



## Crafting Sustainable Success in Hybrid Work Practices - Quality of Work Life and Mediating Effects of Job Satisfaction & Leadership Support





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**Abstract:** The popularity of hybrid work arrangements, accelerated by the COVID-2019 pandemic, introduced both obstacles and new opportunities for organizations and employees. This study seeks to examine the sustainability of hybrid work models by analyzing the role of leadership support (LS) and job satisfaction (JS) as mediators in the relationship between Quality of Work Life (QWL) and Work-Life Balance (WLB). Data were collected via online surveys from 343 valid respondent employees in the private corporate sector in India who had experience in remote or hybrid work setups. The hypothesized relationships among the named variables were tested using the PLS-SEM approach, with a standard bootstrapping procedure employed to disclose direct and indirect effects among latent variables. The findings indicate that employees strongly preferred the hybrid work model over the traditional work setting. Also, it reveals that QWL positively influences WLB, with both LS and JS serving as significant mediators. LS emerged as a crucial factor in the hybrid work context, affecting perception of employees and helping them to achieve a better balance between their professional and personal lives. The novelty of this research lies in its empirical demonstration of how LS and JS mediate the relationship between QWL and WLB, providing actionable insights for organizations to navigate the complexities of hybrid work model. The study recommends that organizations should formalize hybrid work arrangements; prioritize leadership communication; conduct regular team-building activities and focus on outcome-based performance evaluations. These strategies will enhance job satisfaction, strengthen leadership roles, and promote long-term prosperity with a positive societal and ecological impact.

### Introduction

In December 2019, COVID-19 emerged in Wuhan, China, triggering a worldwide health emergency that the World Health Organization professed a pandemic in the month of March 2020. This unprecedented event led to widespread lockdowns, mobility restrictions, and physical distancing measures to curb the spread of the virus (Purwanto, 2020). As a result, businesses worldwide were forced to shut down, impacting 81% of the global workforce, or roughly 3.3 billion people, creating not only a health crisis but also an economic one (Savić, 2020). Businesses were compelled to restructure

their models and strategies in response to operational disruptions and revenue losses. This resulted in the practice of work-from-home (WFH), which involves working from a convenient location for the individual, typically their home (Bao et al., 2021). It became a widely used solution to effectively navigate uncertainties (Bick et al., 2023; Belzunegui-Eraso and Erro-Garcés, 2020).

The paradigm shift to WFH offered advantages, including reduced office space requirements, enhanced workforce flexibility, increased gender diversity, and improvements in employee WLB (Subramanian and



Joyce, 2024; Yang et al., 2021; Gratton, 2021). Furthermore, the reconfiguration of these work practices significantly enhanced balance in work and personal space by reducing commute time and allowing employees more flexibility in managing their personal and professional responsibilities (Bloom et al., 2024). This flexibility also often led to improved job satisfaction, increased productivity, and employee safety (Zwanka and Buff 2021; Iqbal et al., 2021). WFH also contributed to sustainability goals by reducing carbon emissions, promoting inclusivity, and extending job opportunities to remote areas, thus fostering a more inclusive and sustainable future (Raišienė et al., 2020; Moglia et al., 2021).

However, WFH presented challenges as well. It has been associated with extended working hours, blurring home-work boundaries, issues related to sharing of knowledge and technical skills among employees and loneliness, thereby contributing to physical and mental health issues, conflicts in the family and thus, impacting the work-life harmony (Smoder, 2021; Molino et al., 2020). Other concerns include employee availability, meeting deadlines, diminished problem-solving flexibility, and managing job performance (Ellison, 1999; Cooper and Kurland, 2002; Gareis, 2000; Haddon and Brynin, 2005; Davis et al., 2020). Effective leadership can manage these challenges to a larger extent by creating an inclusive and positive organizational culture. Baruch et al. (1997) emphasized the importance of support of managers/leaders in navigating the transition to remote work. Effective leadership is identified as essential for setting clear expectations, maintaining open lines of communication, and fostering a sense of team cohesion despite physical distance (Rofcanin et al., 2018; Kim et al., 2017).

Recognizing the strengths and limitations of WFH and traditional office setups, organizations continued with hybrid work models - a flexible arrangement combining remote work with in-office time even after the pandemic (Santillan et al., 2023; Gupta and Kumar, 2023). Major surveys predicted that hybrid work would become a key component of the future work landscape, with nearly 70% of organizations in the tech industry in India already planning for such work model (NASSCOM, 2021; KPMG CEO, 2021).

Despite its increasing prevalence, studies on the long-term viability and efficacy of hybrid work models, especially within the Indian setting, remains limited. Additionally, while LS and JS are recognized as essential in traditional work environments, their role in hybrid work settings is underexplored.

This paper seeks to bridge this gap by gathering and comparing experiences and attitudes of workers in hybrid environment within the private corporate sector in India. This study specifically aims to fill in these gaps by concentrating on the following major research questions: (i) to investigate how Work-Life Balance (WLB) is affected by Quality of Work Life (QWL); (ii) to investigate how Job Satisfaction (JS) and Leadership Support (LS) function as mediators between QWL and WLB in the hybrid work environment. Furthermore (iii) to offer insights into crafting effective strategies that can optimize hybrid work setting to ensure well-being of the employee and organizational sustainability, especially as organizations worldwide are considering making hybrid work arrangements a permanent norm.

### Theoretical Background

This section explains the underlying theory of social exchange to elucidate the relationship between QWL, LS JS, and WLB. Further, elaborately discusses the literature with respect to the constructs above and their proposed relationship in the organizational framework.

### The Theory of Social Exchange

The theory of social exchange suggests relationships are built on reciprocal benefits (Blau, 1964). In the context of organizational behaviour, it implies that when employees perceive their work relationship as rewarding and fair, they're more likely to be committed and satisfied (Eisenberger et al., 2001; Vayre, 2019). In the backdrop of the current study, it means that a high-quality work life would improve JS and foster a more desirable equilibrium between professional and personal life, as employees perceive their needs and well-being is being respected and supported by the organisation. Similarly, effective LS in hybrid setting acts as another form of positive exchange that fosters trust and mutual respect. Leaders who actively support their teams will be able to navigate the complexities of hybrid work more adeptly; and reinforce the social contract between both the parties, thus, enhancing JS and overall WLB. In essence, QWL and LS, the key benefits that employers can offer, will foster a positive and healthy hybrid work environment. By focusing on these aspects, organizations can improve employee satisfaction and productivity ; aligning them with the broader objective of the study.

### Hypotheses' Development

As the demand for hybrid work settings rises, organizations face the challenge of optimizing productivity while meeting employee needs and fostering organizational growth. QWL and WLB are two critical areas of concern that have gained popularity. Organizations compete for top-tier talent in the present

competitive landscape, while employees seek opportunities to handle their work and personal responsibilities effectively. A thorough understanding of QWL and WLB is essential, as both are related to employee performance, organizational citizenship, and overall well-being (Pradhan et al., 2016; Abdirahman et al., 2020). Companies with a positive organizational culture, prioritizing high QWL and WLB initiatives, are more likely to bring in and keep highly productive employees and thus enhance JS (Beauregard & Henry, 2009).

#### **(i) Work-life Balance (WLB)**

WLB entails the management of emotional, behavioural and temporal demands associated with both professional and familial responsibilities (Lawson et al., 2013; Hill et al., 2001; Semlali and Hassi, 2016). However, employees cannot achieve WLB alone. Hence, company policies and practices are required to improve QWL which will help to balance their lives. WLB is becoming more important due to organisational changes, labour market changes, employee demographics, and longer work hours (Helmle et al., 2014).

WLB helps workers work better and stay healthy (Joo and Lee, 2017; Nielsen et al., 2008; Kaur et al., 2023). QWL and organisational commitment are positively correlated with employees' psychological well-being (Chan and Wyatt, 2007; Hardjanti et al., 2017). Grawitch et al. (2007) discovered that workplace satisfaction promotes employee participation, advancement, recognition, and mental health. Jain et al. (2009) mentioned that organisational commitment improves employee well-being. Individual well-being improves motivation, productivity and family satisfaction; reduces absenteeism and staff turnover.

#### **(ii) Quality of Work Life (QWL)**

QWL refers to the overall quality of connection between employees and their work environment (Feldman, 1993). This multifaceted construct encompasses elements such as job stability, progression chances, autonomy, incentive mechanisms, and the overall environment at work.

Ultimately, QWL aims to improve employee satisfaction, faith in the organisation, teamwork among colleagues, appreciation for contributions, and the provision of a secure working environment (Saraji and Dargahi, 2006). Research suggests that a positive QWL creates a supportive working environment that boosts satisfaction through rewards, job security, and opportunities for career development (Lau et al., 2001).

Studies highlight the beneficial effects of QWL on reducing employee turnover and increasing organizational commitment (Daud, 2010; Bala et al., 2019). Additionally, evidence indicates that poor working conditions, excessive workloads, work-life imbalance, no involvement in decision-making, and strained supervisor relationships significantly hinder improvements in QWL (Ellis and Pompili, 2002). Furthermore, a negative work environment correlates with lower satisfaction of job, with QWL accounting for 61% of satisfaction levels (Lee and Sirgy, 2018; Waghmare and Dhole, 2017).

#### **(iii) Job Satisfaction (JS)**

JS reflects satisfaction of the employee from the involved work or positive attitude towards the workplace. It depicts the distinction between an employee's expectations or values regarding the employment and the real provisions of the organisation. Giel & Breuer (2023) stated that there are four indicators of JS: satisfaction with-work, rewards, colleagues and promotion, opportunities & support of leaders/managers.

Robbins and Judge (2011) suggested that JS fosters positive work-related feelings, encouraging workers to invest in organizational development, supported by Abdirahman et al. (2020). This boosts productivity, retention, and attendance (Noah and Steve, 2012) while reducing work stress further enhancing JS (Haider et al., 2018). JS mediates the link between WLB and work performance (Dousin et al., 2019), highlighting the need for managers and leaders to cultivate satisfaction enhancing work environments.

Previous research consistently links QWL with JS, indicating higher QWL correlates with greater JS (Danna and Griffin, 1999). Recent findings by Jabeen et al. (2018) among Emirati women in UAE's public sector found a significant positive impact of QWL on JS. Similarly, a study on Indian bank employees found an adverse relationship between unsupportive work environments and JS. It argued that work-related experiences contribute to JS, considering work-life as a psychological domain (Sirgy et al., 2001).

#### **(iv) Leadership Support (LS)**

LS is very important for ensuring WLB (Heras et al., 2021) and improving work culture. It is seen that work-family conflicts reduce with increased JS and reduced work stress (Cuéllar-Molina et al., 2018; Greenhaus et al., 2012; Marescaux et al., 2020). Employees are more inclined to enhance their performance and achieve organizational objectives when they perceive that their bosses or leaders invest in their personal and professional well-being (Rofcanin et al., 2018). Kim et al. (2017) found that when an organisation values WLB,



supervisory support may have a good impact on employees' perception and consequently, JS will significantly influence job performance.

QWL significantly influences LS within organizational settings. Research by Bushra et al (2011) highlighted that transformational leadership aims to cultivate robust interpersonal relationships between managers and employees, facilitating an environment conducive to innovation, creativity, and adaptability. This leadership style cultivates a healthy organisational culture that prioritises employee welfare and well-being, as evidenced by the constructive correlation between management style, leadership, and corporate vision (Voon et al., 2011). Similarly, Kim (2002) highlighted the correlation between participatory leadership styles and employee satisfaction in work in regional governmental organisations, emphasising the influence of leadership on employee perceptions of their work environment.

Additionally, the significance of transformational-oriented management styles in enhancing employee JS is emphasized by aligning leadership behaviors with organizational goals and values (Walumnwa and Dhole, 2017). These findings collectively suggest that LS is positively influenced by the QWL experienced by employees, highlighting the critical role of organizational management in creating a pleasant and encouraging work environment for employees, (Wong and Laschinger, 2013).

To delve deeper into the interconnections of these four variables, the study posits three hypotheses within the hybrid work setting:

H1: QWL, LS, and JS have significant effect on WLB.

H2: JS plays a significant mediator between QWL and WLB.

H3: LS serves as a significant mediator between QWL and WLB.

### Materials and Method

The study employed a quantitative cross-sectional approach to explore the association between QWL, JS, LS, and WLB in the hybrid work setting. The data are analyzed using non-parametric structural equation modelling to confirm the proposed relationships among the variables.

This section provides information on the sample size, the measurement of latent variables, the research model, and the technique employed in the study, followed by a discussion of the measurement model, which covers reliability and validity of constructs.

### Sample Size and Collection of Data

The study employs a non-probability purposive sampling approach, targeting employees in private corporate sectors who have experienced hybrid work setting. This strategy ensures that the sample matches with the objectives of the study, focusing on individuals with practical experience in remote as well as in-office work arrangements. The data for the research work was collected through an online questionnaire which was shared from October 2023 to January 2024. The questionnaire was disseminated through professional connections, social media platforms, and business emails; utilising personal as well as professional network through snowballing convenience sampling. The respondents had the assurance that their responses would be kept confidential to encourage honest responses. We received filled surveys from 384 employees, but only 343 respondents satisfied the specific study criterion of having experience in remote or hybrid work settings.

A structured questionnaire framework was developed to conduct the online survey. The questionnaire comprised of five main sections including demographics and information regarding four constructs for QWL, JS, LS, WLB. Demographic part provided simple data about the respondents including age, gender, experience at workplace, designation, and industry type.

### Measures

The study has used four constructs, namely WLB, QWL, JS, and LS, which have been adapted from previously validated and well-established sources in the literature. The constructs were evaluated using a Likert scale with five points, where a score of "5" denotes 'strong agreement' and a score of "1" signals 'significant disagreement'.

WLB was assessed with seven items from Helmle et al. (2014) like stress, flexibility, managing work and private life and organizing one's life, family support and family's influence on work. Few of the items were: hybrid work setting reduces my stress; balances my work and personal life and organizes my life in a better way.

QWL was assessed through eight items whose information sourced from Tansel et al., (2014) and included dimensions such as; job security, friendly relations among co-workers, cooperation, training prospective and development, participation in organizational decision-making, organizational incentives and perceived organizational environment. The sample items included: a hybrid work setting gives adequate access to resources for career growth; it considers the challenges performance; it has a fair and transparent performance evaluation.

JS was measured with seven items adapted from Giel and Breuer (2023), including satisfaction from work conditions, compensation/ rewards, capacity building, opportunities, job evaluation, team spirit, and family life. The sample items included under a hybrid work setting: I feel energetic and happy at my job, I have adequate time for social connections; I feel satisfied with my job; I align with organizational culture.

LS was determined with three items taken from Kim et al. (2017) and Heras et al. (2021), including dimensions related to effective communication between manager & employee regarding positive work culture. The sample items included: leaders effectively conveying the advantages of the hybrid work setting to its employees; leaders effectively supporting embracing hybrid work practices; and leaders fostering a positive hybrid work culture.

### Methodology

Various statistical tools were used to check whether results were reliable and valid. In order to put the study's results in context, descriptive statistics were used to summarise the demographic characteristics of the sample, which included age, gender, job role and work preferences.

The relationships between QWL, JS, LS, and WLB were analysed using Non-Parametric Structural Equation Modelling using SMARTPLS 3.3.3. It allowed for a comprehensive evaluation of both direct and indirect relationships, particularly focusing on the role of JS and LS as mediator in the relationship between QWL and WLB as shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1. The Model.**

Bootstrapping was utilized to further verify these mediation effects' significance (Hair et al., 2019). This non-parametric method provided confidence intervals for the indirect effects, ensuring that the results were statistically robust.

The model shown in Figure 1 shows the hypothesised correlations between QWL, JS, LS, and WLB in hybrid work situations. QWL is an independent variable denotes how good a workplace is in general. This includes things like job stability, working conditions, incentive system, and opportunity for career advancement.

JS and LS act as key mediating variables. JS reflects employees' positive perception of their jobs, and it is hypothesized that higher QWL leads to increased JS, positively influencing balance in personal and work life.

LS is vital in hybrid work settings, as effective leadership enhances positivity in work culture, boosts satisfaction of job and helps employees to maintain balance in the personal and work space.

The dependent variable, WLB, signifies the efficacy with which employees balance their responsibilities at work and at home. The model suggests that QWL indirectly affects WLB through JS and LS, highlighting the importance of these mediators in achieving a balanced and sustainable hybrid work environment.

The associations among these factors are examined by non-parametric structural equation modelling to evaluate both direct and indirect effects. This perspective highlights the significance of quality of life at work and support of managers/leaders in augmenting job happiness and attaining an improved balance between work and life, which is crucial for fostering a sustainable hybrid work model.

### Evaluation of Measurement Model: Assessing Reliability and Construct Validity

Several tests were performed to evaluate reliability of

items and construct; and discriminant & convergent validity were used in preparation for the path analysis and to enhance the measurement model. Item reliability was evaluated through factor loadings, indicating how well each item represented its corresponding construct.

Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ), which has a minimum level of 0.7, was used to check the internal consistency and reliability. To find out how consistent the constructs were generally, composite reliability was calculated. Average variance extracted (AVE) was used to check convergent validity and making sure that each construct attributed a large portion of the variance from its parts.

To maintain the uni-dimensionality of the constructs, only items with factor loadings above 0.6 were retained, in line with the guidelines from Hair et al. (2013). These tests demonstrated robustness of measurement model across all constructs, confirming that the items reliably measured their intended variables as shown in Table 1 and Figure 2.

In the Figure 2, the loadings are presented for all the latent variables. It indicates that the strength of the

threshold of 0.70 suggest that the measurement scales are very reliable. The composite reliability scores also exceed 0.87 for all constructs, confirming that the constructs are reliable and consistent in measuring their intended concepts. Further, values of AVE values lie between 0.535 and 0.731, supporting that each construct has a significant share of the variance in the observed variables. This provides evidence for the convergent validity of the measurement model.

Reliability and validity check indicate that measurement model is robust, providing a strong support for the study's subsequent path analysis and structural modelling. The results of 'Fornell-Larcker Criterion' have been depicted in Table 2 in order to evaluate discriminant validity. The 'diagonal values' represent the square root of the AVE, whereas the 'off-diagonal

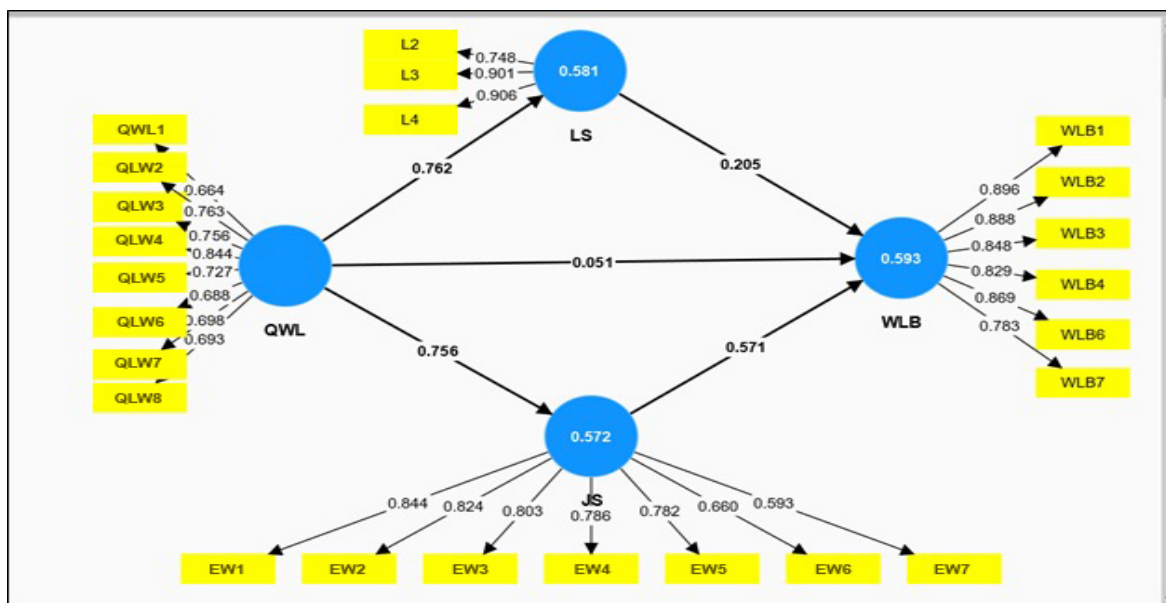


Figure 2. Factor Loadings of the Latent Variables.

Table 1. Reliability and Validity of the Model.

“Latent variables”	“Cronbach's alpha”	“Composite reliability (rho_a)”	“Composite reliability (rho_c)”	“Average variance extracted”
JS	0.875	0.878	0.905	0.579
LS	0.811	0.814	0.890	0.731
QWL	0.875	0.883	0.901	0.535
WLB	0.925	0.930	0.941	0.727

association between each item and its underlying construct is exceptionally high, with values between 0.664 to 0.906 in the positive direction. It suggests that each item makes a significant contribution to the measurement of the construct that it is associated with.

Table 1 presents an estimate of Cronbach's Alpha indicates the internal consistency is consistently strong across all constructs, with values ranging from 0.811 to 0.925. These values above the frequently accepted

values' show inter-construct correlations.

The findings demonstrate that the values of diagonal (for example, 0.761 for JS, 0.855 for LS, 0.731 for QWL, and 0.853 for WLB) are greater than the correlations between constructs. This indicates that each construct shares more variance with its own indicators than with other constructs, providing strong evidence for discriminant validity as recommended by Fornell and Larcker (1981) and Hair et al. (2010).

It may be concluded that the Fornell-Larcker criterion provides further validation of the model's reliability and discriminant validity by confirming that all of the latent variables in the measurement model are distinct from one another.

These are really important factors influencing the work environment.

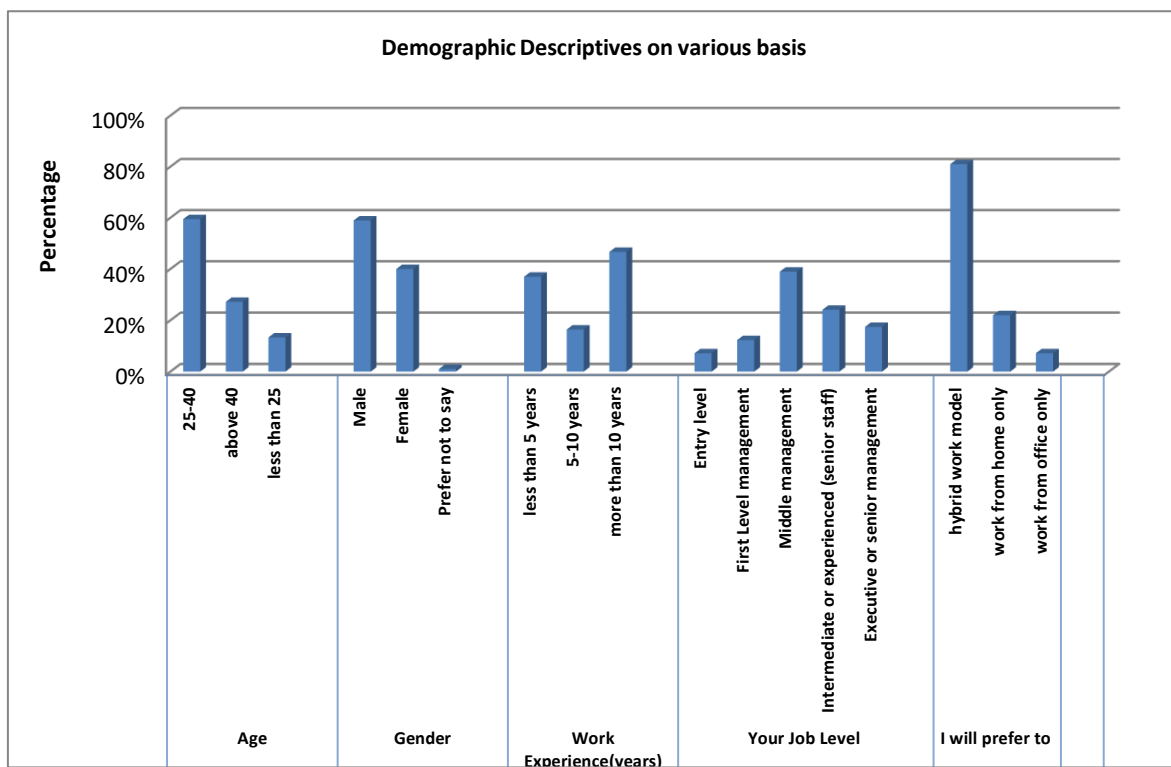
Multicollinearity was tested using the Variance Inflation Factor, with all values falling well below 5, indicating that multicollinearity is not an issue and that the

**Table 2. Fornell-Larcker Criterion.**

Variables	JS	LS	QWL	WLB
JS	0.761			
LS	0.698	0.855		
QWL	0.756	0.762	0.731	
WLB	0.752	0.642	0.639	0.853

**Table 3. Correlations.**

Variables	JS	LS	QWL	WLB
JS	1.000	0.698	0.756	0.752
LS	0.698	1.000	0.762	0.642
QWL	0.756	0.762	1.000	0.639
WLB	0.752	0.642	0.639	1.000



The correlation matrix in Table 3 highlights significant relationships between the key constructs: JS, LS, QWL, and WLB. JS exhibits a strong positive correlation with WLB (0.752), QWL (0.756), and LS (0.698), suggesting that higher JS is closely associated with improved WLB and a better impressions of QWL.

relationships between variables can be reliably interpreted in the model.

**Results and Discussion**  
**Demographic Descriptive**

Likewise, LS shows a strong correlation with QWL (0.762), indicating that LS has a significant effect in forming employees' views about their work environment and enhancing their balance in life. WLB is moderately associated with both QWL (0.639) and LS (0.642) while maintaining a strong correlation with JS (0.752). These relationships suggest that various aspects of well-being of the workers, including LS and QWL are interconnected.

The descriptive statistics (Figure 3) provide a complete picture of the demographics and work preferences. The majority is in the age group between 25-40 years, 27% are over 40, and 13% are under 25. Males make up 59%, females 40%, and minor percentages do not declare their gender. Experience levels include 47% with more than 10 years, 16% with 5–10 years, and 37% with less than 5 years. The workforce is diversified, with 39% in middle management, 24% in intermediate or



senior staff roles, 17% in executive or senior management, 12% in first-level management, and 7% at the entry-level. Hybrid work models are preferred by 81%, with lesser percentages choosing to work from office only 12% or WFH only 7%.

### Structural Model Analysis

The examination of the structural model gives important insights, such as the coefficients of the independent variables and the coefficient of determination, which displays the power of the model to explain phenomena. Further validation of the model's dependability is provided by the fact that effect sizes, t-statistics, and p-values highlight the importance and intensity of the correlations in question.

**Table 4. Structural Model Analysis: Direct Relationships.**

<i>H1: QWL, LS, and JS have significant effect on WLB.</i>			
Hypothesis			
Relationship	JS → WLB	LS → WLB	QWL → WLB
<b>β value</b>	0.571	0.205	0.051
<b>F<sup>2</sup></b>	0.314	0.04	0.002
<b>T-value</b>	4.968	2.369	0.524
<b>p-value</b>	0.000***	0.018***	0.6
	R <sup>2</sup> = 0.593 and Adjusted R <sup>2</sup> = 0.588; ***: p-value is significant at 5%, Authors' Calculations		

For H1, the analysis presented in Table 4 evaluates the effect of three independent variables, JS, LS and QWL, on WLB. The standardized regression coefficients (β values) indicate the power and direction of the relationships. The results reveal that both JS and LS significantly influence WLB, with β values of 0.571 and 0.205, respectively. This is supported by their corresponding t-values of 4.968 and 2.369, along with p-values below the significance threshold ( $p < 0.05$ ). QWL positively impacts WLB, as indicated by its β value of 0.051 and t-value of 0.524 with  $p = 0.600$ .

These findings suggest that while JS and LS play crucial roles in shaping WLB, QWL may not significantly influence it. The model's R<sup>2</sup> and adjusted R<sup>2</sup> values of 0.593 and 0.588, respectively, indicate that approximately 59.3% of the variance in WLB is explained by the combined effects of JS, LS, and QW. These results signify the critical roles of JS and LS in shaping WLB. Therefore, organizations which want to improve WLB should prioritize strategies that enhance satisfaction in job and increase the support of managers/leaders.

The findings presented in Table 5 provide an in-depth analysis of JS and LS as mediators in the association between QWL and WLB. Through mediation analysis,

the findings reveal that both JS and LS significantly mediate the effect of QWL on WLB.

For H2, the relationship  $QWL \rightarrow JS \rightarrow WLB$  demonstrates a direct effect (DE) of 0.051, while the specific indirect effect (SIE) through JS is 0.432, with a t-value of 4.718 and a p-value of 0.00, indicating a strong and significant mediation effect. The total effect (TE) of 0.571 confirms that much of the influence of QWL on WLB is mediated by JS. This highlights that a significant portion of the positive effect of QWL on WLB is achieved through increased JS, emphasising the necessity of nurturing high satisfaction in job work in order to enhance balance in work and personal life.

For H3, the relationship  $QWL \rightarrow LS \rightarrow WLB$  shows a

direct effect (DE) of 0.051 and a specific indirect effect (SIE) of 0.156 through LS, with a t-value of 2.372 and a p-value of 0.018, demonstrating a significant mediation effect, though smaller in magnitude compared to JS. The total effect (TE) of 0.205 reflects that LS also plays a crucial mediating role between QWL and WLB but to a lesser extent than JS.

The findings provide evidence that full mediation is present, as demonstrated by the fact that both JS and LS have large indirect effects. This indicates that these mediators provide a comprehensive explanation for the connection between QWL and WLB.

This comprehensive mediation analysis provides insights into the mechanisms through which workplace factors influence employees' perceptions of WLB. It emphasizes that enhancing work satisfaction and LS is essential for fostering positive WLB outcomes, far outweighing the direct impact of QWL alone.

### Conclusion

The study highlights a significant trend where most employees prefer hybrid work arrangements. This pattern supports the recent global trends in which hybrid work settings are gaining popularity due to their potential to meet employees' and employers' different needs and preferences. In particular, it highlights the shifting



dynamics of WLB and paves the way for a research into the factors that contribute to achieving long-term balance in hybrid work environment, particularly in the aftermath of the COVID-2019 pandemic in India.

quality of life at work and shaping the perception of balance in work and personal life among employees.

To summarise, this study sheds light on the complex dynamics that influence balance between work and

**Table 5. Mediating Impact Analysis.**

Mediator	Hypothesis	Relationship	Effect Type	Value	Statistical Significance
<b>Job Satisfaction (JS)</b>	<i>H2: "Quality of work life has a significant direct and indirect positive effect on work-life balance via job satisfaction"</i>	QWL → JS → WLB	Direct Effect (DE)	0.051	t-value: 4.718 (p = 0.001***)
			Specific Indirect Effect (SIE)	0.432	
			Total Effect (TE)	0.571	
Result: Full Mediation					
Mediator	Hypothesis	Relationship	Effect Type	Value	Statistical Significance
<b>Leadership Support (LS)</b>	<i>H3: "Leadership Support serves as a significant mediator between Quality of Work Life and Work-Life Balance"</i>	QWL → LS → WLB	Direct Effect (DE)	0.051	t-value: 2.372 (p = 0.018***)
			Specific Indirect Effect (SIE)	0.156	
			Total Effect (TE)	0.205	
Result: Full Mediation					
***: p-value is significant at 5%, Authors' Calculations					

In order to gain a better understanding of the intricate relationship that exists between QWL and WLB in hybrid work environment, the study investigates the crucial roles that JS and LS play as mediators. The results reveal that quality of life at work place is a cornerstone for fostering a conducive work environment. However, the effect of QWL on WLB becomes significant only when it is mediated through JS and effective LS. This endorses the theory of social exchange, which posits that relationships are built on reciprocal benefits (Blau, 1964), and offers deeper insights into the mechanisms through which QWL impacts WLB. Specifically, the study confirms that when a high quality of work-life enhances satisfaction in job, it positively affects WLB (Vayre, 2019; Eisenberger et al., 2001).

Further, the study reveals the significant role of LS as a mediator in the improving the WLB. It demonstrates that leadership practices that effectively communicate the benefits of hybrid work; and give guidance and support to employees; promote a healthy work culture and enhance well-being of the employees. The social contract between employers and employees is strengthened when leaders actively support their teams in overcoming the challenges of hybrid work. This, in turn, leads to a rise in JS and an overall improvement in WLB. This underscores the fact that JS and LS play crucial roles in improving the

personal life in the hybrid work setting. The study provides a road map for attaining long-term success by strategically improving quality of life at work based on the key roles of LS and JS. These findings offer guidance for organisations seeking to promote well-being of employees and organisational resilience in an ever-changing work environment.

### Policy Implications

In light of the insights derived from the study, realizing the prevalence of hybrid work setting, the organizations should formalize hybrid work arrangements, including work hours, availability, communication norms, and productivity expectations, to ensure clarity and consistency. To promote flexible work policies, organisations should provide equitable access to the necessary technology and resources, such as laptops, communication tools, secure access to company networks, and resources at home. Regular virtual and in-person training opportunities should be offered to recognize and support the employees' career growth, thus improving the quality of life at work in the hybrid work setting. Further, fair and transparent performance evaluation methods should be adapted to focus on outcomes rather than physical presence, and adequate rewards should be promoted to boost morale and enhance employee's satisfaction from work.

Leaders and managers should be trained to effectively support their teams in a hybrid work environment and establish a virtual open-door policy encouraging employees to share concerns and suggestions with their managers, fostering a culture of openness and trust. Regular events for team-building such as virtual coffee sessions and in-office meetups, should be organised to strengthen social relationships and collaborations, which will help to enhance the well-being of the employees. Regular feedback and open communication channels can also help identify and address areas of dissatisfaction.

The journey towards a sustainable business model requires a holistic approach that places people at the centre of organizational strategy and decision-making. By prioritizing quality of life at work, balance in personal-professional life, satisfaction in job, and effective support of leaders in organizations not only enhances employee's satisfaction and engagement in work but also lay the groundwork for long-term success, resilience, and positive impact in an ever-evolving global work landscape. By putting these policy ideas into practice, organisations will be positioned for long-term success and positive societal impact, as well as ecological efficiency through hybrid work patterns and a culture of well-being, creativity, and sustainability.

### Limitations and Future Scope of the Study

This study gives key insights into hybrid work settings; several limitations are present. The application of snowball convenience sampling may have resulted in an over-representation of specific industries or locations, constraining the results' generality. The reliability of the results may have been compromised by sample bias, including social desirability and recall problems, given the findings are derived from self-reported data. Nevertheless, the study failed to consider a comprehensive array of demographic, social, and cultural characteristics, including societal norms, professional nature, gender, family structure, and personal resilience, which can influence balance in work-life in a hybrid setting.

Subsequent research could enhance this study by utilizing randomized sampling to guarantee more representative and diverse samples and by implementing longitudinal designs to evaluate changes in satisfaction in job, support of managers/leaders, and balance in personal and professional life over time. Utilising mixed approaches, including interviews and surveys, may yield more profound insights, whereas the inclusion of objective performance data would mitigate bias. Extending the study to additional cultural contexts or

sectors, such as the public sector, might improve the generality of the findings.

Collaborations between academia and business can develop creative solutions that promote eco-friendly workplace practices. And last, a multidisciplinary approach can provide subtle insights on how best to optimise the work environment for a diverse set of workers in the set-up.

### Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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