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# The remote revolution: assessing the impact of working from home on finance professionals

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## Abstract

The aim of this study is to investigate how remote work affects job performance. It suggests that factors such as the work environment, employee productivity, and work-life balance play a role in mediating this impact. The study also explores how remote work influences employee performance through these variables. The findings of this research have practical implications for businesses looking to evaluate the effectiveness of their remote work policies, especially during the ongoing coronavirus crisis. One distinctive feature of this study is its questionnaire, which has been specifically designed to capture the effects of COVID-19. Data were collected through an online survey distributed to workers in Syria. The survey, which utilized a Likert scale, was sent via email to around 2650 employees and was also shared on social media platforms. A total of 300 respondents took part in the survey. To address the research questions, structural equation modelling was employed in this study. The results indicated that remote work resulted in increased enjoyment, satisfaction, and motivation among employees, ultimately improving job performance. It is worth noting that while this research focuses on examining these benefits within the context of Syria, there is potential for external validity among other countries affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Keywords** Work from home, Job performance, Employees productivity, Work environment, Work-life balance

## Introduction

In recent years, a growing number of academics have shifted their focus towards working from home (WFH) [68]. Recent research has examined WFH in the context of pandemics, particularly from the standpoint of identifying jobs that can be performed remotely [4]. According to Bloom et al. [83], working remotely is commonly referred to as teleworking. In the contemporary sense, “teleworking” refers to working remotely and away from the office. In recent years, telework has re-emerged as a “new management style”, a “policy”, a “arrangement”, or a “forced” issue [83]. Teleworking is not a new occurrence that the development of IT has made possible for the

professional job. There is no internationally accepted definition of telecommuting. Nevertheless, telework is considered as “the organisation of work through the use of ICTs that allows employees and managers to access their labour activities from remote locations” [84].

According to Baruch [16], it analysed that teleworking utilize the electronic devices as its primary “tool”, but homeworking may be compared to traditional place of work for production. Nakrošienė et al. [68] identified several characteristics that influence various WFH outcomes, such as decreased communication with co-workers, supervisor confidence and support, and a suitable working environment at home. Additionally, the performance of individuals recruited for certain time periods differs from that of employees with consistent working conditions and contracts [43]. In addition, Bonacini et al. [23] shown that an increase in average worker income is correlated with an improvement in WFH feasibility. Nevertheless, the average worker income would not be distributed equally among the organization’s employees. As

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the moderating variable between WFH and job performance, socio-demographic variables such as age, gender, and education have been considered [2, 3, 10].

Etheridge, and Tang in their paper [36] emphasized that WFH standards effect on specific socioeconomic groups, sectors, and occupations. Alternatively, earlier research by Shirom et al. [79] indicates that demographic characteristics, such as gender, age, and length of service, function as moderators of job performance. During the pandemic, the debate about WFH attitudes and views appears to have been poorly documented. Indeed, the relationship between WFH and job performance, using work environment and work-life balance as mediator factors, has not been addressed in earlier research. In addition, the adoption cues for telework alter before and during the COVID-19 epidemic. Previously, it appeared that a drop in the cost of maintaining office space essentially drove the economic triggers in the United States [14]. Recent COVID-19 outbreak prompted numerous organizations to embrace WFH. Diverse distortion is essential to the emerged management of human resource [27]. Today, businesses are coming to regard WFH as both a continuous trend and a regular policy [87].

Several reviews of the telework literature have been conducted, including evaluations of European work and studies on both the negative and positive effects for teleworkers [37, 66, 69]. These evaluations aim to identify the primary benefits and drawbacks of telework, such as schedule flexibility and time saved in commuting. However, professional and social isolation are often mentioned as disadvantages. While early research focused on these benefits and drawbacks, more contemporary work also includes lists of these factors. However, the available research is plagued by definitional issues, methodological flaws, and a lack of control over critical factors. Despite these challenges, researchers are noticing improvements in rigour. This study aims to explore the impact of working from home on job performance in Syria and whether work environment and work-life balance mediate this impact. Previous studies using different cultural groups will also be examined to see if their findings manifest in the Syrian context. The study will focus on financial professionals in Syria due to the prevalence of teleworking in this profession. Syria's unique cultural background, influenced by Islamic law and traditional values, makes it an interesting case for this research. The country has experienced significant damage in various sectors due to wars and crises, leading to remote work as a means of income generation. Additionally, Syria is known as a commercial hub with a skilled workforce, making it attractive for companies seeking remote employees [70]. Syrian culture emphasizes the role of the family, with Syrian men traditionally seen as providers for their families. As a result,

the Syrian workforce is predominantly male-dominated [49].

The subsequent sections of the paper are delineated into five distinct categories. The forthcoming section elaborates on the research gap in comprehensive detail. Section "Literature review" scrutinizes the literature review, while Section "Methodology" elucidates the methodology employed. The findings and ensuing discussion are expounded upon in Section "Results". Subsequently, Section "Discussion" delves into a comprehensive discussion by juxtaposing the research outcomes with those of preceding studies. The paper culminates with the conclusion and pertinent recommendations.

### Research gap

The purpose of this study is to demonstrate that there is an ongoing need in each and every firm to pay attention to preserving and enhancing productivity and job performance, particularly in this period of uncertainty brought on by the COVID-19 epidemic. In addition, the study analyses the impact of working from Home on finance professional job on Syria. In Syria, productivity is often viewed as a crucial element that contributes to the overall success of organizations and to job performance. Productivity is the factor that most directly contributes to an organization's total efficiency, which in turn contributes to the organization's level of performance and job performance of the employees. It is of the utmost importance to determine whether or not working from home has an effect on productivity since so many businesses, particularly during this epidemic period, are being compelled to implement WFH. The prospect of an improvement in the work-life balance of workers is a driving factor for many businesses that implement WFH policies. These businesses believe that an improvement in work-life balance will lead to an increase in productivity. The original intention behind the notion of working from home (WFH) was to be a component of flexible working arrangements that may be of assistance to workers in maintaining a healthy work-life balance. Efforts aimed at achieving a better work-life balance may prove to be a beneficial course of action for a firm, particularly in the event of a force majeure event such as COVID-19.

In this study, the focus was on financial professionals in the context of studying productivity and job performance, especially amidst the uncertainty brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, holds particular significance for several reasons [1, 65].

Firstly, finance professionals play a pivotal role in the financial health and decision-making processes of organizations. Their responsibilities encompass managing financial resources, analysing data, and providing strategic insights that directly impact the organization's

performance and sustainability. Thus, understanding the dynamics of productivity and job performance among finance professionals is crucial for ensuring the effective functioning of financial systems, particularly during times of economic volatility and uncertainty [71].

Secondly, the nature of finance roles often entails working with complex financial instruments, regulatory frameworks, and market dynamics. This complexity requires a high level of cognitive abilities, analytical skills, and attention to detail from finance professionals. Studying their productivity and job performance can provide valuable insights into optimizing processes, enhancing decision-making capabilities, and mitigating risks in financial operations.

Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought about unprecedented disruptions to traditional work environments, prompting a widespread shift towards remote work arrangements, including in the finance sector. Examining the impact of remote work, specifically on finance professionals in Syria, is essential for understanding how this transition affects productivity, collaboration, and job satisfaction within the finance industry.

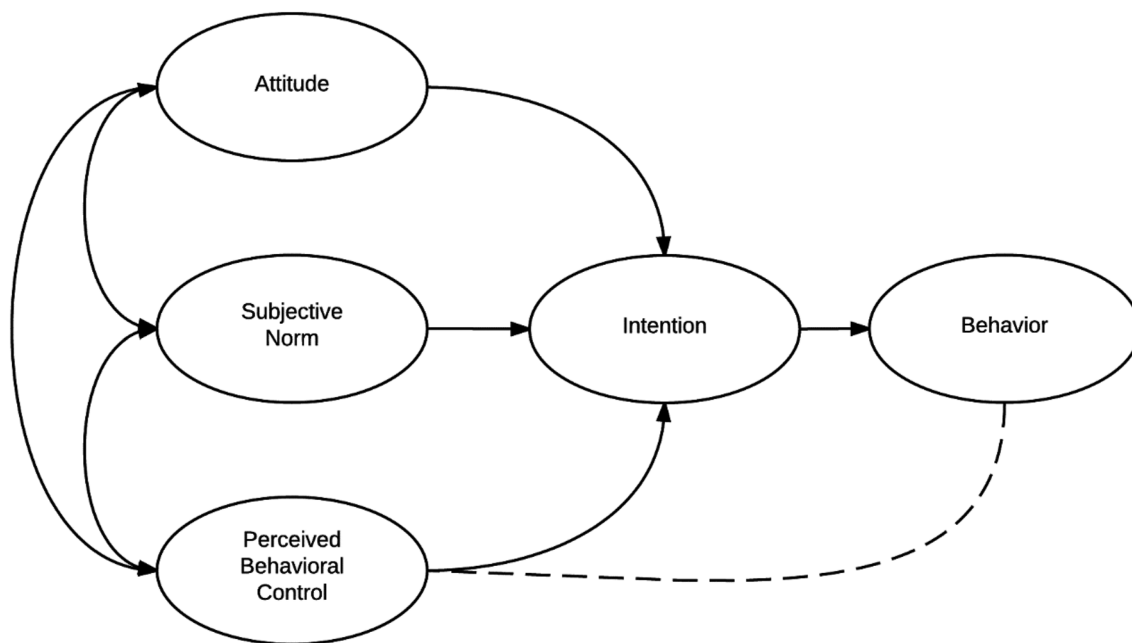
Furthermore, finance professionals often face unique challenges and pressures, such as stringent deadlines, regulatory compliance, and market fluctuations. These factors can significantly influence their productivity levels and job performance, particularly when adapting to remote work setups or navigating external disruptions like the COVID-19 epidemic.

By studying productivity and job performance among finance professionals in the context of remote work, researchers can provide valuable insights and recommendations for organizations to effectively manage and support their finance teams during times of uncertainty. This knowledge can inform strategies for optimizing remote work practices, fostering resilience, and sustaining productivity levels in the finance industry, ultimately contributing to organizational success and resilience in challenging times.

**Literature review**

**Theoretical framework**

The Theory of Planned Behaviour is a behavioural model that has gained widespread acceptance and is used to investigate the elements that influence human behaviour. The purpose of this study is to understand the aim to enhance WFH, with a special emphasis on a post-COVID timeframe, which is a period of time during when there is no longer a danger of infection. The Theory of Planned Behaviour is a flexible model that has had a great deal of application, particularly in the current research to analysed the job performance of the employees. The Theory of Reasoned Action is further developed into what is known as the Theory of Planned Behaviour. According to this theory, an individual’s desire to engage in a certain behaviour may be broken down into three distinct categories of psycho-social factors as shown in Fig. 1 [25]. Attitudes of the employees is favourable or negative

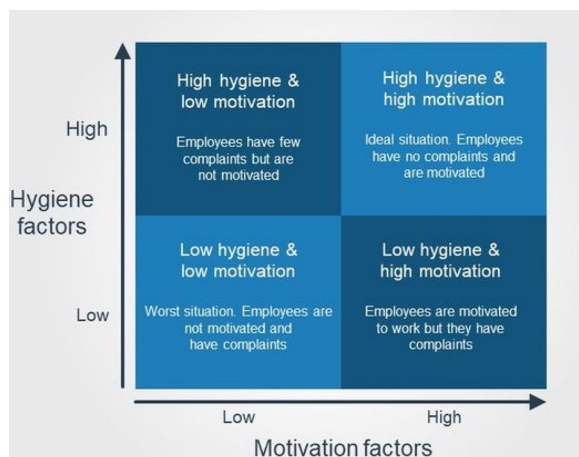


**Fig. 1** Theory of planned behaviour

assessment of the mentioned behaviour. Subjective norms are social constraints that worker think they must follow. Perceived ease or difficulty of a behaviour reflects both prior experience and expected obstacles. Perceived behavioural control is the perceived ease or difficulty of a behaviour.

The another theory that may be used for the current study is Herzberg two-factor theory of motivation. According to Herzberg two-factor theory of motivation if working condition which is one of the hygiene factor is poor then employees can feel dissatisfied from their job. Moreover, Stoker et al. [83] have also stated that working condition or work environment is an important factor that might also influence job performance of the employees. Therefore, it can be inferred that it is necessary for employers to not just improve the work environment within the physical premises of their organization but they should also improve the work environment for those employees that might be working remotely from home. This can be done, for instance, by giving flexibility to the employees who are working from home by perhaps giving them autonomy to decide their own shift timings and break times depending on their feasibility or convenience. Another way for improving work environment for such employees as mentioned by Susilo [85] can be based on improving the portal, intranet, or the website of the company where these employees tend to perform their work by making them more interactive and user friendly. Figure 2 shows well the relationship between the Hygiene factors of the organizational work environment and the motivation factors of workers to perform their work.

After reviewing previous studies and literary theories, it was noted that Heisenberg’s theory is the most widely used theory due to its study of a set of factors that make the employee motivated and satisfied. It was also noted



**Fig. 2** Herzberg’s motivation two-factor theory

that there were several previous studies that applied this theory in many countries such as the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia such as a [8, 46, 73].

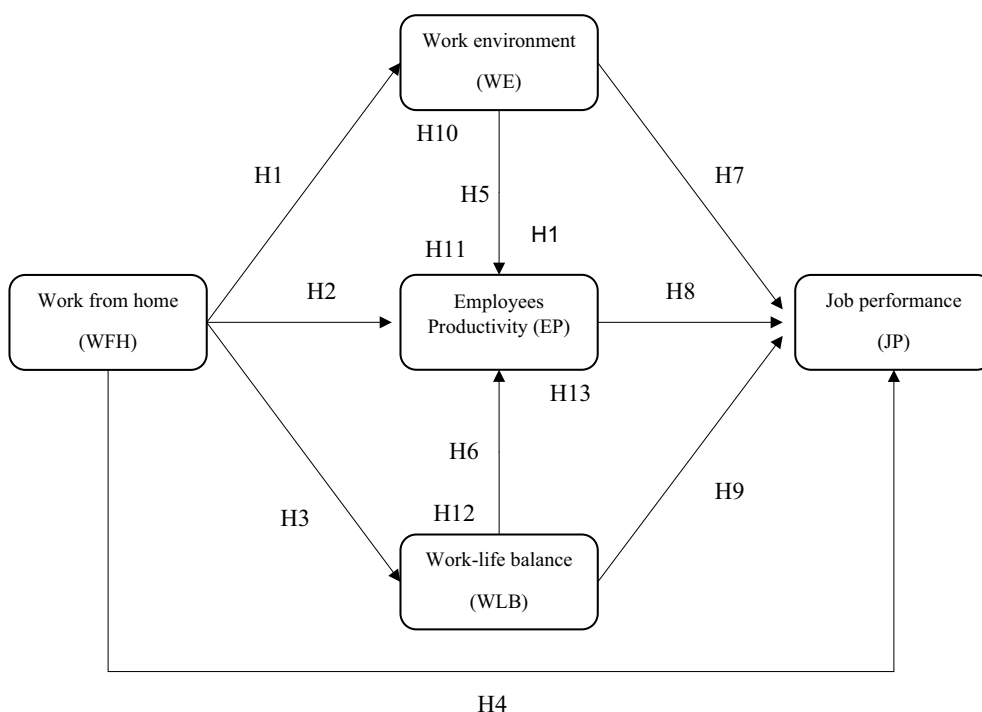
To our surprise, we found a shortage of research that examines the combination of working from home (WFH), work environment (WE), work-life balance (WLB), and job performance (JP) within a single framework in the context of Syria, despite reviewing summaries of the most relevant articles. Furthermore, there is a lack of literature on WFH that explores the relationship between WFH and JP while considering work environment and work-life balance as mediator factors. This study also investigates the impact of various control variables, such as gender, education level, WFH experience, position, department, and sector, on the effect of WFH dimensions on JP from the perspective of employee qualities.

Our work contributes to the literature review in three significant areas, given the limitations of the previous research mentioned above. Firstly, it enhances the managerial literature by exploring the correlation between Employees Productivity, WFH, and job performance, along with the potential mediating role of work environment and work-life balance. This perspective is supported by Biche et al. [20], who recommended further research into the impact of remote working on organizational performance. Secondly, this study is conducted in Syria, where there is a shortage of WFH studies that examine the relationships between WFH, work performance, work environment, and work-life balance. This study combines the data collected about WFH configurations and features in an unfamiliar situation (such as a pandemic) in an empirical manner. Thirdly, this study proposes a better understanding of how WFH can influence job performance, identifies ways to foster a suitable work environment and work-life balance, and determines the extent to which the interaction may be moderated by control variables such as gender, education, WFH experience, position, department, and sector. This study expands on previous WFH research by analysing these constructs among a group of employees who adopted WFH due to the COVID-19 outbreak. All the participants in this study are Syrian employees working in the finance sector.

Accordingly, model as defined in Fig. 3 proposes that WFH is particularly related to job performance. It also suggests that work environment and work-life balances mediate the impact of working from home to job performance.

**Working from home**

The interests of scholars in working from home (WFH) are not limited to the context of the pandemic [21]. It has



**Fig. 3** Conceptual framework

been a subject of investigation in the past decades. Initially, teleworking was just intended as a substitute for office-based jobs [23]. The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic redefined the idea of WFH as a forces and policy. In 2020, WFH was again thrown into the spotlight during the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced countries to adopt a combination of social distancing, closures of educational institutions banning public gatherings, and even total lockdowns in which it was difficult to be protected. Many organizations have begun to deliver a new way of working to adapt to these shifts effectively using teleworking or a work from home policy.

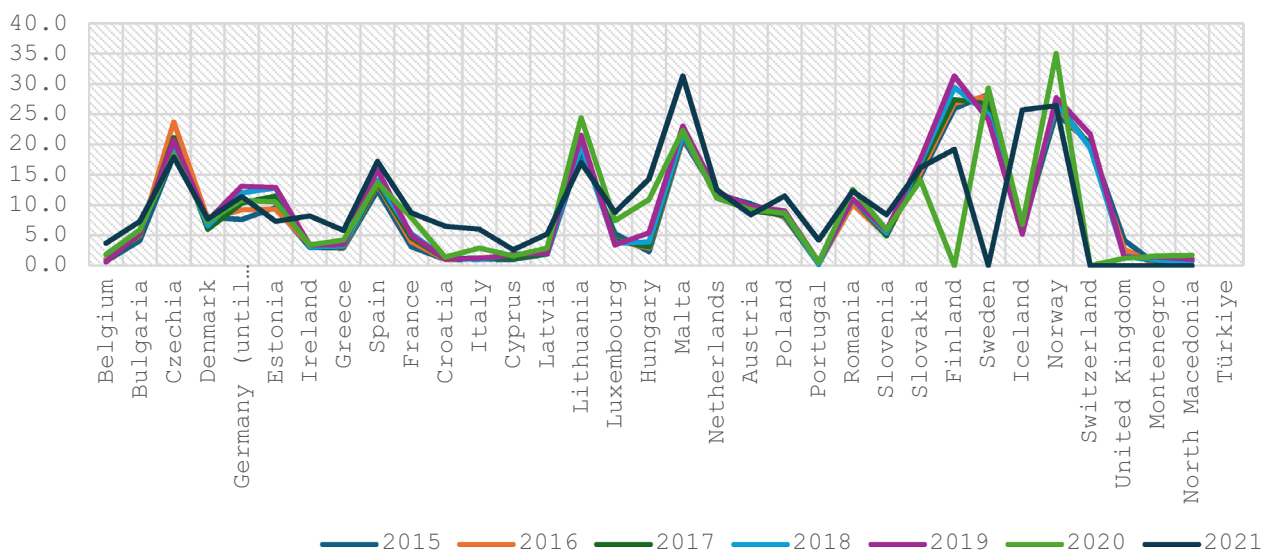
Statistically, the number of employees engaged in WFH arrangements is increasing even before the pandemic began. According to the Baker et al. [14], the percentage of employees working from home globally has increased from 5% to over 40%. In USA alone the growth is observed at 50% growth of workforce doing work remotely during the pandemic. The UK is one of the countries where WFH is prevalent even before the pandemic strikes. Regardless of this situation UK still recorded a 5% growth of home-based employees at the start of the pandemic in April 2020 [27], Fig. 4 shows the percentage of remote employment in European countries from 2015 to 2021.

Italy, a country in Europe with a low percentage of home-based workers prior to the COVID-19 pandemic,

experienced a significant increase in remote work due to the crisis. This shift occurred quickly, even without adequate legislation and human resource policies in place. Similarly, Egypt, in the Middle East region, has embraced remote work, with around 50% of employees in IT, accounting, and academia working remotely [55]. In Saudi Arabia, the concept of remote work was introduced in 2016 but was not widely adopted until recently [78]. The Saudi Telecom Company (STC) saw a 300% increase in remote work users since March 2020 [28]. The IT, banking, and insurance sectors globally have the highest number of teleworkers. Jobs that require autonomy, limited face-to-face interactions, and knowledge-based tasks are more likely to be conducted remotely [13].

**Job performance**

The sudden shift from working in an office to working from home may change the way a job is done [23]. Moreover, there is no substantial evidence that supports the claim that remote work enhances employees’ productivity and efficiency ([89], p. 19). The accomplishment of various essential tasks and activities is typically linked to job performance according to job analyses [30]. Performance can be evaluated from an organizational standpoint in relation to telecommuting, length of service in the organization, uncertainty in work roles, and job satisfaction. Demographic factors like gender, age, and length



**Fig. 4** Employed persons working from home as a percentage of the total employment, by sex, age and professional status (%)

of service also impact job performance. It is analysed that ageing affects job performance if duties demand sensory perception, selective attention, working memory, information processing, fast response, or physical strength. Women are more likely to have lower incomes, part-time jobs, temporary contracts, and poor social protection, whereas males have greater salaries, more advancement opportunities, and upper category jobs. In an organization where earnings differ by gender, women may be less motivated to perform at their best. Human capital theory says that when knowledge and skills develop, work performance will too. According to job design literature, as job longevity grows, workers get bored and less motivated [40]. Furthermore, research has shown that the extent to which telework is implemented, the flexibility of job functions, and the level of internal numerical flexibility are all positively associated with firm performance.

According to Jackson and Fransman [50], one of the most common concerns employers have been whether working from home will affect the employee’s job performance. Mandeville et al. [64] have shown that work from home does not always have a negative impact on employee performance. Some researchers have shown that working from home can improve employee performance because remote workers reported experiencing lower levels of stress, and as a result, they were less inclined to look for other employment opportunities, which led to a reduced overall rate of employee turnover. Telecommuters also reported being more content with their day-to-day work activities. Employees who work from home can take care personal business while still being available for their job. This allows the employee to

use break time to take care of necessary tasks, such as errands and picking up children at school.

There are few factors that can affect employee performance when working from home. The environment in which the employee works can have a big impact [89]. Boyatzis [24], originator of the theory of action and work performance, says person, organizational environment, and job demand impact organizational performance. First is the individual’s vision, values, philosophy, knowledge, nature, competences, professional path, style, and hobbies. The organizational environment includes culture and climate, structure and processes, industrial maturity, strategic position, key capabilities, and context. Third, job demand includes each member’s tasks, functions, and positions. The theory of action and work performance suggests that the best performance (best fit) may be achieved via individual elements, the environment, and the roles and duties of human resources, including leaders. Value, characteristic, style, and knowledge backed by the organizational environment may drive a leader to complete duties and functions for optimal organizational performance. Skilled workers may boost organizational performance.

In a study of 150 businesses, 73% reported that some workers preferred to work from home because of lifestyle considerations [33]. These employees can find balance that works best for them and their families, reducing stress and enhancing performance. In addition, the company benefits from increased employee retention and loyalty and decrease absenteeism. Some of the reasons that people chose to work from home include more time to spend with family; lower costs for commuting and

transportation; less stress and distraction; and more efficient use of office space.

### **Work environment**

There is no question that the modern workplaces have changed a great deal in recent years. With the prevalence of computers and smartphones, many employees now work from home. According to a study by FlexJobs, as of 2016, nearly one-third of American workers report working from home at least once in the past 12 months [39].

Having a designated workspace has been linked to better management of work–family conflicts and improved job performance [38, 61] due to the reduced distractions from others while working from home. When working and living in the same environment, it becomes increasingly challenging to establish boundaries between work and personal life [42]. To maintain or even increase productivity and engagement, it is crucial to have the necessary equipment, ergonomic setup, and a fast and secure internet connection [61, 88]. However, the sudden shift to working from home has left many workers without adequate preparation and teleworking tools [41].

To ensure that staff working from home are productive and efficient, organizations should strive to provide them with all the necessary facilities that are available in the office. There are various ways in which organizations can help to maintain productivity levels, including regular check-ins between managers and their teams, creating schedules that separate work from family life, and using video calls for collaboration instead of phone calls [21]. These organizational factors are crucial for the development of WFH [47] and are essential for successful WFH configurations [14, 41]. Supporting employees, covering the costs of WFH-related facilities, providing training on organizational communication systems, and building a culture of trust are all critical factors that organizations must consider [16, 41]. Additionally, reducing the cost of information and communication technologies (ICT) can significantly increase the number of employees who work from home [52]. Several studies, such as those conducted by Bélanger [18], Biche et al. [20] and Green et al. [42], have reported that an appropriate working environment is also essential for WFH, including factors such as reducing noise, improving air quality, providing natural light, adequate space, privacy, comfort, safety, and positive relationships with co-workers and supervisors. Moreover, work from home also tends to suit those employees that are found to possess certain demographic characteristics. For instance, most aged employees who have mobility issues prefer to work from home because this type of working arrangement tends to be more comfortable and convenient. Similarly, Johnson and Mabry [53] have stated that some female employees that tends

to be married and have children also prefer flexible working arrangements like work from home so that they are able to give time to both their family and career. According to previous research, significant factors are not only technical or financial issues but also taking into consideration human and managerial requirements.

### **Work-life balance**

There is no question that working from home has become increasingly popular in recent years. This trend is likely due to several factors, including the flexibility it offers employees and the ability to balance work with other commitments such as family. However, working from home can also have a negative impact on employee's well-being and lead to reduced productivity in the workplace [53]. Individuals believe that employees who work from home are more engaged in their work and less likely to use sick days, but that may not always be the case [36]. In fact, De Smet [33] shows that employees work from home are more likely to take sick leave than those who work in the conventional office environment. There are various reasons for this.

Firstly, the employees who is doing work from home may not have the same distractions as those who work in an office environment and therefore they may feel stressed out or tired as those when they have to work in an office environment [53]. Secondly, WFH employees may be more likely to feel isolated and lonely at work [57]. This makes them feel less committed to their job and may lead them to use their sick leave as a result. Finally, teleworkers may be less likely to feel like they are able to communicate effectively with their colleagues, which can further reduce their productivity in the workplace and increase the likelihood of using sick leave [7].

Professional-life balance is described as achieving a balance between employees' family or personal life and work lives (Jyothi and Ravindran 2012). The concept of work–life balance is predicated on the premise that professional life and personal life complement each other in displaying perfection in one's life. Furthermore, men and women implement flexible working in diverse ways, resulting in varied outcomes in terms of well-being and work–life balance [30, 60]. Work–life balance can affect employee performance both favourably and negatively. An imbalance between work and personal life can have an impact on low productivity and decreased performance of a person for an organization [32, 56]. The individual will feel overwhelmed when they lack the essential resources to accomplish both job and family obligations. The previous study demonstrates that work–life balance was positively connected to job satisfaction [50]. According to Mandeville et al. [64], work from home is also help for improving the work balance life of the employees because

employees are able to give attention to both their jobs (by working remotely) and family.

### **Employee productivity**

The traditional definition of productivity, as it was used in twentieth-century businesses that focused primarily on the efficiency of their manual workers, may be described as the ratio of the number of products and services that a worker generates to the length of time that is required. This definition is inherently distinct from knowledge worker productivity, which is defined as a productivity measure for non-routine output and abstract input of modern workers in knowledge-intensive organizations [29]. This definition focuses on the productivity of modern workers in knowledge-intensive organizations. The twenty-first century has seen a significant transition away from production-oriented companies and towards those that are more knowledge-intensive. Knowledge workers place a premium on the resolution of non-routine problems, which calls for a mix of convergent and divergent thinking. The traditional concept and assessment of productivity is not applicable to knowledge workers in the twentieth century, whose output is more abstract than that of manual labourers. However, the productivity of knowledge workers may still be reliably quantified using a method known as subjective productivity measurement. This method gathers information about productivity through a questionnaire or an interview that is directed towards a certain interest group [76]. For the sake of this investigation, we are going to refer to worker productivity as knowledge worker productivity. Not only is it more applicable to the twenty-first century, but the job characteristics of knowledge workers are more likely to be performed at distant locations, which are fundamentally fit with the notion of working from home.

In addition, a poll conducted by Owl Labs indicated that in 2021, 70% of employees who worked from home during the epidemic found virtual meetings to be less stressful, and 64% of those same people now prefer hybrid meetings. In the most recent few months, a number of studies have proven that working from home is more productive than being in an office setting. Those who are able to perform their tasks from home are, on average, 47% more productive, have a 10% lower rate of wasted time per day, and put in an additional work day each week. According to a research conducted by 16,000 people over the course of nine months at Stanford University, working from home increases productivity by 13% [12]. The increase in productivity can be traced back to a combination of factors, including an improved ability to concentrate on each individual call and an increase in the number of minutes spent on the clock per shift as a result of fewer breaks and absences. Both of these factors

contribute to an increased total number of minutes spent working on the clock.

Working from home (WFH) can be a more productive work environment than the conventional office cubicle, allowing to better blend personal life and professional life, depending on how home is set up [12]. Because of the ongoing pandemic, an increasing number of businesses are favouring the use of remote workers and schedules that are flexible.

### **Work from home and work environment**

Earlier research indicates that remote work has a favourable impact on the work atmosphere and is the most pertinent literature to establish a hypothesis for this study. Scholars have contended that telecommuting can lead to a more adaptable work environment since workers have the freedom to organize their own work schedule and workspace [15]. They can satisfy their individual needs and preferences by customizing their work area to match their personality [38].

Recent research has illuminated various ways in which Work from Home (WFH) arrangements positively influence the Work Environment (WE), providing fresh perspectives previously overlooked. Firstly, WFH offers enhanced flexibility and autonomy, empowering employees to manage their work schedules and surroundings, thereby fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility, leading to increased job satisfaction and motivation. Secondly, WFH eliminates commuting stress, reducing anxiety levels and improving mental health among employees, resulting in a more relaxed and focused workforce. Thirdly, WFH promotes inclusivity and diversity by providing opportunities for individuals with diverse backgrounds and circumstances to participate in the workforce, thus creating a more inclusive work environment. Fourthly, WFH contributes to environmental sustainability by reducing carbon emissions associated with daily commuting and office operations, demonstrating organizational commitment to environmental stewardship. Finally, WFH facilitates global collaboration and talent acquisition, allowing organizations to assemble diverse teams from different geographical locations, cultures, and time zones, enriching the work environment with varied perspectives and fostering creativity and innovation. These insights underscore WFH's potential to transform workplace dynamics, cultivate a more inclusive, sustainable, and collaborative organizational culture, and drive long-term success as organizations navigate the evolving landscape of remote work.

Based on the findings of prior research and the existing literature, this study has formulated the following hypothesis.



**Hypothesis (H1)** Work from home (WFH) has a positive and significant effect on Work Environment (WE).

#### **Work from home and job performance**

The ability to customize their work environment gives telecommuters an advantage that can lead to increased job performance. Additionally, working remotely can save time and money that would otherwise be spent on commuting, while also providing a sense of freedom that contributes to employee satisfaction and, in turn, job performance [38]. Furthermore, employees who telecommute more frequently tend to have better work-life balance, which can also positively impact their performance [26]. Based on these findings, this research proposes the following hypotheses:

**Hypothesis (H4)** Work from home (WFH) has a positive and significant effect on Job Performance (JP).

**Hypothesis (H10)** Work Environment (WE) mediates the effect of Work from home (WFH) on Job Performance (JP).

**Hypothesis (H11)** Employees Productivity (EP) mediates the effect of Work from home (WFH) on Job Performance (JP).

**Hypothesis (H12)** Work-life balance (WLB) mediates the effect of Work from home (WFH) on Job Performance (JP).

#### **Work environment and job performance**

Previous research studies by Jayaweera [51] and Muchtar [67] have provided evidence for the positive impact of the work environment on job performance. These studies suggest that a pleasant, healthy, safe, and optimal work environment can contribute to improved employee performance [67]. It is crucial for organizations to focus on enhancing their work environment in order to achieve their goals. Jayaweera [51] specifically found that a good work environment can increase motivation and performance among employees in the hotel industry. Additionally, the research also revealed that employees' productivity acts as a mediator in the relationship between the work environment and job performance. Building on the findings of previous studies, this research proposes the following hypotheses:

**Hypothesis (H7)** Work Environment (WE) has a positive and significant effect on Job Performance (JP).

**Hypothesis (H13)** Employees Productivity (EP) mediates the effect of Work Environment (WE) on Job Performance (JP).

#### **Work from home and work-life balance**

Due to two main factors, working remotely can lead to a better work-life balance for employees. Firstly, telecommuting allows employees to increase their productivity

by avoiding traffic congestion and transportation costs, and even living in more affordable areas outside the city. Secondly, remote work provides employees with the opportunity to attend to personal matters during work hours, which can lead to a greater sense of personal fulfillment [80]. Based on previous research findings, this study proposes the following hypothesis.

**Hypothesis (H3)** Work from home (WFH) has a positive and significant effect on Work-life balance (WLB).

#### **Work-life balance and employees productivity**

Ryan and Kossek [75] has argued that work-life balance practices can help workers improve the work environment. There are four strategies that can enable an employee to achieve balance: telecommuting, compressed work weeks, and part-time work. Each of them or the four together can have a positive impact on work productivity, increase employees Productivity and reduce work-life conflict. This revealed that the success of any organization largely rests on the productivity of employees within the system. It is therefore, necessary for managers at the helm of business affairs to adopt the approach that will lead to employee's retention. The essence of balancing both private and work life is to a healthy encouraging environment that can guarantee loyalty of the staff and secure a high level of productivity. Accordingly, the combination of flexibility of work schedule together with job attitude has been linked to an increase in organizational commitment from employees, satisfaction from the job and most especially reduction in turnover intention [59]. In line with Results of previous studies. This research assumes the following hypothesis:

**Hypothesis (H6)** Work-life balance (WLB) has a positive and significant effect on Employees Productivity (EP).

#### **Work-life balance and job performance**

From a different perspective, the concept of work-family conflict arises from the need for individuals to juggle multiple roles. In this study, the importance of work-life balance is emphasized as it ensures the effectiveness of employees in all the institutions they are associated with Duxbury [35]. Teachers and other employees may face challenges in achieving a balance between their professional and personal lives due to the lack of boundaries between work and personal life [72]. According to a study by Beehr and Newman [17], a strong desire for achievement may lead individuals to prioritize their work life over their personal life, resulting in reduced satisfaction and increased stress levels. The literature has extensively explored the role of work-life balance in predicting job performance. Rego and Cunha [74] and Harrington and Ladge [48] found that employees who successfully

balance their work and family commitments demonstrate better job performance. Additionally, Bloom et al. [22] reported that work-life balance is a significant predictor of various organizational outcomes, including employee retention and productivity. Therefore, it is suggested that:

**Hypothesis (H9)** Work-life balance (WLB) has a positive and significant effect on Job Performance (JP).

**Hypothesis (H14)** Employees Productivity (EP) mediates the effect of Work-life balance (WLB) on Job Performance (JP).

#### ***Benefits of the working from home on the finance professional job in Syria***

Working from the comfort of one's own home offers a variety of advantages. This way of living, which is also known as working from home, doing remote work, or telecommuting, has become more common in recent years. According to Strack et al. [82], Many workers are now able to make it a reality thanks to the ease with which they may work from home, which just requires them to have a laptop computer and a connection to the internet that is dependable. It entails completing their typical task with the assistance of technology and a home office rather than leaving the house. Workers who do their jobs from home instead of going into an office save time and money by doing their work online. The freedom that comes with working from home is a significant advantage of the practice. It often provides financial professionals with the autonomy to design their own work schedules in a manner that is more suited to their own requirements. This is beneficial since it implies that individuals who work in finance are able to decide when to take breaks and when to work, which enables them to boost their overall productivity. Telecommuting makes it possible for those working in finance to simply save money. When they are able to do their jobs from home, those who work in finance save the money that would have been spent on the daily travel to and from the office. Because financial professionals are at home, they are also less likely to spend money dining out or buying beverages to perk up [6]. This is due to the fact that finance professionals are at home. In addition to this benefit, those who work in the financial industry do not have to invest a substantial amount of money in the purchase of professional apparel. Making even just a few of these little adjustments to their routine might result in significant savings over time and put it in a better financial position than if they were employed in an office.

#### ***Challenges that employees face during working from home in Syria***

According to Alshahrani and Scholar [9], the concept of allowing employees to choose their own hours and work

from home has rapidly become the standard at many different types of businesses. 72% of white-collar professionals were still working remotely as of the middle of May, and several businesses have said that they intend to continue offering remote work or hybrid choices when the epidemic is over. When individual is doing work from home (WFH), it may find their self-working alone, which would be significantly different from the bustling environment of an office. Worker productivity may suffer, especially for extroverted employees who receive a boost from interacting with others. In addition, many tasks are accomplished without assistance, and the need for extra hands is always a possibility. Albawardi et al. [5] state that those who work remotely may have negative effects on their mental health as a result. Recent adopters of remote work report being more readily side-tracked than ever before. They kill time by engaging in a wide range of pastimes, including music listening, internet shopping, and video gaming. People who live with friends or relatives have also complained that their companions tend to disturb them at the worst possible moments. Employees often do not need to worry about the technical arrangements, such as a computer, internet connection, software, and any other related equipment, while working from the office. In most cases, the company's shoulders are the whole weight of responsibility. While at home, one can find the contrary to be true. As a consequence, there may be a great deal of downtime, interruption, and even, in the worst case scenario, a breach of security. Perhaps people who aren't as tech-savvy will have a tougher time.

#### **Methodology**

This section presents the results of data analysis using the descriptive-analytical method with quantitative inferential approach, to study the impact of the independent variable on the dependent variable, and test the presence of mediator variables and their effects, The descriptive-analytical and inductive methods were employed in this study to comprehensively explore the various phenomena associated with remote work and to investigate the causal relationships and mutual effects between different variables. The descriptive-analytical method allowed for a detailed and comprehensive examination of the factors related to remote work, aiding in understanding the general patterns and trends. Meanwhile, the inductive method facilitated the exploration of causal relationships, enabling a deeper and more precise understanding of the mechanisms influencing the impact of remote work on job performance. By utilizing these methods, the study aimed to produce comprehensive and insightful results, guiding the improvement of remote work policies and practices to enhance work performance effectively and sustainably based on the following main steps: data were

collected through distributing an electronic questionnaire to financial professionals in Syria, and then data were cleaned and prepared to explore the structure of the study variables, confirmatory factor analysis and verification of the studied model (independent, mediator, and dependent), hypothesis testing, and then the results of the hypotheses that were prepared to achieve the study objectives and recommendations. The questionnaire was designed according to a Likert scale, which consists of five levels as follows: strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree. The weights in the analysis process were assigned as follows: number (1) corresponds to strongly disagree, number (2) corresponds to disagree, number (3) corresponds to neutral, number (4) corresponds to agree, number (5) corresponds to strongly agree. The questionnaire successfully received 330 responses, and after eliminating invalid and missing responses, 300 valid and reliable responses were analysed further and with nominal and ordering questions.

Bentler and Chou [19] suggest that a minimum of 5 respondents per variable is necessary. Since this study involves 5 variables, a minimum of 25 respondents is recommended. Furthermore, [81] propose that a sample size of 50 respondents is adequate for a model with 4 latent variables. As the study includes 300 participants, the minimum sample size requirement has been fulfilled.

To ensure precise outcomes and prevent inaccurate associations, the study’s sample size was determined using the 10 times rule. This principle dictates that the minimum amount of data should be ten times the maximum number of links pointing to any latent variable in the model. In this particular research, there were nine links, indicating that the minimum sample size should be 90 [44]. Furthermore, according to power tables provided by Hair et al. [44], a minimum of 166 data points are recommended for analysis to achieve a statistical power of 80% with a significance level of 5% and a minimum R2 of 0.10, when there are a maximum of three links pointing to a construct. With a total of 300 respondents in this study, both the 10 times rule and G power analysis requirements have been met, satisfying the recommended sample size for PLS-SEM analysis.

To address the investigate inquiries, this study employed structural equation modelling, which entails two essential stages: Explanatory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). To facilitate these analyses, SPSS and AMOS software were employed. Following data collection, the initial step involved evaluating the measurement model’s validity and reliability by using an questionnaire (Appendix A1).

To address the research inquiries, the researchers relied on distributing the questionnaire online, ensuring that the sample included all age groups above 17 years old

to serve the study’s objectives and answer its questions and test its hypotheses. The researchers also ensured the availability of the necessary expertise to understand the questions well. As for the sample size, due to the unavailability of the standard deviation for our research population and the absence of offices that specialize in publishing or even selling such data to academic and practical researchers, according to [44] and based on the power tables provided by them, the recommended minimum data for analysis is 166 items. Therefore, the researchers determined a sample size of 300 items. The goal of using structural equation modelling (SEM) with partial least squares (PLS-SEM) was to determine the extent to which the theoretical model matches the field data, i.e. the extent to which the theoretical model is supported by the sample data. If the sample data support the theoretical model, it is then possible to assume more complex theoretical models. However, if the data do not support the theoretical model, either the original model needs to be modified and tested or new theoretical models need to be developed and tested. SPSS and AMOS software was used to assist in conducting the required analyses.

The representativeness of the sample in this research has been confirmed through the results presented in Table 1. These results are based on chi-squared tests conducted in all four categories (p value gender=0.983, p value age=1.000, p value education=0.956, and p value occupation=1.000). All the P values (Asymp. Sig) are greater than 0.05, indicating that there is no significant difference in the sample proportion across the characteristics of gender, age, education, and occupation. Therefore, since the sample in this research has been shown to be representative, the conclusions and recommendations of our research can be generalized.

The exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted according to [31] to test the data and ensure construct

**Table 1** Sample representativeness test

	Test Statistics			
	Gender	Age	Education	Occupation
<b>Chi-Squared</b>	0.000 <sup>a</sup>	0.003 <sup>b</sup>	0.126 <sup>c</sup>	0.022 <sup>b</sup>
<b>df</b>	1	5	3	5
<b>Asymp. Sig</b>	0.956	1.000	0.675	1.000

a.0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 86.7

b.0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 5.6

c.0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 28.7

d.0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 17.0

validity. The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was found to be 0.83, indicating a good ratio (see Table 2). Additionally, Bartlett’s test of sphericity was found to be significant ( $p < 0.05$ ), indicating that the correlation matrix between variables is not an identity matrix but rather indicates a relationship between variables. Therefore, the sample size is sufficient and appropriate for conducting factor analysis. The extracted average variance explained (AVE) for each variable was higher than 0.5, indicating the availability of convergent validity evidence [62].

Based on the previous table (Table 3) and according to (Malhotra N.K [63]), we observe that all convergence validity evidence falls within acceptable limits. The loadings of the variables on the factors were less than 0.90 and greater than 0.50, while the variances between the scale factors ranged from 0.20 to 0.90. Additionally, all extracted variance values (AVE) were greater than the common variance and exceeded the critical value of 0.50 according to the Fornell criterion. Furthermore, each AVE value for the factors was greater than the value for the relationship between two factors (Fornell–Larcker criterion), providing additional evidence for the discriminant validity of the scale.

To assess the fit of the proposed model, indicators of fit quality were examined. The purpose of measuring fit quality is to determine the extent to which the proposed model is suitable for answering research questions, and it serves as a requirement prior to conducting path analysis. The model fit was found to be consistent with the requirements of [45] in Table 4.

## Results

### Descriptive statistics

The descriptive statistics provided in Table 5 display the data collected from all participants. The average response for each question is approximately 3, indicating an equal distribution of agreement and disagreement among respondents, including those who remain neutral. The dataset comprises responses from 300 individuals, and each mean value exceeds its corresponding standard deviation, suggesting the absence of any outliers within the data.

**Table 2** Validity and reliability statistic

Construct	CR	AVE	$\alpha$	MSV	MaxR(H)
Employees productivity	0.867	0.583	0.72	0.291	0.911
Work Environment	0.795	0.602	0.77	0.115	0.824
Work-life balance	0.794	0.529	0.78	0.126	0.932
Job Performance	0.775	0.524	0.61	0.324	0.712
Work from Home	0.807	0.580	0.70	0.126	0.854

**Table 3** Discriminant validity

Construct	1	2	3	4	5
Employees productivity	0.764				
Work Environment	0.278	0.776			
Work-life balance	0.181	0.359	0.728		
Job Performance	0.612	0.463	0.336	0.724	
Work from Home	0.443	0.542	0.442	0.385	0.762

The provided table (Table 6) offers a comprehensive overview of the participants’ demographic characteristics, including their gender, age, education level, and occupation. It reveals that the ratio of male to female respondents is nearly equal. Additionally, the data indicate a higher representation of younger individuals compared to older ones, which can be attributed to the younger generation’s familiarity with technology in Syria. In terms of education, a significant majority (70.6%) of respondents hold a bachelor’s degree. Regarding occupation, the majority of participants are employed in financing, marketing or human resources, followed by information technology, design or creative fields, teaching professions, and various other occupations.

### Data cleaning and preparation

Before starting the analysis, it is essential to examine the data and ensure normality of distribution and handle missing values.

1. Missing Values: This issue accompanies studies involving surveys, where there are numerous items to be answered, especially questions touching on the respondent’s privacy. These values may be lost intentionally or unintentionally. Resolving this issue depends on the patterns of missing values, whether they are randomly distributed or not [86]. The researchers used the “EM Covariances” method to test the pattern of missing data and obtain complete data. There were 15 cases with missing values, accounting for approximately 5%, which is less than

**Table 4** Model fit evaluation

Model Fit Index	Recommended Value	Analysis Result	Decision
CMIN/DF	4.00 or below	3.00	Passed
RMSEA	0.07 or below	0.06	Passed
CFI	0.90 or above	0.91	Passed
GFI	0.90 or above	0.92	Passed
TLI	0.90 or above	0.92	Passed
IFI	0.90 or above	0.91	Passed

30%. Thus, the condition for conducting the EM analysis was met. The analysis revealed a chi-square value of  $X^2=2.212$ , with  $DF=3$  and  $SIG=0.530>0.05$ . Consequently, the null hypothesis that the missing data is missing completely at random was accepted.

2. Normality of Variables: It is necessary to conduct a test for the normality of data before starting the analysis due to its impact on the analysis results. As seen in the following table containing the one-sample Kolmogorov–Smirnov test, it assesses the normality of distribution.

We notice from the previous table that the value of (SIG) is higher than (0.05) for all items, and therefore,

we can say that the sample data for all variables follows a normal distribution.

**Hypothesis testing**

The data presented in Table 7 demonstrate that nine hypothesis tests yielded statistically significant and positive outcomes. The significance of these results is evident through both the critical ratio (CR) and P value. If the critical ratio or t value is greater than 1.96 and the P value is less than 0.05, the effect is considered significant. P value of \*\*\* indicates that the significance level is less than  $P<0.001$ . Further elaboration on each path analysis can be found in the subsequent discussion section (see Fig. 5).

**Table 5** Descriptive statistics

Variable	Mean	S.D	$\alpha$	1	2	3	4
Work-life balance	3.45	0.44	0.78	1			
Employees productivity	3.89	0.67	0.72	.113	1		
Work from Home	3.67	0.53	0.70	.345**	.344**	1	
Work Environment	3.77	0.71	0.87	.176**	.278**	.247**	1
Job Performance	3.86	0.72	0.71	.235**	.425**	.258**	.249**

It is Cronbach, Schonemann test. Cronbach's alpha is a statistic used to measure the internal consistency, or reliability, of a set of scale or test items

\*\* p < 0.01; \*\*\*p < 0.001

**Table 6** Background of respondent

Gender	%	Age	%	Education	%	Occupation	%
Male	42.5	17–25	28.7	High school/below	10.5	Marketing	39.5
Female	57.5	26–33	26.2	Diploma	6.1	HR	40.5
		34–42	18.3	Bachelor	69.7	IT	6.5
		43–50	15.3	Masters/Doctorate	13.7	Design	0.4
		51–58	9			Teacher	3.3
		>58	2.5			Others	9.8
Total	100		100		100		100

**Table 7** Path analysis result

Path	Estimate	S.E	C.R	P
1. Effect of work from home on work environment	.462	.143	3.230	***
2. Effect of work from home on Employees productivity	.312	.128	2.437	***
3. Effect of work from home on work-life balance	.473	.204	2.318	***
4. Effect of work from home on job performance	.261	.153	1.170	.054
5. Effect of work environment on Employees productivity	.334	.074	4.513	.042
6. Effect of work-life balance on Employees productivity	-.074	.112	-.660	.349
7. Effect of work environment on job performance	.295	.087	3.390	.031
8. Effect of Employees productivity on job performance	.381	.098	3.887	***
9. Effect of work-life balance on job performance	.247	.0878	2.806	.027

\*\* p < 0.01; \*\*\* p < 0.001

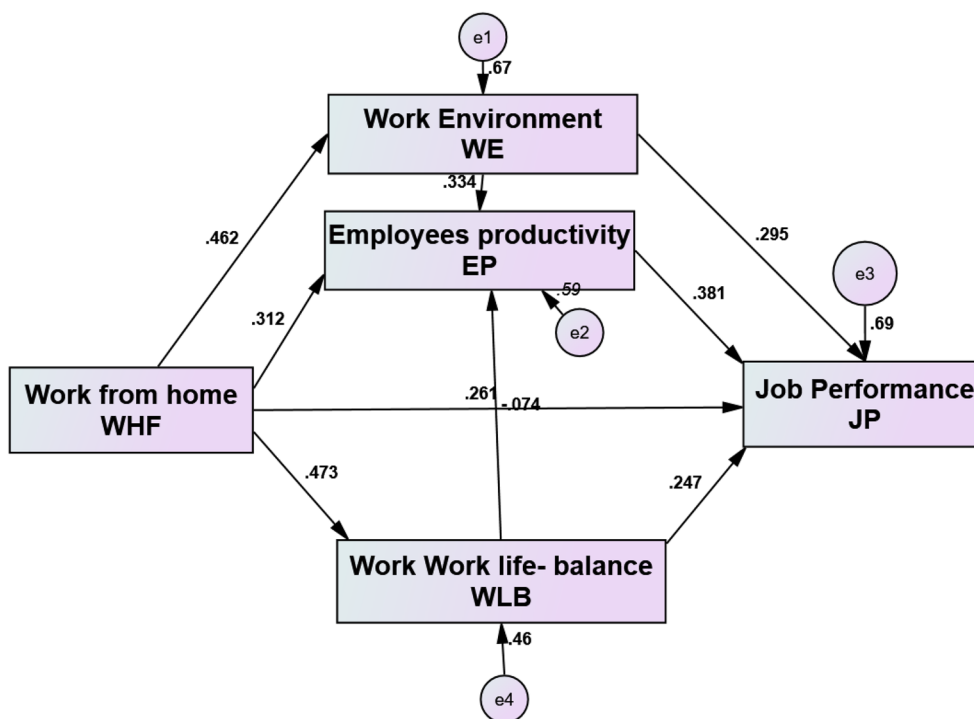


Fig. 5 Hypothesis testing

In this study, a sequential chi-square difference test was utilized to evaluate the mediation effect between variables [11]. This involved comparing three different models: Model 1, which represents a partial mediation model with all paths present; Model 2, which represents a direct model without any mediation effect when the path between the mediating and independent variables is eliminated; and Model 3, which represents a full mediation model where the direct path between the dependent and independent variables is removed. The findings presented in Table 8 demonstrate that the chi-square value between Model 1 and Model 2 is statistically significant for paths 1, 2, 3, and 5. Following the principle of parsimony, it is suggested that Model 3 is the most appropriate fit for these paths, indicating the presence of full mediation. However, for path 4, the chi-square value between Model 1 and Model 3 is significant, suggesting that Model 2 is accepted and there is no mediation effect in this particular path. More detailed explanations of each path analysis can be found in the subsequent discussion section (Table 9).

**Discussion**

**The effect of work from home on work environment**

The trend of remote work was not the result of any circumstances, but this trend was strengthened because of these circumstances. It is not easy to control the variables

of the office work environment (physical, social, and psychological) and make them harmonious with each other. “All roads lead to Rome”, if Rome in our research is an environment. There is no harm in letting the worker choose the appropriate path for it, by customizing his work environment and giving him the freedom to choose and design the place from which he works, giving it a personal character, and controlling its variables (music, lighting, space) without disturbing others, especially in jobs that require mental presence without interruption.

This is supported by statistical evidence, with a p value of  $0.001 < 0.05$  and a critical ratio of  $3.230 > 1.96$ . The strong relationship between working from home and a better work environment suggests that strengthening work from home policies can be an effective way to enhance the work environment. These results are consistent with a study by [21], and a study by [14] that researchers’ interests in working from home (WFH) have been a topic of investigation in the past decades and are also consistent with a study by [13], which indicated that jobs that require independence and limited face-to-face interactions are more likely to be done remotely, and these results are consistent with [77, 85] which showed that employees feel more comfortable in their work environment, where they can be with their families and avoid the cost and stress of moving. This flexibility allows them to create a customized work environment that suits their

**Table 8** Mediation analysis result

Model	CMIN/DF	RMSEA	CFI	GFI	TLI	IFI
<i>Path 1: Work Environment mediates Work from Home and Job Performance</i>						
1. Partial Mediation Model	2.11	0.06	0.91	0.90	0.92	0.91
2. Direct Model	2.13	0.05	0.92	0.91	0.93	0.90
3. Full Mediation Model	2.11	0.06	0.91	0.90	0.92	0.91
<i>Path 2: Employees productivity mediates Work from Home and Job Performance</i>						
1. Partial Mediation Model	2.00	0.06	0.92	0.93	0.91	0.92
2. Direct Model	2.45	0.06	0.90	0.901	0.90	0.91
3. Full Mediation Model	2.00	0.06	0.92	0.93	0.91	0.92
<i>Path 3: Work-life balance mediates Work from Home and Job Performance</i>						
1. Partial Mediation Model	2.00	0.05	0.93	0.91	0.91	0.93
2. Direct Model	2.37	0.06	0.92	0.90	0.90	0.91
3. Full Mediation Model	2.00	0.05	0.93	0.91	0.91	0.93
<i>Path 4: Employees productivity mediates Work Environment and Job Performance</i>						
1. Partial Mediation Model	2.00	0.05	0.91	0.90	0.92	0.93
2. Direct Model	2.13	0.06	0.92	0.92	0.91	0.90
3. Full Mediation Model	2.14	0.06	0.93	0.90	0.92	0.92
<i>Path 5: Employees productivity mediates Work-life balance and Job Performance</i>						
1. Partial Mediation Model	2.21	0.06	0.92	0.93	0.94	0.93
2. Direct Model	2.65	0.07	0.91	0.90	0.930	0.93
3. Full Mediation Model	2.43	0.05	0.93	0.92	0.92	0.943

**Table 9** One-sample Kolmogorov–Smirnov test

One-sample Kolmogorov–Smirnov test		WFH	WE	EP	WLB	JP
N		300	300	300	300	300
Normal Parameters	Mean	4.147	3.838	3.470	3.955	3.617
	Std. Deviation	.5711	.5995	.8343	.5555	.5373
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.202	.184	.237	.296	.291
	Positive	.151	.184	.125	.262	.180
	Negative	-.202-	-.136-	-.237-	-.296-	-.291-
Kolmogorov–Smirnov Z		1.180	1.075	1.383	1.728	1.697
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.124	.198	.044	.005	.006

personal preferences and lifestyle, especially for those who live in crowded capital cities.

**The effect of work from home on employees productivity**

The essence of remote work is clearly manifested through its provision of time and cost savings in general, and more specifically, by allowing employees to manage their time better and rely on a flexible schedule by prioritizing tasks and selecting the most suitable times to work. Additionally, it provides employees with greater comfort and independence, improves their focus by avoiding distractions and office noise, and reduces wasted time in commuting and personal office conversations, thereby

improving both the mental and psychological health of the employee. Moreover, it eliminates the daily routine and the associated expenses and long hours spent outside the home.

The analysis yielded results that demonstrate the significant and positive impact of remote work on employee productivity, with a p value of  $0.001 < 0.05$  and a critical ratio of  $2.437 > 1.96$ . This noteworthy correlation indicates that employees feel more satisfied when working from home. Therefore, policymakers should prioritize promoting remote work to enhance employee satisfaction. This finding is consistent with [34], which emphasizes that remote work enhances employee satisfaction

and improves job performance, as well as with studies by Gajendran and Harrison [38] and Lopez-Leon et al. [61], which focused on reduced deviations from others, and with the study by Bloom et al. [21], which confirmed the creation of schedules that separate work and family life, and with studies by Bélanger [18], Biche et al. [20] and Green et al. [42], which suggest that remote work reduces noise.

#### **The effect of work from home on work life-balance**

Remote work contributes to employee well-being by reducing stress and relying on a schedule that considers personal commitments, away from the pressure and mental preoccupation of work within the family. On the other hand, it allows employees to choose appropriate rest times for their priorities and commitments, helping them renew their energy and maintain efficiency and effectiveness in their work. Individuals can determine working hours that suit them and work in a comfortable environment.

The analysis results show that remote work has a significant and beneficial effect on achieving a healthy work-life balance. This was evident with a large p value of 0.001, which is less than the accepted significance level of 0.05, and a critical ratio of 2.318, exceeding the critical value of 1.96. The strong and positive correlation indicates that when employees work from home, work-life balance improves. Therefore, policymakers should actively promote remote work as a means to enhance work-life balance. This finding is consistent with previous studies that also confirmed a strong relationship between these variables.

The balance between work and life can positively or negatively affect employee performance. Imbalance between work and personal life can lead to decreased productivity and lower individual performance in the organization [32]. Similarly, for those forced to work in an office environment [54], working from home also helps improve work-life balance for employees because they can focus on both their jobs (through remote work) and their families.

#### **The effect of work from home on job performance**

Remote work frees employees from the negative effects of offices and their repercussions, allowing them to focus on work away from conflicts and negative social interactions with colleagues. It also reduces absenteeism (due to weather conditions, for example), which lowers the turnover rate. Remote work fosters a sense of loyalty due to the trust given by the organization to remote employees, allowing for the enrichment of personal experience by blending diverse backgrounds of cultural, social,

economic, and geographical experiences without geographical constraints.

The results of the analysis indicate a significant and positive impact of the work environment on job performance, as evidenced by the p value of  $0.031 < 0.05$  and a critical ratio of  $3.390 > 1.96$ . This strong and purposeful correlation emphasizes the importance of enhancing the work environment to improve employee job performance. Therefore, policymakers should prioritize improving work environments as a means to enhance job performance. These results align with a study by De Smet [33]. Employees can find a balance that works best for them and their families, reducing stress and enhancing performance. Additionally, the company benefits from increased employee retention and loyalty and reduced absenteeism. Some reasons individuals choose remote work include spending more time with family, reduced commuting costs, lower stress and distractions, and more efficient use of office space. A study by Jackson and Fransman [50] confirmed that remote work reduces the overall turnover rate of employees, and a study by Lewis et al. [59] found that remote work increases job satisfaction, particularly reducing turnover intentions.

#### **The effect of employees productivity on job performance**

Ultimately, employees seek to satisfy their various material and psychological needs. The relationship between these two variables is a relationship between the part (employee productivity) and the whole (job performance), and the whole will only be achieved through its parts. When we empower employees with control over both the temporal aspect (suitable schedules) and the spatial aspect (customizing the work environment) regarding their work, their satisfaction and loyalty to the job increase. This boosts morale, enhances initiative, and passion for work, laying the foundation for improving their performance.

The analysis results revealed a strong and positive relationship between job performance and employee productivity, as indicated by a p value of  $0.000 < 0.05$  and a critical ratio of  $3.887 > 1.96$ . This suggests that enhancing employee productivity can effectively improve job performance. Therefore, policymakers should prioritize initiatives aimed at improving employee productivity to enhance overall job performance. These findings are consistent with previous research consistently reporting a significant relationship between these variables. Lewis et al. [59] emphasized providing a supportive work environment that can ensure employee loyalty and secure a high level of productivity, while Gajendran and Harrison [38] suggested the possibility of employees meeting their individual needs and preferences through customizing their work area to fit their personality.



### **The effect of work-life balance on job performance**

The starting point for this relationship is effective time management and balancing work with personal activities, adjusting schedules to accommodate unforeseen personal variables. This includes allocating time for core tasks. On the other hand, social interaction emerges as a crucial element, as effective management of social relationships enhances employee satisfaction and mental well-being, contributing to improved mental health and stress reduction. It provides employees with the opportunity to enjoy a balanced and fruitful life on both personal and professional levels, thereby enhancing their overall effectiveness and workplace satisfaction.

The analysis results indicate a significant and positive impact of work-life balance on job performance, as evidenced by the probability value of 0.027, which is below the threshold of 0.05, and the critical ratio of 2.206, which exceeds the threshold of 1.96. This positive and significant relationship suggests that enhancing work-life balance will lead to improved job performance. Therefore, policymakers should prioritize improving work-life balance for employees to enhance job performance. These findings align with previous research such as [37, 66, 69], which investigated identifying the key advantages and disadvantages of remote work, such as schedule flexibility and time savings in commuting. Additionally, a study by Apollotechnical [12] found that working from home is more productive than working in the office, with those able to perform their tasks from home being on average 47% more productive and having 10% less daily wasted time. These employees can find a balance that works best for them and their families, reducing stress and enhancing performance.

### **Work environment mediates work from home and job performance**

Remote work contributes to mitigating the negative effects of office politics, which can impact employee performance, as it allows employees to focus solely on their work without getting involved in gossip, conflicts, and other negative interactions with colleagues that are often witnessed in office settings.

The examination yielded results indicating that the significance of the Kai-square value comparing Model 1 and Model 2 is noteworthy. Consequently, Model 3 is considered valid, indicating that the effect of remote work on job performance is mediated by the entire work environment. Employers and other stakeholders should prioritize adapting the home work environment for employees when implementing remote work policies. This finding aligns with previous research that demonstrated the significant mediating effect of the work environment on the relationship between remote work and job performance.

This result is consistent with Gajendran and Harrison [38] and Lopez-Leon et al. [61], which emphasized the role of allocating workspace in better conflict management between work and family and improving job performance due to reduced distractions when working from home.

### **Employees productivity mediates work from home and job performance**

To ensure employee efficiency and effectiveness at work, variables such as reducing absenteeism need to be regulated. Unlike those who work remotely, allowing them to continue their work from home and take breaks whenever they wish, which reduces absenteeism rates and helps accomplish tasks efficiently. This advantage also applies to vacations; if an employee can organize their day and work, they won't need unnecessary time off.

The analysis results indicate a significant Kai-square value between Model 1 and Model 2. As a result, Model 3 is considered acceptable, indicating that the effect of remote work on job performance is fully mediated through employee productivity. When employers and other stakeholders aim to improve job performance by implementing remote work policies, it is crucial to consider employee productivity as a fundamental requirement for increasing job performance. This finding aligns with previous research that also demonstrated a strong mediating effect of employee productivity on the relationship between remote work and job performance, such as the study by Etheridge et al. [36], which suggested that employees working from home are more engaged in their work and less prone to using sick leave. Similarly, De Smet [33] clarified that employees working from home are more likely to take sick leave than those working in a traditional office environment.

### **Work-life balance mediates work from home and job performance**

Remote work contributes to reducing employee stress levels because it allows them to rely on a schedule they set themselves, avoiding the need to rush through tasks. Additionally, they can take breaks during work to recharge and attend to family-related needs, allowing employees to balance their personal lives with work and continue working effectively.

The analysis results indicate a significant value for the Kai-square between Model 1 and Model 2. Consequently, Model 3 is deemed acceptable, indicating that work-life balance plays a full mediating role in the impact of remote work on job performance. When employers and other stakeholders aim to enhance job performance through remote work implementation, it is essential to consider the work-life balance aspect. This finding aligns

with previous research consistently demonstrating the strong mediating effect of work-life balance on the relationship between remote work and job performance, such as the study by De Smet [33]. Employees can find a balance that works best for them and their families, reducing stress and enhancing performance, as corroborated by studies by Cohen and Liani [32] and Konrad and Mangel [56], which suggested the potential positive or negative impact of work-life balance on employee performance. Imbalance between work and personal life can lead to decreased productivity and individual exhaustion when lacking essential resources to fulfil work and family obligations.

#### ***Employees productivity mediates work environment and job performance***

Employee productivity is not solely dependent on the work environment; there are other variables at play that sometimes overlap with each other. For example, but not limited to, the psychological makeup of workers and their self-concept, including considerations related to their psychological makeup (such as ego, id, and superego). The influential role of these factors cannot be overlooked in determining the manner and level of performance exhibited by employees.

The analysis resulted in findings indicating the significance of the Kai-square value between Model 1 and Model 3. As a result, Model 2 was accepted, indicating that the impact of the work environment on job performance is not mediated by employee productivity. This result suggests that job performance can be directly enhanced through a favourable work environment, regardless of employees' productivity levels. This finding contradicts previous studies that found a strong mediating effect of employee productivity on the relationship between the work environment and job performance. Therefore, further research is needed to verify the validity of this result. A well-designed work environment has the ability to enhance productivity, even if employees are not satisfied with their work. Other motivating factors may influence their performance regardless of their productivity level.

#### ***Employees productivity mediates work-life balance and job performance***

Balancing personal and work life is a crucial element in enhancing employee satisfaction and well-being. Organizing time between personal and work obligations and prioritizing tasks contribute to achieving this balance, along with interacting with family and friends and prioritizing physical health. Encouraging creativity and productivity creates a positive work environment, helping to reduce stress levels. Achieving a good balance provides

employees with the opportunity to enjoy a balanced and fruitful life on both personal and professional levels, enhancing their overall effectiveness and satisfaction in the workplace.

The analysis resulted in findings indicating the statistical significance of the Kai-square value between Model 1 and Model 2. Consequently, Model 3 is deemed acceptable, indicating that the impact of work-life balance on job performance is fully mediated through employee productivity. When employers and other stakeholders aim to enhance job performance by improving work-life balance, it is crucial to consider the level of employee productivity. This finding aligns with previous research that consistently demonstrated a strong mediating effect of employee productivity on the relationship between work-life balance and job performance. For instance, Johnson and Mabry [53] mentioned that some married employees with children also prefer flexible work arrangements like remote work to allocate time for their families and professional lives. Similarly, Leger [58] noted that remote work also helps improve work-life balance for employees because they can focus on both their jobs (through remote work) and their families.

#### **Conclusion**

This study has made a significant contribution to the research on the impact of remote work on job performance. Previous research had been inconclusive, but this current study demonstrates that working from home leads to increased employee satisfaction, productivity, and work-life balance. Employee productivity is crucial for job performance, as employees need to be satisfied in order to perform well and achieve organizational goals. While companies may face challenges such as supervision and communication, remote work has become the only viable option. Companies can adapt to this situation by evaluating employees' progress on tasks instead of their physical presence and availability for communication. This approach can also enhance employees' job-related skills. It is recommended that policymakers, including companies and governments, promote and regulate remote work programmes to benefit both employees and companies. Given that internet access is essential for such programmes, the internet industry should be incentivized to ensure affordability and availability in rural areas. It is important to note that the scope of this research is limited to the benefits of a work from home scheme in Syria.

#### **Recommendation**

The researchers propose several recommendations aimed at optimizing employee productivity and job performance within organizations. Firstly, they advocate

for providing employees with increased autonomy in managing variables related to time and location, allowing them greater flexibility to enhance their productivity. Additionally, the researchers suggest a transition towards remote work, especially for roles that do not necessitate physical presence. This shift is seen as particularly beneficial for organizations grappling with issues such as frequent absenteeism and high turnover rates. Moreover, they propose that multinational organizations embrace remote work practices to refine the skills and expertise of their workforce. Finally, the researchers emphasize the importance of constructing a comprehensive performance model that incorporates psychological dimensions, self-management, and employee creativity. Such a model could serve as a valuable framework for guiding future research endeavours aimed at further understanding and optimizing employee performance in diverse organizational settings.

**Research limitations**

This study is characterized by a restricted research scope, as it solely focuses on Syria. This decision was primarily driven by the limitations of the author’s available resources. Consequently, the analysis of the collected data was conducted without incorporating control variables, such as age, culture, technology adoption, education, income, and industry, among others, which could potentially influence the outcome of the analysis. Conducting a thorough investigation that considers the impact of variables like age, culture, education, income, industry, and other relevant factors on the job performance of individuals working from home may yield valuable insights into this phenomenon.

- Temporal boundaries: This research was conducted over a period extending from 2022 to 2023.
- Spatial boundaries: This study took place in the Syrian environment.
- Subject boundaries: The research addressed variables influencing job performance based on data available within the constraints imposed by the studied society. Particularly, there was difficulty in fully capturing all variables affecting job performance, especially age, culture, technology adoption, education, income, and industry.

**Appendix A1**

Variable	Item	Statement
Work from home	WFH1	I spend all of my time at home during my work
	WFH2	I always communicate with other people remotely for my work
	WFH3	I use internet technology to do my work as much as possible
	WFH4	I work outside of the physical presence of my colleagues
	WFH5	I do not do any physical travel at all to start and finish my work
Work Environment	WE1	My workspace is fully shared with family members or other people who are not my colleagues
	WE2	I have the freedom to personally arrange my workspace without the intervention of my company
	WE3	My work success is heavily reliant on my internet connection
Job performance	JP1	I have accomplished all of my duties according to the key performance indicators of my company even if I work from home
	JP2	I finish my job responsibilities well without any significant problems even if I work from home
	JP3	
Work-life balance	WLB1	Availability of flexible work schedule
	WLB2	Your job offers any functionality in terms of working hours or after-work options
	WLB3	Opportunity to get back the same job after maternity/paternity leave
	WLB4	Providing sufficient time to family
Employees productivity	WP1	Providing a positive working atmosphere
	WP2	Show respect and appreciation for the employee by others
	WP3	Provide an opportunity of promotion and career advancement
	WP4	Training inside where work leads to increased self-confidence
	WP5	Catalysts generally increases the desire to make more effort to work

**Abbreviations**

- WE Work environment
- WFH Working from home
- EP Employees productivity
- JP Job performance

WLB Work-life balance

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### Author contributions

AAAM contributed to data curation and writing—original draft preparation. In addition, SAM contributed to conceptualization, methodology, and supervision and provided software. MA contributed to writing—reviewing, editing, and supervision. All authors have read and approved the manuscript.

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### Declarations

### Ethics approval and consent to participate

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I hereby agreed that my submitted manuscript "The Remote Revolution: Assessing the Impact of Working from Home on Finance Professionals" be published by your firm.

### Competing interests

The authors declare no competing interests.

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