
Stakeholder-driven telework performance: a systematic review across COVID-19 eras

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Abstract

Purpose – We investigate how stakeholder relationships determine telework effectiveness across temporal contexts, examining the transformation of remote work dynamics throughout pre-pandemic and during/post-pandemic periods. Our study addresses critical gaps in telework literature by applying stakeholder theory's instrumental dimension integrated with the job demands-resources model to understand how competing stakeholder interests create measurable boundary conditions for organizational performance.

Design/methodology/approach – A systematic literature review following PRISMA protocols analyzed 812 studies from Web of Science and SCOPUS databases (1989–2023), focusing on ABS-rated journals (levels 3 or above).

Findings – The study reveals a fundamental reconfiguration of telework dynamics, where traditional facilitators such as workplace flexibility and technological readiness evolved into complex stakeholder ecosystems encompassing digital competence, virtual leadership and psychological safety. Our systematization identifies how COVID-19 fundamentally altered telework configurations, transforming voluntary work arrangements into mandatory stakeholder negotiations that generated previously unrecognized demands alongside emergent organizational resources. It demonstrates how the exogenous shock intensified stakeholder interdependencies.

Originality/value – This study pioneers the integration of stakeholder theory with the JD-R model for telework analysis, establishing a novel framework that operationalizes how stakeholder relationship management creates performance-determining boundary conditions. The research advances human resource management practice by providing evidence-based strategies for optimizing telework arrangements while contributing theoretical understanding of how exogenous shocks fundamentally restructure organizational effectiveness mechanisms across distributed work environments.

Keywords Telework, Remote work, Stakeholders, Job demands-resources, Performance, COVID-19

Paper type Research article

1. Introduction

Telework [1] represents a flexible work model where employees can carry out their tasks from a location of their choice, often from home, utilizing information and communication technology (ICT) to complete their duties (Kapoor *et al.*, 2021; Lopes *et al.*, 2023). It is no longer a mere trend but a reality that organizations must embrace in the current work environment (Ameen *et al.*, 2023; Barrero *et al.*, 2023). The increasing popularity of telework has required companies to learn how to make the most of it (Seva *et al.*, 2021; Straus *et al.*, 2022). As more employees seek to work from home, businesses must adjust to meet their needs (Ameen *et al.*, 2023).



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Despite growing scholarly attention to telework, existing systematic reviews reveal limitations that constrain our understanding of this complex phenomenon. For example, [Athanasiadou and Theriou \(2021\)](#) demonstrate that telework research remains fragmented across disciplines, with studies typically examining isolated organizational or individual factors without considering their dynamic interplay. Similarly, while [Beckel and Fisher's \(2022\)](#) analysis primarily focuses on individual-level health outcomes, it provides limited insight into how competing organizational, technological, and family stakeholder interests are managed. [Figueiredo et al. \(2024\)](#) further conducted a comprehensive analysis on telework and mental health, acknowledging the need for frameworks that can integrate multiple stakeholder perspectives and their evolving relationships.

These reviews collectively reveal three interconnected limitations that necessitate a stakeholder theory approach with temporal segmentation. First, existing frameworks demonstrate a systematic inability to analyze telework as an inherently multi-stakeholder phenomenon, examining employee well-being ([Beckel and Fisher, 2022](#)), organizational performance ([Athanasiadou and Theriou, 2021](#)), family dynamics ([Figueiredo et al., 2024](#)), and technological infrastructure ([Orel, 2023](#)) through less comprehensive lenses rather than as competing interests that create boundary conditions for telework effectiveness. Second, current literature inadequately addresses how COVID-19 fundamentally restructured stakeholder power dynamics and resource dependencies, transforming telework from voluntary organizational arrangements into mandatory multi-stakeholder negotiations involving intensified family responsibilities and technological dependencies ([Kniffin et al., 2021](#); [Carnevale and Hatak, 2020](#)). Third, existing reviews acknowledge the multi-stakeholder complexity; however, they lack theoretical frameworks capable of operationalizing how these relationships create measurable boundary conditions ([Athanasiadou and Theriou, 2021](#); [Figueiredo et al., 2024](#)), a limitation that stakeholder theory's instrumental dimension is valuable in addressing through our systematic approach to analyzing stakeholder relationship-performance linkages.

There are many positive aspects to teleworking in terms of organizational performance ([Barrero et al., 2023](#); [Chatterjee et al., 2021](#); [De Menezes and Kelliher, 2011](#)). These include increased productivity due to flexible working hours, which allow workers to adjust their working hours according to their personal rhythms, resulting in greater efficiency and reduced commuting time ([Athanasiadou and Theriou, 2021](#); [Barrero et al., 2023](#); [Gajendran et al., 2014](#)). Another relevant point is satisfaction and well-being, which enables a better work-life balance by offering workers greater autonomy and control over their tasks ([Awada et al., 2021](#); [Beckel and Fisher, 2022](#)). In addition, organizations can save on office costs (rent, electricity, maintenance). However, some negative points must be considered, ranging from a lack of personal interaction, communication challenges, frequent interruptions in the home environment, and difficulties in monitoring and evaluating worker performance ([Ajzen and Taskin, 2021](#); [Bailey and Kurland, 2002](#)).

These seemingly contradictory outcomes reveal a fundamental characteristic of telework arrangements ([Gajendran et al., 2014](#); [Rockmann and Pratt, 2015](#)): their effectiveness emerges not from isolated organizational or individual factors but from the dynamic interaction of competing stakeholder interests that create specific boundary conditions within which telework either succeeds or fails. Unlike traditional workplace arrangements where stakeholder relationships operate within established physical and temporal boundaries, telework dissolves these boundaries, forcing employees, organizations, families, and technology providers into novel configurations that require continuous negotiation ([Barrero et al., 2023](#); [Bennett, 2021](#)). The concept of boundary conditions becomes crucial because telework performance depends on how successfully these multiple stakeholder interests align or conflict across different contexts.

The COVID-19 pandemic constitutes an exogenous shock ([Jacquart et al., 2024](#)) that fundamentally restructured the relationships defining organizational effectiveness, thereby invalidating pre-pandemic stakeholder configurations for understanding contemporary

telework dynamics. This transformation requires an understanding of the temporal segmentation across pre-, during-, and post-COVID-19 periods as the pandemic has altered the power dynamics, resource dependencies, and expectation structures that define stakeholder relationships in telework contexts (Bennett, 2021; Kniffin *et al.*, 2021; Wilkinson *et al.*, 2022). Consequently, a meaningful theoretical advancement entails a systematic examination of telework performance enhancement strategies through multi-stakeholder perspectives that explicitly account for these temporal boundary condition shifts, justifying our systematic literature review approach to develop a robust theoretical understanding of this transformed organizational phenomenon. As argued, this approach moves beyond previous reviews' focus to examine the systemic relationships that create the context within which telework either succeeds or fails. Thus, our central research question (QR) is: What boundary conditions can enhance or diminish the effectiveness of teleworking practices for individuals and organizations?

Stakeholder theory (Freeman, 1984; Parmar *et al.*, 2010), specifically the instrumental perspective from Donaldson and Preston (1995), provides one of the frameworks we bring for examining these boundary conditions, as it offers a narrative on how multiple, competing interests create the contextual parameters that determine the effectiveness of organizational practices (Donaldson and Preston, 1995). As Freeman stated in *Divergent Stakeholder Theory*, the "Donaldson-Preston typology of 'normative-instrumental-descriptive' stakeholder theories is useful" (1999, p. 233) and "we need more instrumental theories – that is, we need more studies of the kinds of linkages postulated in the instrumental thesis – and fewer of the kind of studies that simply declare 'managerial oughts' from general principles" (1999, p. 235). In addition, we bring the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model (Demerouti *et al.*, 2001; Bakker and Demerouti, 2007, 2016) to create an innovative perspective on how stakeholder relationships function simultaneously as both demands and resources, thereby creating measurable boundary conditions for organizational effectiveness across the temporal transformation in the COVID-19 eras. The JD-R model provides insight into how stakeholder-derived demands and resources influence telework effectiveness (Bakker and Demerouti, 2016).

This study advances the literature in the Human Resource Management field by providing an extended understanding of telework through the lenses of stakeholder theory and the JD-R model, offering a deeper comprehension of how exogenous shocks, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, restructure the fundamental relationships that define organizational effectiveness. The integration of these narratives establishes an innovative analytical framework for examining how stakeholder relationships intersect with demands and resources, thereby creating measurable boundary conditions for organizational effectiveness. Our longitudinal approach contributes to addressing the persistent challenge of linking stakeholder management to specific performance outcomes by illustrating how boundary conditions evolve across distinct phases. This provides managers with actionable insights to effectively navigate stakeholder complexity during times of organizational transformation resulting from external shocks.

2. Theoretical background

The distinction between traditional teleworking and newer models like working from anywhere or digital nomadism is crucial for analytical clarity. Choudhury *et al.* (2022) note that globally mobile workers face different geographical and institutional conditions, affecting comparability with home-based teleworking. Reichenberger (2022) adds that digital nomadism differs from typical contractual work, featuring unique motivations and control mechanisms. Our review defines teleworking as performing work activities outside an organization's headquarters (primarily from home) using digital communication technologies (Fitzer, 1997). We focus on home-based teleworking with formal relationships, excluding independent remote work forms like digital nomads and freelancers. The analysis centers on

teleworking practices adopted during and after the COVID-19 pandemic in both public and private sectors, maintaining alignment with traditional management and supervision models (Wells *et al.*, 2023).

Telework represents a complex organizational phenomenon that transcends traditional boundaries between work and personal life (Clark, 2000; Golden, 2011), fundamentally altering relationships between multiple stakeholders while creating novel configurations of job demands and resources. Understanding this complexity requires a theoretical framework capable of capturing both the multi-stakeholder dynamics inherent in remote work arrangements and the psychological mechanisms through which these relationships influence individual and organizational outcomes. This study integrates the instrumental perspective (Donaldson and Preston, 1995) of stakeholder theory (Freeman, 1984; Parmar *et al.*, 2010) with the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model (Demerouti *et al.*, 2001; Bakker and Demerouti, 2007, 2016) to provide a comprehensive analytical lens for examining telework effectiveness across temporal contexts, particularly during the transformative period of COVID-19.

Stakeholder theory addresses three fundamental business problems that become particularly acute in remote work arrangements (Parmar *et al.*, 2010). The problem of value creation and trade becomes complex in telework contexts where traditional value-creation mechanisms are disrupted by spatial and temporal separation, forcing employees, organizations, families, and technology providers into novel configurations that require continuous negotiation (Freeman, 1984). The problem of reconciling ethics and capitalism is particularly evident in telework, manifesting in questions of surveillance (Fairweather, 1999), work-life balance (Golden, 2011; Hill *et al.*, 2003), and organizational responsibility for employee well-being in domestic environments (Caligiuri *et al.*, 2020). The problem of managerial mindset requires a fundamental reconceptualization as managers must navigate stakeholder relationships without traditional oversight mechanisms (Freeman *et al.*, 2021).

As Freeman (1999, p. 234) pointed out regarding the instrumental dimension of stakeholder theory, “regardless of the firm’s objective, efficient management must manage the relationships that matter.” The instrumental dimension of stakeholder theory offers a focused perspective for examining how stakeholder relationship management impacts performance (Donaldson and Preston, 1995). Building on Freeman’s (1984) foundational insight that organizations depend on managing relationships with multiple stakeholders, the instrumental dimension of stakeholder theory (Donaldson and Preston, 1995) can support our argument that telework effectiveness emerges from the dynamic interaction of competing stakeholder interests that create specific boundary conditions within which remote work either succeeds or fails. Unlike traditional workplace arrangements where stakeholder relationships operate within established physical and temporal boundaries, telework dissolves these boundaries (Wang *et al.*, 2021), creating unprecedented interdependencies between organizational productivity demands, individual autonomy needs, family space requirements, and technological capabilities. These boundary dissolutions intensify stakeholder negotiations, as organizations must balance performance expectations with employee well-being (Carnevale and Hatak, 2020). Meanwhile, families accommodate work activities within domestic spaces, and technology providers enable seamless remote collaboration (Li *et al.*, 2023). Through the lens of the instrumental perspective of stakeholder theory, better stakeholder relations are associated with increased company performance (Donaldson and Preston, 1995).

The JD-R model offers the micro-level mechanisms through which stakeholder relationships translate into individual and organizational outcomes. The JD-R model’s core proposition that working conditions can be classified into job demands and job resources provides a means of operationalizing how stakeholder relationships function simultaneously as sources of stress and support (Bakker and Demerouti, 2016). Job demands refer to the physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of work that require sustained effort. In contrast, job resources refer to factors that facilitate the achievement of work goals, mitigate

demands, or stimulate personal growth and development (Demerouti *et al.*, 2001). The model's dual-process framework explains how stakeholder-derived demands initiate health-impairment processes through exhaustion, while stakeholder-provided resources initiate motivational processes through engagement (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007).

Integrating stakeholder theory with the JD-R model addresses the fragmentation evident in previous telework research, which typically examines isolated organizational, individual, or technological factors without considering their dynamic interplay (Athanasidou and Theriou, 2021; Beckel and Fisher, 2022). This theoretical integration enables the examination of how competing stakeholder interests manifest as specific job demands and resources that shape telework effectiveness, while simultaneously capturing how COVID-19 has fundamentally altered these stakeholder configurations and their associated demand-resource patterns (Kniffin *et al.*, 2021). The framework thus provides both the conceptual apparatus for identifying relevant stakeholders and their evolving interests, as well as the analytical mechanisms for understanding how these relationships translate into measurable boundary conditions that determine telework outcomes across the COVID-19 eras.

3. Methodology

This study employs a systematic literature review (SLR). We adhered to the PRISMA 2020 checklist (Page *et al.*, 2021) and searched the Web of Science (WoS) and SCOPUS databases, mapping and summarizing the results. Both databases are widely recognized for their comprehensiveness and rigor in selecting indexed articles (Singh *et al.*, 2020). They uphold high-quality standards, ensuring that the studies indexed within them have undergone stringent criteria and peer review evaluations (Singh *et al.*, 2020). These databases are multidisciplinary, covering a broad range of knowledge areas, essential for studies that may involve various fields (Cochrane Training, 2023). Additionally, both databases offer robust analysis tools, including impact indicators, h-index, citations, and citation network analysis, which are continually updated, facilitating access to recent and emerging research (Visser *et al.*, 2020).

The searches conducted on May 10, 2023, utilized the following keywords: "telework; telecommuting; performance; public; private; HRM; workers." First, the authors used RStudio software to remove duplicate literature and conducted a manual check. After eliminating duplicate articles ($n = 134$), we reviewed the titles and abstracts to confirm the relevance of the content (237 exclusions). The authors established the inclusion and exclusion criteria. We included studies that: (1) were primary studies relevant to their research topic; (2) identified the public and/or private sectors directly and/or indirectly; and (3) were written in English (Ankrah and Al-Tabbaa, 2015). They excluded studies that: (1) are not articles published in journals, such as, letters, meeting abstracts, conference papers, dissertations/theses, media reports, and content feeds (Jones *et al.*, 2011; Tranfield *et al.*, 2003); (2) did not focus on teleworking; and (3) are systematic literature reviews (13 exclusions). One team member then performed a three-stage screening process: (1) screening the title according to the exclusion criteria, (2) screening the abstract, and (3) screening the full text based on the eligibility criteria. After the first author excluded the papers based on the above criteria, the second author confirmed the exclusions. The authors discussed any discrepancies in inclusion and exclusion and maintained a shared database. We registered this SLR protocol (Figure 1) in the INPLASY platform (Canellas *et al.*, 2023). Registering SLR protocols is crucial to avoid duplication of systematic reviews and improve transparency (Dos Santos *et al.*, 2020).

In the following phase, the authors analyzed the complete articles, focusing on the primary topic and utilizing a matrix defined by the research team based on Law *et al.*'s (1998) matrix to evaluate the quality of quantitative studies, alongside Letts *et al.*'s (2007) matrix for qualitative articles to support article selection of articles. To ensure the high quality of the studies included in the SLR (Rafols *et al.*, 2011), we selected only those with an ABS rating of 3 or 4 (328 articles were excluded), as per the Chartered Association of Business Schools' Academic Journal Guide 2021; Hussain (2011). This decision stems from the fact that the AJG stands out

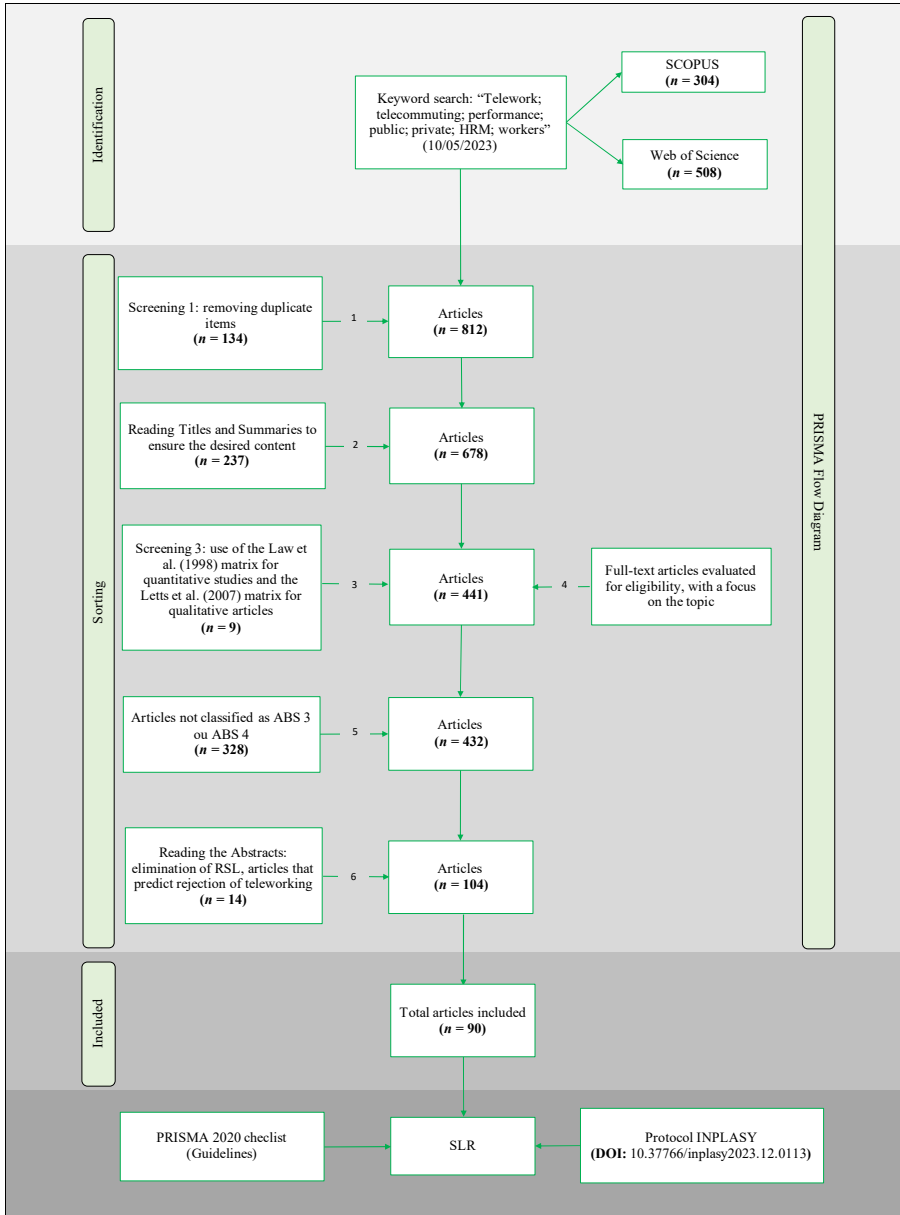


Figure 1. Identification of studies through databases and registers. *Note.* Prepared by the authors

because, unlike other journal rankings, it is not solely based on a weighted average of journal metrics (Chartered Association of Business Schools, 2021). Instead, it incorporates qualitative evaluations made by academic experts in the field, who consider factors such as the methodological rigor of published articles, their theoretical and practical contributions, relevance to the business area, the peer review process, and their prestige among academics (Tourish and Willmott, 2015).

The reasons for exclusions were documented after we reviewed the complete text (i.e. full articles that, even after initial screening, do not focus on teleworking or are systematic reviews). The authors resolved disagreements through discussion during the selection process and reached a consensus through arbitration. If necessary, a third author made the final decision when the two paired authors were unable to resolve the conflict. The process was interactive to ensure that all relevant studies were included (Cochrane Training, 2023). We conducted a pilot test using a purposive sample, considering articles published both before and after 2019 to ensure consistency among reviewers. The search results and the study selection process are reported in the PRISMA flow diagram (Figure 1). After the entire process, all data were recorded and exported in Excel format. As a result, 90 studies were selected from 1989 to 2023 (34 years).

4. Overview of the results

The annual scientific production (Figure 2) began modestly and was limited, accounting for 5.6% of the articles published from 1989 to 1998, with no publications recorded between 1991 and 1998. However, from 1999 onward, there was a significant increase in publications, which continued in subsequent years until 2019. This SLR considers the pre-pandemic period from 1989 to March 2020. We note that the COVID-19 pandemic has influenced the surge in publications, as 51.1% of the analyzed articles address teleworking in the context of the pandemic.

At the same time, studies in the private sector make up 69% of the conducted research, followed by studies in both the public and private sectors (16%), studies carried out solely in the public sector (10%), and studies that do not specify the industry (6%). In the private sector, where the majority of studies are located, 82% are quantitative, 11% are qualitative, and 7% are mixed (Figure 3).

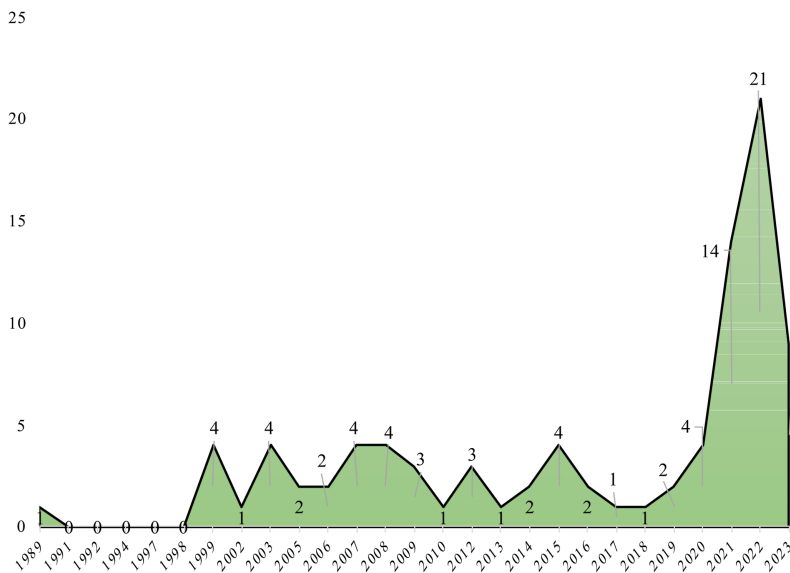


Figure 2. Number of studies carried out per year. *Note.* Prepared by the authors

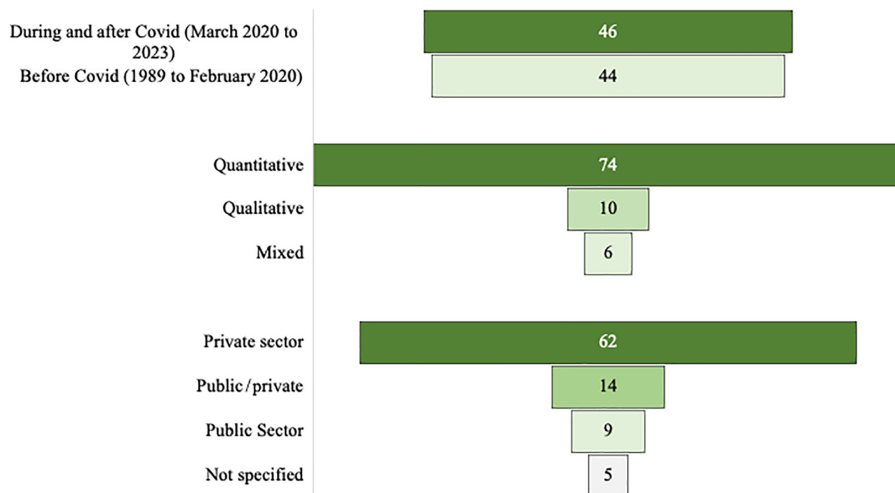


Figure 3. Studies on teleworking carried out by period, type of study and sector. *Note.* Prepared by the authors

5. Findings

The criteria governing telework eligibility across temporal periods illuminate the theoretical mechanisms underlying stakeholder relationship reconfiguration during organizational transformation. Table 1 reveals a fundamental shift in organizational logic, moving from performance-based (e.g. Holland *et al.*, 2016) and meritocratic criteria (e.g. Anderson *et al.*, 2015) to trust-centered and relational assessments (e.g. Shockley *et al.*, 2021a, b). Pre-pandemic mechanisms emphasized objective work characteristics and demonstrated capability (e.g. Golden and Gajendran, 2019), reflecting systematic approaches grounded in measurable organizational outcomes. However, the pandemic period witnessed a dramatic reorientation toward subjective managerial perceptions of trustworthiness and technological competence (e.g. Adamovic *et al.*, 2021). Examining this transformation through the

Table 1. Criteria for teleworking, according to different authors, in the pre- and during/post COVID-19 periods

Period	Criteria	Author(s)/year
Before the COVID-19 pandemic	The complexity of the work	Golden and Gajendran (2019)
	Part-time workers	Müller and Niessen (2019)
	Workers with a history of good performance	Holland <i>et al.</i> (2016)
	More committed workers telework	Anderson <i>et al.</i> (2015)
	Workers with high work differentiation	Gajendran <i>et al.</i> (2014)
	Geographic scope, human capital, capital intensity	Neirotti <i>et al.</i> (2013)
During and post-COVID-19	Type of activity carried out	O'Neill <i>et al.</i> (2009), Wheatley (2012)
	The compatibility of the functions performed	Li <i>et al.</i> (2023)
	Familiarity with the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)	Adamovic <i>et al.</i> (2021)
	Employees who receive remote work privileges are often those whom managers view as conscientious and trustworthy	Shockley <i>et al.</i> (2021)

Source(s): Prepared by the authors

instrumental perspective of stakeholder theory (Donaldson and Preston, 1995) reveals how organizations systematically recalibrated their stakeholder relationship management strategies to optimize performance under fundamentally altered boundary conditions. The JD-R theoretical lens (Bakker and Demerouti, 2016) enables the interpretation of how technological competence evolved from a peripheral skill to a fundamental job resource, while managerial trust became essential for mitigating the psychological demands associated with reduced supervision. This evolution catalyzed a paradigmatic shift from telework as a performance reward to an inevitability contingent upon interpersonal trust and digital readiness.

We identified factors influencing the effectiveness of teleworking in pre-pandemic research (Tables 2 and 3). These revealing patterns engage with both the Job Demands-Resources model's categorization of working conditions (Bakker and Demerouti, 2016) and stakeholder theory's instrumental dimension (Donaldson and Preston, 1995). These factors manifested across five dimensional categories: organizational influences (eight factors, representing 25%), individual influences (seven factors, 21.9%), work-related influences (two factors, 6.3%), technological influences (two factors, 6.3%), and family-related influences (twelve factors, 37.5%). Conversely, in the during/post pandemic period (Tables 2 and 3), from March 2020 to May 2023 (search date), the themes related to teleworking by factor type that emerged most prominently were studies with combined factors at 37.8%, followed by studies focusing on individual (32.4%), organizational (21.6%), work-related (5.4%), and technological factors (2.7%).

Employing the JD-R model as an analytical lens to organize our empirical findings reveals that telework effectiveness operates through stakeholder-mediated demand-resource configurations, which create measurable performance outcomes across various temporal contexts. When demands such as social isolation (Miglioretti *et al.*, 2022), work-family boundary conflicts (Hu *et al.*, 2022), and virtual meeting fatigue (Bennett *et al.*, 2021) exceed available resources, stakeholders experience stress and reduced performance. Conversely, resources including enhanced autonomy and time management capabilities (Afota *et al.*, 2022), digital competence (Jentjens and Cherbib, 2023), technological infrastructure support (Fortuna *et al.*, 2023), and virtual leadership quality (Gan *et al.*, 2022) enable stakeholders to achieve work goals while mitigating demand pressures.

Additionally, our research findings systematically illustrate the manifestation of stakeholder relationships as distinct job demands and resources across temporal contexts, thereby substantiating the dual categorization framework of the JD-R model (Bakker and Demerouti, 2016). For example, time pressures (Zhang *et al.*, 2021), high workload (Wilkinson *et al.*, 2022), role ambiguity (Hu *et al.*, 2022), and emotional labor (Evans *et al.*, 2021) emerged as intensified *individual-level demands*, while *organizational demands* manifested through work volume intensification and virtual meeting fatigue (Bennett *et al.*, 2021). Conversely, autonomy (Chatterjee *et al.*, 2021), coaching and mentoring (Deole *et al.*, 2022), and learning opportunities (Carillo *et al.*, 2020) functioned as critical *individual and organizational resources* enabling telework effectiveness under transformed stakeholder conditions.

5.1 Teleworking and the pre-pandemic period

5.1.1 Main areas of research and thematic evolution of teleworking in the pre-pandemic. Pre-pandemic telework research reveals a progressive theoretical evolution toward implicit stakeholder recognition, advancing from technology-centric analyses to multi-dimensional frameworks that acknowledge competing interests. This evolution demonstrates how scholars have gradually recognized the effectiveness of telework as emerging from stakeholder relationship dynamics rather than isolated organizational or technological factors.

The theoretical trajectory of pre-pandemic research demonstrates three distinct phases of stakeholder recognition. Early investigations focused on technological determinism

Table 2. Facilitators and inhibitors by period and authors

Period	Description	Author(s) and year
<i>Individual facilitators</i>		
Before COVID-19	Worker autonomy	Delanoeije and Verbruggen (2020), O'Neill <i>et al.</i> (2009), Hornung <i>et al.</i> (2008), Raghuram <i>et al.</i> (2003)
	Well-being at work	Müller and Niessen (2019), Wheatley (2012), Golden and Veiga (2008), Golden and Veiga (2005), Guimaraes and Dallow (1999)
	Greater participation in family life	Anderson <i>et al.</i> (2015), Kossek <i>et al.</i> (2006), Barsness <i>et al.</i> (2005)
During/After COVID-19	Greater flexibility	Chatterjee <i>et al.</i> (2021)
	Higher performance	Ameen <i>et al.</i> (2023), Gan <i>et al.</i> (2022)
	Better goal setting	Deole <i>et al.</i> (2022)
	Better performance evaluation when the supervisor also teleworks	Lott and Abendroth (2023), Park and Cho (2020)
	Greater autonomy and better time management	Afota <i>et al.</i> (2022), Vanderstukken <i>et al.</i> (2021)
	Greater concentration to carry out more complex work	Bailey <i>et al.</i> (2022), Loignon <i>et al.</i> (2022)
	Best for those with individual resources (proactivity, digital skills, commitment to change)	Jentjens and Cherbib (2023), Wu <i>et al.</i> (2021)
<i>Individual inhibitors</i>		
Before COVID-19	Professional insulation	Gajendran <i>et al.</i> (2014), Golden <i>et al.</i> (2008), Staples <i>et al.</i> (2006)
	Excessive working hours	Suh and Lee (2017), Holland <i>et al.</i> (2016), Redman <i>et al.</i> (2009), Golden (2006), Olson (1989)
During/After COVID-19	Difficulty reconciling professional and personal life	Golden and Gajendran (2019), Hill <i>et al.</i> (2003)
	Little social connection	Miglioretti <i>et al.</i> (2022), Shockley <i>et al.</i> (2021a, b)
	Distractions, anxiety, depression, stress	Czura <i>et al.</i> (2022), Fischer <i>et al.</i> (2022), Spilker and Breugh (2021)
	Low motivation	Van Zoonen and Sivunen (2021), Hafermalz and Riemer (2020)
	Ergonomic difficulties	Shockley <i>et al.</i> (2021)
	Uncertainties regarding work	Parra <i>et al.</i> (2022), Venkatesh <i>et al.</i> (2021)
	Work-family conflict	Hu <i>et al.</i> (2022)
	Lack of specificities regarding the professional trajectory of teleworkers	Tavoletti <i>et al.</i> (2022)
	Negative affect and possibility of technostress	Evans <i>et al.</i> (2021)
	Women reported a greater increase in interruptions, particularly concerning non-professional interruptions	Oladipo <i>et al.</i> (2023)
Lack of own workspace when at home	Chong <i>et al.</i> (2020)	
Personal requirements (gender, number of children and age)	Li <i>et al.</i> (2023), Jackowska and Lauring (2021), Shockley <i>et al.</i> (2021a, b)	
Low perception of peer support for virtual work	Ajzen and Taskin (2021), Kroell <i>et al.</i> (2021), Leroy <i>et al.</i> (2021)	

(continued)

Table 2. Continued

Period	Description	Author(s) and year
<i>Organizational facilitators</i>		
Before COVID-19	Organization support and support	Kaplan <i>et al.</i> (2017), Rockmann and Pratt (2015), Golden and Raghuram (2010), Lautsch <i>et al.</i> (2009), Elsbach and Bechky (2007), Pérez Pérez <i>et al.</i> (2003), Kurland and Egan (1999)
	Support work tools	Neirotti <i>et al.</i> (2012, 2013), Lee <i>et al.</i> (2007), Martínez-Sánchez <i>et al.</i> (2007), Wegge <i>et al.</i> (2007), Workman <i>et al.</i> (2003), Wright and Burns (1997)
During/After COVID-19	Organizational technological support Training Knowledge sharing Greater interaction due to good leaders	Fortuna <i>et al.</i> (2023) Carillo <i>et al.</i> (2020) Lewis <i>et al.</i> (2023), Tønnessen <i>et al.</i> (2021) Mullins <i>et al.</i> (2022)
<i>Organizational inhibitors</i>		
Before COVID-19	Absence or inefficiency of organizational norms and routines Little communication with the organization and co-workers	Charbonneau and Doberstein (2020), Peters <i>et al.</i> (2016), Fairweather (1999) van der Lippe and Lippényi (2020), Raghuram and Fang (2013), Vayre and Pignault (2014) Wilkinson <i>et al.</i> (2022)
During/After COVID-19	Work volume Payment for overtime worked Many virtual meetings Organizational climate Little organizational awareness of worker effort	Zhang <i>et al.</i> (2021) Straus <i>et al.</i> (2022), Bennett <i>et al.</i> (2021) Zheng <i>et al.</i> (2023), Adamovic <i>et al.</i> (2021) Ge <i>et al.</i> (2022)
Source(s): Prepared by the authors		

(Olson, 1989), progressing to organizational resource perspectives (Staples *et al.*, 2006), and ultimately embracing multi-stakeholder complexity. This evolution reflects the instrumental dimension of stakeholder theory, where scholars began examining “linkages postulated in the instrumental thesis” between relationship management and performance outcomes (Freeman, 1999, p. 235).

The predominance of family-related research themes (e.g. Golden, 2011; Hornung *et al.*, 2008) signals the earliest theoretical recognition that telework effectiveness requires systematic attention to non-organizational stakeholders. We argue this represents a fundamental shift from traditional organizational behavior paradigms toward stakeholder-inclusive frameworks, reinforcing Freeman’s (1984) foundational insight that organizations depend on managing relationships with multiple stakeholders.

The emergence of individual-level research reflects theoretical recognition that employees function as stakeholders with distinct interests that may align or conflict with organizational objectives. Research evolution from simple individual differences (Golden and Veiga, 2005) to complex stakeholder negotiations (Hornung *et al.*, 2008) demonstrates theoretical advancement toward understanding telework as inherently relational. We claim that this theoretical evolution lays the groundwork for understanding how COVID-19 fundamentally restructured stakeholder configurations, transforming implicit stakeholder recognition into explicit, multi-stakeholder negotiations that necessitated theoretical reconceptualization.

5.1.2 Facilitators and inhibitors associated with teleworking in the pre-pandemic period. Pre-pandemic empirical evidence reveals specific boundary conditions that determine the effectiveness of telework concerning stakeholder configurations. These facilitators and

Table 3. Research themes by factor and time

Period	Factor	Main themes	
1989–1999	Organizational	Attitudes and performance in teleworking; distributive justice; organizational programs and policies	
	Individual	Self-efficacy and behavioral consequences	
	Technological	Technological monitoring and privacy	
2000–2009	Organizational	Adoption of teleworking; impact on commitment and turnover; management practices and performance	
	Individual	Profile of teleworkers; burnout; personality traits and motivation	
	Family	Work-family conflicts; self-management of limits	
2010–2019	Technological	Work contracts; access to knowledge	
	Organizational	Managerial trust; role of the organizational and cultural context	
	Individual	Knowledge sharing; gender differences; reorganization of relationships	
	Family	Family conflicts and the mediating role of teleworking	
2020–2023	Technological	Technologies as stress inducers (technostress)	
		Work	Technological practices and environmental context; relationship between work characteristics and performance
		Organizational	The impact of teleworking policies and flexible practices on organizational attractiveness
	Individual	Organizational adjustment to teleworking	
		Organizational resilience	
		Remote supervision and managerial trust	
		Organizational strategies such as rotation and monitoring	
		The impact of teleworking on the productivity and performance of companies (including SMEs)	
		Leadership support and organizational policy	
		Emotional exhaustion, loneliness and burnout	
Gender patterns in work-family balance			
Work	Authenticity, engagement and self-regulation in the home office		
	Individual perceptions of the future of teleworking		
	Personality types and adaptation		
Technological	Dynamics of daily well-being and personal/professional life		
	Effects of virtual meetings (e.g. camera use, fatigue)		
	Characteristics of distributed working practices and mobility		
	Self-efficacy in virtual work and organizational climate		
Family	Communication expectations and effectiveness of virtual groups		
	Digital sharing and use of ICTs		
	Characteristics of videoconferencing related to fatigue		
Work	Impact of technologies on the perception of isolation		
	Integration between personal and professional life (also dealt with within the individual factor)		

Source(s): Prepared by the authors

inhibitors function as measurable mediators between stakeholder management and performance outcomes, operationalizing the instrumental dimension of stakeholder theory within the JD-R model.

Individual-level facilitators demonstrate how employee stakeholders contribute personal resources that enable telework effectiveness. [Raghuram et al. \(2003\)](#) found that worker self-efficacy and cognitive preferences act as personal resources that mediate the relationship between organizational support and telework success. [Golden and Veiga \(2005\)](#) demonstrated that worker autonomy enables optimal telework arrangements when balanced with appropriate intensity levels, a finding further validated by [Hornung et al. \(2008\)](#) through their examination of idiosyncratic deals that allow employees to negotiate customized work arrangements. [O'Neill et al. \(2009\)](#) extended these insights by identifying personality characteristics and

motivational factors as predictors of telework success, while [Delanoëje and Verbruggen \(2020\)](#) confirmed that worker autonomy functions as a critical resource for managing telework demands effectively.

Well-being at work constituted another significant individual-level facilitator. [Guimaraes and Dallow \(1999\)](#) documented early evidence of telework's potential for enhancing worker satisfaction through reduced commuting stress and increased flexibility. [Golden and Veiga \(2005, 2008\)](#) systematically examined how telework intensity affects job satisfaction, revealing curvilinear relationships where moderate telework levels optimize well-being outcomes. [Wheatley \(2012\)](#) demonstrated that telework arrangements contribute to improved work-life balance when properly structured. These findings were corroborated by [Müller and Niessen \(2019\)](#), who showed that self-leadership capabilities enable teleworkers to maintain psychological well-being while working remotely.

Greater participation in family life emerged as a distinctive individual-level facilitator. [Barsness et al. \(2005\)](#) identified how remote work arrangements enable workers to manage family responsibilities more effectively, while [Kossek et al. \(2006\)](#) demonstrated that telework boundary management strategies facilitate work-family integration. [Anderson et al. \(2015\)](#) confirmed that family participation opportunities serve as motivational resources that enhance telework satisfaction and performance.

Individual-level inhibitors revealed the psychological and behavioral challenges inherent in remote work arrangements. [Staples et al. \(2006\)](#) identified professional isolation as a fundamental challenge requiring organizational intervention through technology-enabled connections. [Golden et al. \(2008\)](#) systematically examined how professional isolation affects teleworker performance and organizational commitment, demonstrating that face-to-face interaction opportunities and communication-enhancing technologies serve as critical mitigation strategies. [Gajendran et al. \(2014\)](#) extended these findings by showing how isolation affects citizenship behaviors and performance outcomes.

Excessive working hours emerged as a persistent individual-level inhibitor. [Olson \(1989\)](#) provided early documentation of teleworkers' tendency toward overwork due to blurred work-home boundaries. [Golden \(2006\)](#) demonstrated how work exhaustion mediates the relationship between telework intensity and commitment, while [Redman et al. \(2009\)](#) identified high-involvement work systems as potential contributors to telework intensification. [Holland et al. \(2016\)](#) and [Suh and Lee \(2017\)](#) confirmed that excessive work hours function as demands that deplete teleworkers' resources and reduce satisfaction.

Difficulty reconciling professional and personal life constituted the third individual-level inhibitor. [Hill et al. \(2003\)](#) compared work venues and identified unique challenges in managing work-family boundaries in home-based telework arrangements. [Golden and Gajendran \(2019\)](#) demonstrated how task characteristics interact with work-family integration challenges to affect telework outcomes.

Organizational-level facilitators reveal how management stakeholders provide structural resources that create enabling conditions for remote work success. [Kurland and Egan \(1999\)](#) established that organizational justice perceptions and managerial control approaches significantly influence telework outcomes. [Pérez Pérez et al. \(2003\)](#) revealed that organizational culture and managerial attitudes toward telework create either enabling or constraining conditions for the adoption of remote work. [Elsbach and Bechky \(2007\)](#) demonstrated how organizational design principles can support distributed work arrangements, while [Lautsch et al. \(2009\)](#) showed that supervisory approaches emphasizing information-sharing rather than direct oversight enhance teleworker performance and reduce work-family conflicts. [Golden and Raghuram \(2010\)](#) identified how organizational knowledge-sharing mechanisms function as resources that enable telework effectiveness. This finding was extended by [Rockmann and Pratt \(2015\)](#) and [Kaplan et al. \(2017\)](#), who examined organizational trust and managerial decision-making processes governing telework authorization.

Support work tools constituted the second category of organizational-level facilitators. Wright and Burns (1997) provided early evidence of the technological infrastructure requirements supporting distributed work arrangements. Workman *et al.* (2003) and Wegge *et al.* (2007) demonstrated how communication technologies enable effective remote collaboration, while Martínez-Sánchez *et al.* (2007) provided empirical evidence linking technological support to telework performance outcomes. Neirotti *et al.* (2012, 2013) systematically examined how technological capabilities function as organizational resources enabling telework adoption and effectiveness.

Organizational-level inhibitors reflected systematic deficiencies in supporting remote work arrangements. Fairweather (1999) identified surveillance and control issues as fundamental organizational challenges in telework implementation. Peters *et al.* (2016) demonstrated how inadequate organizational policies and practices create barriers to effective telework adoption. These findings were confirmed by Charbonneau and Doberstein (2020), who examined how organizational norm deficiencies affect telework outcomes.

Communication deficiencies with organizations and co-workers represented the second organizational-level inhibitor category. Vayre and Pignault (2014) employed a systemic approach to examine how communication breakdowns affect teleworker relationships and performance. Raghuram and Fang (2013) identified supervisory power dynamics as barriers to effective telework communication, while van der Lippe and Lippényi (2020) demonstrated how reduced co-worker interaction affects individual and team performance outcomes.

In summary, the pre-pandemic facilitators and inhibitors reflect the JD-R model's dual-process framework (Bakker and Demerouti, 2016). Individual-level facilitators, such as worker autonomy, well-being, and family participation, function as personal resources that initiate motivational processes, enabling teleworkers to achieve work goals while managing potential stressors. Organizational-level facilitators, including support mechanisms and technological tools, serve as job resources that mitigate demands and encourage engagement. Conversely, individual-level inhibitors like isolation, excessive hours, and work-family conflicts operate as job demands that require sustained effort and create psychological costs. Organizational-level inhibitors, such as inadequate norms and communication deficiencies, represent structural demands that hinder resource acquisition and utilization. This illustrates how stakeholder relationships in telework contexts create measurable boundary conditions that determine whether remote work arrangements succeed or fail through their influence on demand-resource configurations. These empirical boundary conditions establish baseline stakeholder relationship patterns that COVID-19 fundamentally disrupted, requiring systematic examination of how crisis periods restructure the demand-resource configurations that determine telework outcomes.

5.2 The impact of teleworking during and after COVID-19

5.2.1 *Main fields of research and thematic evolution during/post pandemic period.* The COVID-19 pandemic catalyzed a fundamental paradigmatic shift in telework research, transforming scholarly inquiry from voluntary work arrangement studies into mandatory multi-stakeholder negotiation analyses. We argue that this transformation illustrates how exogenous shocks restructure the instrumental relationships between organizational stakeholders, necessitating a systematic examination of how crisis periods alter performance-determining mechanisms. The distinction between the “during” and “post-pandemic” periods presents a significant challenge in studying remote work and labor reorganizations resulting from COVID-19 exogenous shock. This transition varies across sectors, countries, and institutions (Vestal and Bosak, 2023). The “post-pandemic” phase is not a clear break, but rather a time of ongoing reconfigurations, with hybrid models and new norms of flexibility being continuously debated (Parker *et al.*, 2022). The terms “during” and “post-pandemic” serve an organizational purpose without implying strict chronological boundaries.

This ambiguity reflects the empirical reality being analyzed, as the pandemic has created a prolonged transitional state where the lines between exceptional and normal remain blurred (Spicer *et al.*, 2021).

We identify three distinct phases of analytical sophistication in the research trajectory during and post-pandemic periods. Emergency implementation studies focused on immediate organizational adaptations and crisis management responses (Carillo *et al.*, 2020; Chong *et al.*, 2020). Research on the stabilization period progressed toward systematic stakeholder interdependence analyses, examining how different organizational actors negotiated competing demands under sustained remote work conditions (Gan *et al.*, 2022; Venkatesh *et al.*, 2021). In this consolidation phase, investigations employed comprehensive, multi-stakeholder performance frameworks, recognizing that telework effectiveness emerges from complex stakeholder ecosystem interactions rather than isolated organizational interventions (Fortuna *et al.*, 2023; Li *et al.*, 2023).

We observe that the emergence of combined factor research themes represents a methodological acknowledgment that pandemic-induced telework requires simultaneous attention to organizational infrastructure, individual capabilities, family dynamics, and technological resources. The dominance of individual-level research reflects the scholarly recognition that employee psychological safety, digital competence, and work-family boundary management have become critical performance determinants under crisis conditions (Fischer *et al.*, 2022; Adamovic *et al.*, 2021; Hu *et al.*, 2022). We note that organizational-level investigations concentrated on virtual leadership capabilities, technological infrastructure adequacy, and policy framework adaptations necessary for sustained remote work effectiveness.

We claim that this research evolution reveals how pandemic conditions have exposed the inadequacy of traditional telework frameworks, which are predicated on voluntary arrangements and stable stakeholder relationships. The necessity for rapid organizational transformation forced explicit recognition of telework as inherently relational, requiring continuous stakeholder negotiation rather than simple policy implementation. We argue that this paradigmatic shift establishes the foundation for understanding contemporary telework as a complex organizational phenomenon demanding sophisticated theoretical frameworks capable of capturing multi-stakeholder dynamics under conditions of systemic uncertainty.

5.2.2 Positive and negative antecedents associated with teleworking during/post-pandemic period. The pandemic period fundamentally reconfigured stakeholder power dynamics, creating novel boundary conditions that determine the effectiveness of telework through transformed demand-resource relationships. We argue that these facilitators and inhibitors operationalize how crisis-induced stakeholder negotiations manifest as measurable performance determinants within the instrumental dimension of stakeholder theory.

Individual-level facilitators reveal how employee stakeholders leveraged enhanced personal resources to navigate the transition to mandatory remote work. Enhanced autonomy and time management capabilities enabled complex work-family integration (Afoa *et al.*, 2022; Vanderstukken *et al.*, 2021), while superior concentration abilities for complex tasks emerged as critical personal resources (Bailey *et al.*, 2022). We observe that digital competence, including proactivity and technological adaptability, has become a fundamental individual resource distinguishing successful pandemic teleworkers (Jentjens and Cherbib, 2023). These findings demonstrate how crisis periods amplify specific personal resource categories while simultaneously creating new resource requirements absent in voluntary telework arrangements.

Individual-level inhibitors intensified as stakeholder interests conflicted within domestic environments. Social isolation emerged as a pervasive demand requiring sustained psychological effort (Miglioretti *et al.*, 2022), while anxiety, depression, and stress functioned as resource-depleting individual demands (Fischer *et al.*, 2022). We contend that work-family boundary conflicts represent the most complex individual-level inhibitors, particularly affecting dual-earner couples and parents managing children's educational needs

(Hu *et al.*, 2022; Li *et al.*, 2023). Professional trajectory uncertainties further complicated individual demand management as traditional career development mechanisms became unavailable (Tavoletti *et al.*, 2022).

Organizational-level facilitators demonstrate how management stakeholders provide resources during crisis conditions. Technological infrastructure support and comprehensive training programs have become essential organizational resources, enabling smooth transitions during pandemics (Fortuna *et al.*, 2023; Carillo *et al.*, 2020). We identify enhanced leadership quality and knowledge sharing mechanisms as critical organizational resources, with managers adapting supervision approaches to virtual environments (Lewis *et al.*, 2023; Gan *et al.*, 2022). Organizational flexibility, including performance evaluation adaptations when supervisors also teleworked, created additional structural resources that supported the effectiveness of distributed work (Lott and Abendroth, 2023).

Organizational-level inhibitors reflected systematic deficiencies in crisis management capabilities. Work volume intensification created primary organizational demands (Wilkinson *et al.*, 2022), while excessive virtual meetings and a deteriorated organizational climate functioned as structural demands that depleted collective resources (Bennett *et al.*, 2021; Zheng *et al.*, 2023). We argue that limited organizational awareness of individual worker effort represents a fundamental failure in stakeholder relationships, creating additional demands through inadequate support provision (Ge *et al.*, 2022).

The pandemic transformation reveals dynamic interactions between facilitator and inhibitor categories that distinguish crisis-induced telework from voluntary arrangements. Individual digital competence facilitators become essential when organizational technological support is inadequate, while family-related inhibitors intensify organizational demand pressures, requiring enhanced managerial resources. We conclude that these interdependencies demonstrate how crisis periods create complex stakeholder ecosystem negotiations where traditional demand-resource boundaries dissolve, requiring sophisticated relationship management approaches that simultaneously address competing stakeholder interests while maintaining performance effectiveness under fundamentally altered boundary conditions.

6. Analytical framework

To facilitate the understanding of our analysis, we bring Figure 4 and Table 4. They provide a compilation and a visual representation of our systematic findings, synthesizing the instrumental dimension of stakeholder theory with the JD-R model to operationalize how stakeholder relationship management creates measurable boundary conditions that determine the effectiveness of telework performance across the pandemic contexts. This integration advances contemporary stakeholder scholarship by demonstrating how competing stakeholder interests manifest as specific demand-resource configurations that mediate performance outcomes.

Stakeholder relationships operate through three interconnected theoretical mechanisms, as illustrated in the framework. First, stakeholder categories encompass organizational stakeholders (e.g. leaders, managers, Human Resource – HR, and IT departments) and individual stakeholders (e.g. employees, families, and technology users), each contributing distinct demands and resources that shape telework effectiveness (Caligiuri *et al.*, 2020; Wang *et al.*, 2021). Second, the JD-R model explains how stakeholder-derived demands initiate health-impairment processes through exhaustion and stress, while stakeholder-provided resources trigger motivational processes through engagement and well-being (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007; Straus *et al.*, 2022). Third, personal resources, including self-efficacy, optimism, and digital competence, serve as mediating mechanisms that enhance an individual's capacity to leverage organizational resources while mitigating demand pressures (Adamovic *et al.*, 2021; Jentjens and Cherbib, 2023).

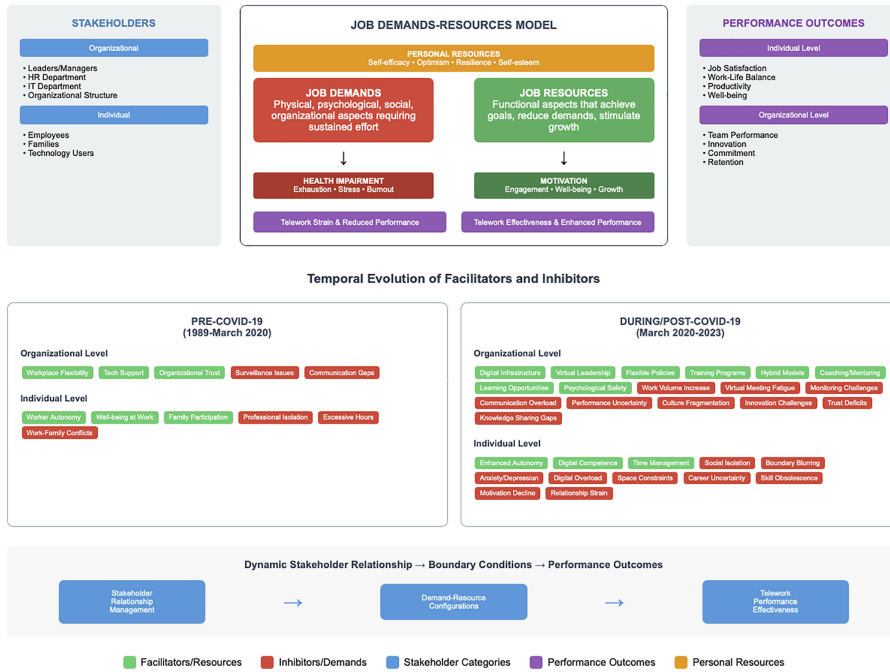


Figure 4. Analysis model. Prepared by the authors

The temporal evolution component reveals how COVID-19 fundamentally restructured stakeholder power dynamics, transforming pre-pandemic configurations involving five facilitators and inhibitors into complex arrangements during and post-pandemic, encompassing eleven facilitators and eighteen inhibitors. We consolidate the during and post-pandemic periods because the effects of this exogenous shock continue to influence organizational practices as governments and companies remain engaged in determining optimal telework implementation strategies (Fortuna *et al.*, 2023; Zheng *et al.*, 2023). This ongoing transformation demonstrates how crisis-induced stakeholder reconfigurations require sustained theoretical attention rather than discrete temporal analysis.

The framework explicitly acknowledges that the effectiveness of telework operates through contextual contingencies rather than universal principles. Industry characteristics, organizational size, cultural dimensions, and individual intersectional conditions create boundary conditions that moderate stakeholder demand-resource relationships (Fischer *et al.*, 2022; Tavoletti *et al.*, 2022). Consequently, rather than seeking universal solutions, organizations can identify and create compilations of best practices that require adaptation to the singularities of each specific case, recognizing that effective stakeholder management strategies must be contextually calibrated.

The dynamic stakeholder relationship pathway illustrates how effective stakeholder relationship management creates optimal demand-resource configurations that enhance telework performance effectiveness across individual and organizational levels. Individual-level outcomes include job satisfaction, work-life balance, productivity, and well-being (Golden and Veiga, 2008; Miglioretti *et al.*, 2022), while organizational-level outcomes encompass team performance, innovation, flexibility, and retention (Gan *et al.*, 2022; Bennett *et al.*, 2021). This pathway operationalizes Donaldson and Preston's (1995) instrumental proposition that organizations practicing superior stakeholder management achieve enhanced

Table 4. Stakeholder-driven telework performance: an integrated framework of demands and resources across COVID-19 periods

Stakeholder	Period	Job demands	Job resources	Mechanism	Performance outcome
<i>Organizational stakeholders</i>					
Leadership and Management	Pre-COVID-19	Establishing remote supervision protocols (Kurland and Egan, 1999); Managing distributed performance evaluation (Golden and Veiga, 2008)	Managerial trust development (Kaplan <i>et al.</i> , 2017); Organizational justice provision (Rockmann and Pratt, 2015)	Resource substitution: Leadership resources compensate for reduced face-to-face interaction demands	Enhanced employee commitment and performance quality
	During/Post-COVID-19	Virtual leadership capability development (Gan <i>et al.</i> , 2022); Crisis-induced organizational restructuring (Zheng <i>et al.</i> , 2023)	Psychological safety provision (Fischer <i>et al.</i> , 2022); Enhanced digital leadership competencies (Mullins <i>et al.</i> , 2022)	Resource amplification: Crisis context intensifies leadership resource provision necessity	Organizational resilience and adaptive capacity
Human Resources and IT Departments	Pre-COVID-19	Technology infrastructure maintenance (Martínez-Sánchez <i>et al.</i> , 2007); Policy framework development (Peters <i>et al.</i> , 2016)	Technological support systems (Neirotti <i>et al.</i> , 2013); Training program implementation (Wegge <i>et al.</i> , 2007)	Demand mitigation: Organizational resources reduce technological and administrative demands	Technological readiness and policy compliance
	During/Post-COVID-19	Rapid digital transformation implementation (Fortuna <i>et al.</i> , 2023); Virtual meeting coordination demands (Bennett <i>et al.</i> , 2021)	Comprehensive training provision (Carillo <i>et al.</i> , 2020); Advanced technological infrastructure (Lewis <i>et al.</i> , 2023)	Resource mobilization: Emergency conditions activate latent organizational resource capabilities	Digital competence enhancement and operational continuity
<i>Individual stakeholders</i>					
Employees	Pre-COVID-19	Professional isolation management (Gajendran <i>et al.</i> , 2014); Work-family boundary regulation (Hill <i>et al.</i> , 2003); Excessive work hour pressures (Golden, 2006)	Worker autonomy exercise (Delanoije and Verbruggen, 2020); Self-efficacy development (Raghuram <i>et al.</i> , 2003); Well-being maintenance strategies (Wheatley, 2012)	Personal resource conservation: Individual resources buffer against isolation and boundary demands	Job satisfaction, work-life balance, and performance sustainability
	During/Post-COVID-19	Virtual meeting fatigue (Shockley <i>et al.</i> , 2021a, b); Social connection deficits (Miglioretti <i>et al.</i> , 2022); Technostress and digital overwhelm (Evans <i>et al.</i> , 2021)	Enhanced digital competence (Jentjens and Cherbib, 2023); Improved time management capabilities (Afota <i>et al.</i> , 2022); Greater work concentration abilities (Bailey <i>et al.</i> , 2022)	Resource adaptation: Crisis-induced resource development enables demand management under uncertainty	Individual resilience and performance optimization

(continued)

Table 4. Continued

Stakeholder	Period	Job demands	Job resources	Mechanism	Performance outcome
Family Members	Pre-COVID-19	Household space reconfiguration demands (Anderson <i>et al.</i> , 2015); Work-family integration pressures (Kossek <i>et al.</i> , 2006)	Family participation opportunities (Barsness <i>et al.</i> , 2005); Household flexibility provision	Boundary permeability: Family resources enable work-home integration while managing spatial demands	Enhanced family cohesion and work-family balance
	During/Post-COVID-19	Home-schooling coordination demands (Li <i>et al.</i> , 2023); Gendered interruption management (Oladipo <i>et al.</i> , 2023); Domestic workspace competition (Chong <i>et al.</i> , 2020)	Household technological capability sharing; Family support system activation (Hu <i>et al.</i> , 2022)	Resource redistribution: Family unit reorganizes resources to accommodate intensive home-based work demands	Family adaptation and collective well-being maintenance
<i>Technology stakeholders</i>					
ICT Infrastructure Providers	Pre-COVID-19	System reliability maintenance demands (Wright and Burns, 1997); Security protocol implementation requirements	Stable connectivity provision; User interface simplification	Technical mediation: Technology resources reduce communication and coordination demands	Seamless virtual collaboration
	During/Post-COVID-19	Massive scale-up capacity demands (Tønnessen <i>et al.</i> , 2021); Platform integration complexity management	Advanced collaboration platform provision; AI-enhanced communication tools	Resource scalability: Technology resources expand to meet unprecedented demand volumes	Technological infrastructure resilience
<i>Regulatory stakeholders</i>					
Government and Policy Bodies	Pre-COVID-19	Labor regulation compliance demands; Workplace safety standard maintenance	Legal framework provision for flexible work arrangements	Institutional legitimation: Regulatory resources provide legal foundation for telework adoption	Regulatory compliance and worker protection
	During/Post-COVID-19	Public health protocol implementation; Economic stability maintenance demands	Emergency telework legislation; Financial support for digital transition	Crisis governance: Regulatory resources enable rapid organizational adaptation while maintaining worker rights	Societal resilience and economic continuity

Source(s): Prepared by the authors

performance outcomes, while simultaneously incorporating Bakker and Demerouti's (2016) mechanism through which demand-resource balance determines individual and collective effectiveness.

7. Theoretical and managerial implications

7.1 Theoretical implications

Our study presents a pioneering systematic integration of stakeholder theory with the JD-R model for telework analysis, addressing critical theoretical gaps that persist in the existing

literature while providing a comprehensive model that captures the multifaceted reality of telework implementation across organizational stakeholder networks. Our theoretical contributions advance three interconnected literature streams through innovation and incremental empirical contribution. Our stakeholder theory integration addresses the fundamental gaps in the telework literature's individualistic orientation. Our multilevel-temporal JD-R extension advances the literature toward a dynamic, cross-level understanding. Our integrated human resource management (HRM) systems approach demonstrates how stakeholder complexity shapes talent management in contemporary telework arrangements.

Our stakeholder theory integration addresses fundamental gaps in the telework literature's individualistic orientation by recognizing that existing research systematically privileges single-constituency perspectives rather than examining the complex web of interdependent interests that telework arrangements create. Previous systematic reviews exemplify this theoretical limitation through their exclusive focus on either employee-centered outcomes (Beckel and Fisher, 2022) or organization-centered performance metrics (Athanasiadou and Theriou, 2021), as shown in studies that analyze productivity gains and cost reductions while ignoring employee well-being and family spillover effects (Choudhury *et al.*, 2022). Our framework transcends this false dichotomy by applying the instrumental dimension of stakeholder theory (Donaldson and Preston, 1995; Freeman, 1999) to demonstrate that telework arrangements simultaneously create value and impose costs across multiple constituencies whose interests are inherently interdependent rather than independently optimizable. While existing research has established that telework enhances employee autonomy (Awada *et al.*, 2021) and reduces organizational real estate costs (Allen *et al.*, 2015), our stakeholder analysis reveals that these apparent benefits generate previously unexamined trade-offs, such as increased emotional labor for family members managing home-workspace boundaries and heightened coordination demands for team colleagues adapting to virtual collaboration requirements. Our theoretical contribution lies in developing a comprehensive analytical framework that explains how telework's demand-resource configurations operate across stakeholder networks, enabling understanding of implementation strategies that optimize collective stakeholder value rather than maximizing single-constituency outcomes at the expense of other legitimate interests.

Our application of the JD-R model to systematically analyze telework facilitators and inhibitors reveals profound, multilevel, and temporal transformations that the existing SLR has failed to capture comprehensively. The evolution from the five facilitators and five inhibitors in pre-pandemic research to eleven facilitators and eighteen inhibitors during/post COVID-19 demonstrates how exogenous shocks fundamentally restructure stakeholder demand-resource configurations across organizational levels. Pre-pandemic facilitators centered on individual-level job resources such as workplace flexibility and autonomy (Golden and Veiga, 2005; Hornung *et al.*, 2008), while organizational-level resources focused on technological readiness and managerial trust (Kurland and Egan, 1999; Golden and Raghuram, 2010). The pandemic period witnessed the emergence of complex multilevel demands, including virtual meeting fatigue and boundary blurring (Bennett *et al.*, 2021; Hu *et al.*, 2022), alongside sophisticated organizational resources such as virtual leadership capabilities and psychological safety provision (Gan *et al.*, 2022; Fischer *et al.*, 2022). This transformation reveals that crisis-induced telework required simultaneous attention to individual psychological demands (e.g. social isolation, digital competence), team-level coordination resources (e.g. communication technologies, collaborative processes), and organizational-level support systems (e.g. policy frameworks, technological infrastructure), demonstrating how stakeholder interests create dynamic demand-resource interdependencies that evolve across multiple timeframes and organizational levels.

Our research advances HRM literature by transitioning the field from treating telework as an isolated work arrangement (Bondarouk and Brewster, 2016) toward understanding it as a fundamental component of integrated talent management systems that require sophisticated coordination across multiple HRM functions. While existing HRM frameworks approach

flexible work arrangements as discrete policies implemented through single functional areas (Allen *et al.*, 2015), our systematic analysis demonstrates that effective telework implementation necessitates coherent integration across recruitment strategies that assess virtual collaboration capabilities, performance management systems adapted for distributed supervision, and career development pathways that maintain advancement opportunities in hybrid environments. Our evidence-based approach extends beyond universal best practices (Opara, 2024) to support context-specific HRM architectures, acknowledging sector differences, variations in organizational size, and cultural contingencies that affect implementation success. The framework establishes new theoretical foundations for understanding how contemporary HRM systems must balance competing optimization criteria across recruitment efficiency, employee retention, productivity maintenance, and well-being enhancement within distributed work environments. This theoretical advancement positions HRM scholarship to address emerging challenges in talent management, where traditional assumptions about workplace proximity, supervision mechanisms, and organizational culture transmission require fundamental reconceptualization for achieving a sustainable competitive advantage in increasingly flexible organizational structures.

7.2 Managerial implications

This research provides HR managers with an evidence-based stakeholder framework for optimizing telework effectiveness by systematically enhancing individual and organizational performance. Our temporal analysis reveals that successful telework implementation emerges from strategic alignment between organizational resource provision and individual capability development within the stakeholder-JD-R integration framework.

7.2.1 Individual stakeholder development approaches. Our findings suggest that HR managers can enhance individual worker performance by developing personalized support frameworks that address digital competence, autonomy optimization, and work-life integration capabilities. Workers could achieve improved performance when targeted digital skill development programs, clear boundary management guidelines, and flexible work arrangements accommodate diverse personal circumstances (Adamovic *et al.*, 2021; Hu *et al.*, 2022).

HR managers can optimize individual performance by recognizing family stakeholders as active contributors to telework effectiveness, rather than potential impediments that require management. Workers may demonstrate enhanced productivity and well-being when family-inclusive policies provide childcare support, flexible scheduling options, and assistance with setting up a home office that acknowledges diverse family configurations across cultural contexts (Li *et al.*, 2023; Wilkinson *et al.*, 2022).

Individual capability enhancement strategies could benefit from addressing the psychological and social dimensions of remote work through structured virtual interaction opportunities, mental health support programs, and professional development initiatives that maintain career progression trajectories. Workers might achieve optimal performance when HR managers implement comprehensive support systems that mitigate isolation while enhancing digital competence and autonomous work capabilities (Miglioretti *et al.*, 2022; Fischer *et al.*, 2022).

7.2.2 Organizational stakeholder enhancement strategies. Our findings indicate that HR managers could enhance organizational performance by establishing a comprehensive technological infrastructure that simultaneously supports worker productivity and organizational efficiency. The research demonstrates that organizations can achieve superior telework outcomes when HR managers coordinate technological support systems, policy frameworks, and leadership development initiatives as integrated stakeholder resource configurations, rather than as isolated interventions (Golden and Raghuram, 2010; Fortuna *et al.*, 2023). Private sector contexts could benefit from adaptive performance management systems that capture the dynamics of remote work. In contrast, public sector environments

might require streamlined bureaucratic processes that facilitate virtual collaboration without compromising accountability requirements (Fischer *et al.*, 2022).

The emergence of virtual leadership capabilities as critical organizational resources suggests that HR managers can optimize organizational performance by developing leadership competencies focused on trust-building, providing psychological safety, and enhancing digital communication effectiveness. Organizations may demonstrate enhanced performance when leadership development programs address the unique challenges of remote supervision while maintaining team cohesion and individual motivation (Gan *et al.*, 2022; Jentjens and Cherbib, 2023). These leadership enhancement strategies prove particularly effective when HR managers establish regular feedback mechanisms and performance evaluation systems that capture both individual contributions and organizational outcomes within remote work contexts.

Organizational policy development might benefit from stakeholder-inclusive approaches that recognize interdependencies between technological capabilities, leadership support, and worker well-being. HR managers could achieve superior organizational performance by implementing systematic stakeholder assessment protocols that monitor both resource adequacy and demand management across different organizational levels (Bennett *et al.*, 2021; Zheng *et al.*, 2023).

7.2.3 Contextual performance optimization. The evidence suggests that HR managers could achieve enhanced individual and organizational performance through sector-specific implementation approaches that leverage contextual advantages while addressing inherent constraints. Private sector contexts can optimize performance by emphasizing innovation facilitation and creating a competitive advantage through superior stakeholder relationship management. Public sector implementations should demonstrate effectiveness when service quality, maintenance, and equity promotion combine with transparent accountability mechanisms.

International contexts require HR managers to adapt stakeholder enhancement strategies to local regulatory environments, cultural expectations, and technological infrastructure capabilities. Our stakeholder-JD-R framework provides empirical guidance for creating sustainable telework arrangements that might simultaneously optimize individual worker performance and organizational effectiveness across diverse operational contexts.

8. Limitations and future research

This research entails both implications and limitations. Our systematic search strategy, although comprehensive across the Web of Science and SCOPUS databases, focused primarily on analyzing papers published in high-ranked journals. The search equation omitted terms that used different wording for remote work arrangements. Additionally, the focus on English-language publications introduces cultural and geographical biases that limit the understanding of telework stakeholder relationships across international contexts that do not publish in English. Future research should address these limitations.

Beyond addressing the constraints of this study, future research presents substantial opportunities for theoretical integration through the systematic application of complementary theoretical lenses within stakeholder frameworks. The integration of self-determination theory (Ryan and Deci, 2000) with stakeholder perspectives offers promising avenues for investigating how leaders' responsibility for intrinsic motivation translates into stakeholder resource provision, particularly by examining how autonomy functions simultaneously as both an individual resource and an organizational stakeholder demand. Social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) applications within stakeholder frameworks require empirical investigation of how reciprocal relationship development between organizational stakeholders might create sustainable support systems that function as social resources within the JD-R model. Work-life boundary theory (Clark, 2000) integration presents opportunities for examining family stakeholders as active participants in telework effectiveness, rather than as passive recipients

of work spillover effects, and for investigating how boundary management strategies create either stakeholder conflicts or balanced demand-resource configurations. Technological acceptance theory (Davis, 1989) offers research potential for understanding how technology user stakeholders influence infrastructure resource-demand calculations, particularly examining how acceptance processes vary across different stakeholder power configurations during organizational transformation periods. These theoretical integrations would advance understanding of the complex mechanisms through which stakeholder relationships create measurable boundary conditions for telework effectiveness.

9. Conclusion

This systematic review demonstrates that effective telework emerges from strategic stakeholder relationship management rather than isolated organizational policies, with COVID-19 fundamentally transforming the phenomenon by intensifying stakeholder interdependencies and creating novel demand-resource configurations. Our integration of stakeholder theory with the Job Demands-Resources model advances theoretical understanding of how competing stakeholder interests create measurable boundary conditions for organizational effectiveness while providing HRM managers with an evidence-based framework for optimizing telework arrangements. Therefore, we assert that organizations recognizing telework as an inherently relational phenomenon that requires sophisticated stakeholder management can achieve superior performance outcomes, positioning themselves advantageously for future workplace transformations in increasingly distributed work environments.

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Credit authorship contribution statement

Isabel C. P. Marques: Conceptualization; *Isabel C. P. Marques and Raysa Geaquinto*: Formal analysis; *Sónia P. Gonçalves and Fernanda Nogueira*: Acquisition of funding; *Isabel C. P. Marques*: Methodology; *Raysa Geaquinto*: Software; *Sónia P. Gonçalves and Rosária Ramos*: Supervision; *Isabel C. P. Marques and Fernanda Nogueira*: Functions/Writing – original draft; *Isabel C. P. Marques, Sónia P. Gonçalves and Rosária Ramos*: Writing – revision and editing.

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Notes

1. We acknowledge the conceptual evolution and increasing differentiation of flexible work arrangements, where distinct terminologies have acquired specific operational meanings (Taskin, 2025). For analytical coherence, we employ “telework” as an umbrella concept capturing the full spectrum of work arrangements where employees can carry their tasks where they want, e.g. remote work, home working, working from home, and telecommuting.

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