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The Consequences of Working from home on Well-Being: Evidence from the French Workforce

Abstract: The global transition to working from home, accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, has fundamentally transformed traditional work patterns. In France, where work-life balance is culturally emphasized, this change presents unique challenges. This study analyzes data from 66,839 French workers (2010-2015) to explore the impact of remote work on employee well-being, with a particular focus on anxiety levels and work-family balance. Contrary to conventional wisdom, working from home itself does not significantly affect anxiety levels. Instead, well-being is primarily influenced by factors such as age, gender, education level, and family size. Specifically, age exhibits a U-shaped relationship with anxiety, men report lower anxiety levels, higher education is negatively correlated with anxiety, and larger family size is positively correlated with well-being. The impact varies significantly across demographic groups, especially for employees with young children and self-employed individuals. This study reveals nuanced effects of remote work and highlights the moderating role of demographic and occupational factors, contributing to the literature on working from home. It also underscores the importance of France's unique cultural context in shaping working from home experiences. These findings indicate that organizations should implement customized support systems and develop targeted mental health resources, moving away from generic policies to effectively address the diverse needs of employees.

Keyword: Working from home, Employee well-being, Anxiety levels, Work-family balance, Cultural context

I. Introduction

1.1 Background and motivations

In recent years, the nature of work has undergone dramatic changes. The COVID-19 pandemic especially has accelerated the development of working from home, changing not just where we work but also our perception of what work is (Grant et al., 2013). From being viewed as a last resort, what has now emerged to become the prevalent work pattern across a large swathe of industry sectors (Diener et al., 2018) continues to challenge conventional theories of organizational design and employee well-being.

Given that France is a country whose culture has strongly separated professional duties from personal life, the current shift to working from home is an especially interesting case in this regard (LeFeuvre & Lemarchant, 2007). A review of this trend would suggest that its impact extends far beyond what can be captured by simple productivity metrics for workers. The premise here is that employee welfare has become a complex multi-dimensional concept (Anderson & Kelliher, 2020).

Recent scholarship has thrown up exciting contradictions on the question of how working from home affects employee well-being. While Anderson and Kelliher (2020) emphasize benefits accruing from increased flexibility and improved work-life integration, others put forward an alternative and much more nuanced proposition: precisely the

flexibility that emancipates some workers may also immerse them in an endless working day (Belzunegui-Eraso & Erro-Garcés, 2020). This is the paradox that raises a fundamental question: does remote work really improve employees' well-being, or does it just increase the problems that employees face?

This is a very unique legislative framework in France, reflected in the 'right to disconnect', which provides an ideal environment to study the dynamics of interaction between cultural practices and working from home. Many researchers have pointed out that the erosion of traditional boundaries of the workplace can shape corporate culture and communication patterns. However, most of these studies have focused on tech-based organizations and may not capture the diverse work environment in France (Bakaç & Barela, 2023). Moreover, previous European studies on working time flexibility provided some valuable lessons in work-life balance but are less applicable to France, with its specific labor environment (Mihelić & Aleksić, 2017).

This study is particularly relevant because it shows that the experience of telecommuting varies considerably across different groups of employees. Initial discussions with employees in France suggest that some people, particularly those with young children, find it difficult to maintain a work-life balance when working remotely (Elliott, 2013). For other employees, however, working at home is seen as offering unique opportunities for family interaction. These varied experiences highlight the crucial role of personal circumstances and environmental factors in shaping the impact of working from home on well-being. Furthermore, scholars studying 'always-on' cultures have emphasized the importance of considering individual differences and their influence on the well-being of those working from home (McDowall & Kinman, 2017).

1.2 Research questions

The COVID-19 pandemic dramatically accelerated the global move to working from home, fundamentally changing the traditional structures of work at a rate unprecedented in history. Originally put in place as a stopgap solution for continuing business, working from home now sits at the center of work strategies in many industries. This transition has afforded workers greater flexibility and autonomy, but the effects this change is having on well-being do not apply uniformly to all workers. For some, working from home has increased convenience and productivity. For others, it has blurred the boundaries between work and personal life, creating new sources of stress and anxiety.

This research addresses four primary questions to increase understanding of the complex interrelationship between working from home and employee well-being. Examining the interaction among individual characteristics, job status, and work-life boundaries, the study tries to explain how working from home influences mental health and job satisfaction.

1. Does working from home genuinely enhance employee well-being? While the increased flexibility and autonomy it offers can be beneficial, there is also the potential for heightened work-life conflicts. Do these blurred boundaries between work and personal life ultimately undermine overall well-being, or can the advantages of working from home outweigh the challenges?

2. What is the impact of working from home on employees' anxiety levels? In the

context of French culture, where a clear separation between work and life is traditionally valued, does working from home reduce stress by eliminating commutes, or does it amplify psychological pressure by intertwining work and family responsibilities?

3. Which factors shape employee well-being in the context of working from home? How do variables like age, gender, education level, family size, and occupation interact to influence individual experiences of telecommuting?

4. What are the long-term effects of working from home on career growth? Does the lack of face-to-face interaction hinder professional networking and promotion prospects, or can employees find alternative ways to maintain career momentum in remote environments?

In conclusion, this research sheds light on the nuanced impacts of working from home, providing actionable insights for organizations and individuals to better navigate the challenges and opportunities of remote work. Organizations should develop tailored mental health programs that address the unique needs of diverse employee groups. For instance, younger employees may benefit from career mentoring programs, while employees with caregiving responsibilities might require flexible work arrangements and family support initiatives. Additionally, promoting clear work-life boundaries through structured policies, such as the “right to disconnect,” can help employees better manage their time and reduce anxiety. Employees, on the other hand, are encouraged to adopt proactive strategies like creating structured routines, maintaining social connections, and investing in skill development. By aligning organizational strategies with individual efforts, the benefits of working from home can be fully realized, paving the way for a balanced and sustainable future of work.

1.3 Research aim and objectives

The current study focuses on the French workforce and conducts a thorough empirical analysis to examine how working from home affects workers' well-being. Specifically, the study focuses on the key dimensions of work-family balance, job satisfaction, anxiety levels, and work fatigue, with a particular emphasis on the correlation between working from home and employees' anxiety levels.

By constructing a rational research model and incorporating a series of relevant control variables, such as employees' personal characteristics (age, gender, education level, etc.), family status (marital status, number of children, etc.), and job characteristics (type of occupation, hours of work, income level, etc.), the study aims to accurately reveal how working from home affects employee well-being. The analysis focuses on the interaction between these factors and the working-from-home mode.

Through these analyses, the study aims to provide a strong empirical basis for enterprises to formulate scientifically sound work policies that align with employees' needs. This will help managers optimize work arrangements, improving both work efficiency and job satisfaction. At the same time, the results of this research offers actionable strategies for employees aiming to navigate the challenges of working from home effectively. mode and effectively cope with the challenges they may face, so as to realize the harmony between work and life and enhance their happiness as a whole.

1.4 Practical implications

In terms of practice, this study provides highly valuable guidance for business management and employee development. For enterprises, effectively managing a work-from-home workforce has become a key challenge in today's business environment of accelerated digitalization and globalization. The results of this study can help organizations gain insights into the work experiences and needs of employees who work from home, so that they can formulate more scientific and practical management strategies.

From the perspective of individual employees, this study provides practical guidelines for better adaptation and development in the work-at-home era. According to the results of this study, employees can actively adjust their work and life styles. In line with the theory of work reshaping, they can take the initiative to optimize and adjust their working from home tasks to better match their personal interests and abilities, thereby enhancing their work engagement and sense of accomplishment. At the same time, employees can use the findings of this study to better manage the boundaries between work and life, rationally allocate their time and energy, focus on the cultivation of their own psychological capital and the satisfaction of their own needs, effectively cope with the challenges of working from home, and realize the organic unity of personal career growth and life happiness.

In conclusion, this study is of irreplaceable significance in deepening the academic understanding of the change of work mode in the context of theory and practice, and helping enterprises and employees realize sustainable development in the wave of working from home.

II. Literature Review

Working from home has, over the past few years, developed from a niche arrangement into a common practice and has been attracting much attention from researchers. This section reviews key findings from existing literature, with attention to work-family balance, career development, mental health, organizational communication, and individual characteristics. Particular attention is given to the peculiar cultural context of France, where work-life separation is very strong and legally protected, to understand how those factors shape the outcomes of working from home.

2.1 Work-Family Balance

Attaining a balance between work-related responsibilities and family duties is very essential for the well-being of employees. Working from home provides greater flexibility, allowing one to plan their schedules more effectively and balance work commitments with family responsibilities (Allen et al., 2000). This positive view, however, is not without critics. Some researchers argue that the blurred boundary of working from home could lead to role confusion and extended working hours, which would threaten employees' ability to detach (Clark, 2000). Such divergent opinions reflect the multifaceted nature of achieving a work-family balance.

In France, a cultural emphasis on the distinction between professional responsibilities and personal life renders these challenges especially pronounced (Le Feuvre & Lemarchant, 2007). The enactment of the nation's "right to disconnect" law

highlights the significance of safeguarding workers from the constant expectation of being available and emphasizes the necessity for clearly delineated limits. Research has shown that those who utilize organized routines and adhere to specific working hours are better at negotiating work-family conflict (Beigi et al., 2012). There also needs to be support from family. Workers with solid support systems will tend to achieve a more sustainable balance between professional and domestic obligations, thus averting the onset of burnout (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006).

2.2 Career Development

Professional careers have been immensely affected by the shift to working from home, and this change has brought about both positive and negative consequences. On the bright side, increased flexibility has been found to be associated with greater job satisfaction and a better balance between work and life, as time management becomes more controllable for employees (McCloskey & Igbaria, 2003). Nevertheless, working from home also has its peculiar drawbacks. The fewer face-to-face interactions could weaken professional networks, which would make it harder for employees to advance in their careers, especially in professions where interpersonal contacts are important (Forret & Dougherty, 2004).

In France, public sector employees have been better positioned to adapt to working from home, benefiting from stable career paths and job security (Ipsen et al., 2022). In contrast, self-employed individuals often face greater career uncertainties, especially when working from home limits client engagement. To navigate these challenges, self-management skills become essential. Employees who proactively engage in online training and professional development activities are more likely to thrive in working from home environments, improving both their performance and long-term career prospects (Billett, 2011).

2.3 Mental Health

Mental health is a critical component of employee well-being, encompassing stress management, emotional resilience, and social connectedness. Working from home offers certain mental health benefits, such as reduced commuting stress and greater control over daily schedules, which can help employees manage their workloads more effectively (Kraut et al., 1998). However, the prolonged isolation associated with working from home poses significant risks, particularly for extroverted individuals who thrive on social interaction (Cain, 2013). Without regular face-to-face contact, employees may experience occupational loneliness and increased anxiety.

In the context of France, labor laws have played a vital role in reducing specific risks (Chung & Tijdens, 2013). For example, many organizations have implemented telephone counseling services and stress management programs to promote the mental health of the employees (Charalampous et al., 2019). In any case, personal personality traits appear to have a potential impact on mental health results. Studies have indicated that introverted employees generally will adjust more easily to home working, while extroverted employees may feel isolated (Belzunegui-Eraso & Erro-Garcés, 2020). This has the implication that in order to maximize the effectiveness of mental health interventions, tailored strategies are to be applied.

2.4 The Moderating Role of Individual and Job Characteristics

Employee experiences with working from home are far from uniform. Personal attributes and job-related factors are significant in deciding how individuals cope with working from home arrangements. For instance, employees with young children often face challenges in balancing childcare and work responsibilities, possibly leading to high levels of stress. On the other hand, people who live alone may feel much lonelier (Magnini, 2009).

Research has shown that age, gender, and educational level are critical factors that determine how remote work affects employees' well-being. Older employees holding higher degrees have greater flexibility and can mobilize their experience and competencies while working from home to deliver their tasks effectively. Employees younger in age, still in the process of building their careers, may find it more challenging to adapt to the demands of working from home (Demerouti et al., 2014).

This effect of gender differences in working from home experiences is very pronounced in France. In this country, women often take care of most caregiving and therefore reported higher levels of stress and anxiety compared to men (Conway et al., 2014). It shows that the design of policies concerning working from home has to consider the gender-specific needs of workers. In relation to job characteristics, employee satisfaction was significantly affected by autonomy and task complexity. Workers generally report higher job satisfaction when they have more control over their work processes because they are in a better position to handle their responsibilities and tasks (Hackman & Oldham, 1976).

2.5 Cultural Context and Organizational Communication

The cultural focus in France on distinguishing between professional and personal life provides a distinctive perspective to assess the implications of remote work. The legislation concerning the “right to disconnect” guarantees that workers possess a legal entitlement to refrain from job-related tasks beyond designated working hours, thereby fostering healthier distinctions between occupational responsibilities and private life (Chung & van der Lippe, 2020). This regulatory structure embodies wider societal principles that emphasize well-being and the equilibrium between work and life.

However, working from home brings with it certain challenges. One of the most important issues is the possibility of communication breakdown in virtual environments. With the lack of regular face-to-face interactions, team cohesion may be lost and the intensity of organizational culture weakened (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007). To counter these problems, organizations are encouraged to implement digital tools that foster transparency and promote communication but allow employees to keep their private time (Golden et al., 2008). Effective communication strategies are essential for a strong organizational culture in a remote setting that keeps employees feeling connected and supported.

2.6 Conclusion

The present literature review underlines the heterogeneous effects of working from home on employees' well-being. This review, by taking a closer look at critical domains such as work-family balance, professional advancement, psychological health, and personal traits, highlights the need for contextually tailored interventions in order to alleviate the challenges brought about by working from home. In addition, to maximize

the benefits of working from home while minimizing its potential disadvantages, organizations must institute flexible policies that are sensitive to both cultural differences and individual needs (Allen et al., 2015).

III. Data and Variables

3.1 Data sources

The dataset used in this study contains extensive information on French employees from 2010-2015, with a sample of 35,175 men and 31,749 women, totalling 66,839 observations. The data come from a wide range of sources, including various types of official statistics, business surveys, and employee self-reports in France, ensuring that the data are diverse and representative. These data cover a wide range of employees' job characteristics (e.g., type of job, working hours, occupational status, etc.), family status (e.g., family size, marital status, number of children, etc.), and personal characteristics (e.g., age, gender, education, etc.), which provide an effective data base for comprehensively analyzing the impact of working from home on employees' well-being.

3.2 Selection of variables

3.2.1 Dependent variable: anxiety levels (anxiety) is selected as the key indicator of employees' happiness in this study, and related variables such as work-family balance, job satisfaction and work fatigue are also considered to comprehensively measure employees' happiness from multiple perspectives.

3.2.2 Independent variables: The independent variables mainly include the Proportion of working at home (wfh), Age (age), Age Squared (age^2), Gender (sex), Education level (edu), Family income (incouple), The number of children (numfu and numk), Self-employment status (selfemp), Public sector work status (pubwrkr), Working hours (hours) and Hourly earnings (hourly_earnings), to control for other factors that may affect employees' well-being.

Table 1 Variable Selection and Definition

Variable Type	Variable Name	Variable Code	Variable Definition	Potential effect on anxiety levels
Dependent Variable	anxiety levels	anxiety	Indicator construction	Measuring employee happiness, the higher the level of anxiety, the lower the level of happiness.
Independent Variable	Proportion of Working from Home	wfh	Calculated based on the working hours at home and the total working hours recorded by employees or provided by the enterprise.	The proportion of the time an employee works from home to the total working time, used to measure the change in work mode.
	Age	age	The age of the employee in full years.	The actual age of the employee, which affect the ability to adapt to changes in work mode and the psychological state.
	Age Squared	age^2	Calculated by squaring the employee's age.	Used to capture the possible non-linear relationship between age and anxiety levels.
	Gender	sex	Represented by a dummy variable.	Different genders may have differences in work and family roles, ways of coping with stress, etc., which in turn affect the anxiety levels.
	Education Level	edu	Different education levels can	Education level may affect

			be set.	career development, coping ability, and psychological cognition, and is thus related to the anxiety levels.
	Family Income	incouple	Measured by the total monthly or annual income of both spouses in the family.	The family income situation affects the quality of life and economic pressure, and further affects the anxiety levels.
	Number of Children	numfu, numk	numfu represents the number of minor children in the family and numk represents the total number of children in the family, both represented by integers.	More children bring more family responsibilities and pressures, affecting the anxiety levels.
	Self-Employment Status	selfemp	Represented by a dummy variable.	Self-employed employees and employed employees have differences in work autonomy, economic stability, etc., which may affect the anxiety levels.
	Public Sector Work Status	pubwrkr	Represented by a dummy variable.	The public sector and the private sector have different working environments and career stability, which may have different impacts on the anxiety level of employees.
	Working Hours	hours	The actual number of hours an employee works per week.	Working hours are directly related to work pressure and work-life balance, and have an important impact on the anxiety levels.
	Hourly Earnings	hourly_earnings	The hourly wage of the employee.	The income level is related to economic pressure and job satisfaction, and thus affects the anxiety levels.

3.2.3 In this study, a multivariate linear regression model was constructed to analyze the effect of working from home (wfh) on employee well-being (with anxiety levels as the key indicator). The specific form of the model is as follows:

$$anxiety = \beta_0 + \beta_1 wfh + \beta_2 age + \beta_3 age^2 + \beta_4 sex + \beta_5 edu + \beta_6 incouple + \beta_7 numfu + \beta_8 numk + \beta_9 selfemp + \beta_{10} pubwrkr + \beta_{11} hours + \beta_{12} hourly_earnings + \epsilon$$

3.3 Descriptive Statistical Analysis

Table 2 Descriptive Statistical Analysis Table

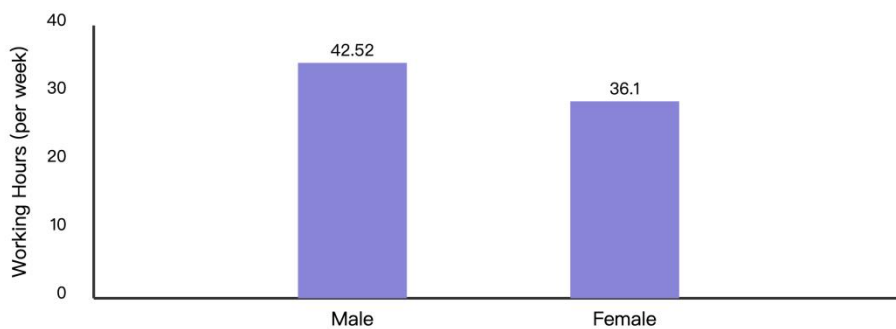
Variable	MALE				FEMALE			
	N	Mean	p50	SD	N	Mean	p50	SD
wfh	35175	0.134	0	0.341	31749	0.115	0	0.319
age	35175	42.38	42	11.38	31749	42.82	43	10.84
age ²	35175	1926	1764	974.8	31749	1951	1849	929.4
edu	35175	2.227	2	0.548	31749	2.36	2	0.554
incouple	35175	0.708	1	0.455	31749	0.662	1	0.473
numfu	35175	3.048	3	1.365	31749	2.917	3	1.273
numk	35175	0.928	1	1.119	31749	0.975	1	1.05
selfemp	35175	0.201	0	0.401	31749	0.118	0	0.322
pubwrkr	35175	0.207	0	0.405	31749	0.335	0	0.472

hours	35175	42.52	40	12.5	31749	36.1	40	12.03
hourly_earnings	35175	41.19	31.77	56.7	31749	43.79	30.15	68.07

- Sample size and gender ratio

This study was conducted in France, with a sample size of 35,175 males and 31,749 females; the sample sizes of men and women were relatively close to each other, and the gender ratios were relatively even. This feature makes it possible to make more effective comparisons when subsequently analyzing the differences between genders on each variable, avoiding possible bias in the results due to an imbalance in the gender ratio, and thus revealing more accurately the relationship between the gender factor and other variables.

Average Working Hours by Gender



- Working hours

The average number of hours worked by men is 42.52, which is significantly higher than the 36.1 hours worked by women. This figure clearly shows that men invest more time in their work. Longer working hours may mean more work pressure for men, but it may also bring them more opportunities for career advancement and financial income.

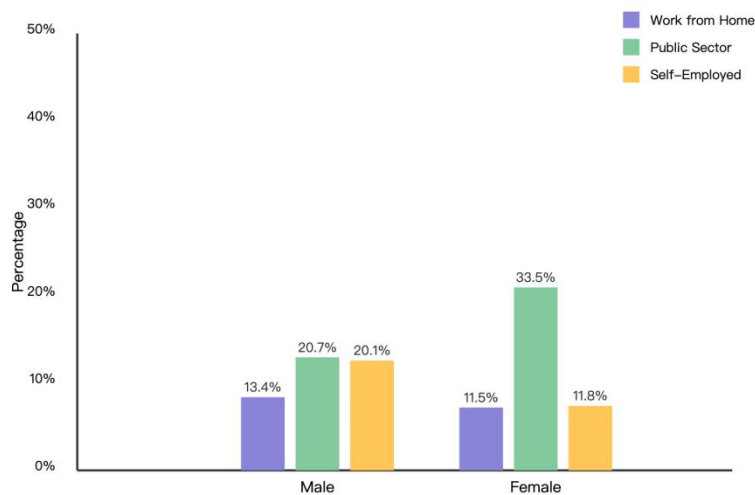
- Age, level of education, family size and number of children

The data show that the differences between men and women in terms of age, level of education, family size and number of children are small. This indicates that the overall situation between men and women is relatively similar. The average age of men is 42.38 years and that of women is 42.82 years, which are roughly the same, indicating that men and women are at a similar level in terms of their overall age structure; in terms of education level, the average of men is 2.227 and that of women is 2.36, which are also relatively close, indicating that there is no significant gender bias in terms of the level of education of men and women; the similarity in terms of the size of the family and the number of children likewise indicates that these factors are relatively balanced between the genders, and that these aspects may not be the same in terms of gender. relatively equalized, and that these aspects may not be the main cause of the other differences.

- Marital status

The proportion of males with marital or partnered status was 70.8% and 66.2% for females. The higher percentage value indicates that most of the men and women in the sample are in the marital or partnered status, but the proportion of men is relatively higher, which shows that men are relatively more stable in their marital relationship. The stability of marital status may affect men differently from women in terms of job choice, career development, and psychological state. Stable marital relationships may make men more inclined to pursue long-term and stable jobs in their career decision-making in order to safeguard the family's financial resources, while women may need to consider marriage-related issues in their career development probably due to the relatively lower proportion of marital status.

Gender Differences in Work Arrangements



- Occupational status situation

In terms of occupational status, the proportion of men who are self-employed is 20.1%, which is higher than the 11.8% of women, indicating that men are more likely to opt for a career pattern of self-employment and independent work. Self-employed professionals usually have a higher degree of job autonomy, but also face greater economic risks and job uncertainty. In contrast, 33.5% of women work in the public sector, significantly higher than the 20.7% of men. Public sector jobs tend to have a relatively stable working environment, welfare protection and clearer career advancement paths. This gender difference in career choice may be related to a variety of factors such as socio-cultural factors, gender role expectations and personal career preferences.

- Work-home ratio

On the variable of work-from-home ratio, the average work-from-home ratio for men was 13.4%, while that for women was 11.5%. On the whole, the average proportion of males choosing to work from home is higher than that of females, and it can be inferred that males are more inclined to choose working from home as a mode of work as compared to females. Individual differences in men's choice of home office are greater. It is possible that some men prefer working from home very much and have a higher

proportion of working from home, while others rarely or hardly ever choose to work from home, leading to a greater degree of dispersion in the data for men as a whole. In contrast, women's data on the proportion of home office workers is relatively more concentrated at an average value of about 11.5%, with less variation among individuals.

• Hourly remuneration

The mean hourly remuneration for females is 43.79, slightly higher than that of males at 41.19, but the standard deviation of females' remuneration is higher (68.07 compared to 56.7 for males). This indicates that although the average compensation for females is slightly higher, the wage differentials within the female group are very large. In contrast, the distribution of male wages is relatively more concentrated around the mean, with less variation between individuals. This difference in wage distribution may reflect greater diversity or inequality among women in terms of career advancement, industry distribution, job skills.

V. Empirical Analysis
4.1 Correlation Analysis

Table 3 Correlation Analysis Table

VARIABLES	wfh	anxiety	age	age ²	sex	edu	incouple	numfu	numk	selfemp	pubwrkr	hours	hourly_earnings
wfh	1												
anxiety	-0.007*	1											
age	0.061**	-0.022**	1										
age ²	0.062**	-0.020**	0.991***	1									
sex	-0.028***	-0.062**	0.020***	0.013**	1								
edu	-0.065***	-0.018**	-0.09g***	-0.099***	0.120**	1							
incouple	0.015**	0.034***	0.170***	0.143**	-0.050***	-0.029***	1						
numfu	0.035**	0.023***	-0.120***	-0.148***	-0.050***	-0.033***	0.412**	1					
numk	0.031**	0.001	0.044***	-0.006	0.022**	-0.029***	0.378**	0.787**	1				
selfemp	0.345**	-0.016**	0.090***	0.089**	-0.113***	-0.092***	0.057**	0.073**	0.062**	1			
pubwrkr	-0.105***	-0.013**	0.094***	0.089**	0.144**	0.216***	0.017**	0	0.033**	-0.239***	1		
hours	0.059**	-0.018**	-0.039***	-0.049***	-0.253***	-0.046***	0.045**	0.074**	0.034**	0.191**	-0.110***	1	
hourly_earnings	0.036**	0.004	0.064***	0.069**	0.021**	0.124***	0.002	-0.065***	-0.008**	0	0.040**	-0.419**	1

*** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

From the above table, it can be seen that occupation type, family situation, income

level and age are important factors affecting working from home, all showing relatively strong correlation levels.

- The effect of working from home on anxiety levels

Contrary to initial hypotheses, the results of the study showed no significant effect of working from home on anxiety levels, meaning that simply changing the workplace (from office to home) did not directly lead to a significant change in anxiety levels. This finding challenges the common assumption that changing the workplace significantly affects psychological well-being. It suggests that other factors, such as personal coping mechanisms and social support, may play a more critical role. It also implies that workplace itself may not be a key determinant of anxiety levels. The sources of anxiety are often multifaceted, and workplace is only one superficial factor.

- Relationship between age and anxiety levels

Age showed a specific correlation with anxiety levels at the 1% significance level, with an age coefficient of -0.003, which indicates a negative correlation between age and anxiety levels, controlling for other factors, suggesting that the older the person is, the lower the level of anxiety is in relative terms. As people grow older, they accumulate more experience in coping with difficulties and stress, and thus are better able to deal with anxiety. And the age^2 coefficient is 0.000, which shows that there may be a non-linear relationship between age and anxiety levels. There may be a tendency for anxiety levels to increase slightly with age. This non-linear relationship suggests that the effect of age on anxiety levels is not a simple linear change, but presents different effects at different ages.

- Relationship between gender and anxiety levels

Gender showed a significant negative correlation with anxiety levels, indicating that men generally have lower levels of anxiety than women. From a socio-cultural perspective, there may be a number of factors that contribute to this difference. Males are typically assigned higher social role expectations, and these expectations may prompt males to be more inclined to mask their anxiety and thus exhibit lower levels of anxiety. Women, on the other hand, may be more inclined to express their emotions, including anxiety, and so show higher levels of anxiety in the data.

- Relationship between partner relationship and anxiety levels

Anxiety levels showed a significant positive correlation with partnership, implying that respondents in a partnership may face higher levels of anxiety. In a partnership, individuals need to deal with various aspects such as emotional communication, sharing of responsibilities, and financial planning. In addition, for some individuals, the gap between expectations and reality of the partnership may also lead to anxiety.

- Relationship between family size and anxiety levels

The larger the family size, the higher the level of anxiety is likely to be. A large family

implies the need for mutual family members to take care of and coordinate with each other, which will bring about more economic pressure, complexity in interpersonal relationship handling and tediousness in family affairs. From the economic point of view, a larger family size requires more financial resources to maintain the family life. Moreover, the network of interpersonal relationships in a large family is more complicated, and differences of opinion among family members are more likely to lead to conflicts and contradictions, which further aggravate the anxiety of individuals..

4.2 Benchmark Regression Analysis

Table 4 Benchmark Regression Analysis Table

VARIABLES	(1) anxiety
wfh	-0.000 (0.004)
age	-0.003*** (0.001)
age ²	0.000** (0.000)
sex	-0.046*** (0.003)
edu	-0.008*** (0.003)
incouple	0.028*** (0.003)
numfu	0.008*** (0.002)
numk	-0.009*** (0.002)
selfemp	-0.018*** (0.004)
pubwrkr	-0.006* (0.003)
hours	-0.001*** (0.000)
hourly_earnings	-0.000 (0.000)
_cons	2.040*** (0.023)
N	66839.000
r2	0.008

*** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

- The relationship between working from home and anxiety levels

Surprisingly, our findings reveal no significant link between the intensity of working from home and anxiety levels ($\beta=-0.000$, $p>0.1$), challenging common assumptions about the psychological impact of working from home. It is possible that in the process of adapting to working from home, people mitigate the potential impact of a change in workplace by adapting their work styles, utilizing technology to stay socially connected.

- Non-linear relationship between age and anxiety levels

The results suggest a U-shaped relationship between age and anxiety levels, with middle-aged workers experiencing the lowest anxiety ($\beta=-0.003$, $p<0.01$ for the linear term; $\beta=0.000$, $p<0.05$ for the quadratic term). When the age is small, the negative effect of age dominates, and the anxiety levels decreases slowly with age; however, as the age increases further, the positive effect of age^2 gradually appears, which may lead to an upward trend of anxiety levels after a certain age.

- Relationship between gender and anxiety levels

The significant gender coefficient ($\beta=-0.046$, $p<0.01$) reveals lower anxiety levels among male employees, but this effect is moderated by family structure and work arrangements.

- Relationship between education level and teaching anxiety levels

Education level was significantly and negatively correlated with anxiety ($\beta=-0.008$, $p<0.01$), suggesting that higher educational attainment is associated with lower anxiety levels. This may be due to the fact that more educated individuals typically possess greater problem-solving skills and access to resources that help them manage stress more effectively.

- Relationship of partnership with family size and anxiety levels

Family size, as measured by the number of minor children ($numfu$), was positively associated with anxiety ($\beta=0.008$, $p<0.01$). Larger families often entail greater financial and caregiving responsibilities, which can contribute to heightened anxiety levels. Interestingly, the total number of children ($numk$) showed a negative relationship with anxiety ($\beta=-0.009$, $p<0.01$), possibly indicating that while young children increase stress, older children may provide emotional or practical support that alleviates anxiety.

- Relationship between occupation type and anxiety levels

Self-employed individuals exhibited lower anxiety levels compared to their employed counterparts ($\beta=-0.018$, $p<0.01$), likely due to the greater autonomy and flexibility associated with self-employment. Similarly, public sector workers reported slightly lower anxiety levels than private sector employees ($\beta=-0.006$, $p<0.1$), possibly reflecting the stability and benefits associated with public sector jobs.

- Relationship between working hours and anxiety levels

working hours were negatively correlated with anxiety ($\beta=-0.001$, $p<0.01$), although the effect size was small. This suggests that while longer working hours may increase stress, they may also provide a sense of purpose and accomplishment that mitigates anxiety to some extent.

4.3 OLS Regression Analysis

Table 5 OLS Regression Analysis Table

VARIABLES	(1) anxiety
numfu	0.010*** (0.003)
sex	-0.032*** (0.007)
sex_numfu	-0.003' (0.002)
_cons	1.893*** (0.010)
N	66839.000
r2	0.004

*** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$

Table 5 analysis reveals significant effects of family size, gender, and their interaction on employee anxiety levels. Specifically, an increase in family size (numfu) is associated with a higher level of anxiety ($\beta=0.010$, $p<0.01$). This finding suggests that larger families may impose greater financial and caregiving responsibilities, which can contribute to heightened stress and anxiety among employees.

Gender also plays a significant role in shaping anxiety levels. Male employees exhibit lower anxiety levels compared to their female counterparts ($\beta=-0.032$, $p<0.01$). This gender difference may be attributed to societal expectations and cultural norms, which often encourage men to suppress emotional expression, while women may feel more culturally permitted to acknowledge and report anxiety.

Moreover, the interaction term between gender and family size (sex_numfu) is marginally significant ($\beta=-0.003$, $p<0.1$), indicating that the impact of family size on anxiety levels is moderated by gender. Specifically, the positive relationship between family size and anxiety is stronger for female employees than for male employees. This suggests that women may bear a disproportionate share of family-related responsibilities, which exacerbates their anxiety levels in larger households.

VII. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions of the Study

Our results hint at the fact that working from home per se does not significantly affect the anxiety levels of employees. Instead, anxiety is more strongly influenced by a

host of demographic and job-related factors such as age, gender, educational attainment, family size, and employment status. These findings suggest that employee well-being is determined by the complex interplay of individual circumstances with broader contextual factors, not solely by whether employees are working from home or physically present in the workplace.

The results of this study have shown the need for organizations to go beyond just adjusting workplace configurations in trying to improve employees' mental health. A deeper understanding of the different factors affecting anxiety is needed to come up with specific policies to address the root causes of employee stress.

Key Insights from the Empirical Analysis

5.1.1 Age and Anxiety Levels

There is a U-shaped curve in the association between anxiety levels and age. Anxiety levels are often greater among younger workers and progressively lower as they get closer to middle age. But among elderly workers, anxiety starts to increase once more. This pattern probably reflects the benefits middle-aged people receive from their life experience and improved coping skills, which help them better handle stress at work. While older employees may feel anxious due to health issues, nearing retirement, or a sense of career stagnation, younger employees frequently struggle with financial strains, job uncertainty, and a lack of security.

5.1.2 Gender Differences

According to our research, there are notable differences in anxiety levels across the sexes, with female employees routinely reporting higher anxiety than their male colleagues. This discrepancy may be partially explained by social norms that forbid men from publicly expressing emotional difficulties, but women may feel more culturally accepted for admitting and reporting concern. Furthermore, women frequently shoulder a disproportionate amount of the caregiving load, especially in homes with small children. Women may experience increased stress and anxiety due to the combined strain of juggling work and family responsibilities.

5.1.3 Family Size and Anxiety

The influence of family dynamics on anxiety levels is particularly noteworthy. Employees with larger families, especially those with young children (numfu), face heightened anxiety, largely driven by the compounded pressures of financial obligations and caregiving responsibilities. Interestingly, the total number of children (numk) shows a negative correlation with anxiety, suggesting that older children may provide practical or emotional support that helps reduce stress for parents. This indicates that family support networks, especially as children grow older, can act as a buffer against anxiety.

5.1.4 Education Level

An key defense against anxiety is education. Because education gives people better problem-solving abilities and more stress-reduction resources, employees with greater education levels typically report lower anxiety levels. Higher educated people are also typically better equipped to handle uncertainty and negotiate challenging work circumstances. This emphasizes how crucial educational attainment is for fostering

psychological resilience over the long term. In addition to improving cognitive abilities, education increases prospects for social and economic security, which also helps people feel less anxious.

5.1.5 Occupational Status

Anxiety levels are also significantly influenced by one's employment situation. Due to the increased autonomy and flexibility that self-employment provides, people who work for themselves typically report lower levels of anxiety than those who work for an employer. In a similar vein, workers in the public sector report somewhat lower anxiety levels than those in the private sector; this pattern may be related to the security, predictability, and advantages that come with government jobs. These results imply that stability and occupational autonomy are important components in lowering anxiety.

5.1.6 Working Hours

Our study's complex link between anxiety and working hours is an interesting finding. Our data reveals a modest negative connection, which defies the common belief that longer work hours lead to more stress. This suggests that longer work hours may, in certain situations, create a sense of accomplishment or purpose that reduces anxiety. This could be seen as proof that workers who put in more hours might experience a sense of fulfillment, achievement, or financial stability that helps to counteract some of the worry that comes with having a lot of work. This research casts doubt on oversimplified notions of labor intensity and indicates that employee well-being is more significantly influenced by the caliber of work experience than by the number of hours worked.

5.2 Policy recommendations

For Enterprises:

- Arrange work reasonably according to different employees:Employers should create customized work programs that cater to each worker's specific needs while accounting for variables like age, education, and career path. For instance, career mentoring programs may be beneficial for younger workers, but more autonomy in work arrangements may be necessary for more seasoned workers.

- Focus on employee mental health: Employers should prioritize the mental health of their staff by offering resources like remote counseling services and stress management training.

- Reasonable arrangement of rest breaks for employees:To improve productivity, businesses can encourage staff members to schedule regular rest periods while working from home. To enable employees to modify their rest time in accordance with their individual needs, a flexible rest time policy may be considered.

- Work-family balance training: To help employees of an organization understand the boundaries between work and life and lessen work-life stress, provide training on how to establish defined work and rest breaks.

For employees:

- Use flexibility to improve themselves: Actively utilising the flexibility of working from

home and upgrading their education through online career courses or professional training will not only help reduce anxiety, but also enhance their career competitiveness and overall sense of well-being.

- Setting clear work and rest schedules: Employees are advised to set clear work and rest schedules to avoid work taking time away from their personal lives, thus reducing the stress caused by blurred boundaries.

- Manage family relationships: For employees with large families, it is recommended that they focus on family relationships to reduce the negative impact of family factors on their emotions at work.

- Maintaining social and physical health:Employees are encouraged to communicate with colleagues on a regular basis and participate in team activities to enhance team cohesion and reduce isolation. At the same time, it is recommended to take a moderate amount of physical exercise between jobs to promote physical and mental health.

5.3 Research Limitations and Future Research Directions

While this study provides valuable insights into the effects of working from home on employee well-being, it has certain limitations. First, the cross-sectional nature of the data limits our ability to establish causal relationships between variables. Second, the study sample was mainly from France and the findings may not be applicable to employees in other cultures. Future research could use longitudinal data to explore the long-term effects of working from home and compare differences in employee well-being across cultures.

This study sheds light on how the shift to working from home has reshaped the lives and well-being of employees. It uncovers both opportunities and challenges, highlighting the important role of factors such as age, gender, and family size in generating anxiety levels. By formulating differentiated support policies and optimising work arrangements, companies can help employees better adapt to the work-at-home mode and enhance their overall well-being. At the same time, employees should also actively adjust their work and lifestyle to effectively cope with the challenges posed by working at home and achieve work-life harmony.

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