

Research on the Impact of Remote Working on the Work-Life Balance of Marketers

Ge Jin*, Xiaotun Chen

School of Economics and Management, Shaanxi University of Science & Technology, Xi'an, China

Email: *1751001541@qq.com

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Abstract

The rapid development of digital technology is profoundly reshaping the way organizations work, and the rise of remote work is particularly notable. Marketers are at the core of the model because of the information-intensive, communication-dependent and result-visible nature of their work. Based on the fundamental labor relationship contract of “companies pursuing profits and employees fulfilling their duties”, this paper uses literature research and case analysis to explore the dual impact of remote work on the work-life balance of marketers. The study dissects the positive effects of remote work in enhancing work autonomy, flexibility, and saving commuting costs. At the same time, the possible negative impacts and dual effects on enterprises were demonstrated. In addition, this paper takes emerging live-streaming marketers as an example to deeply analyze the actual performance of this group in remote work. The research shows that while remote work enhances autonomy, it may also exacerbate the blurring of the boundary between work and life. To this end, a systematic approach should be taken at three levels: organizational strategy, institutional support, and individual action, in order to build healthy and sustainable remote working labor relations. This study provides important insights for individuals and enterprises to optimize relevant management strategies and achieve synergistic development of individuals and organizations.

Keywords

Remote Work, Marketers, Work-Life Balance, Labour Relations, Live-Streaming Sales, Boundary Theory

1. Introduction

Since the 21st century, the digital revolution, represented by Internet, cloud computing and mobile communication technologies, has profoundly changed the tra-

ditional form of the workplace. Remote work, as a work arrangement that breaks geographical limitations and relies on information technology for communication and collaboration, has gradually evolved from a marginal flexible benefit to the mainstream work mode. Among the many occupational groups, marketers have become important practitioners of remote work because of the inherent characteristics of their work, such as its high reliance on information processing, customer communication and relationship maintenance, and quantifiable assessment of work results. Through tools such as email, instant messaging software, video conferencing, and customer relationship management systems, they can effectively complete tasks such as market analysis, planning, customer negotiation, and brand promotion. However, as the workplace moves from the office to the home or other space, the traditional physical and psychological boundaries between “work” and “life” become blurred (Liu, Cheng, & Wang, 2023).

Existing research has mostly explored the pros and cons of remote work from the perspective of individual employees, but has paid less attention to the labor relationship basis on which it is based. The existence of any employment relationship is based on a fundamental contract: employees pay and develop in exchange for labor, and companies make profits and achieve sustainable development by organizing production and operation. Based on this, this paper, based on the framework of labor relations theory, uses literature research and case analysis to analyze the impact of remote work on the work-life balance of marketers. The study not only focuses on its positive and negative effects on individual employees, but also delves into how these effects further affect the operational efficiency and management costs of the company, thereby influencing the stability of labor relations and the healthy development of the organization. This article will focus on analyzing the actual performance of live-streaming sales practitioners in remote work. The study aims to formulate scientific and reasonable remote work policies for enterprises, help marketers adapt to the new working mode, and provide comprehensive references that take into account the interests of both employers and employees and have theoretical depth and practical guidance significance. The theoretical contribution of this study lies in the innovative application of boundary theory to the field of marketing, while integrating the analysis of this topic from both individual and organizational perspectives, enriching the application scenarios of boundary theory in the field of career research. It also provides practical references for individuals and enterprises to optimize relevant management strategies and achieve the coordinated development of individuals and organizations.

2. Related Concepts and Theoretical Basis

2.1. Work-Life Balance Theory

Work-life balance refers to the harmonious state in which an individual feels satisfied and fulfilled between work and life. It is not about devoting exactly the same amount of time to work and life, but about being able to flexibly allocate time and energy to meet the needs of different roles, thereby achieving overall well-being

and reducing role conflicts. For marketers, this balance is not only about their personal well-being and mental health, but also directly affects their work engagement, creativity and final performance output (Xie & Jin, 2024). The concept of work-life balance originated from the study of “work-family conflict” in the second half of the 20th century. Early research held that work and family were two competing fields where the demands of one would deplete the resources of the other, leading to conflict. As society developed, this concept gradually extended to non-family areas of life such as leisure, health and personal development.

2.2. Boundary Theory

Boundary theory provides a powerful analytical tool for understanding work-life balance in remote work. The theory suggests that individuals manage and distinguish different roles by creating and maintaining physical, temporal, and psychological boundaries between work and life. Clear demarcation of physical boundaries (such as the office), time boundaries (such as working hours), and behavioral boundaries (such as dress and speech) helps with role transitions and reduces conflicts. The essence of remote work is the deconstruction and remodeling of these traditional boundaries, which turns the home environment into a workspace where working hours and living hours interpenetrate, thus placing extremely high demands on an individual’s ability to manage boundaries.

2.3. Overview of Remote Work

Remote work is a new way of working based on the development of the Internet and communication technology. It refers to employees working outside the company through the Internet and other technical means. It is achieved through remote control software, teleconferencing, video conferencing and other tools, eliminating the reliance on physical locations in traditional work (Huo, Gong, Li, & Nie, 2020). It helps businesses reduce operating costs and enables workers to break through space limitations, increase productivity and save commuting time. Compared with the traditional centralized working model, remote work has unique advantages and is increasingly popular among businesses and workers. Remote work mainly has the following three characteristics:

The first is that the workplace is far from the business premises of the employer. The second is to rely on communication technology to get the job done. Third, the subject is a worker who has established a labor relationship with the employer, rather than a temporary employment or cooperative relationship.

2.4. The Nature of Marketing Personnel’s Work

1) Result-oriented and performance pressure. Marketing efforts are often closely linked to quantifiable key performance metrics such as sales volume, market share, brand awareness, and customer conversion rate. This puts marketers under long-term high-intensity work pressure, and the volatility of performance brings about an unstable mental state.

2) Intensive communication and relationship dependence. The core of marketing is dealing with people, including internal teams (such as product, design departments) and external stakeholders (such as customers, channel partners, media). Frequent, high-quality communication is the key to success.

3) Creative needs and knowledge updates. Marketing requires practitioners to have a continuous creative output and a rapid learning ability to cope with the ever-changing market environment and the continuous emergence of new platforms and tools.

4) Non-standardization and flexibility of work tasks. Unlike assembly line work, marketers' tasks are often project-based and non-repetitive, requiring flexible strategy adjustments based on market feedback, and the work rhythm fluctuates greatly.

These characteristics determine marketers' inherent need for autonomy and flexibility in their work, and also make them more vulnerable to work uncertainty, performance pressure, and creative exhaustion.

3. An Analysis of the Impact of Remote Work on Marketers' Work-Life Balance

The impact of the remote working model on the work-life balance of marketers is not one-dimensional. While granting individuals greater autonomy, it also poses unprecedented challenges to their ability to manage boundaries, ultimately presenting a complex duality.

3.1. Positive Impact

Ideally, working remotely can significantly empower marketers. The positive impact is first reflected in an unprecedented increase in work autonomy and flexibility. Marketers are able to independently plan their work schedules and locations based on the nature of the tasks, their own energy fluctuations, and the immediate needs of family life, such as caring for children and dealing with urgent matters. It enables employees to engage in deep thinking and content creation when they are inspired, and to assign transactional work when they are not in a good state, thus finding a dynamic balance in the complex and ever-changing role demands. Secondly, the elimination of commuting costs leads to a double saving of time and energy. The hours saved each day can be converted into valuable resources for learning improvement, family companionship, or personal relaxation, providing the necessary physical and mental basis for maintaining long, efficient work (Ge, Lin, Jiang, & Chen, 2022). Finally, personalized work environments further enhance the work experience. Remote work allows marketers to choose the most suitable working environment based on the nature of the task and personal preference, such as working from home for focused creation, shared office space for collaborative communication, and face-to-face with clients for closer market access. This autonomy in choosing the environment helps to enhance productivity and creativity (Li & Xia, 2023; Huo et al., 2020; Hunter, 2019).

3.2. Negative Effects

However, when there is a lack of clear strategy and personal self-discipline, remote work can also easily trigger a series of negative effects. While remote work offers location flexibility, it can also lead to a blurring of the boundary between work and life. When working from home, the home space overlaps with the work space; Working in a non-fixed location, such as a cafe or on the go, can lead to instability in the environment and poor privacy, further exacerbating the difficulty of role transition. This is followed by a sense of social isolation and restricted career development (Huo et al., 2020). While digital tools ensure the basic smoothness of task collaboration, the lack of informal, face-to-face interactions (such as casual chats in the tea room or casual conversations during lunch) weakens the social and emotional connections among team members, which may not only lead to loneliness but also cause marketers to be invisibly “marginalized” within the organization. Missed access to implicit information, building relationships, and promotion opportunities. In addition, the pressure of self-management and distractions from the external environment constitute another challenge. The responsibility for maintaining boundaries has almost entirely shifted to individual employees, placing higher demands on their self-discipline, time management, and resilience. At the same time, various distractions in the home environment, if not handled properly, will constantly disrupt the workflow and instead increase the difficulty and pressure of completing tasks, creating a risk of swinging between “work slackness” and “overwork” (Liu, 2020; Russell et al., 2009).

3.3. The Dual Effects of Remote Work on Enterprises

The remote working model is also a double-edged sword for businesses. Ideally, it can reduce the turnover rate by enhancing employee satisfaction and organizational loyalty (Liu, 2024), thereby saving a significant amount of recruitment and training costs; At the same time, the reduction in office space costs directly optimizes operating costs, and the breakthrough of geographical constraints enables the company to attract high-quality talent nationwide and even globally, enhancing its human resource advantage (Liu, 2024). In addition, employees freed from the pressure of commuting tend to maintain a better working state, which not only enhances personal productivity but also builds the business resilience of the enterprise in response to emergencies, providing support for stable development.

However, if not managed properly, the hidden risks of the remote working model can also harm the company’s interests. The lack of information richness and immediate feedback in remote communication can slow project progress and suppress the team’s culture of innovation, thereby weakening the core competitiveness of the enterprise. Physical space isolation also dilutes the infiltration effect of organizational culture, leading to a decrease in employees’ sense of belonging and intrinsic drive to the enterprise and a reduction in team cohesion. More crucially, traditional management paradigms can fail in remote Settings, and compa-

nies can easily fall into the dilemma of “overcontrol” or “lack of regulation” if they fail to establish a matching, results-based performance evaluation system: The former will suppress employee autonomy and push up management costs, while the latter may lead to underperformance, a decline in the return on human capital investment, and ultimately endanger the healthy development of the enterprise (Liu, 2020).

4. Case Studies (In the Case of Live-Streaming Salespeople)

Live-streaming sales, as a new form of digital marketing for remote work, provide a typical sample for us to understand its dual impact.

4.1. Positive Impact

In the live-streaming e-commerce model, the positive impact of remote working has been intensively and multi-dimensionally demonstrated:

1) A significant increase in work autonomy and creativity. Hosts and teams have a high degree of autonomy over live content, style, and process, achieving deep personalized marketing. In terms of time management, teams can flexibly plan the timing of product selection, preparation and live streaming, enhancing work motivation and innovation space.

2) The elimination of commuting costs and the enhancement of personalized work environments. “Zero commuting” saves streamers a lot of time and energy costs that can be invested in professional learning and state recovery to form a sustainable accumulation of human capital. At the same time, the well-crafted personalized live-streaming room not only optimizes the work experience but also constitutes a unique marketing scenario and brand symbol that can directly empower marketing results.

3) The immediacy of performance feedback and the directness of incentives. Real-time feedback on sales data and audience interaction builds an efficient learning and improvement loop of “execution-feedback-optimization”, accelerating the professional growth of streamers. In addition, their compensation structure is often closely linked to sales performance, and the “result-oriented” principle creates a strong internal incentive.

4.2. Negative Impacts

In contrast, live-streaming sales amplify the negative effects of remote work, posing a serious challenge to practitioners and businesses:

1) The complete disintegration of the work-life boundary. For some live-streamers who do live-streaming from home, the physical connection between the home space and the live-streaming space makes the boundary signal of “leaving the workplace” disappear; In terms of time, customer inquiries and product reviews break through fixed time periods, forming a “24-hour on-call”; Psychologically, the performance pressure that “live streaming results are directly related to income” makes it difficult for streamers to switch from “work role” to “life role”,

posing an extremely high challenge to individual boundary management ability. Even if some streamers choose to work in professional live-streaming rooms, the boundary between their work and life can still be easily blurred.

2) High-intensity overexertion of emotional labor. Anchors need to maintain a high level of emotional engagement and performance in front of the camera for long periods of time. This continuous, high-intensity emotional labor can easily lead to emotional exhaustion and psychological exhaustion.

3) The transmission of individual risk to operational risk of the enterprise. The core performance, brand reputation and market value of an enterprise are deeply bound to the personal health, mental state and professional performance of a few core anchors. This high degree of dependence turns the individual risks of workers into operational risks of enterprises.

In summary, the case of live-streaming salespeople shows that the intrinsic effects of remote work can be triggered and amplified in specific circumstances. While demonstrating advantages such as work autonomy, environmental control, and performance incentives, it also exposes problems such as blurred boundaries, emotional drain, and risk transmission. This case warns us that a successful practice of remote work must be based on a deep understanding of the dual effects, making good use of its enabling advantages and using forward-looking institutional designs to prevent and defuse its potential risks.

5. Countermeasures and Suggestions

To effectively address the impact of remote work on the work-life balance of marketers and build sustainable labor relations, this study proposes the following countermeasures from three levels: organizational strategy, institutional support, and individual action.

5.1. Organizational Strategy Level

Enterprises should promote the shift of management paradigms from process control to result empowerment at the strategic level. Build a trust-based, goal-oriented performance responsibility system that gives marketers full autonomy in their work to stimulate their intrinsic motivation and creativity. At the same time, employee well-being should be elevated as a strategic element of human resource management, and soft metrics such as team health and employee engagement should be included in managers' performance evaluations to guide management to attach importance to the maintenance of human capital and avoid the risks of burnout and talent loss that may arise from remote work.

5.2. Institutional Support Layer

The institutional layer should focus on building clear, stable structural support. The top priority is to establish result-oriented performance evaluation and incentive-compatible mechanisms, such as promoting the OKR goal management system, linking compensation, bonuses and career development to it, and clarifying

the organization's value orientation. Secondly, technical support and cultural construction should be strengthened. First, internal email, online video conference rooms should be deployed, and third-party platforms such as Ding Talk should be introduced to facilitate communication and collaboration among members; Secondly, build a unified digital work platform, OA system, customer management system, etc., to enable online approval of business processes; Third, solidify weekly/monthly communication meetings, etc., to ensure team information synchronization; Fourthly, Regularly organize online team-building activities to promote social interaction and emotional connection among members, strengthen employees' sense of belonging and identity to the company, and enhance organizational cohesion. In addition, companies can offer a variety of remote work support to their employees, such as membership subsidies for shared office Spaces (like WPS, Baidu Netdisk, etc.), portable office equipment (like laptops, wireless microphones), and professional training, to help employees stay efficient and focused in different environments (Ge et al., 2022).

5.3. Individual Action Layer

At the individual level, marketers need to enhance their self-leadership skills and proactively adapt to the remote working model. Marketers should be flexible in choosing their workplace based on the type of task: choose a quiet environment when deep thinking is needed, and a space with good networking and communication conditions when collaboration is required (Olmsted, 1995). At the same time, consciously establish "mental switching rituals" between different locations to reinforce the sense of boundary between work and life. At the same time, one should master efficient working methods and communication skills, use tools such as time blocks and task lists to enhance concentration, and proactively and clearly communicate one's work progress, difficulties encountered, and support needs with superiors and colleagues. In addition, actively engage in social connections, actively participate in virtual socializing and continuously invest in capabilities to defend against the risk of marginalization and achieve synergy between individuals and the organization.

6. Conclusion

For marketers, remote work is by no means a simple "home benefit", but a profound transformation about work patterns, management systems, and personal lifestyles. Based on the fundamental labor relationship premise of "corporate profit" and "employee responsibility", this paper systematically analyzes the dual impact of this model on the work-life balance of marketers. The research shows that remote work has significant advantages in terms of enhancing autonomy and saving commuting costs, and can achieve a win-win situation for both employees and companies; But at the same time, the inherent blurring of boundaries, communication barriers and management challenges also pose risks of employee burnout, reduced collaboration efficiency and weakened organizational identity,

which will eventually pass on to the company as a loss of human capital efficiency and a weakening of core competitiveness. Through the analysis of the live-streaming salesperson case, we see the challenges of work-life balance in the new marketing format, which requires enterprise management strategies to be more forward-looking and humanized, with specific adjustments made at the organizational, institutional, and individual levels. In the future, remote work will show a more diversified development trend, no longer confined to the home space. The challenge for businesses and managers is how to support employees in achieving a balance between efficient work and healthy living in different environments, which requires more flexible institutional designs, smarter technical support, and more mature self-management capabilities. Only in this way can a long-term synergy between personal welfare and organizational development be achieved in a dynamic balance.

This study, based on literature review and a single case, has limited results. The case study focused only on the marketing subfield of live-streaming sales and did not cover other types of marketers such as B2B marketing and brand marketing, nor did it distinguish the differences in remote work among enterprises of different sizes. At the same time, there is no in-depth comparison of the differences in remote working practices across different cultural backgrounds (such as Europe, America and Asia), and a cross-cultural perspective can be introduced in the future to explore the moderating role of regional factors.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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