Making Hybrid Work Work: A Job Demands–Resources Perspective Among Language Lecturers

Aini Andria Shirin Anuarudin[1*], Nur Maizura Lin[2], Rosdin Rosly[3]

Academy of Language Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia,

***Corresponding Author**

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ABSTRACT

Hybrid work is no longer simply a legacy of the COVID-19 period. It is becoming part of how organisations think about flexibility, continuity and the organisation of professional work. This shift is especially visible in Malaysia. During the 2026 West Asia crisis, measures within the higher education portfolio included targeted working from home and greater use of hybrid meetings; this was followed by the introduction of Hybrid Work Day for eligible public-service employees. Such developments make hybrid work a timely issue for universities, but they do not by themselves establish that it works equally well for every type of academic work. Language lecturers, for example, move between highly interactive responsibilities such as teaching, consultation and collaborative work, and tasks that require sustained concentration, including marking, lesson preparation, research and writing. Using Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) theory, this concept paper develops a framework for examining hybrid work effectiveness among language lecturers at the Academy of Language Studies (APB), Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Shah Alam. The framework brings together four demands—workload, technostress, professional isolation and work–family conflict—and four resources—work autonomy, technological support, organisational support and home-workspace suitability. Three objectives guide the paper: to identify the demands and resources relevant to lecturers' hybrid work, to examine their relationship with hybrid work effectiveness, and to develop a JD–R-based framework for this occupational setting. A sequential explanatory mixed-methods design is proposed, with a questionnaire survey followed by semi-structured interviews. By locating hybrid work within the actual mix of tasks undertaken by language lecturers, the paper offers a context-sensitive basis for thinking about how universities can design flexible work arrangements that remain workable, supportive and sustainable.

Keywords: Hybrid Work, Job Demands–Resources Theory, Language Lecturers, Higher Education, Work Effectiveness

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has reformed where professional work could take place and also changed norms on which tasks required a conventional workplace. Universities experienced this shift abruptly. Teaching, consultation, meetings, assessment, research collaboration and administrative work had to move online with little preparation. Those arrangements were emergency measures rather than carefully designed forms of flexible work. Even so, they demonstrated that a considerable part of academic work could be carried out away from campus. The post-pandemic question is therefore different from the one universities faced in 2020: not whether academics can work remotely, but how remote and campus-based work should be combined. Contemporary hybrid work reflects this change because it usually involves a planned division of work across locations rather than continuous home working. Evidence from non-educational sector also suggests that such arrangements can be viable. In a six-month randomised trial involving 1,612 employees, Bloom et al. (2024) found that working from home two days each week improved job satisfaction and reduced quit rates by about one-third, without measurable penalties in performance ratings or promotion outcomes.

The issue has acquired renewed relevance in Malaysia for reasons that extend beyond the pandemic. The 2026 West Asia crisis brought concerns about economic uncertainty, energy use and fuel expenditure into public-sector planning. Within the higher education portfolio, the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia (MOHE, 2026) announced seven cost-saving measures. Among them were targeted working from home from 15 April 2026 and wider use of hybrid meetings to reduce petrol consumption, transport and logistical costs. The measures are noteworthy because remote work was being used as an organisational response to an external geopolitical and economic disruption, rather than as a public-health requirement.

A further policy development followed where The Public Service Department (JPA) introduced the Hybrid Work Day policy with effect from 1 August 2026 and, at the same time, cancelled the earlier work-from-home circular associated with the West Asia conflict (Jabatan Perkhidmatan Awam Malaysia [JPA], 2026). In Malaysia, flexible work has moved through several contexts: emergency remote work during the pandemic, post-pandemic flexibility, crisis-related continuity measures, and now a more formalised hybrid-work arrangement for eligible public servants. For universities, this creates a practical need to move beyond debates about whether hybrid work is possible and to examine the conditions under which it can be carried out effectively. This question is particularly important because academic work is not a single type of activity. A lecturer's week may include classes, consultations, supervision and meetings, as well as marking, reading, lesson preparation, research, data analysis and writing. These activities place different demands on time, concentration, technology and interaction. A quiet home environment may be useful for writing or assessment, for instance, while a language class, a student consultation or a departmental discussion may depend more heavily on immediate interpersonal exchange. The value of hybrid work may therefore vary from task to task even for the same lecturer. This makes hybrid work, at its core, a question of work design rather than simply a question of location.

Research on remote and hybrid work points in the same direction. Wang et al. (2021) showed that employees' remote-work experiences were shaped by work–home interference, communication difficulties, procrastination and loneliness, alongside work characteristics such as autonomy, social support, monitoring and workload. More recently, Knight et al. (2025) found that hybrid employees did not experience workload, scheduling autonomy, social support and monitoring in the same way across home and organisational settings. The implication is important for the present paper: two employees can follow an identical hybrid schedule yet experience that schedule very differently because the surrounding demands and resources are not identical.

Technology illustrates this tension clearly. Although digital systems make hybrid academic work possible, the same systems can also add to the burden of work. Learning-management systems, video-conferencing platforms, institutional portals, email and messaging applications allow teaching and administrative processes to continue across locations. At the same time, they could also create overload, continual connectivity and pressure to remain available. Wang and Yao (2025) found technology-related stressors among academics and reported that work–home conflict contributed to several dimensions of technostress; techno-invasion was negatively associated with psychological well-being. Technology should therefore not be treated automatically as a resource. The effect depends on reliability, usability, support, expectations of availability and how digital tools are incorporated into everyday work.

Although studies in the Malaysian context are still limited, they have raised similar concerns. For instance, Minhat and Wan Ghazali (2024) found there are significant relationships between well-being and technostress, workload, work–life balance, remote-working intensity and professional isolation in female lecturers working remotely at a Malaysian public university. A study by Azizan et al. (2024) examined a group closer to the population considered in this paper, where they looked into 130 language lecturers from two Malaysian public universities. They reported relatively low overall burnout, suggesting that hybrid work may be sustainable for educators under some conditions. What remains less clear is which combination of demands and resources helps to produce that outcome. Burnout is an important indicator, but it does not by itself explain whether lecturers can work productively, coordinate effectively, maintain boundaries and sustain their responsibilities across locations.

Language lecturers provide a useful case through which to investigate this issue. Language teaching is strongly interactional: discussion, oral practice, collaborative activities, feedback and lecturer–student communication are central to much of the work. Yet language lecturers also undertake responsibilities that are less dependent on physical co-presence, including material development, marking, research, academic writing and administrative preparation. Hybrid arrangements may support some of these activities while making others more difficult. A framework developed for academics in general may therefore miss features that arise from this particular combination of communicative and concentration-intensive work.

JD–R theory offers a useful way of organising these competing conditions. Rather than prescribing a fixed list of workplace problems and supports, the theory distinguishes between job demands—features of work that require sustained effort—and job resources, which assist goal attainment, reduce the costs of demands or support motivation and development (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). The theory has also developed beyond a narrow focus on the formal workplace. Bakker et al. (2023) incorporate person–situation interactions, multilevel processes and work–home resources, while Demerouti and Bakker (2023) argue that periods of crisis make it necessary to consider demands and resources arising across individual, family, job and organisational domains. This broader formulation is well suited to hybrid work because the boundaries between the organisational and domestic work environments are deliberately crossed.

Building on this reasoning, the paper focuses on four demands—workload, technostress, professional isolation and work–family conflict—and four resources—work autonomy, technological support, organisational support and home-workspace suitability. Hybrid work effectiveness is treated as the outcome of interest and refers to lecturers' ability to carry out their responsibilities productively, efficiently, collaboratively and sustainably across campus and remote settings. The proposed setting is APB, UiTM Shah Alam. The intention is not to argue that these eight factors exhaust all possible influences on hybrid work, but to provide a theoretically coherent starting point that can subsequently be examined and refined through empirical study.

Problem Statement

The rapid growth of remote-work research during COVID-19 created an important evidence base, but it also produced a problem for current hybrid-work research. Much of what is known was generated under conditions in which employees had little choice about where they worked. Universities shifted teaching, assessment, meetings and student support online while movement restrictions, school closures and disrupted family routines were occurring simultaneously. Organisational systems were often being built while they were being used. It would therefore be misleading to assume that findings from emergency home working describe contemporary hybrid work, where arrangements are increasingly planned and incorporated into ordinary organisational practice.

The events of 2026 make this distinction more than a historical one. MOHE's response to the West Asia crisis included targeted home working and hybrid meetings, and the subsequent JPA policy formalised Hybrid Work Day for eligible public servants (JPA, 2026; MOHE, 2026). These measures demonstrate the usefulness of flexible work for continuity and cost management. They do not, however, tell us whether the arrangement is effective for particular occupational groups. A policy can reduce travel while still producing digital overload, blurred work–family boundaries, isolation or intensified workloads. Implementation therefore needs evidence about the quality of the work arrangement, not only evidence that work can be relocated.

A related limitation in the literature is the tendency to describe hybrid work mainly by frequency—for example, the number of days spent at home. Frequency is easy to observe, but it says little about the conditions under which work is performed. A lecturer with reliable technology, a quiet workspace, supportive colleagues and considerable control over scheduling may experience two home-working days very differently from a lecturer with the same schedule but heavy workload, frequent interruptions and limited organisational support. Wang et al. (2021) and Knight et al. (2025) both show why the surrounding

design of work matters. The relevant unit of explanation is therefore not location alone, but the configuration of demands and resources attached to work across locations.

The higher education literature also leaves an occupational gap as academic work contains activities that differ markedly in their need for concentration, interaction, technology and physical presence. This is especially visible in language education, where communicative teaching and immediate feedback sit alongside marking, preparation, research and writing. Malaysian studies have already drawn attention to well-being during remote work (Minhat & Wan Ghazali, 2024) and burnout among language lecturers working in a hybrid landscape (Azizan et al., 2024). These studies are valuable, but neither provides an integrated account of how job demands and job resources combine to shape whether hybrid work itself is effective for language lecturers.

Another question that remains is what should count as 'effectiveness'. Often case, previous studies have focused on outcomes such as satisfaction, burnout, productivity or work–life balance. Although they related, these outcomes are not interchangeable. For example, a lecturer may report high productivity while working unsustainably long hours; another may value the flexibility of home working but experience difficulties coordinating with students or colleagues. Therefore, in this study, the definition of hybrid work effectiveness is broader so as to include elements such as timely and good-quality task completion, efficient use of time, coordination and communication across locations, and the ability to sustain the arrangement without excessive strain.

The gap addressed here is consequently both theoretical and contextual. JD–R theory provides a way to examine how demanding aspects of hybrid work coexist with resources that may support performance and coping (Bakker et al., 2023). Yet there is limited evidence showing how this balance operates among language lecturers in Malaysian higher education. The proposed framework responds to that gap by bringing together workload, technostress, professional isolation and work–family conflict as demands, and work autonomy, technological support, organisational support and home-workspace suitability as resources. These constructs are examined not as isolated variables but as parts of the work environment that may help explain why hybrid work is workable for some lecturers and more difficult for others.

Research Objectives and Research Questions

The proposed study is guided by three research objectives (ROs) that move from identifying the demand–resource profile of hybrid work, to examining its relationship with effectiveness, and finally to developing an integrated JD–R-based explanation.

1. RO1: To identify the key job demands and job resources experienced by language lecturers in a hybrid work environment.
2. RO2: To examine the influence of job demands and job resources on hybrid work effectiveness among language lecturers.
3. RO3: To develop a Job Demands–Resources-based conceptual framework for understanding hybrid work effectiveness among language lecturers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

From Remote Work / Work from Home to Hybrid Work

Remote work or work from home predates COVID-19, but the pandemic changed its scale and social legitimacy. For many professional employees, working away from the organisational workplace moved from an occasional arrangement to an everyday reality. Hybrid work represents a subsequent stage in that development because it deliberately combines remote and on-site work. This arrangement may preserve flexibility and uninterrupted work time while retaining access to colleagues, facilities and face-to-face interaction. Bloom et al. (2024) provide strong evidence that such a balance can work in at least some organisational settings; their randomised trial found gains in satisfaction and retention without corresponding losses in performance or promotion outcomes.

The evidence should not be read as proof that a particular number of home-working days is universally optimal. Hybrid arrangements are embedded in jobs, teams and organisations, and their effects depend on how those systems are designed. Knight et al. (2025), for example, identify distinct hybrid work-design profiles based on combinations of workload, social support, scheduling autonomy and monitoring across locations. This shifts attention away from the simple question of whether hybrid work 'works' and towards the more useful question of what makes it work. That distinction is especially relevant to universities, where different academic responsibilities have very different requirements.

Malaysia's 2026 policy developments add a further dimension: resilience. MOHE's use of targeted working from home and hybrid meetings during the West Asia crisis illustrates how flexible work can be activated to reduce travel-related expenditure and maintain organisational functioning during uncertainty (MOHE, 2026). The later Hybrid Work Day policy suggests a move from temporary response towards a more institutionalised arrangement (JPA, 2026). These policies create a strong practical rationale for research, but they should not be treated as evidence of effectiveness. Effectiveness remains an empirical question that must be examined in relation to the work itself.

Hybrid Work in Higher Education and Language Education

Academic work has always contained some flexibility in time and place, particularly for reading, research, writing and preparation. Digitalisation has widened that flexibility by making meetings, learning-management systems, document access, assessment and communication available across locations. Yet university work is also relational. Teaching, mentoring, collegial exchange, student engagement and institutional service depend on interaction and shared organisational life. Hybrid academic work therefore requires more than moving selected tasks home; it requires decisions about which activities fit which environments and how work remains coordinated when staff are not always co-located.

Evidence from remote work helps to identify where difficulties may arise. Wang et al. (2021) documented work–home interference, communication problems, procrastination and loneliness, and showed that autonomy, social support and workload influenced these experiences. Similarly, in Malaysia, Minhat and Wan Ghazali (2024) discovered that technostress, workload, work–life balance, remote-working intensity and professional isolation were related to academicians' well-being. According to a JD–R lens, these findings suggest that flexibility changes the mix of demands and resources rather than simply removing workplace constraints.

For language lecturers, the mix is rather clear. This is because communicative language teaching often relies on interaction, oral practice, discussion, feedback and collaborative learning. Even though online delivery could support these activities, it places greater weight on digital infrastructure, as well as deliberate interaction design. Other responsibilities, such as marking, lesson planning, material development, reading, research and writing—may benefit from a quieter remote setting. Azizan et al. (2024) found relatively low burnout among 130 language lecturers from two Malaysian public universities working within a hybrid landscape. Their study is encouraging, but it leaves open the explanatory question that motivates the present framework: which demands and resources make a hybrid arrangement effective for this occupational group?

Job Demands–Resources Theory

A central strength of JD–R theory is its flexibility. It begins from the premise that occupations differ in their specific risk and protective factors, while proposing that these characteristics can generally be understood as demands or resources. Demands are aspects of work that require sustained physical, cognitive or emotional effort and can become costly when they are excessive. Resources help employees achieve work goals, deal with demands, or maintain motivation and development (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). For academic work, this is useful because the theory does not require every lecturer or institution to face an identical set of conditions.

The theory also distinguishes two broad processes. Persistent demands can drain energy and contribute to strain, whereas resources can support engagement, motivation and performance. Resources may also lessen

the effect of demanding work conditions. More recent formulations extend this logic across levels and domains. Bakker et al. (2023) emphasise person–situation interactions, proactive behaviour and work–home resources; Demerouti and Bakker (2023) show how crises bring individual, family, job and organisational conditions into closer interaction. Hybrid work fits this expanded view because work is intentionally distributed between organisational and domestic environments.

Applied to the present paper, JD–R theory suggests that the effectiveness of a hybrid arrangement should not be inferred from remote-work frequency. What matters is the pattern of conditions surrounding the lecturer's work. High workload, for example, may be manageable when autonomy, technology and organisational support are strong. The same workload may become difficult when systems are unreliable, home boundaries are weak and collegial contact is limited. Effectiveness is therefore treated here as a feature of work design and its fit with the lecturer's responsibilities, rather than as evidence that an individual is simply better or worse at coping.

Job Demands in Hybrid Academic Work

Workload

According to Bakker & Demerouti (2017), workload is a core component of JD–R demand, as sustained high workload consumes energy and may impair recovery. It refers to the volume, pace, and intensity of responsibilities employees must manage within available time. Some may view that hybrid work reduces academic workload, as it does not require one to travel to the office, and one has better control over task scheduling. Since digital connectivity does not require people to communicate face to face or be present in a meeting, the issue arises on the boundary among colleagues. This is an issue as some people do not know where to draw the line and may interrupt other people's time even during breaks or after working hours. Besides that, the responsibility of a lecturer is not limited to teaching; it also involves preparation of the materials, marking, providing feedback to students, doing research, and attending training for career development. Wang et al. (2021) found that workload was associated with greater work–home interference in remote work, while Knight et al. (2025) identify workload as a salient characteristic that can differ across home and workplace settings. Hence, the proposed framework highlights that excessive workload will reduce hybrid work effectiveness, particularly when flexibility is seen as continuous availability rather than greater control over task location.

Technostress

Technology is indispensable to hybrid work, but its intensive use can create technostress. Academics may experience overload from multiple platforms and communication channels, complexity when systems require continual learning, invasion when work communications extend into personal time, and uncertainty when technologies or procedures change frequently. Hybrid working conditions have both advantages and disadvantages. The extensive use of technology could cause stress among academics due to the overload of usage of multiple platforms and communication channels. Furthermore, the invasion of private space after working hours and the uncertainty of the ever-changing technology and procedures could add a lot of mental stress to academics. It was found that academic technostress dimensions and techno-invasion were negatively associated with psychological well-being (Wang and Yao, 2025). The relevance to language lecturers is substantial because hybrid academic work may require the simultaneous use of learning management systems, video conferencing platforms, messaging applications, email, cloud services, assessment tools, and institutional portals. Although many would support its flexibility, poor integration or expectations of constant responsiveness may transform it into an additional demand. This could affect the effectiveness of one's work.

Professional Isolation

One of the setbacks of hybrid working conditions is professional isolation. This refers to perceived disconnection from colleagues, professional networks, workplace information, and informal organisational interaction. Furthermore, it reduces the frequency of face-to-face knowledge exchange, mentoring,

interactive face-to-face problem solving, and having the sense of belonging. Although one can still communicate with their colleagues online, it cannot replace real-life interactions among colleagues. Minhat and Wan Ghazali (2024) discovered that professional isolation is significantly associated with well-being among remote-working female academicians. For language lecturers, daily interactions include peer support in the form of sharing of classroom experiences, teaching materials and other resources, research ideas, and others. Unfortunately, hybrid schedules can affect this, leading to less meaningful interactions, reduced face-to-face interactions, and weakened coordination among colleagues, sense of togetherness, and perceived effectiveness.

Work–Family Conflict

One of the concerns stemming from hybrid working conditions is that work–family conflict occurs when pressures from professional and family roles happen at the same time. Despite the numerous benefits that work from home brings, it can also blur spatial and temporal boundaries since work has been relocated into the home. For lecturers, replying to emails, marking students' assignments, and working on administrative tasks can easily extend after working hours. This can simply lead to overlapping of roles. Wang et al. (2021) pointed out that work-home interference is a central remote-work challenge. Demerouti and Bakker (2023) stressed that the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) framework should include family demands and resources alongside workplace-related factors. This is important, especially when lecturers cannot establish workable boundaries or when professional requirements take precedence over family responsibilities.

Job Resources in Hybrid Academic Work

Work Autonomy

Work autonomy refers to discretion over how, when, and, where appropriate, where work is performed. Within JD–R theory, autonomy is a resource because it enables employees to adapt work strategies to demands and circumstances (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). In hybrid academic work, autonomy may allow lecturers to match concentration-intensive tasks with remote days and interaction-intensive tasks with campus days. Wang et al. (2021) found that autonomy was associated with lower loneliness in remote work, and Knight et al. (2025) identify scheduling autonomy as a key hybrid-work design characteristic.

Autonomy should not be confused with absence of accountability. An effective hybrid autonomy requires clear goals, coordinated schedules, and service expectations. When all these conditions are met, autonomy may be able to improve time use, focus, and the ability to rearrange tasks around teaching and research responsibilities. Therefore, it can be projected as a positive resource for hybrid work effectiveness.

Technological Support

Technological support is an essential element in hybrid academic work. Without reliable devices, connectivity, secure access to institutional systems, usable platforms, technical assistance, and opportunities to develop relevant digital competence, hybrid academic work would not be able to achieve its objectives. Reliable technology directly facilitates work across locations, while responsive support can reduce the stress associated with complexity, uncertainty, and system failure. Wang and Yao (2025) emphasise the importance of organisational action to address technology-related stress among academics.

For language lecturers, technological support is at its utmost important when teaching resources, students' communications, meetings, assessments, and administrative tasks cross locations. The framework therefore expects technological support to improve hybrid work effectiveness by reducing friction and allowing digital systems to function as resources rather than demands.

Organisational Support

Organisational support is a situation employees distinguish that the institution provides the policies, communication, leadership, workload management, trust, and assistance needed to perform effectively.

Hybrid work requires clear expectations regarding availability, strong objectives that need to carried out, suitable remote tasks, meetings, student communication, performance, and accountability. Flexibility without clear organisational arrangements can create uncertainty and intensify demands.

Social and organisational support are consistent with the JD–R motivational process because they facilitate goal attainment and coping. Wang et al. (2021) found social support is associated with lower levels of multiple remote-work challenges. In higher education, supportive leadership and coherent policies can also warrant that remote employees retain access to information and opportunities. Organisational support is consequently expected to strengthen the hybrid work effectiveness and may safeguard the impact of workload, isolation, and technological strain.

Home-Workspace Suitability

Home-workspace suitability refers to whether the remote environment provides the physical and technological conditions necessary for professional work, including privacy, adequate furniture, lighting, low distraction, stable internet connectivity, and sufficient separation from domestic activities. Hybrid work extends the work system beyond the university; consequently, the home environment becomes part of the resource configuration relevant for employees effectiveness.

Workspace suitability may be predominantly important for concentration-intensive academic tasks and online interactions requiring privacy and reliable connectivity. A suitable workspace can provide focus and boundary management, whereas interruptions, inadequate equipment, or poor ergonomics can create additional demands which will add to unnecessary stress. Including this construct therefore operationalises contemporary JD–R thinking that recognises work–home resource interactions (Bakker et al., 2023).

Hybrid Work Effectiveness

Hybrid work effectiveness is the main outcome in the proposed framework. In this paper, the construct refers to whether a hybrid arrangement enables lecturers to carry out academic responsibilities well across home and campus settings. The emphasis is deliberately broader than output alone. Completing many tasks is not necessarily evidence of an effective arrangement if it depends on excessive hours, persistent work–family conflicts or weakened coordination with colleagues and students. Equally, an arrangement that feels convenient but makes teaching, communication or institutional responsibilities harder to fulfil would be difficult to describe as being effective.

Consequently, the construct includes perceived task completion, quality and timeliness of work, concentration, time used, communication, coordination and the sustainability of working across locations. This framing is consistent with Bloom et al. (2024), whose trial shows that hybrid work can affect satisfaction and retention without reducing formal performance. It also fits the JD–R argument that effective functioning cannot be detached entirely from the demands and resources through which work is accomplished.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

As this study is seeking to answer the questions on 'what is related to effectiveness?' and 'how are those relationships experienced in practice?', a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design is proposed. The first phase would use a questionnaire to examine the proposed demands, resources and their relationships with hybrid work effectiveness. The second phase would use semi-structured interviews to make sense of the quantitative patterns. This sequencing is important as statistical relationships can show which factors matter, and interviews can clarify what those factors mean in the everyday organisation of teaching, assessment, research, communication and home working.

The proposed study would be situated at the Academy of Language Studies (APB), UiTM Shah Alam and would involve language lecturers with experience of remote, flexible or hybrid academic work.

Quantitative Phase

The quantitative phase would use a structured questionnaire comprising five sections. Wherever possible, items would be adapted from established and validated instruments, with appropriate modifications to reflect hybrid work among language lecturers in Malaysian higher education. The first section would collect demographic and work-related information, including academic position, years of service, teaching responsibilities, frequency of hybrid work, and relevant household and workspace characteristics. The second section would measure the four proposed job demands. Workload would be adapted from Wang et al. (2021), technostress from the Technostress Creators Scale by Ragu-Nathan et al. (2008), professional isolation from Golden et al. (2008), and work–family conflict from Netemeyer et al. (1996).

The third section would measure the four proposed job resources. Work autonomy would be adapted from Breaugh's (1985) Work Autonomy Scale, with reference to the remote-work measures used by Wang et al. (2021). Technological support would draw on the technostress inhibitors developed by Ragu-Nathan et al. (2008), while organisational support would be adapted from Eisenberger et al.'s (1986) Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (SPOS). Home-workspace suitability would be informed by the CHAMBER questionnaire developed by Navas-Martín et al. (2026). Their Physical Adequacy of the Teleworking Space construct assesses aspects such as space, environmental conditions, furniture, storage, and functionality and demonstrated good internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = .882$). Selected items would be adapted to suit the context of language lecturers in Malaysian higher education.

The fourth section would measure hybrid work effectiveness, the main outcome of the proposed framework. Items would be informed by the remote-work effectiveness and performance measures used by Wang et al. (2021) and contextualised to lecturers' academic responsibilities, including teaching preparation, assessment, research, administrative work, communication, and coordination. As hybrid work effectiveness is being specifically conceptualised for this study, the proposed items would undergo expert review and pilot testing before the main study. The fifth section would include descriptive items on lecturers' overall perceptions and preferences regarding hybrid work, such as its perceived advantages and limitations, preferred frequency, and the suitability of different academic tasks for home- and campus-based work. All adapted items would be reviewed for their relevance, clarity, and appropriateness to the Malaysian higher education context, followed by pilot testing to assess item clarity and preliminary internal consistency.

Quantitative analysis would begin with descriptive statistics to profile the respondents and summarise the levels of job demands, job resources, and hybrid work effectiveness. Reliability analysis would assess the internal consistency of the adapted measures, while exploratory and/or confirmatory factor analysis could be considered where appropriate. Correlation analysis would examine relationships among the variables, followed by multiple regression to determine the contribution of the proposed job demands and resources to hybrid work effectiveness. If the eventual sample size and measurement properties are adequate, structural equation modelling could also be considered to examine the proposed relationships simultaneously. As the proposed study would use a cross-sectional observational design, the findings would be interpreted in terms of associations rather than causal relationships.

Qualitative Phase

Participants for the interview phase would be selected purposively from survey respondents who agree to be contacted again. Selection would seek variation rather than a single 'typical' experience. For example, lecturers reporting relatively high and low hybrid-work effectiveness, or contrasting demand–resource profiles, could be invited. Interviews would explore which tasks lecturers prefer to undertake at home or on campus, how they experience workload and digital demands, what supports or constrains collegial interaction, how boundaries are managed, and what forms of autonomy, organisational support and workspace conditions make a practical difference.

The interview data would be analysed thematically. JD–R concepts would provide an initial theoretical orientation, but the analysis would not be restricted to the eight constructs specified in the framework. This openness is important because lecturers may identify demands or resources that the questionnaire does not anticipate. Qualitative themes could therefore confirm the proposed relationships, explain them in greater detail, qualify them, or point to revisions needed in the framework.

Integration, Validity, and Ethics

Integration would take place when the two phases are interpreted together. A quantitative result would not be treated as self-explanatory. If autonomy emerged as strongly related to effectiveness, for instance, interview accounts could show whether lecturers value control over location, scheduling, task sequencing or communication expectations. Conversely, a weak statistical relationship for technological support might reflect generally adequate infrastructure while concealing difficulties with particular systems. A joint display could be used to place quantitative results alongside the qualitative explanations and the resulting integrated interpretation.

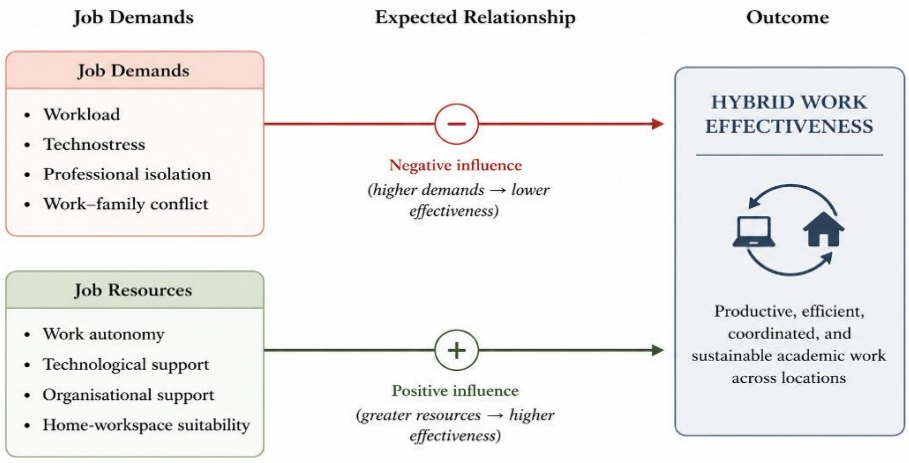
Several safeguards would be required before the empirical study proceeds. Adapted questionnaire items would need documented expert review and pilot testing, and the reliability and measurement properties of the scales would need to be reported rather than assumed. Participation would be voluntary and based on informed consent. Because lecturers would be discussing their workplace experiences, confidentiality would require particular attention: interview extracts would be anonymised, identifiable details would be removed, data would be stored securely, and institutional ethical approval would be obtained before recruitment or data collection.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Proposed Conceptual Framework

Because no empirical data have yet been collected, this section does not report findings in the conventional sense. It sets out the relationships that the framework expects on theoretical and empirical grounds. The basic argument is that demands are likely to make effective hybrid work harder to sustain when they become excessive, whereas resources should make it easier for lecturers to achieve their work goals across locations. Figure 1 summarises this logic and the propositions that follow specify the expected direction of each relationship.

Figure 1. Proposed JD–R Framework for Hybrid Work Effectiveness among Language Lecturers



Note. Job demands are expected to hinder hybrid work effectiveness, whereas job resources are expected to enhance it. The arrows indicate the proposed direction of relationships.

*Figure 1 was generated using AI platform

Proposed Relationships

P1: Higher perceived workload is expected to be associated with lower hybrid work effectiveness among language lecturers.

P2: Higher technostress is expected to be associated with lower hybrid work effectiveness among language lecturers.

P3: Higher professional isolation is expected to be associated with lower hybrid work effectiveness among language lecturers.

P4: Higher work–family conflict is expected to be associated with lower hybrid work effectiveness among language lecturers.

P5: Greater work autonomy is expected to be associated with higher hybrid work effectiveness among language lecturers.

P6: Greater technological support is expected to be associated with higher hybrid work effectiveness among language lecturers.

P7: Greater organisational support is expected to be associated with higher hybrid work effectiveness among language lecturers.

P8: Greater home-workspace suitability is expected to be associated with higher hybrid work effectiveness among language lecturers.

These propositions reflect the central assumption of the proposed framework that hybrid work effectiveness is shaped by the balance between the demands placed on lecturers and the resources available to support them. The propositions would subsequently be examined empirically in the proposed study.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The framework is deliberately not built around the assumption that hybrid work is either good or bad. Moving work across locations changes what lecturers gain and what they have to manage. A day at home may remove a commute and create uninterrupted time for marking or writing, yet it may also increase reliance on digital communication or make family interruptions more visible. Campus attendance can restore informal interaction and immediate access to colleagues, but it may reduce the uninterrupted time available for concentration-intensive tasks. The practical value of hybrid work therefore lies in the fit between tasks, locations and available resources rather than in the location itself.

This interpretation is consistent with contemporary JD–R theory. Bakker et al. (2023) argue for a broader view of demands and resources that includes work–home processes and person–situation interactions. Demerouti and Bakker (2023) similarly show that crises can rearrange the resources and demands available across individual, family, job and organisational domains. Hybrid work makes these interactions routine rather than exceptional. For a lecturer, the home is not merely a private setting once academic work is carried out there; its space, connectivity, interruptions and boundaries become part of the conditions under which work is performed.

The framework also highlights the possibility that the same feature can have different consequences depending on how it is organised. Digital technology is a clear example. Reliable systems and responsive technical assistance are resources because they allow work to continue across locations. Yet multiple platforms, continual notifications and expectations of immediate response can turn technology into a source of technostress. Autonomy has a similar dual edge: discretion over scheduling can help lecturers match tasks to suitable settings, but poorly coordinated autonomy may create difficulties for meetings, student access or

collaborative work. The relevant question is therefore not simply whether a resource exists, but whether it is usable in ways that support the work.

For language lecturers, the distinction between interaction-intensive and concentration-intensive responsibilities adds an occupational layer to this argument. Language classes often depend on dialogue, oral practice, feedback and social presence. Research, writing, marking and lesson preparation frequently require a different environment—one that protects concentration and allows longer periods of uninterrupted work. A hybrid arrangement may be most effective when lecturers have enough discretion to align these tasks with appropriate locations while still meeting collective and student-facing responsibilities. This is one reason a general measure of 'days at home' is unlikely to capture the quality of hybrid academic work.

The four proposed demands are also likely to reinforce one another. Heavy workload can extend the working day, which may increase work–family conflict. A crowded digital environment can add to workload and make it harder to disengage after formal working hours. Professional isolation may make routine problems slower to resolve because informal help is less accessible. These links are not represented as causal findings in the present paper; they are theoretically plausible pathways that the qualitative phase would be well placed to explore.

Resources may operate in similarly connected ways. Autonomy can help a lecturer protect time for demanding tasks, but its value is limited if institutional expectations remain unclear or if technology is unreliable. Organisational support can provide the rules, communication and trust needed for autonomy to function without undermining coordination. A suitable home workspace can make remote concentration possible, but it cannot compensate fully for an unmanageable workload. The framework therefore encourages attention to configurations of resources rather than the assumption that one favourable condition will offset every demand.

This has implications for how hybrid-work effectiveness is interpreted. Effectiveness should not be reduced to whether lecturers report that they like working from home. Preference matters, but universities also need to consider whether teaching, assessment, research, student communication and collegial responsibilities are completed to an appropriate standard and within sustainable boundaries. The proposed outcome construct is intended to hold these considerations together. Its empirical development will require careful validation precisely because it is broader than established measures of satisfaction or well-being.

The propositions should therefore be read as a first model to be examined rather than as conclusions. Quantitative analysis can establish whether the proposed demands and resources are associated with hybrid work effectiveness in the expected directions. The interviews can then show how those relationships are produced in lecturers' day-to-day work and whether additional factors need to be added. This combination allows the framework to remain theoretically grounded without treating the initial eight constructs as exhaustive.

Practical Implications for Higher Education

If the framework is supported empirically, its practical value would lie less in prescribing a fixed number of remote days than in helping institutions design the conditions around hybrid work. A university could require the same attendance pattern for all staff and still produce very different experiences if workloads, technology, communication expectations and home-working conditions vary. Policy should therefore address the design of work alongside the schedule of work. One implication concerns task–location fit. Activities that depend on face-to-face interaction, access to facilities or collective decision-making may be better concentrated on campus, whereas marking, writing, reading, data analysis and preparation may benefit from protected remote time. This does not require rigid classification of every academic task. Rather, it suggests that hybrid arrangements should give lecturers reasonable scope to match tasks to environments while preserving teaching schedules, student access and departmental coordination.

Workload management is of equal importance. For instance, removing a commute does not automatically create spare organisational capacity, and remote days should not be treated as periods of unlimited

availability. Clear expectations about response times, meeting schedules and turnaround periods can help prevent flexibility from becoming an extension of the working day. Workload monitoring would also allow institutions to distinguish genuine flexibility from work intensification. Technology policy should focus on the quality of the digital work environment rather than the mere availability of platforms. Reliable access, integrated systems, technical assistance and relevant training can support work across locations. At the same time, institutions may need norms around after-hours communication and unnecessary platform proliferation. Such measures recognise that technology can enable hybrid work while also contributing to techno-overload or techno-invasion.

Organisational support requires a similar balance between trust and clarity. Lecturers need to know which responsibilities can be undertaken remotely, how availability is communicated, how meetings and student services are organised, and how performance is evaluated. Excessive monitoring can erode autonomy, while vague expectations can create uncertainty. Clear and equitable arrangements are therefore likely to be more useful than either close surveillance or an entirely informal approach. Collegial contact should also be designed rather than left to chance. Elements such as shared campus periods, mentoring, research conversations, communities of practice and informal departmental activities may help preserve the social and professional exchanges that are easily lost when attendance patterns differ. Finally, the home workspace deserves recognition as part of the hybrid-work system. Universities cannot standardise employees' domestic environments, but ergonomic guidance, secure access, suitable equipment where feasible and realistic expectations can reduce avoidable disadvantages associated with working away from campus.

Contributions and Future Research

The paper offers three contributions. First, it updates the temporal framing of flexible work. The discussion moves beyond emergency pandemic working from home and considers hybrid work both as a post-pandemic arrangement and, in Malaysia, as a mechanism that can be activated during geopolitical and economic disruption. Second, it takes an occupationally specific view by focusing on language lecturers and the combination of interaction-intensive and concentration-intensive responsibilities that characterises their work. Third, it brings organisational and home-based conditions into one JD–R framework rather than treating the home environment as external to work.

Empirical testing should go beyond the eight direct relationships proposed here. One useful next step would be to examine whether particular resources buffer particular demands—for example, whether technological support reduces the association between technostress and effectiveness, or whether autonomy helps lecturers manage work–family conflict. Longitudinal designs would also be valuable because lecturers' responses to hybrid work may change as policies become familiar and work routines stabilise. Comparative research across faculties, universities and national settings could help separate features that are distinctive to language education from those that characterise academic hybrid work more generally.

The qualitative phase may also identify constructs that deserve a place in later versions of the framework. Role ambiguity, commuting burden, digital competence, leadership practices, student expectations and personal boundary-management preferences are plausible examples. They should not be added simply to make the model more elaborate. The advantage of JD–R theory is that it allows the most relevant demands and resources to be identified for a particular occupational setting and then tested rather than assumed.

CONCLUSION

Hybrid work has outlasted the circumstances that first pushed universities into large-scale remote working. In Malaysia, the 2026 response to the West Asia crisis and the subsequent Hybrid Work Day policy show that flexible work now also forms part of discussions about continuity, resilience and public-sector work design (JPA, 2026; MOHE, 2026). For universities, however, the existence of a policy does not answer the more difficult question of whether the arrangement supports academic work. That depends on the tasks lecturers perform and on the conditions under which those tasks are carried out.

This concept paper has proposed a JD–R framework for examining that question among language lecturers at APB, UiTM Shah Alam. Workload, technostress, professional isolation and work–family conflict are treated as demands that may make hybrid work harder to sustain, while work autonomy, technological support, organisational support and home-workspace suitability are treated as resources that may enable lecturers to work effectively across locations. A sequential explanatory mixed-methods study is proposed to examine these relationships and, importantly, to refine the framework in light of lecturers' accounts of their actual work.

The central issue is therefore not a choice between home and campus. It is whether universities can organise tasks, technology, support, interaction and boundaries so that the advantages of working across locations are not cancelled out by new demands. For language lecturers, whose responsibilities move repeatedly between interaction and concentrated individual work, this question is especially pertinent. A better understanding of the demand–resource balance can help institutions move from simply allowing hybrid work to designing arrangements that are workable over time.

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