

WORK-LIFE BALANCE AND MODERN ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF THE CHALLENGES OF REMOTE WORK AND BURNOUT

Suryowanto^{1*}, Andaryanto², Sopiah³
^{1,2,3}Universitas Negeri Malang / Malang, Indonesia

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Abstract

The transformation of the global work landscape driven by digitalization and the pandemic has rapidly accelerated the widespread adoption of remote work, creating an urgent need to understand the relationship between work-life balance (WLB), burnout, and the dynamics of modern organizational behavior. This study aims to synthesize scientific findings from the past five years on the interconnection of these three concepts through a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach guided by the PRISMA protocol. A total of 79 verified primary articles were analyzed using thematic and content analysis methods to map key trends, theoretical-methodological approaches, and relevant research gaps. The results indicate that WLB functions as a protective factor against burnout, whereas remote work exhibits ambivalent effects that depend on organizational design and behavior. This review highlights the dominance of the JD-R theory and the limitations of longitudinal studies. The main contribution of this research lies in its thematic integration of cross-cutting variables and the proposal of a synthetic model based on dynamic interaction. The study recommends the development of digital organizational behavior theory and work policies that prioritize well-being. Future research is encouraged to adopt cross-disciplinary and contextual approaches to build a more adaptive and human-centered framework.

Keywords: *Work-Life Balance, Burnout, Remote Work, Organizational Behavior, Literature Review*

INTRODUCTION

In the digitized era of modern work, remote work has evolved from a flexible option into an institutional norm across sectors, driven by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the rise of hybrid work strategies (Leonardi et al., 2023). This shift presents significant challenges to individual well-being and organizational behavioral dynamics, particularly in managing work-life balance (WLB) and the increasing risk of burnout triggered by digital pressures, technostress, and the blurring boundaries between work and personal life (Stankevičiūtė, 2022).

Recent research shows that the impact of remote work on WLB and burnout is highly context-dependent. Lamprinou et al. (2021) emphasize the critical role of supervisor support in mitigating burnout, while Khalid et al. (2024) identify role conflict and WLB imbalances during work-from-home periods as key triggers of work fatigue. Irfan et al. (2023) underscore the importance of organizational support for performance, though the integration between individual and organizational dimensions remains inadequate. Desiatco et al. (2024) further highlight the role of engagement as a crucial mediating variable, particularly within millennial workforces, which have been underrepresented in organizational design.

Burnout is also influenced by weak control systems and technological disruptions (Palumbo, 2020; Attieh, 2022). Ramya & Kathiravan's (2024) study reveals that effective communication in remote settings can actually enhance organizational commitment. García-Salirrosas & Rondon-Eusebio (2023) add that the positive effects of WLB are shaped by emotional spillover between work and home domains, which is strengthened by remote leadership styles that promote autonomy (Walsh et al., 2024).

Although the relationship between WLB and burnout has been extensively studied, the role of modern organizational behavior as a mediating variable has not yet been systematically explored (Khalid et al., 2024; Stankevičiūtė, 2022). On the other hand, while work flexibility is often seen as a benefit, it is not always matched by organizational readiness to manage it (Attieh, 2022). This highlights the need for a synthesized approach to integrate WLB, burnout, and organizational behavior within a comprehensive and contextual analytical framework. Many

earlier studies are descriptive in nature and have yet to build a strong theoretical integration (Desiatco et al., 2024; Lamprinou et al., 2021), while the long-term structural dynamics of organizations that also affect WLB are often overlooked (García-Salirrosas et al., 2023).

To address these challenges, the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach is considered appropriate for synthesizing evidence-based insights into the relationship between WLB, burnout, and organizational behavior in remote work contexts. By filtering and analyzing literature from the past five years, this study maps key issues, identifies research gaps, and formulates practical future research directions. Thus, this article aims to offer both theoretical and practical contributions to the development of organizational strategies that are adaptive and oriented toward human well-being.

Accordingly, this study is guided by the following research questions: 1) What is the pattern of relationships between work-life balance, burnout, and organizational behavior in remote work contexts?; 2) What approaches and theories are employed in the literature?; 3) What directions for future research are needed to address the challenges of flexible work and burnout?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review is a critical component of your research paper, providing a comprehensive overview of existing research and theoretical frameworks related to your topic. This section serves to establish the context of your study by summarizing and synthesizing relevant literature, highlighting key findings, methodologies, and gaps in current knowledge.

In this section, you should:

- Identify and critically evaluate previous studies pertinent to your research question. This includes examining the strengths and weaknesses of earlier work, and how they inform your own research.
- Discuss the theoretical frameworks and concepts that underpin your study, providing insights into how they relate to your research objectives.
- Highlight any controversies, discrepancies, or debates within the existing literature, emphasizing areas where your study contributes new knowledge or perspectives.
- Conclude with a clear statement regarding the gaps in the literature that your research aims to address, setting the stage for your study's significance and intended contributions.

Ensure that the literature review is well-organized, flowing smoothly between topics, and logically leading to your research questions or hypotheses. Proper citations and references are essential to uphold academic integrity and provide credit to original authors.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach guided by the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) protocol to ensure transparency, objectivity, and replicability in reviewing scientific literature. This approach was chosen to identify, evaluate, and synthesize recent literature discussing the interrelations between work-life balance (WLB), burnout, and modern organizational behavior in the context of remote work, while building cross-disciplinary conceptual understanding without selection bias (Page et al., 2021).

Literature searches were conducted using the Scopus database, assisted by Boolean operators combining keywords such as: “Work-Life Balance” AND “Remote Work Control,” “Work-Life Balance” AND “Burnout,” “Modern Organizational Behavior” AND “Remote Work Control,” and “Modern Organizational Behavior” AND “Burnout.” This strategy was designed to capture the complexity of multidimensional relationships between work-life balance, psychosocial stress, and digital organizational dynamics.

The literature selection process followed the PRISMA stages: identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and inclusion. Inclusion criteria encompassed articles published between 2020–2025, written in English, peer-reviewed, and explicitly addressing WLB, burnout, remote work, or digital organizational behavior. Non-scholarly articles and studies with non-organizational focuses were excluded. From an initial pool of 842 articles, 147 were screened, and 79 articles met the eligibility criteria for further analysis.

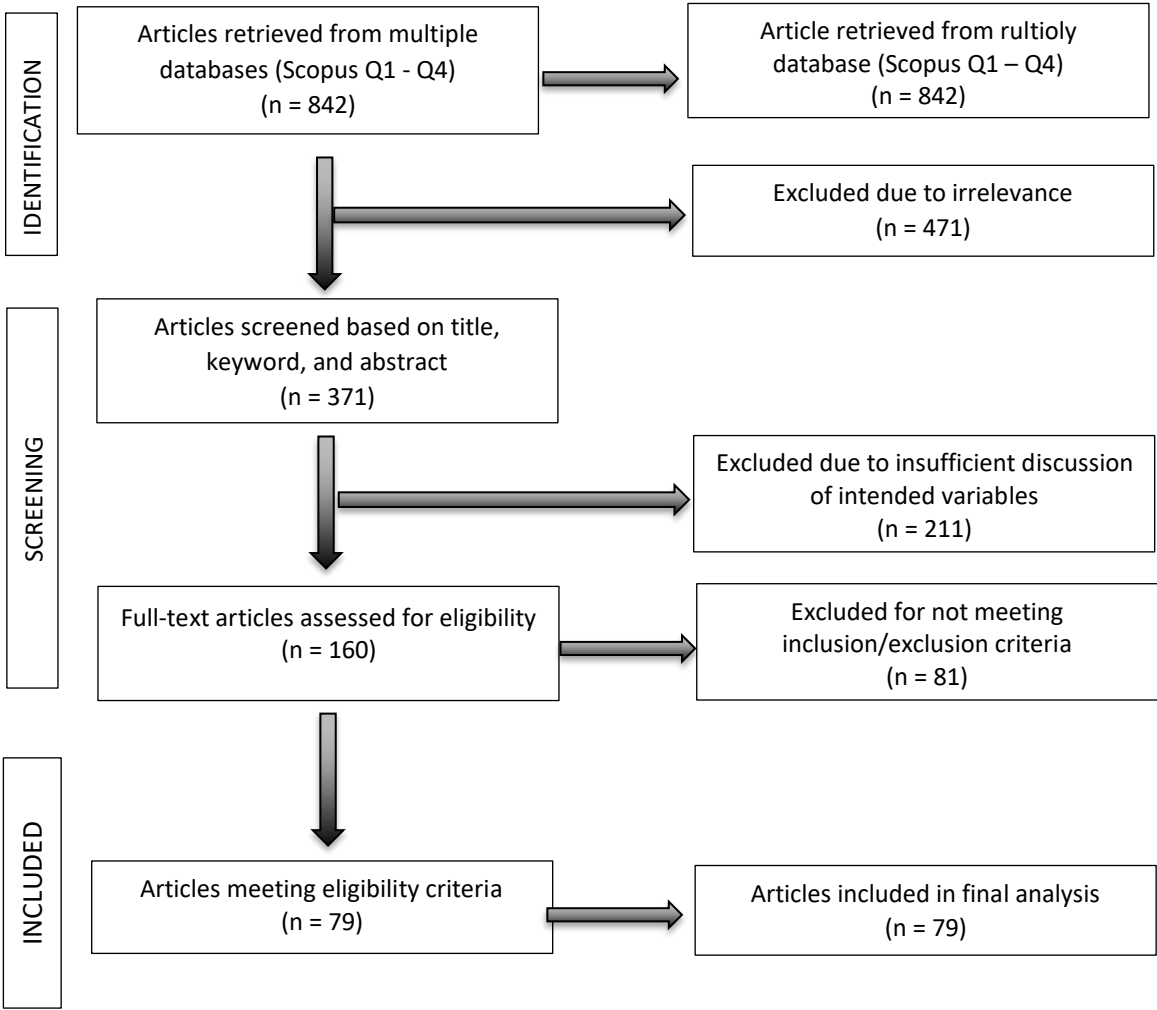


Figure 1: PRISMA Flowchart Diagram

Data extraction was carried out using a codification sheet containing key elements such as title, author, journal, methodology, population, theory, main variables, and findings. Two analysis approaches were employed: thematic analysis to identify key issues such as technostress, remote leadership, and workplace well-being; and content analysis to examine inter-variable relationships, methodological trends, and conceptual gaps. The entire process was conducted meticulously and reflectively to ensure the validity of the synthesis and its scientific contribution to the development of human well-being-centered organizations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

General Description of the Literature

This study reviews 79 scholarly articles published between 2020 and early 2025, focusing on the interrelationships among work-life balance (WLB), burnout, remote work, and modern organizational behavior. The literature analyzed reflects diversity in geographical context, methodological approaches, and thematic focus relevant to contemporary managerial challenges.

Chronologically, there has been a significant surge in publications since 2020, driven by work disruptions caused by the pandemic. Articles published between 2023 and 2024 dominate the dataset, including recent works by Singh (2024), Desiatco et al. (2024), and Tang et al. (2024), which enrich the theoretical foundations laid by earlier studies such as Zajac & Kowalski (2021), Arumningtyas & Trisafidaningsih (2021), and Gabriel & Aguinis (2021).

Geographically, the studies span a wide range of regions—from South and Southeast Asia (Gultom & Liyas, 2023), North America (Leonardi et al., 2023), to other global zones, as reflected in the McKinsey Health Institute report (2022). This diversity strengthens the cross-contextual analytical framework adopted in this study. Methodologically, approximately 50 articles employed quantitative approaches, including studies by Basuni & Sopiah (2023), Hariri et al. (2024), and Kilova & Stoyanova (2024). Qualitative approaches are observed in works

by Lehto (2023) and DeFeo (2022), while 19 other articles utilized mixed methods or bibliometric techniques, as seen in Kaur & Singh (2024) and Iqbal & Hussain (2024). Thematically, the literature can be grouped into four main domains: the relationship between WLB and remote work (Okeke et al., 2022), the correlation between WLB and burnout (Tomar & Singh, 2024), the impact of remote work on organizational behavior (Mustajab, 2024), and the relationship between burnout and organizational behavior (Gaspar et al., 2024). These four themes form an integrated conceptual foundation for research synthesis.

In terms of source quality, the majority of articles are published in high-impact journals within Scopus Q1 and Q2 quartiles, such as *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology*, *Frontiers in Psychology*, *BMC Public Health*, and *Journal of Organizational Behavior*. The works of Leonardi et al. (2023), Gabriel & Aguinis (2021), and Zeng & Hu (2024) serve as key references in constructing the theoretical and analytical basis of this article.

4.2 Key Thematic Findings

Theme 1: Work-Life Balance and Remote Work

Digital transformation and the expansion of remote work practices have placed work-life balance (WLB) at the forefront of modern organizational studies. Numerous studies demonstrate that work flexibility has a positive impact on time efficiency and personal control, which in turn supports the achievement of WLB (Singh, 2024; T et al., 2024; Okeke et al., 2022; Nasution et al., 2024). In this context, social support serves as a crucial mediator that enhances the positive effects of remote work (Yilmaz, 2023; Basheer et al., 2022).

Since 2020, academic publications related to this theme have increased sharply, reflecting growing attention to time flexibility, digital stress, and organizational structural dynamics (Kaur & Singh, 2024; Iqbal et al., 2024; Zajac et al., 2021). Furthermore, WLB has increasingly been associated with overall well-being (F. Wang, 2024; Milosavljevic et al., 2021), and is shifting toward the concept of work-life integration, which emphasizes harmony between personal and professional values.

Qualitative approaches in the literature also highlight the importance of organizational resources and workplace culture in shaping perceptions of flexibility (Niemi, 2023; Lehto, 2023). The shift in focus from physical presence to outcomes and autonomy reinforces the role of human resource management as a driver of balance-oriented work systems (Silva et al., 2024; Verma et al., 2023). Several studies offer practical solutions such as hybrid systems based on individual preferences (Raghavan et al., 2023) and boundary management strategies to effectively navigate the work-life interface (Case Western Reserve, 2023).

Theme 2: Work-Life Balance and Burnout

The relationship between work-life balance (WLB) and burnout has become a major focus in studies on human resource management and organizational health. An imbalance between job demands and personal needs is proven to be a primary trigger of burnout, both physiologically and psychologically. Studies by Basuni & Sopiah (2023) and Gultom & Liyas (2023) confirm that high workloads without adequate WLB significantly increase the risk of burnout, particularly among contract workers.

Technology-induced pressures further exacerbate the situation. Bencsik & Juhasz (2023) find that technostress negatively impacts WLB and intensifies burnout symptoms. In the national context, Nascimento et al. (2024) highlight that conflicts between work and home domains increase emotional strain, indicating the need for systemic organizational interventions.

Theoretically, WLB serves a protective function against burnout. Studies by Hariri et al. (2024), Tomar & Singh (2024), and Julianti & Mardianty (2024) demonstrate that WLB effectively reduces emotional exhaustion and improves job satisfaction. Arumningtyas & Trisafidaningsih (2021) and Ramadhan & Frendika (2022) support these findings by emphasizing that burnout undermines work effectiveness across sectors.

The impact is also reflected in productivity. Safitri & Frianto (2021) associate the blurred boundaries between work and personal life with decreased productivity. Ramadhi et al. (2024) highlight the phenomenon of quiet quitting as a response to chronic burnout.

Cross-cultural and intergenerational studies reveal variations in vulnerability. Kim (2020) notes that Generations Y and Z are more susceptible to burnout when WLB is compromised. Lopez & Gonzalez (2022) assert the mediating role of WLB in the relationship between work pressure and burnout in cross-cultural contexts. Galanaki & Papalexandris (2021) conclude this discussion by showing that rigid HRM practices worsen burnout and hinder the development of a healthy work-life balance.

Theme 3: Modern Organizational Behavior and Remote Work

The shift toward remote work has fundamentally reformed the structure, values, and culture of organizations. Modern organizational behavior is now characterized by a tendency toward decentralized, outcome-based, and hybrid-oriented systems. In this context, organizational control mechanisms are required to adapt to digital challenges, particularly in managing social interactions, intrinsic motivation, and the cultivation of collaborative cultures (Pianese & Errichiello, 2023; Leonardi et al., 2023).

Digital well-being has emerged as a critical issue, emphasizing the importance of psychosocial support and attention to mental health to prevent burnout and isolation in remote work settings (Vizcaíno et al., 2023; Lyzwinski, 2023). Organizational adaptation to the digital era requires a reformulation of communication systems, motivation patterns, and workplace cultures that uphold shared values and collective orientation (Lu, 2024; Al, 2023; Ebner et al., 2022).

The strategic function of human resource management (HRM) has also been repositioned. Training, monitoring, and retention strategies must align with a result-oriented digital work logic (Haque, 2023; Singh, 2024; Mustajab, 2024). Employee engagement is now significantly influenced by open communication, the granting of autonomy, and trust, although the risk of social alienation remains high (Fatima et al., 2024; Killedar et al., 2025; DeFeo, 2022).

The literature also highlights the importance of digital leadership and culture. Organizational effectiveness in this context is determined by leaders' digital mindset, the flexibility of work norms, and outcome orientation (Paudel & Sherm, 2024; Makkar & Rani, 2024; Bal & Bulgur, 2023). Without proper management, virtual social relationships may fail to foster team cohesion and erode the meaning of collective work (Nowrouzi-Kia, 2024; Celestin & Sujatha, 2024; Rogers, 2022).

Global reports such as the 2025 Modern Workplace Report reinforce the position of remote work as a key strategy for talent retention, with 76% of workers preferring flexibility over promotion. This underscores the urgency for organizational design that emphasizes balance and autonomy.

Theme 4: Modern Organizational Behavior and Burnout

Burnout in modern organizations cannot be viewed merely as an individual response but must be understood as a reflection of structural, cultural, and managerial failure. The literature confirms that organizational behavior is a principal determinant in both exacerbating and preventing burnout. Flexible job design and a supportive culture are proven to be crucial in mitigating work-related exhaustion (Demerouti & Adaloudis, 2024; Demerouti, 2024). Criticism has also been directed at organizations that tend to blame individuals without reforming unjust systems (Gabriel & Aguinis, 2021; McKinsey Health Institute, 2022).

The balance between job demands and job resources is a key variable in explaining chronic fatigue, particularly in the service sector and in developing country contexts with hierarchical cultural legacies (Gaspar et al., 2024; Bes et al., 2023; Tiwari, 2023; Tua et al., 2024). Theories such as Job Demands–Resources (JD-R), Person–Organization Fit, and engagement approaches enrich the theoretical foundation explaining the importance of alignment between personal values and organizational values (Edú-Valsania et al., 2022; Ozturk, 2020; Bakker & Demerouti, 2021; Zeng & Hu, 2024).

A humanistic approach has gained prominence, with spirituality and employee resilience recognized as protective elements when integrated into organizational design and leadership practices (Silva et al., 2023; Tang et al., 2024). Supportive and appreciative leadership significantly reduces emotional pressures that trigger burnout (Jo & Shin, 2025).

Moreover, learning organizations that support self-efficacy also contribute to reducing burnout (Amadi et al., 2024). Personality traits such as neuroticism should also be considered in HR policies, as they influence vulnerability to work-related exhaustion (Angelini, 2023).

Burnout has systemic implications for loyalty, work quality, and organizational sustainability (Bouhsaien & Azmani, 2024; Fountouki & Theofanidis, 2022). Therefore, organizational strategies must be proactive and systemic, positioning empathetic leadership and fair work systems as foundational in addressing the complexities of contemporary burnout (MHI, 2022).

4.3 Integration of Findings: A Synthetic Model

The synthesis of 79 scientific articles reveals that work-life balance (WLB), burnout, remote work, and modern organizational behavior form a complex and interwoven system of causal interaction. The relationships among variables are not linear but are shaped by mediating and moderating mechanisms encompassing structural, affective,

and digital aspects. These findings are visualized in two forms: first, a matrix mapping the interrelationships among variables; second, a dynamic interaction model based on causal loops.

The first, a conceptual integration matrix, outlines the synthetic relationships among the four core concepts consistently found in the thematic results as follows:

In the WLB \Rightarrow Remote Work relationship, remote work has shown potential to enhance WLB through flexibility and personal control (Singh, 2024; T et al., 2024; Basheer et al., 2022; Okeke et al., 2022). However, in the absence of supportive organizational design and role clarity, the impact can reverse (Yilmaz, 2023; Niemi, 2023).

The WLB \Rightarrow Burnout relationship consistently shows WLB functioning as a protective factor against burnout (Basuni & Sopiah, 2023; Hariri et al., 2024; Tomar & Singh, 2024). Poor work-life balance contributes to emotional fatigue and feelings of alienation within organizations (Gultom & Liyas, 2023; Julianti & Mardianty, 2024; Ramadhan & Frendika, 2022).

In the Modern Organizational Behavior \Rightarrow Remote Work relationship, the literature emphasizes the role of digitalization, flexibility, and virtual leadership in determining remote work effectiveness (Leonardi et al., 2023; Mustajab, 2024; Haque, 2023). Elements such as collaboration, non-intrusive systems, and digital maturity are key catalysts (Paudel & Sherm, 2024; Lu, 2024; Rogers, 2022).

Meanwhile, the Modern Organizational Behavior \Rightarrow Burnout relationship indicates that burnout often results from an organization's failure to create fair and supportive systems (Demerouti & Adaloudis, 2024; McKinsey Health Institute, 2022). Conversely, work structures emphasizing autonomy, empathy, and proactive HR efforts help reduce burnout levels (Zeng & Hu, 2024; Edú-Valsania et al., 2022; Jo & Shin, 2025).

The second visualization is a dynamic interaction diagram. These four relational paths are integrated into a dynamic interaction model based on a causal loop, which illustrates the systemic and mutually reinforcing flow of influence among variables. This model emphasizes that healthy, adaptive, and empathetic work design is the foundational cornerstone for managing WLB, preventing burnout, and aligning modern organizational behavior within the digital work ecosystem.

4.4 Critical Discussion and Interpretation

The synthesis results indicate that the relationships among work-life balance (WLB), burnout, remote work, and organizational behavior are contextual and influenced by geographical factors, work culture, and institutional approaches to flexibility. Studies from developed countries tend to emphasize autonomy-based flexibility (Leonardi et al., 2023; Gabriel & Aguinis, 2021), whereas in developing countries, flexibility often leads to role ambiguity due to weak structural support (Mustajab, 2024; Haque, 2023; Ramadhan & Frendika, 2022).

The effectiveness of remote work is highly dependent on institutional design and organizational culture. Without an adaptive structural framework, flexible work fails to serve as a medium for achieving work-life balance. These findings affirm the importance of organizational strategies that are responsive to local contexts and capable of addressing burnout systemically.

From a theoretical perspective, the literature remains fragmented, often focusing on binary relationships such as WLB–burnout or remote work–organizational behavior. Few studies have developed comprehensive conceptual frameworks that integrate all variables into a single system (Demerouti & Adaloudis, 2024; Edú-Valsania et al., 2022). Models such as JD-R and Person–Organization Fit have not yet fully captured the complexity of culture, digital leadership, and virtual work norms.

Methodologically, most studies are descriptive and cross-sectional in design (Wang, 2024; Hariri et al., 2024; Kaur & Singh, 2024), limiting insights into the long-term dynamics of digital work adaptation. Longitudinal, experimental, and mixed-method studies capable of uniting narrative depth with empirical generalization remain scarce.

The practical implications of these findings encompass three key areas. First, organizations must develop employee-centered work designs that emphasize well-being, autonomy, and humanistic monitoring systems (Silva et al., 2023; Vizcaino et al., 2023). Second, the development of digital organizational theory requires new conceptual models that highlight structural agility and empathetic values (Leonardi et al., 2023; Zeng & Hu, 2024). Third, flexible work policies should be data-driven and generationally sensitive, with a well-being framework that supports mental health and social balance, particularly for millennials and Gen Z workers (Kim, 2020; Desiatco et al., 2024).

4.5 Unique Contributions of the Review and Future Research Agenda

This review makes a significant conceptual contribution by integrating four core domains—work-life balance (WLB), burnout, remote work, and modern organizational behavior—into a single, systemic, and integrated

framework. This approach differs from prior studies that have been partial and fragmented (Basuni & Sopiah, 2023; Leonardi et al., 2023; Mustajab, 2024). Through thematic analysis and dynamic causal modeling, this article maps the interactions among variables within a complex and interdependent digital organizational ecosystem.

Theoretically, the main contribution lies in the expansion of the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) and Person–Organization Fit frameworks, emphasizing the importance of multidimensional interaction involving digital infrastructure, employees’ affective experiences, and technology-based work values (Zeng & Hu, 2024; Edú-Valsania et al., 2022). In this context, digital support, technological literacy, and the quality of virtual leadership are contextual variables that are essential and cannot be overlooked in shaping modern organizational behavior.

From a methodological standpoint, this review identifies the dominance of cross-sectional designs, which tend to neglect temporal dynamics. This creates an urgent need for longitudinal, experimental, and mixed-method approaches that can capture long-term adaptation processes to flexible work systems and their implications for employee well-being.

Practically, the review underscores the importance of transforming organizations toward more empathetic, trust-based, and human-centered work models. These recommendations align with reports from the McKinsey Health Institute (2022) and WHO (2022), which emphasize the need for institutional interventions in addressing the systemic nature of burnout.

For future research directions, it is important to expand cross-cultural and intergenerational explorations in understanding how perceptions of WLB and burnout vary, particularly among millennials and Gen Z, who exhibit distinct work characteristics and expectations (Kim, 2020; Desiatco et al., 2024). Additionally, there is an urgent need to design sustainable digital organizational adaptation models that can address the challenges of the disruption era. Humanistic technology-based innovations, such as AI-powered burnout detection systems, digital self-regulation platforms, and empathetic feedback mechanisms, are essential components in building a socially sustainable and meaningful organizational architecture for the future.

CONCLUSION

This review presents a comprehensive conceptual synthesis of the interrelationships among work-life balance (WLB), burnout, remote work, and modern organizational behavior within the post-digital work landscape. An analysis of 79 scholarly articles published between 2020 and 2020 reveals a shift in the literature’s focus—from efficiency-oriented themes to concerns over psychosocial well-being—amid the acceleration of digitalization and rising demands for more human-centered organizational approaches.

Overall, WLB is found to function as a protective factor against burnout, while remote work demonstrates ambivalent characteristics, heavily influenced by structural design and contextual implementation. In this regard, modern organizational behavior plays a dual role—it may act as a facilitator of well-being or, conversely, as a primary driver of systemic exhaustion when poorly managed. The review also highlights the dominance of theoretical frameworks such as JD-R, Person–Organization Fit, and Boundary Theory, while pointing out the lack of integration among them into a comprehensive, multidimensional model.

Methodological limitations also emerge as a key concern, especially the prevalence of cross-sectional quantitative approaches that fail to capture contextual and temporal dynamics in digital work adaptation. This presents an opportunity for more exploratory and longitudinal research, including the use of mixed methods to uncover deeper and more representative narratives of work experience.

This review further reveals the limited integration of cultural, generational, and digitalization variables, which undermines organizations’ ability to design adaptive work policies. Herein lies a critical avenue for future research: the development of technowellbeing approaches, personalized hybrid work designs, and the application of artificial intelligence for data-driven burnout detection and intervention represent promising directions.

Therefore, future research must be interdisciplinary, exploratory, and transformative. This approach will broaden the understanding of cultural diversity, generational preferences, and sectoral dynamics, ultimately supporting the development of globally relevant and human-centered organizational solutions for navigating an increasingly complex world of work.

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