager, stated that the hybrid model has enhanced their motivation by providing improved autonomy over their time and task. They successfully arranged concentrated work sessions remotely, enabling them to accomplish intricate jobs with greater efficiency. Nonetheless, they observed that their motivation was occasionally impeded by the absence of prompt feedback from peers and supervisors. The communication delay hindered motivation for tasks necessitating team cooperation or collaborative problem-solving.

The Team Leader, Employee 2, reported observing differing levels of motivation among team members. Certain employees excelled in the hybrid model, especially those who favoured more autonomous work settings. These individuals had heightened motivation due to increased autonomy over their work schedules and the option to organise their days according to their preferences. Nonetheless, several team members, especially those who favoured more rigid direction, experienced difficulties with motivation in a hybrid environment. To resolve this, Employee 2 instituted more regular one-on-one meetings and urged colleagues to establish explicit goals, thereby sustaining motivation throughout the team.

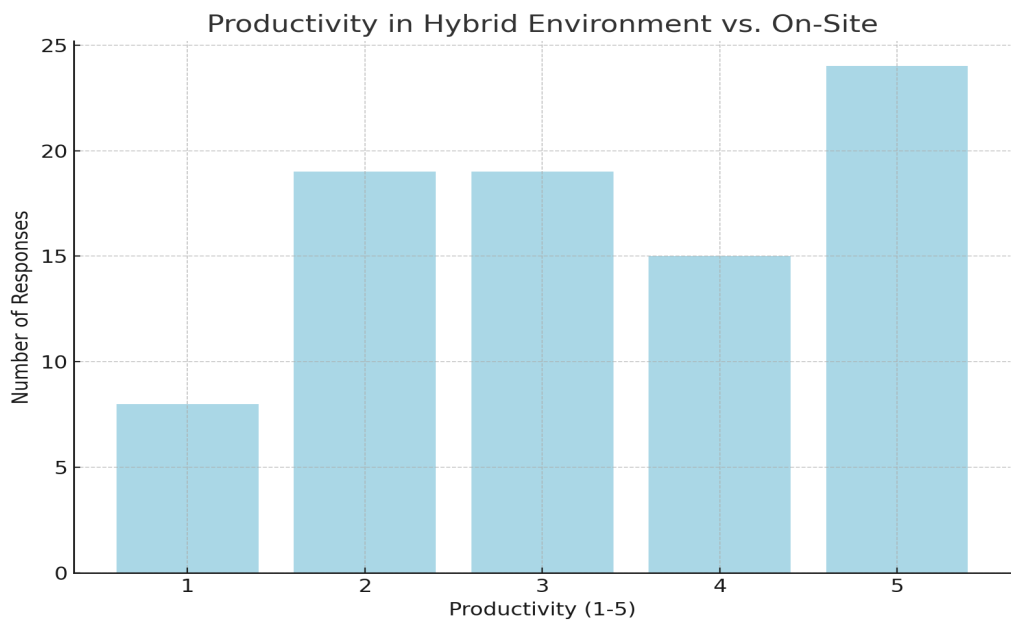
**Summary:**

The hybrid work approach enhances motivation by providing employees with increased autonomy and flexibility. The capacity to regulate their schedules, work settings, and optimal productivity periods markedly boosts motivation for the majority of employees. Nonetheless, the evidence indicates that motivation may be influenced by communication delays and an absence of real-time feedback, especially for collaborative tasks. To maintain motivation in hybrid

settings, organisations should establish more structured communication procedures and deliver prompt feedback to distant staff.

**4.2.3 Productivity in Hybrid Work vs. On-Site**

Survey Results: Numerous participants indicated that remote work enabled them to mitigate distractions often encountered in the workplace, including frequent interruptions from coworkers and impromptu meetings. The capacity to maintain prolonged focus without disruption was particularly advantageous for activities necessitating prolonged focus, such as data processing, report writing, or engagement in intricate projects. Respondents assessed their efficiency in such jobs as markedly higher while working remotely, with numerous values of 4 or 5 .



Nevertheless, certain respondents saw their productivity as diminished in a hybrid paradigm, especially regarding collaborative work. These employees observed that collaboration frequently proved more challenging in a hybrid work setting due to communication issues and the absence

of in-person connection. Participants who assigned lower productivity ratings (scores of 2 or 3) often mentioned difficulties in collaborating with colleagues, arranging virtual meetings, and achieving consensus on project objectives. These difficulties were especially evident in initiatives necessitating continuous collaboration among numerous team members.

Insights from the Interview: The people interviewed corroborated these findings.

Employee 1, a Senior Software Engineer, articulated that remote work facilitated enhanced concentration on cognitively demanding tasks, including coding and system design. They observed that remote work offered reduced distractions and enhanced opportunities to achieve a flow state, hence markedly increasing their output. Nonetheless, in the context of projects in cooperation, Employee 1 discovered that distant work impeded swift alignment with colleagues on critical decisions. In the office, approaching a colleague's desk for a brief inquiry or collaborative problem-solving was more straightforward, whereas in a remote environment, such contacts became more deliberate and more challenging to begin.

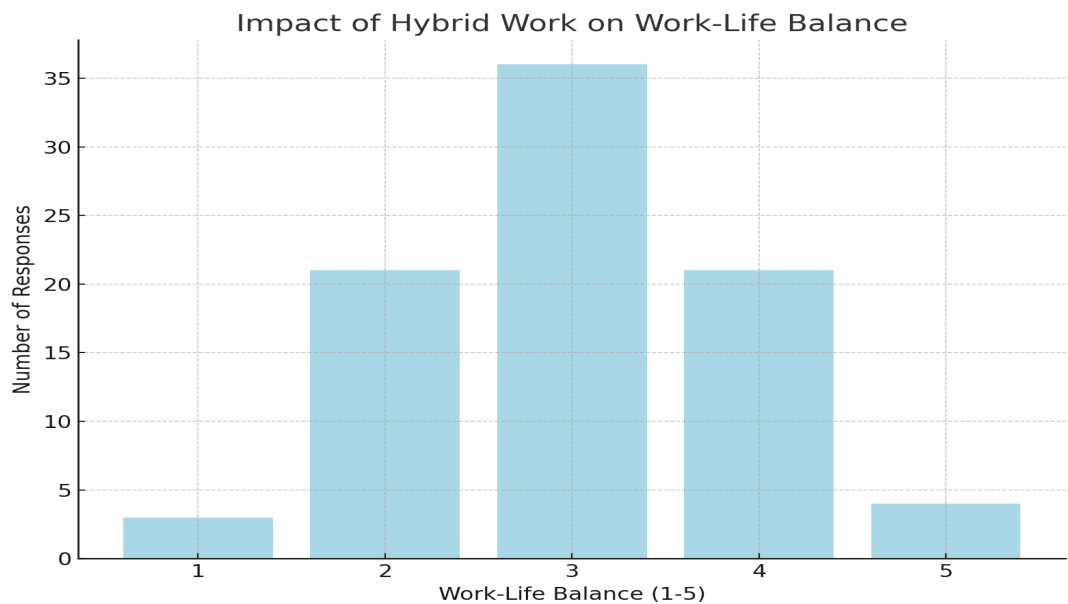
Employee 3, the Project Manager, underscored the significance of face-to-face interaction for specific duties. Although they deemed remote work beneficial for project planning and documentation, they observed that team meetings and problem-solving talks were frequently more effective when held in person. The hybrid paradigm complicated the coordination of meeting schedules, and the absence of non-verbal indicators in virtual meetings occasionally resulted in miscommunication or delays in decision-making (DuFrene and Lehman, 2015).

The hybrid work style typically enhances individual productivity, especially for jobs necessitating concentrated focus and autonomous effort. Nonetheless, the approach poses considerable difficulties for collaborative work that depend on real-time communication and

face-to-face engagement. Although remote work may enhance productivity for individual contributors, the absence of spontaneous cooperation and communication delays might impede productivity in team-oriented initiatives. Organisations may need to create more efficient communication tools and scheduling policies to enhance interaction in hybrid work environments.

#### 4.2.4 Work-Life Balance

**Survey Findings:** The survey data revealed that the hybrid work paradigm positively influenced work-life balance for most those surveyed, with the majority evaluating this part of their work experience as a 4 or 5. Employees consistently said that the option to work remotely facilitated improved management of their personal and professional obligations. The cessation of daily commutes liberated considerable time for many, which they might dedicate to family, personal interests, or relaxation. Numerous respondents indicated that they experienced reduced stress and enhanced control over their daily routines while working from home.



Participants who assigned lower ratings to their work-life balance (scores of 2 or 3) frequently identified the difficulties of delineating work from personal life as a significant issue. The indistinct borders between work and home hindered these employees' ability to completely disengage from their professional obligations (M, Alagarsamy and Mehroliya, 2021). Some individuals reported extended working hours while telecommuting due to the absence of definitive cues signalling the conclusion of the day of employment, such as departing from the workplace.

**Interview Insights:** The interview data augmented the survey findings with further depth. Employee 1, the Senior Software Engineer, indicated that the hybrid work paradigm has markedly enhanced their work-life balance. They valued the opportunity to circumvent a lengthy daily commute and to take intermittent breaks, which enhanced their refreshment and concentration during work hours. They noted that truly disengaging from work at the end of the day may be challenging, particularly when their residence had transformed into their principal workstation. To mitigate this, they established explicit guidelines, such as refraining from checking emails after a certain evening hour, to preserve a distinct boundary between professional and personal life.

Employee 3, the Project Manager, conveyed a comparable sentiment, observing that although the hybrid approach provided increased flexibility, it also complicated the enforcement of limits. As a manager handling many projects, they frequently felt compelled to remain accessible to their team, even beyond conventional working hours. The indistinct barrier between professional and personal life occasionally resulted in extended working hours and a perpetual sense of being "on." Employee 3 indicated that they had begun to establish stricter boundaries, including

allocating specific hours for work and personal time, yet acknowledged that this continued to be a persistent challenge.

The Team Leader, Employee 2, noted considerable disparities in work-life balance among team members. Certain employees, especially those with young children, perceived the hybrid model as a substantial enhancement, facilitating improved management of childcare duties and familial obligations. Nonetheless, several individuals struggled to uphold boundaries between professional and personal time, especially during prolonged durations of remote work.

Summary: The hybrid work model provides significant advantages for work-life balance, especially regarding flexibility and the elimination of lengthy commutes. Nonetheless, it also poses challenges concerning the indistinction between professional and personal life. Employees who require distinct boundaries between their professional and personal obligations may find it challenging to achieve equilibrium in a hybrid model, particularly when telecommuting. Organisations should offer advice on establishing boundaries and promote work-life separation to mitigate burnout among employees (Ellen Ernst Kossek and Lautsch, 2008).

#### **4.2.5 Accountability in Hybrid Work**

**Survey Findings:** The poll enquired if respondents perceived accountability for their job outcomes in a hybrid paradigm and identified the factors influencing their sense of responsibility. The majority of participants expressed a sense of accountability, primarily attributed to the utilisation of digital tools that facilitated the monitoring of their progress and deliverables. Project management platforms such as Trello and Asana were regularly identified as tools that helped staff remain on top of their duties and retain accountability, even when working remotely (Lencioni, 2002).

However, other respondents voiced worries about the absence of real-time monitoring and delays in feedback, which sometimes made it tougher to gauge whether they were fulfilling expectations. Several employees indicated that they missed the rapid feedback that comes from working in close vicinity to their bosses and coworkers, and that the slower pace of communication in a remote situation often made them feel less accountable for their job.

**Interview Insights:** The interview data corroborated these worries. The Team Leader, Employee 2, underscored the significance of regular check-ins and task management tools to uphold accountability within the team. They instituted daily stand-up discussions and utilised technologies such as Trello to guarantee that all individuals were synchronised about their tasks and commitments. Employee 2 recognised that the absence of in-person oversight complicated the task of ensuring that all colleagues remained focused (Anderson, 2010). To rectify this, they implemented more systematic accountability procedures, including establishing explicit objectives for each team member and doing regular follow-ups to monitor progress.

Employee 1, the Senior Software Engineer, expressed that although they felt responsible for their own tasks, the hybrid model occasionally hindered their ability to ascertain if they were fulfilling their manager's expectations. They saw that increased input from their supervisor would enhance their confidence in performance and offer greater clarity regarding their alignment with expectations.

**Summary:** Hybrid work fosters accountability via digital tools and organised check-ins; however, the absence of real-time feedback may hinder some employees' sense of responsibility for their tasks. Managers should consider instituting more frequent feedback mechanisms and establishing clear expectations for remote employees. Furthermore, employing digital tracking

tools like Trello and Asana can enhance accountability by offering transparency regarding work progress and completion.

### **4.3 Application of SDT to the Findings**

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) underscores three fundamental psychological demands essential for enhancing commitment and well-being: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. The results from the survey and interviews provide a valuable perspective for applying Self-Determination Theory, illustrating how hybrid employment fulfils or undermines these psychological demands.

#### **4.3.1 Autonomy**

Employee 3, the Project Manager, indicated that the capacity to control their time and organise concentrated work sessions from home significantly enhanced their efficiency. This regulation of work schedules and settings distinctly illustrates how hybrid work promotes autonomy, enabling individuals to synchronise their professional duties with personal preferences and commitments. Employee 1 indicated that the hybrid approach provided the flexibility to concentrate on intricate coding assignments without the distractions typical of a conventional office environment.

The survey results corroborate these conclusions, as numerous respondents emphasised the advantages of customising their work surroundings to align with their tasks. Regardless of whether employees operated in the office or remotely, they perceived an increased autonomy in managing their tasks, which favourably impacted their enthusiasm and drive.

**Alignment with SDT:** The hybrid model's adaptability directly reinforces the SDT principle of autonomy by enabling employees to manage their work procedures, schedules, and settings. This therefore augments their motivation and general job happiness.

#### **4.3.2 Competence**

The SDT concept of competence pertains to an individual's necessity to perceive themselves as capable and efficient in attaining their objectives. In the realm of hybrid work, employees typically expressed a sense of competence, especially when provided with explicit deliverables and the requisite instruments for success. Nonetheless, certain obstacles arose, particularly concerning feedback chains and collaborative work.

Survey participants who provided lower scores for efficiency or engagement frequently identified delays in responses as an impediment to their sense of competence. In the absence of instant oversight or real-time feedback, certain employees found it challenging to assess whether they were fulfilling expectations or producing work of the requisite quality. This issue was most obvious for individuals who predominantly worked remotely, resulting in infrequent personal interactions with managers and colleagues.

#### **Interview Insights:**

Employee 2, the Team Leader, indicated that although their team felt proficient in handling individual duties, they occasionally had difficulties with collaborative endeavours under the hybrid model. The absence of in-person meetings necessitated that team members depend on virtual platforms, which were occasionally ineffective for real-time cooperation. Employee 1 reiterated this concern, observing that remote collaboration on group projects diminished feelings

of competence due to frequent connection delays and misalignments that adversely affected overall team performance.

**Conformity with Self-Determination Theory:** Although hybrid work enhances proficiency in individual activities, it may impede emotions of competence in collaborative endeavours. The absence of prompt feedback and difficulties in real-time communication might hinder employees' sense of competence in their tasks, particularly in distant work settings. Organisations should enhance communication channels and offer more frequent feedback to help employees feel competent and encouraged in their roles.

#### **4.3.3 Relatedness**

The necessity for connection, or the aspiration to establish connections with others, is a fundamental tenet of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) that poses significant challenges in a hybrid work setting. Both the survey and interview data indicated that numerous employees experienced isolation on remote workdays, particularly those who dedicated a substantial amount of time to working from home. Although digital platforms like as Slack and Zoom facilitated communication, they were often inadequate in fostering a robust feeling of unity among teams and connection.

#### **Survey Findings:**

Numerous respondents who provided a lower score for involvement or work-life balance indicated that they lamented the absence of informal connections that occur organically in an office environment. Spontaneous dialogues and informal check-ins are essential for fostering relationships and sustaining a sense of community within a team. In a hybrid model, these

contacts occur less frequently, causing certain staff members to feel alienated from their peers and the overarching organisational culture.

### **Interview Insights:**

Employee 1, the Senior Software Engineer, expressed that although they appreciated the concentration facilitated by remote work, they yearned for the social interactions inherent in an office environment. They indicated that establishing and sustaining relationships with colleagues when working remotely was more challenging, as virtual meetings typically concentrated only on work-related subjects and lacked the informal, personal interactions that take place in person.

Employee 2, the Team Leader, observed that team dynamics had altered since the shift to hybrid work. Certain team members, especially those who frequently worked remotely, indicated a diminished sense of connection to the team and voiced apprehensions about being marginalised in decision-making processes. In response, Employee 2 instituted virtual team-building exercises and promoted increased one-on-one consultations with distant staff. Nonetheless, they recognised that these initiatives were insufficient to entirely mimic the camaraderie of face-to-face collaboration.

The hybrid approach fails to adequately fulfil the desire for relatedness, as distant work may result in feelings of isolation and detachment from the team. Although digital communication tools facilitate fundamental connectivity, they frequently fail to cultivate the profound social connections established through in-person interactions. Organisations must invest in deliberate team-building initiatives to ensure that all employees, irrespective of their location, feel included and linked to the larger team.

#### 4.4 Summary of Key Findings

1. This research reveals the intricate dynamics of hybrid work and its effects on employee engagement, motivation, productivity, work-life balance, and accountability. The hybrid model provides considerable advantages, especially regarding flexibility and autonomy, although it also introduces several problems that organisations must confront to enhance its efficacy.
2. Hybrid work typically fosters elevated engagement, particularly among individuals that prioritise flexibility and autonomy. Nonetheless, issues about cohesiveness in the team and social connection arise, especially for individuals who predominantly work remotely. Organisations should prioritise cultivating a sense of being a member by implementing virtual collaboration exercises and deliberate communication tactics to sustain engagement (Stein, 2022).
3. The adaptability of hybrid work significantly enhances motivation by enabling employees to manage their schedules and work settings. Nonetheless, delays in feedback and the difficulties of remote collaboration may impede motivation for certain personnel. Organisations must prioritise regular check-ins and establish clear expectations for remote employees to sustain elevated motivation levels.
4. Hybrid labour improves individual productivity, especially for activities necessitating intense focus and solitary effort. Nonetheless, collaborative work are more arduous in a hybrid paradigm owing to communication delays and the absence of face-to-face engagement. Organisations should invest in enhanced communication tools and systematic cooperation practices to augment team productivity.

5. The hybrid model significantly enhances work-life balance, enabling people to more effectively manage both their professional and personal responsibilities. The indistinct separation between professional and personal life may result in excessive labour and exhaustion if not meticulously regulated. Organisations ought to promote the establishment of explicit work-life boundaries and provide assistance to employees who find it challenging to disengage from work in reference to (Harvard Business Review, 2024).
6. Accountability: Although hybrid work enhances accountability via digital tools and organised check-ins, the absence of real-time oversight may hinder certain employees from feeling entirely responsible for their tasks. Organisations must establish explicit norms and offer regular feedback to guarantee that employees perceive accountability and support, irrespective of their work environment.

## **Chapter 5: Discussion**

### **• 5.1 Interpretation of Findings**

This study's findings offer a comprehensive insight into the impact of hybrid work on several aspects of employee achievement and general well-being. The data obtained via surveys and interviews provides significant insights into the effects of hybrid work on engagement, motivation, productivity, work-life balance, and responsibility. This section analyses these findings in relation to the literature review and the study's research questions.

#### **Engagement in Hybrid Work**

The survey results indicated that the majority of employees ranked their level of involvement as 4 or 5 in a hybrid work environment, affirming that flexibility plays a crucial role in sustaining high engagement levels. This discovery corresponds with recent literature highlighting the significance of independence in the workplace in improving engagement. Employees who can customise their work settings, either at home or in the office, are more likely to maintain focus and engagement. This corroborates Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which posits that autonomy is a fundamental catalyst for motivation and engagement (Ryan and Deci, 2017).

The survey results, indicating that most employees ranked their involvement levels as 4 or 5, align with the interview findings. Interview participants indicated that the flexibility afforded by hybrid employment favourably impacted their involvement. Both the survey and interviews indicated that autonomy, enabled by hybrid work models, permitted employees to organise their responsibilities and schedules in a manner that improved their focus and dedication. Both data sets underscored the difficulty of isolation, as a deficiency in spontaneous social encounters led

to diminished engagement among certain employees. This consistency highlights the contradictory effect of hybrid work on engagement: autonomy enhances involvement, yet the absence of informal office interactions is a difficulty.

A minority of participants, especially those experiencing isolation or disconnection from their colleagues, reported diminished engagement levels, reflecting findings that the lack of informal, spontaneous contacts in remote work environments might reduce engagement. The hybrid model, while its flexibility, frequently diminishes the spontaneous social contacts characteristic of a conventional office setting—an element recognised as essential for cultivating a sense of connection and engagement.

The interviews corroborated this interpretation. Employee 1, a Senior Software Engineer, noted that although hybrid work facilitates focused tasks, the lack of immediate direct contact with colleagues for collaborative efforts diminished their interest (Marylene Gagne, 2014). This finding corroborates previous studies that highlighted the difficulties of sustaining robust participation in remote environments when cooperation is more formalised and less spontaneous.

### Motivation to Attain Work Objective

The research indicated that motivation remained elevated among the majority of respondents in the hybrid work paradigm, with employees often seeing flexibility as a fundamental component influencing their motivation. This conclusion aligns with extensions of Self-Determination Theory, which assert that autonomy—such as the ability to manage one’s schedule—enhances intrinsic motivation (Deci and Ryan, 2000). In this framework, employees are empowered to oversee their work, thereby sustaining a high degree of devotion to their responsibilities.

The survey results revealed that the majority of employees maintained motivation in hybrid work

environments because of the flexibility it provides, enabling them to manage their schedules. The interview findings corroborate that hybrid work increased participants' intrinsic motivation by providing them autonomy in their jobs. Both study sets indicated that delayed communication and feedback, especially during collaborative work, resulted in diminished motivation for certain individuals. This demonstrates a robust correlation between survey and interview results, indicating that although autonomy in hybrid work enhances motivation, delays in input impede it.

The interviews corroborated this finding. Employee 3, a Project Manager, indicated that hybrid work facilitated the organisation of concentrated work sessions at home, so augmenting their drive for intricate, long-term projects. This indicates that the ability to structure time and tasks according to individual preferences enhances motivation in knowledge-based positions. Nonetheless, the findings revealed that certain individuals saw a decline in motivation attributable to lags in interaction and input, especially during instances necessitating team collaboration. This issue aligns with research indicating that remote employees may experience motivational challenges when feedback is postponed, as it hinders their capacity to modify their work promptly (Pink, 2011).

### Efficiency in Hybrid Work Environments

The study emphasised a dual impact on productivity: individuals experienced increased productivity with specific duties at home but encountered difficulties with team-oriented activities in the hybrid model. The enhanced productivity for specific tasks corresponds with the evidence that minimising office distractions markedly improves performance on cognitively

intensive jobs. Participants in this study indicated analogous experiences, observing that the capacity to concentrate for prolonged durations at home enabled them to accomplish greater amounts of work in reference to Deloitte Insights, 2023.

Employee 2, a Team Leader, indicated that distant work impeded productivity in collaboration and teamwork owing to the absence of real-time, face-to-face contact. The challenge of duplicating the natural in-person problem-solving that transpires in an office might impede progress on joint initiatives. The open-ended survey responses validated this difficulty, as several employees indicated that although they had increased productivity with individual tasks, they lamented the absence of spontaneous brainstorming sessions and casual discussions that typically took place in the office (CLARKE, 2021).

Survey responses revealed that hybrid work improved efficiency for solo tasks but presented difficulties for collaborative activities, a conclusion that aligns with the interview data. Interview participants affirmed the survey's finding that the absence of in-person, informal problem-solving in a hybrid setting reduced productivity for collaborative work. Both data sets concurred that individuals exhibited heightened productivity in solitary tasks at home, although encountered challenges in participating in collaboration and collaborative endeavours remotely. This constancy underscores the dual nature of hybrid work's influence on productivity.

#### Equilibrium between Professional and Personal Life

The research indicated that hybrid work significantly enhanced work-life balance, as the majority of participants expressed increased happiness from the elimination of commutes and improved management of personal obligations. The inherent flexibility of remote work arrangements enables people to more effectively balance their professional and personal life.

The survey results indicated that hybrid work markedly enhanced individuals' work-life balance by removing commuting and facilitating improved management of personal obligations. This aligns with the interview findings, in which participants indicated that hybrid employment provided them greater freedom to balance their private and professional obligations. Both the surveys and interviews revealed a prevalent challenge: the struggle to disengage from work after hours, which obscures the distinction between life at work and at home. This alignment indicates that although hybrid work enhances flexibility, it may exacerbate the distinction between work and personal life if not meticulously controlled.

Nonetheless, the difficulty of preserving boundaries between professional and personal life became a notable issue for certain individuals. Employee 1 said that although hybrid employment provided increased flexibility, it also complicated the ability to disengage after work hours (CJPI Insights, 2024). Remote employees may encounter difficulties in establishing distinct boundaries between work hours and personal time, potentially resulting in heightened anxiety and exhaustion if inadequately addressed.

### Responsibility in Hybrid Employment

The findings revealed that employees predominantly upheld a sense of responsibility by utilising digital project management platforms such as Trello and Asana. These platforms assisted employees in remaining organised and cognisant of their duties, corroborating the assertion that technological devices are essential for sustaining responsibility in distant or hybrid settings. A minority of participants voiced apprehensions with the absence of real-time oversight and the latency of input, which occasionally resulted in ambiguity about their compliance with

expectations. Remote employees frequently have challenges with responsibility in the absence of prompt feedback from supervisors or peers (Jones, 2018).

The study results indicated that employees predominantly felt responsible in hybrid work environments, especially through the utilisation of digital tools such as Trello and Asana, which facilitated organisation and task tracking. The interview results confirmed this, with participants emphasising similar digital tools as crucial for sustaining a sense of accountability in remote work. Both surveys and interviews highlighted issues with insufficient immediate monitoring and delayed feedback, which occasionally resulted in ambiguity about expectations. This consistency highlights that although digital tools enhance accountability, the lack of instant input may induce ambiguity.

#### Final Assessment

The findings indicate that the hybrid work model provides considerable advantages regarding flexibility, autonomy, and enhanced work-life balance, while simultaneously posing issues concerning participation, cooperation, and responsibility. These findings corroborate and enhance current studies on hybrid work models, while also providing novel insights into the impact of hybrid work on many dimensions of worker satisfaction and performance. Although hybrid work fosters increased autonomy and enables employees to customise their schedules according to personal preferences, it necessitates that organisations confront the issues of interaction latencies and social isolation to optimise the advantages of this work paradigm.

- **5.2 Implications for Theory and Practice**

### **Implications for Theory: Self-Determination Theory (SDT)**

This study robustly endorses Self-Determination Theory (SDT), particularly the aspiration for autonomy, while simultaneously emphasising the difficulties in fulfilling connection and competence requirements in hybrid work environments. The autonomy in hybrid employment to manage schedules, responsibilities, and work environments aligns with the Self-Determination Theory's focus on self-direction. Employees experience an increased sense of autonomy in their work, enhancing intrinsic motivation (Ryan and Deci, 2022).

Meeting employees' need for connection is challenging under the hybrid model. The survey and interviews indicated that remote employees yearned for social interaction in the workplace. Digital communication platforms such as Zoom and Slack enhance connectivity; but, they cannot substitute for in-person team-building encounters. Social isolation diminishes employees' sense of belonging and engagement, particularly in collaborative settings. The necessity for skill differs in mixed settings. A considerable number of employees experienced enhanced competence while working remotely; yet, several encountered difficulties in sustaining such perception throughout collaborative efforts (Chafi, Hultberg, and Bozic Yams, 2021). Delays in remote communication and insufficient real-time feedback hindered employee effectiveness, particularly in collaborative endeavours.

In summary, hybrid work settings promote autonomy and job proficiency but face challenges in sustaining relatedness. Self-Determination Theory necessitates that organisations reconcile flexibility with connectivity and prompt feedback, particularly for distant employees, to address psychological needs.

## Practical Implications: Hybrid Work Policies and Strategies

This study indicates that organisations should create hybrid work rules that optimise autonomy and flexibility while tackling issues of engagement, team cohesiveness, and communication. The subsequent recommendations are based on the study's findings:

**Improving Social Connectivity and Participation:** Organisations ought to allocate resources towards virtual engagement initiatives and organised social contacts to mitigate feelings of isolation. Consistent check-ins, virtual team-building exercises, and designated in-person collaboration days can foster a sense of team coherence and belonging. It is essential to ensure that all team members, whether remote or on-site, are equally engaged in decision-making processes to sustain involvement (Havens, 2017).

**Reconciling Autonomy with Systematic Feedback:** Although hybrid work inherently affords autonomy, organisations must establish explicit feedback methods to ensure individuals stay aligned with corporate objectives. Consistent feedback, individual meetings, and systematic performance evaluations will ensure accountability while promoting the flexibility appreciated by employees. This guarantees that staff feel encouraged and assured in their tasks, even while working remotely (Betterworks, 2021).

This study concluded that autonomy enhances employee engagement and motivation, corroborating Self-Determination Theory. Interviewees and survey participants indicated that hybrid employment provided them with greater control over their daily activities, which enhanced their motivation and engagement. Organising work at optimal hours and from preferred locations enhanced employees' task completion. Self-Determination Theory underscores

autonomy since it enables individuals to regulate their behaviours, hence enhancing their own motivation (Ryan and Deci, 2017a).

The hybrid work model impacted SDT competency in several ways, as indicated by the study. Surveys indicated that remote workers perceived themselves as more competent due to reduced workplace interruptions, which enhanced their focus. Participants in the survey and interviews asserted that communication delays and insufficient prompt feedback during joint efforts diminished their competency. Pink (2011) also determined that prompt feedback sustains motivation and proficiency. Employees expressed dissatisfaction over delays in acquiring input without real-time participation, which impeded collaborative efforts.

Utilising Technology to Improve Competence: The research indicated that hybrid work may diminish ability in collaborative projects owing to communication delays. Organisations ought to utilise sophisticated communication platforms such as Trello, Asana, or Microsoft Teams to enable real-time collaboration. Providing training on the efficient use of these tools enables organisations to augment employees' sense of competence and facilitate more seamless management of projects, even in hybrid environments (Trello, 2022).

The third element of Self-Determination Theory, relatedness, poses challenges in mixed work environments. Survey and interview findings indicated that employees had difficulties in establishing connections with colleagues. Zoom and Slack facilitated team connectivity; nonetheless, they did not supplant office chatter. Havens (2017) noted that numerous employees experienced feelings of isolation stemming from insufficient informal, in-person encounters. Employee engagement declined due to this isolation, as interpersonal connections are crucial for job motivation and a sense of belonging.

Facilitating Work-Life Balance through Defined Boundaries: The flexibility of hybrid work can obscure the distinction between professional and personal life. Organisations should promote the establishment of explicit boundaries by employees to safeguard their work-life balance, including the specification of designated work hours and the restriction of after-hours communication. Equipping staff with resources for properly managing boundaries will mitigate burnout and promote long-term well-being (Miller, 2012).

Enhancing Accountability with Digital Instruments: Hybrid work necessitates innovative strategies for accountability. Organisations ought to adopt digital project management technologies that enable employees to monitor progress and consistently communicate updates to their managers. By cultivating a transparent work culture via these technologies, employees may uphold accountability while enjoying the freedom of hybrid employment (Stein, 2022).

- **5.3 Comparison with Previous Research**

This study's findings corroborate and enhance current studies in critical domains like engagement, motivation, productivity, work-life balance, and accountability, while also uncovering new issues in hybrid work, especially with team cohesiveness and collaboration.

#### Engagement and Connectivity

This study corroborates previous studies emphasising the significance of flexibility in enhancing engagement, as hybrid work enables employees to customise their work environments and schedules. The majority of employees indicated elevated engagement levels, corroborating the established correlation between autonomy and engagement. This research also uncovered the disadvantages of connection in hybrid models. In accordance with previous research, numerous

respondents reported feelings of loneliness while working remotely, lamenting the absence of informal, spontaneous contacts characteristic of an office setting. This indicates that although autonomy enhances engagement, insufficient social connections may adversely impact employees' sense of belonging (Tsipursky, 2024).

The results of this study concerning the beneficial impact of flexibility on engagement align with prior research by Ryan and Deci (2017a), which emphasised the significance of autonomy in boosting workplace engagement. This study further corroborates the assertion on the issues of social exclusion in hybrid models, highlighting that engagement may decline due to the absence of spontaneous social encounters. The dual characteristics of hybrid work—promoting involvement via autonomy while diminishing it through isolation—echo similar prior findings.

#### Incentive and Independence

This result correlates with research demonstrating a robust relationship between autonomy and motivation. Hybrid work improves individuals' capacity to regulate their schedules, promoting intrinsic motivation. Participants in this study appreciated the flexibility provided by hybrid work, corroborating previous research findings. Some respondents reported diminished motivation resulting from communication delays during remote collaborative projects, underscoring a concern that has been inadequately addressed in previous research. Prompt feedback and efficient communication are essential for sustaining motivation in mixed work environments.

The findings of this study concerning the significance of autonomy in fostering motivation correspond with Ryan and Deci's (2017a) research on Self-Determination Theory, which underscores autonomy as a pivotal element of intrinsic motivation. This research corroborates

Pink's (2011) assertions regarding the essential function of constructive criticism in maintaining motivation. Consistent with our findings, Pink emphasised that tardy criticism can diminish motivation, particularly in collaborative endeavours. The focus on autonomy in hybrid work reflects prior study findings; however, the difficulty of sustaining motivation in collaborative environments due to communication delays introduces further complexities to the discourse.

### Efficiency and Cooperation

The research corroborates earlier conclusions that remote work enhances productivity for individual assignments by allowing employees to circumvent workplace distractions. Nonetheless, it also disclosed that hybrid work impedes collaborative productivity. Challenges in real-time communication and the lack of impromptu problem-solving during virtual meetings diminished productivity in collaborative efforts. This discovery supports recent research highlighting the necessity for enhanced collaboration tools to promote distant teamwork in hybrid settings (Cacoveanu, 2024).

This study corroborates Clarke's (2021) findings, indicating that remote and hybrid work markedly enhanced individual productivity by minimising workplace distractions. Similarly to our research, Clarke too recognised the difficulties hybrid work poses for teamwork, especially in real-time collaboration. Both findings indicate that although hybrid work enhances individual productivity, it presents challenges for collaboration, necessitating more efficient communication methods and strategies. The dichotomy of these results improved productivity for solitary tasks while impeded collaboration aligns with prior studies.

### Equilibrium between Professional and Personal Life

The findings on work-life balance corroborate prior studies, affirming that hybrid employment enables individuals to more effectively manage personal and professional responsibilities. The removal of commuting and the capacity to tailor work hours enhanced work-life balance for numerous individuals. Nonetheless, as evidenced by previous research, the conflation of work and personal life continues to provide a considerable barrier, with certain employees indicating difficulty in completely disengaging from work while at home (Duarte et al., 2023).

The results of work-life balance correspond with the research conducted by CJPI Insights (2024), which emphasised that hybrid work improves the capacity to balance personal and professional obligations by removing commuting and providing flexible working hours. This study's findings on the difficulty of establishing barriers between jobs and private lives align with those of Duarte et al. (2023), who saw comparable challenges in hybrid work settings. The consistent findings underscore the paradoxical impact of hybrid work on work-life balance, wherein flexibility enhances balance, while indistinct boundaries may result in burnout if inadequately handled.

## Responsibility

This study corroborates previous research regarding the significance of digital tools in upholding accountability. Platforms like Trello and Asana have proven effective in assisting staff with progress tracking and organisation. Nonetheless, the study also highlighted apprehensions regarding the absence of real-time oversight, which may result in ambiguity concerning the fulfilment of expectations. This discovery highlights the necessity for regular feedback and explicit accountability frameworks in mixed work paradigms.

The conclusions of this study concerning transparency and the use of digital tools align with Jones (2018), who determined that platforms such as Trello and Asana are crucial for sustaining

a sense of accountability in remote work settings. Our findings corroborate Clarke's (2021) observations regarding the difficulties of sustaining accountability in the absence of real-time supervision, a prevalent challenge in hybrid work environments. Previous research substantiates the dependence on digital tools for task tracking; nonetheless, this study emphasises the necessity of continuous feedback to mitigate uncertainty regarding performance expectations.

- **5.4 Recommendations for Organizations**

This study's findings provide critical insights for organisations aiming to enhance the hybrid work paradigm. Although hybrid work offers distinct advantages, like enhanced flexibility and autonomy, significant problems regarding engagement, cooperation, and accountability must be resolved to guarantee the efficacy of this paradigm.

1. Promote Social Connectivity and Involvement

A primary problem associated with hybrid work is the deficiency of social interaction and the resultant sense of isolation experienced during distant work. Organisations ought to allocate resources for team-building initiatives and facilitate regular opportunities for unofficial interaction, even in remote work settings. Organising in-person team days, online coffee breaks, or social activities can sustain the sense of identity and participation typically fostered in an office environment (Worthington, 2006). Digital platforms such as Slack or Microsoft Teams can promote both formal and informal conversations, enhancing remote workers' sense of connection to the larger company.

2. Improve Communication and Feedback

The research underscores the need for immediate feedback and communication in sustaining employee engagement and accountability. Organisations must implement explicit communication channels and guarantee that supervisors consistently engage with distant personnel. Regularly scheduled one-on-one meetings, performance evaluations, and project updates are essential to ensure staff feel supported and aligned with organisational objectives. To mitigate feedback delays in hybrid systems, organisations should utilise technologies such as Asana or Trello to monitor progress and deliver prompt updates (Miroslavov, 2023).

### 3. Facilitate Collaboration through Technology

Successful cooperation in hybrid environments can be challenging in the absence of the spontaneous encounters typical in an office context. Organisations ought to invest in collaboration solutions that facilitate real-time cooperation between remote and on-site staff. Applications such as Zoom, Google Workspace, and Microsoft Teams enable efficient communication, and project management tools like Asana and Monday.com assist teams in maintaining organisation and monitoring work (University, 2024). Organisations must offer training on the proper use of these tools to help staff feel proficient in remote collaboration.

### 4. Promote Distinct Work-Life Boundaries

Although hybrid employment provides enhanced flexibility, it may obscure the distinctions between personal and professional life. Organisations must promote the establishment of explicit work-life boundaries among employees, including the delineation of certain working hours and the deactivation of alerts beyond those hours. Managers ought to exemplify respect for these boundaries by refraining from sending work-related communications after hours. Providing

mental health resources and advocating for flexible policies that emphasise employee well-being can enhance a good work-life balance (Kossek, 2016).

## 5. Uphold Accountability using Digital Instruments

Ensuring accountability in a hybrid work setting necessitates clear monitoring and consistent updates. Organisations ought to use digital project management technologies that enable employees to self-manage and report their progress. Managers must establish explicit performance metrics and execute regular evaluations to ensure staff are accountable for their tasks. By cultivating a culture of transparency and accountability, employees will maintain responsibility while benefiting from the flexibility of hybrid work.

### ● 5.5 Limitations and Future Research

#### Limitations of the Research

This study elucidates the impact of remote work on employee engagement, motivation, productivity, work-life balance, and accountability, although it presents certain limitations. Interviews were conducted with only three individuals from distinct organisations. The interviews produced profound qualitative insights; yet, the limited participant pool may restrict its relevance to other demographics or organisations.

The study was primarily based on personal survey and interview data. Social desirability bias, when individuals disclose their typical or socially acceptable experiences rather than their authentic ones, may influence self-reported data. Retrospective bias may also influence participants' recollections of diverse work environments. The research investigated the immediate impacts of hybrid work within a constrained time frame. Future research may uncover

varying impacts on employee satisfaction and organisational success as hybrid work develops, particularly in reaction to global disruptions such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### Recommendations for Subsequent Investigations

In light of these constraints, other study alternatives are proposed. Subsequent research should focus on a broader, more heterogeneous sample from various businesses and regions. An expanded participant pool would provide broader generalisations regarding the impact of mixed employment on employees across various sectors and countries.

Secondly, hybrid work warrants examination on its enduring impacts on employee engagement, motivation, and productivity. This study emphasises the immediate advantages and disadvantages of hybrid employment; nevertheless, longitudinal studies may uncover how employees' perceptions and performance evolve over time, particularly when organisations enhance their hybrid models. Subsequent research should investigate the impact of hybrid employment on age, gender, and organisational seniority. Comprehending the impact of hybrid work on various employee demographics may assist organisations in enhancing their hybrid work strategy.

## **Chapter 6: Recommendations and Conclusion**

### **Recommendations**

The study's findings, along with survey and interview data, provide significant recommendations for organisations to effectively navigate and optimise the hybrid work model. These recommendations pertain to employee engagement, productivity, communication, and work-life balance challenges.

1. Enhancing Social Engagement: Survey results and interviews indicate that mixed employment leads to isolation among certain individuals. Hybrid employment offers flexibility; yet, the absence of interpersonal interaction may lead to disengagement. Organisations can enhance social connectivity by conducting regular virtual team-building activities and face-to-face meetings. These may encompass professional and informal activities to assist staff in sustaining robust interpersonal relationships that foster motivation and engagement.

2. Structured Interaction and Feedback Systems: Research indicates that delayed feedback may impede motivation and performance. Organisations should implement explicit communication mechanisms to facilitate supervisor-distance check-ins. Slack, Microsoft Teams, and Trello facilitate collaboration and inform employees of progress, maintaining team cohesion irrespective of location. Scheduled individual sessions foster staff support and engagement.

3. Establishing Work-Life Boundaries: Numerous employees indicated that although hybrid work provides flexibility, it might obscure the distinction between professional and personal life, resulting in stress and fatigue. Employers ought to promote defined work hours and restrictions on job-related communication beyond those hours. Regulations promoting flexible scheduling

and breaks may enhance employees' time management skills. Enhancing work-life balance can be achieved by the provision of mental health services, such as stress management and therapy.

4. Investment in Digital Tools for Collaboration and Transparency: Organisations should allocate resources to digital technology that facilitate seamless engagement and accountability, hence enhancing employee collaboration in hybrid settings. Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Google Workspace, in conjunction with project management tools such as Asana and Monday.com, can enhance team communication and maintain productivity among remote and on-site employees. Educating personnel on the utilisation of these technologies would enhance accountability and performance.

5. Fostering Diversity and Equity in Career Progression: Hybrid employment may lead to "proximity bias," resulting in greater career advancement possibilities for in-office employees compared to remote workers. Inclusive policies must guarantee equitable professional development opportunities for all employees, irrespective of geographic location. Implementing transparent criteria for advancement and recognition guarantees equitable treatment of distant employees.

6. Ongoing Performance Evaluations and Recognition: To sustain motivation and efficiency, businesses ought to implement regular performance assessments. Consistent feedback and acknowledgement must be provided to employees, particularly those working remotely. Commemorate achievements either virtually or in person to foster a positive work environment and enhance productivity.

## **Conclusion**

The COVID-19 pandemic created a hybrid work model with flexibility, autonomy, and work-life balance. The survey and interviews demonstrate that these benefits have drawbacks, particularly in employee involvement, communication, teamwork, and accountability.

Some employees prefer hybrid work environments' flexibility and job satisfaction, but others suffer without face-to-face interaction and unplanned collaboration, which are needed for teamwork, according to the survey. Isolation can diminish remote workers' motivation and belonging.

Interviews with important participants show hybrid work's accountability and teamwork concerns. Trello and Asana arrange tasks, but employees claim they lack office-like feedback and guidance. Lack of real-time monitoring can confuse job requirements and performance.

Although limited, the hybrid work paradigm has worked for many organisations, balancing flexibility and face-to-face communication. Companies can improve employee happiness, productivity, and work satisfaction by fixing the concerns.

According to research, hybrid work succeeds when firms have clear communication and feedback mechanisms, support inclusive career growth, and invest in digital tools that improve productivity and accountability. They must encourage clear personal-professional boundaries to assist employees balance work and life.

Organisations must adapt to shifting employee needs for hybrid work to succeed. This study's recommendations can help organisations achieve corporate goals and employee satisfaction while maintaining a good hybrid work style.

Despite its drawbacks, the hybrid work paradigm can make workers more flexible and productive. Hybrid employment's benefits can help companies survive the post-pandemic era with careful planning, rigorous procedures, and employee welfare.

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## **Appendix**

### **Appendix 1: Interview Questions**

1. Has the transition to a hybrid work model affected your daily work routine and overall productivity? Can you provide specific examples of tasks or projects that have become easier or more challenging?
2. Do you feel that the hybrid work model has influenced your sense of connection and engagement with your team and the organisation as a whole? How does this compare to your experience in a fully on-site or fully remote setting?
3. Do you find certain digital tools and platforms particularly effective in supporting your work in a hybrid environment? Which tools and platforms do you find most effective, and are there any technological challenges you've encountered? How have you addressed them?
4. Has the hybrid work model impacted your work-life balance? Can you describe any changes in your stress levels, job satisfaction, or overall well-being since adopting this model?
5. From your perspective, does management understand and address the challenges of hybrid work well? If not, are there any areas where you feel additional support or resources could improve your hybrid work experience?
6. Do you think certain aspects of the hybrid work model are particularly beneficial or challenging, considering your industry and organisational culture? What are these aspects, and how do you think they influence the success of hybrid work in your organisation?

7. As a team leader, has the hybrid work model affected your ability to manage team productivity and performance? If yes, can you provide examples of strategies you've implemented to maintain or improve team efficiency in this new environment?
8. Have you observed any changes in team dynamics and employee engagement since adopting the hybrid work model? If yes, how have you adapted your leadership approach to address these changes?
9. Do you find certain digital tools and platforms particularly effective in facilitating collaboration and communication within your team in a hybrid setting? If yes, how do you ensure that both remote and on-site team members are equally involved and informed?
10. Do you face challenges in balancing the needs and preferences of team members who may have different attitudes towards hybrid work? If yes, have you encountered any conflicts or challenges in this regard, and how have you addressed them?
11. In your opinion, has the hybrid work model impacted job satisfaction and work-life balance within your team? If yes, have you noticed any differences in these aspects between fully remote, hybrid, and on-site work periods?
12. Considering your industry and organisational culture, do you think the hybrid work model presents unique challenges or opportunities for your team? If yes, how do you adapt your management style to align with these factors and ensure the success of the hybrid model?

## **Appendix 2: Interview Transcripts**

### **Employee 1**

**Interviewer:** Hi participant 1, thank you for taking the time to speak with me today. Before we dive into the questions, I'd love to learn a bit more about you and your role in the organisation. Could you share a little about what you do and how long you've been with the company?

**Employee:** Sure! I've been with the company for about three years now, and I work as a Senior Software Engineer. My job mainly involves leading the design and development of complex software applications, ensuring the code is of high quality, and performing thorough code reviews. I also work closely with product managers and other teams to translate business requirements into technical solutions. Additionally, I mentor junior developers and stay updated on new technologies that could improve our work.

**Interviewer:** That sounds interesting! And how has your experience with the hybrid work model been so far?

**Employee:** The transition to hybrid work has been a bit of an adjustment, but I've found it to be mostly positive. I now spend some days in the office and others working from home, which gives me more flexibility.

**Interviewer:** Great! Let's dive into the specifics of the hybrid model. Has the transition to this work model affected your daily routine and overall productivity? Can you provide specific examples of tasks or projects that have become easier or more challenging?

**Employee:** Yes, it has definitely changed my routine. For example, I now start my day with fewer distractions when I work from home, which helps me focus on tasks that need deep concentration, like data analysis. On the other hand, collaborating with colleagues on group projects can be a bit harder remotely, as it's not always easy to catch someone for a quick question or brainstorming session.

**Interviewer:** That makes sense. Do you feel that the hybrid work model has influenced your sense of connection and engagement with your team and the organisation as a whole? How does this compare to your experience in a fully on-site or fully remote setting?

**Employee:** I think the hybrid model has both positives and negatives when it comes to staying connected. When I'm in the office, I can easily chat with my team and feel more in touch with what's happening. But on remote days, it can feel a bit isolating, even with video calls. When we were fully on-site, I felt more involved in the daily culture, and when we were fully remote, I missed the spontaneous conversations we used to have.

**Interviewer:** I see! Do you find certain digital tools and platforms particularly effective in supporting your work in this hybrid environment? Which tools do you find most effective, and have you encountered any technological challenges?

**Employee:** Tools like Slack and Zoom have been essential. Slack helps me stay connected with my team throughout the day, and Zoom is great for meetings. But sometimes, there are issues like poor internet connection or technical glitches during meetings, which can be frustrating. We've addressed this by keeping meetings short and using async tools like email for detailed discussions when possible.

**Interviewer:** That's a helpful insight! Now, has the hybrid work model impacted your work-life balance? Can you describe any changes in your stress levels, job satisfaction, or overall well-being?

**Employee:** I think my work-life balance has improved. I have more control over my schedule, so I can take breaks when needed, and I don't have to deal with long commutes on office days. However, it can also be hard to disconnect from work since my home has become my workspace. I've had to set clear boundaries, like not checking emails after a certain time, to maintain my well-being.

**Interviewer:** It's great to hear you've found ways to manage that balance. From your perspective, does management understand and address the challenges of hybrid work well? If not, are there areas where you feel additional support or resources could improve your experience?

**Employee:** I think management is trying, but there's still room for improvement. They're good about providing the tools we need, but I think more guidance on managing hybrid workloads and better communication about expectations would help. Sometimes it feels like there's more pressure to be constantly available just because we're working from home.

**Interviewer:** That's a valuable point. Lastly, considering the nature of our industry and organisational culture, do you think certain aspects of the hybrid model are particularly beneficial or challenging? How do these aspects influence the success of hybrid work here?

**Employee:** For our industry, where collaboration and innovation are important, the hybrid model is both a benefit and a challenge. The flexibility is great because it allows us to be more creative

and work in ways that suit us best. But on the flip side, building team rapport and maintaining company culture remotely can be tough. I think that's an area where the organisation could focus more effort.

**Interviewer:** Thank you so much for sharing your thoughts! Before we wrap up, is there anything else you'd like to add about your experience with hybrid work or any suggestions you have for improving it?

**Employee:** I think we've covered everything, but I would just emphasise that ongoing feedback from employees and more opportunities for in-person team-building could go a long way in making the hybrid model more effective.

**Interviewer:** That's a great suggestion! Thank you again for your time today. Your insights will be really valuable for my dissertation, and I appreciate your honesty and thoughtfulness in answering the questions.

## **Employee 2**

**Interviewer:** Hi [Employee], thank you so much for joining me today! Before we jump into the more specific questions, I'd love to know a little more about you and your role in the company. Could you tell me what you do and how long you've been a team leader here?

**Employee:** Sure! I've been with the company for about five years now, and I've been a team leader for the past two years. I oversee a team of about 10 people in the [specific department], and my job involves coordinating our daily activities, managing performance, and ensuring that we hit our project goals.

**Interviewer:** That sounds like a very dynamic role. What do you enjoy the most about leading your team?

**Employee:** I think what I enjoy most is seeing how everyone's strengths come together to complete a project. Each team member brings something different to the table, and it's rewarding to see them collaborate and grow. Helping them navigate challenges and achieve success as a group is something I really value.

**Interviewer:** That's wonderful to hear. Now, to dive into the main questions—since your team has been working in a hybrid model, has that affected your ability to manage productivity and performance? Can you share any strategies you've implemented to maintain or even improve team efficiency?

**Employee:** Yes, the hybrid model has definitely influenced how I manage the team. With some members in the office and others working remotely, it can be harder to get a sense of how everyone is doing day-to-day. One strategy I've implemented is having more frequent check-ins. We do a quick daily stand-up meeting to make sure everyone is aligned, whether they're remote or on-site. I've also encouraged the team to use collaboration tools like Trello for task management, so everyone knows who's working on what, and there's full transparency about project progress. This has helped keep us on track even when we aren't all physically together.

**Interviewer:** That's a great approach. Have you noticed any changes in team dynamics or engagement since adopting the hybrid model? If so, how have you adapted your leadership style to address those changes?

**Employee:** Yes, I have noticed some changes. The team dynamic is different when you can't always see each other in person. Some team members have felt less engaged, especially those who work remotely more often. To address this, I've made an effort to create more opportunities for team bonding, even if it's virtual. We've had virtual coffee breaks or just informal check-ins where we talk about things outside of work. I've also tried to balance workloads more carefully to ensure that no one feels disconnected or overlooked, especially those working remotely.

**Interviewer:** That's a great way to keep everyone involved. Speaking of keeping everyone connected, are there any specific digital tools or platforms that you've found particularly useful for collaboration and communication? How do you ensure both remote and on-site team members are equally involved?

**Employee:** Absolutely. We rely heavily on Microsoft Teams for communication—it's become our go-to platform for quick updates, team meetings, and file sharing. For project tracking, we use Asana, which helps everyone stay informed about deadlines and progress, no matter where they're working from. To make sure remote team members feel just as involved as those on-site, I always schedule meetings with a video component and encourage everyone to participate. I've also made it a habit to rotate responsibilities, so both remote and on-site employees take the lead on certain tasks or discussions, which helps everyone stay engaged.

**Interviewer:** It sounds like you've put a lot of thought into keeping the team balanced. Have you encountered any challenges in balancing the needs or preferences of team members who might have different attitudes toward hybrid work? How have you dealt with any conflicts or challenges that arose?

**Employee:** Yes, it can be challenging at times. Some team members really thrive in the office environment and prefer being on-site, while others have found that working from home helps them focus better. We did have a few conflicts initially, especially when some people felt they were taking on more responsibilities because they were in the office more frequently. To address this, I've had open conversations with the team about flexibility and fairness. We've also made sure to set clear expectations around availability and workload, regardless of location, so that everyone feels like they're contributing equally.

**Interviewer:** It's great that you've been able to manage those different preferences. In your opinion, has the hybrid model had an impact on job satisfaction and work-life balance within your team? Have you noticed any differences compared to when the team was fully remote or fully on-site?

**Employee:** Yes, the hybrid model has had a noticeable impact on work-life balance. For some team members, the flexibility to work from home has improved their overall job satisfaction—they appreciate the reduced commute and the ability to manage their personal lives better. On the other hand, a few team members have expressed feeling more isolated when they're working remotely, which has affected their job satisfaction a bit. I think it's about finding the right balance and ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to work in a way that suits them best while also staying connected to the team.

**Interviewer:** It's interesting how work-life balance can vary depending on personal preferences. Considering the industry and the organisational culture, do you think the hybrid work model presents any unique challenges or opportunities for your team? How have you adapted your management style to address these factors and ensure the success of the hybrid model?

**Employee:** Our industry is very fast-paced, and collaboration is key, so the hybrid model does present some unique challenges. It can be harder to coordinate when not everyone is in the same place, and there's always the risk of miscommunication. That said, the hybrid model also offers opportunities for increased flexibility, which has allowed us to be more innovative in how we approach our work. I've had to adapt by becoming more intentional in how I communicate and lead—setting clear goals and expectations, being transparent about progress, and ensuring that both remote and on-site team members are treated equally. I've also become more flexible in terms of how the team can manage their time, as long as the work gets done.

**Interviewer:** You've shared some really valuable insights today, thank you! Before we finish, is there anything else you'd like to add about your experience with hybrid work or any suggestions you have for improving the model?

**Employee:** I think we've covered most of the key points, but I would just add that ongoing communication and flexibility are crucial. Every team is different, and the hybrid model won't look the same for everyone. It's important to keep adjusting based on what works best for the team. Also, finding more opportunities for in-person team-building, even if it's not frequent, could really help maintain a strong team dynamic.

**Interviewer:** That's a great takeaway! Thank you again for your time today, your insights will be incredibly helpful for my dissertation. I appreciate your openness and thoughtfulness in answering these questions.

**Employee 3**

**Interviewer:** Hi, I appreciate you taking the time to chat with me today. To start off, could you tell me a bit about your role as a Project Manager here and how long you've been with the organisation?

**Employee:** Absolutely! I've been with the company for about four years now, and I'm currently working as a Project Manager. My role involves overseeing various projects from inception to completion, coordinating between different teams, ensuring that we meet deadlines, and that our deliverables align with client expectations. I also manage resources, resolve any issues that arise during the project, and keep stakeholders informed throughout the process.

**Interviewer:** That sounds like a crucial role! How has the shift to a hybrid work model impacted your responsibilities and the way you manage projects?

**Employee:** The hybrid model has definitely brought some changes. On the one hand, it's given me and my team more flexibility, which can be a big plus. But on the other hand, it's added a layer of complexity when it comes to communication and coordination. For instance, managing deadlines and ensuring that everyone is on the same page sometimes requires more effort when not everyone is physically present in the office.

**Interviewer:** I can see how that would be challenging. Could you share some examples of tasks or projects that have been easier or more difficult to manage in this hybrid setting?

**Employee:** Certainly! One example is our project meetings. When we were fully on-site, it was easy to pull everyone together quickly to address issues or brainstorm ideas. In a hybrid model, scheduling can be a bit tricky, especially when people are in different locations. However, I've noticed that when it comes to tasks like project planning and documentation, the quieter

environment of working from home can actually be more productive. I can focus on creating detailed project plans and timelines without the usual office interruptions.

**Interviewer:** That's an interesting point about the planning phase. How has the hybrid work model influenced your ability to keep your team connected and engaged? How does it compare to when everyone was fully on-site or fully remote?

**Employee:** Keeping the team connected is one of the bigger challenges in a hybrid setup. When we were all on-site, it was easier to foster team spirit through in-person meetings, casual conversations, and team-building activities. In a fully remote setup, we were more intentional about scheduling virtual check-ins and team events, but now with hybrid, it's a bit of a mix. Some team members might feel more connected when in the office, while others, working remotely, might feel a bit detached. I have to be more deliberate in ensuring everyone feels included, regardless of where they are working from.

**Interviewer:** That makes sense. With the shift to hybrid work, have there been specific tools or platforms that you've found particularly effective in managing your projects? Have there been any technological challenges along the way?

**Employee:** Tools like Microsoft Teams and Trello have been invaluable. Microsoft Teams helps us stay in touch throughout the day, whether we're discussing project updates or just checking in on each other. Trello is great for tracking project progress and tasks, making sure everyone knows what they need to do and when. However, there have been challenges, particularly with maintaining momentum in virtual meetings. Sometimes, technical issues or the lack of face-to-face interaction can make it harder to gauge how well the team is aligned on a project's

goals. We've tried to address this by mixing up our communication methods—using video calls for detailed discussions and sticking to chat or email for simpler updates.

**Interviewer:** That's a great approach to managing communication. Has the hybrid model had any impact on your work-life balance? Have you noticed any changes in your stress levels, job satisfaction, or overall well-being since the transition?

**Employee:** The hybrid model has had a mixed impact on my work-life balance. On the one hand, the flexibility to work from home has been beneficial—I can better manage my time and avoid long commutes, which has reduced stress. On the other hand, the lines between work and personal life can blur. As a Project Manager, I'm responsible for ensuring everything stays on track, and sometimes that means I'm more accessible outside of traditional working hours. It's taken some time, but I've started to set stricter boundaries to make sure I can fully disconnect after work.

**Interviewer:** It's great that you've found a way to set those boundaries. Do you feel that the organisation's management has been supportive in addressing the challenges of hybrid work? Are there areas where you think additional resources or support could improve your experience?

**Employee:** I do think management is making an effort to support us, but there's always room for improvement. They've been proactive in providing the necessary tools and encouraging flexibility, which is great. However, I think there could be more guidance on best practices for managing hybrid teams, particularly around maintaining team cohesion and ensuring that remote employees don't feel left out. More structured support in these areas would definitely enhance the hybrid work experience for me and my team.

**Interviewer:** That's a valuable perspective. Lastly, considering the nature of our industry and the organisational culture, do you think there are aspects of the hybrid work model that are particularly beneficial or challenging? How do these factors influence the success of your projects?

**Employee:** In our industry, which thrives on collaboration and innovation, the hybrid model has both advantages and challenges. The flexibility allows us to work in ways that suit us individually, which can boost creativity and productivity. However, the challenge lies in maintaining a unified approach to project management and delivery. It's important that we don't lose the collaborative spirit that's key to our success. For instance, when we're brainstorming or problem-solving, having everyone in the same room can lead to more dynamic discussions. In a hybrid model, we have to work harder to ensure that remote participants are equally engaged and contributing to these critical conversations.

**Interviewer:** Thank you so much for sharing your insights! Before we wrap up, is there anything else you'd like to add about your experience with the hybrid work model or any suggestions you have for improving it?

**Employee:** I think we've covered the main points, but I would just emphasise the importance of continuing to adapt and evolve our approach to hybrid work. Ongoing feedback from all levels of the organisation will be key to making this model as effective as possible. Also, more opportunities for in-person team-building would be beneficial to maintain our strong team dynamic.

**Interviewer:** That's a great suggestion! Thanks again for your time today. Your insights will be incredibly helpful for my dissertation, and I really appreciate your openness and thoughtfulness in answering the questions.

### **Appendix 3: Survey Questions**

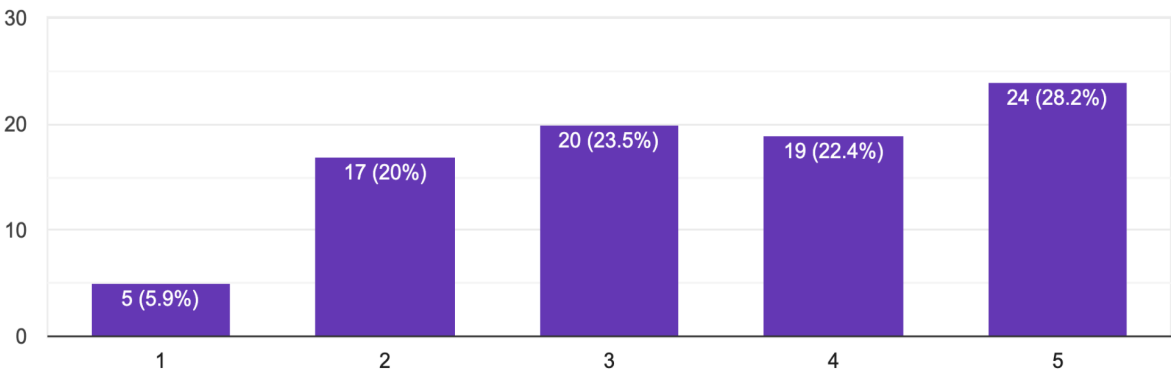
1. On a scale of 1-5, how engaged do you feel with your work while working in a hybrid setting?
2. How motivated are you to achieve your work goals while working remotely or in a hybrid model? (1-5 scale)
3. How would you rate your productivity while working in a hybrid environment compared to working on-site full-time? (1-5 scale)
4. Do you feel more productive working remotely, on-site, or in a hybrid model? Please elaborate. (Open-ended)
5. To what extent do you feel you have control over how you structure your workday in a hybrid environment? (1-5 scale)
6. How has hybrid work impacted your ability to make independent decisions regarding your tasks and responsibilities? (1-5 scale)
7. How confident are you in your ability to perform your job effectively in a hybrid work model? (1-5 scale)
8. Have you experienced any challenges in maintaining the same level of competence while working remotely? (Yes/No)
9. How has working in a hybrid model affected your work-life balance? (1-5 scale)
10. Do you feel the hybrid work model allows you to balance your personal and professional life more effectively? (Yes/No)
11. How often do you receive feedback from your manager or colleagues while working remotely? (1-5 scale)

12. Do you feel accountable for your work outcomes in a hybrid model? Please explain.

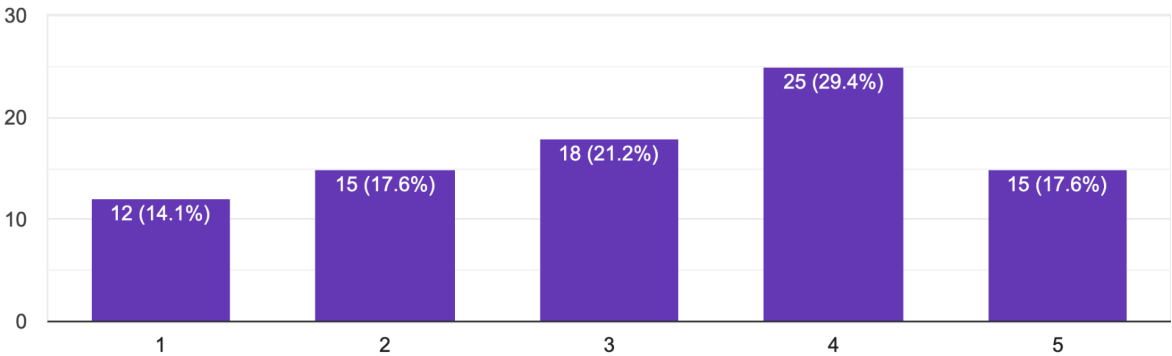
(Open-ended)

Appendix 4: Graphs and Pie Charts

On a scale of 1-5, how engaged do you feel with your work while working in a hybrid setting?  
85 responses

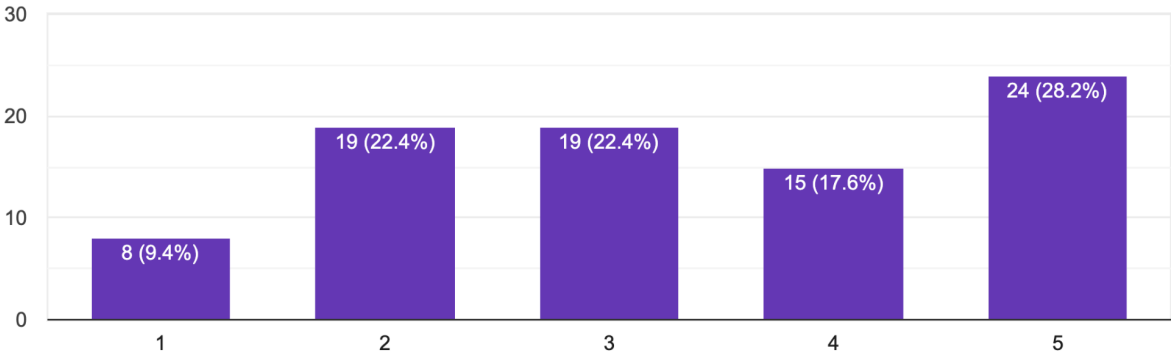


How motivated are you to achieve your work goals while working remotely or in a hybrid model?  
85 responses



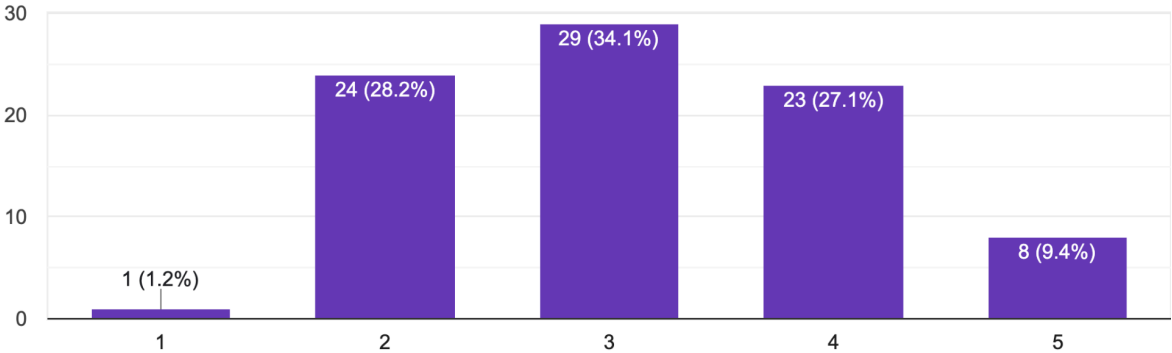
How would you rate your productivity in a hybrid environment compared to on-site full-time?

85 responses



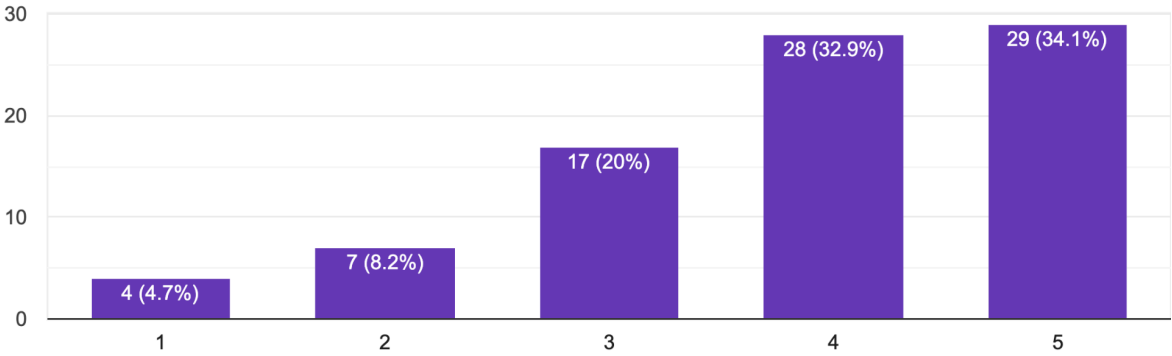
To what extent do you feel you have control over how you structure your workday in a hybrid environment?

85 responses



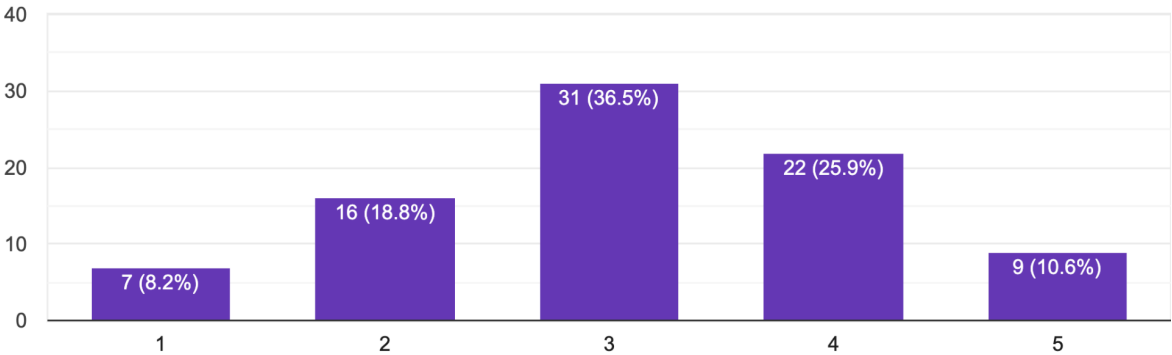
How has hybrid work impacted your ability to make independent decisions regarding your tasks and responsibilities?

85 responses



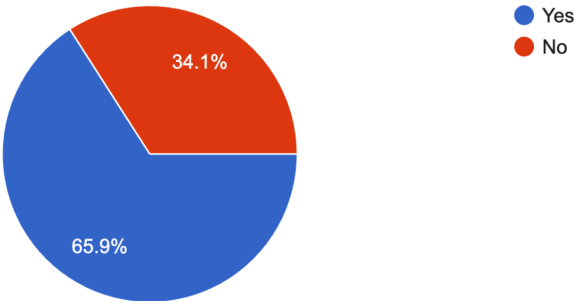
How confident are you in your ability to perform your job effectively in a hybrid work model?

85 responses



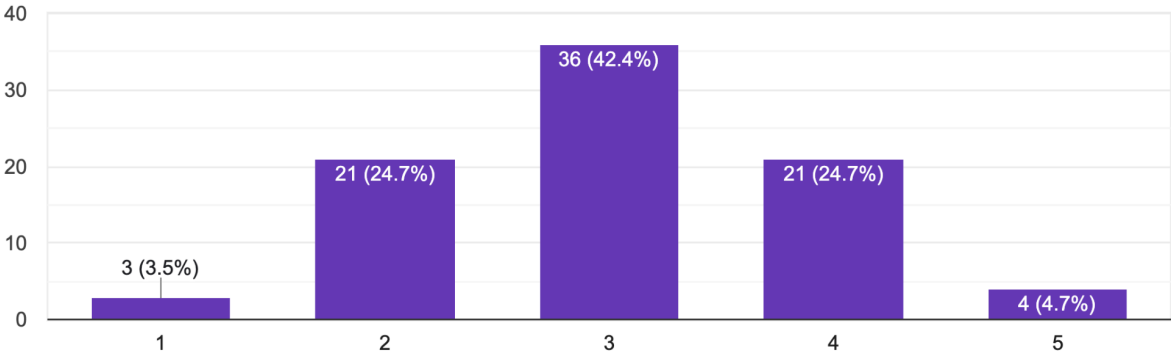
Have you experienced challenges in maintaining your competence while working remotely?

85 responses



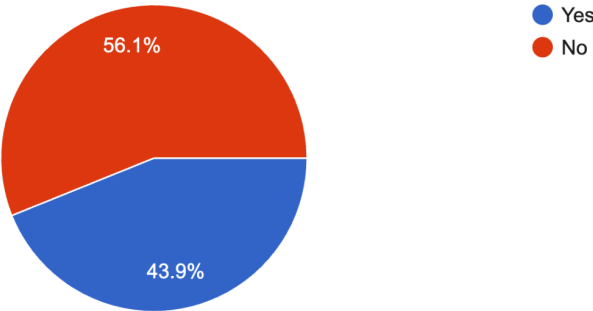
How has working in a hybrid model affected your work-life balance?

85 responses



Do you feel the hybrid work model allows you to balance your personal and professional life more effectively?

82 responses



How often do you receive feedback from your manager or colleagues while working remotely?

85 responses

