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THE PERSPECTIVES OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ON THE CHARACTERISTICS AND CONDITIONS OF REMOTE WORK: THE THEMATIC AND DUAL SENTIMENT ANALYSIS

Anita Pollak[1], Magdalena Ślazyk-Sobol[2], Izabela Rusin[3], Małgorzata Klich[3], Tomasz Lis[4], and Małgorzata Dobrowolska[5]

[1]Institute of Psychology, University of Silesia

[2]Institute of Psychology, University of Wrocław

[3]Humanitas University in Sosnowiec

[4]Faculty of Management, Czestochowa University of Technology

[5]Faculty of Organisation and Management, Silesian University of Technology

Remote work issues for disabled people are still poorly understood. Due to the high unemployment rate among disabled people, analysis and solutions to increase access to work are necessary. Remote workers must deal with space, time, and the blurring of boundaries between home and work life. Remote contact also weakens management–coworker relationships, reducing workplace support and professional development. The aim of the paper was to collect opinions on remote work based on interviews with

Anita Pollak, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9921-6607; Magdalena Ślazyk-Sobol, https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1165-0570; Izabela Rusin, https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8462-2576; Małgorzata Klich, https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5888-02806; Tomasz Lis, https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6737-3133; Małgorzata Dobrowolska, https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1502-2205. Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Małgorzata Dobrowolska, Politechnika Śląska, Wydział Organizacji i Zarządzania, ul. Roosevelta 26–28, 41-800 Zabrze, Poland; e-mail: malgorzata.dobrowolska@polsl.pl.

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15 people with disabilities. Their opinions expressed their experience with the reality in which they function. Dual Sentiment Analysis was used with a dedicated qualitative analysis tool (QDA MINER). The respondents mainly described remote work as having good working conditions at home and being satisfied with less contact with others. Our findings suggest that organizing remote work for people with disabilities in a highly individualized way that takes into account their disabilities, job functions, and complex emotional responses can improve job satisfaction and the work environment. Remote work reduces social contact, which in turn lessens stress and enhances job satisfaction for disabled people.

Keywords: people with disabilities; remote work; computer-assisted qualitative analyses; working conditions; interactions with co-workers.

Relatively little is still known about the prevalence and consequences of home-based work as regards employees with disabilities (Kruse et al., 2022). The study review covering 20 years (2000–2020) included only 17 publications that focused on remote work and people with disabilities. Importantly, few showed the results of empirical studies. Most of them involved descriptions of the laws and regulations, proposals of strategies or solutions to support people with disabilities at work, or semantic models for understanding work-related phenomena for these individuals (Igeltjørn & Habib, 2020). These issues are worth exploring because analyzing the phenomena and creating and promoting solutions that increase access to work are essential and needed due to the high level of unemployment among people with disabilities.

According to UK statistics, 81% of people without disabilities were employed, compared to 52.7% of people with disabilities (Department for Work & Pensions, 2022). As of 2017, 3,116 thousand people in Poland had a valid disability certificate issued by a competent authority. This cohort was mostly working-age, although only 28.9% were employed (Hryniewicka-Filipkowska, 2021). In April 2020, following the first month of the COVID-19 pandemic, 73.7% of people with disabilities maintained their employment, while others (approximately 114,000) experienced changes in their employment conditions. Next to a reduction in working hours and payment, 20% of these individuals performed their work remotely, and another 30% of them expected such changes in the future (Daniłowska & Gawska, 2020).

As in the case of former pandemics, COVID-19, has led to transformations in terms of work organization and performance (Rudolph et al., 2021). These changes are challenging for employees and employers, who are responsible for creating adequate working conditions (Tursunbayeva et al., 2022). As regards people with disabilities, further understanding of the meaning and consequences of these changes is required to develop optimal conditions for adaptation to work. Questions arise as to what categories of remote work are relevant to people with disabilities and

what meaning people with disabilities give them in terms of work well-being and performance.

E-work is a synonym for telework and remote work (Vartiainen, 2021). Its origins are linked to the development of information and communication technologies (Nilles, 1994), the use of which has made it possible to move work activity off-site (European Framework Agreement on Telework, 2022). The final determinant of e-work is its regularity, i.e., its repetitive task performance remotely over time.

The Centraal Planbureau LISS panel (Lifelines Cohort Study) expects more individuals to work from home after the COVID-19 pandemic (Jongen & Verstraten, 2020). The governmental sector (+24%) and financial and commercial services (+23%) are predicted to favor working from home (Jongen & Verstraten, 2020). Additionally, according to the increasing trend that was reported even before the COVID-19 pandemic (Kłopotek, 2017), job seekers would be more likely to stay with an employer if a flexible form of work was available (Laumer & Maier, 2021).

Determinants of Remote Work

Gender is an interesting factor that differentiates attitudes toward remote work. In 2017, men were more likely to work from home than women (Statistics Netherlands, 2018). This is because women are more often employed in the healthcare and education sectors, where remote work is difficult (Yerkes et al., 2021). Men are more satisfied with working from home than women, and they were more likely to claim that it improved family–work balance (Timmers et al., 2020). According to Del Boca et al. (2020), women don't benefit as much from working from home as men do. The results of studies conducted during lockdown could explain this phenomenon. They reported a return to the traditional division of roles and more women working unpaid, including taking care of the home and children (Farré et al., 2022). Women also spend more time on household chores than men (Del Boca et al., 2020; Wheatley, 2012). Encouraging fathers to participate equally in their children's upbringing is also linked to the mother's full-time employment hours (Norman, 2020).

Personality also influences workplace preference (office vs. remote). People who show openness to experience and those who are extroverts were more likely to select a traditional, stationary workplace (van de Koevering, 2017). Extroverts, who are sociable, communicative, and active (Barrick & Mount, 1991), became less satisfied with their jobs and reported increasing burnout after the pandemic forced a change in work style (Evans et al., 2022). Individuals with these personality traits feel more comfortable in an office where there is more interaction, while introverts prefer a workplace with fewer distractions and seek a more private workspace

(Wohlers et al., 2019). Individuals exhibiting high levels of conscientiousness might find it challenging to cope with the unstructured, anxiety-inducing, and uncertain nature of remote work. Conversely, those with lower levels of conscientiousness could potentially flourish in such environments. While changes in work organization can contribute to a decrease in productivity and job satisfaction, these shifts do not necessarily correlate with turnover intentions (Evans et al., 2022).

A survey conducted on 1,000 working U.S. citizens[1] found that caring for kids and saving money/time on commuting were the most frequent reasons to continue remote work after the pandemic. Employees valued remote work and considered it a source of flexibility in their current behaviors, i.e., travel behaviors (Gajendran et al., 2021), with younger employees emphasizing it more frequently (Earle, 2003). In the context of climate change, this may be especially significant. Remote work is viewed as an opportunity to reduce environmental degradation by eliminating commutes to work and thus lowering the amount of exhaust emissions (Tenailleau et al., 2021).

Consequences of Remote Work

Like many other phenomena, remote work carries positive and negative implications (Gajendran et al., 2021). Research has revealed many benefits of remote work for individuals, organizations, and society (Pérez Pérez et al., 2003). These advantages include freedom to schedule time (Morgan, 2004), reduced informal communication (Khalifa & Davison, 2000), more free time (Ammons & Markham, 2004), greater job satisfaction (Felstead & Henseke, 2017), shorter commute times (Tremblay & Thomsin, 2012), reduced travel costs (Morgan, 2004), and increased employment opportunities for women with children, students, and people with disabilities (Morgan, 2004).

The more time employees spent working remotely compared to working in an office, the higher their perception of autonomy was (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007). Working from home offers employees more control and flexibility during the day (Bosua et al., 2012; Vos & van der Voordt, 2001). The increased productivity of employees during remote work is one of the most important arguments for organizations that consider introducing it as a form of work organization (Bailey & Kurland, 2002; Fonner & Roloff, 2010). Remote workers can be more productive because they can work when they feel most productive and are not distracted by their co-workers (Golden & Veiga, 2008; Tremblay & Genin, 2007).

[1] https://digital.com/the-real-reasons-people-want-to-keep-working-from-home

However, information technologies used in remote work reduce face-to-face communication with co-workers, which is an essential source of social interaction (Ammons & Markham, 2004; Baruch, 2000; Cooper & Kurland, 2002; Wilson & Greenhill, 2004). Teleworkers find it difficult to understand the values and goals of the organization (Madsen, 2003) and experience weaker management support (Cooper & Kurland, 2002). As a result, it has the potential to decrease employees' commitment to and alignment with the company, adding a layer of complexity to the difficulties associated with this mode of work (Ingusci et al., 2022).

Remote work poses challenges to employees who must cope with social isolation (Sparrowe et al., 2001), invisibility to management due to lack of direct contact, and career stagnation (Khalifa & Davison, 2000), as well as the relationships between commitment and setting long hours of work for themselves and presenteeism (Wheatley et al., 2008), and the stress of balancing family life and work (Hardill & Green, 2003; Wheatley et al., 2008).

Additionally, difficulties are more pronounced among women, as they are more likely to switch to non-standard forms of work to be able to take care of their families at the same time (Hoque & Kirkpatrick, 2003). Unpaid work for women functions as a social constraint on their professional activity (van Staveren, 2010). The pandemic has stressed these gender inequalities and addressing them can help reduce the risk of job loss for mothers (Petts et al., 2021). Concurrently, the flexibility offered by non-standard work arrangements, including telework from home, not only facilitates their dual roles as workers and mothers (Sullivan & Smithson, 2007) but also benefits anyone who provides support or care to their loved ones or relatives. In contrast, for men, decisions to work from home are often determined by the type of work that can be done remotely (e.g., programming). These decisions may also be aimed at increasing control over work (Sullivan & Lewis, 2001; Sullivan & Smithson, 2007).

Another negative aspect of modern technology is the ability to work at any time, which can lead to working late and longer hours than usual (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007). The separation of work and leisure time is not so clear due to working from home, which can disrupt work-life balance (Felstead et al., 2003; Peters et al., 2010; Vos & van der Voordt, 2001).

A lack of self-discipline, which may manifest as procrastination, simulated productivity, exhibiting inactivity, and disregard for responsibilities in the absence of direct supervision, has also been linked to remote work (Eurofound, 2020). Work flexibility allows employees to allocate resources between work and non-work matters in accordance with their preferences (Ray & Pana-Cryan, 2021). Nonetheless, such arrangements may reduce employees' commitment to their job by allowing them to devote their flexible work hours to non-work-related activities. The decline in interpersonal communication, both among coworkers and with superiors, has

the potential to negatively affect productivity, especially in positions requiring frequent interaction, since they cannot as easily and quickly share their ideas or concerns (Charalampous et al., 2018).

Aspects of Remote Work in the Context of Disability

Remote work offers hope to workers with disabilities. In May 2020, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020) updated the assessment of barriers and support for workers with disabilities. Workers with disabilities drove to work in their cars less frequently (by about 10%) and worked from home more often (by 3%). In addition to the difficulty of commuting, people with disabilities may be forced to climb stairs, for example, due to an inoperative elevator. Employees with disabilities required flexible work hours more frequently (by 8%).

According to the findings of Holland (2021), remote work has the potential to eliminate employment barriers for people with disabilities. The creation of an inclusive workplace has the potential to increase job opportunities. To address the potential drawbacks of remote work, organizations should provide all employees with the opportunity to engage in this practice, allowing workers to exercise autonomy over their work environment. Work stranglehold and time flexibility are easier to achieve in a home-based work environment, where greater flexibility can also include a slower work pace, more frequent breaks, and a modified schedule (Varekamp & van Dijk, 2010).

Video conferencing can ease the social anxiety that face-to-face interactions cause for workers with autism spectrum disorders. Even simple expectations related to talks before and after meetings, involvement in group discussions, or participation in off-site sessions can be a burden (Mamtani et al., 2022). A remote work environment allows for greater individual control over work interactions, potentially alleviating some of these burdens.

Nonetheless, this phenomenon poses several obstacles, including decreased opportunities for positive social interactions, difficulties with direct electronic communication, limited opportunities for learning from colleagues, and issues with maintaining a healthy work-life balance. Emerson et al. (2021) highlight the increased experience of loneliness, decreased perception of social support, and social isolation among people with disabilities, which can have a negative impact on their overall well-being. The shift to remote work may exacerbate such feelings, emphasizing the importance of social interaction in remote work settings. This viewpoint is supported by a study conducted by Hoque and Bacon (2022), which found that

disabled workers had more difficult experiences with remote work, particularly in terms of mental health, when compared to non-disabled workers.

In summary, although remote work presents opportunities for improved autonomy, adaptability, and integration for individuals with disabilities, obstacles endure. It is imperative to acknowledge and tackle concerns such as loneliness and isolation to guarantee that remote work has a favorable impact on these individuals.

Aim of the Study

The primary objective of this study was to determine how respondents with disabilities perceived remote work based on their personal experiences. The goal was to identify significant aspects that could be essential for the organization and to improve remote work performance. We wanted to understand the respondents' emotional responses and attitudes toward remote work by analyzing their opinions and determining whether they were positive or negative.

By assessing their positive and negative viewpoints, we were able to identify both the strengths and areas for potential improvement within remote work settings. The collected information could potentially be used to create a more nuanced and effective tool to support vocational education, as it was grounded in the real experiences and needs of people with disabilities engaging in remote work.

Qualitative research assisted in eliciting respondents' broader experiences. For starters, initial hypotheses are not required in qualitative research. This method allows for an in-depth and open-ended investigation of the phenomenon. As a result, rather than limiting the research to assumptions, it encourages a more nuanced and individualized understanding of remote work experiences among people with disabilities. Second, even with a small participant group, qualitative data can describe a wide range of problem-related phenomena. Rather than quantifying results, qualitative research seeks to reveal participants' diverse experiences. This approach aids in gaining a holistic understanding of the issue, which is critical to comprehending disabled people's remote work experiences.

To achieve the research objectives, the questions addressed the following aspects and were presented to the participants: (1) predictions about the course of remote work ("What do you expect from remote work?"), (2) cognitive representation a person had in their mind for this phenomenon ("How do you picture this form of work?"), (3) the reasons prompting the choice of a particular solution ("Why did you choose remote work?"), (4) the benefits of remote work ("What are the advantages of this type of work?"), (5) personal experience related to difficulties in this type of work ("What do you think is difficult about remote work?"), (6) the reasons for

these difficulties, and (7) the importance of remote work in the vocational activation of people with disabilities ("How can remote work help people with disabilities function in the labor market?").

METHOD

Sample and Procedures

The study was conducted in November 2021. Data was collected through an in-depth structured interview. The invitation to the study was submitted to the board members of disability associations and to organizations recognized as sheltered workshops. After expressing interest in participating in the study, a telephone interview was arranged. The inclusion criterion was confirmation of possessing a disability certificate.

Individuals are legally deemed disabled if their physical or mental abilities are constrained, impacting their ability to work, study, or manage daily life (Act on Vocational and Social Rehabilitation [1997], Article 2, point 10). Disability recognition and degree determination follow a set administrative procedures and legal guidelines (Regulation of the Minister of Economy, Labor and Social Policy [2015]). Legal authorities officially certify disability status according to local regulations.

Mild disability is typically characterized by an individual's capacity to work for only limited periods or necessitating specialized workplace accommodations such as technical, orthopedic, or auxiliary tools. In contrast, those identified with a moderate disability can perform tasks exclusively under protected work conditions (e.g., sheltered workshops). Cognitive and mental health disorders give rise to cognitive and psychiatric disabilities, which may stem from mood disorders, anxiety, psychosis, or dementia syndromes. Physical disability, on the other hand, often results from internal diseases, anatomical damage, or motor impairments.

The respondents were informed that their personal data would be confidential and anonymized and that they could withdraw from the study at any time. They also gave consent to being recorded during the telephone interview. The study was conducted according to the principles of the Declaration of Helsinki and received a recommendation from the International Center for Interdisciplinary Research of the Silesian University of Technology. The participants did not receive any gratification for participating in the study. For the purpose of the entire project, the respondents provided personal information and completed questionnaires in addition to giving interviews.

In accordance with the recommendations of Braun and Clarke (2021), 15 interviews were analyzed. The study encompassed 15 participants (10 females, 5 males) from the Polish population, aged 24–40 years, with a mean age of 30.6 years (*SD* = 5.08). Their educational backgrounds varied, including vocational training (n_1 = 2), post-secondary (n_2 = 7), undergraduate (n_3 = 4), and graduate (n_4 = 1) degrees. The participants' average total professional experience was 11.13 years (*SD* = 4.31), with an average of 2.93 years (*SD* = 1.48) in their present roles.

Primarily, they represented service occupations, such as marketing specialists and nutritionists, that emphasize communication and serve as intermediaries between their organization and clients (i.e., consultant, salesperson, tourist information officer). Notably, no participant held a managerial position. The majority of participants had mild disabilities (*n* = 13), while two exhibited moderate disabilities. Nine participants presented psychiatric and cognitive impairments, while six had physical disabilities. Detailed information can be found in the Supplemental Material (Supplemental Material, Table 1).

The recorded interviews were transcribed, and based on the material, the analysis was conducted. Using codebooks derived from literature theories (Strauss & Corbin, 1998), QDA MINER was used to classify opinions, allowing for the emergence of categories. Using a Dual Sentimental Analysis (Xia et al., 2015), we analyzed the feelings expressed during remote work. 200 codes were generated in total. In this study, Cohen's kappa value was .91, signifying a satisfactory agreement between the two coders. In the Supplemental Materials, the specific stages of the analysis of the collected data are described in detail.

RESULTS

The results presented in this section were collected 18 months after the pandemic's outbreak. The following sections provide a description and qualitative analysis of these findings. Detailed information can be found in the Supplemental Material (Supplemental Material, Table 2).

A strong majority of participants identified remote work as a significant opportunity for employment and inclusion, particularly for individuals with disabilities. Of 15 participants, six explicitly expressed optimism about the employment prospects offered by remote work. As part of the category known as satisfaction, we searched for information on the relationship between remote work and higher or lower satisfaction. The respondents showed a generally positive attitude towards remote work. Overall, the study found high levels of job satisfaction. Respondents pointed out

that the ability to work from the comfort of their homes had a favorable impact on their quality of life and overall well-being.

The category of combining responsibilities was another one. The study uncovered only one of the subtopics of this category described in the literature, i.e., work–life balance. Other topics included in the literature, such as combining work and housework and the ability to care for those in need while working remotely, were not mentioned by respondents. Similarly, they did not mention a higher level of stress experienced by women, which prevented the expansion of knowledge in this area.

The interviews revealed that the scheduling flexibility of remote work, in particular, was viewed as a significant benefit that positively impacted work–life balance. However, this adaptability introduced new obstacles. Respondents reported difficulty balancing work and household responsibilities while working remotely, which raises concerns about their ability to effectively cope. This dual nature of flexibility, as both an advantage and a source of stress, captured the complexity of managing responsibilities in a remote work environment.

All interviewees viewed the reduced communication requirements favorably and identified them as one of the most crucial aspects. Participants indicated that working remotely lessened the stress associated with constant communication and quick response times in a traditional work environment. However, some participants also noted the downsides of limited social interaction, including increased feelings of social isolation and a deterioration in the quality of their interpersonal relationships.

Participants overwhelmingly preferred working from home to traditional office settings. They noted that their homes were more accommodating to their individual needs and provided a more comfortable work environment. They usually had adequate facilities and improvements at home that helped them function in their daily lives and were useful when performing professional tasks. They were convinced that the workplace on company grounds did not always suit them as well as the one at home.

Greater flexibility in the time of day when work is performed promotes worker comfort. Respondents also associated a greater influence on the mode of work with the outcomes at work. Working when they were most mentally and physically fit was associated with better results for some of them.

According to one respondent, the reduced number of people in the workplace as a result of pandemic restrictions provided an additional layer of health security. At the same time, the participants did not report an increase in workplace comfort or productivity because of fewer distracting stimuli. This is also an individual factor, depending on the appropriate workstation adaptation.

While participants' overall perception of remote work was largely positive, several challenges were identified. These ranged from difficulties in self-organization

and feelings of social isolation to a lack of support in difficult situations. Those accustomed to the structured environment of on-site work struggled the most with the absence of external oversight, raising concerns about potential productivity declines and the need for additional time to adapt to new work routines. Importantly, these difficulties were viewed as obstacles that could be overcome through individual coping strategies rather than as inherent disadvantages of remote work. Respondents emphasized the importance of stress resistance in remote work, hence the desire to learn coping mechanisms.

In contrast to the existing literature, which did not identify a lack of knowledge and experience in remote work as significant factors, participants in our study did. They emphasized that remote roles, particularly e-professions, are still emerging fields with a lack of experienced professionals, particularly for those with disabilities. Acquiring the necessary training and experience in these roles was viewed as critical for successful adaptation to remote work, albeit time-consuming and sometimes stressful.

No participant reported feeling "invisible" in their remote work environment, a category cited in theoretical frameworks. Similarly, none reported gender-specific work-related stress, an issue mentioned in existing literature. A notable concern was the absence of specialized roles in remote professions, particularly for disabled individuals, which underscores the need for further training and gaining practical experience.

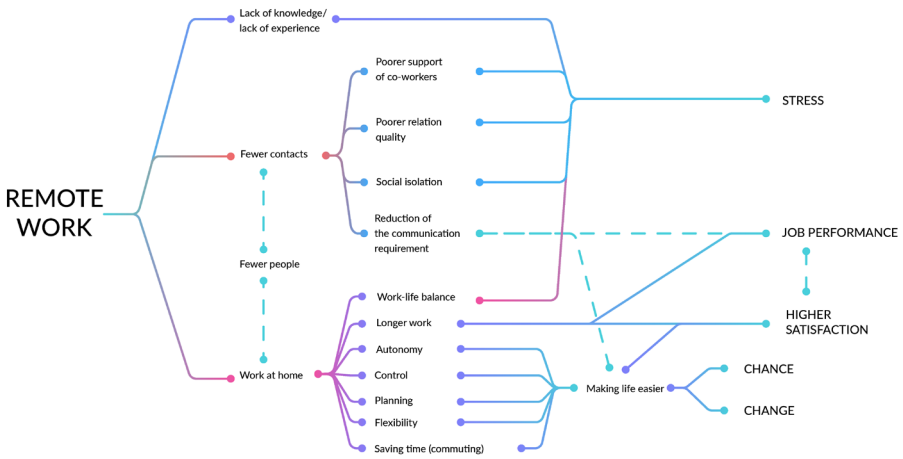
Although participants acknowledged that remote work eliminated the need for commuting, they did not report having more overall free time. They emphasized the need to prepare for new work modes and adapt to the remote work setting as consuming additional time. Nevertheless, none of the participants mentioned night work as a prevalent practice, nor did they claim that a less distracting work environment led to increased productivity or comfort.

DISCUSSION

Based on the analysis, it was possible to model a pattern of links between the categories that were found, excluding those that had only a theoretical basis. The following diagram summarizes the analysis. The numbers next to the lines represent the respondents' reports of the categories' frequency of occurrence.

Figure 1

Relationships Between Different Aspects of Defining Remote Work Based on Respondents' Opinions



Note. Solid lines show the relationships indicated by the respondents; dashed lines indicate the theoretical and methodological bases.

As shown, respondents primarily described remote work as working from home and being satisfied with less social interaction. The conditions for remote work give people more autonomy, control, and flexibility in scheduling. It also gives them more daytime flexibility (*work anytime*). Remote work saves time and money on commuting. Working from home has drawbacks. Respondents found it harder to balance work and personal life. Remote work allows flexible hours, but it also takes longer due to inexperience and the need for training in many areas. Working from home is convenient and increases the chance of employment or job change, especially for disabled people when other jobs are unavailable. This study confirms other findings on remote work's consequences (Gajendran et al., 2021). Based on the classic work of Jahoda (1981), it can be concluded that remote work is a beneficial proposition for people with disabilities, which allows more of them to perform the professional role that is so important to their well-being. However, working in safe, comfortable conditions increases job satisfaction and performance. In practice, it can prevent work abandonment. Kristof-Brown et al.'s (2005) meta-analysis of studies on work adjustment supports these findings.

The respondents had a positive perception of another key aspect of working remotely (i.e., less time spent with others and information exchange). The positive perception of the reduced communication requirement may show how difficult and

stressful communication is for people with disabilities. Igeltjørn and Habib (2020) found that individuals with disabilities may prefer to limit non-work-related contacts, contributing to the discussion on minimizing social isolation and maximizing workplace participation.

Limiting contacts leads to social isolation, poorer relationships, and less social support. Many respondents found it stressful, especially when trying to solve problems and consult with others. The respondents reported stress from limiting contact with others, work-life balance disruption, and e-professions unfamiliarity. Thus, remote work requires stress resistance and coping strategies. Results confirm the importance of work stress management and communication skills. The study shows that stress management and communication skills improve work performance and employee satisfaction. Gupta et al. (2022) and Payne (2005) found that organized communication improves organizational structure. The positive perception of people with disabilities reducing communication requirements and the perception that it did not promote problem-solving need further exploration.

Specificity of contact may explain the relationship between remote workers with disabilities' satisfaction and performance, intensity of contact, and sense of isolation. It would be valuable to collect and analyze data on the frequency and duration of these interactions. Additionally, it is worth examining the level of people's trust, openness, and support. These factors determine the distance between individuals (closer or distant relationships) and the associated expectations. The analysis of relationships at work is important because strong, friendly relationships are considered a resilience resource, as indicated by Rivera et al. (2012), and constitute the mental well-being of an individual (Ryff & Singer, 2001).

After reviewing our study's findings, we must acknowledge and consider the limitations that persisted despite our best efforts to mitigate them. First, while qualitative research designs can provide a deep understanding of participant experiences, their subjectivity may limit their interpretability and generalizability. Due to the in-depth nature of qualitative research, the findings may be significantly affected by personal perspectives, bias, or interpretation errors.

Second, our research sample included individuals with various types of disabilities. Variations in the nature and severity of disabilities may introduce substantial differences in work-related experiences, limiting the applicability of the findings across the spectrum of disabilities.

Third, due to the pandemic, our research focused on fully remote workers. This study did not examine the emerging paradigm of hybrid work models, which combine remote and on-site work. Employees with disabilities in a hybrid model may have different stress levels, work attitudes, and job satisfaction. Future research could identify the best work models for disabled people.

The single time-point design of this study restricts our ability to observe changes over time and establish causal relationships. Future research could take a longitudinal approach or conduct repeated interviews to gain a better understanding of employee experiences and shifts in job satisfaction and work attitudes.

Several research methodologies could be used to expand on and validate the findings of this preliminary study. Quantitative methods could supplement qualitative findings, providing a more complete picture of how remote work affects disabled employees. Collecting additional data, such as the size of the participating organizations and information about respondents' personal and familial contexts, may reveal additional influencing factors. Quantitative methods could also be used on a more diverse and larger sample to validate and generalize the qualitative themes identified in this study.

Furthermore, a comparative study of fully remote, on-site, and hybrid employees' experiences could provide insights into varying stress levels and work attitudes. To identify unique needs and optimization strategies for the well-being and productivity of disabled employees, research could also be tailored to consider variables such as the nature of the employee's disability, their specific job role, and the level of employer support.

CONCLUSION

The study provides valuable insights into the experiences and emotional states of remote-working people with disabilities, enhancing our understanding beyond the scope of quantitative analyses. These findings can contribute to the design and improvement of work environments and remote work solutions that are tailored to the needs of individuals with disabilities.

Despite shared experiences like the importance of the workplace, its amenities, work organization, and interpersonal relationships, our respondents' responses varied greatly. This supports the idea that remote work solutions for disabled workers should be tailored to specific employee groups' needs.

Those distinguished by the nature or severity of their disability or by their job function are among the distinct groups that could be considered. Employees with physical disabilities may have different needs and challenges than those with psychiatric or cognitive disabilities. Furthermore, job function requirements and adaptability can greatly affect remote workers' experiences and needs.

Moreover, the findings shed light on the complex emotional reactions to remote work, such as satisfaction, loneliness, and anxiety. This complexity emphasizes

the importance of individualized workplace support measures for people with disabilities.

When recommending or designing remote work solutions, psychologists, career counselors, and career planners must understand the needs, emotions, and experiences of disabled people. Effective career counseling should take into account both job requirements and workplace psychological implications.

Finally, our findings suggest that remote work may improve job satisfaction for people with disabilities. With the right resources, remote work can be both successful and fulfilling. This demonstrates that organizations, career counselors, and policymakers can have a significant impact on remote work environments.

CRediT Author Statement

Anita Pollak (20%): methodology, formal analysis, software, validation, visualization, writing (original draft), writing (review and editing).

Magdalena Ślazyk-Sobol (15%): conceptualization, investigation, methodology, resources, validation, writing (review and editing).

Izabela Rusin (15%): conceptualization, investigation, resources, validation, writing (review and editing).

Małgorzata Klich (15%): conceptualization, investigation, resources, validation, writing (review and editing).

Tomasz Lis (15%): resources, validation, writing (review and editing).

Małgorzata Dobrowolska (20%): conceptualization, funding acquisition, data curation, methodology, project administration, resources, supervision, validation, writing (review and editing).

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SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL

STRATEGY OF ANALYSIS

Literature Review and Data Collection

A scoping review strategy, as proposed by Booth et al. (2012), guided our literature collection efforts. Our research focused primarily on the EBSCO database using the following keywords: *remote work*, *home-based work*, *telework*, *disability*, and *disability/disabilities in employment.* Due to the scarcity of existing research on the topic of remote work for people with disabilities, our investigation was expanded to include meta-analyses related to remote work. Another technique we used to find relevant publications was through references (co-citation). Using deductive coding and a top-down methodological approach, the collected data provided a fundamental framework for the processes of coding, analysis, and interpretation.

Data Analysis and Coding

The data coding process was guided by codebooks developed using the theoretical material cited in the study (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The software QDA MINER (LITE ver., https://provalisresearch.com/products/qualitative-data-analysis-software/freeware) was utilized to classify individual opinions in accordance with the pre-established codebooks. However, we made allowances for the incorporation of emergent categories derived from participant perspectives that were not initially accounted for in the theoretical material.

Sentiment Analysis

Dual Sentimental Analysis was utilized for a nuanced understanding of participant emotions and feelings regarding remote work. This approach was influenced by the findings of Xia et al. (2015) and the preliminary nature of the analysis. Favorable attitudes, pleasant emotional states, or perceived advantages were indicators of positive feelings in participants' opinions. In contrast, they were classified as negative if they were connected to unfavorable evaluations, unpleasant emotions, or an indication of perceived or anticipated losses.

Reliability Assessment

In total, 200 codes were generated for analysis. To test the reliability of our coding, an independent coder, uninvolved in the study, was engaged. Therefore, bias was eliminated. This coder was provided with the coding scheme and the interview files. The coders were in agreement on 186 codes. The analysis revealed a Cohen's kappa score of .91, signaling near-complete agreement between the two sets of codes and affirming the reliability of our coding process.

Codebook

Following the top-down approach, the codebook, which included primary and secondary codes as well as categories representing theoretical concepts identified in the literature, was used as the first step in the research process (Table 2). Additionally, more categories were incorporated after an in-depth examination of the interviews. Furthermore, certain categories were included based on the researchers' cognitive curiosity, particularly those relating to the emotional approach to various aspects of remote work. For ease of reference, the "Number" column quantifies each category numerically. A "0" denotes a category with solely theoretical underpinnings. If a category's numerical value exceeds the total number of interviews, it signifies that respondents discussed the topic multiple times, underscoring its significance in the scope of the study.

Table 1

The Description of Research Sample (N = 15)

Participant no.	Gender	Age (years)	Level of education	Total work experience (years)	Job tenure (years)	Occupation	Type of disability	Level of disability
1	F	36	Graduate	13	3	Consultant	Psych/ Cog	Mild
2	F	34	Post-secondary	15	3	Marketing specialist	Psych/ Cog	Mild
3	F	24	Undergraduate	6	2	Security administrator	Psych/ Cog	Mild
4	F	36	Post-secondary	17	4	Marketing specialist	Psych/ Cog	Mild
5	F	25	Vocational training	6	5	Warehouse worker	Psych/ Cog	Mild
6	F	27	Post-secondary	8	1	Nutritionist	Psych/ Cog	Mild
7	M	30	Vocational training	11	4	Salesperson	Psych/ Cog	Mild
8	M	35	Post-secondary	16	5	Tourist infor. officer	Psych/ Cog	Mild
9	M	27	Post-secondary	8	1	Nutritionist	Psych/ Cog	Mild
10	F	25	Undergraduate	6	5	Logistician	Phys	Mild
11	F	33	Post-secondary	14	4	Nutritionist	Phys	Mild
12	F	32	Post-secondary	13	1	Telemarketer	Phys	Moderate
13	F	31	Post-secondary	12	2	Nutritionist	Phys	Moderate
14	M	24	Undergraduate	5	3	Job interviewer	Phys	Mild
15	M	40	Undergraduate	17	1	Marketing specialist	Phys	Mild

Note. Psych/Cog = Psychiatric/Cognitive disability; Phys = physical disability.

Table 2

Codebook: Summary of Issues Identified in Qualitative Analysis of the Material Based on Literature and Information Provided by Study Participants (N = 15)

Primary and Secondary Code	Description: remote work	No.	POS	NEG
EMPLOYMENT				
Chance	increases the chance of employment (otherwise they would not have a job)	8	5	0
Change	allows a change in the current profession	3	1	0
SATISFACTION				
Higher	allows higher satisfaction from work	7	7	0
Lower	causes lower work-related satisfaction	0	0	0
COMBINING RESPONSIBILITIES				
Profession and home	allows combining professional and domestic duties	0	0	0
Work and care	enables simultaneous care for children, and people in need of care	0	0	0
Work life balance	implications of impaired work-home balance (experiencing stress related to work and family)	2	0	1
Profession and home	allows combining professional and domestic duties	0	0	0
CHANGE IN CONTACTS				
Fewer contacts	requires less social contact	25	19	0
Reduction of the communication requirement	reduces the need for frequent communication	9	6	0
Impaired quality	weakens the quality of social contacts	1	0	1
Social isolation	creates the need to cope with social isolation	3	0	3
Invisibility	creates a sense of being invisible to others at work	0	0	0
CONDITIONS (includes physical and social working environment)				
Working from home	allows one to work from home	22	13	8
Fewer people	allows one to work in a place with fewer people—home is less crowded, increasing work comfort	1	1	0
Fewer stimuli	allows one to work in a place where there are fewer distractions, which affects the comfort of work and performance	0	0	0

SAVING				
Time saving	saves time previously spent on commuting	12	0	0
Money saving	saves money previously spent on commuting	0	0	0
WORK CHARACTERISTICS (features of work and its properties)				
Planning	allows free planning of time at work	3	3	0
Autonomy	ensures autonomy at work (independent decision on the method and time of its performing)	5	5	0
Control	offers a sense of more control at work	1	1	0
TIME				
Free time	offers more free time	0	0	0
Flexibility	offers greater flexibility during the day; the ability to work at any time	7	3	0
Longer work	enables work for extended time	2	0	0
Night	enables work at night	0	0	0
ORGANIZATIONAL CONSEQUENCES				
Performance	increases performance at work	8	1	0
Values and goals	leads to difficulties in understanding the values and goals of the organization	0	0	0
Poorer management support	makes employees feel weaker support from management	0	0	0
Poorer support from co-workers	makes employees feel less support from co-workers	1	0	1
Limited capabilities	causes a feeling that development opportunities have been limited (career stagnation)	0	0	0

Note: own elaboration.