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Majid Sadeghian[1] *– Dr. Erika Varga*[2]

Work–Life Balance in the Era of Home Office: Exploring the Complex Interplay Between Home and Beyond

Summary

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated remote work adoption, reshaping work-life dynamics. This study examines its effects on employees' work-life balance through social, psychological, economic, and long-term productivity factors. Using a mixed-methods approach, 150 employees from 20 countries completed structured questionnaires, and 16 participants were interviewed. Quantitative analysis, including linear regression and ANOVA, showed all four components positively influence work-life balance, with social factors having the strongest effect. Qualitative findings highlighted flexible schedules, technological infrastructure, virtual collaboration, and career development resources, alongside challenges such as reduced social interaction. In conclusion, it is indicated that well-supported remote work arrangements enhance well-being, productivity, and professional growth, offering practical insights for organizational policy and a foundation for future research on sustainable work-life integration in digital environments.

Keywords: remote work, work-life balance, social factors, productivity, employee well-being

JEL codes: J01, J24, J81

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the adoption of remote work, fundamentally altering the relationship between professional and personal life (Chung, 2018; Contreras et al., 2020). This transformation has significant implications for productivity, social interactions, economic structures, and mental health. While advances in information and communication technologies offer flexibility, they also challenge traditional norms of workplace organization and supervision (Kossek & Lautsch, 2012; Nakrošienė et al., 2019). Understanding these multifaceted impacts is essential for promoting sustainable work arrangements and employee well-being.

Despite its increasing prevalence, remote work continues to present complex challenges that require interdisciplinary investigation, incorporating insights from economics, sociology, psychology, marketing, pedagogy, management theory, and human resource management (Ipsen et al., 2021). Critical issues include long-term productivity, workforce satisfaction, social dynamics, economic outcomes, and potential mental health and equity concerns. Examining these dimensions is vital for developing evidence-based strategies to support employees, organizations, and society. This study addresses a critical gap in the literature by employing an integrated quantitative and qualitative approach to examine the multidimensional impacts of remote work on work–life balance (WLB). Whereas previous research has typically investigated isolated aspects such as productivity or psychological well-being, the present study narrows its focus to four interrelated domains: social, psychological, economic, and long-term productivity. These dimensions, identified as those most significantly shaped by remote work, provide a comprehensive yet focused analytical framework for advancing understanding of how remote work reconfigures employees' work–life balance.

This study focuses on the following objectives:

1. To evaluate the extent to which remote work influences employees' work–life balance.
2. To analyze the long-term effects of remote work on individual and organizational productivity.
3. To investigate the societal implications of remote work on community dynamics and social structures.
4. To assess the economic consequences of large-scale adoption of remote work across industries.
5. To examine the influence of remote work on employees' psychological well-being and overall satisfaction.

To achieve these objectives, the research is guided by the following questions and hypotheses:

1. To what extent does remote work influence employees' work–life balance?
2. Does remote work have lasting effects on individual and organizational productivity?
3. How does remote work reshape community dynamics and social structures?
4. What are the economic impacts of widespread remote work adoption across sectors and employment trends?
5. How does remote work affect employees' psychological well-being and satisfaction?

H1: Remote work significantly influences employees' work–life balance.

H2: Remote work has lasting and measurable effects on individual and organizational productivity.

H3: Remote work significantly reshapes community dynamics and alters traditional social structures.

H4: Remote work significantly affects economic patterns across sectors and employment trends.

[1] PhD. in management and organizational sciences, Ph.D. Candidate, Doctoral School of Economics and Regional Sciences, Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Gödöllő, Hungary, Sadeghian.Majid@phd.uni.mate.hu, Corresponding Author

[2] Habil. Associate Professor, Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences (MATE), Páter Károly utca 1, H-2100 Gödöllő, Varga.Erika@uni-mate.hu.

H5: Remote work significantly impacts employees' psychological well-being and satisfaction.

Method

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative techniques to examine the impacts of remote work on work–life balance, productivity, social dynamics, and employee well-being. Participants were recruited from 20 countries and were selected based on specific professional characteristics using the LinkedIn platform. A structured questionnaire was administered to all participants, complemented by in-depth interviews to gain qualitative insights. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS software, while thematic coding was applied to the qualitative responses, ensuring a comprehensive and reliable examination of the research questions.

Sample Size Determination

The target population consisted of employees from multiple organizations across different sectors. As shown in Table 1, the appropriate sample size was determined using G-Power software, which indicated a maximum of 143 respondents. To account for potential non-responses or errors, a final sample size of 150 participants was deemed suitable for the study.

Questionnaire Validation and Reliability

Ensuring the validity and reliability of the measurement instrument was a critical step in this research.

– **Validity Assessment:** Questionnaire validity was evaluated during a pilot phase with 50 participants from diverse firms. Statistical analysis using SPSS confirmed that the questionnaire items effectively captured the research variables, demonstrating content and construct validity.
– **Reliability Assessment:** Reliability was assessed using two complementary methods. First, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with varimax rotation was conducted to examine the underlying factor structure. As shown in Table2, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) index and Bartlett's test indicated that the data were suitable for factor analysis (KMO > 0.7, $p < 0.05$), and four components with eigenvalues greater than 1 were extracted. According to Table 3, second, internal consistency was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha, yielding a coefficient of 0.86, which exceeds the commonly accepted threshold of 0.7, confirming the instrument's reliability.

Table 1. Output table of G Power software to determine sample size

Test Name	Error Probability	Power	Hypothesis Type	Sample Size
ANOVA	0.05	0.95	–	107
Linear Regression	0.05	0.95	Two-tailed	131

Source: author's own work

Table 2. KMO Coefficients and Bartlett

Questions	KMO test	Bartlett Test		
	0.74	Chi Square Approximate	P-value	df
		292.58	0.00	66

Source: author's own work

Table 3. Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Long-Term Productivity	0.86	1.04	0.10	0.86
Societal	0.80	0.89	0.17	0.79
Economic	0.89	0.95	0.19	0.77
Psychological	0.83	0.90	0.26	0.79
Total				0.86

Source: author's own work

Table 4. respondents' demographic

		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	90	59.6
	Female	60	39.7
Age	Under 25	15	9.9
	25 to 34	87	57.6
	35 to 44	41	27.2
	45 to 54	6	4.0
	55 and Above	1	0.7
Education	High school	6	4.0
	Bachelor's Degree	52	34.4
	Master's Degree	82	54.3
	PhD or Equivalent	10	6.6
Living Arrangement	Alone	45	29.8
	With Family	65	43.0
	With Roommates/ Flat mates	32	21.3
	Other	8	5.3

Source: author's own work

Results

This section is structured into two main parts: Qualitative and Quantitative analysis, which the Qualitative analysis is divided into descriptive and inferential analysis. The descriptive analysis provide a detailed overview of the respondents' demographic characteristics, including age, gender, educational background, and living arrangement. The inferential analysis address each of the research hypotheses, presenting statistical analyses and results that evaluate the proposed relationships and effects.

The descriptive analysis

According to table 4, the sample consisted of 150 participants, with 59.6% male and 39.7% female respondents. The majority of participants were aged between 25 and 34 years (57.6%), followed by those aged 35 to 44 years (27.2%), under 25 years (9.9%). In terms of educational attainment, most respondents held a master's degree (54.3%), followed by a bachelor's degree (34.4%). Regarding living arrangements, 43.0% lived with family, 29.8% lived alone, 21.3% lived with roommates or flat-

mates. These demographic characteristics reflect a predominantly young, highly educated workforce, with diverse living contexts.

The inferential analysis

To test the research hypotheses, linear regression analysis was conducted. Preliminary assumptions were evaluated prior to the analysis. The Pearson correlation matrix indicated that the correlations among variables were below 0.6, confirming the absence of multicollinearity. Linearity of the relationships was also verified, and the examination of scatter plots demonstrated that the residuals followed a normal distribution, satisfying the normality assumption.

As presented in Table 5, the results of the ANOVA test indicated that the regression model was statistically significant ($p < 0.001$), with an R-squared value confirming the explanatory power of the model. The findings further revealed that long-term productivity, the social component, the economic component and the psychological component could predict the work–life balance ($R^2 = 0.28, 0.49, 0.37, 0.39$), in order.

In the next step, to assess the extent and direction of the influence of the four components on work–life balance, a linear regression analysis was performed, the results of which are presented in Table 6. The findings indicate that the relationship between all four factors and work–life balance is statistically significant ($p < 0.001$), with each demonstrating a positive effect. Specifically, long-term productivity ($\beta = 0.27$), the social component ($\beta = 0.48$), the economic component ($\beta = 0.35$), and

Table 5. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
Long-term productivity Component	0.53	0.28	0.27	0.25
Social Component	0.70	0.49	0.48	0.21
Economic component	0.60	0.37	0.35	0.23
Psychological component	0.63	0.39	0.38	0.23

Source: author's own work

Table 6. The Coefficient of four Components

Model B		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		Std. Error	Beta			
1	**(Constant)**	-4.598E-16	0.00		0.00	1.00
	Long-Term Productivity	0.25	0.00	0.27	300.40	0.00
	Societal	0.25	0.00	0.48	341.75	0.00
	Economic	0.25	0.00	0.35	294.16	0.00
	Psychological	0.25	0.00	0.38	290.93	0.00

Source: author's own work

Table 7. Summary of Extracted Information

Factor	Attitude	Frequency	Points
Long-Term Productivity	Agree	6	flow mindset more efficiency more flexibility to create a personalized work environment tailor their schedules comfortable workspace eliminating commute time
	Disagree	5	harder and less natural to collaborate increased stress and reduced productivity spontaneous interactions lead to burnout
	Neutral	5	both beneficial and challenging
Social Impact	Agree	6	spend time with family allowing individuals to participate in local community events more diversified social life broader social perspective
	Disagree	7	team social events separated from colleagues decreased social interactions diminishing the richness of in-person connections
	Neutral	3	Allows individuals to integrate work and personal life seamlessly. However, can also lead to asynchronous schedules
Economic Impact	Agree	9	reducing ‚commute carbon' rise in online shopping shifts in local economies and housing markets companies reassess their office space needs influencing transportation influence employment trends
	Disagree	4	macroeconomic factors overall impact is multifaceted
	Neutral	3	Potential decline in the commercial real estate market, but the broader economic patterns are shaped by multiple variables.
Psychological Impact	Agree	8	better balance work and personal responsibilities greater control over their schedules improving work-life harmony comfortable work environment mental well-being
	Disagree	6	more isolation increased stress and burnout difficulty in disconnecting feelings of disconnection
	Neutral	2	Changes in daily routines and the work environment. Some experiencing improved mental well-being

Source: author's own work

the psychological component (β = 0.38) were found to positively contribute to work–life balance.

The qualitative analysis

This section presents the qualitative analysis of the study. Data were collected through structured interviews and questionnaires administered to employees from various companies. Remote work experiences were explored using a 10-question interview protocol with 16 international participants. A summary of these interviews is provided in Table 7. It is important to note that the first two questions of the interview served as an introduction, focusing on the participants' workplaces and job responsibilities, which included roles such as internal department managers, research staff, planning managers, and issue analysts.

In conclusion, the majority of respondents emphasized that remote work offers several long-term benefits, including the development of a flow mindset, enhanced efficiency, greater flexibility in creating personalized work environments, the ability to tailor schedules, improved comfort through customized workspaces, and the elimination of commuting time. At the same time, they acknowledged certain drawbacks, such as reduced opportunities for social events, friendships, professional collaboration, and overall social connectedness. Participants also highlighted broader societal and economic implications, noting that patterns related to online purchasing, reduced air pollution, transportation systems, and hiring practices are likely to be influenced by remote work adoption. Finally, respondents generally agreed that remote work contributes positively to work–life balance by facilitating personal planning, enabling comfortable work settings, and fostering mental well-being. A summary of these key findings is presented in Table 8.

Participants highlighted several advantages of utilizing technology and digital infrastructure in the workplace, such as improved physical well-being, secure data access, enhanced comfort, and ease of resource utilization. At the same time, many emphasized the drawbacks of diminished social interactions and weakened cohesion among colleagues. Respondents further pointed to professional satisfaction, collaboration, personal growth, and flexibility as significant factors shaping their remote work experiences. To address these challenges, they recommended hybrid work models and flexible scheduling as effective means of supporting work–life balance, alongside the use of virtual collaborative environments and regular check-ins to maintain team engagement. Finally, participants agreed that remote work fosters career development when supported by comprehensive learning programs, access to mentoring and guidance resources, opportunities for multi-functional project involvement, effective remote implementation practices, and virtual leadership initiatives.

Totally, the conceptual framework as shown in figure 1 highlights the link between remote work (independent variable) and work–life balance (dependent variable). Four mediating dimensions explain this relationship, each with measurable effects on work–life balance: social factors (β =0.48), psychological factors (β =0.38), economic factors (β =0.35), and long-term productivity (β = 0.27). These coefficients indicate the extent of each factor's impact. Together, they provide a comprehensive view of how remote work shapes employees' work–life balance in digital environments.

Table 8. Essential Points and Suggestions

Factor	Attitude	Frequency	Points
Technology/infrastructure at your company	Agree	12	– optimizes physical health – secure data access – supporting remote work high level of efficiency – smooth experience – seamlessly access resources
	Disagree	0	–
	Neutral	4	– Both digital tools and the human element
The most important factor	Productivity	2	– More available working hours
	Social	4	– the lack of social interaction – Decreased team cohesion
	Economic	3	– rise of remote work – reduced expenses on commuting
	Psychology	3	– feelings of isolation – mentally transition from work to personal life – Well-being
	Other	4	– Job Satisfaction – Collaboration – Professional Development – Flexibility
Initiatives, policies or programs for work-life balance	hybrid way of working	5	-
	Flexible work time	5	
	Remote wellness program	1	
	Regular check-ins	3	
	Virtual communications	2	
professional development	Agree	13	– comprehensive remote learning curriculum – access to guidance and support – remote-friendly performance review process – cross-functional project – virtual „Leadership Academy" – enhance virtual professional development opportunities
	Disagree	0	–
	Neutral	3	–

Source: author's own work

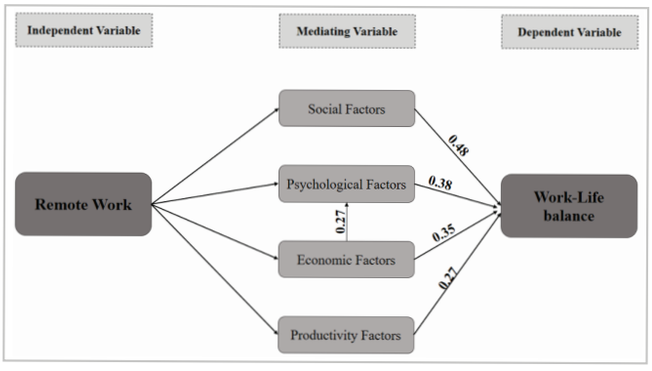

Figure 1. The Conceptual Framework
Source: author's own work

Conclusions

The present study investigates the impact of remote work on employees' work–life balance, productivity, social dynamics, economic outcomes, and psychological well-being. Despite the growing prevalence of remote work, existing literature shows a lack of comprehensive studies that simultaneously examine its multifaceted effects across individual, organizational, and societal levels.

Quantitative Analysis of Remote Work Components

Due to the multifaceted nature of the research hypotheses, both quantitative and qualitative methods were employed to examine the various components and their effects on work–life balance. Quantitative results indicated that all four examined dimensions—long-term productivity, social, economic, and psychological—exert a significant and positive influence on work-life balance. Such that, social factors affect remote workers' work-life balance the most, followed by psychological, economic, and long-term productivity aspects. This means prioritizing social support measures to improve remote workers' well-being and productivity. This suggests that remote work arrangements, when adequately supported by organizational policies and infrastructure, can effectively foster greater harmony between professional and personal domains.

Qualitative Insights on Employee Experiences

The qualitative analysis complemented these results by offering deeper insights into employees' lived experiences. Respondents emphasized both the advantages and the challenges associated with remote work. Benefits included enhanced flexibility, personalized work environments, reduced commuting time, and improved opportunities for individual planning and efficiency. Conversely, participants highlighted potential drawbacks such as weakened social connections, reduced opportunities for collaboration, and diminished workplace cohesion. These findings underscore the importance of organizational strategies that balance the flexibility of remote work with mechanisms to sustain social interaction and professional engagement.

Moreover, participants identified the central role of technology and digital infrastructure in shaping the effectiveness of remote work. Secure access to resources, virtual collaboration tools, and structured hybrid work arrangements were considered critical to sustaining productivity and supporting employee well-being. In addition, remote work was widely perceived as a catalyst for career development, enabling access to training programs, mentoring opportunities, and innovative project structures that might not have been as feasible in traditional workplace settings.

Implications for Organizations and Work-Life Balance

Overall, the findings indicate that remote work represents a transformative model with enduring implications for individuals, organizations, and society. The analysis highlights that while all examined factors contribute to employees' work-life balance, social dynamics play a particularly critical role in shaping outcomes, followed by psychological, economic, and long-term productivity considerations. These insights emphasize that organizations seeking to optimize remote work arrangements should prioritize social support systems, flexible structures, and resources that enhance interpersonal connectivity alongside technological and policy interventions. By doing so, remote work can effectively promote harmony between professional and personal domains, offering a sustainable framework for workforce well-being and organizational performance in the digital era.

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