Article

Occupational Stress-Induced Consequences to Employees in the Context of Teleworking from Home: A Preliminary Study

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Abstract: Challenges when many people moved their jobs from the office to home because of COVID-19 pandemic restrictions have put stress on employees' daily routine and professional lives. This article investigated the experience of individuals working not at the office and disclosed consequences of occupational stress such as mental and physical exhaustion, social deprivation, decreased work commitment, professional cynicism, and professional burnout. The preliminary study was based on a survey of 202 employees in Lithuania who were teleworking from home throughout the pandemic. According to the results, it can be assumed that teleworking had rather negative effects on employee wellbeing, as many teleworkers tended to suffer mental and physical exhaustion and social deprivation when working from home within pandemic. The psycho-emotional state of employees seems to be a key factor influencing the intellectual resources of an organization in a period of uncertainty.

Keywords: work-from-home; occupational stress; work commitment; burnout; Lithuania

1. Introduction

The prevailing pandemic of the COVID-19 virus has disrupted the usual rhythm of work–life. The situation forced a lot of people to telework from home. Even though this way of organizing work was known to some, it was completely new to others. Despite previous experience, most working-from-home employees faced significant challenges as the pandemic-influenced requirement to stay at home and work from home forced them to find a place to work at home and coordinate with people living together to carry out their work duties. Such significant changes naturally caused stress, which was heightened by fear of the disease. According to various studies, levels of stress, anxiety, depression, substance use, and self-harm have increased due to the COVID-19 pandemic (McCartan et al. 2021; Kopasker 2021). Additionally, teleworking from home has specific consequences along with increased stress and technostress (e.g., Niu et al. 2021; Belzunegui-Eraso and Erro-Garcés 2020; Petcu et al. 2021; Camacho and Barrios 2022; Zhang and Chen 2022; Soubelet-Fagoaga et al. 2022; Beckel and Fisher 2022; Kaltiainen and Hakanen 2022). It is important that, while short-term stress is mobilizing, prolonged stress has the opposite effect (Dhabhar 2018). Mobilizing stress encourages a person to define priorities, improve work outcomes, develop new skills, and better plan a time schedule, while negative stress causes fear and distrust to perform the work. Negative stress occurs when an individual is stimulated by negative factors for a long time, and prolonged stress has a cumulative effect (Camacho and Barrios 2022). The psychological effect of prolonged stress causes self-devaluation and feelings of hopelessness and inferiority, triggers anxiety, causes discomfort, worsens psychophysiological functions, reduces performance and professional capacity, and provokes symptoms of depression, physical disorders, etc. (Besse et al. 2018). Long-lasting occupational stress can make a person cynical (Grama and Todericiu 2016). In turn,

due to occupational cynicism, the employee may be less committed to the organization (Benn 2011).

Currently, teleworking has become the usual; nevertheless, there is still a research gap on the impact of mandatory telework and teleworking from home on employees' well-being in terms of occupational stress. In the time of the pandemic, it was difficult for researchers to identify the causes of stress and to distinguish whether telework itself affects the well-being of employees or whether the consequences are determined by the home situation and anxiety about the future (Beckel and Fisher 2022; Shipman et al. 2021). Recent studies analysed the range of consequences of telework, which also includes stress, but few focused on the consequences of occupational stress (e.g., Sandoval-Reyes et al. 2021; Popaitoon 2022; Soubelet-Fagoaga et al. 2022). Additionally, it is important to note that the individual perception of one's stress experience influences the subjective well-being of a person, despite the possible discrepancy with objective physiological indicators (Dhabhar 2018). This human feature also may have misled researchers on the effects of telework.

The above-mentioned information does not lose its relevance in the face of telework and hybrid work in the post-pandemic period. Thus, our preliminary study, which aimed to explore the effects of occupational stress based on feedback of individuals who teleworked from home within the period of pandemic restrictions, serves as a trigger to further research on the wellbeing of teleworkers.

The survey involved 202 respondents who revealed the role of occupational stress in the context of telework on their psycho-emotional state, work attitudes, and behaviour. The survey instrument was elaborated on the authors' theoretical model of the impact of occupational stress on work commitment, cynicism, and professional burnout. As the sample was small, non-parametric statistics were applied to analyse the research data.

The paper consists of three parts as follows: theoretical background with sub-sections on (i) occupational stress and its effects, (ii) links between stress, employee work commitment, occupational cynicism, and professional burnout, and (iii) teleworking challenges for employees; materials and methods; and finally, research results with sub-sections presenting aspects of (i) occupational stress links to employees' well-being in the context of telework, (ii) job satisfaction and its relationship to occupational cynicism and work commitment, and (iii) employees' attitudes related to teleworking and professional burnout. At the end of the paper, the insights and conclusions of the research are given.

Lastly, it should be noted that there is no consensus on a term of telework, and many terms are used synonymously and interchangeably in the literature (Maillot et al. 2022; Catană et al. 2022; Gohoungodji et al. 2022), e.g., telework, telecommuting, remote work, virtual work, distance work, mobile work, etc. Thus, in this paper, we chose a view of "teleworking that includes all work done remotely by means of technology" (Maillot et al. 2022, p. 1731).

2. Theoretical Background

2.1. Occupational Stress and Its Effects

Even though work gives economic security, status, and well-being, it can be a physical and mental burden and a cause of negative aspects such as frustration, feelings of collapse, conflicts, physical and mental diseases, or even death. Studies reveal that teleworking from home during quarantine in the pandemic increased employee stress (e.g., Sandoval-Reyes et al. 2021; Stanca and Tarbujaru 2022; Beckel and Fisher 2022; Popaitoon 2022; etc.). According to research results, the stress of teleworking from home worsens employees' mental health (Zhang and Chen 2022), leads employees to burnout (Kaltiainen and Hakanen 2022), negatively affects family well-being and productivity (Soubelet-Fagoaga et al. 2022; Sandoval-Reyes et al. 2021), and causes chronic diseases and pain intensification (Niu et al. 2021). More significant stress is reported by teleworkers raising young children (Pataki-Bittó and Kun 2022), by younger people, and by single people (Kaltiainen and Hakanen 2022). In the meantime, the results of studies in terms of gender differ. There is no consensus on whether men or women experience more stress from teleworking at home

(see, e.g., Petcu et al. 2021; Sandoval-Reyes et al. 2021; Beckel and Fisher 2022; Kaltiainen and Hakanen 2022; Chênevert et al. 2022).

The phenomenon of occupational stress was studied in detail by Levi (1990). He emphasized how work-related psychosocial stressors affect a person's health through emotional, cognitive, behavioural, and psychological processes defined by situational and individual factors. Stress is not an unequivocal phenomenon and can have different effects; for example, short-term stress helps a person to mobilize forces. This type of stress is beneficial because it can help to improve outcomes. Moreover, positive stress encourages task planning and the learning of new skills. Nonetheless, experienced stress is often negative and can be dangerous, as it generates fear and self-doubt. The negative psychological effect of stress, which is manifested in self-devaluation and feelings of hopelessness and inferiority and that provokes anxiety that makes it difficult to concentrate not only during work but also at home, was discussed by other researchers (Besse et al. 2018). A person under stress may experience sleep or eating disorders, one's relationships with colleagues can worsen, conflicts at work may become more frequent and aggressive, passive behaviour as well as more errors when performing tasks may occur, and the ability to concentrate may decrease.

Moreover, research has revealed that events related to COVID-19 were associated with more mental health symptoms compared to other stressful events, especially symptoms of anxiety, depression, insomnia, and dissociation (Olff et al. 2021). As a consequence of stress, there may be a decrease in creativity and personal effectiveness or a general feeling of dissatisfaction, irritability, or anxiety that prevents a person from performing tasks productively (Mishra 2014). Due to the mentioned reasons, a person under stress feels even more difficult, which may also lead to more serious health problems.

The most dangerous in terms of consequences for people is chronic stress, which occurs when the body is stimulated by various negative internal and external factors for a long time, such as long-term negative life events, e.g., unhappy marriage, unloved work, poverty, etc. (Yao et al. 2019). The main signs of chronic stress are excessive haste and uncontrollability of emotions, and the consequences are anxiety, feeling of fatigue, reduced working capacity, symptoms of depression, physical disorders, and a higher risk of death (Besse et al. 2018). Therefore, the toxicity of long-term stress manifests by causing unpleasant feelings, negatively affecting the organism, reducing performance, etc.

One of the types of stress is occupational stress, which is described as the reaction of an employee to the workplace that poses challenges to one. Occupational stress is caused by the organizational environment, the climate within it, and conflicts that arise due to unclear work requirements (Hashmi 2015), while according to Besse et al. (2018), stress is often caused by pressure to perform the work, which results from an imbalance between the needs of the environment and the confidence in one's ability to satisfy those needs. Another cause of occupational stress may be excessive commitment to the organization (Uriesi 2019) and changes in the work environment (Wisse and Sleebos 2016). Closely related to occupational stress is time stress, which occurs when a person starts worrying about time or lack of it. When working, people are faced with certain deadlines, during which tasks need to be completed, and as the number of tasks increases, tension increases, and the employee under stress may no longer properly complete the work (Imeokparia and Ediagbonya 2013). Although there are those who claim that, depending on how the employee understands work requirements, the consequences of stress may not cause any harm (Wisse and Sleebos 2016), similar to negative stress, occupational stress can cause the employee physical (fatigue, high blood pressure, dense heart rate, dizziness or headaches, jaw and back pains, inability to concentrate and feeling of confusion, suppression of the immune system, or even chronic pain) or psychological (poor work performance, increased absenteeism, lower productivity) symptoms (Hashmi 2015). In addition, occupational stress weakens people's cognitive abilities, reduces motivation, and causes negative emotions (Siegrist and Wahrendorf 2016). When stress at work does not diminish and becomes long-term, it can have influences on professional and organizational levels (Lichner et al. 2018;

Sabagh et al. 2018). Chronic stress at work can lead to thought wandering (i.e., distraction, lack of concentration) because chronic stressors destroy psychological and physiological resources of a person that are needed to focus, and it is also possible that employees use thought wandering as a tool to escape the present moment and to not think about a difficult reality and be led by emotions (Crosswell et al. 2019).

Psychological fatigue and suffering and dissatisfaction with work can be distinguished as direct consequences of chronic occupational stress (Na et al. 2018), while in a broader sense, it can be claimed that long-term stress experienced at work can lead to various illnesses, bad mood, negatively effects of job outcomes, a decrease in commitment to work, occupational cynicism, and occupational burnout (Kim et al. 2019). "Digital stress" refers to mental health, sleep quality (Rohwer et al. 2020), sadness, and even insomnia (Hernandez 2020). Researchers also note that work–life imbalance causes emotional exhaustion and correlates with family problems. (Von Bergen et al. 2019; Vladut and Kallay 2010). Therefore, even though occupational stress occurs only in the work environment and chronic stress can be caused by other factors, both occupational and chronic stress have very similar negative effects on a person's physical and psychological conditions, as well as the quality of one's work. As claimed by Quick and Henderson (2016), occupational stress is not an acute condition that can be quickly cured—it is a chronic illness that requires us to understand the history of its existence, and then to try to find protection, prevention, and intervention alternatives. On the other hand, as Beckel and Fisher (2022) pointed out, the results of stress research are ambiguous, and the understanding of employees' mental health due to working from home is not clear, since it is difficult to distinguish the reasons for remote work from the reasons for home life.

2.2. Links between Stress, Employee Work Commitment, Occupational Cynicism, and Professional Burnout

Long-term stress has a negative impact not only on the employee, but also on the organization. One of the aspects affected by chronic work stress is the commitment to the organization, described as a strong emotional attachment and a desire to stay in a particular organization for as long as possible. Commitment to the organization can be determined by factors such as emotions, beliefs, or even the relationship with the organization formed over a particular time. Meyer and Allen (1991) presented a three-component model of organizational commitment that consists of affective commitment or a desire, continuance commitment or a need, and normative commitment or an obligation to maintain employment in an organization. Each of the components contributes to the likelihood that the employee will stay in the organization for a longer period. Employees who demonstrate affective commitment voluntary remain in the organization, as they feel recognized and valued; employees who are committed to continue the work remain in the company because the job allows them to meet the needs of their desired lifestyle (Radzuan et al. 2020), and employees who feel a normative commitment to the organization remain there due to normative pressure, such as loyalty and a sense of duty, family expectations, and pre-promotion in the organization (Pulungan et al. 2020).

There are four conceptual categories of factors modelling the employee's normative/formal commitment to the organization: personal characteristics, work characteristics, interpersonal relationships in the organization, and involvement in work (Kavaliauskienė 2012). Marital status in the category of personal characteristics is determined by the number of children in the family, and the following factor affects those employees who raise the youngest child in the family, which means that raising a small child reduces commitment to the organization. In the group of work characteristics, the following aspect of organizational support should be noted: the evaluation of performance and the remuneration received according to it is very important to the employees, i.e., if an employee does not feel properly valued, one's commitment to the organization may diminish. The category of interpersonal relationships in the organization defines satisfaction with the job and the manager and describes the psychological relationship between the organization and the

employee, i.e., the system of values. The fourth group, involvement in work, defines such parameters as the field and form of activity, general work experience, and responsibilities; all these parameters determine how strongly the employee is involved in the work. Both individual and organizational aspects can be affected by occupational stress and thus have a negative impact on the organizational commitment of employees.

Another serious consequence of stress is occupational cynicism, defined as a negative attitude of an employee to work (Dean et al. 1998). At the organizational level, organizational cynicism is defined, which is particularly detrimental to the employer, because it reduces productivity in the company (Kim et al. 2019). Cynicism is particularly common in an organization when employees cannot trust the organization, and this results in decreased employee satisfaction and commitment to work and a reluctance to contribute to organizational changes (Grama and Todericiu 2016). In the study of Kim et al. (2019), they established that organizational cynicism is increased by stress at work and decreased by co-workers' confidence and transformational leadership, a process during which a leader not only considers the needs of member of the organization, but also increases their motivation. Mousa (2017) highlighted key factors that can affect employee cynicism, such as lack of recognition, disagreement with organizational values, weak work autonomy, excessive workload, lack of proper management, unrealistic job goals, insufficient social support, feeling of rejection, poorly paid salaries, poor communication in the organization, conflict situations, and the promotion of nepotism. All of the mentioned factors suggest that cynicism can occur due to the company's inability to organize work properly. Moreover, when changes take place in the organization, and they inevitably took place during the COVID-19 period, the environment for organizational cynicism is particularly favourable. Research has shown that organizational cynicism has a significant impact on changes at the organizational level and hinders the process of change itself, resulting in a loss of money and time (Grama and Todericiu 2016). When speaking about the consequences of cynicism, it is important to note that it can be a cause of mistrust, professional misconduct, and burnout (Rose et al. 2017).

Long-term stress not only leads to a decrease in the employee's commitment to the organization and the emergence of occupational cynicism, but it can also affect the occupational burnout of an employee, which is described as the long-term dissatisfaction of failing to adapt to work requirements caused by chronic stress at work (Salvagioni et al. 2017). Occupational burnout is characterized by a long process of development that is marked by physical and mental symptoms. Therefore, unlike stress that can occur suddenly due to difficult situations at work, occupational burnout does not develop as rapidly and is a prolonged reaction to failures (Pines and Keinan 2005). Maslach and Jackson (1981) identified occupational burnout as a syndrome of emotional exhaustion and cynicism that occurs among professionals whose work is closely connected with other people, and they revealed that occupational burnout includes the following: (1) emotional exhaustion: the person feels that work becomes emotionally debilitating, and thus there appears a lack of physical and emotional energies not only at work but also outside of it, and the person feels tired and unable to perform the tasks assigned to them; (2) depersonalization: when relationships and communication with other people become cynical or indifferent; (3) the decrease of personal accomplishments: a feeling of helplessness appears, professional opportunities begin to be limited, a feeling of lack of competencies occurs, the person feels as if one is unable to perform anything in professional activities. This three-factor model by Maslach and Jackson (1981) complements the one-dimensional concept of stress because it transcends the boundaries of individual stress experience (exhaustion) and encompasses a person's reaction to work (cynicism, indifference) as well as to oneself (feeling of uselessness). According to Maslach (2003), exhaustion and cynicism tend to occur due to work overload and social conflicts, while the feeling of uselessness stems from a lack of resources to perform the job, e.g., a lack of relevant information, a lack of necessary tools, inadequate deadlines for tasks. Similar sources of occupational burnout were also observed by Galletta et al. (2016); researchers claim that burnout is caused by the following factors:

excessive workload, limited human and time resources, lack of support that ensures proper performance of work, and poor communication in teams and work control. Gudžinskienė and Pozdniakovas (2021) distinguished three types of burnout sources: work resources, management, and the professional environment, which include profession, type of work, working hours, the existence of conditions for optimal performance, clarity of work content, social support, assistance at work, leadership style, support for motivation, regulation of communication with colleagues and clients, optimal workload, employee commitment to an organization, and career opportunities, amongst others. Dhusia et al. (2019) claimed that occupational burnout has physical, behavioural, emotional, and psychological consequences. One of the first signs of burnout is the change in behaviour. Such individuals maintain a distance from others, feel disgust with other people, and rudely and sharply react to people around them (Lichner et al. 2018). Fedai et al. (2017) distinguished the following signs of behaviour of an employee suffering from occupational burnout: being late for work, a resistance to work, resignation, disengagement, lack of will, feeling of failure, lack of energy, loss of self-confidence, not thinking about achievements, distrust of managers, job dissatisfaction, and hatred for work. People experiencing occupational burnout are also accompanied by psychological/emotional symptoms, such as sensitivity, concerns, feeling of insignificance, frustration, despair, alienation/coldness, sleep disturbances, lack of self-confidence, problems in the family, and even depression. A burned out person may experience physical consequences of burnout, such as constant fatigue, headache, amnesia, shortness of breath, skin diseases, gastrointestinal disorders, and increase in cholesterol level (Fedai et al. 2017).

2.3. Teleworking Challenges for Employees

Teleworking became widespread during the pandemic, and even though the changed form of work should not affect the rights and responsibilities of the employee and the organization, there are cases when working from home causes difficulties, working hours are extended, and employment contract conditions are violated (Belzunegui-Eraso and Erro-Garcés 2020). Teleworking affects both the employee and the organization, and to ensure that employees do not lose productivity while working at home and their involvement in work does not decrease, managers should understand the challenges of teleworking, which are categorized as follows (Larson et al. 2020; Tavares et al. 2020). (1) Lack of direct supervision: When working from home, no one has control over the actions of the workers; they partly become their own masters. (2) Lack of access to information: It takes more time and effort to receive information from co-workers when working remotely. Moreover, this phenomenon not only hinders the performance of tasks, but it also causes problems in interpersonal relationships with colleagues because employees who receive an e-mail without seeing each other may misunderstand each other, and the resentment or misconception of co-workers appear, etc. (3) Social isolation: Loneliness is highlighted as one of the most common complaints about teleworking. Longer periods of isolation can lead an employee to the idea that one is less and less part of the organization, which can even lead to quitting the job. Moreover, it is thought that loneliness should be considered an important feature of case conceptualisation for depression during this time (Toscano and Zappalà 2020, p. 10; Groarke et al. 2021). (4) Balance between teleworking and family life/housework: Teleworking from home requires employees to learn to combine work and time with family/home, but it is not always easy to find a balance so that neither of these suffers. (5) Distraction at home: The transition from office to home poses certain challenges for employees because employees at home may not have the right conditions to perform their job well, they may be disturbed by children or other family members, and they may feel strain, stress, or frustration.

Recent research focused on different challenges posed by teleworking. According to several studies (e.g., Larson et al. 2020; Miglioretti et al. 2021; Catană et al. 2022), organizations can overcome these challenges using specific strategies. (1) They must build the right infrastructure: Managers must ensure that each employee has the necessary equipment to

work from home. (2) They must maintain a good distance culture: When working from home, managers need to constantly inform their employees about what is happening at the organizational level so that they do not feel separated from the organization. (3) The must establish daily structural inspections: Connection with the employees must be maintained daily. (4) They must present several different variants of communication technologies. (5) They must provide opportunities for remote social communication; this is a very important factor to be ensured by the manager, i.e., to form ways of social communication for employees while teleworking. (6) They must encourage and provide emotional support. (7) They must improve job resources.

In summary, teleworking can cause stress for personnel, can influence the quality of work, and can reduce work commitment.

3. Materials and Methods of the Empirical Research

The logic of the empirical study was supported by further insights from the theoretical analysis. Prolonged occupational stress can lead to professional burnout of the employee, the essence of which is the loss of the individual's working capacity. There are certain stages characterized by physical, emotional, and behavioural changes in a person that lead to burnout. In the context of work performance, under the conditions of negative occupational stress, the decrease in the employee's organizational commitment is manifested first, then occupational cynicism, and finally burnout. On the base of the literature analysis, a theoretical model of employee occupational stress-induced impact to work commitment, occupational cynicism, and professional burnout through the prism of telework was elaborated on (Figure 1).
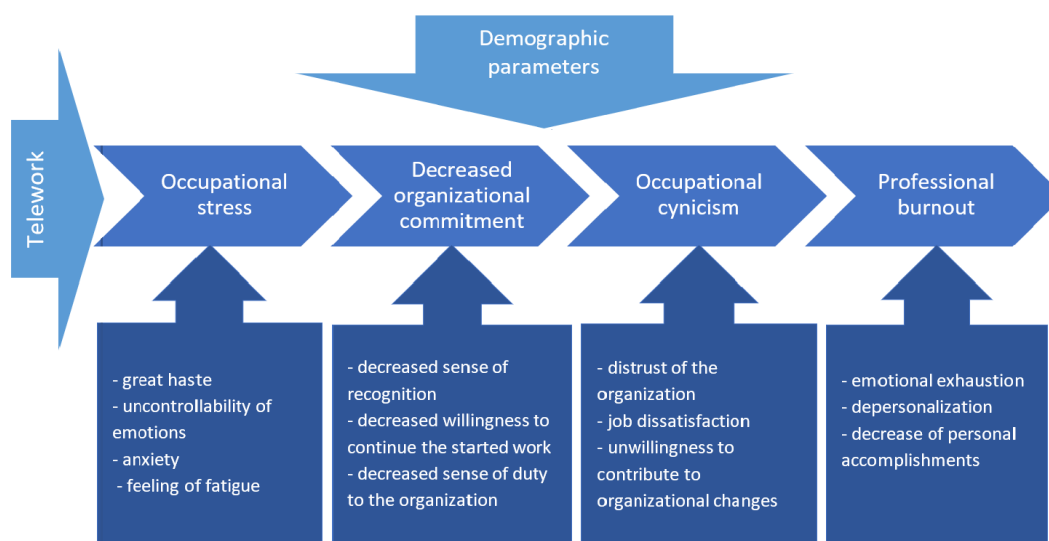

Figure 1. The model of employee occupational stress-induced impact to work commitment, cynicism, and professional burnout. Compiled by the authors.

According to the literature, demographic characteristics are important predictors of the negative effects of occupational stress (e.g., Prasad et al. 2020; Ilczak et al. 2021; Petcu et al. 2021; Kaltiainen and Hakanen 2022; Beckel and Fisher 2022). Thus, in the study, we researched stress related to respondents' demographic characteristics and how it depends on the person's gender, age, and number of children. It was also analysed whether decreased work commitment, occupational cynicism, and professional burnout is related to gender, age, and number of children. Accordingly, it was sought to reveal how teleworkers evaluate their well-being, working capacity, and attitude to work, as well as changes in working capacity.

The survey was conducted on the online survey portal during the pandemic shutdown in Lithuania. Only individuals who teleworked exclusively from home throughout the

time of pandemic restrictions were chosen as research participants. This criterion was announced in the header of the questionnaire with the aim of not wasting the time of persons whose contribution would not be considered due to being outside the scope of the study. We also marked all questions in the questionnaire as mandatory. This helped to avoid data shortage due to incomplete questionnaires. Hence, 202 questionnaires were collected and analysed in the sample (Table 1).

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the respondents.

Demographic Characteristics	Variables	N (%)
Gender	Male	149 (74)
	Female	53 (26)
Age	18–24	64 (32)
	25–34	70 (35)
	35–48	48 (24)
	49–64	20 (10)
	65 or more	0 (0)
Children	0	110 (55)
	1	33 (16)
	2	49 (24)
	3 or more	10 (5)
Total		202 (100)

It should be noted that we did not study objective indicators but collected teleworkers' opinions about occupational stress-induced consequences in relation to their working from home experience within the period of the pandemic.

The research questionnaire consisted of demographic questions and 4 groups of items: (1) attitude to teleworking, (2) occupational stress experience, (3) work commitment and manifestations of occupational cynicism, (4) manifestations of occupational burnout.

The internal consistency, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, of the questionnaire was $\alpha = 0.985$ ($\alpha > 0.07$); thus, the questionnaire was considered reliable (Table 2).

Table 2. Homogeneity of answers in questionnaire blocks.

Scale	Number of Statements	Cronbach's Alpha
Transition from office to home	10	0.935
Teleworking and stress	8	0.955
Commitment to work and occupational cynicism	11	0.963
Occupational burnout	11	0.963

To evaluate respondents' opinion, a ranking scale was used, in which research participants could choose the following possible answers: "Strongly disagree", "Disagree", "Partly disagree", "Neither agree nor disagree", "Partly agree", "Agree", and "Strongly agree".

The research data were analysed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) data processing software. Non-parametric statistical criteria were applied to analyse the ranked data:

1. The ranked data of the two groups of subjects were compared using the Mann-Whitney criterion;
2. The ranked data of more than two groups of subjects were compared using the Kruskal-Wallis criterion.

When interpreting research results, the results were considered statistically significant if the calculated value of criterion p was lower than the significance level $\alpha = 0.05$.

The following ethical principles were followed when conducting the research: (1) consent of the subjects to participate in the research: research participants were informed that

their participation in the research is voluntary; (2) guarantee of anonymity and confidentiality of the received data: the received answers do not identify the specific institution that the respondent works in and which person that is, and only summarized results are published; (3) research participants were acquainted with the purpose of the research and where research data will be used. Respondents voluntarily participated in the survey at a time convenient to them. The questions in the questionnaire were impersonal and not offensive or inciting discord.

4. Empirical Research Results

4.1. Teleworking and Employees' Well-Being

To understand how individuals were affected by moving from office to home, in the first part of the questionnaire, they were asked to rate 10 provided statements related to the impact of work and home on the individual. The research revealed that 44.9% of participants working from home agreed with the statement I became less attentive. When assessing the negative aspects of teleworking, the statement I feel less responsible for the work I do was particularly marked. A total of 36.6% of respondents agreed with this statement. It should be noted that almost half of the respondents, i.e., 49.0%, agreed that it is more difficult to obtain information from co-workers when working from home. More than half of the research participants face the problem of overtime when working from home; 56.9% of respondents agreed with the statement that working from home often means working overtime. Significantly more than a third of the research participants (42.4%) agreed with the statement that their productivity decreased while working from home. Significantly more than a third of the research participants noted that I feel lonely; 43.7% agreed to that.

The research highlighted changes in the well-being and quality of life of those working from home: 41.6% of respondents agreed with the statement that headaches and the feeling of fatigue increased when working from home. The research found that as many as 50.3% of respondents agreed with the statement that they often feel anxious while working from home. Slightly more than half of the respondents (41.8%) agreed with the statement that I spend less time with my family. The research highlighted another problem, the distance between people who work from home and those at home; as many as 49.9% of participants noted that they spend less time with their family. Moreover, the research revealed that as many as 46.0% of participants who work from home marked the statement family members disturb me from doing my job properly.

The results of the relationship between the research statements and the number of children according to the Kruskal-Wallis criterion (Table 3) showed that the higher number of children in the family leads to more frequent anxiety ($p = 0.018$), longer working hours ($p = 0.000$), and shorter time spend with family ($p = 0.003$), and it has an impact on work performance due to disturbance from family members ($p = 0.000$).

Table 3. The effect of teleworking by the number of children.

Variable	Average Rank by Number of Children				*p* Value
	0	**1**	**2**	**3+**	
I feel anxious more often	89.24	114.39	112.92	134.40	0.018
I work overtime more often	84.69	119.64	121.74	129.80	0.000
I spend less time with the family	86.84	115.86	118.40	130.00	0.003
Family members disturb me from doing my job properly	85.65	116.58	120.87	137.15	0.000

The relationship between teleworking statements and age (Table 4) showed that workers aged 25–34 were more likely to experience a reduced sense of responsibility for the work they do ($p = 0.032$), and people aged 35-48 were more likely to work after working hours ($p = 0.000$) and more often stated that family members make it difficult to do their job properly ($p = 0.010$).

Table 4. The effect of teleworking by age.

Variable	Average Rank by Age				*p* Value
	18–24	**25–34**	**35–48**	**49–64**	
I feel lesser responsibility for the work I do	101.64	114.64	92.59	76.40	0.032
I work overtime more often	75.69	101.80	130.50	113.45	0.000
Family members disturb me from doing my job properly	91.05	108.93	116.32	73.38	0.010

The analysis of the relationship between teleworking and gender also showed statistically significant differences (Table 5); men working from home became less attentive ($p = 0.000$), felt less responsible while performing work ($p = 0.000$), and were more likely to experience anxiety ($p = 0.027$), feelings of loneliness ($p = 0.012$), headaches and fatigue ($p = 0.042$). They more often have difficulty in obtaining information from colleagues ($p = 0.011$), spend less time with family when working from home ($p = 0.012$), and claim that family members interfere with their work ($p = 0.001$).

Table 5. The effect of teleworking by gender.

Variable	Average Rank by Gender		*p* Value
	Male	**Female**	
I became less attentive	126.50	92.61	0.000
I feel less responsibility for the work I do	132.86	90.35	0.000
I feel anxious more often	116.57	96.14	0.027
I feel lonely	118.43	95.48	0.012
Headaches, feeling of tiredness increased	115.29	96.59	0.042
It is more difficult to get information from co-workers	118.81	95.34	0.011
I spend less time with my family	118.61	95.41	0.012
Family members disturb me from doing my job properly	123.25	93.76	0.001

In brief, employees who have more children and men who moved from the office to home are more likely to feel anxious and spend less time with family; those with more children and employees aged 35–48 more often work overtime; those with more children and employees aged 35–48 and men more often face difficulties in carrying out the work due to the disturbance from family members; men are also more likely to feel less attentive, less responsible, and lonely, and they also more often experience headaches and fatigue as well as difficulty in obtaining information from colleagues remotely.

The research revealed that, based on subjective assessment, as many as 44.3% of teleworkers experience stress due to too much work when working from home. The research established that 43.3% of teleworkers who participated in the research agreed that time given to perform the work is too short and that is worrying.

Next, the study exposed the problem of work organization when teleworking. A total of 39.8% of participants agreed with the statement that My supervisor does not clearly define tasks, which makes it difficult to understand what tasks to perform first.

Insufficient communication with both the managers and colleagues was found to be shortcoming for employees in a remote workplace. A total of 38.8% of research participants agreed with the statement I often feel stressed due to miscommunication with colleagues and the boss.

The research also highlighted problematic employee–manager relationships. Nearly a third of the research participants (28.0%) agreed with the statement My supervisor generates fear and anxiety. The role of the manager is very important because one's misconduct can make employees feel scared and anxious, and later, other consequences of stress are also possible.

The research discovered that as many as 41.0% agreed with the statement I feel pressure when working from home and that negatively affects my well-being. Teleworking can put pressure on the managers, as they find it harder to control various works and cannot see what their subordinates are doing. As a result, management may demand much more from employees, which can have a strong impact on their well-being.

When assessing teleworking, 42.0% of respondents said that working from home usually makes them concerned. The research revealed that 46.0% of subjects agreed with the statement that teleworking can lead to negative thoughts or even the risk of depression.

The results of relationships according to the Kruskal-Wallis criterion presented in Table 6 show that, when working from home, employees with children and especially those upbringing one child usually feel stress due to too much work, short deadlines, miscommunication with colleagues and the manager, and anxiety due to the manager and teleworking itself.

Table 6. Causes of stress when working from home by number of children in the family.

Variable	Average Rank by Number of Children				*p* Value
	0	1	2	3+	
I feel stressed when working from home due to too much work.	85.27	133.77	115.43	103.50	0.000
Time given to do the work is too short and that is worrying.	88.64	123.61	115.04	101.95	0.011
I often feel stressed due to miscommunication with colleagues and the boss.	90.77	122.92	110.11	108.10	0.043
My supervisor makes me feel scared and anxious.	88.11	123.08	111.63	127.15	0.007
Teleworking often makes me concerned.	87.19	125.77	114.93	108.20	0.003
I feel pressure when working from home and that negatively affects my well-being.	87.36	128.67	111.24	117.25	0.003

Statistically significant relationships between stress due to teleworking and age of employees (Table 7) reveal that workers aged 25–48 are more likely, compared to younger and older employees, to feel fear and anxiety due to the manager and claim to receive vague tasks, which hinders their proper performance.

Table 7. Causes of stress when working from home by age.

Variable	Average Rank by Age				*p* Value
	18–24	**25–34**	**35–48**	**49–64**	
My supervisor makes me feel scared and anxious.	86.34	118.94	102.71	86.10	0.006
My supervisor does not clearly define tasks, which makes it difficult to understand what jobs to do first.	94.15	116.61	102.66	69.35	0.007

When examining the impact of occupational stress by gender (Table 8), it was discovered that, compared to women, men are more likely to experience stress and anxiety when teleworking in all aspects analysed.

Table 8. Causes of stress when teleworking by gender.

Variable	Average Rank by Gender		*p* Value
	Male	**Female**	
I feel stressed when teleworking due to too much work.	122.57	94.01	0.002
Time given to do the work is too short and that is worrying.	120.50	94.74	0.005
I often feel stressed due to miscommunication with colleagues and the boss.	124.21	93.42	0.001
My supervisor makes me feel scared and anxious.	119.86	94.97	0.006
My supervisor does not clearly define tasks, which makes it difficult to understand what jobs to do first.	123.77	93.58	0.001
Teleworking often makes me concerned.	115.75	96.43	0.036
I feel pressure when teleworking and that negatively affects my well-being.	120.62	94.70	0.005
I think teleworking can lead to negative thoughts or the risk of depression.	117.50	95.81	0.018

As can be seen, teleworkers with children as well as men are more likely to experience occupational stress and anxiety due to changes caused by teleworking, while employees aged 25–48 more often than others face challenges in communicating with the manager.

4.2. Job Satisfaction and Its Relationship to Occupational Cynicism and Work Commitment

Stress can lead to occupational cynicism and less commitment to work for working people; thus, teleworkers were asked to assess situations that may indicate that the employee is cynical or less committed to the organization while teleworking.

The research found that almost half (46.0%) of participants agreed with the statement when teleworking I notice that sometimes I want to ignore the assigned tasks. Ignoring tasks shows the cynical behaviour of the employee and less commitment to work. The subjective and rather casual participants' assessment of the approach towards work allows them to claim that teleworking sometimes encourages them to ignore or pay less attention to the given tasks. Moreover, 41.8% of respondents indicated that teleworking makes them want to distance themselves from colleagues and work. The desire to distance is a sign that a person is cynical about one's work as well as less committed to it, and ultimately, it can be a symptom of occupational burnout. In this case, respondents' opinions show that teleworking makes them want to distance themselves from colleagues and work, which is also one of the symptoms of occupational burnout, and all the more so as 29.0% of respondents agreed with the statement Opinion of colleagues is not interesting to me. Research shows that distancing from colleagues is characteristic of almost a third

of people teleworking. Almost a third (32.7%) of research participants agreed with the statement I am disappointed with the organization. An employee who is disappointed with one's organization for some reason may become less committed to one's workplace. A total of 31.5% of respondents agreed with the statement that they feel less needed by the organization when teleworking. In one's organization, the employee wants and needs to feel needed and to know that is one is a full member of the community, but if one does not feel this, manifestations of cynicism or less commitment to work may appear.

The research also highlighted another problem: the lack of support from management when teleworking. More than a third (39.5%) of respondents indicated that they lack support from management when teleworking.

If the employee is reluctant to trust one's organization, one's colleagues, and one's managers, organizational cynicism may appear. Accordingly, the employee may then be apathetic and not so serious in terms of work. The research established that just over a third (35.5%) of teleworkers agreed with the statement Teleworking undermined my confidence in the organization. More than a third (35.0%) of teleworkers that do not receive support from managers agreed with the statement Teleworking is not valuable to me. Significantly more than a third (39.9%) feel less committed to their work. A person who is strongly dedicated and involved in one's work is committed to the organization and will not easily leave one's workplace. Research results suggest that teleworking has a negative effect on the employee's dedication and commitment to work.

It should be noted that both lack of attention of managers to the employee and the negative attitude of the employee to the organization have a negative effect not only on the organization, but also on the person. The research revealed that more than a third (36.0%) of teleworkers are often sad, and teleworking is a serious challenge for them that causes negative emotions. It was established that as many as 40.5% of subjects agreed with the statement The management does not organize the work properly. Thus, the management of a large number of organizations, according to the subjective opinion of the employees, does not properly organize teleworking, which may possibly encourage some of the workers to be less committed to the organization.

As can be seen in Table 9, the higher number of children contributes to the decreased confidence ($p = 0.019$) and disappointment ($p = 0.032$) with the organization, as well as sadness ($p = 0.048$).

Table 9. Occupational cynicism and commitment to work by number of children in the family.

Variable	Average Rank by Number of Children				*p* Value
	0	**1**	**2**	**3+**	
Teleworking has reduced my confidence in the organization.	89.83	124.68	108.26	120.90	0.019
I am disappointed with the organization.	90.78	125.09	105.82	116.85	0.032
I am often sad.	91.87	122.83	103.23	125.65	0.048

The results provided in Table 10 show that younger teleworkers more often want to ignore the assigned tasks, while people aged 25–48 are more likely to feel disappointed with the organization.

Table 10. Occupational cynicism and commitment to work by age.

Variable	Average Rank by Age				*p* Value
	18–24	**25–34**	**35–48**	**49–64**	
I notice that when working from home I sometimes want to ignore the assigned tasks.	103.07	113.99	94.28	70.10	0.018
I am disappointed with the organization.	89.63	116.44	102.66	84.45	0.026

Next, compared to women, men more often think that the management does not properly organize telework ($p = 0.000$), more often feel unnecessary for the organization ($p = 0.002$), and more often feel lack of support ($p = 0.001$), decreased confidence in ($p = 0.000$) and devotion ($p = 0.000$) to the organization, appreciate teleworking less ($p = 0.009$), are more likely to ignore tasks ($p = 0.001$) and want to distance themselves from co-workers and work in general ($p = 0.000$) (Table 11). Moreover, men are less concerned with the opinion of colleagues ($p = 0.000$), and they more often feel disappointed with the organization ($p = 0.000$) and feel sad ($p = 0.000$).

Table 11. Occupational cynicism and commitment to work by gender.

Variable	Average Rank by Gender		*p* Value
	Male	Female	
Management does not organize the work properly.	125.25	93.05	0.000
I do not feel necessary for the organization.	122.44	94.05	0.002
I lack support from management when working from home.	124.98	93.15	0.001
Teleworking has reduced my confidence in the organization.	126.92	92.46	0.000
I feel less committed to my organization.	128.67	91.84	0.000
Working from home is not valuable to me.	119.08	95.24	0.009
I notice that when teleworking I sometimes want to ignore the assigned tasks.	124.88	93.18	0.001
I often want to distance myself from colleagues and work.	126.83	92.49	0.000
I am not interested in the opinion of colleagues.	138.16	88.46	0.000
I am disappointed with the organization.	126.38	92.65	0.000
I am often sad.	123.63	93.63	0.001

In brief, younger people and men are more likely to ignore the tasks assigned to them when teleworking. Moreover, employees with children as well as men more often feel distrust and disappointment with the organization and feel sad. In addition, in all aspects analysed, men are more likely to experience a decrease in the commitment and manifestations of cynicism when teleworking.

4.3. Employees' Attitudes Related to Teleworking and Professional Burnout

Work stress and its consequences (in this case, occupational cynicism and decreased commitment to the organization) can cause occupational burnout in a person. During the research, respondents were asked to assess statements that would help to understand whether teleworkers experience occupational burnout.

A total of 54.2% of respondents agreed with the statement I feel emotionally exhausted due to the situation during the pandemic. Emotional exhaustion signals that a person is experiencing severe stress and/or occupational burnout. It is emotional exhaustion that has a great impact on a person's well-being and work, that reduces one's abilities, and that causes problems in the family. Therefore, it can be stated that more than half of participants working from home feel emotionally exhausted due to the pandemic, and this negatively affects their lives, work, and general well-being. Occupational burnout can cause physical and mental exhaustion in a person; for example, the feeling of fatigue may occur, certain diseases may develop, and negative thoughts and despair may appear. Accordingly, they were asked to assess the following statement: Due to teleworking I feel physically and mentally exhausted. The research revealed that 48.0% of persons working from home find teleworking mentally and physically demanding, which can lead to occupational burnout.

The lack of direct communication may greatly affect a person's emotional state, and one can become emotionally insensitive to other people. The mentioned phenomenon is also one of the signs of occupational burnout. A total of 40.2% agreed with the statement Lack of direct communication makes me emotionally insensitive. This means that more than a third of those working from home may have problems, because if the situation does not change, then it may lead to occupational burnout. A total of 39.5% agreed with the statement I feel less committed to the organization. When a person works from home and experiences stress or even occupational burnout, one's commitment to the organization can quickly diminish. When a person is burned out, one feels much less committed to one's organization (emotional symptom). Accordingly, 35.3% of persons agreed with the statement My commitment to the organization significantly decreased when working from home. Therefore, more than a third of respondents were affected by teleworking and experienced this symptom of occupational burnout, i.e., less commitment to the organization.

It is very important that each organization sets clear goals for its employees. Then, people know exactly what they need to do and what to seek, and they will not want to distance themself from the existing work. It should be noted that dissociation is one of the many symptoms of occupational burnout. A total of 37.0% of those working from home agreed with the statement Distance from work is increasing due to vaguely defined goals. Consequently, for more than a third of employees, the objectives of the work are not clearly defined.

Professional isolation can have a serious impact on a person's thinking and well-being, as the lack of communication can make a person feel less needed by one's organization, and it can also affect the quality of work. A total of 43.0% of respondents agreed with the statement Professional isolation negatively affects the quality of my work.

In times of change, some people are able to quickly adapt, while for others, it is quite a challenge. In this case, it is a question of adapting to teleworking, since not everyone can quickly and easily get used to the way of organizing such work.

The research revealed that, when working from home, 51.3% of respondents had thoughts of wanting to change their current job. Such thoughts/deliberations can be provoked not only by the desire to change something, but it can also be a consequence of occupational burnout.

Occupational burnout can cause various behavioural, physical, and psychological/emotional symptoms. Occupational burnout may lead to an increase in the use of alcohol, nicotine, or other psychotropic substances; thus, respondents were asked to assess whether teleworking contributed to the increase in the use of the following substances. The research revealed that more than a third (34.0%) of the participants agreed with the statement that they started using alcohol or nicotine more often when working from home.

The results of the relationship analysis presented in Table 12 suggest that respondents with children feel more physically and mentally exhausted ($p = 0.003$), which makes it more difficult for them to communicate with clients ($p = 0.016$). Moreover, due to the lack of direct communication, employees with children are more likely to feel reduced emotional sensitivity ($p = 0.014$), distance due to unclear goals ($p = 0.002$), poorer quality of work due to isolation ($p = 0.015$), undermined self-confidence due to inability to adapt to the changed working conditions ($p = 0.002$), decreased commitment to the organization ($p = 0.013$), and will more often use alcohol and nicotine when teleworking ($p = 0.023$).

Table 12. Occupational burnout by the number of children in the family.

Variable	Average Rank by Number of Children				*p* Value
	0	**1**	**2**	**3+**	
Due to teleworking I feel physically and mentally exhausted.	86.87	125.85	114.69	114.35	0.003
Due to physical and mental exhaustion it is harder for me to communicate with clients.	88.88	122.23	113.47	108.20	0.016
Lack of direct communication makes me emotionally insensitive.	90.10	126.17	108.73	102.30	0.014
Distance from work is increasing due to vaguely defined goals.	88.47	133.91	107.88	101.15	0.002
Professional isolation negatively affects the quality of my work.	89.14	124.80	110.19	113.65	0.015
Inability to adapt to teleworking undermines my self-confidence.	86.53	121.89	119.64	109.95	0.002
My commitment to the organization significantly decreased while working from home.	90.19	128.45	105.52	117.20	0.013
I noticed that I started using alcohol or nicotine more often when working from home.	90.79	122.95	110.83	108.00	0.023

Research showed that people aged 25–48 are statistically more likely to ignore tasks when working from home compared to younger and older employees (Table 13).

Table 13. Occupational burnout by age.

Variable	Average Rank by Age				*p* Value
	18–24	**25–34**	**35–48**	**49–64**	
I notice that when working from home I sometimes want to ignore the assigned tasks.	87.76	114.27	106.20	89.50	0.041

It was observed that the phenomena under analysis occur more frequently in men working from home than in women. The analysis of the manifestations of occupational burnout syndrome and attitude towards work showed the same trend (Table 14); compared to women, men working from home more often feel all the signs of burnout under consideration.

Table 14. Professional burnout by gender.

Variable	Average Rank by Gender		*p* Value
	Male	Female	
Due to teleworking I feel physically and mentally exhausted.	120.27	94.82	0.006
Due to physical and mental exhaustion it is harder for me to communicate with clients.	124.90	93.18	0.001
Lack of direct communication makes me emotionally insensitive.	133.18	90.23	0.000
Distance from work is increasing due to vaguely defined goals.	129.52	91.53	0.000
Professional isolation negatively affects the quality of my work.	125.95	92.80	0.000
Inability to adapt to teleworking undermines my self-confidence.	121.84	94.27	0.003
I feel less committed to the organization.	129.73	91.46	0.000
My commitment to the organization significantly decreased while working from home.	131.38	90.87	0.000
I sometimes feel that I want to change my current job.	116.35	96.22	0.029
I feel emotionally exhausted due to the situation during the pandemic.	116.51	96.16	0.027
I noticed that I started using alcohol or nicotine more often when working from home.	133.55	90.10	0.000

According to the research, people with children working from home are more likely to experience physical and mental exhaustion, signs of depersonalization, and a decrease of personal accomplishments, while employees aged 25–48 more often experience only depersonalization, which manifests in a desire to ignore the assigned tasks. It is obvious that, for men working from home, teleworking usually causes stress and occupational cynicism, reduces commitment to the organization, and increases the risk of burnout.

5. Discussion and Conclusions

According to previous studies, occupational stress can lead to a deterioration in the physical and psycho-emotional conditions in response to a workplace that poses long-term unpleasant or overly complex challenges for employees. Consequences of occupational stress can also include less commitment to work, occupational cynicism, and professional burnout. The most recent studies show that teleworkers experienced increased occupational stress during the pandemic (Gualano et al. 2022; Van Slyke et al. 2022; Kikunaga et al. 2022; Deschênes 2023). However, research results vary on the effect of teleworking-induced stress. For example, Moens et al. (2022) found that teleworking during the pandemic helped employees avoid a number of negative effects with burnout in between. Despite the positive attitudes of Flemish workers towards teleworking during the pandemic, the authors emphasized the need to study different countries, as the results of the surveys differ from country to country. Adamovic's (2022) study supports the need to study the subjective experience and attitude of telework employees from different cultures. Therefore, the results of our study, despite the small sample size, may be more representative of a wider population than would be the case in less culturally homogeneous countries. On the other hand, more in-depth research should be used for stronger evidence.

Our study disclosed that organizations' care for the subjective well-being of teleworkers was insufficient in Lithuania. According to survey results, the compulsory transition to telework during the pandemic caused overtime work for employees, and they also complained of disruptions in communication and collaboration, a loss of productivity, and

a sense of social isolation. The survey revealed that (i) younger teleworkers more often tended to ignore the assigned tasks, while people aged 25–48 were more likely to feel disappointed with the organization; (ii) males working from home more often thought that management does not properly organize telework, more often felt unnecessary for the organization, and lacked management support, and their confidence in and devotion to the organization decreased. Males also reported less concern with the opinion of colleagues and were more often disappointed with the organization. Moreover, teleworkers admitted that they had become more cynical with their work commitment when working from home lessened. Recent research also confirms the influence of a manager's role on employees' feelings of social isolation and overwork (e.g., Dias-Oliveira et al. 2023; Deschênes 2023). For example, research in Japan revealed that teleworkers who did not have enough support from their supervisors experienced greater negative effects of stress (Kikunaga et al. 2022). However, our study showed that, in Lithuania, the consequences of stress during teleworking appeared more often among men.

Based on the research, we defined more links between teleworking and gender, parenthood, and the well-being of employees overall.

We found that both genders were affected by teleworking, but consequences were different. Males more often felt anxious and tended to work overtime compared to females. Additionally, males more often than females became less attentive and felt less responsible while performing for organization. They were more likely to experience anxiety, feelings of loneliness, headaches, and fatigue, and they also claimed that family members interfere with their work. These results contrast with others that say that females are more negatively affected by teleworking (e.g., see research by Van der Lippe and Lippényi 2020; Kaltiainen and Hakanen 2022; and literature review by De Vincenzi et al. 2022). Research in Lithuania in different samples repeated the results in terms of gender (e.g., Raišienė et al. 2020). On the other hand, research on the impact of teleworking on employees' well-being in Latin America showed that teleworkers' perceived stress affects productivity more for men than for women (Sandoval-Reyes et al. 2021). It encourages the consideration of the influence of culture on the attitudes, behaviour, and well-being of teleworkers. Thus, there is still a need for further gender studies in teleworking.

According to our study, people with children were more negatively affected by teleworking from home compared with those with no children. Employees with the parallel role of parents experienced negative thoughts and felt stressed and physically and mentally exhausted. The results support earlier studies (e.g., Pataki-Bittó and Kun 2022; Chênevert et al. 2022).

The study highlighted differences of the mental state of teleworkers regarding age. Unlike the earlier research (e.g., Kaltiainen and Hakanen 2022), middle-aged individuals were more likely, compared to younger and older employees, to feel fear and anxiety due to the manager and claimed to receive vague tasks.

Finally, we found that a significant number of teleworkers suffer mental and physical exhaustion and social deprivation. The study suggests that we are facing an unprecedented throw of occupational burnout. It seems that the psycho-emotional health of employees is a critical factor to be considered for organizational development in the time of uncertainty. Otherwise, organizations could face a shortage of intellectual resources.

In conclusion, the results of the study provide a better understanding of a spectrum of challenges in teleworking. A call for organizations to build a culture of dialogue and collaboration is more important than ever and cannot be declarative in a post pandemic time. An urge to turn to employee well-being becomes a warning, and the ignorance of which could lead organizations to decline.

6. Limitation of the Study

Our preliminary study has several limitations. First, there is the theoretical possibility of confounding effects of stress and telework itself. To prevent inaccuracies, we asked our respondents to answer specifically about the signs and consequences of occupational

stress that occur during teleworking. Nevertheless, it may still happen that the respondents answered having in mind the consequences of telework and not about the stress effect experienced during telework. The situation made it difficult to separate telework from the pandemic isolation caused by COVID-19, but as far as possible, we ensured this separation by the statements of the questions that were specifically targeted at teleworking. The results could also be affected by employee's technology maturity and/or self-organisation skills. We sought to control potential confounding by wording unambiguous statements about the stress-induced psycho-emotional state, point of view, and behaviour. For example, feelings of sadness, frustration, and fatigue are signs of stress and are not attributes of telework.

Second, we did not measure occupational stress. Our research participants self-reported on their experience when working from home during the pandemic. Since we relied on the subjective evaluations of the respondents, this may have caused some bias in the overall evaluations.

Finally, given the limitations of the chosen data analysis method, we can only share some observations about employees' teleworking experience in the context of occupational stress, while because of small sample, the results cannot be interpreted for a generalized population.

However, we would like to note that our study refers to a wider context than stress, such as its consequences, e.g., signs of exhaustion and burnout. We hope that the study has yielded insights that can be useful for team leaders of teleworkers. It would be useful in the future to analyse the issue in different and non-pandemic contexts to eliminate possible errors.

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