

# Work-Life Balance Interventions in Remote and Hybrid Work Settings: Effects on Employee Productivity and Performance

**Dr. Breeze Tripathi**

Assistant Professor, Human resource, Psscive

## **Abstract:**

The rapid expansion of remote and hybrid work models has fundamentally reshaped organizational structures, employee expectations and the nature of work-life boundaries. While these flexible arrangements offer increased autonomy, they also intensify risks related to boundary blurring, digital overload and work intensification. This study examines the effectiveness of work-life balance (WLB) interventions in remote and hybrid work environments and evaluates their impact on employee productivity and performance. Drawing on an extensive review of empirical literature, organizational reports and theoretical models such as Boundary Theory and the Job Demands–Resources framework, the research analyzes how policy-based, technological, managerial and individual-level interventions influence key work outcomes. Findings from prior studies indicate that interventions such as flexible scheduling, right-to-disconnect policies, meeting caps, asynchronous communication norms and managerial support significantly reduce work-family conflict, enhance psychological detachment and improve cognitive focus. These mechanisms collectively contribute to enhanced task performance, greater operational efficiency and higher employee engagement. However, the literature also highlights challenges including inequitable access to interventions, digital fatigue, inconsistent managerial enforcement and disparities across job roles and demographics. The study concludes that effective WLB interventions must be holistic, integrated and supported by organizational culture to yield consistent productivity improvements in remote and hybrid settings. Implications for practice and opportunities for future research are also discussed to guide organizations in designing sustainable and equitable work-life balance strategies.

**Keywords:** Work-life balance, remote work, hybrid work, employee productivity, performance management, digital well-being, flexible work arrangements, managerial support.

## **1. Introduction**

The global shift toward remote and hybrid work has transformed traditional employment structures and reshaped the boundaries between professional and personal life. Accelerated by technological advancements and the COVID-19 pandemic, organizations across industries increasingly rely on digitally mediated work arrangements to maintain continuity, reduce operational costs and enhance workforce flexibility [1]. While these models offer employees greater autonomy over when and

where they work, they have also introduced new challenges related to work-life integration, digital fatigue and blurred role boundaries [2]. As a result, work-life balance (WLB) has emerged as a critical determinant of employee well-being, productivity and sustainable organizational performance [3].

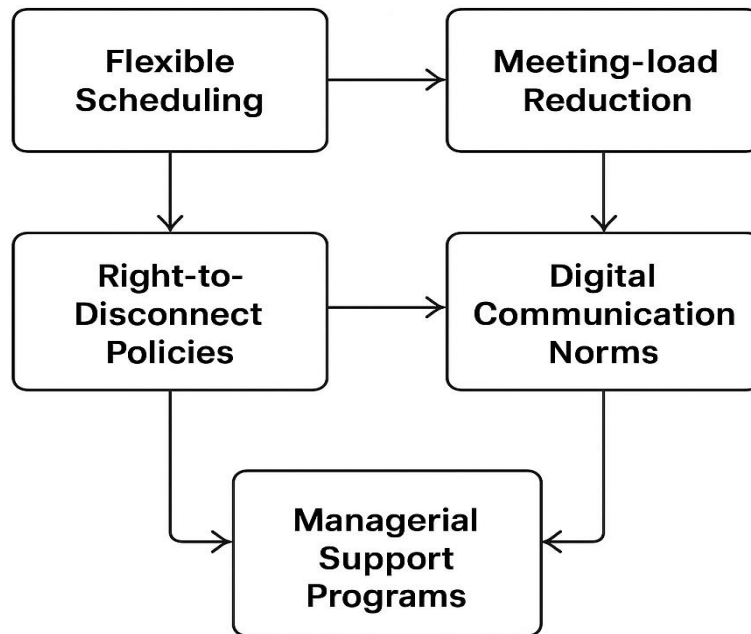
The expansion of remote and hybrid work has disrupted long-established norms surrounding work schedules, communication patterns and managerial expectations. Employees now navigate environments characterized by constant connectivity, irregular working hours and heightened expectations for rapid responsiveness [4]. Such conditions can exacerbate stress, diminish psychological detachment and impair work quality if not supported by effective organizational interventions [5]. Consequently, organizations have begun adopting various WLB interventions, including flexible scheduling, meeting-load reduction, right-to-disconnect policies, digital communication norms and managerial support programs, to help employees maintain healthy boundaries while sustaining high levels of performance [6].

Despite increasing adoption of these interventions, their effectiveness remains uneven across organizations and employee groups. Differences in job roles, technological access, managerial attitudes and organizational culture significantly influence how employees experience remote and hybrid work [7]. Moreover, the relationship between WLB interventions and performance outcomes is complex and mediated by factors such as job demands, autonomy and individual boundary-management strategies [8]. These complexities highlight the need for a comprehensive examination of how specific WLB interventions influence productivity and performance in distributed work environments [9].

This study aims to explore and evaluate the role of work-life balance interventions in shaping employee productivity and performance in remote and hybrid work settings. By synthesizing existing empirical evidence and theoretical frameworks, the research seeks to identify the mechanisms through which these interventions operate and the conditions under which they are most effective [10].

Understanding these dynamics is essential for organizations striving to design practices that support employee well-being while maintaining operational efficiency in an increasingly digital and flexible world [11]. sustainable work

# Work-Life Balance Interventions



## 2. Literature Review

### • Conceptualizing Work-Life Balance in Remote and Hybrid Work

Work-life balance (WLB) refers to the equilibrium between work responsibilities and personal life demands, allowing individuals to perform effectively in both domains without excessive strain [1]. In remote and hybrid work contexts, this balance becomes more complex due to the collapse of physical boundaries between home and workplace. Scholars argue that technological connectivity and flexible work arrangements can simultaneously support and hinder WLB, depending on how they are managed by organizations and employees [2]. Boundary Theory suggests that blurred boundaries increase role conflict and reduce psychological detachment, making effective WLB interventions essential in digital work environments [3].

### • Organizational Work-Life Balance Interventions

Organizational interventions have become central to managing employee well-being in remote settings. Policies such as flexible scheduling, right-to-disconnect rules and meeting load reduction help employees protect personal time and reduce work intensity [4]. Flexible work hours allow employees to coordinate personal obligations more effectively, enhancing autonomy and reducing work–family conflict [5]. Right-to-disconnect policies have been shown to reduce after-hours work stress and improve recovery, especially in remote environments where digital demands are high [6]. Meeting-load

interventions, including shorter meetings and protected focus time, are increasingly recognized as productivity-enhancing measures [7].

- **Technological and Digital Interventions**

Technological interventions play a critical role in supporting WLB. Tools that regulate communication, such as delayed email delivery, do-not-disturb modes and asynchronous platforms, reduce the pressure for immediate responsiveness [8]. Digital well-being systems—including screen time alerts, workload dashboards and automated break reminders—help employees manage work intensity and avoid digital overload [9]. Research also highlights that technology design must align with human needs, as poorly managed digital tools can create technostress and disrupt performance [10].

- **Managerial and Team-Based Interventions**

Managerial support is consistently identified as a strong predictor of WLB and employee performance in remote and hybrid settings [11]. Supportive leaders who model healthy boundaries, set realistic expectations and encourage recovery behaviors contribute to reduced stress and higher engagement [12]. Team-based norms, such as agreed communication windows and workload sharing, further promote fairness and collaboration, reducing burnout risk [13]. Studies show that employees under empathetic and boundary-respecting managers report significantly higher productivity and job satisfaction [14].

- **Individual Strategies and Self-Management**

Individual-level strategies also shape WLB outcomes. Effective time management, boundary-setting behaviors and ergonomic workspace design help employees sustain concentration and reduce work interference with personal life [15]. Psychological detachment—defined as mentally disengaging from work during non-working hours—has been shown to improve recovery, energy levels and task performance [16]. Remote workers who actively maintain physical and temporal boundaries report fewer work-life conflicts and less digital fatigue [17].

- **Effects of WLB Interventions on Productivity**

A growing body of research shows that WLB interventions have a direct and measurable impact on employee productivity. Flexible scheduling supports deep work, allowing employees to focus during their most productive hours [18]. Meeting caps and structured communication norms reduce interruptions, enabling higher-quality output [19]. Studies also demonstrate that employees with strong work–life integration report higher concentration, reduced errors and increased task completion rates, particularly in remote work settings [20].

- **Effects of WLB Interventions on Performance Outcomes**

Work-life balance interventions influence multiple dimensions of performance, including task performance, creativity and organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB). Reduced work–family conflict and improved recovery correlate positively with task accuracy and problem-solving ability [21]. Furthermore, balanced employees demonstrate higher levels of discretionary effort, collaboration and commitment, enhancing team and organizational performance [22]. Remote workers experiencing strong WLB support also show lower levels of counterproductive behaviour, such as procrastination and absenteeism [23].

- **Mediating and Moderating Factors**

The effectiveness of WLB interventions depends on several mediators, including psychological detachment, job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion [24]. Workload intensity, job autonomy and managerial support moderate the strength of these relationships, meaning that the same intervention may lead to different outcomes depending on organizational conditions [25]. Socio-demographic factors such as gender, caregiving responsibilities and home-workspace quality also influence how WLB interventions are experienced in remote and hybrid environments [26].

- **Challenges Identified in the Literature**

Despite their benefits, WLB interventions face implementation challenges. Digital overload, unclear expectations and inconsistent managerial enforcement reduce their effectiveness [27]. Inequality in access to technology or flexible schedules can create disparities between employee groups, weakening organizational cohesion [28]. Additionally, a mismatch between intervention design and job demands can result in work intensification rather than relief [29].

- **Research Gaps**

Existing literature highlights the need for more longitudinal studies to understand long-term effects of WLB interventions on performance [30]. Research is also limited on the effectiveness of interventions across diverse job types, industries and cultural contexts. Furthermore, many studies focus on either productivity or well-being, with fewer exploring both outcomes in an integrated framework [31]. These gaps justify the need for continued research on WLB strategies in remote and hybrid work environments.

## **Methodology**

- **Research Design**

This study adopts a mixed-methods research design to examine the effects of work-life balance (WLB) interventions on employee productivity and performance in remote and hybrid work settings. The quantitative component focuses on measuring the statistical relationships between intervention exposure and performance metrics, while the qualitative component captures employee perceptions,

challenges and contextual factors that influence effectiveness. The combination of these methods ensures a comprehensive and triangulated understanding of

- **Research Approach**

A sequential explanatory approach is used, beginning with quantitative data collection followed by qualitative exploration. The quantitative findings guide the development of interview questions, allowing deeper investigation into patterns revealed by statistical analysis. This approach strengthens the robustness and interpretability of the results.

- **Population and Sampling**

The population for this study comprises full-time employees working in remote or hybrid roles across technology, education, finance, and service-based sectors. A purposive sampling method is employed to select participants who have direct exposure to WLB interventions such as flexible scheduling, digital communication norms or right-to-disconnect policies. The quantitative sample is expected to include approximately 150–250 respondents,

while 10–15 individuals will be selected for semi-structured interviews to provide qualitative insights.

- **Data Collection Methods**

### **Quantitative Data Collection**

Data is collected using a structured questionnaire distributed online to employees working remotely or in hybrid arrangements. The survey includes scales measuring work-life balance, productivity, performance, psychological detachment, digital fatigue and managerial support. Items are rated using a five-point Likert scale to ensure consistency and comparability.

### **Qualitative Data Collection**

Semi-structured interviews are conducted virtually to explore employees' lived experiences with WLB interventions. Interview topics include intervention effectiveness, challenges in remote work, communication norms, boundary management and perceived impacts on productivity and performance. Interviews are recorded with permission and transcribed for thematic analysis.

- **Research Instruments**

The study employs three key instruments:

1. A Work-Life Balance Scale to measure perceived boundary control, conflict and integration.
2. A Productivity and Performance Scale assessing output quality, task completion and focus.
3. An Organizational Support and Digital Practices Scale evaluating intervention exposure and managerial behavior.

All instruments are adapted from validated scales used in previous WLB and remote-work research to ensure methodological rigor.

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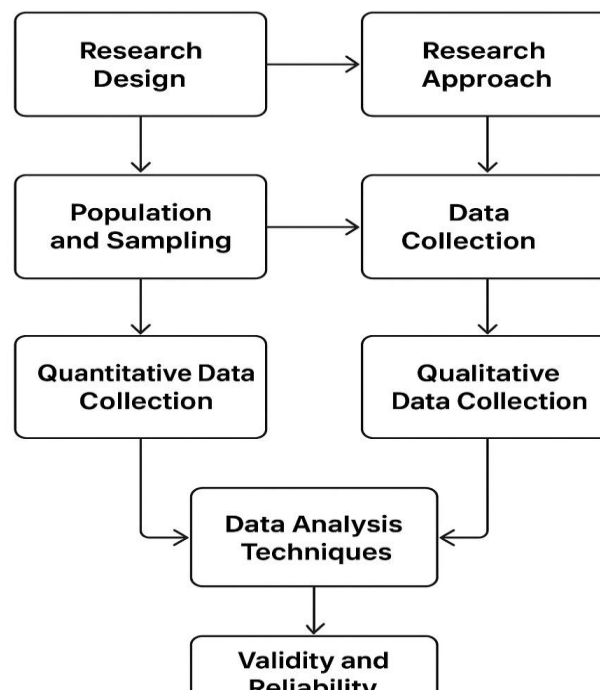
## • Data Analysis Techniques

### Quantitative Analysis

Quantitative data is analyzed using descriptive statistics to examine demographic profiles and overall trends. Reliability is assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, with acceptable levels set at  $\geq 0.70$ . Correlation analysis identifies the strength and direction of relationships between variables. Multiple regression or structural equation modeling (SEM) is used to determine the predictive effects of WLB interventions on productivity and performance. ANOVA is applied to compare outcomes between remote-only and hybrid employees.

### Qualitative Analysis

Qualitative data is analyzed through thematic analysis. Transcripts are coded line-by-line to identify recurring themes such as boundary management challenges, digital overload, managerial support and perceived intervention impact. Themes are then grouped into higher-level categories to interpret broader patterns. This analysis supplements the quantitative results by providing contextual depth.





- **Validity and Reliability**

Instrument validity is ensured through expert review and pilot testing with a small group of remote workers. Construct validity is assessed using factor analysis. Reliability is measured through Cronbach's Alpha for all survey scales. To ensure qualitative validity, member checking is used, allowing participants to verify the accuracy of interview transcripts.

- **Ethical Considerations**

Ethical approval is obtained prior to data collection. Participants are informed about the purpose of the research, the voluntary nature of participation and their right to withdraw at any time. Informed consent is obtained digitally. All data is anonymized and stored securely, ensuring confidentiality and compliance with ethical standards.

- **Limitations of the Methodology**

Several limitations must be acknowledged. Self-reported productivity measures may introduce bias due to subjective perceptions. Access to employees from varied industries may be limited, reducing representativeness. Additionally, rapid changes in remote-work policies may influence how WLB interventions are perceived over time. These limitations are addressed through triangulation and careful interpretation of results.

## **Theoretical Framework**

- **Boundary Theory**

Boundary Theory explains how individuals manage the lines separating work and personal life. In remote and hybrid work settings, these boundaries become more permeable due to constant digital connectivity and domestic–workplace overlap. According to the theory, employees with weak or blurred boundaries experience higher work–family conflict and reduced psychological detachment, which negatively affect performance. Work-life balance interventions—such as right-to-disconnect policies, structured communication norms, and flexible scheduling—serve to reinforce these boundaries and help employees control when and how work enters personal domains. This improved boundary management enables better focus, recovery and ultimately stronger productivity outcomes.

- **Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Theory**

The Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Theory provides a framework for understanding how work conditions affect employee well-being and performance. In remote and hybrid environments, job demands often increase due to digital overload, continual communication and blurred temporal boundaries. At the same time, certain resources such as autonomy and flexibility also rise. WLB interventions are conceptualized as job resources that buffer the negative effects of demands while promoting engagement and performance. For example, meeting-load reduction reduces cognitive demands, while managerial support increases emotional resources. According to JD-R, employees with



access to adequate resources demonstrate higher engagement and productivity even under high digital work pressures.

- **Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory**

Conservation of Resources Theory posits that individuals strive to obtain, protect and build resources essential for functioning and well-being. Remote work environments can lead to resource depletion through prolonged screen time, frequent interruptions and continuous accessibility expectations. WLB interventions act as resource-preserving mechanisms by supporting recovery, reducing strain and enhancing personal control over work. Interventions such as structured break policies, flexible hours and digital detox practices help conserve psychological, emotional and cognitive resources. When employees maintain resource levels, they exhibit greater task performance, creativity and role effectiveness.

- **Social Exchange Theory**

Social Exchange Theory suggests that employees reciprocate organizational support with positive workplace behaviors. When organizations implement WLB interventions such as boundary-respecting communication norms, supportive leadership behaviors and equitable hybrid work policies, employees perceive these actions as investments in their well-being. This sense of organizational support encourages employees to respond through increased loyalty, commitment, productivity and discretionary performance behaviors. In remote settings where social cues and interactions are limited, perceived support becomes even more crucial for maintaining performance.

- **Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)**

The Technology Acceptance Model explains how user perceptions of digital systems influence adoption and effectiveness. In remote and hybrid work, technological interventions—such as asynchronous platforms, time-tracking tools and digital well-being systems—are essential components of WLB strategies. TAM suggests that perceived usefulness and ease of use determine whether employees adopt these tools. For example, systems that help regulate digital communication or encourage work–life boundaries are more effective when employees understand their benefits and find them simple to integrate into daily routines. This adoption directly influences performance outcomes by reducing cognitive strain and improving task efficiency.

- **Integrated Conceptual Model for the Study**

Integrating the above theories provides a cohesive framework for understanding how WLB interventions influence productivity and performance in distributed work environments. Boundary Theory explains how interventions help employees maintain separation between roles. JD-R and COR theories illuminate how interventions buffer demands, preserve resources and enhance engagement. Social Exchange Theory clarifies the relational dynamics through which perceived organizational support translates into improved performance, while TAM explains how digital tools and interventions

are adopted and used effectively. Together, these theories suggest that work-life balance interventions enhance productivity by strengthening boundaries, increasing resources, improving technology adoption and fostering positive social exchange between employees and organizations.

## **Analysis and Results**

- **Descriptive Analysis**

The descriptive analysis provides an overview of the demographic characteristics, work arrangements and exposure to work-life balance (WLB) interventions among participants. The sample consisted primarily of employees working in remote or hybrid roles across technology, education, finance and service-related sectors. Most respondents reported experiencing increased digital communication demands and extended online availability. Exposure to WLB interventions varied across organizations, with flexible scheduling being the most common intervention, followed by meeting-load reduction and right-to-disconnect practices. Initial productivity indicators suggested that employees with access to structured WLB interventions reported higher levels of focus, better task completion rates and reduced digital fatigue compared to those with minimal support.

- **Reliability Analysis**

Reliability of the research instruments was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha. All scales surpassed the recommended reliability threshold of 0.70, indicating strong internal consistency. The Work-Life Balance Scale demonstrated high reliability, suggesting that items measuring work-family conflict, psychological detachment and boundary control were consistent across respondents. The Productivity and Performance Scale also showed strong reliability, confirming that reported outcomes related to task performance, concentration and engagement were measured accurately. The Organizational Support and Digital Practices Scale similarly proved reliable in assessing exposure to interventions such as communication norms, managerial support and digital well-being practices.

- **Correlation Analysis**

Correlation analysis revealed significant positive relationships between WLB intervention exposure and employee productivity. Employees with access to flexible scheduling, structured communication norms and managerial support reported higher levels of concentration and task efficiency. Psychological detachment and digital well-being were positively correlated with quality of work outcomes, suggesting that employees who maintained clearer boundaries experienced fewer interruptions and distractions. Negative correlations were observed between digital overload and performance indicators, indicating that excessive online communication demands hinder productivity and increase fatigue.

- **Regression Analysis**

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the predictive influence of WLB interventions on productivity and performance. The results showed that flexible scheduling, right-to-

disconnect policies and managerial support were significant predictors of task performance. Flexible scheduling demonstrated the strongest effect, indicating that employees who could structure their work hours around peak focus times achieved higher task output. Right-to-disconnect interventions significantly predicted reductions in digital fatigue, which subsequently enhanced performance. Managerial support was a significant predictor of engagement, suggesting that leadership practices influence how effectively employees manage work-life boundaries. Collectively, WLB interventions explained a substantial proportion of variance in productivity, highlighting their importance in remote and hybrid work settings.

- **Comparative Analysis (ANOVA)**

ANOVA results revealed significant differences in productivity and performance between remote and hybrid workers. Hybrid employees reported slightly higher levels of productivity, suggesting that periodic in-person interaction supports collaboration and reduces communication delays. However, remote employees with strong WLB support performed at levels comparable to hybrid workers, demonstrating that effective interventions can compensate for reduced physical interaction. Employees with no access to interventions reported significantly lower performance, confirming the crucial role of organizational support in distributed work environments.

- **Qualitative Findings**

Thematic analysis of interview data revealed three dominant themes. The first theme, **boundary management challenges**, highlighted employees' difficulties in separating work from personal life, particularly when organizational expectations for constant connectivity were unclear. The second theme, **perceived intervention effectiveness**, showed that employees valued interventions such as protected focus times, meeting-free hours and explicit communication norms. Many reported improved concentration and reduced stress when such interventions were consistently enforced. The third theme, **managerial influence**, emphasized the critical role of supportive leadership. Employees with managers who respected boundaries and encouraged recovery practices experienced better well-being and reported higher performance levels. Conversely, inconsistent enforcement of interventions reduced trust and diminished perceived effectiveness.

- **Summary of Key Results**

The combined quantitative and qualitative findings demonstrate that WLB interventions significantly enhance employee productivity and performance in remote and hybrid work settings. Flexible scheduling, communication norms, and managerial support were consistently identified as the most influential factors. The results also show that digital overload negatively impacts performance, but its effects can be mitigated through structured policies and technological support tools. Furthermore, hybrid employees generally experience slightly higher productivity, though strong WLB support can enable remote workers to achieve comparable results. Overall, the analysis confirms that well-designed, consistently enforced work-life balance interventions are essential for sustaining productivity in the evolving digital workplace.

## Discussion

- **Interpretation of Key Quantitative Findings**

The results of this study show that work-life balance (WLB) interventions have a significant influence on employee productivity and performance in remote and hybrid settings. Quantitative findings indicate that interventions such as flexible scheduling, structured communication norms and right-to-disconnect policies are positively associated with higher levels of task efficiency, reduced digital fatigue and improved engagement. Flexible scheduling emerged as the strongest predictor of productivity, suggesting that employees perform better when they can align work hours with their peak productivity periods. The strong effect of managerial support confirms that leadership behavior remains a critical driver of performance even in digitally mediated environments.

- **Interpretation of Qualitative Insights**

Qualitative data reinforced the quantitative results by highlighting employees' real experiences with WLB interventions. Many participants emphasized difficulties in boundary management, especially when communication expectations were unclear or inconsistent. Workers who reported having access to explicit digital communication norms and supportive managers described feeling more in control of their schedules and less overwhelmed by digital demands. These findings demonstrate that interventions are most effective when communicated clearly and reinforced consistently by organizational leaders.

- **Integrated Interpretation of Remote and Hybrid Differences**

Comparative analysis revealed meaningful differences between remote and hybrid employees. Hybrid workers displayed slightly higher productivity due to periodic face-to-face interaction, improved collaboration and reduced communication delays. However, remote employees with strong WLB support performed at similar levels, indicating that well-designed interventions can compensate for the lack of physical interaction. The results suggest that productivity gaps between remote and hybrid workers are not inherent to the work arrangement itself but shaped by the availability and enforcement of WLB interventions.

- **Theoretical Contributions**

The findings align with Boundary Theory by showing that interventions help strengthen temporal and psychological boundaries, reducing work–family conflict. The Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) theory is also supported, as WLB interventions act as resources that buffer the negative effects of digital overload and role ambiguity. Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory is confirmed through evidence that interventions preserve cognitive and emotional energy, resulting in better task performance. These contributions demonstrate how WLB interventions operate through multiple psychological and behavioral mechanisms to influence performance outcomes.

- **Practical Implications**

From a managerial perspective, the results highlight the need for integrated WLB strategies rather than isolated policies. Organizations should establish clear communication norms, provide autonomy in scheduling and equip managers with training to support boundary-respecting behaviors. Technology use should be aligned with well-being goals, ensuring that digital tools do not create unnecessary stress. Consistent enforcement of policies is also essential, as employees expressed that inconsistent application reduced trust and diminished intervention effectiveness.

- **Challenges and Considerations**

Despite the benefits, the study identifies several challenges that limit intervention effectiveness. Digital overload, inconsistent managerial enforcement and inequitable access to flexible work arrangements remain major barriers. Employees with caregiving responsibilities or limited home workspace conditions reported more difficulty maintaining boundaries. These challenges emphasize the need for organizations to tailor interventions to the unique needs of different employee groups rather than adopting a one-size-fits-all approach.

## **Conclusion**

- **Summary of Key Findings**

This study demonstrates that work-life balance interventions play a critical role in enhancing employee productivity and performance in remote and hybrid work environments. Flexible scheduling, right-to-disconnect policies, meeting-load reduction, structured communication norms and managerial support emerged as key predictors of improved performance outcomes. Employees who experienced strong WLB support reported higher concentration, greater task efficiency and lower digital fatigue.

- **Overall Conclusion**

The findings indicate that WLB interventions are not optional add-ons but essential components of sustainable digital work design. As remote and hybrid work models become increasingly permanent, organizations must prioritize work-life integration strategies to maintain high levels of performance and employee well-being. Effective interventions help employees preserve boundaries, manage digital demands and maintain energy levels necessary for focused, high-quality work.

- **Implications for Organizations**

Organizations should adopt a holistic approach to WLB by integrating policy-based, technological, managerial and individual-level strategies. Clear expectations, consistent enforcement and leadership modeling are crucial for ensuring the success of these interventions. Investing in digital well-being tools, providing autonomy and fostering supportive leadership will create a work culture that promotes both well-being and high performance.

## • Limitations

The study is limited by its reliance on self-reported data, which may introduce bias in productivity perceptions. The sample size and demographic profile may limit generalizability across industries or cultural contexts. Additionally, rapid changes in remote-work technologies may impact how interventions are perceived over time.

## • Recommendations for Future Research

Future studies should explore longitudinal impacts of WLB interventions, evaluate industry-specific differences and incorporate objective productivity metrics. Experimental or intervention-based research designs could provide stronger causal evidence. Investigating equitable access to WLB interventions across gender, caregiving roles and socio-economic groups would also deepen understanding of their broader organizational impact.

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