



Work–Life Balance Challenges Among HR Professionals in the Era of Remote and Hybrid Work

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Abstract – Work–life balance has become a significant concern for HR professionals as remote and hybrid work arrangements reshape organizational practices. Although these work models provide flexibility and autonomy, they may also increase workloads, extend working hours, create continuous digital connectivity, and blur boundaries between professional and personal life. HR professionals face additional pressure because they manage employee concerns, organizational communication, performance issues, and workplace relationships through increasingly digital environments. Technology can improve HR efficiency through automation and digital tools, but excessive connectivity may also contribute to stress, digital overload, and difficulty disconnecting from work. Organizational support, flexible work policies, supportive leadership, reasonable workloads, and clear communication expectations are therefore important for maintaining work–life balance. Individual strategies such as effective time management, prioritization, psychological detachment, and self-care can further support well-being. Overall, maintaining work–life balance can improve job satisfaction, engagement, organizational commitment, well-being, and professional effectiveness, while poor balance may contribute to stress, burnout, emotional exhaustion, reduced productivity, and turnover intentions among HR professionals.

Keywords - Work–Life Balance, Hybrid Work, Workloads, Digital Connectivity, And Workplace Relationships, Digital Tools, Stress, Burnout and Emotional Exhaustion.

I. INTRODUCTION

The nature of work has changed significantly with the growing adoption of remote and hybrid work arrangements, creating new opportunities as well as challenges for employees and organizations. Remote work provides greater flexibility in terms of working time and location, while hybrid work combines remote working with periodic office-based work. These arrangements have become increasingly common following the COVID-19 pandemic and have changed traditional expectations regarding workplace presence and communication. Research indicates that although flexible working can improve employee autonomy and support work–life balance, it can also create longer working hours, increased work intensity, and difficulty in separating professional and personal responsibilities (Eurofound, 2020). For HR professionals, these challenges may be particularly significant because they are responsible for managing employees, resolving workplace issues, supporting organizational policies, and maintaining employee engagement, often while working within the same flexible arrangements.

The role of HR professionals has become increasingly complex in remote and hybrid workplaces. HR personnel are expected to manage recruitment, employee relations, performance management, training, employee well-being, communication, and organizational change through digital platforms. The increased dependence on technology can make HR work more accessible and flexible, but it can also encourage continuous connectivity and make it difficult to establish clear boundaries between work and personal life. The International Labour Organization (ILO)

highlights that working from home can involve important tensions between employment responsibilities and personal or family life, particularly when appropriate organizational protections and working arrangements are absent (ILO, 2021). Similarly, Eurofound reported that people working from home were more likely to work during their free time, demonstrating the potential for remote work to extend beyond normal working hours (Eurofound, 2020). These conditions can contribute to work-related stress, fatigue, reduced recovery time, and difficulties in maintaining healthy boundaries.

Work–life balance among HR professionals is therefore an important issue for contemporary organizations because the effectiveness and well-being of HR personnel can influence the wider workforce. HR professionals themselves are expected to promote employee well-being while simultaneously managing their own workload and personal responsibilities. Hybrid working may provide greater flexibility and autonomy, but its outcomes depend on how organizations structure communication, working hours, managerial support, and expectations regarding availability. Evidence suggests that teleworking can improve work–life balance for some employees while simultaneously increasing overtime and reducing social interaction for others (Eurofound, 2022). Recent research also suggests that hybrid work can influence work–family conflict and employee well-being, indicating that the effectiveness of hybrid arrangements depends on how work and non-work boundaries are managed (Costa et al., 2025). Therefore, examining work–life balance challenges among HR professionals in the era of remote and hybrid work is important for understanding workload pressures, boundary management, work–family conflict, technological demands, and organizational support, while



identifying practices that can promote sustainable performance and employee well-being.

II. CHANGING NATURE OF HR WORK IN REMOTE AND HYBRID ENVIRONMENTS

The transition from traditional office-based work to remote and hybrid arrangements has significantly changed the nature of HR work. HR professionals are increasingly required to manage recruitment, onboarding, employee communication, performance management, engagement, training, and employee well-being through digital platforms. Instead of relying primarily on face-to-face interactions, HR functions now involve virtual meetings, online collaboration tools, digital documentation, and technology-supported workforce management. This transformation has made HR more digitally oriented and requires professionals to develop new competencies in virtual communication, technology use, and remote employee management (International Labour Organization [ILO], 2021).

The changing work environment has also expanded the strategic responsibilities of HR professionals. HR teams are expected to design appropriate policies for flexible work, maintain organizational culture, support employee well-being, and manage the challenges associated with geographically dispersed employees. Recent research indicates that HRM roles differ across hybrid and fully virtual work arrangements, requiring HR professionals to adopt more integrative and technology-enabled approaches (Blay et al., 2026). At the same time, increased dependence on digital communication can create additional pressure. Research involving HR practitioners in India found that ICT-enabled remote work can contribute to technostress, work-family conflict, and reduced well-being (2025).

III. WORKLOAD AND EXTENDED WORKING HOURS

Remote and hybrid work have created greater flexibility for HR professionals, but they have also contributed to increased workloads and longer working hours. HR professionals are often responsible for multiple activities simultaneously, including employee communication, recruitment, performance monitoring, grievance handling, training, attendance management, and employee well-being. The digital nature of remote work can further increase work intensity because HR professionals may need to coordinate with employees across different locations and respond quickly to organizational requirements. The ILO notes that telework can involve work intensification and excessive working hours, creating risks for employee well-being and work-life balance (International Labour Organization [ILO], 2021).

1. Increased Work Pressure and Multiple HR Responsibilities

HR professionals working remotely or in hybrid settings often experience increased work pressure because several HR functions must be managed simultaneously through digital platforms. Virtual meetings, employee queries, recruitment activities, performance monitoring, conflict resolution, and organizational communication can increase the number of daily responsibilities. Research on HR practitioners in India found that ICT-enabled remote work can contribute to technostress, work-family conflict, and reduced performance, indicating that technology-supported work may create additional demands rather than simply reducing workload (2025).

2. Blurring of Working and Non-Working Hours

The flexibility associated with remote and hybrid work can make it difficult for HR professionals to maintain clear boundaries between professional and personal time. Digital communication tools allow employees and managers to send emails, messages, and meeting invitations beyond conventional working hours, creating expectations of continuous availability. The ILO and Eurofound report that telework can result in longer working hours and overlap between paid work and personal life, potentially increasing stress and reducing opportunities for recovery (ILO & Eurofound, 2017).

IV. DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY AND WORK-RELATED STRESS

Digital connectivity has become an essential part of HR work in remote and hybrid environments. HR professionals increasingly depend on email, instant messaging, video conferencing, HR information systems, and collaborative platforms to communicate with employees and managers. Although these technologies improve accessibility and speed of communication, they can also increase technostress, particularly when HR professionals are expected to manage several digital channels simultaneously. Research involving 218 HR practitioners from software organizations in India found that ICT-enabled remote work can increase technostress, negatively affect mental health, increase work-family conflict, and reduce performance (Rohwer et al., 2025). Eurofound similarly reports that high ICT use and flexible working can contribute to stress, anxiety, and work intensification when digital connectivity becomes excessive.

1. Continuous Availability Through Digital Platforms

Continuous connectivity can create an “always-on” work culture, where HR professionals feel pressure to respond to emails, messages, calls, and meeting requests even outside regular working hours. This makes it difficult to psychologically disconnect from work and may reduce opportunities for rest and personal activities. Eurofound found that more than 80% of surveyed workers regularly received work-related communications outside contractual working hours, while frequent out-of-hours contact was



associated with poorer work–life balance and greater stress (Weber & Adăscăliței, 2023).

V. WORK–FAMILY CONFLICT AMONG HR PROFESSIONALS

Remote and hybrid work arrangements can create both opportunities and challenges for HR professionals in managing work and family responsibilities. Although working from home can reduce commuting time and provide greater flexibility, the physical overlap between professional and family environments may make it difficult to separate work demands from personal responsibilities. Research shows that the relationship between remote work and work–family conflict is complex and depends on working hours, family circumstances, and the extent of remote work.

1. Difficulty Managing Family and Professional Responsibilities

HR professionals working remotely may have to manage employee concerns, meetings, recruitment activities, and organizational responsibilities while simultaneously dealing with household and family demands. This can create competing expectations and make it difficult to concentrate fully on either role. However, evidence suggests that extensive work-from-home arrangements can sometimes reduce work-to-family conflict by providing greater flexibility. Laß and Wooden (2023) found that greater proportions of working hours performed at home were associated with lower work–family conflict, particularly among those working most of their hours from home.

2. Impact of Work Demands on Family Time

Heavy workloads, urgent employee issues, virtual meetings, and communication outside regular working hours can reduce the time available for family interaction and personal activities. When work continues into evenings or weekends, HR professionals may experience difficulty participating in family activities and maintaining meaningful relationships. Research indicates that working from home outside normal working hours is associated with poorer psychological well-being and higher work-to-family and family-to-work conflict (Yang et al., 2023).

3. Difficulty Maintaining Family and Work Boundaries

Another important challenge is maintaining clear boundaries between professional and family life. When the home becomes the workplace, HR professionals may find it difficult to mentally disconnect from work after completing their formal working hours. Remote-work research highlights that blurred boundaries can produce temporal and emotional spillover between work and family domains, while family-supportive supervisory practices can help employees manage these boundaries more effectively (Kangas et al., 2023).

4. Difficulty in Handling Family Emergencies and Unexpected Work Demands

HR professionals working in remote and hybrid environments may face difficulties when unexpected family responsibilities arise during working hours. At the same time, urgent HR matters such as employee grievances, staffing issues, management requests, or virtual meetings may require immediate attention. This creates competing demands between professional and family roles. When HR professionals repeatedly shift between these responsibilities, they may experience stress, reduced concentration, and difficulty completing tasks effectively. Flexible working arrangements can help manage these situations, but their effectiveness depends on workload, organizational expectations, and managerial support (Kangas et al., 2023).

Challenges in Maintaining Professional Boundaries

Remote and hybrid work have made professional boundaries more difficult to maintain because the traditional separation between the workplace and home environment has weakened. HR professionals frequently use digital communication tools such as email, messaging applications, video-conferencing platforms, and HR systems, making work accessible beyond conventional working hours. This can create an expectation of continuous availability and make it difficult to psychologically disconnect from professional responsibilities. Research shows that technology-induced reductions in work–home boundaries can increase work–home conflict and influence employee outcomes such as exhaustion and turnover intentions (Weinert et al., 2024). Maintaining professional boundaries also depends on individual preferences, organizational expectations, managerial support, and the degree of control employees have over their work. Remote workers may adopt segmentation strategies, such as fixed working hours and separate workspaces, or integration strategies that allow work and personal activities to overlap. However, frequent boundary crossing by supervisors and colleagues during non-working hours can negatively affect work–life balance and well-being (2025). Therefore, HR professionals need clear communication norms, protected personal time, and organizational policies that support healthy boundaries.

Difficulty in Disconnecting from Work: HR professionals may find it difficult to disconnect from work after official working hours because emails, messages, and employee requests remain accessible through digital devices. Continuous connectivity can reduce psychological detachment, limit recovery time, and increase stress, making it challenging to maintain healthy boundaries between professional and personal life (Weinert et al., 2024).

Intrusion of Work into Personal Space: Remote working can cause professional responsibilities to enter spaces normally associated with family and personal life. HR professionals may attend virtual meetings or address



employee concerns while managing household responsibilities. This overlap can create role conflict, reduce personal time, and make it difficult to maintain a clear separation between work and family activities (Laß & Wooden, 2023).

Continuous Digital Communication: Frequent emails, instant messages, virtual meetings, and online notifications can extend HR professionals' working time beyond regular office hours. The expectation of immediate responses may create an "always-available" culture, increasing communication pressure and making it difficult for HR professionals to establish clear boundaries between their professional responsibilities and personal activities (Eurofound, 2023).

Lack of Control Over Working Time: Although remote and hybrid work provide flexibility, HR professionals may have limited control over their actual working schedules. Employee concerns, management requests, meetings, and urgent HR activities can interrupt personal time. Greater control over work schedules can help employees manage competing responsibilities and improve work-life effectiveness (Kossek et al., 2006).

Boundary Violations by Managers and Colleagues: Professional boundaries can be weakened when managers or colleagues contact HR professionals during evenings, weekends, or other personal periods. Repeated after-hours requests may create expectations of immediate availability and increase work pressure. Clear organizational communication policies and managerial respect for personal time are therefore important for maintaining healthy boundaries (Kelliher & Anderson, 2010).

Difficulty Establishing Physical and Psychological Boundaries: HR professionals working from home may struggle to establish clear physical and psychological separation from their jobs. A dedicated workspace and fixed working routine can strengthen boundaries, but organizational expectations are equally important. Effective boundary management requires individual strategies, managerial support, and organizational policies that prevent work from continuously entering personal life (Allen et al., 2021).

VI. EMPLOYEE MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES IN REMOTE WORK

Remote work has significantly changed the way HR professionals manage employees, communicate organizational expectations, and maintain employee engagement. In traditional workplaces, HR professionals could directly observe employee interactions, address concerns through face-to-face discussions, and provide immediate support. In remote settings, these activities increasingly depend on digital platforms, making communication and coordination more complex. The International Labour Organization (ILO, 2021) highlights

that effective remote working requires appropriate organizational practices, communication mechanisms, and managerial support to maintain employee well-being and productivity.

A major challenge is monitoring employee performance and productivity without creating excessive supervision or reducing employee autonomy. HR professionals need to establish clear performance indicators, communicate expectations, conduct virtual performance reviews, and provide regular feedback. At the same time, they must maintain trust and avoid excessive digital monitoring. Wang et al. (2021) found that remote work creates challenges related to communication, social support, job autonomy, workload, and home-work interference, all of which can influence employee effectiveness. For HR professionals, managing these issues requires greater planning, technological competence, and continuous interaction with employees.

Another important challenge is maintaining employee engagement, organizational culture, and well-being when employees have limited face-to-face interaction. Remote employees may experience isolation, reduced social connection, communication difficulties, or weaker identification with the organization. HR professionals are therefore required to organize virtual engagement activities, maintain regular communication, address employee grievances, and provide appropriate support for well-being. These additional responsibilities can increase the workload of HR professionals themselves. Consequently, effective remote employee management requires organizations to develop clear communication policies, appropriate performance-management systems, supportive leadership practices, and employee-well-being initiatives. Such measures can help HR professionals manage geographically dispersed employees while maintaining productivity, engagement, trust, and a positive organizational culture.

VII. TECHNOLOGY AND ITS IMPACT ON HR PROFESSIONALS' WELL-BEING

Technology has become an essential component of HR functions in remote and hybrid work environments. Digital HR platforms, artificial intelligence, video-conferencing tools, cloud-based systems, and automated workflows enable HR professionals to perform several activities more efficiently. These technologies can reduce repetitive administrative work, improve access to employee information, and support faster communication and decision-making. However, excessive dependence on digital technologies may also create new pressures and affect HR professionals' psychological well-being. Research on HR professionals shows that technology-enabled remote work can contribute to technostress and work-family conflict, demonstrating that technological convenience does not always translate into improved well-being (Rohwer et al., 2025).



Benefits of HR Technology and Automation: HR technology and automation can improve HR professionals' well-being by reducing repetitive administrative tasks such as attendance management, documentation, payroll processing, scheduling, and routine communication. Automated systems allow HR professionals to devote more time to strategic and employee-focused activities. Effective digital HR systems can therefore improve efficiency, flexibility, and task management while reducing unnecessary workload (Marler & Boudreau, 2017).

Technology Fatigue and Digital Overload: Excessive use of digital technologies can negatively affect HR professionals' well-being by creating technology fatigue and information overload. Continuous virtual meetings, notifications, emails, and multiple communication platforms can increase cognitive demands and make it difficult to disconnect from work. Technostress associated with remote working can also contribute to work–family conflict and reduced performance (Rohwer et al., 2025).

VIII. ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT AND WORK–LIFE BALANCE

Organizational support plays an important role in helping HR professionals maintain a healthy work–life balance in remote and hybrid work environments. Supportive organizations can provide flexible schedules, reasonable workloads, employee assistance, supportive supervision, and clear communication regarding working hours. Such practices can reduce work–family conflict and improve job satisfaction and well-being. Research suggests that organizational and supervisor support can influence employees' ability to manage work and family responsibilities effectively (Kossek et al., 2011; Allen et al., 2021).

Role of Flexible Work Policies: Flexible work policies can help HR professionals manage professional and personal responsibilities by providing greater control over working time and location. Flexible schedules may allow employees to accommodate family responsibilities, reduce commuting demands, and organize work according to individual needs. However, flexibility is most effective when supported by reasonable workloads and clear organizational expectations (Allen et al., 2021).

Coping Strategies for Better Work–Life Balance

Coping strategies are important for HR professionals working in remote and hybrid environments because flexible work can create difficulties in managing workload, personal responsibilities, and digital communication. Effective strategies such as time management, task prioritization, clear work schedules, regular breaks, psychological detachment, and self-care can help professionals manage work demands more effectively. Research suggests that individual boundary-management strategies can support work–nonwork balance when working from home (Allen et al., 2021). Psychological

detachment from work is also associated with better recovery and employee well-being (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2015).

Time Management and Prioritization: Effective time management can help HR professionals organize multiple responsibilities and prevent work from extending unnecessarily into personal hours. Prioritizing urgent and important tasks, preparing daily schedules, setting realistic deadlines, and allocating specific periods for meetings and administrative work can improve control over working time. Such strategies can strengthen work–nonwork boundaries and reduce role conflict (Allen et al., 2021).

Psychological Detachment and Self-Care Practices: Psychological detachment involves mentally switching off from work during non-working periods. HR professionals can support detachment by avoiding work-related communication after working hours, taking regular breaks, engaging in physical activity, maintaining hobbies, and spending quality time with family. Such recovery activities can reduce work-related strain and support well-being and effective recovery from job demands (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2015).

Impact of Work–Life Balance on HR Professional Outcomes

Work–life balance has a significant influence on the professional and personal outcomes of HR professionals, particularly in remote and hybrid work environments. A healthy balance can improve job satisfaction, organizational commitment, employee engagement, and overall well-being. When HR professionals are able to manage their professional responsibilities alongside personal needs, they may experience greater motivation and effectiveness at work. Research indicates that work–family balance is positively associated with job satisfaction and organizational commitment, while excessive work–family conflict can produce negative occupational outcomes (Haar et al., 2014). Similarly, work–life balance has been associated with improved employee well-being and reduced work-related strain (Allen et al., 2021).

Poor work–life balance, in contrast, can contribute to burnout, emotional exhaustion, reduced productivity, and turnover intentions among HR professionals. The continuous demands of employee management, digital communication, virtual meetings, and organizational problem-solving can increase pressure when adequate boundaries are not maintained. Research suggests that psychological detachment from work supports recovery and protects employees from the negative effects of job demands (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2015). Furthermore, work–family conflict has been linked with lower job satisfaction and increased intentions to leave organizations (Allen et al., 2000). Therefore, organizations should strengthen flexible work policies, workload management, managerial support, and boundary-setting practices to improve HR professionals' well-being and sustain their effectiveness.



IX. CONCLUSION

The changing nature of work has created significant implications for the work–life balance of HR professionals. Remote and hybrid work arrangements provide flexibility, reduce commuting requirements, and offer greater control over working location; however, they have also introduced challenges related to workload, extended working hours, digital connectivity, work–family conflict, and professional boundaries. HR professionals are particularly affected because they are responsible for managing employee concerns, recruitment, performance, engagement, communication, organizational policies, and employee well-being. The findings discussed throughout this study indicate that the benefits of flexible working can be reduced when HR professionals experience continuous work demands and difficulty separating professional responsibilities from personal life.

Another important conclusion is that technology has become both an enabler and a source of pressure for HR professionals. Digital HR platforms, virtual meetings, communication applications, and automated systems can improve efficiency and reduce repetitive administrative activities. At the same time, excessive digital connectivity can produce technostress, information overload, continuous availability, and difficulty disconnecting from work. Similarly, remote working can create work–family conflict when professional responsibilities overlap with family and personal activities. Maintaining professional boundaries is therefore essential, particularly when employees and managers communicate outside conventional working hours. The study also indicates that organizational support, flexible work policies, managerial understanding, reasonable workloads, and clear communication expectations can help HR professionals manage these challenges more effectively.

Overall, maintaining work–life balance among HR professionals requires a combination of individual coping strategies and organizational support. Time management, task prioritization, psychological detachment, regular breaks, self-care, and clearly defined working hours can help professionals manage competing responsibilities. At the organizational level, flexible policies, appropriate workload distribution, supportive leadership, effective performance-management systems, and respect for personal time are important for creating sustainable remote and hybrid working conditions. A healthy work–life balance can contribute to greater job satisfaction, organizational commitment, employee engagement, well-being, and professional effectiveness, whereas poor balance may increase stress, burnout, emotional exhaustion, reduced productivity, and turnover intentions. Therefore, organizations should treat HR professionals' work–life balance as an important component of sustainable human resource management rather than simply an individual responsibility.

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