

Abstract

Orientation: The COVID-19 pandemic brought about an abrupt shift from on-site work to remote work. While some employees were ready for the shift and were positively impacted, many were not fully prepared to work from home which brought about increased levels of stress and emotional exhaustion as well as a disequilibrium in their work and home lives.

Research Purpose: The objective of this scoping review is to gain a more in-depth understanding of the impact that working from home had on the work-life balance of employees across the world during the COVID-19 pandemic. As remote and hybrid work are likely to remain options for some organisations in the future, it is important to identify the implications for work-life balance.

Research Design, Approach and Method: A scoping review was conducted and adhered to a methodological framework involving five stages that ranged from identifying the research questions and choosing suitable articles to review, to summarizing and reporting the results. The reporting section of this scoping review used the protocols of the preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses extension for Scoping Reviews (PRISMA-ScR). The seventeen articles included in this review were published between 2020 and 2022 and were collected for inclusion in this review between April 2022 and October 2022.

Preliminary Findings: Stress, gender differences, emotional exhaustion and alterations in working hours affected how employees working from home during the pandemic were able to establish work-life balance. It was seen that increased stress and emotional exhaustion had negative relationships with work-home balance. In terms of gender, the differing social roles and attitudes of men and women and what they perceived as important played an important role in how they were able to create a balance between their home and work lives. Alterations in working hours had differing results in how they influenced remotely working employees' work-life balance with some studies finding positive relationships and others negative.

Practical Implications: The findings shed light on the factors that influenced employees' work-life balance while working remotely during the COVID-19 Pandemic. They provided valuable insights into how employees were able to or struggled to establish a balance between their work and their personal life. This has implications for future hybrid and remote work for organisations.

Contributions: This review was done on literature from various industries involving a variety of demographics and provided more perspectives than those that have already been uncovered. Many variables including those that were not commonly studied in relation to work-life were highlighted which allows more focus on other potential antecedents, moderators and mediators of work-life balance that were not previously considered. This review has uncovered the gaps of and practical implications of previous studies which will potentially aid in the improvement of future research

Keywords: *COVID-19, Employees, Gender Differences, Pandemic, Remote Work, Stress, Work-Home balance*