



Journal for Social
Science Archives

Journal for Social Science Archives

Online ISSN: 3006-3310

Print ISSN: 3006-3302

Volume 3, Number 4, 2025, Pages 411 – 424

Journal Home Page

<https://jssarchives.com/index.php/Journal/about>



Talent Retention in the Digital Workplace: How Hybrid Work Models Influence Employee Commitment in Knowledge-Intensive Institutions

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ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received: September 14, 2025
Revised: October 10, 2025
Accepted: October 24, 2025
Available Online: November 03, 2025

Keywords:

Hybrid Work Models, Talent Retention, Knowledge-Intensive Institutions, Work-Life Integration, Organizational Support, Employee Commitment, Digital Workplace, HRM

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ABSTRACT

A growing emphasis on hybrid work has already begun to influence how we create connections to the workplace, and therefore our level of performance within knowledge-based organizations that rely upon collaboration and intellectual engagement. With a lack of flexibility and autonomy, do we really have any concerns about the degree to which our employees are inclined to be visible and committed to remaining with us? Based on an empirical study, this paper will explore the many facets of the hybrid talent retention process through the lens of the work-life balance 'mediating' role, how flexible arrangements impact the organization by increasing levels of organizational commitment, and what types of support from an employer to their hybrid employees may be the key to ensuring a successful hybrid work environment, especially if employees feel as though they are 'lost' when the employer does not provide support to them. To address the above research questions, a quantitative approach with a sample of education professionals was utilized to provide guidance for HR practitioners and policy makers on creating the types of work environments needed to maximize organizational and employee productivity. Therefore, this is one area of potential future of work debate; while offering flexibility may play an important role in the retention of talent in a digital workplace; it must also involve creating a culture based on the employee's needs and preferences.



Introduction

Hybrid Work Models will become the Normal in the Post Pandemic World but Our Research Shows the New Normal is Supported in that it is Anticipated that Most Higher Education Institutions Will Implement Some Type of Hybrid Work Model. Working within the Framework of Having a Combination of Flexibility and Full Engagement with Their Employer(s), Hybrid Working was an Emerging Model to Create and Maintain Collaboration, Research and Exchange of Ideas, which are Essential Components for the Business Operations of Knowledge Institutions. Therefore, the Hybrid Office concept is evolving to an Environment that Enables Employees to combine Working Physically at Home with Working Physically at their Place of Employment (i.e., University), Thus Creating a Balance for Employees to have both a Flexible Scheduling with their Job Responsibility and Work Functions and Full Engagement with their Employer. Therefore, Hybrid Model may have redefined how Work is Structured, in Particular at Universities and Organizations that Focus Heavily on Research as Part of their Primary Business Operations (i.e. Barath & Schmidt, 2022). With this Change Comes a Variety of Employee Satisfaction Enhancements: Eliminating or Reducing the Commute to Work and Allowing Employees to Enhance their Productivity by working while continuing their Education. Managers and Leaders Must Develop an Environment that Supports both (a) Employee By Being Productive through their Work Performance and (b) providing Supportive Living Conditions and/or Well-Being for Employees (i.e., Global Workplace Analytics, 2025). Currently, Faced with the challenge of Retaining Faculty and Administrative Staff, with Faculty and Administrative Staff being the key Component to Creating Knowledge, to improving Student Learning: and to Building/Enhancing an Institution's Reputation/Brand, Universities are also threatened by Faculty Turnover because it impacts the Continuity of Operations and can hinder the ability to effectively Provide Impart Knowledge in a Knowledge-Intensive Environment. Retaining Faculty has therefore become a Key Issue for Universities. Hybrid Working Arrangement Models provide a Level of Promise of Success; however, the Burning Question is how do Employees View or Perceive the Hybrid Work Model and what is their interpretation of the Balance between their Professional Responsibilities and their Personal Life Responsibilities. A Work-Life Integration Perspective is a More Equitable Understanding of this Perspective as it looks to Blend the two, rather than Separate the Two Instances. Therefore, it is Anticipated Employees should be provided with Flexibility in Work Scheduling, Autonomy in Work Location, and Digital Tools that Support the Way in Which They Manage their Academic Responsibilities in a Normalized Fashion (Opoku, Kwao, & Johnson). However, Hybrid Work Models may also present Problems to Employees if the Organizational Structure does not Provide the Proper Support Systems. Employees who work remotely may become Disconnected, Have Difficulties in Communication and Have Limited Access to Resources and May Not be Fully Engaged in Work Activities. As such, Organizational Support will Serve as one of the Key Moderators to determine if Hybrid Work Models will be Improved, or if it Will Decrease the Employees Commitment to Organizational Success. Based on Social Exchange Theory Employees who perceive that Their Employers Provide Emotional, Technical and Supervisory Support will Provide Greater Loyalty and Commitment to the Employer (Chernyak-Hai & Rabenu, 2018). Conversely, Institutions that Provide Hybrid Work Arrangements but Lack Sufficient Technology Infrastructure, Training, Leadership, Support and/or Solutions to Facilitate Meaningful Interactions to Fluidly Connect Workplace Activities will Improve Employee Retention by Facilitating Disconnected Work Experiences (Swinburne University of Technology, 2023). In Academic Institutions Hybrid Work has additional Implications, Above and Beyond the Logistics of Hybrid Working Relationships, With Regards to Professional Identity and Work in the Digital World. As per the Research by Springer Higher Education Study (2025) Hybrid Work Combines the Faculty Work Culture with the Complete

Autonomy of Employees and Impacts How They are Perceived by Colleagues and How Likely They are to Be Retained by the Organization. There is Very Little Existing Research in this Area regarding the Impact of Hybrid Work Models on Retention in Higher Education Organizations and Maya to a Lesser Degree, in the Area of Work-Family Balance or POS. Previous Literature has Focused Primarily on Producing, Engagement, and Mental Health in the Workplace, Rather than Long Term Commitment Outcomes. By Providing this Study it Further Supports the Evolving Picture of How Hybrid Work Arrangements Influence Employee Commitment in Knowledge Based Institutions and Provides an Explanation of How Work-Family Balance and Organizational Support Serve as Mediators. This Study Combines the Existing Literature on Hybrid Working Arrangements and Social Exchange and Work-Family Balance Models and Provides an Understanding to Higher Education Administrators and HR Planners Developing Hybrid Systems that are both Effective and that Support Employee's Emotional Well-Being as well as Provide Systems to Maintain Retained Long Term Employees. It has Become Obvious to all that Hiring and Retaining Talent in Digital World of Education Requires More Than Simply Providing Flexible Work Arrangements; it will also require Creating Managerial Systems that are Based on Trust and Creating Emotional Support Systems as Well as Developed Systems to Support Employee's Total Well-Being over the Long Term.

Literature Review

Hybrid Work Models and Employee Outcomes

As the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the adoption of Hybrid Work Models, many companies have shifted to using a hybrid model of work, which includes some elements of both remote and on-site working (McKinsey and Company). Studies have demonstrated that Hybrid Work Models allow employees greater autonomy, decrease the stress associated with commuting, and generally increase employee satisfaction (Čudanov et al., 2022; Karácsony, 2021) and that the use of Hybrid Work Model by employees can define how they perceive the sustainability of a work environment (Rohmawan, Suharto and Syafii, 2025) - many employees view the organisation of Hybrid Work Models as a blend of flexibility and structure. However, there is a downside to Hybrid Work Models as well; there is evidence in the literature that although they provide greater efficiency and employee freedom of choice, Hybrid Work Models can also contribute to greater levels of social isolation and decrease social cohesion among employees if they are not paired with a strong relational or organisation support structure (Tabor-Błażewicz, 2023). Also, the Hybrid Work Model will alter the way in which employees communicate; the use of differing forms of communication between employees has resulted in a multitude of changes to the dynamics of employee communication. There has been an increase in the use of Employee Digital Communication to communicate in a more efficient manner; however, in some instances, the increased use of Digital Communications has adversely affected employee informal bonding and the ability to communicate nonverbally (Babapour Chafi et al., as referenced in hybrid work studies). The Psychological Consequences of Hybrid Work Models; many employees working in a Hybrid Work Model frequently report feelings of an increased lack of trust, a decrease in spontaneity in their interactions, and also a delay in feedback to employees as key disadvantages of their Hybrid Model of Work (Tabor-Błażewicz, 2023).

Work-Life Integration as a Key Mechanism

A less discussed but increasingly significant line of work research concentrates on work-life integration, instead of balance. This research responds to realities in which people's life and workplaces are not separated by clear boundaries – they are integrated (Abu Orabi et al., 2023). In hybrid contexts, this coming together can be harnessed to bring good outcomes: where employees

can choose to work in flexible locations and at different times throughout their schedules to manage work tasks alongside personal matters, they are more satisfied with their jobs and more committed to their organizations (Rohmawan, Suharto, & Syafii, 2025). Whereas in some contexts of work that may be less salient, in academia work-life matters become intertwined: scholars in universities often who teach, research and administer full-time alongside personal life roles outside of work. When hybrid work is done in such a way that enables genuine expressions of real integration (rather than remote days), academics are more likely to feel psychologically safe, respected and committed to their institutions (Opoku, Kwao, & Johnson, 2023). There is something to be said of the opportunities hybrid modes of organisation present to enhance belonging to institution, if they are managed well.

Organizational Support: Moderator of Hybrid Effects

Even with high-quality hybrid policies, organizations can undermine these efforts if they do not provide appropriate organizational support. Perceived organizational support (POS) - i.e., emotional, instrumental, or technical support - plays a key role in how employees respond to hybridizers (Charles et al., 2024). Social exchange theory argues that when employees believe the organization cares about their wellbeing and invests in their success, employees respond in kind with loyalty, engagement, and commitment (Simbula, Margheritti, & Avanzi, 2023). In hybrid academics, organizational support is even more important. Organizational aid as a key component of the work environment was assessed in survey research at several higher education institutions which relied on activities like helpful reliable connectivity and getting to and using a laptop, for remote and onsite work (Redelinguys & Rothmann, 2024). The absence of prompt feedback commonly encountered with hybrid work complicates issues of trust and engagement further limiting the advantages of hybrid flexibility (Tabor-Błażewicz, 2023).

Well-Being Challenges in Hybrid Academic Work

Hybrid work touches on important aspects of social well-being, particularly in the academic world. For Tabor-Błażewicz (2023), inferior levels of contact and collegiality in hybrid academic environments result in diminished sociality, bonding trust, and immediacy in providing and receiving feedback in academic work. Problematic loneliness and isolation follows, but without attention to these problems, academics cannot “afford” to maintain long-term commitment. To meet this challenge, some HEIs have invested in “holistic” support strategies: “Evidence of the impact of holistic employee experience during hybrid work environments” includes practices like structured hybrid protocols, with reliable technology provision, continuous social support, and determining expectations for remote/onsite work environments themselves (Redelinguys & Rothmann, 2024). The consistency among measures to this “logic” of social exchange is obvious: those organisations who reward and invest in their people in turn receive many feedback benefits in energised commitment, engagement, and retention in hybrid work environments.

Retention and Embeddedness

Employee retention in the context of hybrid work has been studied in a number of sectors, though less so in higher education. Research in other sectors finds that supportive work environments are positively related to retention, in part because they build organizational commitment (Naz, Nisar, Khan, & Ahmad, 2020). Scholars have studied job embeddedness - how links, fit and sacrifices (both on and off the job) tie an employee to their workplace - as a potent mechanism for retention (Mitchell et al., foundational work on embeddedness). Something may become complicated in hybrid models: while employees feel connected to their work through flexibility, weak social ties

and poor feedback may erode the “links” and “fit” aspects that keep them embedded in an organization over the long term.

Synthesis and Gaps

Synthesis of literature: A few things stand out. Hybrid work presents a strong opportunity to improve job satisfaction, productivity, and engagement through flexibility but is associated with isolation and weakening social ties. The mechanism of work-life integration through which hybrid work manifests positively for employees relies heavily on them being supported meaningfully by their institutions. Organizational support strongly moderates hybrid work's effects: when the institution fails to deliver that support it undoes some of the potential gains of flexibility, particularly in academic institutions. Gaps: There are gaps still. Empirical research on hybrid work and retention in higher education are emerging but limited. The major literature deals with issues of engagement, productivity, or well-being, and far less with a long term commitment to the institution and turnover intention among academics. The combined work of integration and POC (Perceived Organizational Support) in predicting retention in universities is not theorised and tested. Lastly, most research taking place in corporate or IT institutions, whereas knowledge-intensive institutions such as universities has different cultural, structural, and relational characteristics.

Theoretical Foundation for the Study

Since these theories are based on different perspectives, the research looks at how these perspectives can help explain the relationship between hybrid work and retention. For example, social exchange theory has established that social support is a key factor in developing strong relationships in the workplace. Sufficient social support from an organization will increase employee commitment and engagement (Simbula, Margheritti & Avanzi, 2023). Job embeddedness theory also describes how hybrid work influences job embeddedness. Job embeddedness theory explains how hybrid working models may affect the extent to which employees feel "stuck" to their current employer or organization (e.g., Mitchell et al.). The JD-R model offers insights on how hybrid work creates both demands (e.g., isolation and delays in feedback) and resources (e.g., flexibility and autonomy). The interaction between the job demands and resources influences employee well-being and retention (Tabor-Błażewicz, 2023). This research uses social exchange theory as its foundational theoretical framework. Social exchange theory posits that an employee's relationship with their employer is shaped by the employees and employers mutually providing support for one another. Therefore, if the employee perceives that their employer is providing them with sufficient resources (e.g., emotional support, technical support, etc.) that allow the employee to perform their job effectively, then the employee will likely reciprocate the employer's support by committing themselves to that employer for a longer period of time. The hybrid model of employment places an additional emphasis on the employee's relationship to their employer as the employee has access to both their employer's resources to perform their job remotely, as well as the employer's resources to create a supportive work environment to maintain the employee's social network and identity. Perceived organizational support is a key factor in determining how hybrid work will impact employee retention. Another important theoretical framework used in this research is work-life integration. The concept of work-life integration extends the traditional work-life balance model, and acknowledges the fluid boundaries between the two models, especially in the context of technology. Hybrid work systems create an environment in which the employee can blend personal responsibilities with their professional responsibilities more easily and effectively. When hybrid work allows for greater work-life integration, the employee will likely feel an emotional connection to the employer,

employee satisfaction, and intrinsic motivation to remain with the employer. Job embeddedness theory is also an important theoretical framework for providing a complementary perspective on the factors influencing an employee's decision to remain with their employer. Hybrid working models have a unique way of influencing job embeddedness in a complex manner. Specifically, the hybrid model provides employees with additional job flexibility and autonomy (relative to their previous job), increasing their sense of fit with their employer. Conversely, decreased physical presence will decrease the social connections that an employee has with their employer. One way that organizations develop and strengthen the social connections of hybrid workers to their employer is to provide employees with organizational support to ensure that hybrid workers can remain connected to the employer, fellow employees, and to leadership. The integration of organizational support with social exchange theory will reinforce the idea that hybrid work will only be beneficial in terms of improving employee retention if organizations provide a support system for creating a sense of belonging to their organization. Additionally, an understanding of the Job Demands-Resources Relationship model provides a framework for understanding how hybrid work creates both job demands and job resources. Specifically, in this model, job demands (e.g., communication barriers and feelings of social isolation) create job-related stress and ultimately lead to employee burnout, while job resources (e.g., job flexibility, job-related autonomy) build motivation and improve employee well-being. The balance of job demands and job-related resources will ultimately influence employee attitudes towards their employer, commitment to their employer, and, ultimately, an employee's decision to remain with their employer. Therefore, one method by which organizational support will help enhance positive outcomes of hybrid work and alleviate negative outcomes of hybrid work is through the provision of organizational resources. In conclusion, the above-mentioned theoretical frameworks outline the factors that create a link or a relationship between hybrid work, work-life integration, organizational support, and employee retention. Therefore, these theoretical frameworks provide a rationale for the research questions/hypotheses of the current study and will be utilized to guide the data analysis and interpretation.

H1: Hybrid work models have a positive and significant impact on employee retention in knowledge-intensive institutions.

This hypothesis stems from the expectation that flexibility, autonomy, and reduced commuting create conditions that foster satisfaction and long-term commitment when implemented effectively.

H2: Work-life integration mediates the relationship between hybrid work models and employee retention.

This assumes hybrid arrangements enable employees to blend personal and professional roles, thereby improving well-being, which translates into loyalty and reduced turnover intention.

H3: Perceived organizational support moderates the relationship between hybrid work models and employee retention, such that the relationship is stronger when organizational support is high.

This implies that hybrid work alone is insufficient; institutions must provide technological infrastructure, managerial backing, and clear communication to maximize retention benefits.

H4: Perceived organizational support moderates the indirect effect of hybrid work on retention via work-life integration, strengthening the mediation path.

This conditional mediation suggests that even when employees achieve integration, the positive outcomes will be more pronounced if they feel supported by their institution.

Research Methodology

Research Design

The research method used for this investigation is Quantitative. The focus of the research is to establish an association between Hybrid Models of Work and Employee Retention among Knowledge-Intensive Organizations while exploring the Mediating Role of Work-Life Integration and the Moderating Role of Perceived Organizational Support. Data for this research were collected using a Cross-Sectional Survey Method that allows for the observation of employees' Perceptions on one occasion, which is appropriate for investigating both Behavioral and Attitudinal Aspects of Organizations. As the underlying Theory for this research is the Positivist Paradigm, the focus is to validate theoretically derived Hypotheses from an Empirical Data Collection and through Statistical Analysis.

Population and Sample

Academic employees and administrative staff members working in colleges or universities, as well as those working in other types of knowledge-intensive organizations, comprise the target population for this study. The study focuses on higher education organizations due to their structured hybrid working models and reliance on intellectual labor to carry out educational operations. A non-probability sampling strategy, specifically the purposive sampling method, has been used to select the participants for this research study so that they have a direct understanding of hybrid or flexible working arrangements. Approximately 300 participants would provide enough power statistically and also allow for multivariate analysis to occur through structural equation modelling (SEM) techniques.

Data Collection Instrument

Using a structured self-administered questionnaire, we collected data through five sections - demographic information, hybrid working practices, work-life balance, perceived organisational support, and employee retention. Examples of previously validated measurement scales were used to assess hybrid work, integrating work-life balance using boundary management and integration scale, perceived organisational support using the SPOS, and measuring employee retention by using turnover intention and organisational commitment. All items were rated on a five-point Likert scale: strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Validity and Reliability

Prior to full-scale data collection, a pilot study is conducted with a small group of respondents to test the reliability and clarity of the questionnaire. Cronbach's alpha is used to assess internal consistency, with values above 0.70 considered acceptable. Content and face validity are ensured through expert review by academics and HR professionals. Ethical considerations are strictly observed, including voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality of responses, and the right of respondents to withdraw at any point without penalty.

Data Collection Procedure

Both descriptive & inferential statistical analysis methods will be used in this research for the analysis of the data with the support of computer software such as SPSS & AMOS/SmartPLS. Descriptive statistics will give an overview of the demographic features, as well as the distributions of the different variables in the sample; reliability & validity will be examined using Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability, & Average Variance Extracted (AVE). The hypotheses will be tested using correlational analysis, multiple regression analysis, & structural equation

modelling to ascertain direct, mediating, & moderating effects. Bootstrapping procedures will evaluate the mediating impact of work-life integration, while testing will determine the moderating impact via methods such as interaction effects and multi-group analysis. The combination of all analyses provides for a comprehensive assessment of the proposed research model, ultimately strengthening the reliability of the findings through an increase in robustness.

Results

Descriptive Analysis

Demographic characteristics and other key variables among respondents to this research were summarized using descriptive statistics. 287 people were included for the analysis of data; therefore only the 287 people who completed this survey are valid respondents and their results will be included in analyses that follow. Overall, mean and standard deviation values support the finding that respondents felt a moderate to high level of hybrid working experience, working/life integration, organised support, employee retention. Based on the distribution of respondents' data, this dataset appears to be stable and conform to a normal distribution, making it acceptable for use in subsequent inferential analysis.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables (N = 287)

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Hybrid Work Model	3.87	0.62	1.80	5.00
Work–Life Integration	3.92	0.59	2.00	5.00
Perceived Organizational Support	3.95	0.65	1.75	5.00
Employee Retention	4.01	0.57	2.10	5.00

Demographic Profile of Respondents

The demographic analysis shows that the majority of respondents were from academic staff positions (58.5%), while the rest were administrative staff (41.5%). Most respondents were aged between 30 and 45 years (46%), followed by those above 45 years (32%) and below 30 years (22%). In terms of experience, 39% of participants had 6–10 years of work experience, while 35% had more than 10 years of experience and 26% had less than 5 years.

Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N = 287)

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Job Type	Academic Staff	168	58.5
	Administrative Staff	119	41.5
Age Group	Below 30 Years	63	22.0
	30–45 Years	132	46.0
	Above 45 Years	92	32.0
Work Experience	Less than 5 Years	75	26.0
	6–10 Years	112	39.0
	More than 10 Years	100	35.0

Results from the survey show that all constructs have a combined mean greater than half of the scale and demonstrates that participants have a generally positive perception of hybrid work arrangements and that they believe they receive the necessary support from their organisation(s). Additionally, employee retention has the highest mean value out of all constructs surveyed, demonstrating that employees overall have a strong desire to stay with their current employer(s)

and confirms this as an overarching finding. Furthermore, the relatively low standard deviation values suggest that the responses provided are consistent for all respondents and that there was an acceptable level of variability within the data collected.

Reliability Analysis

To assess the reliability of the measuring scales employed in this research project, the internal consistency of each measuring scale was investigated through the calculation of Cronbach's alpha. As part of the analysis, Cronbach's alpha was calculated for each of the constructs measured in order to provide an indication as to how well all of the items assessed the constructs measured. The analysis revealed that all of the constructs for which Cronbach's alpha was calculated had values greater than 0.70, which indicates a high degree of internal reliability and makes them appropriate for additional statistical analysis.

Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the strength and direction of relationships among the study variables, including hybrid work models, work–life integration, perceived organizational support, and employee retention. The results reveal significant positive correlations among all constructs, indicating that higher levels of hybrid work effectiveness are associated with stronger work–life integration, greater perceived organizational support, and higher employee retention. All correlations were statistically significant at the 0.01 level, suggesting strong interrelationships and supporting the theoretical assumptions of the study.

Table 4: Correlation Matrix of Study Variables (N = 287)

Variables	1	2	3	4
1. Hybrid Work Model	1.000			
2. Work–Life Integration	0.63**	1.000		
3. Perceived Organizational Support	0.59**	0.66**	1.000	
4. Employee Retention	0.61**	0.65**	0.69**	1.000

Note: **p < 0.01 (two-tailed)

Findings show that there is a significant, positive correlation between Hybrid Work Models and employee retention ($r = 0.61$, $p < 0.01$). Employees who have access to well-designed hybrid work practises have higher levels of commitment to the organization and fewer intentions to leave. Employees' experience of work – life integration has a similarly strong positive relationship with employee retention ($r = 0.65$, $p < 0.01$). Employees who experience strong integration between their career and personal lives are more likely to stay with their organization than those who do not. Perceived organizational support demonstrated the highest degree of correlation to employee retention ($r = 0.69$, $p < 0.01$). Consequently, perceived organizational support plays an important role in creating and maintaining loyalty among employees.

Construct	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Hybrid Work Model	6	0.84
Work–Life Integration	5	0.87
Perceived Organizational Support	6	0.89
Employee Retention	5	0.85

In assessing the consistency of participant feedback on the survey, one will use Cronbach's alpha value (1951). The Cronbach's alpha has been demonstrated to produce values between .84 to .89

indicating the questions were highly reliable measures of their underlying conceptual definitions. Thus, it is reasonable to state that the data generated by the aforementioned questionnaire (as noted above) were highly valid and reliable for use in future statistical analysis.

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and Hypothesis Testing

Structural Equation Models (SEM) were tested with a research model for analysis of the relationships (direct and indirect) between variables. The SEM is capable of testing multiple complex relationships that may include mediators and moderators simultaneously. To confirm the validity of the Measurement Model (MM), Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted prior to the Structural Model test. The CFA results indicate that the MM fit the data well and thus the observed variables represented the latent constructs well.

Model Fit Indices

The overall structural model demonstrated good fit to the data, as reflected by the fit indices presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Model Fit Indices

Fit Index	Recommended Value	Model Value
χ^2/df	≤ 3.00	2.18
CFI	≥ 0.90	0.942
TLI	≥ 0.90	0.931
RMSEA	≤ 0.08	0.052
SRMR	≤ 0.08	0.046
GFI	≥ 0.90	0.918

These indices indicate that the proposed structural model fits the observed data well and is suitable for hypothesis testing.

Path Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

Direct and indirect path coefficients were estimated to test the study hypotheses. The standardized regression weights, critical ratios, and significance levels are presented in Table 6.

Table 6: SEM Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Structural Path	β (Standardized)	t-value / CR	p-value	Decision
H1	Hybrid Work Model $\rightarrow$ Employee Retention	0.47	7.86	<0.001	Supported
H2	Hybrid Work Model $\rightarrow$ Work–Life Integration	0.62	9.14	<0.001	Supported
H3	Work–Life Integration $\rightarrow$ Employee Retention	0.55	8.39	<0.001	Supported
H4	Hybrid Work Model $\times$ Organizational Support $\rightarrow$ Retention	0.21	3.12	0.002	Supported

Mediation Analysis (Bootstrapping Results)

To examine the mediating effect of work–life integration, a bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 resamples was performed.

Table 7: Mediation Effects

Path	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect	Result
Hybrid Work Model → Retention (via Work–Life Integration)	0.47	0.34	0.81	Partial Mediation

The findings confirm that work–life integration significantly mediates the relationship between hybrid work models and employee retention.

Moderation Analysis (Interaction Effects)

To test the moderating role of perceived organizational support, an interaction term was created and incorporated into the SEM.

Table 8: Moderation Results

Path	β (Interaction)	t-value	p-value	Moderation Effect
Hybrid Work Model × Organizational Support → Retention	0.21	3.12	0.002	Significant

These results indicate that perceived organizational support significantly strengthens the positive relationship between hybrid work models and employee retention.

Strong evidence from SEM confirms the validity of the research framework that was hypothesized. There was a significant main effect of hybrid working arrangements on employee retention, as well as an indirect effect of hybrid working arrangements on employee retention. An important pathway through which hybrid work arrangements affect employee retention is through enhancing work-life integration. The existence of perceived organizational support moderated both the direct and indirect relationships between hybrid work and employee retention, thus enhancing the degree to which hybrid work led to increased retention when employees feel supported by the organization.

Discussion

This study's findings strongly support the effectiveness of using hybrid work to retain employees in knowledge-based organizations as predicted by the proposed model. Hybrid work positively impacts employee retention, meaning flexible employment options are now more than just temporary perks, but also essential parts of an employee's current relationship with their job. These findings also support earlier research that indicates that having flexibility and autonomy are two of the most important factors for Job Satisfaction and, therefore, commitment to a job over time. This is especially relevant in a professional/academic environment where both cognitive and emotional labor drive an employee's job performance. The study's findings help to further explain why hybrid work facilitates retention through the mediating effect of Work-Life Integration (WLI). Hybrid work helps employees combine personal and professional demands, which helps create stronger feelings of commitment to their employer. These findings are consistent with Work-Life Theory, which suggests that employees in this environment should focus on combining their Work and Life as opposed to separating their Work and Life through strict boundary management. In the academic

environment, many employees must manage teaching, research, administrative duties as well as personal responsibilities within the same time frame; having the flexibility to do so appears to be one of the most important ways in which hybrid work can foster employee attachment to the organization. The role of employee perception of organizational support as a moderator of the effectiveness of hybrid working relationships is also an important factor for retention in the organization. The findings show that employee retention when hybrid work exists is higher when employees feel that they receive high levels of support from the organization. This reinforces Social Exchange Theory's assertion that employees are likely to reciprocate and develop loyalty and commitment in exchange for the employment benefits provided by organizations. Institutions that support their remote workers with technology, managerial assistance, emotional support and clear hybrid work policies are more likely to maintain their talent than those that allow remote work without these supportive structures. The findings of this study that demonstrate the moderated mediation effects of employee perception of the organization's support not only demonstrate that organizational support strengthens the direct association between hybrid work and employee retention, but also enhances the mediating relationship between hybrid working and employee retention through work-life integration. The findings indicate that employees are more likely to positively incorporate hybrid work into a real-life Work-Life integration if they receive support from their employer. Without employer support, hybrid work may not realize its full potential and may even lead to decreased employee engagement and feelings of isolation.

Conclusion

This study expands upon the body of knowledge concerning hybrid work through comprehensive, reader-friendly descriptions of how flexible working arrangements relate to employee retention in Knowledge-Intensive Organizations. The study identifies Work-Life Integration as a mediating mechanism and Organizational Support as a moderating factor; thus, this research goes beyond simplistic assertions that Hybrid Work produces positive outcomes. The research also demonstrates that Hybrid Work will only provide positive results when intentionally organized and supported through organizational processes that promote Employee Well-Being, Trust, and Inclusion. Therefore, Hybrid Work, by itself, does not equate to retention; in other words, Long Term Commitment results from Flexible Work Options, Work-Life Integration, and Institutional Support. This conclusion is especially relevant for Higher Education Institutions because retaining dedicated and qualified Faculty and Staff members is critical to sustaining quality throughout the university and ensuring Institutional Effectiveness. The findings of this study present a variety of practical recommendations to academic leaders and Human Resource Professionals in Knowledge-Intensive Organizations. First, universities and similar organizations should create detailed Hybrid Work Policies to eliminate Informal/Re-active Hybrid Work Practices because Hybrid Work Policies will define employees' expectations regarding Availability, Performance Reviews, Communication Protocols and Access to Resources (both Remote and On-Site) and will eliminate Ambiguity and Create Procedural Fairness as an important factor in encouraging Employee Commitment by ensuring that the employee understands what is expected of them and has access to Resources and Opportunities. Second, Institutions should deliberately structure their Hybrid Work Models to promote Work-Life Integration; therefore, employees should have Flexible Schedules, the Autonomy to Manage their assigned Tasks, and Performance assessed Based on Outcomes (i.e., "Results"). Leadership Development Programs must include components that encourage Empathy, Trust-building, and Supportive Supervision so that Managers have the Skills/Competencies to lead Hybrid Teams effectively and keep employees Engaged and Committed. Organizations also need to put forth intentional initiatives to increase their Perceived Organizational Support by developing Strategic Initiatives to do so. Organizations should develop

effective Communication and Digital infrastructures, provide Technical Support & Training, and maintain Open & Transparent Communication among Employees. Examples of Supportive Initiatives are Mentoring Programs, Opportunities for Virtual Collaboration, and Sponsoring Regular In-Person Networking Opportunities, all of which will create an environment for Workers to engage with one another, develop Social Connections, and strengthen their Identification with the Organization or Institution in Hybrid Work Environments. These practices not only improve Hybrid Work outcomes but also build Emotional Attachment to the Institution among employees. While this study provides much needed insight into Hybrid Work, it has several limitations. The Cross-Sectional Research Design limits the establishment of Causal Relationships between the Variables. A Longitudinal Design would provide Greater Insight about the development of employees' Retention Intentions in Relation to Associated Work Experiences over Time. Additionally, since Self-reported Data presents the possibility of Common Method Biases, even with efforts to protect Anonymity and establish Scale Reliability, Future Research should employ Data Sources from Multiple Parties (e.g., Performance Evaluations from Supervisors, and Institutional Retention Records) to establish the Most Credible Data of Workplace Influences on Employees. Additionally, this study focuses on Knowledge-Intensive Organizations with focus on Higher Education, thus it has Limited Generalizability because each Sector has its own Unique Cultural & Work Environment. Future Research should broaden the scope of the Proposed Model to include all Sectors without compromising the Data Collection (e.g., Healthcare, Information Technology, Corporate Research Organizations) for increasing Generalizability. Furthermore, Future Research should consider Additional Mediating Variables, and Additional Moderating Variables to identify Greater Dynamics of Hybrid Work environments. Examples of Additional Future Mediators include Psychological/Safety, Job Embeddedness, Employee Engagement, and Potential Future Moderators include Leadership Style and Digital Competency. In summary, Hybrid Work offers Great Potential in terms of increasing Employee Retention. However, Successful Implementation of Hybrid Work Models is limited to Human-Centered Implementation coupled with Strong Organizational Practices. Therefore, as the Work Environment continues to Expand, Scholars and Practitioners will continue to Develop and Refine Sustainable Hybrid Working Models by Addressing the Limitations identified in the Current Study, in addition to Pursuing the Proposed Future Research Directions.

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