



RE-CONCEPTUALIZING WORK–LIFE BALANCE IN THE DIGITAL AND HYBRID WORK ERA: INTEGRATING BOUNDARY THEORY, TECHNO STRESS, AND ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

Xavier J Stalin* Dr. M. Muthukamu**

*Research Scholar, Department of Management , Alagappa University, Karaikudi.

** HOD,Associate Professor in Business Administration, APSA College.

Abstract

The quick expansion of the hybrid and technologically enhanced work setting has fundamentally altered the lines between workplace and personal living. These changes also bring flexibility and independence, but also bring new pressures like techno-stress, role-blurring, and the disappearance of the work/life distinction. Current work–life balance (WLB) models, most of which were originally constructed in pre-digital times, are less able to encompass these complexities. To narrow this gap, the present study seeks to re-conceptualize WLB by creating an integrated conceptual framework that would be more representative of contemporary work. This paper constructs a theoretical framework based on Boundary Theory, Techno-stress Theory and Organizational Support Theory, and then provides a conceptual synthesis to discuss the interaction of technological requirements, individual boundary management and organizational support mechanisms. The research suggests a full model representing the downsides of techno-stress on WLB, the upsides of good boundary management and how it may buffer the negative effects of techno-stress on WLB. Hypotheses are stated to be tested in future empirical studies. The proposed framework adds to the literature by integrating a multi-theoretical approach to reflect traditional WLB views in the digital/hybrid working era. The research highlights the importance of organizational policies, digital well-being programs, and employee support for promoting a sustainable work–life balance from a managerial perspective. The paper provides a basis for future empirical studies and interventions in changing work environments.

Keywords: *Work–Life Balance (WLB) - Hybrid Work Systems - Techno-stress - Boundary Theory - Perceived Organizational Support (POS) - Employee Well-being - Digital Work Environment.*

Introduction

The work in the last ten years has changed dramatically from traditional work, which was conducted inside the office, to more flexible and distributed work. Traditionally, patterns of work included formalized and fixed schedules, distinct role definitions, and a separation of work and personal lives. But as the world has increasingly adopted information and communication technologies, globalization and evolving expectations of the workforce have helped speed up the move to remote and hybrid working models. This change has also been strengthened by the organizational strategies of post-pandemic, which emphasize flexibility, productivity, and autonomy of the employee. At the same time, it is increasingly common to use digital technologies to support and smooth out work processes. Virtual collaboration platforms, cloud-based systems, and real-time communication apps are a part of daily business, allowing for seamless collaboration across geographical distances. These technologies facilitate efficiency and accessibility but also create an “always-on” culture of work involving employees being permanently connected and having fewer opportunities to “unplug” from work. In consequence, the distinction between the work and personal sphere is becoming increasingly indistinct. In this constantly changing landscape, the concept of work–life balance demands rethinking of previous theories to incorporate the complexity of hybrid working arrangements and digital dependence.

Literature Review

Work–Life Balance: Concept and Evolution

Work–lifestyle balance (WLB) has developed over time as work structures, societal expectations and technological advancements have changed, but was often thought of as a balance of work and personal life. Initial research focused on role balance and role satisfaction, with the idea that effective engagement with both roles leads to overall well-being (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011). According to Allen, the initial studies on work–life balance (WLB) tended to focus on the work–family conflict and role strain perspectives, in which the concept of balance meant that there was no conflict between the two domains. This attitude was founded on segmentation, the idea of work and personal life being separate and apart. In 2013, research started to recognise both the interdependence of work and personal life, and the impossibility of complete separation. Employees' capacity to address competing demands is greatly affected by flexible work arrangements, supportive leadership and policies that support families (Beauregard & Henry, 2014). Spagnoli and Molino (2021) point out that the inclusion of digital technologies and hybrid work arrangements has greatly broadened the understanding of WLB. During that period, the studies pointed to blurring boundaries, greater links and the significance of boundary management to maintain balance. The latest research has conceptualized WLB as an ongoing and situational phenomenon, influenced by digital working environments and flexible work arrangements. Emphasis has now been placed on sustainability, employee health, and personal and professional identity (Nguyen & Malik, 2025) The construct of work–life balance began to be viewed as a dynamic and dynamic concept, influenced by generational shifts and workplace flexibility, around 2018. Balance is relative and different for everyone, as Kossek and Lautsch (2018) point out, and thus may require adaptive organizational practices.

Hybrid Work and Digital Transformation

Allen, 2010 highlight that early literature on work–life balance (WLB) focused on the work–family conflict and role strain aspects of WLB, with balance being measured in the lack of interference between the domains. This view was based on segmentation—that is, work and personal life were viewed as separate and segmented. In 2013, research started to look at work and personal life as interdependent and that it is not possible to separate them. This shift underscored the need for flexibility and employee wellbeing to achieve a balance. (Guest, 2013) The scholars also noted that flexible working options, leadership support, and family-friendly policies have a strong impact on employees' capacities to cope. This was an evolution in thinking about WLB as a collective responsibility of people and institutions (Beauregard & Henry, 2014). By around 2018, the concept of work-life balance became more fluid and subject to change and generational norms, and flexible work arrangements. Balance is subjective and can be different for different people, as Kossek and Lautsch (2018) noted, meaning that the organization needs to be more adaptive. The concept of work–life balance (WLB) had changed significantly after the rise of the widespread hybrid and remote working models, as noted by Choudhury, Foroughi and Larson (2022). They highlight the need for boundary management strategies as crucial for helping employees manage integrated and segmented roles well and argue that organizational support and individual autonomy are essential. Mehta and Singhal (2026) define work–life balance (WLB) as a multi-dimensional and context-dependent phenomenon that is influenced by digital work environments and changing organizational structures. They focus on sustainability, employee wellness, and combining technological, psychological, and organizational aspects, indicating a holistic view of WLB in the new hybrid working world.

Boundary Theory

It is important to note that there is a difference between segmentation and integration preferences when it comes to the management of work–life boundaries, as noted in Kreiner, Hollensbe and Sheep (2012), people have different personalities, job demands and family responsibilities. Based on their research, segmentation is found to decrease role conflict and integration is found to be flexible but can lead to boundary blurring. Allen, Cho, and Meier (2015) point out that studies began to investigate ways that people actively create and strengthen boundaries between work and life using behavioral, temporal, and communicative tactics. They focus on practices like defined work hours, workspace segregation and judicious use of technology to control access and boundary interference. It is important to note that contextual and organizational factors like job autonomy, leadership support, and organizational climate are important factors that affect how employees manage their work–life boundaries (Kossek and Lautsch, 2017). Their study also highlights the fluidity of boundaries, which can vary according to the situation and the people involved, such that sometimes people might move from segmentation to integration and other times from integration to segmentation. As highlighted by Ashforth, Kreiner, and Fugate (2022), this perspective highlights the need for being flexible with approaches like digital disconnection and role prioritization to maintain a healthy work–life balance. As noted by Clark and Holdsworth (2023), this view signals a decrease in conflict and better work–life balance for those with stronger boundary control. In recent views (2025), boundary management is viewed as an ongoing, situation-dependent continuum, shaped by digital technologies, hybrid working and organizational expectations. Current studies point to both personal strategies and support systems for organizations to manage their boundaries effectively in an “always-on” working environment (Nippert-Eng & Wharton, 2025).

Techno Stress

Initial studies conducted in early 2013s indicated that technostress can be a major work-related stressor, affecting employees' productivity and satisfaction. Scholars also noted that over-dependence on ICTs created an overload of information, excessive workload, and time pressure, which can result in techno-overload and lower efficiency of work (Ayyagari, Grover & Purvis, 2013). The impact of technostress on psychological and behavioral aspects was examined in 2016. Research highlighted techno-invasion's impact on personal lives through the development of an “always on” culture that led to employees feeling pressured to be constantly connected to the workplace, which in turn contributed to work–life conflict and emotional exhaustion (Tarafdar, Cooper, & Stich, 2016). Research in 2019 has continued to study the cognitive and emotional aspects of technostress complexity, especially technostress. The workers had to learn new technologies continuously and were feeling inadequate, frustrated and low in job satisfaction. During this time, the connection between technostress and burnout was also emphasized (Maier et al., 2019). In 2022, with remote and hybrid work becoming the norm, the focus was on the growing impact of technostress on employee well-being. These three aspects (overload, invasion and complexity) were intensified with the use of digital tools, which leads to greater stress and less psychological distance from work (Wang, Liu, Qian & Parker 2022). Starting in 2024, researchers started to look at technostress from a more holistic perspective, analyzing how it affects employees' health, satisfaction, and productivity levels. Researchers pointed out that chronic exposure to technostress can lead to anxiety, fatigue, and a general reduction in life satisfaction, along with the influence of organizational support and digital literacy (Califf, Sarker, & Sarker, 2024). The latest 2026 contributions think about technostress as a multi-dimensional and situational phenomenon, especially in hybrid working contexts. Recent research highlights the importance of developing adaptive coping strategies, digital well-being measures, and organizational interventions to counter its negative impact. The

emphasis is now on managing the technology to be compatible with the health of the workers to promote sustainable work practices (Ragu-Nathan & Ragu-Nathan, 2026).

Organizational Support Theory

Initial studies in about 2010 highlighted the importance of POS as a key factor influencing employee attitudes such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment. During this time, research confirmed that supportive organizational practices like fair treatment, recognition, and supervisor support are important to the reduction of stress and creation of a positive work culture (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2010). By 2015, it shifted to examine how to use POS to alleviate stress and promote work–life balance. Scholars emphasized that flexible policies such as flexible working and family-friendly policies greatly reduce role conflict and work-related stress. POS was growingly seen as a buffer against the pressures of the workplace (Kurtessis et al., 2015). The link between POS and employee well-being was also investigated in 2019, with a particular focus on how POS can help to reduce burnout and emotional exhaustion. Researchers were able to show that workers who feel more supported in their work can better manage job demands, which leads to increases in resilience and psychological wellbeing (Caesens & Stinglhamber, 2019). The 2021 outlook added remote and digitally enabled work environments to the mix of POS. As the concept of virtual work emerged, organizational support went beyond the traditional to digital communication, managerial availability and technological support. Having been identified as key factors to decrease stress and keep employees engaged in a remote environment (Spagnoli & Molino, 2021). The importance of POS in hybrid work environments became more prominent by 2023. Research also indicated that organizational support can help reduce stress and improve employees blurred boundary management. It was concluded that POS is a mediator of the negative impact of technostress on work–life balance (Ahmed, Khuwaja, Brohi, & Othman, 2023). Recent works from 2025 conceptualize POS as a multidimensional construct that includes emotional, instrumental and technological aspects. Recent research highlights its pivotal role in supporting digital well-being, promoting adaptive coping strategies and facilitating sustainable working practices in hybrid environments. Stress reduction and better long-term well-being can be achieved through active employee support systems; this is especially true for organizations that actively implement them (Nguyen & Malik, 2025).

Literature Synthesis and Gap Identification

Initial studies in the early 2010s have mostly looked at WLB in a unidimensional way, concerning work–family conflict and employee well-being. An initial body of research offered insights into what factors make for balance, but the relationship between the technological and organizational factors were not sufficiently considered (Allen, Herst, Bruck, & Sutton, 2010). In 2014, research started to use organizational practices in conversations about WLB, stressing the importance of good policies and flexible work arrangements. During the same timeframe, however, the study of constructs like organizational support or work–life balance continued to be studied as separate constructs, and very little was done to account for the combined effects or integrate these two constructs into a single theory (Beauregard & Henry, 2014). Researchers began to take a more comprehensive perspective in 2016, recognizing that WLB can vary based on each person's perception of the situation, job demands, and contextual factors. Even with this progress, the literature focused on these dimensions in isolation without synthesizing and integrating the boundary management, technological stressors and organizational support mechanisms (Wayne, Butts, Casper, & Allen, 2016). For 2017, the focus was on boundary management and role transitions, especially with flexible working. Boundary Theory was a comprehensive theory on the interaction between work and personal roles and, while it did not completely neglect other constructs, such as technostress, it was not often considered in conjunction

with newer concepts (Kossek&Lautsch, 2017). The fast-paced transition to remote and hybrid working environments highlighted technostress and digital working in 2021. Research emphasized the increasing interdependence of technology usage, boundary blurring and organizational support. Most studies, however, used a partial integration approach, focusing on two constructions in each study, instead of building a more global model that includes all the relevant constructs (Spagnoli& Molino, 2021). The emphasis on the importance of considering Boundary Theory, Technostress and Organizational Support in conjunction with each other to explain the impact on work–life balance is highlighted in recent contributions in 2025. Modern research suggests that the lack of such holistic approaches hinders both theoretical progress and implementation, especially in hybrid work environments where constant connectivity and changing organizational dynamics pose challenges (Nguyen & Malik, 2025).

Problem Statement

The shift to hybrid and digitized working has profoundly changed the nature of the professional/private sphere. Today's work environment is more flexible than traditional work arrangements, characterized by both greater freedom of space and greater freedom of time, but also continued connectivity between various domains of work and non-work. This has created an overlap between work and non-work time, and sometimes it is hard to draw a boundary between the two, difficult to ensure psychological detachment, or tough to get a "work-life balance" right. One important effect of this trend is the increasing occurrence of technostress, which is “stress caused by the use of information and communication technologies.” The constant use of digital technologies, the countless interruptions, the overload of information and the need for instant reactions increase employees' stress levels. These can over time lead to emotional exhaustion, loss of productivity and a negative impact on well-being and ultimately burn out. While these challenges are becoming increasingly relevant, the existing concept of a work–life balance does not sufficiently cover the effects of boundary blurring and technostress in hybrid work arrangements. This emphasizes the importance of a new line of thinking that embraces these new dynamics and helps to navigate the challenges of employee wellness in the digital age.

Research Gap

Even though there is a significant amount of literature about work-life balance (WLB), most previous research has focused separately on the factors influencing work-life balance. Most research has adopted one perspective in their examination of work-life balance, such as organizational practices, individual behavior, and technology impacts. While theories like Boundary Theory, Technostress, and Organizational Support have individually provided valuable insights into employee wellbeing, an integrated theoretical model combining all the factors into one framework has yet to be developed. Moreover, although some previous research have studied the issue, many of them were based on the traditional work environment or the fully remote work setting. Hybrid work arrangements have been understudied by many researchers, even though they bring new problems to WLB that do not exist in other settings. Hybrid work involves the use of flexible working hours and locations; thus, employees have more autonomy to control their boundaries between work and personal life. However, they still require technological devices for communication, leading to technostress. Furthermore, the level of organizational support might also differ compared to other settings.

Objectives of the Study

Objective 1: To examine the impact of technostress on work–life balance in digital work environments

Objective 2: To analyze the role of boundary management in influencing work–life balance

Objective 3: To evaluate the moderating role of perceived organizational support in the relationship between technostress, boundary management, and work–life balance

Structure of the Paper

In terms of its structure, the paper is organized in such a way that it allows for a smooth flow of thoughts and ideas in line with the goals of creating an integrated conceptual framework regarding work-life balance in the age of digitalization and hybrid work. After the introduction, a detailed review of the available literature will be provided, including a historical overview of work-life balance, emergence of hybrid work arrangements, and theoretical background of boundary theory, technostress, and organizational support.

This will be followed by the development of the theoretical framework by integrating perspectives and creating a conceptual model of the connections between the concepts discussed. In addition, hypotheses based on the theoretical model will be formulated. Then, the discussion section will explain the implications of the model developed, both theoretical and managerial, and highlight its significance in the existing literature.

The limitations of the current study and possible areas for further research, especially those involving empirical evidence, will be discussed as well. The conclusions will sum up the main findings of the paper.

Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses Development

Conceptual Model Overview

The proposed conceptual framework aims to reconceptualize **Work–Life Balance (WLB)** in the context of digitally enabled and hybrid work environments by integrating key constructs from Technostress, Boundary Theory, and Organizational Support Theory. The model is designed to capture the complex interplay between technological demands, individual boundary management strategies, and organizational interventions in shaping employee well-being.

In this framework, **Technostress** and **Boundary Management** are positioned as the primary **independent variables**, influencing employees' ability to achieve and sustain work–life balance. Technostress, conceptualized through dimensions such as overload, invasion, and complexity, represents the strain arising from excessive and continuous use of digital technologies. High levels of technostress are expected to negatively impact WLB by increasing work intrusion, reducing psychological detachment, and contributing to burnout.

Conversely, **Boundary Management** reflects the strategies individuals employ to regulate the interface between work and personal life. Effective boundary management, whether through segmentation (clear separation) or integration (flexible blending)—enables individuals to minimize role conflict and enhance balance. Employees with strong boundary control are more likely to maintain equilibrium despite increasing work demands.

The model further incorporates **Organizational Support** as a **moderating variable**, recognizing its critical role in influencing how employees experience and respond to technostress and boundary challenges. Perceived organizational support, including flexible policies, supportive leadership, and access to technological resources, is expected to buffer the negative effects of technostress and strengthen the positive impact of boundary management on WLB. In supportive organizational contexts, employees are better equipped to manage digital demands and maintain healthier boundaries.

The **dependent variable**, Work–Life Balance, is conceptualized as a multidimensional construct encompassing satisfaction, role harmony, and psychological well-being across work and personal

domains. The model proposes that WLB is not merely an outcome of reduced conflict, but a dynamic state influenced by both individual strategies and organizational conditions.

Overall, the conceptual model advances existing literature by offering an **integrated and interactional perspective**, where technostress and boundary management jointly influence work–life balance, and organizational support plays a pivotal moderating role. This framework provides a foundation for developing empirically testable hypotheses and contributes to a deeper understanding of employee well-being in the hybrid work era.

Hypotheses Development

H1:Technostress has a significant negative impact on work–life balance.

H2:Effective boundary management has a significant positive impact on work–life balance.

H3:Perceived organizational support significantly moderates the relationship between technostress, boundary management, and work–life balance, such that higher support weakens the negative impact of technostress and strengthens the positive effect of boundary management.

Discussion

Theoretical Contributions

Theoretical Contributions

This conceptual paper makes a significant theoretical contribution by integrating three major frameworks—Boundary Theory, Technostress, and Perceived Organizational Support (POS)—to reconceptualize work–life balance in the context of digital and hybrid work environments. While prior research has largely examined these theories in isolation, this study offers a holistic and multi-dimensional perspective, highlighting how individual boundary management, technology-induced stressors, and organizational support systems interact to shape employee well-being and role integration. First, the paper advances theory by bridging micro-level and macro-level perspectives. Boundary Theory explains how individuals negotiate and manage the interface between work and personal life, while Technostress captures the pressures arising from constant digital connectivity. POS, on the other hand, introduces the organizational lens, emphasizing how institutional support can buffer stress and facilitate healthier boundary management. By synthesizing these perspectives, the study presents a comprehensive framework that captures the complexity of modern work arrangements.

Second, the study contributes by extending Boundary Theory to hybrid work settings, where traditional spatial and temporal boundaries are significantly blurred. In contrast to earlier conceptualizations that assumed relatively stable physical and temporal separations, hybrid work introduces dynamic and fluid boundaries, requiring continuous negotiation. This paper reconceptualizes boundaries as digitally mediated, permeable, and context-dependent, influenced not only by individual preferences but also by technological demands and organizational expectations.

Furthermore, the integration with Technostress theory highlights how digital overload, constant availability, and communication fatigue can erode boundary control, leading to work–life imbalance. Simultaneously, incorporating POS underscores the role of organizations in designing supportive policies, fostering a culture of flexibility, and enabling digital well-being, thereby mitigating the adverse effects of technostress.

Overall, this study contributes to the literature by proposing a unified theoretical model that reflects the realities of the digital and hybrid work era. It shifts the discourse from a static understanding of work–life balance to a dynamic, interactional process, where balance is continuously co-constructed through



the interplay of individual strategies, technological environments, and organizational support mechanisms.

Managerial Implications

The findings of this conceptual paper offer important implications for organizations navigating the complexities of digital and hybrid work environments. As work–life boundaries become increasingly fluid and technology-driven, managerial strategies must evolve to ensure employee well-being, productivity, and long-term engagement.

A key implication is the critical importance of robust organizational support systems. Drawing from the integration of Perceived Organizational Support (POS), the study emphasizes that employees are more likely to manage work–life boundaries effectively when they perceive their organization as supportive and responsive to their needs. This includes not only formal policies—such as flexible work arrangements and leave provisions—but also informal support mechanisms, such as empathetic leadership, open communication, and a culture that respects personal time. Managers play a pivotal role in modelling boundary-respecting behaviours, thereby reinforcing norms that discourage excessive work intrusions into personal life.

Additionally, organizations must recognize the growing impact of technostress and proactively address it through structured interventions. This highlights the need for comprehensive digital well-being policies that regulate the use of technology and promote healthier work practices. Such policies may include guidelines on after-hours communication, limits on meeting overload, and encouragement of “digital detox” periods. By establishing clear expectations around availability and responsiveness, organizations can reduce ambiguity and prevent burnout associated with constant connectivity.

Moreover, training and awareness programs are essential to equip employees and managers with the skills required to navigate hybrid work challenges. This includes boundary management training, digital literacy, and stress management techniques. Organizations that invest in these areas are better positioned to foster a resilient and adaptable workforce.

Overall, the study underscores that work–life balance in the digital era is not solely an individual responsibility but a shared organizational priority. By strengthening support systems and implementing thoughtful digital well-being initiatives, organizations can create sustainable work environments that enhance both employee satisfaction and organizational effectiveness.

Practical Applications

The conceptual framework presented in this study translates into several actionable strategies that organizations, particularly HR functions, can implement to enhance work–life balance in digital and hybrid work environments.

One of the primary applications lies in designing targeted HR interventions that align with the integrated model of Boundary Theory, Technostress, and Organizational Support. HR departments can develop structured policies that promote flexible work arrangements while simultaneously ensuring clarity in role expectations and communication norms. This includes formalizing hybrid work guidelines, establishing boundaries for availability, and integrating employee well-being metrics into performance management systems. Additionally, HR can introduce regular pulse surveys and feedback mechanisms

to monitor employee stress levels and boundary challenges, enabling timely and data-driven interventions.

Another critical application is the implementation of employee training programs focused on boundary management. As hybrid work requires individuals to actively manage the overlap between personal and professional domains, organizations must equip employees with the necessary skills and strategies. Training programs can cover areas such as time management, prioritization, digital discipline, and techniques to manage interruptions and maintain focus. Employees can also be guided on setting physical, temporal, and psychological boundaries—such as creating dedicated workspaces, defining work hours, and communicating availability clearly to colleagues and supervisors.

Furthermore, organizations can extend these initiatives to include managerial capability building, ensuring that leaders are trained to recognize signs of technostress and support their teams effectively. Managers should be encouraged to foster open dialogue, respect individual boundary preferences, and avoid reinforcing an “always-on” culture.

In practice, these applications contribute to creating a balanced and sustainable work ecosystem, where employees are empowered to manage their roles effectively while organizations provide the necessary structural and cultural support. By embedding these practices into HR systems and daily operations, organizations can move from a reactive to a proactive approach in managing work–life balance in the evolving world of work.

Implications

Theoretical Implications

One of the greatest contributions of the current study to theoretical knowledge is that it provides a new and more coherent conceptualization of work-life balance within the era of digital transformation. Using such concepts as Boundary Theory, Technostress, and Perceived Organizational Support (POS), the paper introduces a unified theoretical framework that explains the phenomenon comprehensively at multiple levels.

Firstly, a combined framework of factors related to individual, technological, and organizational aspects allows advancing theoretical knowledge through demonstrating the complex nature of work-life balance in the contemporary world. Namely, the paper suggests that boundaries of work have become fluid because employees' ability to balance work and private life now largely depends on technological requirements and organizational structure. Moreover, a coherent framework enables exploring correlations between employees' coping abilities and both organizational support and technostress.

Finally, an introduced framework paves the way for future empirical studies on the topic in question. Namely, the introduction of clear definitions and relations enables testing them empirically in other settings and conditions. Hence, the paper calls researchers to examine the issue using an integrative approach.

Managerial Implications

This study provides valuable insights for practitioners by demonstrating how a unified understanding of Boundary Theory, Technostress, and Organizational Support can inform the design of effective hybrid work policies. As organizations continue to adopt flexible and digitally enabled work models, there is a growing need for structured policies that balance organizational goals with employee well-being.



The proposed framework helps managers recognize that hybrid work is not merely a logistical arrangement but a strategic and behavioural system that requires careful alignment of expectations, technology use, and support mechanisms. It guides organizations in designing policies that clearly define work hours, communication norms, and availability expectations, thereby reducing ambiguity and preventing the erosion of work–life boundaries.

Additionally, the study highlights the importance of embedding flexibility with accountability in hybrid policies. Managers can use these insights to create guidelines that allow employees autonomy in choosing when and where they work, while still maintaining performance standards and collaboration efficiency. This balance is essential to avoid both overwork (due to constant connectivity) and under-engagement.

The framework also emphasizes the need to incorporate employee well-being and digital health considerations into policy design. Organizations can use these insights to implement practices such as “right to disconnect” policies, structured meeting schedules, and limits on after-hours communication. Such initiatives not only reduce technostress but also foster a culture of trust and respect.

Overall, the study equips managers with a theoretically grounded approach to designing hybrid work policies, enabling them to create sustainable, inclusive, and high-performing work environments in the evolving digital landscape.

Policy Implications

This study offers important insights for policymakers and institutional leaders by highlighting the need to support the development of comprehensive employee well-being guidelines in the context of digital and hybrid work environments. As traditional work structures evolve, there is an increasing necessity for formal policies that address the emerging challenges of boundary blurring, technostress, and continuous connectivity.

The integrated framework underscores that employee well-being must be approached as a systemic and policy-driven priority, rather than an individual concern. Policymakers—both at the organizational and broader regulatory level—can use these insights to formulate guidelines that promote healthy work practices, including clearly defined working hours, the right to disconnect, and safeguards against excessive digital surveillance and workload intensification.

Furthermore, the study supports the creation of standardized well-being frameworks that organizations can adopt and customize based on their operational context. These may include policies on digital communication norms, mandatory breaks, mental health support systems, and periodic well-being assessments. Such guidelines can help ensure consistency, fairness, and accountability across teams and departments.

At a broader level, the findings also encourage industry bodies and regulatory agencies to consider embedding employee well-being into labour policies and organizational compliance frameworks, particularly in sectors heavily reliant on digital work. This can contribute to creating healthier and more sustainable work ecosystems.

In essence, this research reinforces the idea that effective work–life balance in the digital era requires policy-level interventions that institutionalize well-being, ensuring that employees are supported not only by organizational practices but also by formal guidelines and standards.

Limitations

While providing many theoretical insights, the study also faces some limitations that cannot be overlooked.

To start with, the study is of a theoretical nature and, thus, cannot be verified through primary and secondary data. In other words, the model combining Boundary Theory, Technostress, and Perceived Organizational Support (POS) has been created by reviewing the relevant literature, but it has yet to be examined empirically. This suggests that all the relations presented within the model and its propositions are still only theoretical and have not been validated. Therefore, further studies should be conducted to verify this model through quantitative and qualitative techniques.

In addition, it is important to note that the scope of the research is rather narrow since the framework under discussion covers only digital and hybrid workplaces. Even though this limitation is justified by the recent developments in the working environment of employees, one cannot ignore the fact that there might be some differences between digital and non-digital work environments that would require a different approach towards managing boundaries. Overall, both limitations identified call for more empirical and contextual research.

Future Research Directions

Building on the conceptual foundation of this study, several avenues for future research emerge that can further strengthen and expand the proposed framework.

First, there is a clear need for the empirical validation of the proposed hypotheses. Future studies can operationalize the constructs of Boundary Theory, Technostress, and Perceived Organizational Support (POS) to test the relationships outlined in this model. Both quantitative (e.g., surveys, structural equation modelling) and qualitative approaches (e.g., interviews, case studies) can be employed to examine the robustness and applicability of the framework in real-world settings.

Second, future research should explore cross-industry and cross-cultural contexts to enhance the generalizability of the model. Work–life balance dynamics may vary significantly across sectors such as IT, education, healthcare, and manufacturing, as well as across different cultural settings with varying norms around work, technology use, and organizational support. Comparative studies can provide deeper insights into how contextual factors influence the interplay between boundaries, technostress, and support systems.

Finally, there is a need for longitudinal research designs to capture the evolving nature of work–life balance over time. As digital and hybrid work arrangements continue to develop, employee experiences, coping mechanisms, and organizational practices are likely to change. Longitudinal studies can help track these shifts, offering a more dynamic understanding of how work–life balance is constructed and sustained in the long term.

Overall, these future research directions will not only validate and refine the proposed framework but also contribute to a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of work–life balance in the rapidly changing world of work.

Conclusion

This study provides a comprehensive conceptual understanding of work–life balance (WLB) in the context of the digital and hybrid work era by integrating Boundary Theory, Technostress, and Perceived

Organizational Support (POS). The key insight emerging from this paper is that WLB is no longer a static or individual-centric construct; rather, it is a dynamic and continuously negotiated process shaped by the interaction between individual boundary management, technological demands, and organizational support systems.

The study reinforces the urgent need to reconceptualize work–life balance considering evolving work arrangements. Traditional notions of clear separation between work and personal life are increasingly inadequate in digitally connected environments, where boundaries are fluid and often blurred. By proposing a unified framework, this paper shifts the discourse toward a more holistic and context-sensitive understanding of WLB that reflects contemporary workplace realities.

Furthermore, the research highlights the continued and growing relevance of this reconceptualization for both academia and practice. As organizations increasingly adopt hybrid and technology-enabled work models, understanding the interplay between technostress, boundary management, and support mechanisms will be critical in ensuring employee well-being and organizational sustainability.

In conclusion, this study not only contributes to theoretical advancement but also lays the groundwork for future empirical research and practical interventions, emphasizing that effective work–life balance in the modern era requires a multi-dimensional, adaptive, and forward-looking approach.

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37. Follow APA 7th / Harvard style.
38. Include foundational and recent studies (2020–2025).