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The Impacts of Remote Work on Employee Well-being and Gender Equality

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Abstract

Covid-19 lockdowns resurfaced the dynamics that influence the distribution of household duties and reinforced gender disparity due to the domestic roles of women. We analyzed the effects of remote work on work efficacy and satisfaction of employees in terms of gender equality in Turkey. The primary data gathered from the authors' survey have been compared to unique e-survey of Eurofound for Italy. The methodology of this research has displayed a regression analysis to find the impact of remote work on the remote workers of Turkey by using the data collected from our online survey. It has been found that the satisfaction and wellbeing of employees have been reduced by the effects of remote work. Women in comparison to men, in particular, have reported higher levels of work quality and efficacy while reporting lower levels of satisfaction during remote work period.

Keywords: remote work, gender inequality, well-being, work efficacy, Covid-19

JEL Codes: C1, J16, J28, I31

1. Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic has initiated a remote work period which has brought gender based issues in households to the surface. Women's domestic tasks are vital in patriarchal countries, like Turkey and Italy, which suggests that family members' responsibilities for housework and childcare are divided unequally favoring males over women. This study has aimed to illustrate the impacts of remote labor on employees' happiness and job efficacy with relation to gender imbalance, taking into account the cultural backgrounds of Turkey and Italy.

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This study question was critical in addressing gender imbalance in remote employment. We have claimed that after the outbreak of the pandemic, the practice of distant labor has reduced people's quality of life while altering the balance of childcare and home obligations between men and women.

The subsequent part of this research covers existing literature on gender disparity in distant labor and changing life situations. Section 3 elaborates on the methodology of this research. Section 4 introduces data received from the survey conducted in Turkey and data gathered from an online survey of Eurofound. Section 5 demonstrates the empirical results. Section 6 displays the analysis and discussion of the results. Section 7 provides the conclusion of this research paper.

2. Literature Review

The gender equality aspect of remote working environments has been addressed by numerous scholars from various nations (Chung et al., 2021; Çoban, 2020; Graham et al., 2021). Existing literature has either concentrated on a single nation or a group of countries for the gender component and well-being in remote employment (Alzueta et al., 2021; ILO, 2021; Reichelt et al., 2021). Despite this, no research has been done to examine the characteristics that have worked as a reinforcer of gender disparity in Turkey during the Covid-19 remote work period. Our motivation for this research is to fill the gap by analyzing the results of our survey conducted in Turkey to identify the present reinforcers of gender inequality and the effect of these on gender asymmetries in remote working efficacy and the well-being of individuals. As a base of comparison, we have used Italy since it holds some similarities with Turkey due to its Mediterranean characteristics. Our research has contributed to prior studies by adding primary data acquired from our survey conducted in Turkey and by displaying a comparison between Turkey and Italy.

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2.1. Covid-19 Policies Affecting Gender Asymmetries

During the Covid-19 period, Turkey and Italy have pursued differing policy strategies. Some regulations, such as school closures and curfews, have had an inevitable impact on gender inequality. It can be argued that while schools have been closed down, mothers have taken on additional responsibility for enforcing discipline for their children's school-related chores. In addition to online learning, curfews can be viewed as another element worsening the burden on women by requiring extra housework. In Turkey, the Ministry of Education has moved away from face-to-face education to mandatory remote learning at the national level for the whole Covid-19 period (Parlaklıç, 2021). Although Italy has closed schools, the closures have only been temporary. Closures were initially set for four months but were altered later based on the amount of Covid cases (Reuters Staff, 2021; Taglietti et al., 2021). In terms of lockdown policy, Turkey has imposed a full lockdown for a year by order of the Interior Ministry, after which the measures have been progressively eased (Bilginsoy, 2021). Italy has taken a similar stance as Turkey. Soon after the start of Covid-19, strict lockdown procedures were put in place. The time span granted for curfew hours has been later shortened (Amante, 2021; Aviano Air Base, 2021).

2.2. Gender

The existing literature has a consensus that distant employment during Covid-19 exacerbated the detrimental interests of women, resulting in more gender inequality. Although the consensus has stayed with the idea that the workload on women at home has been greater under Covid-19, there are some resources that have said that fathers have contributed more to housework than in the pre-Covid period (European Institute for Gender Equality [EIGE], 2021). The resources have identified a number of factors that influenced the division of parental

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responsibilities at home. These are traditional values, availability to relatives/friends who have previously assisted with care, and the closing of schools and childcare services.

It has been argued that existing traditional values have had a key part in shaping the duties of people at home, which is why it has been assumed that remote work has perpetuated gender disparity (Bernhardt et al., 2022). Women have been historically responsible for unpaid labor, whilst fathers have traditionally been regarded as breadwinners. As a result, remote work during Covid-19 has aggravated women's labor, including both paid work and domestic tasks at home (EIGE, 2021; Eurofound, 2022; ILO, 2021). Despite a significant change to egalitarian formation in the workplace and at home, traditional inclinations have continued to foster gender inequality at home (Eurofound, 2022). Besides limited access to informal support, which was help received from friends and relatives, the burden on women also has been exacerbated by the shutdown of daycare services during Covid-19 (EIGE, 2021; Reichelt et al., 2021). Another aspect that has been discovered by research is that the transition from face-to-face education to online education has forced parents to substitute themselves as educators for their children's schoolwork. This additional labor has primarily been performed by mothers, emphasizing gender disparity once more (Gorlick, 2020).

2.3. Countries and Gender Equality

As previously stated, two different countries have been chosen for this study to have a basis of comparison for the effects of remote work during Covid-19. The gender gap index rankings in the World Economic Forum's *Global Gender Gap Report* for 2006 and 2022 have revealed that Italy and Turkey are positioned at different levels in terms of gender equality. Italy is ranked 77th in 2006 and 63rd in 2022, whereas Turkey is ranked 105th and 124th (World Economic Forum, 2006, 2022).

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In Turkey, despite regulations aimed at improving gender equality, it has been argued that patriarchal norms remain prominent in both social and political domains (Ozdemir-Sarigil & Sarigil, 2021). Turkey is a Muslim-majority country. Thus, Tailassane argues that patriarchal interpretations of Islam, rather than Islam itself, have influenced gender inequality (Tailassane, 2019).

In the instance of Italy, it has been mentioned that public institutions encourage traditional portrayals of families in which the males are depicted as breadwinners (Collins, 2019). It has been stated that the Catholic Church of Italy has encouraged conventional gender roles in families and has placed the family at the center of people's lives (Naldini, 2003, as cited in Collins, 2019).

2.4. Well-being

2.4.1. Life and Work Balance

It is argued that remote work adaptation has reinforced work and life imbalances (Chung et al., 2020; Marn & Holdsworth, 2003, as cited in EIGE, 2021). Based on this, it has been stated that if people had been able to successfully balance work and family, they would have been satisfied, which would have had a positive impact on their mental health (Haar, 2014, as cited in Hjalmsdóttir & Bjarnadóttir, 2020). In addition, several authors have noted how being able to work from home has given people greater autonomy in managing their personal and professional lives (Cannito & Scavarda, 2020; Dockery & Bawa, 2020; Marn & Holdsworth, 2003, as cited in EIGE, 2021). However, conflicts have grown within families as a result of the challenges of life and work (Sinclair et al., 2020, as cited in Munobwa et al., 2022).

In terms of the gender asymmetry, Chung et al. (2020) observed that 49% of mothers have reported that work has hindered them from spending time with their families, and 50% of them have stated that their work hours have been disturbed by their families. Fathers have made

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up a smaller portion of individuals who have agreed with those statements (Chung et al., 2020). As a result, it has been pointed out that women have experienced greater challenges balancing their personal and professional lives at the same time compared to men (Eurofound, 2020).

2.4.2. Productivity and Job Satisfaction

Productivity and job satisfaction are the other dimensions of well-being that have been impacted by working from home. According to some studies, working from home has reduced productivity for a number of reasons, including too many virtual meetings and check-ins (Waizenegger et al., 2020), distractions at home, and poor communication with coworkers (Moretti et al., 2020). It has been observed that working from home has increased job satisfaction (Susilo, 2020, as referenced in Sutarto et al., 2021), although Bellmann and Hübler (2020) argue that this effect has not lasted.

Feng and Savani (2020), with regards to the gender issue, have claimed that the conditions brought on by working from home have had an impact on the gender-based differences in work productivity and job satisfaction. It has been found that in terms of productivity, women (Cui et al., 2022; Etheridge et al., 2020, as cited in Kitagawa, 2021) and mothers (Alon et al., 2021, as cited in OECD, 2021) have experienced a more significant decrease and have reported lower levels of work productivity than men (Feng & Savani, 2020). On the contrary, after conducting a study in four firms to see gender differences in productivity, Kitagawa et al. (2021) has reported results indicating that some of the women participants have had higher productivity levels than male coworkers. In addition, some female participants in a different study have reported an improvement in productivity level or no change at all (Abdellatif, 2021). As previously mentioned, in addition to productivity working from home has had an impact on work satisfaction. In comparison to men, women reported lower levels of job satisfaction, according to a number of studies (Bhattarai, 2020, as cited in Weitzer et al., 2021; Rožman et al., 2021; Țălnar-Naghi, 2021). However, Ahmadi et al. (2022)'s study has

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found that women have reported greater levels of job satisfaction than males during working from home period.

3. Methodology

This research has been carried out in order to examine the gender-based differences in the remote work period during Covid-19 by performing an analysis utilizing the necessary data from Turkey and comparing it to Italy. The asymmetry between women and men in the remote work period has been determined using a variety of methods. Quantitative analysis based on primary and secondary data has been used in this research to gather insights regarding gender-based differences. Primary data has been gathered from the survey conducted by authors on the people who have worked remotely in Turkey and secondary data regarding Italy have been collected from e-survey of Eurofound named as living, working, and Covid-19 data. The survey design has focused on identifying how women and men differed in their adaptation to changing work environments, household responsibilities, and other emergent factors during the remote work period. For the regression analysis, we used our own data that we obtained through the questionnaire. OLS regression has been utilized to estimate the effects of independent variables on the dependent variable. We have constructed five different regression models for our research. Principal component analysis has been used to form the variables as components with Varimax rotation in 25 iterations. In our first regression analysis, the component work quality and efficacy, has been chosen as our dependent variable. We have selected independent variables in accordance with our survey questions such as negative effects of remote work, possession of required equipment and support of colleagues, gender taken as female and lastly, the increase in work intensity during remote work period.

4. Data

The data obtained by the authors from the survey performed in Turkey has been elaborated in part 4.1. Meanwhile data received from the survey of Eurofound has been presented side by side with our data of Turkey in section 4.2.

4.1. Data from Survey Conducted in Turkey

Data on Turkey has been gathered via an online survey from a group of individuals who have worked remotely during the Covid-19 period. This survey has been approved by the ethical committee of Bilkent University. Data was obtained from 149 participants. To enable for a comparison of results, survey questions have been created similarly to those in the survey of Eurofound. Our survey has been conducted via the SurveyMonkey platform. A total of 44 questions have been asked to the participants. The demographic data, changes in work-life balance during the remote work period, and quality of work have all been taken into consideration while developing the survey questions. A principal component analysis has been performed on data gathered from our survey in Turkey to uncover the common underlying patterns among the variables. To simplify the component structure and make it more interpretable, the Varimax rotation method in 25 iterations has been used. The Cronbach's alpha reliability test has been used to test and validate these key elements.

4.2. Data from Living, Working and Covid-19 Survey of Eurofound

The focus of Eurofound's Living, Working, and Covid-19 e-survey is to capture the experience of living and working conditions of individuals during the pandemic. The survey has included questions ranging from life satisfaction, work-life balance, work quality, division of labor at home and happiness to analyze the quality of life and society during this challenging time. Table 1 contains the survey data from Eurofound.

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Table 1: Data from Our Survey and Survey of Eurofound

| | 2020 April/May | | 2020 June/July | | 2021 February/March | | 2022 November/December | |
|--|----------------|------|----------------|------|---------------------|------|------------------------|------|
| | ITALY | | ITALY | | ITALY | | TURKEY | |
| | Female | Male | Female | Male | Female | Male | Female | Male |
| During the Covid-19 pandemic have your working hours... | | | | | | | | |
| • Decreased a lot | 41,8 | 45,6 | 31,7 | - | - | - | 1,8 | 7,5 |
| • Decreased a little | 11,4 | 11,7 | 10,6 | - | - | - | 13,7 | 12,5 |
| • Stayed the same | 23,1 | 23,4 | 26,3 | - | - | - | 37,6 | 50 |
| • Increased a little | 7,2 | 10 | 10,9 | - | - | - | 35,7 | 22,5 |
| • Increased a lot | 10,2 | 6,3 | 18,5 | - | - | - | 11 | 7,5 |
| • Don't know/prefer not to answer | 6,1 | 2,7 | 2 | - | - | - | - | - |
| You have the feeling you are doing useful work | | | | | | | | |
| • Always | - | - | 27,1 | - | - | - | 24,7 | 32,5 |
| • Most of the time | - | - | 41,3 | - | - | - | 30,2 | 45 |
| • Sometimes | - | - | 20 | - | - | - | 28,4 | 17,5 |
| • Rarely | - | - | 4,9 | - | - | - | 6,4 | 0 |
| • Never | - | - | 6,6 | - | - | - | 10 | 5 |
| I am satisfied with the amount of work I managed to do | | | | | | | | |
| • Strongly agree | - | - | 11,5 | - | - | - | 25,6 | 25 |
| • Agree | - | - | 39,8 | - | - | - | 40,3 | 52,5 |
| • Neither agree nor disagree | - | - | 26,2 | - | - | - | 21,1 | 15 |
| • Disagree | - | - | 9,9 | - | - | - | 10 | 5 |
| • Strongly disagree | - | - | 12,7 | - | - | - | 2,7 | 2,5 |
| I am satisfied with the quality of my work | | | | | | | | |
| • Strongly agree | - | - | 12,7 | - | - | - | 19,2 | 22,5 |
| • Agree | - | - | 41,7 | - | - | - | 40,3 | 55 |
| • Neither agree nor disagree | - | - | 26 | - | - | - | 24,7 | 17,5 |
| • Disagree | - | - | 10,8 | - | - | - | 12,8 | 5 |
| • Strongly disagree | - | - | 8,9 | - | - | - | 2,7 | 0 |
| My employer provided all the equipment I need to work from home | | | | | | | | |
| • Strongly agree | - | - | - | - | - | - | 18,3 | 12,5 |
| • Agree | - | - | - | - | - | - | 33 | 32,5 |
| • Neither agree nor disagree | - | - | - | - | - | - | 16,5 | 25 |
| • Disagree | - | - | - | - | - | - | 22,9 | 2,5 |
| • Strongly disagree | - | - | - | - | - | - | 9,1 | 2,5 |
| With the equipment I have at home I could do my work properly | | | | | | | | |
| • Strongly agree | - | - | 16,3 | - | - | - | 27,5 | 25 |
| • Agree | - | - | 45,1 | - | - | - | 52,2 | 52,5 |
| • Neither agree nor disagree | - | - | 21,3 | - | - | - | 11,9 | 17,5 |
| • Disagree | - | - | 9,1 | - | - | - | 6,4 | 2,5 |
| • Strongly disagree | - | - | 8,2 | - | - | - | 1,8 | 2,5 |
| Your colleagues or peers help and support you | | | | | | | | |
| • Always | - | - | 17,6 | - | - | - | 14,6 | 25 |
| • Most of the time | - | - | 37,1 | - | - | - | 37,6 | 60 |
| • Sometimes | - | - | 19,8 | - | - | - | 29,3 | 0 |
| • Rarely | - | - | 14,6 | - | - | - | 13,7 | 0 |
| • Never | - | - | 11 | - | - | - | 4,5 | 0 |
| Have you kept worrying about work when you were not working? | | | | | | | | |
| • Always | 16,3 | 16,2 | 15 | - | 10,5 | 6,4 | 6,4 | 2,5 |
| • Most of the time | 29 | 23,4 | 21,7 | - | 26,1 | 24,5 | 16,5 | 10 |
| • Sometimes | 29,7 | 31,6 | 32 | - | 36,5 | 33,6 | 33 | 32,5 |
| • Rarely | 13 | 15,7 | 15,1 | - | 14,3 | 17,8 | 11,9 | 30 |
| • Never | 12,1 | 13,2 | 16,2 | - | 12,6 | 17,6 | 32,1 | 25 |
| Taking all things together on a scale of 1 to 10, how happy would you say you are? | | | | | | | | |
| • On average | 6,1 | 6,3 | 6,8 | 7,1 | - | - | 6 | 6,35 |
| Felt too tired after work to do some of the household jobs which need to be done | | | | | | | | |
| • Always | 4,8 | 3,7 | 6,1 | - | 6,8 | 3,5 | 4,5 | 0 |
| • Most of the time | 17,9 | 17,6 | 24,8 | - | 35,6 | 20,1 | 25,6 | 15 |
| • Sometimes | 42 | 33 | 43,4 | - | 37,4 | 46,5 | 41,2 | 22,5 |
| • Rarely | 19,1 | 23,2 | 13 | - | 14,3 | 19,3 | 15,5 | 47,5 |
| • Never | 16,2 | 22,5 | 12,7 | - | 6 | 10,6 | 12,8 | 15 |
| Have you found that your job prevented you from giving the time you wanted to your family? | | | | | | | | |
| • Always | 5,9 | 6,5 | 12,7 | - | 6,1 | 4,8 | 3,6 | 0 |
| • Most of the time | 16,7 | 19,4 | 18,8 | - | 21,1 | 19,4 | 25,6 | 17,5 |
| • Sometimes | 36,1 | 30,9 | 35 | - | 33,5 | 30,9 | 34,8 | 30 |
| • Rarely | 20,2 | 19,9 | 15,7 | - | 22 | 27,4 | 16,5 | 25 |
| • Never | 21,1 | 23,3 | 17,8 | - | 17,2 | 17,6 | 19,2 | 27,5 |
| Have you found it difficult to concentrate on your job because of your family responsibilities? | | | | | | | | |
| • Always | 2,7 | 1,2 | 2,2 | - | 2,1 | 1,2 | 4,5 | 0 |
| • Most of the time | 7,9 | 6,6 | 6,1 | - | 7,5 | 2,9 | 27,5 | 10 |
| • Sometimes | 34,1 | 32,2 | 32,3 | - | 32,9 | 26,7 | 33 | 40 |
| • Rarely | 28,5 | 29,6 | 27,2 | - | 28,2 | 37,9 | 18,3 | 30 |
| • Never | 26,8 | 30,4 | 32,2 | - | 29,3 | 31,2 | 16,5 | 20 |

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Table 1: Data from Our Survey and Survey of Eurofound (Continued)

Data from Our Survey and Survey of Eurofound

| | 2020 April/May | | 2020 June/July | | 2021 February/March | | 2022 November/December | |
|--|----------------|------|----------------|------|---------------------|------|------------------------|------|
| | ITALY | | ITALY | | ITALY | | TURKEY | |
| | Female | Male | Female | Male | Female | Male | Female | Male |
| Have you found that your family responsibilities prevented you from giving the time you should to your job? | | | | | | | | |
| • Always | 1,6 | 1 | 2,7 | - | 2,1 | 0,1 | 1,8 | 0 |
| • Most of the time | 4,6 | 3,3 | 3,6 | - | 3,9 | 2,2 | 16,5 | 10 |
| • Sometimes | 21 | 17,8 | 23,9 | - | 22,3 | 20,1 | 34,8 | 27,5 |
| • Rarely | 32,9 | 36,4 | 30,1 | - | 30,7 | 38,2 | 23,8 | 45 |
| • Never | 40 | 41,6 | 39,7 | - | 41 | 39,3 | 22,9 | 17,5 |
| On average, how many hours per week were you involved in cooking and housework outside of paid work? | | | | | | | | |
| • On average | - | - | 20,5 | 10,3 | 16,9 | 9,2 | 28,6 | 20 |
| Overall I'm satisfied with my experience of working from home | | | | | | | | |
| • Strongly agree | - | - | 11,2 | - | - | - | 18,3 | 32,5 |
| • Agree | - | - | 36,2 | - | - | - | 26,6 | 35 |
| • Neither agree nor disagree | - | - | 28,7 | - | - | - | 24,7 | 12,5 |
| • Disagree | - | - | 13,5 | - | - | - | 14,6 | 12,5 |
| • Strongly disagree | - | - | 10,4 | - | - | - | 15,5 | 7,5 |
| If you had the choice, how often would you like to work from home if there were no restrictions due to Covid-19? | | | | | | | | |
| • Daily | - | - | - | - | 21,6 | - | 13,7 | 22,5 |
| • Several times a week | - | - | - | - | 25,2 | - | 38,5 | 50 |
| • Several times a month | - | - | - | - | 15,7 | - | 10 | 7,5 |
| • Less often | - | - | - | - | 20,5 | - | 11,9 | 10 |
| • Never | - | - | - | - | 16,9 | - | 25,6 | 10 |

Work hours for women during Covid-19 have decreased a lot in Italy, whereas women from Turkey have claimed to observe an increase in theirs. Women from Italy, most of the time, have reported that they have felt they have been doing more useful work than women from Turkey. Both female and male participants from Turkey have been more satisfied with the amount of work they have accomplished than women from Italy but females from Turkey, in comparison to males, have been slightly more satisfied. However, in regard to the quality of work completed, men from Turkey have shown higher results than women. Majority of female participants from Turkey in comparison to men have stated that their employer has not provided all the equipment they need to work from home. A greater half of the survey responders have declared that they could accomplish their job adequately with the equipment they had at home. Meanwhile, working women in Italy and Turkey have reported that they have not received much support from their peers or coworkers. A larger part of responses has indicated that people from Italy and Turkey sometimes have worried about work when they have not been working. In Italy and Turkey, women are still proven to be less happy than men, despite the fact that there is a smaller difference between the reported levels of happiness between men and women.

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In comparison to women, men in Turkey and Italy have reported that they rarely ever found that their job prevented them from spending time with their families. In addition, the survey of Eurofound has revealed that most of the time, women in Italy and Turkey have struggled to focus on work because of their responsibilities to their families. Furthermore, survey results have indicated that women in Italy and Turkey have been unable to devote the required amount of time to their job due to domestic responsibilities. When the respondents have been asked to indicate their average time spent on caring for and/or educating their children, cooking, and housework, it has been found that especially women in Turkey have been more involved in these activities than men. According to the answers received from the survey conducted in Turkey women have reported to be less satisfied with their remote work experience than men and they have been less likely to prefer working from home in the future.

5. Empirical Results

5.1. Regression Results for Turkey

In this regression analysis, the level of significance has been chosen as 0.10. We used four distinct OLS regression models to investigate the link between the characteristics that impact remote work efficacy and individual satisfaction. One of the dependent variables, work quality and efficacy, derived from the principal component analysis has been put together with the answers collected from the survey we have conducted in Turkey, which included responses from questions regarding whether people felt they were doing useful work and were satisfied with the quantity and the quality of the work they completed with the equipment they had at home. Another dependent variable, overall satisfaction, has been provided as a component by including responses to questions assessing whether a person was pleased and satisfied with their remote work experience and would choose to work remotely in the future. One of the independent variables, effects, has been made with data derived from questions such as to what

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degree one's domestic responsibilities made it difficult to concentrate on their job and devote enough time to their paid work, and how frequently one's work has prevented them from spending time with their family and how worried they were about work outside of working hours. Another independent variable, colleagues' support, and equipment, addressed questions regarding peer assistance, if participants received positive feedback from their supervisor, and whether their company provided them with equipment. Finally, the independent variable remote work intensity, contained answers to questions concerning working longer hours and whether paid workload increased. During preliminary analysis, we examined a variety of interactions between variables in our regression equations. However, those could not produce significant, relevant findings. Nonetheless, we have continued with separate regressions for female and male individuals in order to capture any significant variations in the size of the coefficients.

Table 2: Regression Results (Whole Data)

| <i>Regression Results (Whole Data)</i> | | | | | |
|--|---------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| | Specification 1 | Specification 2 | Specification 3 | Specification 4 | Specification 5 |
| Dependent Variable | Work Quality and Efficacy | Overall Satisfaction | Overall Satisfaction | Overall Satisfaction | Overall Satisfaction |
| Independent Variable | | | | | |
| Constant | 3.9545 (0.0000) | 3.7887 (0.0000) | 3.7333 (0.0000) | 3.7595 (0.0000) | 3.5326 (0.0000) |
| Effects | -0.2158 (0.0065) | -0.6299 (0.0000) | -0.5667 (0.0000) | | |
| Equipment and Colleagues' Support | 0.4106 (0.0000) | | 0.2055 (0.0528) | | |
| Gender (female=1) | -0.2360 (0.0703) | -0.3520 (0.1065) | -0.4166 (0.0349) | -0.4112 (0.0574) | -0.4574 (0.0408) |
| Remote Work Intensity | 0.1896 (0.0119) | | | -0.3017 (0.0074) | |
| # of Children | | -0.2134 (0.0396) | -0.1866 (0.0465) | -0.0211 (0.0379) | |
| Housework Hours | | -0.0347 (0.0714) | | | |
| R-squared | 0.28 | 0.27 | 0.26 | 0.10 | 0.02 |
| Adjusted R-squared | 0.26 | 0.25 | 0.24 | 0.09 | 0.02 |
| Number of observations | 149 | 119 | 149 | 149 | 149 |

In specification (1), our coefficient estimates for effects, equipment, and peer support have shown a positive relation to work quality and efficacy. Similarly, although it is only near significant remote work intensity has also displayed positive association with work quality and

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efficacy. Meanwhile, gender and effects have been negatively related. Results of specification (2) have shown that the existence of children has decreased overall satisfaction by 21 percentage points. Furthermore, it has been observed that effects and time spent on housework as well as gender, although it is near significant, decreases the probability of having a higher overall satisfaction level. In specification (3), it has been seen that effects have a significant negative correlation with the satisfaction and likeliness of people choosing to work remotely in the future. Whereas colleagues' support, the existence of the equipment, and extra work hours have a positive impact on overall satisfaction. According to specification (4), the impact of an increase in remote work intensity has decreased overall satisfaction by 30 percentage points. Results from specification (5) have indicated that overall satisfaction level of women during Covid-19 is significantly below the satisfaction level of men since the estimated gender coefficient for women is -0.45.

Table 3: Regression Results (Female Participants)

| <i>Regression Results (Female Participants)</i> | | | | |
|---|---------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| | Specification 1 | Specification 2 | Specification 3 | Specification 4 |
| Dependent Variable | Work Quality and Efficacy | Overall Satisfaction | Overall Satisfaction | Overall Satisfaction |
| Independent Variable | | | | |
| Constant | 3.7184 (0.0000) | 3.4002 (0.0000) | 3.3230 (0.0000) | 3.3450 (0.0000) |
| Effects | -0.2303 (0.0173) | -0.6671 (0.0000) | -0.5896 (0.0000) | |
| Equipment and Colleagues' Support | 0.3972 (0.0000) | | -0.1604 (0.1718) | |
| Remote Work Intensity | 0.2749 (0.0041) | | | -0.3490 (0.0082) |
| # of Children | | -0.1867 (0.1139) | -0.1915 (0.0799) | -0.2086 (0.0772) |
| Housework Hours | | -0.0446 (0.0307) | | |
| R-squared | 0,28 | 0,31 | 0,25 | 0,10 |
| Adjusted R-squared | 0,26 | 0,29 | 0,23 | 0,08 |
| Number of observations | 109 | 86 | 109 | 109 |

Table 4: Regression Results (Male Participants)

| <i>Regression Results (Male Participants)</i> | | | | |
|---|---------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| | Specification 1 | Specification 2 | Specification 3 | Specification 4 |
| Dependent Variable | Work Quality and Efficacy | Overall Satisfaction | Overall Satisfaction | Overall Satisfaction |
| Independent Variable | | | | |
| Constant | 3.9545 (0.0000) | 3.8907 (0.0000) | 3.7234 (0.0000) | 3.7577 (0.0000) |
| Effects | -0.2628 (0.0498) | -0.4466 (0.1030) | -0.4596 (0.0631) | |
| Equipment and Colleagues' Support | 0.3782 (0.0095) | | 0.4281 (0.1039) | |
| Remote Work Intensity | -0.0390 (0.7345) | | | -0.1633 (0.4640) |
| # of Children | | -0.3014 (0.1714) | -0.1774 (0.3477) | -0.2093 (0.3092) |
| Housework Hours | | 0.0317 (0.5580) | | |
| R-squared | 0,33 | 0,16 | 0,22 | 0,04 |
| Adjusted R-squared | 0,28 | 0,07 | 0,15 | -0,007 |
| Number of observations | 40 | 33 | 40 | 40 |

In specification (1), the relation between work quality & efficacy and remote work intensity for women is positively higher in magnitude compared to men, even though for men, the results are insignificant. Results of specification (2) have indicated that the overall satisfaction of women has been likely to be affected negatively by an increase in housework hours. Despite being insignificant, men have not been negatively affected by housework hours. For all samples of men and women, women have a higher negative correlation between overall satisfaction and effects than men. Although both outcomes are insignificant, having children reduces overall satisfaction by 18 percentage points for women and 30 percentage points for men. According to specification (3), the effect of having equipment and peer support for men is significant and positively related to overall satisfaction. On the other hand, for women, the coefficient of equipment and colleagues' support is negatively correlated with overall satisfaction, yet this can be explained by the insignificance of the results and the fact this component has a lower Cronbach's alpha value compared to other variable components. In

specification (4), the relationship between overall satisfaction and remote work intensity for women is negatively higher in magnitude compared to men despite the fact that the results are insignificant for males.

6. Discussion of Findings

The primary goal of this study was to evaluate gender asymmetries during remote work period in Turkey. The findings of this study on Turkey reveal some agreement with the existing literature. Despite the fact that we could not observe similar significant results by using an interaction variable on the whole data, results of the separate regressions, magnitude-wise, may still be an indicator of gender asymmetries. In Table 3, Specification (1), for example, showed that remote work intensity, which represented an increase in workload and hours, was shown to be positively associated with the amount and quality of work accomplished by women using the equipment they had. The underlying reason for these findings could be attributed to the fact that women could not escape their household responsibilities. Thus, it was necessary for women to precisely plan their lives day by day in an attempt to satisfy their duties and minimize any work and life conflicts that may arise. In other words, remote work has served as a medium that benefited women because women have gained more autonomy in managing their personal and professional life (Cannito & Scavarda, 2020; Dockery & Bawa, 2020; Marn & Holdsworth, 2003, as cited in EIGE, 2021). In the past, it has been reported that women (Cui et al., 2022; Etheridge et al., 2020, as cited in Kitagawa, 2021) and mothers (Alon et al., 2021, as cited in OECD, 2021) have experienced a more significant decrease in productivity and have reported lower levels of work productivity than men (Feng & Savani, 2020). Contrary to these papers, our regression results of women for work quality and efficacy have shown that the coefficients of our independent variables, magnitude-wise, have not been significantly different from males.

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Specification (2) has presented that hours spent on housework have a significant negative association with the overall satisfaction of women such that an increase in the time spent on housework hours has made women less likely to prefer remote work and be happily satisfied with the distant employment. This may be an indicator of the fact that Turkey has a predominantly patriarchal society with traditional gender roles, where women are often expected to take on the primary responsibility for household chores and childcare. These existing traditional values that held women responsible for unpaid work have increased women's labor hours at home (EIGE, 2021; Eurofound, 2022; ILO, 2021).

In the case of women, these cultural beliefs and societal expectations can reinforce their gendered domestic roles that men do not have in regard to domestic responsibilities. Moreover, it has been observed that for females, an increase in the magnitude of effects which represents work and life imbalances, leads them to become less satisfied with their remote work experience, but the conflict between work and life responsibilities only decreases the satisfaction of men by 44 percentage points. In accordance with other studies, if women had been able to successfully balance work and family, they would have been satisfied, which would have had a positive impact on them (Haar, 2014, as cited in Hjálmsdóttir & Bjarnadóttir, 2020). However, it has been stated that conflict between family and work responsibilities is fastened by additional responsibilities given to women, such as their obligation to replace an instructor in order to enforce their children's school commitments (Gorlick, 2020).

Turkey is not alone in terms of traditional gender values attributed to men and women. These values are also prominent in Italy. Moreover, both in Turkey and Italy, religion has an influence on the culture that shapes society's expectations of women. While interpretations of Islam have an effect on gender asymmetry, Catholic Church also encourages the breadwinner role of men (Naldini, 2003, as cited in Collins, 2019; Tailassane, 2019). We have found that the majority of female survey participants in Turkey have found it difficult to concentrate on their

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jobs due to their domestic responsibilities that may have been attributed to them by the patriarchal interpretation of Islam as the caregiver role has been associated with women. However, in Italy, even though the Catholic Church has promoted patriarchal norms in a society similar to Turkey, women in Italy still experienced fewer negative effects than in Turkey. The differences in the survey results may be a factor of religion; although Italy and Turkey have similarities due to being patriarchal societies under the Mediterranean culture, the gender gap index for Turkey has been revealed to be worse than Italy in 2022, as Turkey has ranked 124th and Italy 63rd (World Economic Forum, 2022).

According to specification (3), remote work assistance from colleagues, the provision of workplace equipment, and positive feedback from supervisors all had a positive near significant influence on men's satisfaction levels. However, in the case of women, the correlation appears to be negative and negligible, which might be due to the lower reliability score of the Equipment and Colleague's support component in comparison to other independent variable components.

Specification (4) has shown that the number of children for both men and women has decreased the satisfaction levels of survey participants even though the results are insignificant for men. The underlying reason behind the depreciation of satisfaction can be related to the fact that the Interior Ministry of Education has enforced remote education on the national level, which has meant that parents have taken on additional responsibility for enforcing discipline to their children for their education (Parlakkılıç, 2021). Furthermore, parents have lost access to paid and unpaid childcare services. On the other hand, an increase in workload and work hours has depreciated the likeliness of women being happy with the remote work period and their desire to prefer remote work in the future. A similar decrease has been observed in men as well. Yet, for men, the volume of a decrease in satisfaction levels indicated by the coefficient of

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remote work intensity has not been as high as in women; this again can be a result of domestic responsibilities of women at households.

7. Concluding Remarks

The primary purpose of this research was to determine the impacts of remote work on gender differences. The clearest outcome from this study is that survey participants were negatively impacted by the effects of the remote work period. However, there has been gender related differences between the work quality and efficacy of men and women as it has been found that remote work conditions have allowed women to schedule their time more efficiently which has yielded higher levels of work quality and efficacy.

Furthermore, working women in patriarchal societies have reported a decrease in their job satisfaction due to their household responsibilities, as women have been assigned additional domestic responsibilities. According to the findings of this study, women have been negatively impacted by distant employment since patriarchal traditions define women as caregivers in homes which has yielded conflicts for women in balancing their work and life.

This work has contributed to the existing literature by providing a new perspective through providing primary data from survey conducted in Turkey. The current study was limited by the amount of female and male survey respondents. A greater sample size may produce more precise results, resulting in more significant regression results.

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