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Rethinking Hybrid Work Boundaries Beyond the Immediate Post-Pandemic Transition

Omar Zayed^{1*}, Leila Ibrahim¹, Ahmed Mansour²

1. Department of Hybrid Work and Boundary Management, Faculty of Business, Cairo University, Cairo, Egypt.
2. Department of Post-Pandemic Work Design, Faculty of Management, Alexandria University, Alexandria, Egypt.

Abstract

Hybrid work has moved from emergency accommodation to a durable organizational arrangement, yet much of the literature still treats it as a location choice or a residual pandemic condition. This state-of-the-art review reconsiders hybrid work as an enacted boundary regime that distributes control, interruption, social access, and visibility across workers, teams, and organizations. The review examines the development of recent scholarship and synthesizes four connected domains: autonomy and boundary control, recovery and temporal fragmentation, belonging under uneven physical presence, and career inequality associated with proximity advantage. Evidence was selected through transparent identification, screening, appraisal, and claim-level extraction, while PRISMA-compatible reporting was used only to document the selection pathway. The literature converges on heterogeneity: flexibility can increase discretion while transferring coordination and boundary-management responsibility; digital connection can preserve access while weakening relational depth; and reduced physical presence can remove commuting burdens while changing recognition opportunities. Contradictions often arise because studies examine different policy forms, intensities, tasks, occupations, household conditions, and implementation climates. The review proposes an original enacted-boundary-regime synthesis in which formal flexibility is analytically separated from realized control, recoverable time, consequential inclusion, and visibility-based advantage. This synthesis is not a validated causal model. Its value lies in organizing unresolved relationships, clarifying alternative explanations, and directing research toward longitudinal, multilevel, and policy-specific tests. Organizational implications are therefore conditional: hybrid work should be evaluated through how boundaries are governed and experienced, not through attendance ratios alone.

Keywords: Hybrid work beyond emergency adaptation, Development of the hybrid-work literature, Autonomy and boundary-control questions, Recovery and temporal fragmentation, Research agenda, Methodological priorities

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Corresponding author: Omar Zayed

E-mail ✉ omar.zayed@cu.edu.eg

Introduction

Hybrid work is frequently described through the proportion of time spent at home and in a shared workplace. That description is administratively convenient but theoretically incomplete. Flexible and distributed arrangements long predated the pandemic, while virtual-work scholarship already showed that distance, technology, coordination, and identification belong to partially disconnected research traditions. The pandemic then compressed these trajectories into an exceptional organizational shock, making temporary workarounds appear equivalent to settled design choices [1-3]. A state-of-the-art review is therefore needed not to calculate a universal advantage or disadvantage, but to identify what the most consequential recent evidence establishes, where interpretations conflict, and which boundary questions define the current frontier.

The first problem is that location is often treated as the causal object when work design is the more plausible explanatory system. Evidence from pandemic remote work indicates that autonomy, social support, monitoring, workload, and self-discipline jointly shape performance and well-being [4]. The same nominal schedule can consequently produce discretion for



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one employee, intensified availability for another, and coordination costs for a third. Hybrid work should thus be analyzed as an enacted arrangement comprising formal policy, access, actual use, work practices, managerial interpretation, and consequences across levels.

The second problem is temporal. Working from home persisted after emergency restrictions, but its distribution remains strongly patterned by occupation, education, earnings, industry, and organizational policy [5]. This persistence makes “post-pandemic transition” an inadequate endpoint. The relevant question is how recurring combinations of presence and absence stabilize into boundary regimes that govern when work starts and stops, whose interruptions are absorbed, who remains connected to informal networks, and which forms of visibility acquire career value.

This review integrates four domains that are too often examined separately: autonomy and boundary control; recovery and temporal fragmentation; belonging across uneven physical presence; and career inequality and proximity advantage. The proposed contribution is an enacted-boundary-regime synthesis that distinguishes formal flexibility from realized control, contact from consequential inclusion, visibility from performance, and technological capability from legitimate organizational authority. The synthesis is original and requires empirical testing. It does not establish causal sequencing, universal applicability, or an implementation-ready model.

Development of the hybrid-work literature

The literature developed from pre-pandemic telework and virtual-work research into crisis-era remote-work studies and, more recently, evaluations of stabilized hybrid policies. Earlier evidence already showed that remote e-worker well-being was multidimensional: flexibility and autonomy coexisted with isolation, intensification, and boundary blurring, while many studies remained cross-sectional [6]. The pandemic enlarged the evidence base but also created a confounded setting in which health risk, school closure, household crowding, labor-market uncertainty, and abrupt technological change occurred together. Recent reviews converge less on a single outcome than on heterogeneity. Well-being varies by dimension and context; flexibility is shaped by gendered and institutional conditions; and health findings remain mixed and methodologically constrained [6-8]. The current frontier therefore concerns configurations: policy form, homeworking intensity, task interdependence, household demands, supervisory practice, communication design, occupational status, and national institutions. A binary office-versus-home comparison cannot adequately represent these interacting conditions.

This state-of-the-art review used publisher and DOI-indexed searches, multidisciplinary scholarly-index searches, and backward and forward citation chaining. Search concepts combined hybrid work, telework, remote work, flexible work, boundary control, work-family transitions, recovery, interruption, collaboration, belonging, isolation, visibility, flexibility stigma, career outcomes, review methodology, and organizational implementation. Eligible sources were peer-reviewed journal articles with a verifiable DOI and direct claim-level relevance. Duplicate DOI, title, version, and preprint-publication matches were reconciled before screening. Extraction covered context, unit, design, construct, mechanism, moderator, outcome, limitation, transferability, and exact permitted claim. Comparative appraisal emphasized design strength, construct fit, level of analysis, temporal relevance, and overclaiming risk.

Figure 1 reports the verified flow of records through identification, duplicate removal, screening, full-text assessment, exclusion, and final inclusion for this state-of-the-art review article.

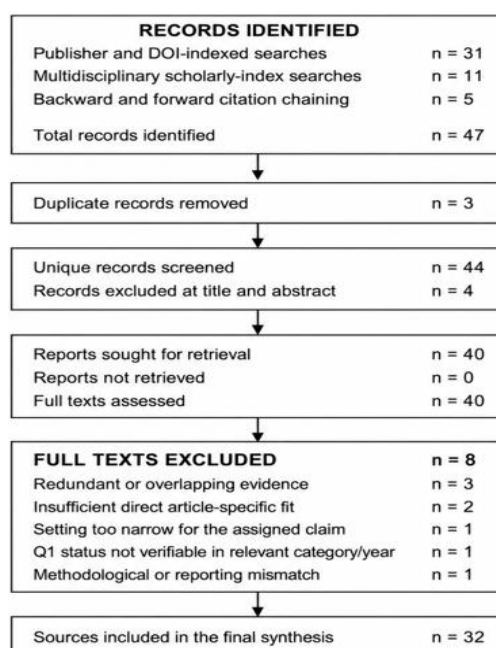


Figure 1. PRISMA Flow Diagram for Evidence Identification and Selection*Autonomy and boundary-control questions*

Autonomy concerns discretion over how, where, and when work is performed. Boundary control is narrower and more demanding: it is the realized capacity to regulate spatial location, temporal availability, role transitions, permeability, and continuity. Home-based workers may receive formal location discretion while experiencing the workplace as increasingly embedded in family life through expectations of responsiveness, self-management, and constant accessibility [9]. Autonomy should therefore not be inferred from policy availability alone.

Daily evidence reinforces this distinction. Home-based telework can alter the direction of role transitions, reducing some work-to-home conflict while increasing home-to-work conflict through interruptions and competing demands [10]. This pattern challenges claims that integration is uniformly beneficial or harmful. Boundary permeability has direction, timing, and role-specific consequences; it may protect one domain while transferring strain to another.

Flexible working time also does not guarantee psychological disengagement. Longitudinal evidence from Germany indicates that some forms of time flexibility are associated with greater cognitive work-to-home spillover and that patterns differ between women and men [11]. One interpretation is responsibility transfer: discretion over scheduling can be accompanied by stronger obligations to coordinate, remain available, or absorb unfinished work. Yet occupational selection, household roles, and organizational expectations remain plausible alternatives.

Boundary violations are further conditioned by preference fit and task state. Employees with stronger segmentation preferences may experience greater disruption when work crosses into home, while unfinished tasks can sustain cognitive activation beyond scheduled hours [12]. The evidence supports a conditional model of realized control, but it does not establish that preference mismatch or unfinished work is the sole causal pathway.

Table 1 organizes the evidence, constructs, relationships, uncertainties, and boundary conditions required for review design, evidence domains, and extraction framework for rethinking hybrid work boundaries beyond the immediate post-pandemic transition.

Table 1. Review design, evidence domains, and extraction framework for Rethinking Hybrid Work Boundaries Beyond the Immediate Post-Pandemic Transition.

Evidence domain or review construct	Review question	Eligible evidence type	Extraction fields	Appraisal or relevance criterion	Synthesis role	Main limitation	Interpretation boundary
Literature development	What changed from established remote-work research to the hybrid frontier?	Reviews and temporally relevant empirical research [6]	Period, construct, design, and context	Separates mature evidence from crisis evidence	Establishes the literature's development	Inconsistent terminology	Development does not imply theoretical convergence
Formal autonomy	What discretion is granted through policy and work design?	Work-design and flexible-work evidence [4]	Location, time, monitoring, and workload	Distinguishes nominal discretion from experienced outcomes	Identifies policy inputs	Frequently self-reported	Availability is not realized control
Boundary control	Can workers regulate permeability and role transitions?	Mixed-method evidence [9]; daily evidence [10]	Transition direction, interruptions, and expectations	Captures enacted rather than formal control	Explains heterogeneous experiences	Context specificity and short horizons	Associations are not long-term causal proof
Recovery interface	How might permeability affect disengagement and restoration?	Spillover evidence [11]; unfinished-task evidence [12]	Cognitive activation, preference fit, and task state	Requires mechanism-level correspondence	Connects control to recovery	Mediation is commonly observational	The proposed pathway requires temporal testing
Inclusion and inequality	Who receives access, control, and protection from penalties?	Gendered and institutional evidence [7]	Gender, status, policy context, and perceived consequences	Examines unequal enactment	Extends the synthesis across levels	Perceptions may not equal decisions	No universal equity effect is implied

Note. Evidence-derived entries are cited. "Synthesis role" and the cross-domain distinctions are original integrative classifications proposed for this review.

Recovery and temporal fragmentation

Recovery refers to psychological and physiological restoration after demands, commonly involving detachment, reduced activation, and replenishment of depleted resources. Temporal fragmentation concerns the interruption of recoverable time by repeated role switches, concurrent demands, meetings, messages, and unfinished work. Hybrid schedules may reduce

commuting and offer temporal discretion, yet the same arrangement can disperse work across more episodes and make the endpoint of the workday less legible.

Longitudinal person-centered evidence from the early pandemic shows that employees did not move through one uniform work-family transition. They shifted among distinct profiles of conflict and enrichment, with caregiving, workload, and support contributing to different trajectories [13]. This heterogeneity cautions against treating emergency homeworking as a single exposure or assuming that later hybrid arrangements inherit the same pattern.

More specific evidence identifies practices that can create recoverability burdens. A within-person field experiment found that camera use in virtual meetings increased fatigue, with downstream associations involving voice and engagement [14]. The result supports a practice-level causal claim about camera use in that setting, not a general claim that virtual meetings or hybrid work impair performance. It also illustrates why technological capability should be separated from mandatory use and from legitimate expectations of visibility.

Temporal fragmentation can also arise when paid work, caregiving, household labor, and schooling are performed concurrently. Longitudinal evidence during the pandemic documented changing demands and well-being as employees occupied several roles at once [15]. These conditions were exceptional, but they reveal a mechanism that remains relevant whenever hybrid work shifts coordination costs into the household.

Finally, work-to-life integration is associated with poorer well-being partly through reduced recovery activities [16]. Because that evidence is cross-sectional, causal ordering remains uncertain: lower well-being may itself impair recovery or encourage boundary permeability. The defensible conclusion is therefore conditional. Hybrid work may support recovery when it creates protected, predictable discretion; it may undermine recovery when flexibility becomes fragmented availability. Future testing must measure sequences of work episodes, detachment, interruptions, household demands, and organizational expectations rather than relying only on weekly location frequency.

Belonging across uneven physical presence

Belonging in hybrid work should not be reduced to communication frequency or perceived friendliness. It concerns relational inclusion, access to socially meaningful participation, and the ability to enter information and decision networks on consequential terms. Large-scale communication data show that organization-wide remote work can make collaboration networks more static and siloed while shifting interaction toward asynchronous media [17]. These patterns do not directly measure belonging, but they indicate that uneven physical presence can redistribute bridging ties and informal access.

Table 2 organizes the evidence, constructs, relationships, uncertainties, and boundary conditions required for cross-study findings, mechanisms, convergence, and conflict in rethinking hybrid work boundaries beyond the immediate post-pandemic transition.

Table 2. Cross-study findings, mechanisms, convergence, and conflict in Rethinking Hybrid Work Boundaries Beyond the Immediate Post-Pandemic Transition.

Construct, mechanism, or relationship	Representative context	Reported finding	Evidence design	Convergent evidence	Conflicting evidence	Methodological concern	Review interpretation
Network access	Large information-work organization	Collaboration became more siloed and less synchronous [17]	Longitudinal digital traces	Presence affects bridging opportunities	Belonging was not directly measured	Single-firm transition	Network position is one condition of inclusion, not belonging itself
Digital affordances	Teams working from home	Tools enabled coordination while creating interruptions and altered cues [18]	Qualitative study	Capability depends on enactment	The same tool can enable and constrain	Crisis setting	Digital access does not guarantee equivalent participation
Isolation and contact	Remote workers using mediated communication	Communication frequency conditionally related to isolation and distress [19]	Observational survey	Social access matters	More contact is not uniformly protective	Self-report and reverse causality	Contact volume and relational quality should be separated
Dynamic belonging	New high-intensity telecommuters	Belonging changed with meaningful work and exhaustion [20]	Longitudinal survey	Belonging is temporally variable	Direction of influence remains uncertain	Transition-specific population	Belonging is an evolving work condition, not a fixed attitude
Consequential inclusion,	Cross-domain integration	Access becomes consequential when participation can	Original integrative synthesis	Builds on network, affordance, and	Not tested as a combined construct	Requires multilevel validation	Digital presence, relational inclusion, and

proposed synthesis	influence interpretation or decisions	belonging evidence	influence should be measured separately
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Note. Evidence-derived findings are cited. The distinctions among contact, network access, relational inclusion, and consequential influence are original integrative classifications proposed for this review.

Technology does not remove these differences. An affordance perspective shows that digital tools can make coordination possible while simultaneously creating interruptions, communication overload, and reduced contextual cues [18]. Capability is therefore not equivalence: two employees may have access to the same platform while differing in whose contributions are noticed, whose questions receive rapid attention, and who participates before decisions become formal. Communication frequency is similarly ambiguous. Mediated contact can condition isolation and psychological distress, but increasing messages or meetings is not necessarily a belonging intervention [19]. Contact can be instrumental, surveillant, burdensome, or relationally meaningful. Studies must therefore distinguish volume, reciprocity, tie diversity, psychological safety, and whether participation changes decisions. Longitudinal evidence among new high-intensity telecommuters further indicates that belongingness changes alongside meaningful work and emotional exhaustion [20]. The direction of influence remains uncertain, and emergency-transition conditions limit transferability. The available evidence nevertheless supports viewing belonging as dynamic and intensity-dependent. Uneven presence may matter most when it alters access to informal interpretation, developmental feedback, sponsorship, or consequential voice rather than when it merely changes the number of interactions. The level of analysis is consequential. An employee may report strong team attachment while remaining peripheral to cross-unit networks, or may attend many digital meetings without influencing their outcomes. Conversely, a team can maintain dense internal ties while becoming isolated from the wider organization. Research should therefore combine individual belonging measures with network position, information access, meeting participation, and evidence that expressed voice changed a decision. This distinction prevents subjective inclusion from being treated as proof of equal organizational influence.

Career inequality and proximity advantage

Career inequality in hybrid work is often discussed as a “visibility problem,” but visibility must be disaggregated. Physical presence may increase observability, informal information, access to decision makers, sponsorship opportunities, and occasions to signal commitment. None of these is equivalent to performance. Proximity advantage is therefore defined here as a conditional organizational process through which physical co-presence improves access to recognition or influence independently of demonstrated contribution.

Evidence using objective career outcomes suggests that telecommuting intensity can have nonlinear and context-dependent associations with career success [21]. Moderate use may preserve flexibility without eliminating relational access, whereas high-intensity absence may reduce exposure to informal opportunities. Because participation is not randomly assigned in most settings, self-selection, job type, supervisor relationships, and organizational culture remain credible alternative explanations. Qualitative research shows that face time is actively produced through visible sacrifice and signaling rather than passively recorded as attendance [22]. Employees may remain late, travel unnecessarily, or display availability because managers interpret costly presence as commitment. Hybrid arrangements can change the medium of these signals without removing the norm. Digital responsiveness, camera use, rapid replies, and conspicuous office attendance can become new forms of performative availability.

Flexibility stigma adds an inequality dimension. Perceived career consequences differ by gender and by the form of flexibility used [23]. Ideal-worker expectations may make the same arrangement appear legitimate for a high-status employee but insufficiently committed for a caregiver or lower-status worker. Perceived stigma is not direct evidence of discriminatory promotion decisions, yet it can shape uptake, self-presentation, and willingness to request flexibility.

Proximity advantage may also operate before formal evaluation. Informal assignment allocation, invitations to early-stage conversations, access to stretch work, and opportunities to repair misunderstandings can accumulate into unequal career resources. These processes may be difficult to detect because each decision appears discretionary and minor. The relevant comparison is not simply who received a promotion, but who entered the sequence of interactions through which promotable experience, sponsorship, and reputational information were produced.

The review therefore treats proximity advantage as a hypothesis about unequal access, not a universal penalty for absence. Research should separate performance ratings, promotion, pay, developmental assignments, sponsorship, voice uptake, and network centrality. It should also test whether transparent criteria and deliberately distributed managerial attention reduce proximity-based advantages or merely shift signaling to digital channels.

Proposed research agenda

The next research phase should replace broad comparisons of “hybrid” and “office” workers with policy-specific, task-specific, and temporally ordered tests. A randomized field trial of a structured two-day homeworking schedule found improved retention and satisfaction without measurable performance loss in one firm [24]. Its importance lies less in identifying a universal schedule than in demonstrating that hybrid policy can be specified as an organizational treatment with defined eligibility, intensity, duration, and outcomes.

Strong causal studies also indicate that effects vary by task and setting. Geographic flexibility improved productivity in a highly measurable knowledge-work system, whereas virtual communication reduced creative idea generation without comparably impairing idea selection [24-26]. These findings support neither blanket endorsement nor rejection. They show that work location interacts with task phase, output measurability, coordination demands, and organizational infrastructure.

The proposed enacted-boundary-regime synthesis organizes future tests around four linked questions. First, does formal autonomy produce realized control, or does it transfer coordination responsibility? Second, do work episodes become more recoverable or more fragmented? Third, does digital participation provide consequential inclusion or only nominal access? Fourth, do presence patterns alter career outcomes through performance-relevant information, signaling, sponsorship, or bias? Testing should begin with temporal ordering. Policy characteristics should be measured before enacted boundary practices; enacted practices before recovery, inclusion, or visibility mechanisms; and those mechanisms before longer-term outcomes. Competing models should examine whether employee preferences, prior performance, job status, or managerial trust explain both hybrid-work access and later outcomes. Studies should also test cross-level effects, such as whether one employee’s flexibility shifts coordination demands to coworkers or changes a team’s network position.

These relationships should be modeled as competing and potentially independent pathways rather than one causal chain. Evidence would challenge the synthesis if realized control did not predict recovery, if network access did not affect consequential inclusion, or if transparent evaluation eliminated proximity differences without changing presence. Cross-national, occupational, and household comparisons are necessary because institutions and unequal resources may condition every pathway.

Methodological priorities

A state-of-the-art review should identify the current frontier, explain how consequential developments were selected, and distinguish reported evidence from interpretive synthesis [27]. Future empirical work requires the same discipline. “Hybrid work” should be operationalized through location frequency, schedule predictability, employee choice, eligibility, task allocation, communication expectations, and implementation fidelity rather than through a single yes-or-no category.

Table 3 organizes the evidence, constructs, relationships, uncertainties, and boundary conditions required for evidence limitations, unresolved questions, and future research priorities.

Table 3. Evidence limitations, unresolved questions, and future research priorities.

Context or level	Moderator or boundary condition	Evidence pattern	Organizational implication	Alternative explanation	Transferability limit	Uncertainty	Research need
Individual and household	Caregiving, segmentation preference, unfinished tasks	Boundary and recovery outcomes vary [12]	Protect predictable nonwork time	Self-selection or temporary overload	Household structures differ	Direction of influence	Experience sampling with time-use data
Team and network	Interdependence, tie diversity, communication design	Remote work can alter bridging and synchrony [17]	Distribute information and meeting access	Reorganization unrelated to location	Single-firm evidence	Long-term network adaptation	Multilevel network studies
Task and technology	Creativity phase, measurability, camera expectations	Outcomes differ across practices and tasks [14]	Match practices to task requirements	Novelty or learning effects	Bounded tasks and technologies	Persistence of effects	Field experiments across task phases
Career system	Status, gender, managerial norms	Visibility and flexibility penalties are conditional [23]	Audit allocation and advancement decisions	Occupational sorting	National and organizational context	Actual versus perceived penalty	Administrative career histories and decision tracing
Organization and policy	Access, discretion, implementation climate	Formal availability does not ensure control	Measure access, use, and burden distribution	Broader culture drives both policy and outcomes	Policy forms differ	Implementation mechanisms	Staggered rollouts and comparative case designs

Note. Evidence patterns are source-bounded. Organizational implications and the ordering of research needs are proposed review interpretations rather than validated prescriptions or rankings.

PRISMA-compatible reporting can clarify identification and selection even when the declared design is not a systematic review [28]. That transparency should be complemented by searchable concepts, record-level deduplication, explicit eligibility boundaries, claim-level extraction, and disclosure of interpretive decisions. A flow diagram documents what entered the synthesis; it does not establish exhaustive coverage or eliminate selection judgment.

Review research is strongest when the question, search, appraisal, synthesis, and claimed contribution are aligned [29]. Empirical studies likewise require alignment among level, mechanism, and outcome. Individual perceptions cannot justify organizational conclusions without multilevel data; communication volume cannot stand in for belonging; visibility cannot stand in for performance; and cross-sectional mediation cannot establish temporal process.

Measurement deserves particular attention. Studies should establish whether boundary control, belonging, and visibility mean the same thing across occupations, countries, caregiving situations, and levels of hybrid intensity. Measures should distinguish desired from imposed integration and policy access from actual discretion. Researchers should report schedule changes during observation because a worker classified as hybrid may experience substantial week-to-week variation. Without these distinctions, apparent inconsistency may reflect measurement non-equivalence rather than genuine theoretical conflict.

Priority designs include within-person sampling, policy rollouts, randomized or quasi-experimental changes, objective time-use and communication traces, administrative career outcomes, qualitative process studies, and cross-national comparisons. Triangulation is particularly important because no single method can simultaneously identify causal effects, lived boundary experiences, implementation variation, and long-term inequality.

Organizational implications

Organizations should begin with distribution rather than attendance. Flexibility access, discretion, and burden differ across occupational strata, meaning that the same policy can provide choice to high-status knowledge workers while transferring unpredictability or coordination costs to lower-status workers [30]. An equity review should therefore examine eligibility, schedule control, workload, digital surveillance, workspace quality, caregiving compatibility, and the burdens placed on employees who remain continuously on-site.

Formal policy is also distinct from enacted practice. Work-life initiatives can generate resentment, stigma, and workload redistribution when coworkers or supervisors perceive use as norm violation or unfair burden shifting [31]. The implication is not that flexibility should be restricted. It is that organizations should monitor whether work is redistributed invisibly, whether users are excluded from developmental opportunities, and whether managers reward performative availability.

Implementation should distinguish policy availability, access experience, actual use, outcomes, and realized boundary control [32]. Employees may technically qualify yet avoid use because of stigma; they may use hybrid work but lack control over meeting times; or they may gain spatial discretion while losing temporal continuity. Evaluation should therefore include worker choice, predictability, interruption, recovery opportunities, network access, decision participation, and career allocation alongside retention or performance.

Managerial practice matters because uneven presence creates discretion over whose work is seen and whose contributions are interpreted. Meeting processes can reduce asymmetry by distributing materials in advance, documenting decisions, rotating facilitation, and ensuring that remote contributions enter discussion before closure. Such practices are design principles rather than proven universal interventions. Their effects may depend on task, team maturity, power distribution, and technology.

Governance should also include a feedback cycle. Organizations can compare formal policy with employee access, actual schedules, workload transfers, meeting patterns, and developmental allocations; identify groups experiencing low control or exclusion; and revise practices while preserving local explanation. Aggregate satisfaction alone is insufficient because average improvement can coexist with concentrated burdens. Review by occupation, status, caregiving context, and presence intensity may reveal whether benefits depend on resources unavailable to others.

Organizations should resist translating the review into a fixed office-day formula. Strong evidence from specific settings does not establish a context-free optimum. A defensible approach is iterative and bounded: specify the policy, identify who can exercise control, examine burden redistribution, compare intended with enacted practice, and revise arrangements when recovery, inclusion, or career access becomes uneven. This treats hybrid work as an organizational system requiring monitoring rather than an employee benefit whose presence alone establishes success.

Conclusion

Hybrid work has moved beyond emergency adaptation, but its central organizational problem is not simply where work occurs. It is how recurring patterns of presence and absence distribute boundary control, recoverable time, relational access, visibility, and career opportunity. The available literature shows persistent heterogeneity because policies, occupations, tasks, households, technologies, managerial norms, and institutions differ.

This state-of-the-art review contributes an enacted-boundary-regime synthesis that links four domains without collapsing them into a single effect. Formal autonomy may or may not become realized control. Digital connection may or may not produce consequential belonging. Physical presence may provide useful coordination or create proximity-based advantage. These relationships remain conditional and require direct empirical testing.

The synthesis is neither a validated causal model nor a universal implementation prescription. Its purpose is to clarify constructs, alternative explanations, levels of analysis, and decision boundaries. Progress depends on policy-specific longitudinal and multilevel evidence that measures enacted practices rather than attendance labels. Organizations should accordingly evaluate hybrid work through the quality and distribution of control, recovery, inclusion, and career access, while remaining prepared to revise arrangements when benefits and burdens are uneven.

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