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The New Normal? the Impact of Worklife-Life Balance on Remote Workers

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Abstract

COVID-19 and the ensuing government-mandated shelter-in-place decrees forced millions of traditional office employees to work as remote or work-from-home (WFH) employees. This novel phenomenon has changed both work characteristics and perceptions of employee outcomes as many people still work remotely, to some extent, today. The mass exodus from office work to remote work has brought with it new research opportunities. The infrequency of remote workers before the pandemic is disproportionate to the abundance of remote work today, leaving the research on WFH incomplete. The primary objective of this research was to examine the challenges associated with remote work and how the balance between professional obligations and family responsibilities impacts employees. Specifically, we posited that the relationships between work autonomy and monitoring and employee performance and well-being are mediated by two WFH variables (work interference with home and home interference with work). To assess our model, a survey was administered to 380 full-time American employees who worked from home at least three days a week. Our analysis found support for the direct relationship between work autonomy and employee performance, as well as for the direct relationship between home interference with work and employee performance. In addition, we found that the relationship between work autonomy and employee well-being was mediated by work interference with family. Overall, this study provides valuable insights into the experiences and perspectives of WFH employees and paves the way for future research in this “new normal” of remote work.

Keywords: Autonomy; Employee Performance; Employee Wellbeing-Being; Monitoring; Workfromhome-From-Home (Wfh)