

Performance of Remote Workers A Job-Demand-Resources Theory Perspective

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BACKGROUND

- While remote work (RW) has become increasingly common, its impact on employee performance remains unclear. Some studies suggest positive effects, others report no or even negative associations (e.g., Gajendran et al., 2024). These mixed findings point to a need for deeper insight into how and when RW influences performance.
- To address this, we examine key mechanisms—both well-studied (but often with inadequate measures) and novel—that may help explain the link between remote work intensity (RWI) and performance. Guided by the Job Demands-Resources model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2016), we explore how RWI shapes employees' experiences through varying demands and resources.
- Importantly, we distinguish between two facets of performance: task performance (core job duties) and contextual performance (extra-role behaviors like helping and taking initiative). By clarifying the working mechanisms behind RW's effects, we aim to support organizations and employees in fostering more effective remote work practices.

METHODS

- Cross-sectional data (part of a larger longitudinal study)
- Self-reported via online survey
- Swiss employees in hybrid or remote settings
- N=1150

MEASURES

- Autonomy; 4 items (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016)
- Social support; Supervisor & Coworker; 2x 4 items (Zimet, et al., 1988)
- Feedback; 3 items (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006)
- Role ambiguity; 3 items (Bowling et al., 2017)
- Interruptions at work; 6 items (Wilkes et al., 2018)
- Communication difficulties; 3 items (adapted from Jian et al., 2014)
- Performance measures; 13 items (Staufenbiel & Hartz, 2000)

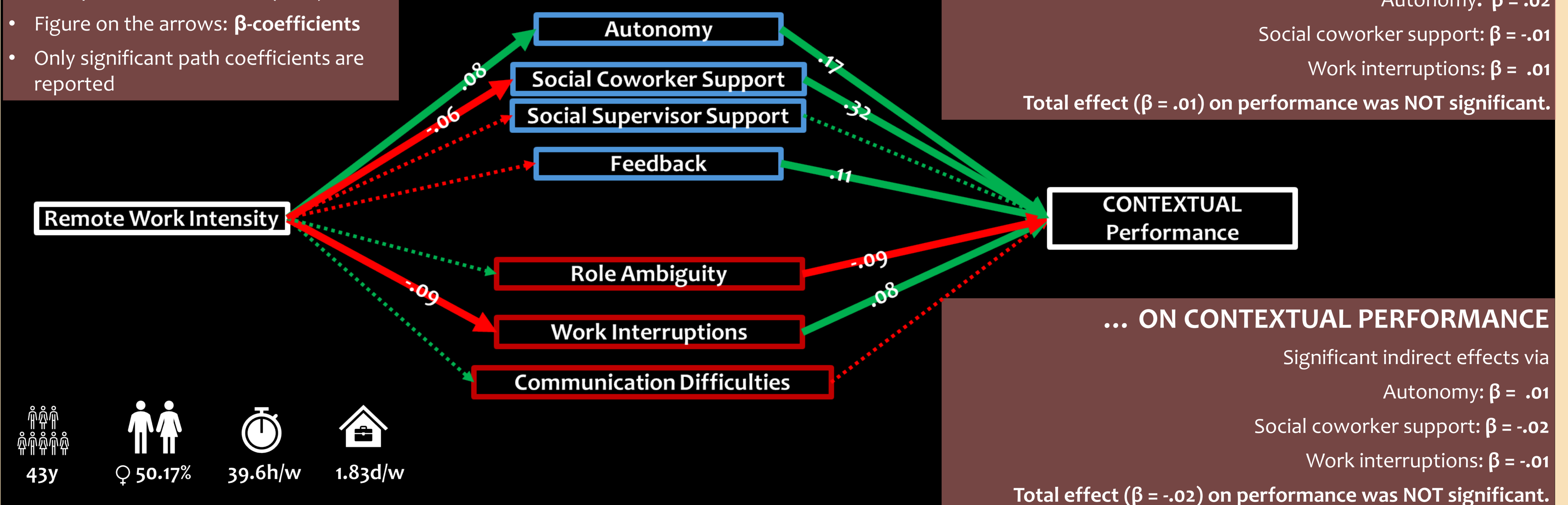
RESULTS

LEGEND

- Sig.
- ⋯ Not sig.
- 😊 Resources
- 😡 Demands

ANALYSIS

- Multiple-Mediated Model (SEM)
- Figure on the arrows: β -coefficients
- Only significant path coefficients are reported



CONCLUSIONS

No overall link was found between RWI and performance. Opposing indirect paths—both positive and negative—may explain this pattern.

- Only autonomy, coworker support, and interruptions showed significant indirect paths from RWI to both performance facets.
- Higher RWI was linked to lower coworker support, which related to poorer performance on both facets.
- Higher RWI was associated with fewer interruptions; this was linked to better task performance but worse contextual performance.
- Higher RWI was associated with greater autonomy, which was linked to better performance on both facets—consistent with prior research.

CONTACT

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REFERENCES

