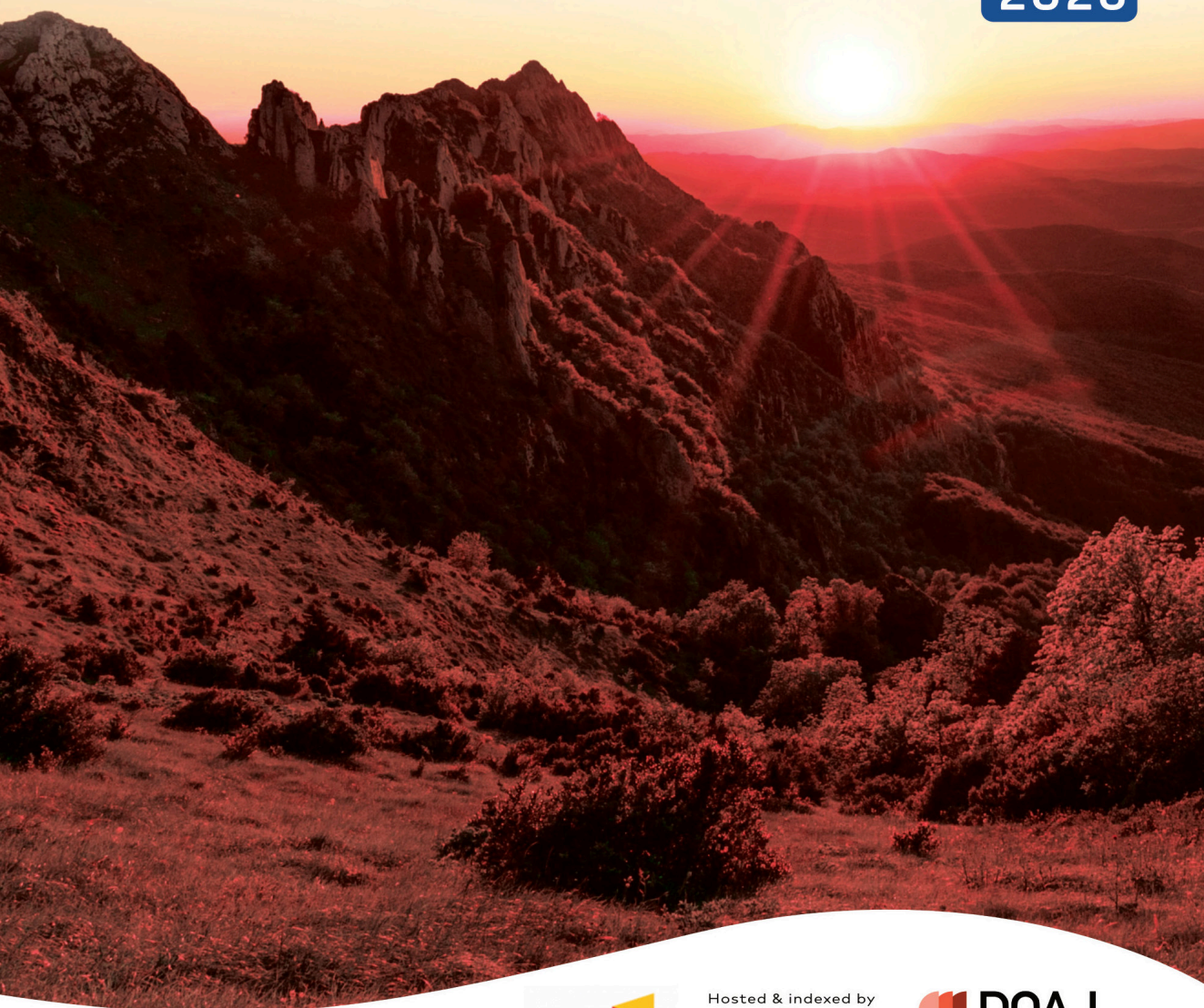


The Dyke

Volume 20 No.1

2026



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Sabinet
African Journals

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The perceptions of managers and non-managers on hybrid work in Zimbabwe

Remigio Chingara^a

^aGreat Zimbabwe University

Abstract

Extant literature has widely examined employee perceptions of hybrid work across global contexts. Despite increasing interest in hybrid work arrangements in Zimbabwe, empirical research on this topic remains limited. A notable gap persists regarding how managers and non-managers conceptualise and experience hybrid work within Zimbabwean organisations, and the determinants shaping these perceptions remain insufficiently theorised. Addressing this gap is essential for developing a nuanced understanding of how organisational actors at different hierarchical levels respond to hybrid work practices. This study employed a quantitative research design; it used an online survey with a structured questionnaire distributed via an electronic link. Participants were selected through stratified random sampling from a diverse range of organisations, including transport, local government, mining, telecommunications, tourism, financial services, training, and education, all drawn from members of the Zimbabwe Institute of Management (ZIM). Findings reveal that both managers and non-managers express confidence in hybrid work and support its continuation. Respondents who experience autonomy, demonstrate competence, and maintain meaningful connections with colleagues report higher job satisfaction, productivity, communication, and collaboration. These results underline the importance of basic psychological needs, as outlined in self-determination theory, in shaping positive hybrid work experiences. The findings further suggest that organisations aiming to enhance hybrid work outcomes should implement strategies that promote employee autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Strengthening communication and collaboration mechanisms is also crucial for reinforcing connectedness and creating opportunities for competence development within hybrid environments. The study contributes to the emerging discourse on hybrid work in Zimbabwe by showing that managerial and non-managerial perceptions are influenced by the extent to which basic psychological needs are met. It provides empirical evidence that autonomy, competence, and relatedness are key antecedents to job satisfaction, productivity, collaboration, and communication in hybrid work settings.

Keywords: Perceptions; Manager; Non-Manager; Hybrid Work; Organisation.

Introduction

The global economy has undergone profound shifts because of the COVID-19 pandemic (Jackson et al., 2020), catalysing a transformation of the traditional model of work that required employees to be physically present at the workplace (Susan et al., 2021). With the onset of the pandemic in 2020, organisations across the world rapidly transitioned to remote working arrangements, prompting both managers and non-managers to express concerns regarding the implications of such changes for productivity and performance (Williamson et al., 2020). Although the relaxation of COVID-19 restrictions has enabled employees to return to their physical workplaces, many organisations have not reverted to pre-pandemic work practices. Instead, they have adopted hybrid work models, combining remote and on-site working arrangements (Beno, 2021).

Despite the growing global shift towards hybrid work, there remains a notable research gap in understanding managerial and non-managerial perceptions of hybrid work in Zimbabwe. This gap is particularly evident within Zimbabwean organisations, where the determinants shaping these perceptions have neither been empirically validated nor sufficiently theorised. Addressing this gap is essential for advancing knowledge and informing organisational practice in Zimbabwe, particularly given the country's developing economy and evolving labour markets.

Existing international literature provides extensive insights into employee perceptions of hybrid work; however, only a limited number of studies have examined the phenomenon within the Zimbabwean context (Zvavahera & Chirima, 2023; Chisango et al., 2023). While these studies explore flexible work arrangements and post-pandemic work-life balance dynamics, there remains limited empirical evidence that specifically identifies and validates the determinants influencing managerial and non-managerial perceptions of hybrid work.

The purpose of this study, therefore, was to determine the key determinants influencing managerial and non-managerial perceptions of hybrid work in Zimbabwean organisations. The study was guided by the following research question: *"What are the key determinants influencing managerial and non-managerial perceptions of hybrid work in Zimbabwean organisations?"*

Literature Review

Hedderman (2021) defines the hybrid workplace as one that allows employees to work both remotely and in a physical office. It is widely conceptualised as a blended arrangement whereby employees divide their working time between home and the office (Beno, 2021; Lenka, 2021). Lenka (2021) categorises hybrid work models into three types: (1) the remote-first model, (2) the office-occasional model, and (3) the office-first–remote-allowed model.

In the remote-first model, work is conducted predominantly from home, with occasional on-site attendance, when necessary, typically one or two days per month. Office space is thus maintained for intermittent use rather than daily occupancy. The office-occasional model allows employees to work on-site two or three days per week; an arrangement commonly suited to senior management whose roles require periodic physical presence. The office-first, remote-allowed model, by contrast, prioritises on-site work but permits employees to choose specific days to work from home (Vidhyaa & Ravichandran, 2022).

The hybrid model is widely regarded as beneficial for ensuring that both managerial and remote employees remain informed and aligned on organisational matters. Empirical evidence indicates that hybrid work can reduce operational costs (Beno et al., 2021; Lenka, 2021), strengthen trust-based relationships between managers and employees, and enhance loyalty and job satisfaction (Vidhyaa & Ravichandran, 2022). Employees benefit from greater flexibility, improved safety, and the ability to work from locations of their choosing, thereby enhancing concentration, performance, and efficiency (Lenka, 2021). For employers, hybrid work facilitates access to a broader talent pool unconstrained by geographical boundaries (Birkett et al., 2021).

Nevertheless, hybrid work is not without challenges. Remote workers may experience feelings of isolation and disconnection from organisational life (Vidhyaa & Ravichandran, 2022). Maintaining organisational culture and cohesion may also become more difficult. Despite these challenges, several scholars argue that hybrid work is increasingly emerging as the dominant work model of the future (Susan et al., 2021; Waizenegger et al., 2020; OECD, 2023).

The importance of managerial perception has long been acknowledged in management scholarship (Ozleblebici & Cetin, 2015). Managerial perception refers to the subjective interpretation and meaning managers assign to information from their environment, which shapes their attitudes, behaviours,

and decision-making processes (Nazir, 2023). Because individual experiences influence perceptions, they can introduce cognitive biases that affect managerial judgement and organisational outcomes (McKinley et al., 2022).

Surveys conducted globally illustrate managers' growing acceptance of hybrid work. A study by Baker (2020) found that 82% of managers intended to allow employees to work at least part of the time remotely, while 43% planned to introduce flex-time arrangements. Similarly, Setty (2021) reported that 75% of respondents expressed confidence in hybrid and flexible working models. Other studies (Bao et al., 2021; Miller et al., 2021; Smite et al., 2023; Ford et al., 2022) further demonstrate managerial willingness to maintain hybrid work post-pandemic.

Recent research suggests that hybrid work improves productivity and attention, even when employees struggle to balance work and personal life (Forbes et al., 2020; Birkett et al., 2021). Contrary to earlier findings that remote work undermines teamwork, recent evidence indicates that hybrid arrangements can strengthen team cohesion and satisfaction (Topp et al., 2022). Scholars have thus recommended further research in non-crisis contexts to deepen understanding of hybrid work beyond the pandemic period (Ozkan et al., 2022). The renewed global interest in flexible work arrangements, including hybrid models (Susan et al., 2021), has positioned these practices as integral to broader sustainability agendas, including the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Studies consistently show positive associations between remote or hybrid work and job satisfaction (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007), productivity (Fayzieva et al., 2020), and performance (Golden & Veiga, 2008). Digital communication technologies have been shown to enhance collaboration, team spirit, and communication quality (Fonner & Roloff, 2010; Arunprasad et al., 2022).

A 2022 cross-market survey of 31,000 full-time employees and self-employed workers across 31 countries found that 70% wanted flexible remote options to keep working, and 80% reported being as productive or more productive at home than in the office (Gautam & YiLin, 2022). Despite the growing global evidence base (Baker, 2020; Setty, 2021; Susan et al., 2021), there remains a significant gap in Zimbabwe-specific research on hybrid work. Studies to date (e.g., Zvavahera & Chirima, 2023) have looked at flexible work and work-life balance. However, none have empirically confirmed the factors influencing managerial and non-managerial perceptions of hybrid work in Zimbabwean

organisations. This gap highlights the importance and timeliness of the present study.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is grounded in Ryan and Deci's Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which offers a robust foundation for understanding how work contexts shape human motivation and behaviour. SDT elucidates how organisations can create environments that foster intrinsic motivation by meeting employees' fundamental psychological needs, thereby enhancing engagement, productivity, and job satisfaction (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2020). According to the theory, three basic psychological needs, autonomy, competence, and relatedness, serve as precursors to optimal motivation and positive work outcomes (Sonnenschein, Hagen, Rostard, & Wiik, 2022).

Autonomy in the workplace refers to the degree of volition and self-direction employees exercise in performing their tasks (Sonnenschein et al., 2022). It encompasses control over work methods, decision-making latitude, and flexibility in managing one's schedule, provided organisational goals and role expectations are met. Competence denotes the perception of being capable, effective, and able to master work-related challenges. Employees who perceive themselves as competent tend to display greater enthusiasm, persistence, and task engagement. Relatedness captures the universal human need to feel connected to others, experience a sense of belonging, and foster meaningful interpersonal relationships. This involves feeling valued, supported, and socially integrated within the workplace.

SDT posits that when these needs are adequately supported, employees are more likely to display heightened engagement, commitment, and intrinsic motivation, culminating in favourable outcomes such as job satisfaction and improved performance (Ryan & Deci, 2020; Van den Broeck et al., 2023). Autonomy enhances employees' sense of ownership and initiative, thereby boosting productivity. Competence underpins increased goal-setting, persistence, and achievement, while relatedness strengthens collaboration, cohesion, and organisational commitment. Conversely, unmet psychological needs may diminish motivation and weaken performance, leading to adverse organisational outcomes.

SDT also highlights the role of communication and collaboration in satisfying these needs. Autonomy-supportive climates, characterised by meaningful

choice, encouragement, and constructive feedback, tend to strengthen both competence and relatedness (Deci, Olafsen, & Ryan, 2017). Effective feedback, opportunities for skills development, and recognition practices further reinforce competence, while regular team interactions, social connection opportunities, and inclusive communication practices foster relatedness. These supportive conditions collectively create intrinsically motivated teams capable of sustaining high performance in hybrid work environments.

Employees whose basic psychological needs are fulfilled tend to derive intrinsic satisfaction from their work or identify strongly with its purpose (Maslach & Banks, 2017). This often results in positive attitudes and feelings toward their work roles, manifesting as job satisfaction. However, SDT acknowledges that individuals experience and respond to need satisfaction differently; thus, when these needs are undermined, motivation may be compromised.

In this study, SDT provides a theoretical lens for examining managerial and non-managerial perceptions of hybrid work in Zimbabwe. It informs the identification of key determinants influencing these perceptions. It provides a coherent explanatory framework for understanding how autonomy, competence, and relatedness shape the adoption and effectiveness of hybrid work models within Zimbabwean organisations.

Methodology

This study covered the period from October 2021 to August 2022. It used the quantitative research approach. The use of the quantitative approach was significant in that it allowed the researcher to conduct an online survey using an online questionnaire. The questionnaire comprised open-ended and closed-ended questions. The closed-ended questions required respondents to choose one response, whilst the open-ended questions required them to insert responses in spaces provided. The use of the questionnaire was ideal in this instance because it allowed respondents the time to think through their answers. Thus, it was simple to administer. Nevertheless, Anderson et al. (2012) seem to suggest that questionnaires may have to be administered physically if they are to attract a high response rate and non-response bias.

To mitigate against non-response bias, the questionnaire had more closed-ended questions than open-ended ones which made responding to the questions simpler and easier. In the case of this study, the respondents were not forced to participate and were guaranteed secrecy and privacy. To ensure both reliability

and validity of the online questionnaire, it was subjected to a pilot test involving managers and non-managers from the Zimbabwe Institute of Management. These did not take part in the main online survey.

The online survey was preferred because the study took place at a time when the COVID-19 pandemic was at its peak in Zimbabwe, and the country was under severe restrictions, which prevented the physical administration of questionnaires. To ensure anonymity of all the respondents, a survey link was sent to a sample of managers, non-managers, chief executive officers, senior executives, and board members selected via stratified random sampling from diverse industries. These included transport, local government, mining, telecommunications, tourism, financial institutions, training and education, and were members of the Zimbabwe Institute of Management. No information that disclosed the respondents' or their organisations' identity was collected. There was a 49% response rate, which is a generally accepted response rate considering that the responses were solicited via an online link. Anonymised data were collected in Excel format.

This study's intention was to find the key determinants influencing managerial and non-managerial perceptions of hybrid work in Zimbabwean organisations. In this regard, a combination of descriptive statistics through frequency distributions and inferential techniques was used to analyse results in this study. Descriptive statistics allowed the researchers to understand how the data were distributed across different categories. Inferential techniques through the Pearson Correlation Coefficient and the Chi-square tests were used to provide empirical evidence to support the claim made by the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) that the work context influenced human motivation. These inferential techniques helped to refine and expand the researcher's understanding of the SDT and its applications. This also enabled the researchers to make inferences about the population based on the sample, thereby helping to draw meaningful conclusions from the data. In the process, knowledge on human motivation and well-being consistent with the SDT was advanced.

Findings

Findings in this study revealed that there were more managers who responded to the survey (45%), followed by non-managers (39%) and then Chief Executive Officers/Senior Executives (11%), and finally Board members (3%). The diversity in the respondents was important in that it reduced the risk of accidentally having an extreme or biased group provide their views. Findings

also reveal that organisations from Training and Education as well as Energy, Construction and Engineering industries (at 11.76% each) dominated the survey. These were followed by organisations from Financial Services Industries (8.82%), Retail services (7.84%), Consulting (7%), NGOs (5.7%), Healthcare (5%), Manufacturing (4%), and Mining (3%). The rest of the industries had a 1.1% representation. These results indicate a broader diversity in the industries that the respondents worked in. This was very important for this study, as it provided the respondents' thoughts, opinions and feelings about hybrid work in Zimbabwe from a broader perspective.

Findings also revealed that there were more male than female respondents (71.6% male and 28.4% female). This is not surprising because collectively, Energy, Construction, Engineering, Consulting, Manufacturing and Mining, from where most respondents came from, are traditionally male-dominated fields. The insights provided in this study about hybrid work are, therefore, predominantly male-dominated. This leaves a gap in the views of females regarding the phenomenon of hybrid work in Zimbabwe.

Findings further revealed that most of the respondents were in the 30 to 40 age category, followed by those in the 40 to 50 age category. Both the under-30 and the over-50 age categories had a 17% representation. The 30-to-50-year age group lies within the decision-making, achievement and fulfilment age range. This suggests that they are in a better position to offer credible views about hybrid work in Zimbabwe since they are in that age range that can make rational decisions.

Findings also reveal that most of the respondents in the study were degree holders, with a representation of 68.2%, followed by certificate or diploma holders, with a representation of 23.9%, and lastly other qualifications, with a 1.1% representation each. These findings suggest that the respondents had both craft literacy and craft competence to offer credible views about how they felt about hybrid work.

Findings also reveal that 61.4% of the respondents had a working experience of more than 10 years, followed by 20.5% who had an experience of less than 5 years, and lastly 18.2% who had 5-10 years working experience. This finding is important in that it shows that most respondents in this study had tacit knowledge, which is gained by staying in their jobs a bit longer. Possession

of tacit knowledge exposes this study to the golden treasure of useful insights about hybrid work in Zimbabwe.

These findings are illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1: Demographic Information of Respondents

Demographic Factor	Categories	Respondent Distribution Frequency (f)	Respondent Distribution (%)
Designation	Managers; Non-managers; Chief Executive Officers/ Senior Executives; Board Members	Managers - 45; Non-managers - 39; Chief Executive Officers/ Senior Executives - 11; Board Members - 3	Managers - 45.9%; Non-managers - 39.8%; Chief Executive Officers/ Senior Executives - 11.2%; Board Members - 3.1%
Type of Industry	Financial Services; Retail services; Training and Education; Energy, Construction....; Consulting; Health Care; NGOs; Manufacturing; Mining; Others.	Financial Services - 9; Retail services - 8; Training and Education - 12; Energy, Construction.... - 12; Consulting - 7; Health Care - 5; NGOs - 6; Manufacturing - 4; Mining - 3; Others - 1 by 32.	Financial Services - 8.82%; Retail services - 7.84%; Training and Education - 11.76%; Energy, Construction.... - 11.76%; Consulting - 6.86%; Health Care - 4.90%; NGOs - 5.88%; Manufacturing - 3.92%; Mining - 2.94%; Others - 1.10% by 32.
Gender	Male; Female	Male - 70. Female - 28	Male - 71.6%; Female - 28.4%
Age	Under 30 30 - 40 40 - 50 Over 50	Under 30 - 17 30 - 40 - 33 40 - 50 - 31 Over 50 - 17	Under 30 - 17% 30 - 40 - 34% 40 - 50 - 32% Over 50 - 17%
Working Experience	Under 5 years 5 - 10 years Over 10 years	Under 5 years - 18 5 - 10 years - 21 Over 10 years - 61	Under 5 years - 18.2% 5 - 10 years - 20.5% Over 10 years - 61.40%

Support for hybrid work

The study findings showed significant insights into respondents' views on support for hybrid work during the COVID-19 pandemic and support for hybrid work post-pandemic. Findings revealed that 71% (70 respondents) supported working hybrid during the COVID-19 pandemic, whilst 15% (15 respondents) did not support it. Only 13% (13 respondents) were indifferent. 76% (74 respondents) supported working hybrid post-COVID-19 pandemic, whilst 15% (15 respondents) did not support it. 9% (9 respondents) were indifferent. These findings are illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2: Respondents' views on support for hybrid work during the covid19 pandemic and support for hybrid work post-COVID-19.

Category	Yes	No	Indifferent
Support for hybrid work during the COVID-19 Pandemic.	70	15	13
Support for hybrid work post-COVID-19 pandemic	73	15	10

To determine the nature of the relationship between the variables: support for hybrid work during the COVID-19 pandemic and support for hybrid work post-COVID-19 pandemic, Pearson Correlation Coefficient test was used as in Table 3.

Table 3: Pearson Correlation test on the relationship between support for hybrid work during the COVID-19 pandemic and support for hybrid work post-COVID-19.

X	Y	X Y	X ²	Y ²
70	73	5110	4900	5329
15	15	225	225	225
13	10	130	169	100
$\Sigma X = 98$	$\Sigma Y = 98$	$\Sigma X Y = 5465$	$\Sigma X^2 = 5294$	$\Sigma Y^2 = 5654$

Computing the Pearson Correlation test:

Pearson's Product–Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson's r)

The Pearson correlation coefficient was computed using:

$$r = \frac{n \sum xy - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{[n \sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2][n \sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2]}}$$

Where:

r = Pearson correlation coefficient

n = number of paired observations

$\sum xy$ = sum of the products of paired scores

$\sum x$ = sum of xscores

$\sum y$ = sum of yscores

$\sum x^2$ = sum of squared xscores

$\sum y^2$ = sum of squared yscores

Substitution and computation

$$r = \frac{2(5465) - (98)(98)}{\sqrt{[2(5694) - (98)^2][2(5654) - (98)^2]}}$$

Numerator:

$$2(5465) = 10930$$

$$(98)(98) = 9604$$

$$10930 - 9604 = 1326$$

Denominator:

$$2(5694) = 11388, 11388 - 9604 = 1784$$

$$2(5654) = 11308, 11308 - 9604 = 1704$$

$$\sqrt{(1784)(1704)} = \sqrt{3039936} = 1744$$

Final value

$$r = \frac{1326}{1744} = 0.760$$

Therefore, the Pearson correlation coefficient was . $r=0.760$

The above means that there is a strong positive correlation between support for hybrid work during the COVID-19 pandemic and support for hybrid work post-COVID-19. This implies that as support for hybrid work during the COVID-19 pandemic increases, support for hybrid work post-pandemic also increases.

Job Satisfaction

Respondents' views of job satisfaction are summarised in Table 4.

Table 4: Job Satisfaction during hybrid work

Category	Yes	No	Indifferent
Do you find hybrid work convenient?	69%	11%	20%
Do you have a say in how you perform tasks whilst meeting performance goals?	66%	20%	14%
Do you feel connected enough to your teammates when working hybrid?	68%	21%	11%
Does management engage with you to establish your preferences and needs whilst on hybrid work?	68.9%	11.8%	19.3%
Are you satisfied with the communication between you and management whilst on hybrid work?	62.5%	37.5%	0%

Productivity

Respondents were categorised based on work arrangements (working from the office, working from home and hybrid work) and their productivity (high, medium and low). This is the observed frequency (O) data (see Table 5).

Table 5: Productivity during hybrid work (Observed frequencies)

Work arrangement	High	Medium	Low	Total
Working from the office	30	58	5	93
Working from home	40	19	29	88
Hybrid Work	89	3	6	98
Total	159	80	40	279

The expected frequencies (E) were calculated using the formula: Expected frequency (E) = Row total x column total divided by the sample size. Table 6 shows the observed frequencies (O) and the calculated expected frequencies (E).

Table 6: Contingency table for Observed frequencies (O) and Expected frequencies (E)

	High		Medium		Low		Total
Frequencies	O	E	O	E	O	E	
Working from the office	30	53	58	27	5	18	93
Working from home	40	50	19	25	29	17	88
Hybrid Work	89	56	3	28	6	19	98
Total	159		80		40		279

Computing the chi-square test for association

Hypotheses Formulation

Null Hypothesis (H_0)

There was no statistically significant association between hybrid work arrangements and employee productivity. Any differences observed in the frequencies are attributable to random variation.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1)

There was a statistically significant association between hybrid work arrangements and employee productivity. The observed differences in frequencies are not due to random chance.

Chi-Square Test of Independence

The chi-square () statistic was computed by comparing the observed frequencies () with the expected frequencies () under the assumption of independence, using the following formula:

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O|E)^2}{E}$$

The observed and expected frequencies used in this calculation are presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Chi-square statistics on productivity during hybrid work

	High		Medium		Low		Total
χ^2	O - E	$\frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$	O - E	$\frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$	O-E	$\frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$	
Working from the office	23	9.98	31	35.59	-13	9.39	54.96
Working from home	-10	2	-6	1.44	12	8.47	11.91
Hybrid Work	3	0.16	-25	22.32	-13	8.89	31.37
Total		12.14		59.35		26.75	98.24

Decision Rule and Hypothesis Testing

The computed chi-square () statistic was compared to the critical value obtained from the chi-square distribution table at the chosen significance level () and the appropriate degrees of freedom (DF), which are determined by the number of rows and columns in the contingency table.

The degrees of freedom are calculated as:

$$DF=(r-1)(c-1)$$

$$DF=(3-1)(3-1)$$

$$DF=(2)(2)=4$$

Accordingly, the chi-square analysis was conducted using 4 degrees of freedom at the 5% significance level.

At $\alpha=0.05$ and $DF=4$, the critical chi-square value was:

$$\chi^2_{\text{critical}} = 9.488$$

The calculated chi-square value was:

$$\chi^2_{\text{calculated}} = 98.24$$

Since:

$$\chi^2_{\text{calculated}} (98.24) > \chi^2_{\text{critical}} (9.488),$$

the null hypothesis (H_0) was thus rejected.

This meant that there was a statistically significant association between hybrid work arrangements and employee productivity. The observed distribution of frequencies was unlikely to have occurred by random chance, providing empirical support for the alternative hypothesis ().

Collaboration and Communication

Managers and non-managers in this study confirmed that there were open and clear lines of communication between management and employees on hybrid work (83%). They also acknowledge that there was adequate communication (71.6%) with their teammates on hybrid work. They also confirmed that management with employees on hybrid work focused on the delivery of outputs and outcomes (89.7%).

Discussion

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into managers' and non-managers' perceptions of hybrid work in Zimbabwe. The discussion integrates the findings with the theoretical framework and the reviewed literature. As posited in Ryan and Deci's Self-Determination Theory (SDT), employee motivation and wellbeing is based on the satisfaction of three basic psychological needs. These are autonomy, competence and relatedness (Ryan and Deci, 2000). The theory highlights the importance of satisfying these antecedents to foster self-motivation and positive work outcomes. The theoretical framework suggests that hybrid work enhances autonomy, allowing managers and non-managers to manage their work-life balance. Such autonomy is revealed in this study through the positive characterisation of the greater control respondents have expressed over where they work, when and how work is done. Findings support this perspective, particularly where respondents express their support for hybrid work during and post-COVID-19. This is also validated by the Pearson Correlation test, which found a strong positive correlation between support for hybrid work during and post COVID-19 pandemic. These findings align with the literature, where support for hybrid work is also evident in studies by Setty (2021), who found that 75% of the respondents have faith in both hybrid and flex working. Several other studies (Bao et al., 2021; Miller et al., 2021; Smite et al., 2023; Ford et al., 2022) indicated the willingness of managers to allow hybrid work to continue beyond the COVID-19 pandemic. The Zimbabwean experience suggests that respondents in this study have faith in hybrid work and are willing to allow it to continue beyond COVID-19.

Job satisfaction emerged as one of the key determinants influencing managerial and non-managerial perceptions of hybrid work. The Self-Determination theory posits that fulfilling employees' basic needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness is critical for fostering intrinsic motivation, and consequently, enhancing job satisfaction. Managers and non-managers in this study confirmed that they were allowed to have a say in how they performed their tasks whilst meeting performance goals. They felt connected enough to their teammates while working hybrid. Management engaged with them to establish their preferences and needs whilst on hybrid work. They felt satisfied with the communication between them and management whilst on hybrid work. The Self-Determination Theory suggests that working under the circumstances as described above positively impacts job satisfaction. Taken in this context, it is prudent to conclude that job satisfaction is a key determinant influencing managerial and non-managerial perceptions of hybrid work.

Productivity also emerged as one of the key determinants influencing managerial and non-managerial perceptions of hybrid work in this study. The Self-Determination theory posits that productivity is significantly influenced by satisfaction of three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence and relatedness. When these needs are met, individuals experience intrinsic motivation, leading to greater engagement, satisfaction and ultimately, improved performance. Findings confirm that management in this study equipped both remote and workplace stations during hybrid work (51.2%). Their expectations of the workload of employees on hybrid work were found to be realistic, with set objectives and targets clear (60.2%). They were found to be treating employees on hybrid work equally (68.2%). Managers and non-managers alike felt they were more productive whilst on hybrid work (60.2). They acknowledged the efficiency and effectiveness of work routines and schedules of employees on hybrid work (65.9%) and confirmed that management's approach to employees on hybrid work is a one-size-fits-all (70%).

The findings were validated by a chi-square test for association, which found a significant association between hybrid work and productivity in this study. These findings further align with the reviewed literature in this study, which determined that when employees do things right (efficiency) and do the right things (effectiveness), this constitutes productivity (Mandl, Dierx & Ilizkovitz, 2008). The findings also dovetail with those by Fayzieva, Goyipnazarov and Gulnora (2020), showing that hybrid work had a positive relationship with

employee productivity and effectiveness. Their study established that hybrid work improved organisational performance through positive changes in efficiency and motivation. It also established that hybrid work facilitated cost reductions to free up resources for productivity. This implies that a highly efficient and effective team is likely to have a positive relationship with hybrid work, which, in turn, translates into a positive relationship with employee productivity. Taken in this context, it suffices to conclude that productivity is a key determinant influencing managerial and non-managerial perceptions of hybrid work.

Teamwork and collaboration also emerged as one of the key determinants influencing managerial and non-managerial perceptions of hybrid work in this study. The Self-Determination Theory suggests that communication and collaboration play a supportive role in supporting autonomy, competence and relatedness needs. Findings in this study confirm that managers and non-managers were exposed to communication that met these needs. For example, they confirmed that there were open and clear lines of communication between management and employees on hybrid work. They confirmed that there was adequate communication with their teammates on hybrid work. Management with employees on hybrid work focused on the delivery of outputs and outcomes. These findings align with the literature, which determined that, unlike previous studies that revealed challenges with teamwork when working from home, recent studies concede that hybrid work promotes teamwork (Topp et al., 2022). Using digital technology when communicating during hybrid work was found to foster collaboration between team members, which enhanced team spirit (Arunprasad et al., 2021). It was also found to enhance communication (Fonner & Roloff, 2010).

An analysis of the results reveals that team cohesion is reasonably good during hybrid work. This implies that managers and non-managers who experience the positive impact of team cohesion do have a positive perception of hybrid work. They support hybrid work because it helped in fostering collaboration and communication. Taken in this context, it is reasonable to conclude that collaboration and communication are the key determinants influencing managerial and non-managerial perceptions of hybrid work.

The results of this study have significant implications for hybrid work in Zimbabwe. They suggest that:

- Hybrid work should be continued beyond the COVID-19 pandemic since managers and non-managers in this study have faith in it.
- Meeting employees' basic psychological needs should be prioritised if organisations are to cultivate a more engaged, productive, and satisfied workforce.
- Hybrid work should be continued beyond COVID-19 since managers and non-managers acknowledge that it increased job satisfaction and productivity.
- Effective communication and collaboration should be prioritised if organisations are to foster a sense of relatedness and provide opportunities for managers and non-managers to develop their competence.

The results demonstrate that the hybrid work approach, when integrated with basic psychological needs, provides a framework for cultivating a more engaged, productive, and satisfied workforce. These insights align with the Self-Determination Theory, which emphasises the importance of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in fostering job satisfaction, productivity, communication and collaboration.

Conclusions

This study provided valuable insight into the perceptions of managers and non-managers on hybrid work in Zimbabwe. It makes a theoretical contribution to knowledge about hybrid work in Zimbabwe. It provides knowledge on the perceptions of managers and non-managers on hybrid work in Zimbabwe, as well as the underlying determinants influencing such perceptions. It links two aspects (perceptions and determinants) that have not been linked before in this context. The study also makes a practical contribution to knowledge about hybrid work in Zimbabwe. It provides knowledge on the antecedents of the determinants of hybrid work, thereby validating the notion that beneath managers' and non-managers' perceptions lie what determines them. The findings highlight the potential of hybrid work to increase job satisfaction, productivity and collaboration. The study, thus, makes the following conclusions:

- Support for hybrid work is critical during and post-COVID-19 pandemic. The study established that managers and non-managers support hybrid work because it helps increase productivity, has a positive impact on job satisfaction and helps in fostering collaboration and communication. This aligns with the Self-Determination Theory, which emphasises the role of the basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness in fostering self-motivation and positive work outcomes. Thus, fulfilling

these antecedents (basic needs) is crucial for enhancing job satisfaction, productivity, communication and collaboration.

- Hybrid work has a positive impact on Job satisfaction, productivity, communication and collaboration. The study established that these are crucial for fostering a sense of autonomy, competence and relatedness necessary for organisations to develop a more engaged, productive, and satisfied workforce.
- The perceptions of managers and non-managers who work autonomously, competently and are connected to their colleagues whilst on hybrid work are influenced by job satisfaction, productivity, communication and collaboration.

This study provides a perspective on how managers and non-managers can use the basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness as antecedents to job satisfaction, productivity, collaboration and communication during hybrid work. The study recommends that organisations adopt the hybrid work policy as it appears to be the future of work in Zimbabwe.

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