

# **The Effect of Telework on Employee's Work-Life Balance in Japan During The Covid-19 Pandemic**

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## **Abstract**

Japan is known for its conventional business management style. The influence of culture on business management style requires all workers to do face-to-face. In addition, Japan is also known for its employees who have long working hours. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, suppressing the positive number of Covid-19, a telework system was implemented, which caused many employees in Japan to stay at home more. So, this research aims to know the impact of telework on the work-life balance of employees at the Japanese company during pandemic Covid-19. The method used in this research is descriptive quantitative. Source data collect by distributing questionnaires to employees in Japan. The collected data is tested statistically and associated with the work culture in Japan. Through this research, it can be concluded that telework has a significant and positive impact on work-life balance but with a weak correlation. Telework has a positive impact because it can help overcome problems such as long working hours, and reduce stress levels and work pressure, so employees' work-life balance in Japan can be improved. Then, the factors that cause a weak correlation are the difficulty of managing time due to distractions such as family, motivation, and forgetting the time due to the absence of boundaries between the time of work and place of residence.

## **Keywords**

telework, work-life balance, Japan's work culture, the worker in Japan, Covid-19

## **1. Introduction**

Japan is known for its conventional management business. Before the pandemic, Japan's culture influences the style of management that makes all the employees must work face to face, from planning, doing the project, discussing, and making decisions. When working face to face, superiors can see the employees doing their work and advise on the result. Japanese employees like to read their interlocutor's body language and expression. So, in everything related to the job, they must do it face to face. A lot of face-to-face meeting makes time used for telecommuting a lot too. For example, when going to duty to another city for negotiation or go to meeting at the branch office, the commuting time will be affected to increase the working time for the employees in Japan. It will reduce the productivity of their work.

Besides the management style, Japan's employees also have long wrought hours and are willing to work overtime without being paid. In international comparison, working hours in Japan are longer than OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) average working hours (Ono, 2020). Even though the government has set the regulation on working hours, many employees are still willing to work overtime because they want to show their loyalty to the company. It can show how little their time to rest if their work late every day and they must get up early

on the next day to go to work, not to mention the long commuting time. This time for oneself that is not comparable to working time can cause various problems such as the karoshi phenomenon, psychological problems, health problems, and even population decline due to low requests for marriage.

To resolve the problem, the Japanese Prime Minister of Japan issued a Work Style Reform Action Plan to significantly change how Japanese people work (Ono, 2022). The policy targets employees to improve their quality of life, work-life balance, and personal life and reduce long working hours, which can lead to higher fertility for an increasing population. Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, 2020 said that telework has a significant influence and role in part of work style reform because it can improve the quality of work-life balance, increase productivity, and secure the workforce during population decline (Ono, 2022). Therefore, to support the implementation of telework in 2017, the Japanese government began to organize a "Telework Days" campaign for all communities, companies, and employees in Japan. The explanation above proves that before the pandemic, the Japanese government had taken the initiative to promote telework in Japan so that public awareness began to increase.

However, the implementation of telework only increased rapidly during the Covid-19 pandemic. Many companies in Japan have started implementing this system to suppress the positive number of Covid-19. Covid-19 entered Japan in January 2020. The Covid-19 pandemic made the government declare that the people in Japan began to reduce and avoid face-to-face activities outside the home. This makes the business management style in Japanese companies must leave behind the old concept and adapt to a new concept, from the face-to-face to the telework or work from home concept. It automatically affects employees' lives because they do various activities at home more often without going out.

This is the reason that makes the author want to examine more deeply the effect of telework on the work-life balance of employees in Japan, such as whether after doing teleworking, the employees in Japan have a balanced life between work and personal life or not.

## **2. Literature Review**

According to Huuhtanen (1997) (Munkasa, 2020), telework is an occupation that someone does (employees, freelance, home worker), especially or just at a particular time, at a location that is far from the office, use telecommunications media as a work tool. Some kinds of terms in the literature on telework, among others, are telecommuting, working from home, and remote work (Pabilonia & Vernon, 2021). Telework was first used in the report at the University of Southern California by Niles in 1974 with telecommuting, which refers to a project to reduce traffic density during rush hours (Mungkasa, 2020).

According to Gądecki et al. (2018) (Dua, 2020), there are three dimensions of the implementation of telework (Dua, 2020).

1. Space. Transformation or changes in the personal environment space (house) as a place to realize hobbies and a place for self-expression enter the public sphere.
2. Time. Using personal space for workspace leads to conflict with two different time systems: Cyclic time (personal problems) and linear time (professional work), which means resulting rhythms overlap.
3. Social roles. Important to clearly distinguish between teleworkers and private time roles.

According to Maria Kurland and Bailey (1999) (Dua, 2020), there are four categories of telework:

1. Home-based telecommuting. Usually, employees work at home, but the basis is still at the main office.
2. Satellite office. The satellite office is in a suitable and comfortable place to reduce commuting time to the central office. A company or employer usually provides satellite offices.
3. A neighborhood work center. Like a satellite office, the difference is that a neighborhood work center can accommodate more than one company team member. Employees who need to work and collaborate are arranged in a workplace environment according to their needs so that employees can maximize their time at work.
4. Mobile worker. Employees work from various places, like homes, cars, airplanes, and hotels.

Flexitime is a work schedule regulated by employees and employers to benefit both parties (Khateeb, 2021). In Mungkasa (2020), There are three kinds of flexitime, which are

1. Fixed working hours. Employees are free to choose a work session every day according to company regulation as long it fulfills the number of working hours. For example, the company determines that the session employees

can work from 08.00-16.00 or 10.00-18.00. employees can choose from one of the sessions as long they meet the required number of working hours, for example, 40 hours per week.

2. Flexible working hours. Employees can work freely, and working hours cannot be the same every day as long they meet the requirements of the number of working hours. For example, on Monday employees can work from 11.00-17.00, Tuesday work from 13.00-08.00, the schedule is determined by itself, as long they can meet 40 hours/week.
3. Variable working hours. Employees must be present at the office at a particular time; after that, they can set their working time and place for work until they meet the requirements for the number of working hours. For example, a team member on Monday and Tuesday must come to the office from Wednesday until Friday, and they can work telework as long it meets the total working hours of 40 hours/week.

In Tamunomiebi & Oyibo 2020, according to Kossek et al. (2013), work-life balance is satisfaction and perceptions of success in meeting work and non-work role demands, low levels of conflict among roles, and opportunity for inter-role enrichment. There are three dimensions of work-life balance, according to McDONALD (2005)

1. Time balance. Refers to time that an individual or employee gives to his work or personal affairs. Personal affair is not only for the family but also for hobbies or leisure. The balance of time of employees shows that although employees take time for personal life, this will not reduce professional time to do their job.
2. Involvement balance. Refers to the psychological involvement and commitment of an individual carrying out work or things outside the job. Capacity for involvement in quality activities undertaken by employees, such as being physically and emotionally involved; carrying out work, family, and social activities, can support achieving a great work-life balance.
3. Satisfaction Balance. Satisfaction balance refers to individual satisfaction with work life and personal life. Satisfaction will arise when employees feel good enough to accommodate work and personal needs. It can know from the relationship with the surrounding environment, friends, family, and coworkers, as well as the completion of the quality and quantity of work.

Previous research on the effect of telework on work-life balance by Maria Helena Carolinda Dua dan Hyronimus (2020) with the title "The Impact of Work from Home on Work-Life Balance of Women Workers at Ende City." This research uses the quantitative method. The results show that work from home had a positive effect of 67.5% on the work-life balance of female workers at Ende City. The positive effect is fulfilling the quality of family and personal life, which makes female workers more motivated to work. However, there is also a negative influence from work from homes, such as creating a dual role conflict for women workers, between acting as housewives and workers or employees. It can cause stress because these roles must carry out simultaneously. This conflict occurs because women workers cannot balance work and family life.

### **3. Methods**

The research method used is descriptive quantitative. The problem formulation used is an associative problem formulation, which is a problem formulation that asks about the relationship between telework (independent) and work-life balance (dependent) variables.

This study focuses on employees in Japan who implemented a telework system during the Covid-19 pandemic. There are three steps in this research.

Step 1: start the research, which is determining research variables, conducting a literature review, and making a hypothesis. The independent in this research is telework (X), and the dependent variable is work-life balance (Y). From the literature review, it found that the research hypothesis is that telework had a positive and significant effect on the work-life balance of employees in Japan during pandemic Covid-19.

Step 2: Collect the data, which starts by determining the sample, making questionnaire statements and questions, and last, sharing the questionnaire with employees in Japan. The type of sampling technique is nonprobability sampling which is quota sampling. There were data from 50 respondents, but only 31 met the criteria. So, the data analysis only used data from 31 respondents. Statement and questions of the telework variable using the indicator by Gądecki et al., 2018, which consists of space, time, and social roles, and for the indicator of the work-life balance variable using the theory from Mc Donald 2005 which consists of time balance, involvement balance, satisfaction balance.

Questionnaires consist of a Likert scale and open questions. Likert scale use number 1-5, which is one does strongly not agree (まったく同意できない), and five is strongly agreed (非常に同意できる). The questionnaire uses the Japanese language because the target is employees in Japan that work use telework systems.

Step 3: Analyze the collected data from the results of the questionnaire. The data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistic 28.0. The tests included validity and reliability tests on questionnaire items, normality test and linearity tests, as a condition for parametric tests, correlation tests, and simple linear regression test.

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1 Descriptive Analysis

There were data from 50 respondents, but only 31 met the criteria. So, the data analysis only used data from 31 respondents. There is the result of descriptive data. (Table 1)

Table 1. Descriptive Variable of Telework

No	Statement	STS 1	TS 2	N 3	S 4	SS 5	Fre que ncy	Score	Mean
<b>Space</b>									
1	コロナ禍の間に自宅で働く		2	5	12	12	31	127	4.1
3	コロナ禍の間に事務所と自宅以外にほかの場所で働く。	7	4	11	7	2	31	86	2.8
4	自宅は事務所よりもとよい助長作業環境。	4	8	7	8	4	31	93	3.0
Space Indicator's Mean								102	3
<b>Time</b>									
6	直接事務所で仕事のスケジュールとテレワークで仕事のスケジュールは違うことがない。	4	8	8	7	4	31	92	3.0
7	テレワークでスケジュールは柔軟だ。		6	7	14	4	31	109	3.5
8	テレワークで色々なこと「仕事のこととか個人的活動」が一度にできる。	2	2	8	9	10	31	116	3.7
12	テレワークでプライベート名時間を増やす。	1	2	7	17	4	31	114	3.7
13	テレワークで働く時間を不規則にします。	5	5	9	11	1	31	91	2.9
Time Indicator's Mean								104	3
<b>Social Roles</b>									
14	職位に応じて ICT で事務を完了できる。	2	2	10	11	6	31	110	3.5

	<b>Total Mean</b>	104	3.4
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In Table 1, the items on the telework variable in the indicators of space-time and social roles have a good application. The overall mean, which is the result of 31 respondents' answers, shows that the total mean (average) of the telework variable score is 104, and the overall mean of the total average is 3.4

Table.2 Descriptive Variable of Work-life Balance

No	Pernyataan	STS 1	TS 2	N 3	S 4	SS 5	Fre que ncy	Score	Me an
<b>Time Balance</b>									
1	弊社は良い労働時間の規制が整っている。		1	10	15	5	31	117	3.8
2	プライベート生活のために十分な時間がある。	1	3	6	16	5	31	114	3.7
3	働く時間とプライベート時間をよい分けられる。		2	11	13	5	31	114	3.7
Time balance Indicator's Mean								115	4
<b>Involvement Balance</b>									
4	プライベートの問題があるのに職位に応じて事務を完了できる。	1	4	11	9	6	31	108	3.5
5	仕事中は仕事以外のことを気にせず集中できる。	2	5	5	14	5	31	108	3.5
6	仕事の活度とプライベート活動は互いに支え合っている。	1	4	8	14	4	31	109	3.5
Involvement Balance Indicator's Mean								108	3
<b>Satisfaction Balance</b>									
7	仕事に満足している。			11	13	7	31	120	3.9
8	仕事の職位に満足している。	1	3	10	8	9	31	114	3.7
9	プライベートな生活に幸せ感じしている。		3	9	13	6	31	115	3.7
10	同僚の期待に応えられる。		1	16	11	3	31	109	3.5
Satisfaction balance Indicator's Mean								115	4
<b>Total Mean</b>								112.6	3.6

Based on Table 2, the work-life balance variable items on the time balance, involvement balance, and satisfaction balance indicators have a good application. The overall mean, the result of the 31 respondents' answers, shows that the total mean (average) of the work-life balance variable scores is 112.6, and the overall mean 3.6.

#### 4.2. Validity Test and Reliability Test

Table 3 Telework Variable Validity Test Results

Telework Indicator	Item	r Count	r table	Description
Space	T.1	0.514	$\geq 0.355$	Valid
	T.2	0.307	$\leq 0.355$	Invalid
	T.3	0.471	$\geq 0.355$	Valid
	T.4	0.476	$\geq 0.355$	Valid
	T.5	0.348	$\leq 0.355$	Invalid
Time	T.6	0.543	$\geq 0.355$	Valid
	T.7	0.43	$\geq 0.355$	Valid
	T.8	0.401	$\geq 0.355$	Valid
	T.9	0.203	$\leq 0.355$	Invalid
	T.10	0.322	$\leq 0.355$	Invalid
	T.11	0.337	$\leq 0.355$	Invalid
	T.12	0.417	$\geq 0.355$	Valid
	T.13	0.598	$\geq 0.355$	Valid
Persian	T.14	0.441	$\geq 0.355$	Valid
	T.15	0.275	$\leq 0.355$	Invalid

Based on Table 3 shows that in the first validity test on the telework variable items, there are T.2, T.5, T.9, T.10, T.11, and T.15, the results of the validity test of r count are smaller than r table so that the item is declared invalid. The invalid statement must eliminate. After eliminating the items, another validity test was carried out on the valid items, there are T.1, T.3, T.4, T.6, T.7, Q.8, Q.12, Q.13, and Q.14, just to make sure again that the question items are valid. The results obtained state that the nine items on the telework are valid.

Table 4 Work-Life Balance Variable Validity Test Results

Work-life Balance Indicator	Item	r Count	r table	Description
Time Balance (Keseimbangan waktu)	W.1	0.591	$\geq 0.355$	Valid
	W.2	0.822	$\geq 0.355$	Valid
	W.3	0.844	$\geq 0.355$	Valid
Involvement Balance	W.4	0.645	$\geq 0.355$	Valid
	W.5	0.63	$\geq 0.355$	Valid
	W.6	0.736	$\geq 0.355$	Valid
Satisfaction Balance	W.7	0.696	$\geq 0.355$	Valid
	W.8	0.704	$\geq 0.355$	Valid
	W.9	0.709	$\geq 0.355$	Valid
	W.10	0.615	$\geq 0.355$	Valid

Based on Table 4, the validity tests on all work-life balance variable items, there are W.1, W.2, W.3, W.4, W.5, W.6, W.7, W.8, W.9, and W.10. All the item's value is greater than the value of r table, so the statement of the item on the work-life balance variable is valid. Therefore, the validity test on the work-life balance variable only do es it once.

Table 5 Telework and Work-Life Balance Reliability Test

Variable	Reliability Statistics			Description
	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items	Standard Reliability	
Telework	0.635	9	>0.6	Reliable
Work-Life Balance	0.879	10	>0.6	Reliable

Based on Table 5, the results of the reliability test on the telework variable (X) show that the value of Cronbach's Alpha for the telework variable (X) is  $0.635 > 0.6$ , so the statement of data on the telework variable is reliable, and the data is feasible to use in research. The results of the reliability test on the work-life balance variable (Y) show that the Cronbach's Alpha value on the work-life balance variable (Y) is  $0.879 > 0.6$ , so so the statement of the data on the work-life balance variable is reliable and feasible for use in research.

### 4.3. Normality Test and Linearity Test

The normality test aims to test whether, in the regression model, telework and work-life balance variables have values that are normally distributed or not. For the normality test, the Shapiro Wilk test is used to detect the normality of the data in the test. The Shapiro-Wilk test was conducted using IBM SPSS 28.0.

Table 6 Result of Normality Test of Telework Variable Residual Value and Work-Life Balance

Tests of Normality						
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	Df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Unstandardized Residual	0.096	31	.200*	0.982	31	0.853
*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.						
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction						

In Table 6, the residual significance value of the two variables in the Shapiro-Wilk test is greater than 0.05, which is 0.853. So, it can be concluded that 0.853 is greater than 0.05, so the residual value of the data in the study is normally distributed.

The linearity test was used to determine the form of the relationship between the telework variable and the linear work-life balance variable or not. In this study, the linearity test was used as a requirement to enter the simple linear regression test stage.(Table 7)

Table 7 Result of Linearity Test

ANOVA Table							
			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
WLB * Tele	Between Groups	(Combined)	422.774	14	30.198	0.573	0.849
		Linearity	200.501	1	200.501	3.807	0.069
		Deviation from Linearity	222.273	13	17.098	0.325	0.977
	Within Groups		842.581	16	52.661		
	Total		1265.355	30			

In the table, the calculated F of the variable is 0.325. Meanwhile, to find out the F table, it is used (deviation from linearity; df within a group) / (13.16) so that it is found that the F table in this study is seen from column 13 and row 16 so that the F table is 2.40. the conclusion is that  $0.325 < 2.40$ , so the data state that there is a linear relationship between the telework variable and the work-life balance variable.

### 4.4 Correlations Test and Simple Linear

#### Regression Test

The product-moment correlation test and simple linear regression test were carried out as a requirement to test the research hypothesis. The correlation test aims to determine the direction and level of closeness of the relationship between variables expressed by the correlation coefficient (r). (Table 8)

Table 8 Result of Pearson Correlations Product Moment Test

Correlations			
		Tele	WLB
Tele	Pearson Correlation	1	0,398
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.027
	N	31	31
WLB	Pearson Correlation	0.398	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.027	
	N	31	31
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).			

From the test results obtained, it can be seen in table 8 that the significance value of the telework and work-life balance variables is 0.027. If based on decision-making, the significance value of 0.027 is smaller than 0.05, so the conclusion is the variables are correlated. In Pearson Correlation, it can also be seen the level of relationship between variables, namely the degree of relationship guidelines.

- If the Pearson Correlation value is 0.00-0.20, then there is no correlation
- If the Pearson Correlation value is 0.21-0.40, then the correlation is weak
- If the Pearson Correlation value is 0.41-0.60, then the correlation is
- If the Pearson Correlation value is 0.61-0.80, then the correlation is strong
- If the Pearson Correlation value is 0.81-1, then the correlation is perfect

The level of relationship between telework and work-life balance is shown in table 4.10 in the Pearson Correlation line, which is 0.389; when viewed in the guideline, the degree of relationship is categorized as weak. The direction of the relationship can also be seen in the Pearson Correlation value, which is positive. So, it can be concluded that telework is positively related to work-life balance, but the correlation is weak.

A simple linear regression test was conducted to test whether there was a significant effect between the telework variable and the work-life balance variable. (Table 9)

Table 9 Result of Simple Linear Regression Test

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	20.946	6.697		3.128	0.004
	Telework	0.510	0.218	0.398	2.337	0.027
a. Dependent Variable: WLB						

Based on Table 4.10, it is known that the constant (a) value is 20.946 and the telework value (b/ regression coefficient) is 0.510, so the regression equation is

$$Y = a + bX$$

$$Y = 20,946 + 0,510X$$

The meaning of the equation is that if the value of X or the value of telework is equal to zero, then the value of the Y variable or work-life balance is 20,946. Then if the X variable, namely telework, has an increase of one unit, then the Y variable will increase by 0.510 or 51%. The regression coefficient X is positive, so it can be said that the direction of the influence of the X variable (telework) on the Y variable (work-life balance) is positive.

Based on the t value in table 4.11, the t value of 2.337 is also obtained. If the t count is greater than the t table, telework (X) influences work-life balance (Y). For the value of the t table, the following formula is used:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{t table} &= (a/2; n-k-1) \\ &= (0,05/2; 31-2-1) \\ &= (0,025; 28) \end{aligned}$$



The results of the t table obtained show that we can see the value of the t table in column number 0.025 and row 28. That is, the t table has a value of 2.048. Therefore, it can be stated that the t-count is 2.337 greater than the t-table, which is 2.048, so it can be concluded that the variable X (telework) influences the variable Y (work-life balance).

#### **4.5 Discussion of the Effect of Telework on Employee's Work-Life Balance**

Based on the correlation test, the X variable, telework, and the Y variable can influence each other. This can be seen from the correlation significance value of less than 0.05, namely  $0.027 < 0.05$ , so the statement of the two variables is correlated, although when viewed from the Pearson Correlation value of 0.389, the correlation is still weak but positive. This is confirmed again by performing a t-test on a simple linear regression test. The t-test also shows that the independent variable, namely telework, affects work-life balance, as seen from t count > from t table, namely  $2,337 > 2,048$ . The results of the above study indicate that H0 is accepted. That is, telework positively affects the work-life balance of employees in Japan. However, although the relationship between telework and work-life balance is positive, the correlation between the two variables is weak.

The positive effect means that telework, which refers to employees' space, time, and social roles, can help employees balance time, role involvement, and satisfaction in their personal lives and their work life in Japan. This study's weak correlation between telework and work-life balance also comes from individual factors. That statement can be proven from several open-ended questions the author distributed on the questionnaire. Of the 31 respondents, 20 said it was difficult to manage time when working telework, and only 11 did not. Here are some reasons why employees in Japan find it difficult to manage time.

1. 家にいれば家族を無視するわけにはいかない。 (At home, can't ignore family)
2. 家庭に小さい子どもがいれば、なかなか難しいと思います。 (It's hard when there are children at home)
3. 集中し過ぎて、時には残業してしまうから、夜遅くまで働いてプライベートのことをやる時間もなくなった。 (Working too focused and sometimes working until late at night, making no personal time)
4. 無意識に夜遅くまで仕事をするため。 (Unknowingly working late into the night)
5. 自宅では誘惑が多すぎるから。 (Too many distractions at home)

These reasons can be summarized into several factors of distraction when working telework from home; there are family, motivation, and forgetting time due to the absence of boundaries between work and place of residence.

However, employees are also aware that telework can improve work-life balance. This is because the Japanese government, before the Covid-19 pandemic, had been campaigning for telework for the Japanese people to reduce the employment problems that occurred in Japan (Ono, 2022).

Judging from the open questions, out of 31 people, who agree with the statement, 19 respondents, and 12 others do not agree. The reasons that telework can improve work-life balance are.

1. 通勤時間や人間関係について手間を省くことができるから。 (Can save time and energy on commuting)
2. 期待感のプレッシャーからストレスが減る。 (Reduce stress due to pressure from expectations)
3. 時間を有効に使える。 (Can use time effectively)

Based on the reasons above, it can be said that most of the time for commuting to and from the office can be reduced and allocated to work time so that time can be used effectively and efficiently. Then when working, the pressure and stress that is felt when working from the office are also reduced. So, this is good for improving the quality of health and life.

The awareness of employees in Japan toward work-life balance can also be seen in their opinion regarding the meaning of work-life balance. Here are some opinions according to Japanese employees. Regarding the meaning of work-life balance as follows:

1. 休みが取りやすく、プライベートの時間に仕事の連絡がない事、仕事とプライベートが干渉しない事が良いバランスだと思う。(Can take breaks easily, there is no contact with work during personal time, and work and personal affairs do not interfere with each other)
2. 仕事の時間はちゃんとして、残業なるべくすくない。終わらせる仕事なら早めに終わらせる。休みの時はちゃんと休みをする。(Work well on time, work overtime as little as possible. If a job needs to be done, finish it as soon as possible. During breaks, rest well).
3. 義務を果たして自分の生活も集中する。(Fulfill your obligations and focus on your own life.)
4. 仕事と人生に感謝しなさい。(Grateful for work and life)

The perception of employees in Japan above regarding the notion of work-life balance is also close to the notion of work-life balance; according to Kossek, Lirio, and Valcour (2013) (Tamunomiebi & Oyibo, 2020), there are satisfaction and perceptions of success in meeting work and non-work demands, the low conflict between roles and opportunities for increased achievement between roles. With the evidence above, it can be said that employees in Japan can understand and realize the importance of work-life balance.

The implementation of telework during the Covid-19 pandemic makes employees who have never worked telework before must be willing to adapt. In an open-ended question, it was also asked whether there were other reasons for implementing telework, apart from Covid-19. Of 31 respondents, 20 answered no, and 11 answered yes. Most of the 20 respondents said there was no specific reason other than Covid-19, and there was also an opinion that it depended on the type of work. For 11 people who have reasons other than Covid-19, namely because of family and living far from work. This means that most employees will not implement telework if there is no Covid-19 pandemic.

The lack of interest in implementing telework can occur when associated with Japanese culture because business culture has been done face-to-face for centuries. But on the other hand, such to the research results that have been obtained, telework also has a positive and significant impact on work-life balance because it can reduce pressure and stress and increase productivity and time efficiency. This is also conveyed by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (2020) (Ono, 2022) that telework has a significant influence and role in part of work style reform because it can improve the quality of work-life balance and increase productivity and secure workforce in the workplace. During a population decline phenomenon in Japan. So even though the implementation of telework is still limited due to Covid-19, in the future, it can be one of the factors that can improve the work-life balance of employees in Japan.

## **5. Conclusion**

Research shows that the relationship between telework and work-life balance among employees in Japan during the Covid-19 pandemic has a significant and positive relationship, although the correlation is weak. Every increase in the implementation of telework will increase the level of work-life balance for employees in Japan.

The weak correlation between telework and work-life balance is caused by factors that cause distraction, namely family, motivation, and forgetting time due to the absence of boundaries between work and place of residence. However, telework indeed has a significant and positive effect. This is because telework can help reduce travel hours, reduce long working hours, reduce stress levels, work pressure, and make time more productive and effective so that the effect on the work-life balance of employees working in Japan also increases.

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