

WORKING-FROM-HOME OPTIONS AS A WORK-LIFE-BALANCE INDICATOR? THE CASE OF GENERATION Z AND WORKPLACE DESIGN PREFERENCES

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Abstract: *This study examines how generation z individuals assess the importance of achieving a perceived work-life-balance and whether they associate this balance with the availability of a working-from-home option as part of a workplace design. In light of current public debates regarding the potential revocation of remote work policies across various industries, the question arises as to how generation z employees would respond to such developments and how these responses might affect organizational loyalty. A cross-sectional, non-probability online survey was conducted to 529 generation z individuals with content on perceived importance of work-life-balance and association with the option of working from home. Data from six mandatory single-choice questions were analyzed and visualized. The results indicate that work-life-balance is considered as (very) important by the majority. Furthermore, a clear connection between work-life-balance and the availability of working-from-home options is perceived.*

Keywords: *Generation change; generation z; working attitudes; working-from-home option; work-life-balance*

INTRODUCTION

Generation Z (born 1995-2010) enters the labour market in significantly smaller numbers than previous generations, accompanied by a distinct shift in work values and expectations. Characterized by a strong orientation toward digital tools and environments (Wang, et al. 2022), Generation Z prioritizes work-life balance, flexible work structures, and a clear separation between work and personal life (Sand 2024). The desire for remote or hybrid work arrangements has become central to their perception of a suitable work environment (Benitz 2021; Rausch 2021). However, these evolving preferences may lead to tensions within traditional workplace structures and are sometimes misunderstood or underestimated (Gabrielova and Buchko 2021). This study investigates whether hybrid work models are essential for aligning job design with the expectations and motivational patterns of Generation Z (Silva, Oliveira and Martins 2024; Laor and Galily 2022; Spudich 2021).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study uses a cross-sectional methodology which enables a snapshot of examined variables (Sato, et al. 2024) and allows nuanced data-based decisions for research and logically coherent (Esteves, et al. 2023). The results have significant potential relevance for the range it moves as working attitudes and work environment (Sparrowe and Mayer 2011). Relationships will be investigated between various variables simultaneously and to test the hypothesis H01 about causal connections

between factors for further exploration (Maione 2024; Setia 2016):

H01: There is a strong perceived connection between work-life-balance and working-from-home options among Generation Z

To obtain reliable and valid data (Gilal, Bux and Gul 2011) a web-based survey targeting generation z was conducted. The relevant questions for this study are analysed and discussed, extracted and shown in the next chapters. Data were collected from November 2024 till December 2024 in a term about four weeks. Separate paragraph on questionnaire required confirmation of affiliation to target group, data storage and use and university’s guidelines and ethics (Zhang, Wolfram and Feicheng 2023). The online-survey consisted of three main sections as two job-related parts and one socio-demographic part. Criteria about appropriate completion time and response quality were considered. The data were processed, analysed and evaluated within special program and tool. Finally, about 529 respondents with an acceptable survey response rate about 52 % contributed value to the research (Burr, et al. 2025).

RESULTS

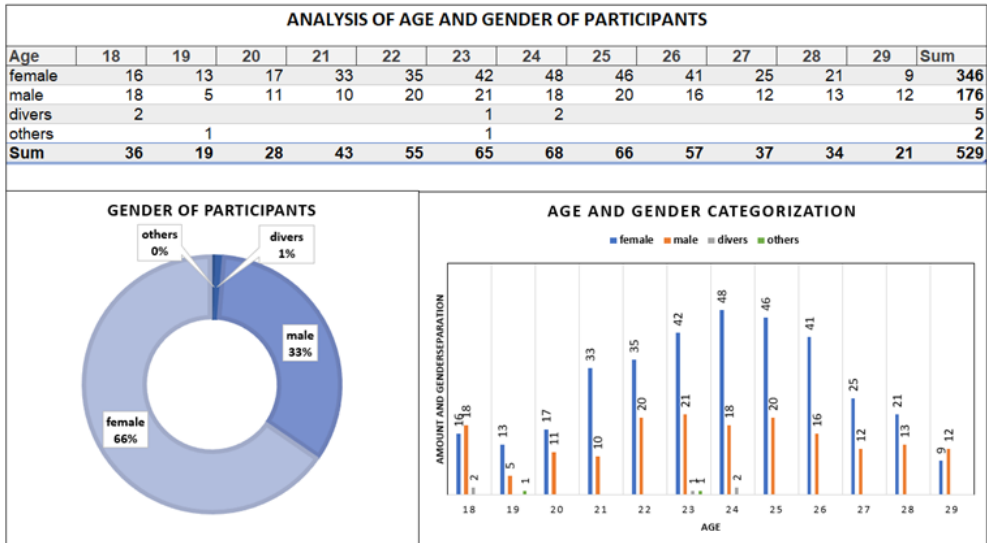
The survey’s socio-demographic replies show how the groups have been developed for categorization within ages, gender and current professions. The following table give an overview of given statements about gender and profession:

Table 1. Analysis of Profession/Job Categorization

ANALYSIS OF PROFESSION/JOB CATEGORIZATION									
Profession/Job	Employees	Workers	Civil Servants	Students	Trainees	Pupils	Self-employed	Others	Sum
female	89	3	5	203	24	13	4	5	346
male	49	5	2	79	12	21	7	1	176
divers	1			1	2	1			5
others				1		1			2
Sum	139	8	7	284	38	36	11	6	529

In case of profession/job, it is analyzed that about one third of participants pursue a current profession or vocational degree. About two third were students and pupils, a very less minority gave other statements. The next table shows gender and ages of participants. It indicates that one third were male participants and two thirds were female. The age-median amounts to about 23,6 years.

Table 2. Analysis of Age and Gender of Participants



In the mandatory survey items Q6-CS17, Q7-CS05, and Q8-CS06, respondents were first asked to indicate their preferred working-from-home arrangement, followed by an assessment of the perceived importance of work-life balance. Each item provided a single fixed-choice response format to ensure clarity in measuring perceived relevance. Q6-CS17 specifically captured preferences regarding remote work modalities:

Table 3. Selected questionnaire items relevant to address hypothesis H01

Q6 CS17	Which form of working from home do you prefer?	Select one (Mandatory)	☐ Working from home in hybrid ☐ Fully working from home option ☐ I do not prefer working from home ☐ I do not have an option of working from home
Q7 CS05	How important is having work-life-balance for you?	Select one (Mandatory)	☐ Very important ☐ Important ☐ Neutral ☐ Less important ☐ Not important
Q8 CS06	How strong do you see a connection between work-life-balance and the possibility of working from home?	Select one (Mandatory)	☐ Very strong ☐ Strong ☐ Neutral ☐ Less strong ☐ Not strong

The given replies of supreme Q6-CS17 are presented in the following figure no. 1:

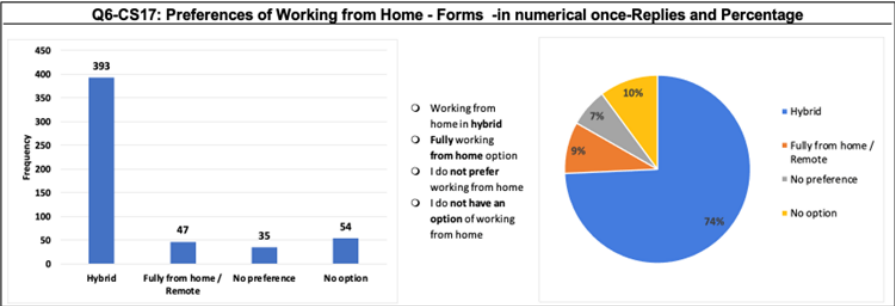


Figure 1: Q6-CS17 Preferences of Working from Home

The analysis of Q6-CS17 shows, that a preference of a hybrid form of working from home exists by 393 replies (74 %) and it is the majority of all given responses. Further important responses to questions no. 7 and 8 (as Q7 – CS05 and Q8 – CS06) are combined stated in the following figure 2 mainly in focus to answer hypothesis H01. The answer possibilities of given replies as ‘very’ important or ‘very’ strong and the possibilities of ‘less’ or ‘not’ important or strong are summarized in this figure, because the hypothesis H01 correlates to a statement if the option or possibility is important or strong connected in general.

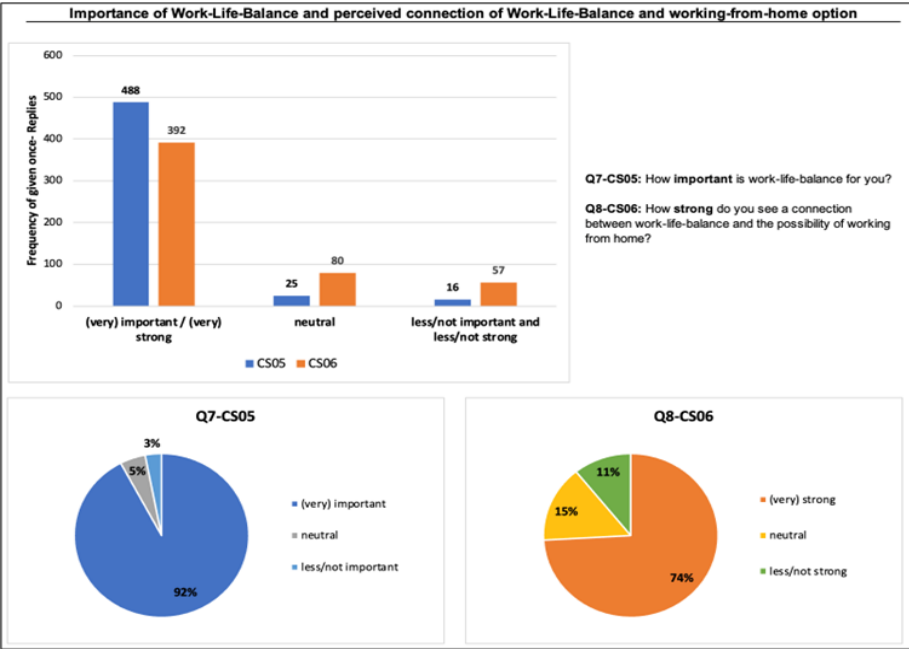


Figure 2: Analysis of given once-responses for Importance of Work-Life-Balance and perceived connection with working-from-home option

Figure 2 shows, that for 488 given replies or 92 % of participants, work-life-balance is (very) important. It also shows that 392 participants (74 %) see a (very) strong connection between work-life-balance and the possibility of working-from-home. The analyses provide that work-life-balance is (very) important for the categorical majority of participants (Q7-CS05), whilst the majority of participants see a (strong) connection between work-life-balance and the possibility of working from home (Q8-CS06).

DISCUSSION

Within a conducted survey to 529 Generation Z individuals as a cross-sectional study, to answering hypothesis H01 it was asked about stated level of importance of having a well-perceived work-live-balance and if they see a (strong) connection of a well-perceived work-life-balance with the fact of having working-from-home options in their workplace design. It was found, that 92 % of participants categorize a perceived work-life-balance as (very) important factor for them, whilst 74 % of given responses state a (very) strong connection of work-life-balance with having the working-from-home option in their workplace design. In further detail 83 % of participants prefer a working-from-home option as hybrid (74 %). Literature describes the absolute majority of all voters who vote for a specific option within a range about more than 50 % (Kraiczy, Cseh and Manlove 2023). Hypothesis H01 is positive tested. This study has methodological limitations due to non-probability sampling and gender imbalance, potentially affecting representativeness (Burr, et al. 2025; Mehrabi, et al. 2021). Mobile online surveys risk response bias from distraction, fatigue, or emotional influence tied to the topic (Dickinson 2024; Fang, Prybutok and Wen 2016). These factors may comprise response accuracy. Nevertheless, results emphasize the importance of work-life balance for Generation Z, shaped by their pandemic-era workforce entry (Ahlers, Mierich and Zucco 2021). Working-from-home is widely perceived as essential to the modern job design, enhancing flexibility, motivation, and loyalty (Wiebusch 2024; Sampat, et al. 2022). Although access to working-from-home varies by sector (Detlefsen 2024), it is seen as key to aligning with Generation Z's expectations and may represent a lasting shift in employment practice (von Schirach and Nomrowski 2024; Brien 2024; Monje-Amor 2023). Despite potential downsides such as reduced interaction, weakened team cohesion, and limited informal knowledge exchange (Voss 2024; Rausch 2021), the majority of industries continue to support work from home practices (Detlefsen 2024). For Generation Z, work from home practices are not just a convenience but a core factor in job decisions and employer image (Kaindl 2024; Voss 2024). Organizations are therefore advised to design flexible models that preserve collaboration and social connection (Self, Gorden and Jolly 2019).

CONCLUSION

The study provides important insights into how Generation Z perceives the role of work-life-balance within the context of modern workplace design, particularly in relation to working-from-home opportunities. The findings confirm that a signifi-

cant majority of participants consider work-life-balance to be highly important and perceive a meaningful connection between achieving this balance and the availability of working-from-home options. These results support hypothesis H01 and highlight the relevance of flexible work arrangements for this generation. Although the option of working from home is not universally feasible across all industry sectors, its role in shaping perceptions of work-life-balance and influencing employee retention should not be underestimated. Remote- or hybrid-working policies, therefore, constitute a relevant aspect of employer branding and talent management strategies aimed at attracting and retaining members of Generation Z. Future research should further explore the moderating variables that influence resignation intentions. Given the complexity of employment decisions, it remains uncertain to what extent stated preferences will translate into actual behaviour.

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ВЪЗМОЖНОСТИТЕ ЗА РАБОТА ОТ РАЗСТОЯНИЕ КАТО ИНДИКАТОР ЗА БАЛАНС МЕЖДУ ПРОФЕСИОНАЛЕН И ЛИЧЕН ЖИВОТ. СЛУЧАЯТ С ПОКОЛЕНИЕ Z И ПРЕДПОЧИТАНИЯТА ЗА ДИЗАЙН НА РАБОТНОТО МЯСТО

Резюме: Настоящото изследване разглежда как представителите на поколение Z оценяват значението на постигането на възприет баланс между професионалния и личния живот и дали свързват този баланс с възможността за работа от разстояние като част от работната среда. В контекста на текущите обществени дебати относно евентуалното премахване на политиките за дистанционна работа в различни индустрии, възниква въпросът как поколение Z би реагирало на такива промени и как тези реакции биха могли да повлияят на лоялността към организацията. Проведено е напречно, непредставително онлайн проучване сред 529 представители на поколение Z, съдържащо въпроси относно възприетото значение на баланса между работа и личен живот и връзката му с възможността за работа от вкъщи. Анализирани и визуализирани са данни от шест задължителни въпроса с единичен избор. Резултатите показват, че повечето участници смятат баланса между работа и личен живот за (много) важен. Освен това се възприема ясна връзка между този баланс и наличието на възможности за работа от разстояние.

Ключови думи: смяна на поколенията; поколение Z; нагласи към работа; възможност за работа от разстояние; баланс между работа и личен живот

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