

Remote Work and Employee Satisfaction in Modern Organizations

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Abstract: This study examines how remote work affects employee satisfaction and perceived productivity in modern organizations, using the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model as its theoretical foundation. Despite the rapid spread of telework following the COVID-19 pandemic, the literature remains divided on its effects, with some studies emphasising flexibility and autonomy and others pointing to stress and social isolation. Against this background, the study tests how telework-related job demands and resources relate to employee well-being, satisfaction, productivity, and work–life balance. Using a quantitative, cross-sectional design, data were collected from 243 respondents, predominantly Generation Z, working remotely on a full or partial basis, and analysed in SPSS through descriptive statistics, Pearson correlations, one-way ANOVA, and independent samples t-tests. The results support the motivational side of the JD-R model far more strongly than the health-impairment side. Telework job resources correlated strongly with all four outcomes, while telework job demands showed only weak, and unexpectedly positive, relationships, contrary to the hypothesised negative effects. Remote-work frequency influenced well-being, satisfaction, productivity, balance, and access to resources, whereas gender did not. The central conclusion is that resources matter more than demands in shaping the remote-work experience, and that outcomes depend less on the arrangement itself than on the supportive conditions, communication, feedback, technology, flexibility, and autonomy, that surround it.

Key words: remote work, telework, employee satisfaction, productivity, Job Demands–Resources model, work–life balance

JEL: J28, J24, M54

1. Introduction

This paper looks at how remote work affects employees, and in particular at employee satisfaction and productivity in modern organizations. The academic literature refers to remote work by several names, including teleworking, telecommuting, and working from home (Drack, 2024). These terms are often used interchangeably, and all of them describe work carried out outside the conventional workplace, whether communication happens by telephone or through more advanced digital technologies (Anon., 2023). The terminology differs, but the underlying idea is the same: work done away from the employer's primary workplace.

Remote work has become far more common over the past few years because of technological development, digitalization, and above all the COVID-19 pandemic (Bérastégui, 2021). Its spread has prompted a long debate about how it affects employees' well-being, motivation, work-life balance, and job performance (Mutebi & Hobbs, 2022). Some studies report positive effects, such as more flexibility and autonomy. Others point to stress, social isolation, and the difficulty of keeping work and personal life apart (Akinwande, et al., 2025). Given these competing findings, this study approaches the question through the Job Demands-Resources model, a framework that organizational psychology uses to connect working conditions, employee well-being, and performance (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007).

This paper decided to use the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model as the theoretical foundation of the study because it offers a flexible way to understand how working conditions shape well-being and performance. The model centres on the interaction between job demands, which create stress and exhaustion, and job resources, which support motivation, satisfaction and productivity. That interaction matters in telework, where the same arrangement produces both advantages and difficulties. Remote work gives employees more independence and flexibility, but it can also bring communication problems, social isolation, and a harder time balancing work and personal life.

2. Literature review

As modern organizations increasingly shift toward flexible structures, the interplay between telework and virtual communication emerges as a defining factor in employee satisfaction. Effective virtual interaction does more than just bridge physical distances; it actively mitigates the isolation of working from home by cultivating clarity, alignment, and a shared digital culture (Veith et al., 2023). Ultimately, when organizations master these digital communication channels, telework transforms from a mere logistical arrangement into a powerful driver of worker morale and overall job contentment (Veith et al., 2025; Matei & Veith, 2023).

Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, and Schaufeli introduced the JD–R model in 2001 to explain employee well-being and burnout across a wide range of occupations. They argued that burnout is not confined to jobs involving direct client contact and that every occupation has characteristics that affect well-being. Working conditions, they proposed, fall into two categories. Job demands are the psychological, physical, organizational or social features of work that require continuous effort and can lead to strain, stress, or exhaustion. Job resources help employees meet

their objectives, offset the impact of demands, and develop professionally. High demands mainly drive exhaustion; a shortage of resources mainly drives disengagement (Demerouti, et al., 2001).

Bakker and Demerouti later expanded the model, and its main strength is flexibility. Earlier occupational stress models such as Karasek's Demand–Control Model and Siegrist's Effort–Reward Imbalance Model examined only a narrow set of factors, whereas the JD–R model adapts to any occupation by identifying the demands and resources specific to it. Two psychological mechanisms drive the model. In the health impairment process, sustained demands gradually deplete an employee's energy and lead to fatigue, stress, and burnout. In the motivational process, resources such as feedback, autonomy, and supervisor support help employees reach their goals and meet psychological needs, which produces engagement and satisfaction. Resources also cushion the effect of demands, and the authors describe how gain spirals and loss spirals reinforce these outcomes over time (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007).

A decade later the two authors reframed the model as a broader theory of employee functioning. They gave more weight to work engagement, a positive state marked by dedication, vigor and absorption, and added personal resources such as optimism, self-efficacy, self-esteem and resilience (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). They also introduced job crafting, the proactive steps employees take to reshape their own work, and self-undermining, in which exhaustion produces mistakes and conflicts that create further demands (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017).

Gajendran and Harrison's meta-analysis of 46 studies and 12,883 participants is one of the most influential on this question. Telecommuting, they found, generally raises job satisfaction, and its benefits tend to outweigh its drawbacks, mainly through greater autonomy, lower stress, less work–family conflict, and more flexibility. The key driver is perceived autonomy: control over how, where, and when work gets done. They also found little evidence that telecommuting damages relationships with supervisors or coworkers, though very high-intensity remote work sometimes weakened coworker ties (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007).

Atobishi and Nosratabadi looked more closely at what drives satisfaction and identified work–life balance as the strongest predictor, followed by organizational and technological support; limited communication was the main constraint, and it left employees feeling isolated (Thabit ATOBISHI, 2022). A U.S. Government Accountability Office report reached similar conclusions, tying telework satisfaction to flexibility, less commuting, and better work–life balance, and noting its value for retention and recruitment, while flagging reduced social interaction and weaker workplace culture as real costs (Office, 2025). Bailey and Kurland offered the most cautious reading. They argued that the relationship is more complicated than it looks, that much of the supposed benefit rests on inconsistent evidence, and that telework is neither universally good nor universally bad (Bailey & Kurland, 2002).

Mutiganda and colleagues, in a systematic review, found that telework is generally tied to higher perceived productivity and job performance, but the gains are not automatic. They depend on job characteristics, organizational support, technological infrastructure, and how much an employee teleworks. Telework worked best in specialized, independent, knowledge-based roles (Mutiganda JC, 2022). Sati and Vats reported the same pattern, higher productivity through fewer distractions, more flexibility, and less commuting, while warning about household distractions

and stressing organizational support (Sati & Vats, n.d.). Mazur added employee well-being to the picture and argued for result-oriented management over close monitoring (Mazur, 2023).

Mamatha and Thoti tied productivity to work-life balance and to self-management and clear boundaries (Mamatha & Thoti, 2023). Halder and colleagues found that boundary management was decisive and that outcomes varied with gender, age, family responsibilities, and job role, which is why they rejected a one-size-fits-all approach (Halder, et al., 2024). Gavaille and Hazans took a different angle. Using data from more than 1,700 teleworkers, they found that conscientiousness and openness to experience predicted higher remote-work productivity, while extraversion was linked to a weaker preference for it (Gavaille & Hazans, 2022). Boell and colleagues explained why telework research so often contradicts itself: researchers ask whether telework is good or bad in general instead of looking at the specific activity being performed, when in fact productivity is highly context-dependent (Boell, et al., 2016). A systematic review by Anakpo, Nqwayibana, and Mishi found a generally positive effect on productivity where flexibility, autonomy, supportive management, and good technology were present, but cautioned that pandemic-era results came from unusual conditions (Anakpo, et al., 2023).

It is important to mention that the value of soft skill development becomes undeniable when organizations are forced to confront sudden macroeconomic shifts. For instance, research examining the COVID-19 crisis reveals that business resilience hinges directly on human capabilities like rapid opportunity recognition and agile resource use. By proactively cultivating these adaptive mindsets and problem-solving skills within the general workforce, companies don't just safeguard their operations; they empower individual employees to turn unpredictable challenges into pathways for professional success (Marinescu & Veith, 2022; Veith et. al, 2023; Veith & Grigore, 2023).

Boell and colleagues treat telework as something that fundamentally changes the nature of work through information and communication technologies, and they single out four challenges: blurred boundaries between work and personal life, social isolation, weaker communication and collaboration, and heavier dependence on technology (Boell, et al., 2013). The Everything Guide to Remote Work makes a related point about self-management and about how constant connectivity makes it hard to switch off (Duffy, 2022). Bhat, Yousuf, and Saba describe work intensification, where employees stretch their hours and stay connected longer, feeding work-related exhaustion (Bhat, et al., 2022). Hong and Jex trace much of this to telepressure, the felt need to answer work messages quickly. Telework can cut work-to-life conflict, but high telepressure blocks employees from psychologically disconnecting (Hong & Jex, 2022).

Noreena Hertz, in *The Lonely Century*, warns that telework's flexibility and convenience can come at the cost of meaningful social interaction and a sense of belonging, making loneliness an organizational problem rather than a private one (Hertz, 2020). Toscano and Zappalà supplied the evidence: treating social isolation as a job demand, they showed it raises stress, lowers perceived productivity, and ultimately reduces satisfaction with remote work (Zappalà, 2020). Shaholli and colleagues documented stress, anxiety, depression, loneliness, fatigue, and work-family conflict among teleworkers, pointing again to blurred boundaries, isolation, and work intensification (David Shaholli, 2024). Castro-Trancón and colleagues showed these effects fall

unevenly: women report more work-family conflict and a “double burden,” especially during the pandemic (Castro-Trancón N, 2024). Tavares (2017) and Ştefan (2021) recorded physical and psychological costs, from musculoskeletal and visual problems to longer hours and less recovery, and Broilo, Fortes, and Lisboa linked heavier screen use and information overload to higher anxiety (Broilo, et al., 2024). Beckel and Fisher draw the threads together: telework is neither good nor bad in itself, and its effects come down to the balance between demands and resources (Beckel & Fisher, 2022).

The JD-R model also points to resources that help employees cope. Beauregard, Basile, and Canónico name autonomy, social support and communication, trust, and organizational support and leadership as the central ones, and stress that what matters is how telework is implemented (Beauregard, et al., 2019). Metselaar, den Dulk, and Vermeeren, drawing on Conservation of Resources theory, treat telework itself as a resource because it supplies autonomy and work-life balance satisfaction, and those two factors carry its positive effect on performance (Metselaar, et al., 2023). Oo highlighted communication, supervisor trust, organizational support, and technology as the resources behind engagement and performance (Oo, 2021). Korkeakunnas and colleagues found that managers viewed telework positively when trust, communication, and flexibility were in place, while still valuing in-person time for teamwork, creativity, and innovation (Korkeakunnas, et al., 2023).

3. Research methodology

The main goal of this paper is to get an answer the following question: How does telework affect employee satisfaction and perceived productivity, and what role do telework-related job demands and resources play in this relationship? Drawing on the JD-R model and the literature above, six hypotheses were tested. H1: telework job demands are negatively related to job satisfaction. H2: telework job demands are negatively related to self-perceived productivity. H3: telework job resources are positively related to job satisfaction. H4: telework job resources are positively related to self-perceived productivity. H5: telework job resources are positively related to work-life balance. H6: telework job demands are negatively related to mental well-being, while telework job resources are positively related to it.

The study uses a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design built on the JD-R model. Participants were employees and working students who work remotely, fully or partly, across different fields, recruited through a convenience sample on social media, online communities, and personal contacts. The survey was open to anyone aged 18 or over, and 243 people completed it. A structured online questionnaire measured Telework Job Demands (Q6–Q12) and Telework Job Resources (Q13–Q19), along with single-item measures of mental well-being (Q20), job satisfaction (Q21), self-perceived productivity (Q22), and perceived work-life balance (Q23), all on Likert scales. Remote work intensity was recorded as an ordinal variable, the number of remote workdays per week. The data was analyzed in IBM SPSS Statistics (version 32) using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlations, one-way ANOVA, independent samples t-tests, and Cronbach's Alpha.

4. Results

The 243 respondents were mostly Generation Z (88.9%), with an almost even gender split (50.2% male, 49.8% female). Most were students (65.4%), most worked in Business Administration (65.0%), and most worked remotely three to four days a week (74.1%), so hybrid arrangements dominated the sample.

Table 1. Sample description. Source: Author's own processing based on SPSS output.

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age Group	Gen Z (18-27)	216	88.9
	Millennials / Gen Y (28-44)	17	7
	Other	10	4.1
Gender	Female	121	49.8
	Male	122	50.2
Type of Contract / Employment	Student	159	65.4
	Part-time	33	13.6
	Full-time	41	16.9
	Other	10	4.1
Field of Activity	Business Administration	158	65
	Other	85	35
Remote Workdays per Week	1-2 days	46	18.9
	3-4 days	180	74.1
	5+ days	17	7

On the descriptive side, every outcome scored above the midpoint of the scale: mental well-being ($M = 3.31$), job satisfaction ($M = 3.30$), work-life balance ($M = 3.27$), and self-perceived productivity ($M = 3.21$). Telework job demands were low ($M = 2.48$), while telework job resources were the highest of all ($M = 3.36$). All three scales were highly reliable, with Cronbach's Alpha of 0.917 for demands, 0.927 for resources, and 0.913 for outcomes.

The Pearson correlations tell the central story. Telework job demands had only weak positive links to mental well-being ($r = .133$, $p = .038$), job satisfaction ($r = .126$, $p = .050$), self-perceived productivity ($r = .129$, $p = .044$), and work-life balance ($r = .126$, $p = .049$). Telework job resources, by contrast, correlated strongly with all four: mental well-being ($r = .681$), job satisfaction ($r = .786$), self-perceived productivity ($r = .723$), and work-life balance ($r = .730$), all $p < .001$. These results support H3, H4, and H5, and the resources half of H6. They do not support H1 and H2, where the relationships came out positive rather than negative, nor the demands half of H6.

Table 2. Pearson correlation analysis. Source: Author's own processing based on SPSS output.

Relationship	r	Sig.
JD_TOT ↔ OC1 (Mental Well-Being)	0.133	0.038
JD_TOT ↔ OC2 (Job Satisfaction)	0.126	0.05
JD_TOT ↔ OC3 (Productivity)	0.129	0.044
JD_TOT ↔ OC4 (Work-Life Balance)	0.126	0.049
WR_TOT ↔ OC1 (Mental Well-Being)	0.681	0
WR_TOT ↔ OC2 (Job Satisfaction)	0.786	0
WR_TOT ↔ OC3 (Productivity)	0.723	0
WR_TOT ↔ OC4 (Work-Life Balance)	0.73	0

A one-way ANOVA showed significant differences across remote-workday groups for mental well-being ($F = 4.471$, $p = .012$), job satisfaction ($F = 6.208$, $p = .002$), self-perceived productivity ($F = 6.602$, $p = .002$), work-life balance ($F = 3.930$, $p = .021$), and telework job resources ($F = 8.658$, $p < .001$), but not for telework job demands ($F = 2.797$, $p = .063$). Independent samples t-tests found no significant gender differences on any variable, including telework job resources ($t = -1.813$, $p = .071$), so male and female respondents reported broadly similar experiences.

5. Discussion and Interpretation of Results

The findings support the JD-R model only in part. Telework job demands were not negatively associated with outcomes, as the model would predict. Instead the correlations were weak and positive. The sample probably explains this. Most respondents were Generation Z and worked remotely only a few days a week, and for them demands such as occasional communication trouble or isolation may register as manageable rather than as serious stressors. The low average demand score backs this up: these respondents were not under heavy strain or close to burnout.

The motivational side of the model, on the other hand, came through clearly. Telework job resources correlated strongly with mental well-being, job satisfaction, self-perceived productivity, and work-life balance, which matches earlier work pointing to autonomy, support, communication quality, feedback, flexibility, and digital tools as the things that make remote work succeed. How often people worked remotely shaped their well-being, satisfaction, productivity, balance, and access to resources, but not their sense of the demands, and gender made no real difference. The overall message is that resources matter more than demands in shaping how people experience remote work.

6. Conclusions

Remote work remains a valuable organizational practice when it is set up well. What this study suggests is that the arrangement alone does not decide the outcome; the conditions around it do. Employees who have proper support, communication, flexibility, and technology are the ones who report good experiences. The negative effects of telework demands that the model led me to expect did not appear; where the relationships were significant, they were weak and pointed the other way.

In practical terms, organizations can improve outcomes by keeping communication strong, giving regular feedback, providing the right technology, and protecting flexibility and autonomy. The study has clear limits. The sample was a convenience sample, weighted heavily toward Generation Z, and all the data were self-reported at a single point in time. Future work could draw on more varied samples, more industries, and longitudinal designs to track how remote work affects people over time.

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