

LIMITLESS WORK OR WORKING TO THE LIMIT?

**A QUANTITATIVE STUDY ON THE IMPLICATIONS OF
BOUNDARY MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES ON EMPLOYEE
WORK-LIFE BALANCE**

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Bachelor Thesis

Stockholm School of Economics

2022



Limitless work or working to the limit?

Abstract:

A frequent debate is how people are affected by working from home, especially as more workers emphasize optionality in terms of flexible work arrangements. But flexibility is a challenge in the boundaryless interface between work and life where work intensification becomes evident. Previous research looks past some dimensions of the relationship between work-life balance and boundary management, particularly in the context of optional hybrid remote work. Guided by Boundary Theory, this cross-sectional study examines individual boundary management with associated factors and the effects on work-life balance. Through multiple OLS regression based on a sample of 117 employees in knowledge-based organizations with flexible work arrangements, it was found that high perceived control in creating boundaries and to enact the preferred boundary strategy are most importantly related to work-life balance. Furthermore, an interaction effect between boundary strategy and perceived control entailed that the effect of perceived control on work-life balance is larger for individuals who enact separation strategies.

Keywords:

work-life balance, boundary management strategy, hybrid organization, flexible work, remote work.

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Bachelor Thesis

Bachelor Program in Management

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Acknowledgements

We are grateful for our supervisor Lena, who always brought fika to the seminars and offered advice, support, and a positive atmosphere to the group. To Laurence who kept us inspired and motivated. To Abiel Sebhatu who patiently supervised our first coding attempt in Stata, to the grandiose result of our full regression model. Special gratitude goes to Isak Thelander, who supported us in the final nerve-wracking moments. To non-sync manners, slow sessions, coffee subscriptions, grand ideas and ambitions combined with meticulous choice of wording, night-owl efforts and endless patience with each other.

Definitions

	Also mentioned as:	Definition:
Work-Life Balance	WLB, work-nonwork balance, work-life conflict	“An overall level of contentment resulting from an assessment of one’s degree of success at meeting work and non-work demands” (Valcour 2007).
Boundary Management	integration vs separation/segmentation	Individuals manage boundaries between work and personal life through processes of separating and/or integrating the domains of work and non-work, aligned with assigned meanings (Ashforth et al. 2000, Zerubavel 1991).
Remote Work	flexible work, mobile work, telework	Work performed by an employee anywhere outside of the office, for an organization that provides flexible work arrangements (Tremblay & Thomsin, 2012).
Hybrid Organizations		Organizations that employ optionality for employees to work remotely, aligned with company policies and employee work tasks.
Knowledge-Based Organization	KBO, knowledge organization	Institutions that rely on the capability of workers to manipulate and transmit their ideas in the creation of products or services, rather than goods.
Knowledge Worker		Employee at knowledge organization.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Flexible work has been a relevant topic since the digitalization, and has become increasingly prevalent globally (Allen, Golden et al. 2015; Greer, Payne 2014). A frequent debate, as of recent tainted by the Covid-19 pandemic, is how people are affected by working from home. As remote and hybrid work solutions become more current and desired, work-life balance is in process of being reshaped (Tremblay & Thomsin 2012). In addition, workers emphasize optionality in terms of flexible work arrangements and reciprocate with improved work attitudes and job satisfaction (Kossek, Lautsch et al. 2006), implying that more organizations will need to adapt into a hybrid workplace to attract, motivate and retain talent (Nyberg, Shaw et al. 2021; Allen 2001; Scandura, Lankau 1997). In the geographical context of Sweden, where parental leave and health care is close to guaranteed, flexible work is potentially the most valuable currency for improving employee work-life balance in academic fields.

A consequence when work and personal life is conducted in the same space is that increased self-discipline and structure is required as boundary lines are blurred and inter-role conflicts emerge (Kingma 2019; Fonner, Stache 2012; Adisa, Gbadamosi et al. 2017; Delanoeije, Verbruggen et al. 2019). Furthermore, improved means of communications in mobile devices equally empower and enslave workers, as flexibility is counterweighted by stress factors of constant availability that intensifies work beyond conventional office hours and compromises the balance of work-life (Barley, Meyerson et al. 2011). Workers under flexible work arrangements typically report overtime work to a greater extent (Mellner, Aronsson et al. 2014), and especially knowledge workers experience a weak to boundaryless interface between work and life, as the distinction of work and non-work is not emphasized, and integration is the norm (Field, Chan 2018; Ezzedeen, Zikic 2017). However, integration is associated with stress, work-family conflict and depression (Baltes, Chakrabarti et al. 2009), which problematizes current normative expectations. If overtime work, integration and stress is a consequence of flexibility, where do employees draw the line?

1.2. Purpose and Research Question

The relevance of flexible work arrangements reveals a gap in previous research within boundary management and work-life balance, that currently looks past some dimensions in the context of optional hybrid remote work. The increased flexibility entails challenges in the boundaryless interface between work and life, where more insight and knowledge are needed to further understand the predictors of work-life balance. Thus, the aim of this study is to explore if boundary management influences work-life balance by answering the research question:

Does individual boundary management affect experienced work-life balance for employees in hybrid organizations?

1.3 Delimitations

The research is geographically delimited to Sweden in the context of emerging from restrictions related to the virus spread of Covid-19. Employee estimates could be more applied to the pandemic, where factors such as leisure time and remote work are affected. Considering that Sweden never entered a total lockdown and remained most functions running as usual is an indicator that findings are likely to be generally applicable beyond pandemic contexts.

As this study is focused on employees on an individual level in the context of hybrid organizations, the results are applicable to similar circumstances. It is also implied that a participant might not work from places other than the office although the opportunity is given, to account for informal remote work such as checking emails from home on weekends.

2. Literature Review

The following theoretical fields explain the context of which this study is conducted within;

Figure 1. Conceptualization of research intersection of theoretical fields

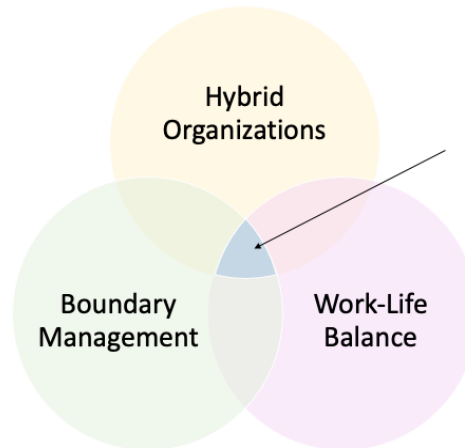


Table 1. Pre-planned Strategy

Database	Scopus, MerQuery, Sage Research, Google Scholar
Theoretical Fields	Remote work, work-life balance, boundary management
Literature	Academic articles, academic journals, e-books, books, Mcs theses, meta studies
Search Words	hybrid organization, remote work, telework, flexible work, work-life balance, work-life conflict, work-nonwork balance, boundary strategy, boundary preference, boundary management, work-life balance measurement/scale/instrument, boundary management measurement/scale/instrument.

2.1. Remote Work

2.1.1. Definition

Although remote work has been an interest of researchers for many years, a common definition of remote work, also known as telework, mobile work or flexible work, does not exist. The main characteristics to frame remote work is that it concerns tasks carried out from a geographical distance from the office or contractor, is regulated by a formal agreement and is supported by or relies on *Information and Communication Technologies* (ICTs) (Huws, Korte et al. 1990, Korte, Wynne 1996). Knowledge-based organizations, which are institutions that rely on the capability and value added by ideas of workers (Balda, Mora 2011), commonly uses ICTs to exchange meaning.

Tremblay and Thomsin (2012) use a broad definition of remote work which is adopted in this study:

“Work performed by an employee anywhere outside of the office, for an organization that provides flexible work arrangements.”

Furthermore, Tremblay and Thomsin (2012) discuss benefits and drawbacks of remote work and mention flexibility, less interruption by colleagues, personal development and time efficiency as advantages, which are also factors related to improved work-life balance. Other studies have the same findings of positive outcomes of telework, including improved productivity, speed and quality of product, performance in teams and decreasing absenteeism (Coenen, Kok 2014; Gajendran, Harrison 2007; Ollo-Lopez, Bayo-Moriones et al. 2010). Some drawbacks associated with full time remote work are critical social costs, blurred boundaries which contribute to tension and confusion, as well as other circumstances of intrusion especially related to employees with children. Additionally, flexible working practices imply work intensification alongside high job satisfaction, as remote work facilitates hard work and time saved by not commuting is used to work rather than for non-work activities (Kelliher, Anderson 2010). Hence, the desire for flexibility is juggled with the requirement for structure (Fonner, Stache 2012).

2.1.2. Relevance of Hybrid Organizations

Previous to the pandemic, 50% of employees were short of experience in work from home, either caused by lack of support in infrastructure or organizational regulation, but proved to be adaptive to hybrid work according to recent data collected by the institution Leesman Index (Hobbs 2021). Majority of participants in this survey polled that they preferred to work from home three days or more post-pandemic, and those with poor space for separation within their homes were more keen to work in-office (Hobbs 2021), as spatial separation is of great importance for work-life balance (Shockley & Clark 2020). Yet, a great deal of research fails to discover reasons behind employee location preference.

If face-to-face contact is sustained, telework improves organizational performance (Coenen & Kok 2014), while real estate costs are reduced and international talent utilized. Choudhury, Foroughi et al. (2021) argue that conforming to hybrid workspaces is an important feature, both generally in the digital economy as well as in the post-pandemic world, as the workforce is increasingly eager to obtain geographical flexibility. Bjärntoft, Hallman et al. (2020) states that the autonomy that flexible work arrangement entails, contributes to intrinsic motivation, and increases work-life balance.

2.2. Work-Life Balance

2.2.1. Definition

The answer to what characterizes a good work-life balance depends on the definition and what is measured. One definition by Marks and Macdermid (1996) is “approaching every role and role partner with attention and care”, which focuses on enjoying every part of life equally sufficient. Thereafter, “absence of conflict” emerged as a decisive variable (Duxbury & Higgins 2001), whereas Valcour (2007) measured work-life balance as an attitude which focused more on the psychological aspects related to work-family domains. This definition aligns with the aim of this study, but was adapted to include several aspects of non-work related roles, rather than just family:

“An overall level of contentment resulting from an assessment of one’s degree of success at meeting work and non-work demands.”

2.2.2. Measurement

There are several attempts in literature to measure work-life balance, which stems from the concept of being highly subjective and individual (Wayne, Vaziri et al. 2021). The result of various definitions and lack of consensus in measurability makes it difficult to draw general conclusions and build accumulative theory (ibid). The meta-analytic review of Casper, Vaziri et al. (2018) assesses various measures for work-life balance which have been developed, such as person-environment fit (Voydanoff 2002), a one question estimation (Greenhaus, Ziegert et al. 2012), or how well one meets the expectations of surrounding relations (Grzywacz, Carlson 2007). Concludingly, historical consensus of a validated tool that properly measures work-life balance is absent in research. Hence, the following publications have served as inspiration in construction of a customized measurement tool.

Dex, Bond (2005) created a checklist with ten questions about the aspects of work-life balance and a template with how to interpret the result, where a three-point scale was used. They tested control variables such as age, sex, number of children and working hours. Weekly hours proved to be a large determinant, where a decrease in work-life balance was seen when employees worked more than 40 hours a week, and working more than 48 hours caused the largest concerns (ibid).

To understand all aspects of work-life balance, the areas of work-place support, work interference with personal life, personal life interference with work and overall satisfaction with work-life balance were investigated through 46 statements, where the targeted group was IT-professionals (Rashida Banu & Duraipandian 2014). Work-related variables such as work hours per week and number of years in the present employment were included as contextual work factors.

Bjärntoft, Hallman et al. (2020) conducted a cross-sectional study on Swedish transport workers in flexible work-arrangements. In contrast to the studies that focus on solely measuring work-life balance, this study investigated how boundary management affected the experienced WLB with variables such as perceived flexibility, boundary management and contextual factors. Part-time workers were excluded, due to previous findings that working hours highly affect experienced work-life balance (ibid). To measure work-life balance, they only asked one question regarding general satisfaction. However, a single question can be argued to not capture such a complex concept, since assessment of internal consistency cannot be made (Loo 2002).

Wayne and Vaziri (2021) claims to have created the first comprehensive and well-developed measurement, which included variables of involvement, effectiveness and affective. The construction of the measurement tool was conducted through different phases, where they finally summarized a questionnaire on 20 questions, tested to fit the entire population with a high generalizability.

2.2.3. Critical Stream of Literature

For the individual, the purpose of work-life balance is to successfully manage work and life demands, which is a subjective evaluation. However, in most research life is assumed to be of positive character and preferred rather than work, of which Roberts (2007) is critical. Long hours do not necessarily have to be bad, since work can bring a sense of self-fulfillment and satisfaction, which can provide even greater overall satisfaction than the contribution of life (Eikhof, Warhurst et al. 2007). Research shows however, that mental recovery through psychological detachment and relaxation from work is crucial to let go of stress, thus emphasizing the importance of life (Barber, Conlin et al. 2019; Wepfer, Allen et al. 2017).

Carlson, Grzywacz et al. (2009) argue that there is little empirical research that supports beneficial outcomes for workers or organizations from balance of work and life. In practice, it is difficult to achieve work-life balance simply by allowing employees options, as it requires awareness of the constraints of gender, workplace culture and norms (Lewis et al. 2007). The mainstream perception of life is that it evolves around caring duties, such as tending to children, leading to organizations that attempt to increase work-life balance among employees mainly choose to facilitate caring responsibilities in the form of maternity leave and increased flexibility (ibid). Such policies are particularly targeting women, since they are still considered the main caregiver in a family, even in “gender neutral” countries (Eikhof, Warhurst et al. 2007). Thus, implicit social constructs might not have progressed as far.

3. Theoretical Framework

The new and increasingly common work-life situation of hybrid or remote work has highlighted the importance of boundary management, especially as employees who work from home tend to have different preferences in how to manage boundaries between work and personal domains (Mellner, Aronsson et al. 2014).

3.1. Boundary Theory

Boundary theory is a fundamental theory within work-life balance that explains how one can either integrate or separate different domains of life and work, as well as transitions between roles, and serves as a cognitive and social classification that focuses on the meanings people ascribe to work and non-work (Zerubavel, 1991, 1996). Separation keeps different domains apart by physical or mental boundaries enacted by the individual, to avoid role-conflicts that can occur when the lines between domains are blurred (Mellner, Aronsson et al. 2014; Wepfer, Allen et al. 2017; Field, Chan 2018) and help cope with multiple expectations (Long 2012). Conversely, integration refers to mixed domains, often to create an individualized solution where the boundaries between work and life are very small or completely erased to simplify role transition (Fonner, Stache 2012). The environmental context, so-called boundary suppliers, create conditions that can facilitate separation or integration strategies.

The entire spectrum from full integration to full separation is covered in Boundary theory. However, empirical findings show that people cannot be divided into either separator or integrator, as individuals might integrate work to non-work but not the other way around, or vice versa. This implies that the continuum of separation and integration is more complex than simply linear (Ammons 2013; Bulger et al. 2007; Kossek et al. 2012).

3.1.1. Separation vs Integration

There are varying advantages between separating and integrating work and personal life (Kreiner 2006), and factors like strength of boundaries between these domains, and how similar they are, affect the choice and/or need for integration or separation. A separation strategy can be associated with psychological detachment (Park, Fritz et al. 2011) and has shown to be more successful in achieving a better work-life balance, probably due to greater recovery (Wepfer, Allen et al. 2017). Too much integration can lead to stress, increased distractions, work-family conflict, depression and dissatisfaction (Baltes, Chakrabarti et al. 2009). Segmentation theory, which is full separation between life and work divided by space, function and time (Edwards & Rothband 2000; Kanter 1977; Staines 1980; Young & Kleiner 1992; Zedeck 1992; as cited in Zainab & Tank (2020) has weak empirical support but is considered a theoretical possibility (Guest, 2001).

However, some integration is positive, since full separation leads to inflexibility and lack of individualized solutions (Baltes, Chakrabarti et al. 2009).

3.1.2 Seven Personas

A study conducted by Bergman, Palm et al. (2017) builds on Boundary theory by categorizing how individuals create boundaries between work and personal life through seven different strategies, covering the spectrum from full integration to full separation. These strategies, here referred to as Seven Personas, are described below:

Total separator: keeps a firm line between private life and work matters.

Place separator: all work should take place at the office or another designated workspace, even if workdays may sometimes be long.

Time separator: may work at different places but works the right amount of hours, no more and no less. Often prefers to work regular hours.

Working integrator: available at home for work. Answers work calls and email at home, possibly during dinner, but does not want to be disturbed by family at work.

Private life integrator: handles some private communication and errands during work hours, but does not take work back home.

Total integrator: is always available and has no boundaries between working and private life.

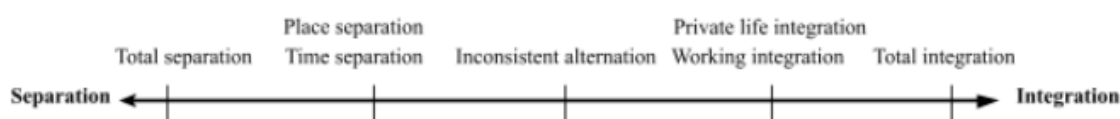
Inconsistent alternator: someone who changes strategy and has no clear boundary preference.

Boundary management strategy has been argued one of the strongest predictors of employee well-being, promoting separation boundaries as having positive associations to work-life balance (WLB) (Kossek et al 2006). Building on this research, we expect:

H1 Integration has a negative relationship with WLB.

This study assumes that place- and time separators can be seen as parallel to each other on the integration/separation continuum, as well as working- and private life integrating strategies on the integration side. Lastly, the alternation strategy is in this study positioned in the center of the spectrum as it represents individuals who enact strategies on both sides of the neutral point.

Figure 2. Positioning of boundary management strategies on the integration/separation continuum.



3.1.3 Perceived Control of Boundary Management

To what extent the work arrangement is perceived as flexible, and extent of psychological control of boundary management, has a larger positive impact on work-life balance than the stated flexibility policies (Oldham & Hackman 1981; Kossek et al. 2006; Bjärntoft, Hallman et al. 2020). Perceived flexibility is synonymous to perceived control in when, where and how to do the work. Work-life balance is affected by occupational factors or environmental conditions (Kreiner 2006; Wepfer et al. 2018) as well as individual behaviors, which means that two people in equal positions and surroundings individually have the power to affect outcomes through their actions, leading to different levels of work-life balance. Organizational factors such as high demands, expectations to work long hours and time pressure usually have a negative effect on work-life balance, but increased autonomy given through flexibility provides better opportunities to handle stressful situations, and reverse the negative impact (Bjärntoft, Hallman et al. 2020; Oldman & Hackman 1981). As results have shown that the factor with the strongest positive correlation with WLB is boundary management (Bjärntoft, Hallman et al. 2020), and that individual choices and control matter, the relationship is expected as followed:

H2 Greater perceived control to set individual boundaries is positively related to WLB

Bjärntoft, Hallman et al. (2020) argue that people with a preference for separation experience a higher decrease in work-life balance when separation was not possible, than integrators did. Moreover, Bloom, Liang et al. (2013) found that employees are likely best to determine for themselves whether to work remotely or in-office, since preference can accurately imply the most beneficial strategy and correlate with job satisfaction and work-life balance. To further explore these findings, the next hypothesis is based on the expectation that if the preference of a certain persona and the behavior that is exercised correspond, it is positively associated with work-life balance:

H3 If behavior and preference of boundary strategy is cohesive, the effect on WLB is positive.

3.1.4 Boundary Management in Remote Work

Research conducted over time on remote workers during the pandemic indicated a greater work-life balance for remote workers who preferred segmentation as boundary strategy (Allen, Merlo et al. 2021). Furthermore, their research tested contextual factors of the home environment and found that fewer household members and access to a dedicated office space within the home had associations with greater work-life balance, irrespective of boundary management preferences. Several factors may strengthen or weaken the ability of employees to segment work and life (ibid), both in the office and remotely, and

integration strategies are negatively related to family–work balance (Kossek, Lautsch et al. 2006).

Delanoeije, Verbruggen et al. (2019) explored the relationship of work-to-home conflict, home-to-work conflict, role transitions and preference to protect a certain domain from interference. They found that employees during days of remote work had more interruptions in work activities, as well as made more transitions, which was related to increased home-to-work conflict. Since remote work facilitate integration and amplify role-transitions, and risk work intensification (Kelliher, Anderson 2010), the following relationship is expected:

H4 Working remotely is negatively related to WLB

3.2 Theory Discussion

Strong theory efficiently explains and predicts relationships between concepts (Saunders, Lewis et al. 2019) where confirmability, refinement and contradiction of these explanations must be possible to further develop the theory. Boundary theory provides this solid foundation but also implies certain limitations. Firstly, integration and separation strategies entail different pros and cons, applicable to varying degrees in different situations (Kreiner 2006). As Boundary theory does not state what is beneficial or not, the broader theoretical discussion of theory provides the basis for hypotheses. Regardless, this theory is argued to be most suitable. For instance, Border theory only considers work-family domains, whereas the Job Demands-Resources model has many relevant aspects but was deemed too extensive given the scope of this study. Secondly, the continuum between integration and separation is not straight forward, in which the usage of Seven Persona attempts to capture the complexity. However, Seven Persona has never been tested in a quantitative study before, which implies novel interpretation and translation of the theory to be measured quantitatively.

3.2.1 Theoretical Contribution

Existing research looks past some dimensions of the relationship between work-life balance and boundary management, especially in the context of optional hybrid work. Contextual factors such as perceived control to set boundaries, and preferences of strategies were tested to further develop existing theory and research, beyond the work-family concept and through broader inclusion of remote work to encompass hybrid work. Especially interesting was to investigate employees that due to heavy workload have little ability to create boundaries between domains and roles. This research contributes empirical findings to the Seven Persona conceptual framework, which will add to the discussion of boundary strategies with a more nuanced continuum and/or limitations when testing this theory quantitatively.

3.3 Hypotheses Summarized

- | | |
|----|---|
| H1 | Integration has a negative relationship with WLB. |
| H2 | Greater perceived control to set individual boundaries is positively related to WLB |
| H3 | If behavior and preference of boundary strategy is cohesive, the effect on WLB is positive. |
| H4 | Working remotely is negatively related to WLB |

Figure 3. Conceptual model associating behaviors related to boundary management and remote work with WLB.



4. Methodology

4.1 Research Approach

This study chose an objective ontology as perspective, which stands to rationalize explanations independent from the observer, unlike constructivism which highlight interpretations dependent on social actors (Saunders, Lewis et al. 2019). The ontology viewpoint implies that this study employs positivist epistemology and research approach, which means that knowledge is attained through observations, human actions are rational and that these can be understood by hypothesis testing (Frey 2018). Resultantly, a deductive approach was used to draw logical conclusions from given premises and theory, on which hypotheses were built. In contrast to qualitative methods, where the intention is to get deeper understanding of experiences, the purpose of this thesis was to draw general conclusions through results based on a large sample to represent the population and decreases biases, for which quantitative analysis was purposeful (Berryman 2019).

4.2 Research Design

This study tested a correlational relationship between variables (Saunders, Lewis et al. 2019), which not necessarily implies causation, in which a more experimental design would have been needed (ibid). Due to the limited time frame and the formulated purpose, a cross-sectional design with data collection through a survey was appropriate (Saunders, Lewis et al. 2019, p. 212). The survey was conducted through a self-administrated, online questionnaire, with mainly closed questions for it is best suited when it consists of and aims to collect a great amount of information. Digital surveys minimize underrepresentation of certain groups, and therefore enable discovery of more generalized patterns (Berryman 2019). An alternative would be to conduct the survey in a controlled environment, which would allow follow-up questions from participants and clarification. However, given the research question and scope of the study, the chosen research design was most suitable.

4.2.1 Data Collection

It was crucial that instructions given to respondents were comprehended corresponding to the intentions (Saunders, Lewis et al. 2019, pp. 354-394), also since 5-9% of respondents refrain from reading initial instructions due to general familiarity of completing questionnaires (Hardy, Ford 2014). Thus, survey errors of measurements related to instructional, sentinel, and lexical miscomprehensions were taken into consideration (Lavrakas 2008). To induce relative impact on increased incentive to complete the online questionnaire and reduce response bias, the length of the survey was revised, sender university included to promote credibility and clear communication was

used to decrease unintended wording effects (Lavrakas 2008; Saunders, Lewis et al. 2019). Especially critical was to establish collaboration with organizations, to distribute the questionnaire internally which incentivizes participation.

4.2.2 Construction of Survey

The survey consisted of 24 questions in four main parts related to demographic information, work arrangement, boundary management and work-life balance. Individual strategies of boundary management were looked at through the lens of Seven Personas (Rosengren, Bergman & Palm, 2017) and related questions were designed as self-categorization among the seven strategies based on short definitions. The participants were asked two questions in which strategy that best described their behavior as well as their preferred preference of boundary strategy to identify discrepancy or synergy. To capture the complexity of how different areas of work and non-work affect work-life balance, a measurement was based on the average score of 15 statements using five-point Likert's scales, which is a conventional scale of previous research (Wayne and Vaziri 2021). Filter questions were included to guarantee quality of data and that only submissions of compatible respondents were analyzed in later stages. The advantage of Swedish as survey language is easier understanding, however, English was concluded to be most suitable considering probable high fluency in the intended target group, improved inclusivity and eliminated risk of translation errors. See Appendix 1 for the full survey and Appendix 2 for coding of variables.

4.2.3 Pilot Testing

Prior to distributing the survey to intended organizations, quality was ensured by both discussing the content thoroughly with two contacts from different organizations used in this study as well as to conduct a pilot test on an appropriate sample. This enabled determination of time length, clarity of information, ambiguity of instructions or layout and feedback. These efforts resulted in minor changes in wording to further clarification, a modification to a more nuanced scale of answer alternatives, and removal of one ambiguous question. The feedback received included validation and encouragement from the authors of Seven Personas (Rosengren, Bergman & Palm, 2017) regarding capturing the boundary strategies of employees. Concludingly, the survey was assessed to be suitable for the intended target group.

4.2.4 Statistical Method

The collected data was analyzed in Stata/SE 17.0 and controlled for normal distribution of the dependent variable through the Shapiro-Wilk test and Skewness and Kurtosis test. To successfully model WLB, several factors of which it can be dependent on had to be accounted for. Conventionally, multiple OLS regression was used to predict values of the response variable as well as identify significant relationships (Hutcheson, Sofroniou

1999). Basic assumptions were represented in null hypotheses and quantified through multiple OLS regression and modeled in the following estimation strategy;

$$WLB_i = \alpha + \beta_1 Boundary Strategy_i + \beta_2 Perceived Control_i + \beta_3 Synergy_i + \beta_4 Days Remote_i + C_i + \varepsilon_i \quad (1)$$

where y_i represents the experienced WLB of an employee, alpha represents the average value of interception, β_{1-4} corresponds to the average change in WLB associated with a unit of change in each independent variable when all others are held constant, C_i represent control variables, is the error term that captures everything not measured, as the relationship is not exact between variables (Hutcheson, Sofroniou 1999, p. 56).

4.3 Sample

By conducting the survey on multiple organizations, a larger sample was obtained which provided a basis to draw general conclusions applicable across industries. Accordingly, research within a single company would be based upon the policies and norms unique for a specific industry or organization and was considered a limitation. The selection process was based on the following:

Table 2. Criteria for Sample

Geographical	Sweden
Organizational constraints	No startups
	Knowledge-based
Employee work arrangement	Flexibility in location
	Full-time employed

Part-time workers were excluded since they can distribute time according to their preference more freely than full-time workers, which is likely to improve work-life balance (Björntoft, Hallman et al. 2020). Moreover, startup firms are considered a unique context of work with high responsibility or prohibited control of setting boundaries. Lastly, knowledge-based organizations imply employee autonomy where work-life balance is a prominent challenge which is interesting to explore. Concludingly, a target group that fulfills the criteria and was suitable for this study was consultants, which are known to have flexibility and heavy workload (Field, Chan 2018), which are factors that intensifies importance of boundary management due to increased difficulty of overall time management in an effective manner.

A purposive sampling method was applied, as participants and organizations logically and by expertise assumed to be representative of the population were contacted (Bryman & Bell 2015, p. 430), with the aim to collect equally large samples from the different industries. A misalignment between the practical and ideal study settings is generally common, which implies that results of the survey cannot be generalized unless the

population of interest is fully aligned with the target population. However, the purposive sampling method was appropriate relative to the restricted population definition and that the sample is limited geographically (Lavrakas 2008). As all members of the population have the same probability of selection in a random sampling, this method was not accurate.

4.3.1 Participants

Collaboration with six different companies was established; two organizations representing each industry, namely management consulting, legal consulting and communication consulting of which intended participants were partners, senior consultants and junior consultants. The survey was distributed by email and data collected during the 1st of March until 23rd of March, where reminders were sent after one week and the survey was closed after two weeks (Saunders, Lewis et al. 2019). Measures were taken to include more employees in the communication sector, but a large mailing invitation to participate is believed to have become impersonal. Consequently, the response rate was 17.21%.

Table 3. Response Rate

Industry	Distribution	Frequency	Response Rate
Management	195	55	28.21%
Legal	136	43	31.62%
Communication	349	19	5.44%
Total	680	117	17.21%

Since there was no missing data due to non-completion, and probabilities of selection were equal and not unstable to estimate the population, weighting responses was not used as a correction technique (Lavrakas 2008).

4.4 Study Measures

4.4.1 Dependent Variable

- *Work-Life Balance (wlb)*: measured as an average score of 15 statements based on indications on Likert's scales corresponding to values between 0 (agree/disagree) and 4 (disagree/agree), depending on the direction of the statement. An example item is "The demands arising from my work make my personal life stressful". Increasing scores represent progressively better work-life balance.

4.4.2 Independent Variables

- *Boundary Strategy*: measured continuously as five strategy groups according to positioning on the continuum illustrated in Figure 2, where increasing values represents more integration.
- *Perceived Control*: measured as a continuous variable, with an indication from 0 (no control) to 10 (complete control).
- *Synergy*: measured as a dummy variable, where if the behavior and preference of boundary management strategy was cohesive, the variable took the value (1).
- *Days Remote*: was measured through a discrete scale from 0 to 7 corresponding to the number of days the participant worked from elsewhere than the office in an average week.

Full table of independent variables is found in Appendix 3 Table 1.

4.4.3 Control Variables

Control variables were included in the regression analysis to reduce impact of potential omitted variable bias and were adopted from previous research to fit the purpose of investigating work-life balance within the context of hybrid organizations.

- *Hours week*: measured categorically as indication of average hours work an average week, included as a continuous variable. (Dex, Bond 2005)
- *Female*: gender of participants measured as a dummy variable where it took the value (1) if the respondent was female.
- *Household size*: measured as number of members living together (Allen, Merlo et al. 2021).
- *Norms*: corresponds to possibility to work remotely given company culture, expectations and norms and is measured by Likert's scale from 0 (very low) to 4 (very high) (Field, Chan 2018).
- *Separate space*: corresponds to access to a separate space for work within the home and is measured by Likert's scale from 0 (disagree) to 4 (agree) (Allen, Merlo et al. 2021; Shockley & Clark 2020).

4.5 Method Discussion

Although deleting variables to remove multicollinearity is problematic (Hutcheson, Sofroniou 1999), only data that was collected but not included lacked theoretical foundation. For instance, age was asked for but did not predict *wlb*. Moreover, the variable *years_role* was difficult to interpret due to dual predictors of years in a current role in combination with years within the current organization, which led to the exclusion of this variable (see full table in Appendix 3 Table 2).

Knowledge workers are typically exposed to stress, where time is a scarce factor. This may prohibit subgroups of the population to engage in a digital survey, which could cause response bias (Lavrakas 2008, p. 752). The method of cross-sectional research also did not allow investigation of strategy implementation or work-life balance over time. Societal norms might imply that high work-life balance is better, whereas the opposite could be reinforced by organization policies or team culture which could affect respondents' answers. However, given the anonymity provided, this aspect is deemed not to affect the outcomes and results largely. In hindsight, the survey could have been constructed to include options for “not applicable/I don’t know”.

4.5.1 Reliability and Validity

Existing measurement tools of work-life balance were either too extensive, like those of Wayne and Vaziri (2021) and Rashida Banu and Duraipandian (2014), or not covering enough like Dex (2005) and Bjärntoft, Hallman et al. (2020). Moreover, participants of Wayne and Vaziri (2021) were adults in the U.S from 22 different industries where 30 hours or more was considered full-time which implied limited relevance. Concludingly, questions were adapted and covered different aspects of balancing demands of different domains and were selected from previous studies using face validity, which resulted in a customized measurement tool (presented in Appendix 4).

This study assessed reliability of internal consistency with the use of Cronbach's alpha to detect whether the items in the scale taps into a single construct. Testing the 15 questions related to work-life balance signified an alpha of 0.873 which passed the normative threshold yet does not indicate a value related to a homogenous set of questions (Saunders, Lewis et al. 2019, pp. 354-394).

The usage of the measurement tool for work-life balance was not tested before and thus imposed a risk for decreased validity. Further, it is a theoretical disadvantage since our research does not contribute to previous measurements. However, our tool captured findings that align with previous theoretical predictions, which indicates validity to some extent (Wayne and Vaziri 2021).

4.5.2 Ethics and GDPR

Since established contacts at the organizations distributed the survey, no emails or names of respondents were retrieved. Extra precautions were taken to anonymize the obtained data by pseudonymize organizations (European Commission 2021). Measures were taken to optimize respondent confidentiality (Lavrakas 2008, p. 956), through an ethical survey tool (SSE Qualtrics) compliant with GDPR. Consent to participate was obtained in the welcome page of the survey, and participants were informed that data would be used solely for purposes of this research paper, analyzed on aggregate level, and permanently deleted post completing the thesis (ibid).

Although information regarding the research topic was not highly sensitive, the confidentiality requirements of Stockholm School of Economics and participating organizations were taken into consideration. An ethical standpoint of this study was avoidance of any harm that may inflict participants (Saunders, Lewis et al. 2019), of which personal matters related to work-life balance was aimed not to affect emotional well-being. It is also recognized that being asked to leave records regarding an employer possibly entails problematic predicament. However, research shows that participants are more likely to answer truthfully, reveal sensitive information and reduce social desirability bias in a self-administered survey, rather than through interviews or a phone call (Lavrakas 2008, p. 804).

4.5.3 Reflexivity

Although judgements were made based on knowledge, it is likely that another expert would sample different elements or essential characteristics from the target population (Lavrakas 2008). The measurement tool for work-life balance was intentionally customized, although considered a delimitation and imposed a risk of common method bias. However, in statistical data analysis the avoidance of personal decision making is inevitable (Gelman, Hennig 2017) and the effort to appear objective can degenerate of which acceptance of a certain subjectivity can be part of the solution (Wasserstein, Schirm et al. 2019). Resultantly, this study is a consequence of choices and interpretations of the authors, although the approach of positivism has permeated the decisions and processes.

5. Empirics

5.1 Descriptive Statistics

The digital survey was distributed to a total of 680 employees, where a total of 119 individuals responded and agreed to participate. Out of these, two observations were excluded as these individuals stated not employed full-time, leaving 117 useful completions from employees at six consultant companies.

Table 4. Survey Sample

	n
Survey respondents	119
Complete responses	119
Intended target group of full-time employees	117
Outliers removed	0
Analysis sample	117

The sample was evenly distributed between binary genders (46.15% female) and the majority (94.02%) indicated college or university as their highest educational level. 55.56% were aged 20-29 and 73.5% indicated that they did not have children. Moreover, 37.61% indicated that they work solely in-office and 55.56% stated that they work more than 50 hours an average week.

Variables that correlate more than the value of 0.7 indicate potential multicollinearity and should be handled with consideration. For instance, the variables that represent norms and policies in an organization correlate medium-high ($r=0.606$), which show that these capture similar constructs. Similarly, due to a high correlation ($r=0.733$) between number of children and people in the household, the variable *children* was removed in the final model. Correlation of all variables can be found in Appendix 5. Resultantly, a VIF test showed no values above 5 which implied no multicollinearity (see Appendix 6 Table 1) of the following variables included in the final model presented below:

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. dev.	Min	Max
wlb	117	2.215	.716	.733	4
boundary_strategy	117	1.863	1.106	0	3
perceived_control	117	5.359	2.561	0	10
synergy	117	.444	.499	0	1
days_remote	117	1.402	1.402	0	5
hours_week	117	1.701	1.002	0	4
female	117	.462	.501	0	1
household_size	117	.949	.705	0	2
norms	117	2.547	1.126	0	4
separate_space	117	2.222	1.614	0	4

Full descriptives of determinants of the dependent variable can be found in Appendix 7. As no respondent indicated to use total separation as a boundary strategy, the independent variable of *boundary_strategy* consisted of four strategies, 16.2% time/space separators, 19.7% alternators, 25.6% working/private integrators and 38.46% total integrators. Only 4.3% preferred alternation as a boundary strategy to enact.

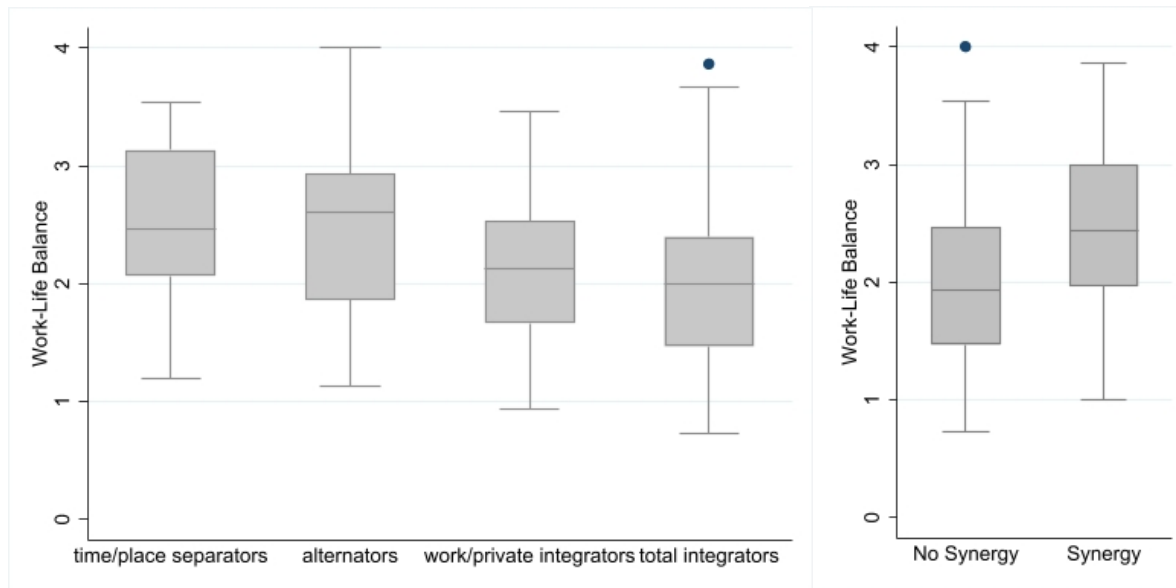
The variables in the final model correlated between -0.381 to 0.510.

Table 6. Correlation of Variables

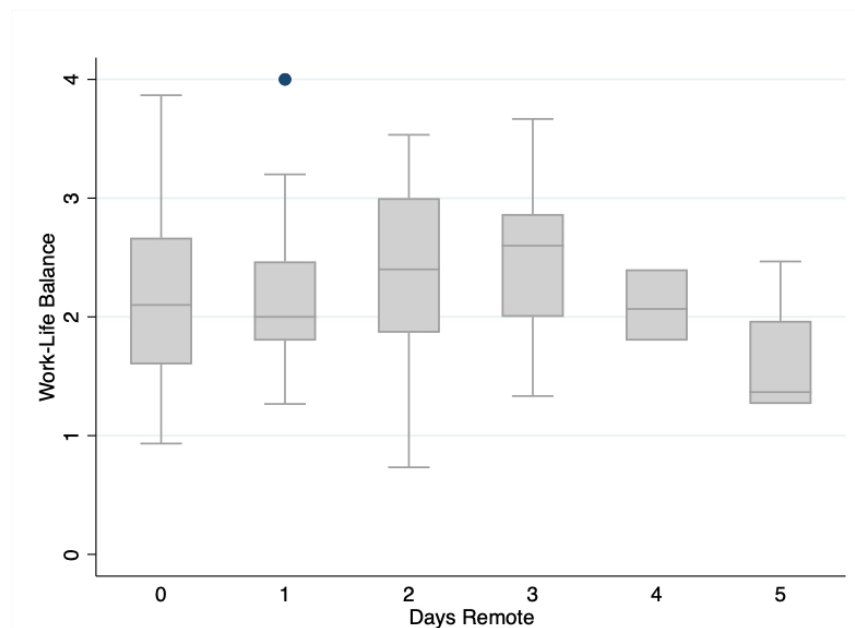
Variable	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
1. wlb	1.000									
2. boundary_strategy	-0.270	1.000								
3. perceived_control	0.510	-0.381	1.000							
4. synergy	0.327	-0.108	0.313	1.000						
5. days_remote	0.037	-0.081	0.238	0.014	1.000					
6. hours_week	-0.315	0.344	-0.260	-0.094	-0.251	1.000				
7. female	0.214	-0.150	0.132	-0.000	0.053	-0.221	1.000			
8. household_size	0.022	-0.053	0.139	0.237	0.178	-0.132	0.019	1.000		
9. norms	0.258	-0.147	0.305	0.223	0.133	-0.037	-0.131	0.068	1.000	
10. separate_space	0.125	-0.022	0.241	0.144	0.254	0.047	0.032	0.275	0.032	1.000

Normality assumptions were tested through Shapiro-Wilk test, where it could not be rejected that WLB is normally distributed, and Skewness and Kurtosis test, where values succeeded the threshold of 1 (see Appendix 6 Table 2), which otherwise indicates a substantially skewed or peaked distribution (Hair, Hult et al. 2022).

Graph 1a-b. Distribution of WLB by boundary strategy and synergy

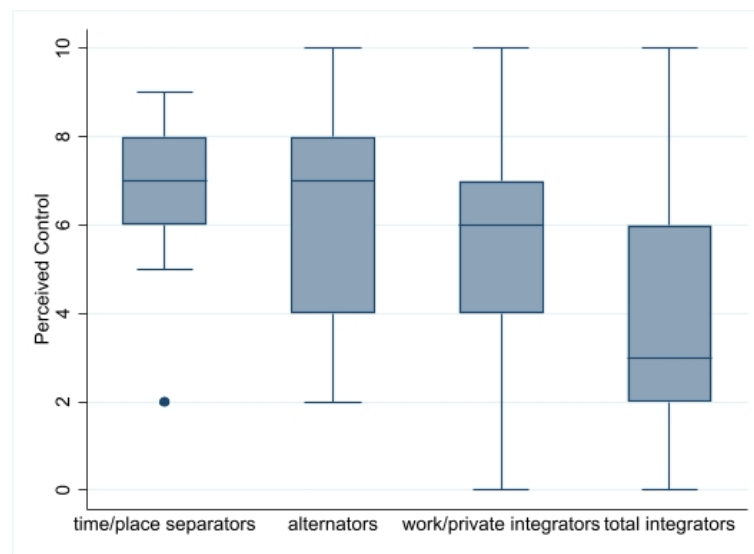


Graph 1c. Distribution of WLB by days of remote work



Graph 1a and 1b illustrates that individuals that integrate have lower mean of WLB, and that individuals who have synergy experience a higher mean of WLB. Graph 1c indicates a possible non-linear relationship between remote days of work and WLB. The outlier observed was after inspection identified as reliable and not excluded.

Graph 1d. Distribution of perceived control by boundary strategy



Graph 1d illustrates that individuals that enact total integration have the lowest mean of perceived control in setting boundaries.

5.1 Multiple OLS Regression

Normal distribution of the dependent variable resulted in OLS regression. Variables were inserted hierarchically to examine durability of effects (Pedhazur 1997). Sequential entries of predictor variables based on theory were explored, but only the final version is presented: 1) WLB predicted from *boundary_strategy*, 2) addition of *perceived_control*, 3) entry of *synergy*, 4) inclusion of *days_remote*, and finally, 5) model 5 added remaining control variables (see Appendix 8 for full hierarchical insertion).

Table 7. Hierarchical Insertion of Variables

Variables	(1) wlb	(2) wlb	(3) wlb	(4) wlb	(5) wlb
boundary_strategy	-0.175** (0.058)	-0.057 (0.056)	-0.059 (0.055)	-0.058 (0.055)	-0.008 (0.056)
perceived_control		0.133*** (0.024)	0.117*** (0.025)	0.122*** (0.026)	0.101*** (0.026)
synergy			0.268* (0.119)	0.260* (0.119)	0.255* (0.119)
days_remote				-0.039 (0.042)	-0.068 (0.043)
hours_week					-0.153* (0.062)
female					0.203+ (0.114)
household_size					-0.110 (0.083)
norms					0.089+ (0.053)
separate_space					0.034 (0.037)
Constant	2.541*** (0.126)	1.608*** (0.204)	1.581*** (0.200)	1.608*** (0.203)	1.642*** (0.258)
Observations	117	117	117	117	117
R ²	0.0727	0.267	0.298	0.304	0.382

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. Significance corresponds to *** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05, + p<0.10

In model 1, *boundary_strategy* was negatively associated with *wlb* ($\beta_1 = -0.175$, $p < 0.01$) when inserted separately, which implies that more integration has negative effects on WLB. As shown in model 2, the significance and coefficient were compromised when other variables entered, thus explaining the variance weakly. *Perceived_control* was positively associated with *wlb* ($\beta_2 = 0.133$, $p < 0.001$), meaning that higher control entails better WLB. In model 3, *synergy* was added and showed a positive relationship with *wlb* ($\beta_3 = 0.268$, $p < 0.05$), which means that when behavior and preference in boundary strategy align, work-life balance is positively affected. In model 4, *days_remote* showed a small negative association ($\beta_4 = -0.039$) with *wlb* but not on a significant level, indicating that WLB decreases the more days is worked remotely. The modeling illustrated that

perceived_control ($p < 0.001$) and *synergy* ($p < 0.05$) were consistently positively related to *wlb* on a significant level.

5.1.1 Final Regression Model

The effect of *days_remote* was unanticipatedly weak. As descriptive statistics in graph 1c hinted at a non-linear relationship with *wlb*, the variable was explored categorically (see Appendix 9). Scientific integrity is fundamental in all research, for which adjustments ex post could be questioned. Nonetheless, the effect of this variable was argued to be presented more just through this adaptation, while the positivistic approach of this study calls for transparency.

Resultingly, the variables run in the full model predicted *wlb*, $F(13, 103) = 5.60$, $\text{prob} > F = 0.000$, $R^2 = 0.414$ ($\text{adj } R^2 = 0.340$), on a statistically significant level which indicated that the model is a good fit of the data. R^2 is widely adopted as the coefficient of multiple determination, and indicates the proportion of *wlb* that all included variables can explain (Hutcheson, Sofroniou 1999). The value of F needs to be significant for the relationship between x and y to be accepted (ibid).

Table 8. Regression Model

wlb	Coefficient	Std. err.	t	P< t	[95% conf. interval]	
boundary_strategy	-.0229563	.0566094	-0.41	0.686	-.1352278	.0893152
perceived_control	.1049533	.0272333	3.85	0.000	.0509424	.1589641
synergy	.2444341	.1268159	1.93	0.057	-.0070753	.4959435
days_remote						
1	.0202099	.1652008	0.12	0.903	-.307427	.3478468
2	.0654713	.1520822	0.43	0.668	-.2361478	.3670904
3	.0220316	.1805163	0.12	0.903	-.33598	.3800432
4	-.44184	.2918986	-1.51	0.133	-1.020752	.137072
5	-.6993388	.3274538	-2.14	0.035	-1.348766	-.0499114
hours_week	-.1300257	.0644856	-2.02	0.046	-.2579177	-.0021338
female	.1890871	.1154449	1.64	0.104	-.0398706	.4180447
household_size	-.1214897	.0826624	-1.47	0.145	-.285431	.0424517
norms	.0641795	.0532302	1.21	0.231	-.0413901	.1697491
separate_space	.0361969	.037392	0.97	0.335	-.0379613	.1103552
_cons	1.613732	.2590815	6.23	0.000	1.099905	2.127559

It can be argued that the level of WLB is not greatly affected by more integration, as *boundary_strategy* is weakly negative and insignificant. The coefficient for *perceived_control* was still significantly positive ($\beta_2=0.105$, $p < 0.001$), while synergy between enacted and preferred boundary management increases WLB by $\beta_3=0.244$, but

now on $p < 0.1$. *Days_remote* showed that working solely remotely (five days) with no remote workdays as reference category had a highly negative and significant effect by $\beta_7 = -0.699$ with WLB, whereas working two days remotely was weakly the best option at a non-significant level. The inconclusive relationship however could not support the hypothesis.

The variable *hours_work* had a negative impact of -0.130 which implies that working more reduces WLB at a significant level ($p < 0.05$), while *female* indicated that women have 0.193 higher level of WLB than men ($p < 0.1$). Although insignificant, the coefficient for household size implied that more members living together is negatively related to WLB, and similarly organizational norms and separate space for work in the home were weakly positively associated with WLB.

5.1.2 Hypothesis Result

Hypotheses were supported to a significant level of minimum 5% as following:

H1	Integration has a negative relationship with WLB.	Not supported
H2	Greater perceived control to set individual boundaries is positively related to WLB	Supported
H3	If behavior and preference of boundary strategy is cohesive, the effect on WLB is positive.	Partially supported
H4	Working remotely is negatively related to WLB	Not supported

5.1.3 Interaction Effect Post Hoc

Since the significance of *boundary_strategy* was compromised when *perceived_control* was entered into the model, this relationship was further explored post hoc by adding an interaction term (See Appendix 10). Thus, the statistical equation was adjusted;

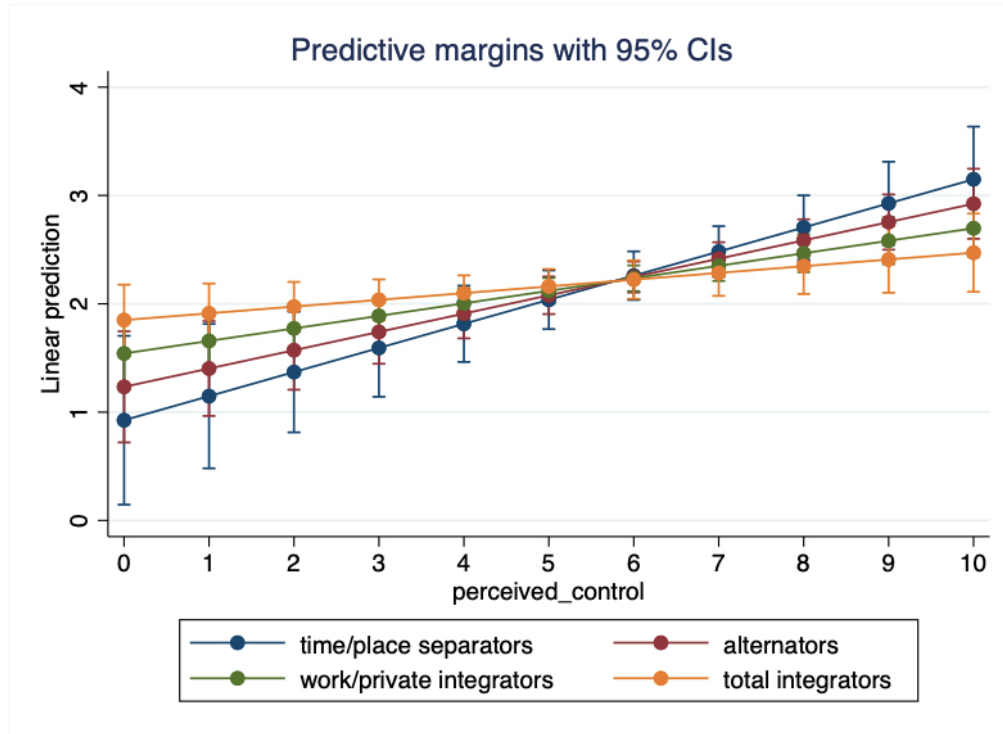
$$WLB_i = \alpha + \beta_1 Boundary\ Strategy_i + \beta_2 Perceived\ Control_i + \beta_3 Synergy_i + \beta_4 Days\ Remote_i + \beta_5 Boundary\ Strategy_i \times Perceived\ Control_i + C_i + \varepsilon_i \quad (2)$$

where $\beta_5 = -0.051$, $p < 0.05$.

The interaction term shows the difference in effect, and is evidence of a synergy effect between *boundary_strategy* and *perceived_control* ($F(13, 103) = 6.09$, $p < 0.05$), which implies that the combination is more explanatory than the sum of the effects. The coefficient indicates the change in *wlb* which is expected to occur as a result of a unit change in *boundary_strategy* x *perceived_control* (Hutcheson, Sofroniou 1999), or in other words reflects boundary strategy effect on WLB, conditioned on the levels of

perceived control (Lavrakas 2008, p. 342). The coefficients of the interaction effect are presented graphically below.

Figure 4. Marginsplot of interaction effect between boundary strategy and perceived control.



The coefficient (-0.051) of the interaction term was interpreted as that the effect of increasing integration becomes more negative relative to higher perceived control. The marginsplot shows that the effect of more control is more positive for individuals who enact time or place separation, and is only weakly more positive for total integrators. It shows that the effect of *boundary_strategy* is larger on *wlb* when *perceived_control* is high. In other words, the effect of perceived control on WLB is larger for individuals who enact separation strategies.

5.2 Statistical Discussion

As data is self-reported, it cannot be guaranteed that estimations are accurate in detail. Further, it is difficult to state with certainty if findings are applicable to other sectors or hybrid organizations. There is a possibility that results are simply an outcome of prevailing contexts. However, the inclusion of various companies and industries speaks for generalizability to the population of knowledge workers.

The term “statistically significant” is wrongly used, and has become synonymous with “significant importance”, which is not the case (Wasserstein, Schirm et al. 2019). Non-significant results can still entail findings that are true, important, or plausible (ibid). The concept of significance is diluted and by attributing importance to the p-value, scientists

become selective in what results to present which lead to avoidance of uncertainty rather than a means of learning and seeking improvements (Rosenthal 1979). The unanimous recommendation is to not use “statistically significant”, however, no equivalent replacement has been presented so far (Wasserstein, Schirm et al. 2019). Thus, this study has taken the misleading concept into consideration, by engaging in statistical thinking rather than evaluating the p-value with tunnel vision or avoiding unsatisfying results, which reduces risk of overfitting. However, the term statistically significant is still used since it is currently difficult to circumvent.

6. Analysis and Discussion

6.1 Answer to Research Question

Does individual boundary management affect experienced work-life balance for employees in hybrid organizations?

Given that the limelight of the research question was whether individual boundary management relates to employee work-life balance in terms of general aspects, rather than if a specific strategy of integration or separation generates a certain work-life balance, the research question has been answered. Yes, findings indicate that individual boundary management affects the experienced work-life balance of knowledge workers in hybrid organizations. It is not the boundary strategy per se, but associated circumstances that have material impact, especially perceived control to set boundaries and exercising the preferred boundary strategy by the individual.

6.2 Analysis of Hypotheses

Boundary Strategies

Hypothesis 1 was not supported, but the weakly negative coefficient entails alignment with previous theoretical findings which claims separation to be the superior strategy to attain good work-life balance (Wepfer, Allen et al. 2017). The effect of *boundary_strategy* was significant as seen in model 1, but since the effect derived from other variables that explained more of *wlb*, not developing the model would have led to a type 2 error. The sample was overrepresented by individuals enacting integrating strategies (64.10%), and as *graph 1d* entails, integration is related to low perceived control, which concludes that total integration between the domains might be a passive decision. Separating strategies might not be suited for knowledge workers because of expectancy of work availability.

Although the dispersion was skewed, it may not be a biased sample as it simply could reflect the population. Instead, there is a possibility that boundary management is rather irrelevant to individual factors or characteristics. Since the variable *female* entails that women have a better work-life balance than men, women might handle the many role-transitions that integration strategies entail more efficiently, perhaps due to social constructs (Eikhof, Warhurst et al. 2007). The result is consistent with previous difficulties of effectively capturing the complexity of the continuum, which may be due to limitations in the use of Seven Persona to measure boundary strategies, or the novelty of measurement may not have been successful.

Perceived Control

Perceived control to set boundaries was found to be essential in explaining variance of work-life balance, and support was found for a positive, significant relationship with WLB. Most of the participants reported to work more than 50 hours an average week, which naturally implies a challenge to manage work demands and other commitments simultaneously. Generally, lack of control is intuitively negative as it implies a sense of reduced freedom and even potentially increased stress levels. Thus, hypothesis 2 is believed to have been supported as high perceived control in setting boundaries is of great importance for individual satisfaction and more definitive of WLB than actual boundary strategy.

Synergy

Synergy indicated that exercising the preferred boundary strategy is highly related to work-life balance positively. However, the degree of cohesiveness rather than binary indications could perhaps provide a more nuanced result. Ultimately, employees who have the opportunity to enact their preferred strategy would reasonably contribute to satisfaction and contentment with the environment and behavior in such, and be reflected positively in WLB. The partial support of hypothesis 3 further strengthens the finding that the context of boundary management is more important than the boundary strategy itself.

Days of Remote Work

The theory upon which hypothesis 4 was founded had weak empirical support, although insignificant in the regression model with hierarchical insertion of variables. There are many potential explanations as to why the effect would not be consistently negative/positive. A possibility could be a non-linear relationship, where certain effects arise in the transition from solely remote work to less than that, respectively from solely in-office work to include little remote work. Thus, a discrete measurement of days becomes blunt as the context of hybrid organizations might blur the definition of remote work if labor conducted at a certain location might only account for part of the total workday. With reference to working solely in-office, it could be argued that working remotely up to three days had positive weak associations with WLB and solely remotely had expected negative associations with WLB. As theory claims, increased role transitions lead to intensified work-life conflicts and process losses (Kossek, Lautsch et al. 2006), but these potential negative effects were only apparent after three days of remote work. The finding that more people in the household is negatively correlated with work-life balance could be caused by increased interruptions when working from home, strengthening the indication that faster role transitions have a negative impact on the overall work-life balance. Conversely, access to separate workspace had a weak positive relationship with WLB, which might be due to decreased interruptions or conflicts when work and life is not conducted in the same space.

6.3 Discussion

As there was lack of support for H1, the use of Seven Persona to identify boundary management strategies could be questioned. Although the categorization did not directly affect the other independent variables, the support for H2 and H3 and estimates should nonetheless be seen as less reliable. The interaction effect provided more understanding of results related to boundary strategy. If low perceived control is experienced, the chosen strategy matters less. Resultantly, a boundary strategy has a stronger impact on work-life balance if perceived control is high. This finding is linked to the illustration in graph 1d that implies that integration due to lack of control is a rather passive strategy choice. A prerequisite to pursue a boundary strategy effectively is thus a sufficiently high sense of control to experience better work-life balance.

The complexity of the continuum of separation and integration (Ammons, 2013) is addressed in this research as alternators were acknowledged as part of the spectrum. Alternators could represent individuals who needs to integrate but would rather enact a different strategy, which causes the inconsistency. Nonetheless, graph 1a suggest that adapting strategies by alternating, might be the optimal customization of boundary management for knowledge workers.

Since the variable *norms* indicated a positive relationship with *wlb*, it is entailed that the employees to some extents are affected by the social context and expectations from the company where lack of control might derive. Ultimately, no matter tendency for integration or separation, the important part is the possibility to exercise the preferred strategy. To some extent, synergy aligns with the importance of perceived control which complies with Bjärntoft, Hallman et al. (2020), since not being able to exercise your preferred strategy can be a sign of lack of control. These two constructs measure different aspects but follow a similar logic.

The organization plays a role in determining what strategies are possible to exercise by deciding the environmental conditions (Kreiner 2006; Wepfer et al. 2018). This study illustrated that an integration strategy seemed to be imposed upon knowledge workers. However, individual behavior plays an important role in how to manage the existing situation (ibid), in which the variable *perceived_control* might theoretically explain to what extent the employees perceive that they can affect their situation and the variable *synergy* captures the outcome of the individual capability. Furthermore, *synergy* might capture the individuals who are a good person-job fit, since the individual successfully can enact the preferred boundary strategy within the norms, policies and culture of the organization. The determinants of work-life balance among employees can therefore be seen as an interplay between the organization and the individual (Field, Chan 2018), but the question remain of who is responsible for ensuring good work-life balance of the employee.

Just as it proved to be important with individual control and enactment of boundary strategies, we argue that employees are likely to best determine for themselves whether to work remotely or in-office to enhance job satisfaction, similarly reasoned as Bloom, Liang et al. (2013). As knowledge workers in majority enact integration strategies, the importance of spatial separation for work-life balance (Shockley & Clark, 2020; Allen et al., 2021) is built upon by high prevalence of work solely in-office regardless of boundary management or location flexibility. This touches upon the research gap of reasons behind employee work location preference. The results of this study captured previous findings of initial benefits of remote work and social costs related to extensive remote work (Tremblay & Thomsin 2012). The need for balance between structure and flexibility is apparent, similarly to findings of Fonner and Stache (2012). If viewed from a theoretical approach, with a more speculative nature, remote work facilitates integration strategies which is beneficial to a certain degree to improve work-life balance, but full integration entails the worst outcome (Baltes, Chakrabarti et al. 2009). That three days of remote work entailed the best work-life balance might illustrate the breaking point of where the benefits of integration are outweighed by negatives.

7. Conclusion

7.1 Summary

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between boundary management strategies and work-life balance among knowledge workers in hybrid organizations. As flexible work arrangements are increasingly prevalent, a predictive value of boundary strategies in this context would provide useful knowledge.

Through a quantitative approach, hypotheses were tested with OLS regression model to answer the research question. This study found that it is not a certain boundary strategy that is most explanatory of work-life balance, but rather related aspects such as perceived control in creating boundaries between work and non-work domains as well as to enact the preferred strategy that affects work-life balance the most. Lastly, weak support was found that working remotely up to three days improved work-life balance.

7.2 Contributions

7.2.1 Research Implications

The fact that boundary strategies did not have a significant relationship with work-life balance when related factors to boundary management did, might imply a need to update theory. A contribution to the theoretical discussion is importance to account for perceived control in creating boundaries between domains. The concept of synergy provides further insight and novelty to the existing usage and understanding of Boundary Theory, in explaining the importance of cohesiveness between behavior and preference so clearly in relationship to work-life balance. This study could also conclude that no one enacted full separation, leading to further support that this strategy is mainly a theoretical construct. Findings contribute to the same complexity as previous research, namely that no strategy proved to be the best one; although separation strategies were weakly associated with better work-life balance. The lack of support when testing the more nuanced continuum through boundary strategies of Seven Persona added relevance to the ambiguity of theoretical application.

7.2.2 Managerial Implications

- Total integration affects work-life balance negatively, which is enhanced by full remote work or limiting norms, where facilitating the usage of separation strategies is important.
- Increasing perception of control in setting boundaries and how/when/where employees work enables effective enactment of boundary strategy which have larger effects on work-life balance.

- If the organization provides opportunities for knowledge workers to enact all types of strategies, probability of employee synergy and work-life balance is improved. It is suggested that boundary management preference should be explicit to ensure person-job fit and benefit both parties.
- Partial remote work should be encouraged, since working two to three days remotely is shown to improve work-life balance.

A limitation for relevance regards implicit expectations, where stated policies and prevalent norms in organizations could take a few years to navigate, which might hinder efficiency of managerial implications.

7.3 Recommendations for Future Research

As this study found no support for the first hypothesis, it is suggested for future research to repeat this study but with a simple continuum from integration to separation to test the basics of Boundary Theory in the context of knowledge workers in hybrid work arrangements, and to include a control group of part-time workers.

Other control variables might be of value, such as satisfaction with the job itself and the salary, as these also might be determinants of work-life balance. Results also might vary depending on where the individuals are in their career in terms of need of supportive environment, or by measuring degree of autonomy, especially related to remote work.

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9. Appendices

9.1. Appendix 1: Digital Survey

LIMITLESS WORKING OR WORKING TO THE LIMIT?

How individual boundary strategy affects work-life balance.

Very welcome! By answering this survey you help the developers collect data for a bachelor thesis at Stockholm School of Economics. Completing the questionnaire takes about nine minutes. There are no right or wrong answers, follow instructions as you go. Every completed questionnaire is highly appreciated and makes a difference for this study - and contributes to future research! If you have any concerns or questions, please contact the originators on [email address]. Thank you in advance, and have a great day.

Under GDPR, data from this survey are collected exclusively for research purposes and information will be handled confidentially. Data will be kept for cross-sectional analyzes and information that could possibly identify anyone will never be shared outside of the research. Results from statistical analyses of the data may be published on an aggregated level in reports, scientific publications or other presentations. By continuing, you agree to voluntarily participate in this study.

#	Item	Alternatives
1.	Do you consent to voluntarily participate in this study?	• Yes • No

Part 1/4 - Introduction

Please indicate

2.	Age	• < 20 • 20-29 • 30-39 • 40-49 • 50-59 • 60 or older
3.	Gender	• Female • Male • Non-binary • Prefer not to answer
4.	Number of people living in the same household	• One person • Two people • Three people • Four people

		• Five or more people
5.	Do you have children?	• Yes, one • Yes, two or three • Yes, four or more • No
6.	Highest level of education	• High school • Vocational school • College/University • Other

Part 2/4 - Working Arrangement

Definition of remote work: work performed anywhere outside of the office.

7.	Name of your organization?	Open question
8.	Industry of your organization:	• Communication • Accounting • Management • Legal • Other
9.	Your position within your organization:	• Partner • Senior consultant • Junior consultant • Administration/support (e.g HR, secretary) • IT • Other
10.	Are you a full-time employee (and not on parental or sick leave)?	• Yes • No
11.	How many hours do you work an average week?	• ≤ 40 • 41-50 • 51-60 • 61-70 • 70+
12.	Years of employment within your organization in your <i>current</i> role?	• ≤ 1 year • 2 years • 3 years • 4 years • 5 years or more
13.	Estimate the average time it takes for you to get to the office, using your most common form of transportation.	• ≤ 15 min • 16-30 min • 31-45 min • 46-60 min • 60+ min
14.	In the context of removed covid-restrictions; how many days of an average week do you work remotely?	0 (days) to 7 (days)
15.	What is possibility to work remotely given...	• Very low

	a) ... your work tasks? b) ... the policies of your company? c) ... company culture/expectations/norms?	• Somewhat low • Neither low or high • Somewhat high • Very high
16.	To what extent do you agree with the following statements: a) I have the appropriate equipment/technology support to work remotely. b) I have access to a separate space devoted to remote work in my home.	• Disagree • Somewhat disagree • Neutral • Somewhat agree • Agree

Part 3/4 - Boundary Management

Definition boundary management: different strategies of how to either integrate or separate domains.

This study looks at boundary management through the theory of Rosengren, Bergman & Palm (2017).

17.	To what extent do you feel like you have control to create boundaries between work and your personal life?	0 (no control) to 10 (complete control)
18.	Which boundary management persona describes your behavior the best?	• Total separator: completely separates between work and personal life and won't let the lines between the domains cross in any way. • Place separator: separates work from personal life by using different places allocated for either work or leisure. • Time separator: may work at different places but uses time to separate work from personal life, physical location doesn't matter. Often prefers to work regular hours. • Working integrator: answers work calls and email during leisure time, but does not want to be disturbed by family/private matters at work. • Private life integrator: handles some private communication or errands during work hours, but does not let work spill over on personal life. • Total integrator: is always available in both domains at the same time and has no boundaries between working and private life. • Inconsistent alternator: changes strategy and has no clear boundary preference.
19.	Which boundary management persona describes your preference the best?	• Total separator: completely separates between work and personal life and won't let the lines between the domains cross in any way. • Place separator: separates work from personal life by using different places allocated for either work or leisure. • Time separator: may work at different places but uses time to separate work from personal life, physical location doesn't matter. Often prefers to work regular hours. • Working integrator: answers work calls and email during leisure time, but does not want to be disturbed by family/private matters at work. • Private life integrator: handles some private communication or errands during work hours, but does not let work spill over on personal life. • Total integrator: is always available in both domains at the same time and has no boundaries between working and private life.

		• Inconsistent alternator: changes strategy and has no clear boundary preference.
20.	Do you have equal opportunity to exercise your preferred strategy in the office as when working remotely?	• Yes • No, working in the office provides better opportunity • No, working remotely provides better opportunity

Part 4/4 - Work-Life Balance

Definition of work-life balance: an overall level of contentment resulting from an assessment of one's degree of success at meeting work and non-work demands.

21.	Workplace support: To what extent do you agree with the following statements? a) My work environment is not supportive of my family and personal commitments b) My organization does not encourage its employees to take time off (e.g go on annual vacations)	• Disagree • Somewhat disagree • Neutral • Somewhat agree • Agree
22.	Work interference with personal life: To what extent do you agree with the following statements? a) The demands arising from my work make my personal life stressful b) I worry about the effect of work stress on my health c) The number of hours I work is a concern for me d) Finding time for hobbies or leisure activities is difficult e) Finding time to maintain relationships with friends and extended family is difficult f) I don't feel in control over my work flexibility (when/where/how I work) g) Sacrificing personal life is the way I can grow fast in an organization	• Disagree • Somewhat disagree • Neutral • Somewhat agree • Agree
23.	Personal life interference with work: To what extent do you agree with the following statements? a) I am often preoccupied with home related thoughts/distractions during work hours b) My home responsibilities often hinder my performance at work c) I have had to make compromises on the work front to keep my family happy	• Disagree • Somewhat disagree • Neutral • Somewhat agree • Agree
24.	Satisfaction with work-life balance: To what extent do you agree with the following statements? a) I am satisfied with my ability to meet the needs of my job with those of my personal life b) I am successful in managing/balancing my work demands and personal life c) I am satisfied with the way I divide my time between work and personal life	• Disagree • Somewhat disagree • Neutral • Somewhat agree • Agree

Thank you for completing the survey!

If you have any concerns or questions, please contact the originators on [email address].

25.	Feel free to leave a comment:	open question
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9.2. Appendix 2: Variable Coding

Variable Name	Corresponds to	Scale	Coding
age	age	Categorical	0 = 20-29 1 = 30-39 2 = 40-59
female	gender	Categorical	0 = male 1 = female
household_size	household size	Categorical	0 = one (person) 1 = two (people) 2 = three or more (people)
children	children	Categorical	0 = no 1 = yes
educational_level	educational level	Categorical	0 = college/university 1 = other
organization_name	organization name	Categorical	0 = comapny A 1 = comapny B 2 = comapny C 3 = comapny D 4 = comapny E 5 = comapny F
industry	industry of organization	Categorical	0 = management 1 = communication 2 = legal
position	position in company of respondent	Categorical	0 = partner 1 = senior consultant 2 = junior consultant 3 = other
hours_week	Average hours worked a week	Categorical	0 = ≤ 40 1 = 41-50 2 = 51-60 3 = 61-70 4 = 70+
years_role	years in role at current organization	Categorical	0 = ≤ 1 year 1 = 2 years 2 = 3 years 3 = 4 years 4 = 5 years or more
transport_time	transport time to office	Categorical	0 = ≤ 15 min 1 = 16-30 min 2 = 30+ min
days_remote	days remote in an average week	Ordinal	0 to 7
tasks	possibility to work remotely given work tasks	Likert's scale	0 = very low 1 = somewhat low 2 = neither low or high 3 = somewhat high 4 = very high

policies	possibility to work remotely given company policies	Likert's scale	0 = very low 1 = somewhat low 2 = neither low or high 3 = somewhat high 4 = very high
norms	possibility to work remotely given company norms	Likert's scale	0 = very low 1 = somewhat low 2 = neither low or high 3 = somewhat high 4 = very high
equipment	access to appropriate equipment for work at home	Likert's scale	0 = disagree 1 = somewhat disagree 2 = neutral 3 = somewhat agree 4 = agree
separate_space	access to a separate space for work at home	Likert's scale	0 = disagree 1 = somewhat disagree 2 = neutral 3 = somewhat agree 4 = agree
perceived_control	control of managing boundaries	Ordinal	0 to 10
persona_behavior	what boundary strategy corresponds to the behavior of the participant	Categorical	0 = total separator 1 = place separator 2 = time separator 3 = alternator 4 = working integrator 5 = private life integrator 6 = total integrator
boundary_strategy		Categorical	0 = place/time separator 1 = alternator 2 = working/private life integrator 3 = total integrator
persona_preference	what boundary strategy corresponds to the preference of the participant	Categorical	0 = total separator 1 = place separator 2 = time separator 3 = alternator 4 = working integrator 5 = private life integrator 6 = total integrator
equal_opp	whether the respondent has equal opportunity to enact preferred boundaries in the office as when working remotely	Categorical	0 = yes 1 = no, better in office 2 = no, better remotely

Determinants of work-life balance

Variable Name	Corresponds to	Scale	Coding
personal_commit	work environment not supportive of family and personal commitments	Likert's scale	0 = agree 1 = somewhat agree 2 = neutral 3 = somewhat disagree 4 = disagree
time_off	organization not encouraging its employees to take time off	Likert's scale	0 = agree 1 = somewhat agree 2 = neutral 3 = somewhat disagree 4 = disagree
demands_stressor	work demands make personal life stressful	Likert's scale	0 = agree 1 = somewhat agree 2 = neutral 3 = somewhat disagree 4 = disagree
health_stressor	worry about effect of work stress on my health	Likert's scale	0 = agree 1 = somewhat agree 2 = neutral 3 = somewhat disagree 4 = disagree
hours_concern	hours worked is a concern	Likert's scale	0 = agree 1 = somewhat agree 2 = neutral 3 = somewhat disagree 4 = disagree
leisure_time	finding time for hobbies or leisure activities is difficult	Likert's scale	0 = agree 1 = somewhat agree 2 = neutral 3 = somewhat disagree 4 = disagree
time_relationship	finding time for relationships is difficult	Likert's scale	0 = agree 1 = somewhat agree 2 = neutral 3 = somewhat disagree 4 = disagree
control	not in control over work flexibility	Likert's scale	0 = agree 1 = somewhat agree 2 = neutral 3 = somewhat disagree 4 = disagree
Sacrifice	sacrificing personal life is how to grow fast in an organization	Likert's scale	0 = agree 1 = somewhat agree 2 = neutral 3 = somewhat disagree 4 = disagree
preoccupied_thoughts	preoccupied with home related thoughts/distractions during work hours	Likert's scale	0 = agree 1 = somewhat agree 2 = neutral 3 = somewhat disagree 4 = disagree

responsibility_hinder	home responsibilities hinder performance at work	Likert's scale	0 = agree 1 = somewhat agree 2 = neutral 3 = somewhat disagree 4 = disagree
compromise	had to make compromises on work from to keep family happy	Likert's scale	0 = agree 1 = somewhat agree 2 = neutral 3 = somewhat disagree 4 = disagree
satisfied_ability	satisfied with ability to meet needs of my job with those of my personal life	Likert's scale	0 = disagree 1 = somewhat disagree 2 = neutral 3 = somewhat agree 4 = agree
managing_demand	successful in managing/balancing my work demands and personal life	Likert's scale	0 = disagree 1 = somewhat disagree 2 = neutral 3 = somewhat agree 4 = agree
divide_time	satisfied with the way I divide my time between work and personal life	Likert's scale	0 = disagree 1 = somewhat disagree 2 = neutral 3 = somewhat agree 4 = agree

9.3. Appendix 3: Statistical Descriptives of Variables

Table 1: Independent Variables

Variables	Scale	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Perceived control	0 (no control) to 10 (complete control)	117	5.359	2.561	0	10
Days of remote work an average week	0 to 7 (days)	117	1.402	1.402	0	5

		Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Boundary strategy	Categorical	117		
Place/Time separator		19	16.24	16.24
Alternator		23	19.66	35.90
Working/Private life integrator		30	25.64	61.54
Total integrator		45	38.46	100.00
Boundary management strategy cohesiveness	Categorical	117		
No synergy		65	55.56	55.56
Synergy (behavior=preference)		52	44.44	100.00
Hours of work average week	Categorical	117		
≤ 40 hours		11	9.40	9.40
41-50 hours		41	35.04	44.44
51-60 hours		44	37.61	82.05
61-70 hours		14	11.97	94.02
70+ hours		7	5.98	100.00

Table 2: Control Variables

	Scale	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Age	Categorical	117		
20-29		65	55.56	55.56
30-39		37	31.62	87.18
40-59		15	12.82	100.00
Gender	Categorical	117		
Female		54	46.15	46.15
Male		63	53.85	100.00
Household size	Categorical	117		
One person		32	27.35	27.35
Two people		59	50.43	77.78
Three or more people		26	22.22	100.00
Children	Categorical	117		
No		86	73.50	73.50
Yes		31	26.50	100.00
Educational level	Categorical	117		
University/college		110	94.02	94.02
Other		7	5.98	100.00

Employed at organization	Categorical	104		
Company A (legal)		19	18.27	18.27
Company B (legal)		18	17.31	35.58
Company C (communication)		9	8.65	44.23
Company D (communication)		7	6.73	50.96
Company E (management)		36	34.62	85.58
Company F (management)		15	14.42	100.00
Industry of organization	Categorical	117		
Management		55	47.01	47.01
Communication		19	16.24	63.25
Legal		43	36.75	100.00
Position in organization	Categorical	117		
Partner		15	12.82	12.82
Senior consultant		48	41.03	53.85
Junior consultant		43	36.75	90.60
Other		11	9.40	100.00
Employment in current role and organization	Categorical	117		
≤ 1 year		51	43.59	43.59
2 years		26	22.22	65.81
3 years		12	10.26	76.07
4 years		12	10.26	86.32
5 years or more		16	13.68	100.00
Transport time to office	Categorical	117		
≤ 15 min		31	26.50	26.50
16-30 min		59	50.43	76.92
30+ min		27	23.08	100.00
Equal opportunity	Categorical	117		
Yes		52	44.44	44.44
No, better in office		49	41.88	86.32
No, better remotely		16	13.68	100.00

	Scale	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Possibility to work remotely given:	0 (very low) to 4 (very high)	117				
Tasks			3.103	1.045	0	4
Policies			3.145	0.931	1	4
Norms			2.547	1.126	0	4
Circumstances that enable remote work:	0 (disagree) to 4 (agree)	117				
Equipment			3.350	0.985	0	4
Separate space			2.222	1.614	0	4

9.4. Appendix 4: Customized Measurement Tool of WLB

Items with reference to previous study usage and Cronbach Alpha (CA)

Variable	Construction	Scale	Reference	CA
WLB	Index: 15 items	Average score		0.873
Workplace support:		0 (agree) to 4 (disagree)		
My work environment is not supportive of my family and personal commitments			[2][4*]	
My organization does not encourage its employees to take time off (e.g go on annual vacation)			[2]	
Work interference with personal life:		0 (agree) to 4 (disagree)		
The demands arising from my work make my personal life stressful			[1*][2]	
I worry about the effect of work stress on my health			[3]	
The number of hours I work is a concern for me			[2][4*]	
Finding time for hobbies or leisure activities is difficult			[1*][3]	
Finding time to maintain relationships with friends and extended family is difficult			[3]	
I don't feel in control over my work flexibility (when/where/how I work)			[3][4*]	
Sacrificing personal life is the way I can grow fast in an organization.			[2]	
Personal life interference with work:		0 (agree) to 4 (disagree)		
I am often preoccupied with home related thoughts/distractions during work hours.			[1*][2]	
My home responsibilities often hinder my performance at work			[1*] [2]	
I have had to make compromises on the work front to keep my family happy.			[2]	
Satisfaction with work-life balance:		0 (disagree) to 4 (agree)		
I am satisfied with my ability to meet the needs of my job with those of my personal life			[1*] [2]	
I am successful in managing/balancing my work demands and personal life			[1*] [2][4*]	
I am satisfied with the way I divide my time between work and personal life			[1*] [2][4*]	

[1] (Wayne & Vaziri 2021) [2] (Rashida Banu & Duraipandian 2014) [3] (Dex 2005) [4] (Björntoft et al 2020).

*=adapted

9.5. Appendix 5: Full Correlation Table

Variable	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.
1. wlb	1.000										
2. boundary_strategy	-0.270	1.000									
3. perceived_control	0.510	-0.381	1.000								
4. synergy	0.327	-0.108	0.313	1.000							
5. days_remote	0.037	-0.081	0.238	0.014	1.000						
6. hours_week	-0.315	0.344	-0.260	-0.094	-0.251	1.000					
7. female	0.214	-0.150	0.132	-0.000	0.053	-0.221	1.000				
8. household_size	0.022	-0.053	0.139	0.237	0.178	-0.132	0.019	1.000			
9. norms	0.258	-0.147	0.305	0.223	0.133	-0.037	-0.131	0.068	1.000		
10. separate_space	0.125	-0.022	0.241	0.144	0.254	0.047	0.032	0.275	0.032	1.000	
11. age	0.086	0.144	0.137	0.151	0.277	0.025	-0.047	0.541	0.133	0.271	1.000
12. children	0.014	0.092	0.113	0.204	0.160	0.044	-0.012	0.733	0.070	0.327	0.691
13. education_level	0.133	0.031	0.134	0.137	0.005	-0.141	0.056	0.018	0.006	0.032	-0.051
14. industry	0.032	0.242	-0.209	-0.050	-0.304	0.070	0.142	0.072	-0.222	-0.031	0.091
15. position	0.017	-0.263	-0.004	-0.088	-0.156	-0.135	0.122	-0.490	-0.068	-0.206	-0.576
16. years_role	-0.107	0.105	-0.002	0.051	0.147	0.224	-0.038	0.417	0.116	0.201	0.592
17. transport_time	0.089	-0.161	0.102	-0.005	0.240	-0.416	0.191	0.204	0.035	0.060	0.194
18. tasks	0.110	-0.040	0.289	0.061	0.295	-0.168	0.139	0.054	0.392	0.099	0.129
19. policies	0.039	0.011	-0.011	0.027	-0.039	0.167	-0.034	0.051	0.606	-0.027	0.121
20. equipment	0.208	-0.003	0.196	0.154	0.240	-0.024	-0.173	0.249	0.300	0.243	0.240
21. equal_opp	-0.260	0.045	-0.173	-0.148	0.118	-0.022	0.064	-0.085	-0.102	-0.015	-0.180

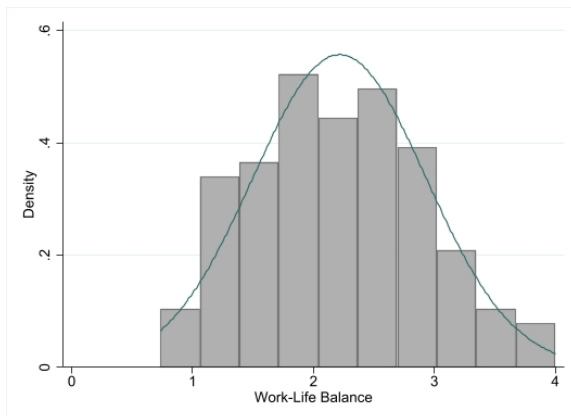
Variable	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.	17.	18.	19.	20.	21.
12. children	1.000									
13. education_level	0.012	1.000								
14. industry	0.025	-0.051	1.000							
15. position	-0.542	0.131	-0.055	1.000						
16. years_role	0.511	-0.124	0.145	-0.505	1.000					
17. transport_time	0.194	0.115	0.115	0.098	0.135	1.000				
18. tasks	-0.003	-0.060	-0.016	0.009	0.134	0.133	1.000			
19. policies	0.136	-0.001	-0.317	-0.081	0.084	-0.058	-0.051	1.000		
20. equipment	0.141	-0.017	-0.113	-0.236	0.225	0.067	0.316	0.151	1.000	
21. equal_opp	-0.179	0.060	0.004	0.109	-0.092	0.153	-0.039	-0.010	-0.130	1.000

9.6. Appendix 6: VIF and Normality Tests

Table 1: VIF test

Variable	VIF	1/VIF
perceived_control	1.50	0.664774
hours_week	1.31	0.766097
boundary_strategy	1.28	0.779093
separate_space	1.23	0.815593
days_remote	1.21	0.826173
synergy	1.20	0.833220
norms	1.18	0.845010
household_size	1.16	0.860597
female	1.10	0.910966

Table 2: Distribution of WLB and Normality tests



Shapiro-Wilk W test for normal data

Variable	Obs.	W	V	z	prob>z
<i>wlb</i>	117	0.9868	1.243	0.486	0.3135

Skewness and kurtosis tests for normality

Variable	Obs.	Pr(skewness)	Pr(kurtosis)	Adj chi2(2)	Prob>chi2
<i>wlb</i>	117	0.2754	0.1800	3.05	0.2171

9.7. Appendix 7: Determinants of the Dependent Variable

Items	Scale	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Workplace Support	0 (agree) to 4 (disagree)	117				
Personal commitments			2.726	1.277	0	4
Time off			3.179	1.149	0	4
Work interference with personal life	0 (agree) to 4 (disagree)	117				
Stress from work demands			1.222	0.992	0	4
Stress impact on health			1.590	1.247	0	4
Hours of work			1.932	1.311	0	4
Time for hobbies			1.282	1.195	0	4
Time for relationships			1.726	1.311	0	4
Control of work flexibility			2.137	1.286	0	4
Sacrifice of personal life			1.906	1.345	0	4
Personal life interference with work	0 (agree) to 4 (disagree)	117				
Reoccupied thoughts at work			2.915	1.103	0	4
Home responsibilities hinder			3.419	0.833	1	4
Compromise work due to home			2.932	1.291	0	4
Satisfaction with WLB	0 (disagree) to 4 (agree)	117				
Meeting needs in domains			2.051	1.128	0	4
Balancing demands in domains			2.231	0.691	0	4
Time divided in domains			1.983	0.661	0	4
wlb		117	2.215	0.716	0.733	4

9.8. Appendix 8: Hierarchical Insertion of Variables

Variables	(1) wlb	(2) wlb	(3) wlb	(4) wlb	(5) wlb	(6) wlb	(7) wlb	(8) wlb	(9) wlb
boundary_strategy	-0.175** (0.058)	-0.057 (0.056)	-0.059 (0.055)	-0.058 (0.055)	-0.019 (0.056)	-0.014 (0.056)	-0.013 (0.056)	-0.007 (0.056)	-0.008 (0.056)
perceived_control		0.133*** (0.024)	0.117*** (0.025)	0.122*** (0.026)	0.117*** (0.025)	0.114*** (0.025)	0.115*** (0.025)	0.106*** (0.026)	0.101*** (0.026)
synergy			0.268* (0.119)	0.260* (0.119)	0.251* (0.117)	0.259* (0.116)	0.289* (0.119)	0.261* (0.119)	0.255* (0.119)
days_remote				-0.039 (0.042)	-0.061 (0.042)	-0.060 (0.041)	-0.053 (0.042)	-0.059 (0.042)	-0.068 (0.043)
hours_week					-0.150* (0.061)	-0.133* (0.061)	-0.138* (0.061)	-0.143* (0.061)	-0.153* (0.062)
female						0.175 (0.113)	0.174 (0.113)	0.206+ (0.114)	0.203+ (0.114)
household_size							-0.095 (0.081)	-0.093 (0.081)	-0.110 (0.083)
norms								0.085 (0.052)	0.089+ (0.053)
separate_space									0.034 (0.037)
Constant	2.541*** (0.126)	1.608*** (0.204)	1.581*** (0.200)	1.608*** (0.203)	1.853*** (0.222)	1.745*** (0.231)	1.815*** (0.239)	1.650*** (0.258)	1.642*** (0.258)
Observations	117	117	117	117	117	117	117	117	117
R-squared	0.0727	0.267	0.298	0.304	0.340	0.354	0.362	0.377	0.382

9 Note: Standard errors in parentheses. Significance corresponds to *** p<0.001, ** p<0.1, * p<0.05, + p<0.10

9.9. Appendix 9: Final Regression Model

Source	SS	df	MS	Number of obs	=	117
				F(13, 103)	=	5.60
Model	24.6212331	13	1.893941	Prob > F	=	0.0000
Residual	34.8044069	103	.337906863	R-squared	=	0.4143
				Adj R-squared	=	0.3404
Total	59.42564	116	.51229	Root MSE	=	.5813

wlb	Coefficient	Std. err.	t	P< t	[95% conf. interval]
boundary_strategy	-.0229563	.0566094	-0.41	0.686	-.1352278 .0893152
perceived_control	.1049533	.0272333	3.85	0.000	.0509424 .1589641
synergy	.2444341	.1268159	1.93	0.057	-.0070753 .4959435
days_remote					
1	.0202099	.1652008	0.12	0.903	-.307427 .3478468
2	.0654713	.1520822	0.43	0.668	-.2361478 .3670904
3	.0220316	.1805163	0.12	0.903	-.33598 .3800432
4	-.44184	.2918986	-1.51	0.133	-1.020752 .137072
5	-.6993388	.3274538	-2.14	0.035	-1.348766 -.0499114
hours_week	-.1300257	.0644856	-2.02	0.046	-.2579177 -.0021338
female	.1890871	.1154449	1.64	0.104	-.0398706 .4180447
household_size	-.1214897	.0826624	-1.47	0.145	-.285431 .0424517
norms	.0641795	.0532302	1.21	0.231	-.0413901 .1697491
separate_space	.0361969	.037392	0.97	0.335	-.0379613 .1103552
_cons	1.613732	.2590815	6.23	0.000	1.099905 2.127559

9.10. Appendix 10: Regression Model with Interaction Effect

Source	SS	df	MS	Number of obs	=	117
				F(10, 106)	=	7.37
Model	24.3641522	10	2.43641522	Prob > F	=	0.0000
Residual	35.0614878	106	.330768753	R-squared	=	0.4100
				Adj R-squared	=	0.3543
Total	59.42564	116	.51229	Root MSE	=	.57512

wlb	Coefficient	Std. err.	t	P< t	[95% conf. interval]	
boundary_strategy	.3082472	.1501319	2.05	0.043	.010596	.6058983
perceived_control	.2224191	.059544	3.74	0.000	.1043673	.3404709
c.boundary_strategy# c.perceived_control	-.0534245	.0236251	-2.26	0.026	-.1002636	-.0065855
synergy	.2660809	.1173237	2.27	0.025	.0334753	.4986866
days_remote	-.0627767	.0419478	-1.50	0.137	-.1459423	.0203889
hours_week	-.145802	.0609606	-2.39	0.019	-.2666623	-.0249418
female	.1774574	.1123273	1.58	0.117	-.0452425	.4001572
household_size	-.1064484	.0816404	-1.30	0.195	-.2683085	.0554117
norms	.0906282	.0516127	1.76	0.082	-.0116989	.1929553
separate_space	.0268103	.0367673	0.73	0.467	-.0460845	.099705
_cons	.8717616	.4246739	2.05	0.043	.0298042	1.713719