

Exploring the Impact of Flexible Work Schedules and Task Complexity on Employee Outcomes: a JD-R Model Perspective

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Preface

The thesis presented here, titled “Exploring the Impact of Flexible Work Schedules and Task Complexity on Employee Outcomes: a JD-R Model Perspective,” meets the graduation requirements for the Master’s program in Strategic Management at Tilburg University. I conducted this research and wrote the thesis from August 2024 to January 2025.

Throughout this process, I learned how to manage strict deadlines, work effectively under time pressure, and utilize survey-based methods to generate and analyze empirical data. These experiences have enriched me personally and professionally, sharpening my research skills and improving my understanding of project management and academic inquiry.

I extend my gratitude to my supervisor, John Li, for the exceptional guidance throughout the project. I am also thankful to the organizations in the Netherlands that granted me access to their employees for survey participation, thereby enabling the essential data collection for my research. Finally, I wish to thank my girlfriend, family, and friends, whose encouragement and understanding have been a constant source of motivation as I completed this final chapter of my academic journey.

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Abstract

This thesis investigates how flexible work schedules affect employee engagement, task performance, creativity, and psychological well-being, and whether task complexity moderates these relationships. Grounded in the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model, the study posits that flexibility serves as a resource, boosting motivational and health-related outcomes, whereas task complexity functions as a demand that may either enhance or hinder these benefits.

Data were collected via a cross-sectional survey of 126 employees across multiple industries in the Netherlands. The participants had access to some form of flexible work arrangements. Validated instruments were employed to measure perceived schedule flexibility, task complexity, and the four employee outcomes. Subsequently, a Structural Equation Model (SEM) was utilized to test the hypothesized direct and moderating effects.

Results indicate that flexible schedules significantly increase employee engagement and psychological well-being, but do not significantly improve task performance or creativity. While task complexity shows a positive association with engagement and creativity, it does not weaken or strengthen the effects of flexible work schedules in this sample. These findings underline the significance of flexible arrangements for promoting motivation and mental health. Yet, they suggest that additional managerial support – such as real-time collaboration tools or structured feedback – may be necessary to translate flexibility into higher performance or innovation, aligning with the JD-R Model's emphasis on resources and demands.

Keywords: Flexible work schedules, task complexity, employee outcomes, JD-R Model

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1 Introduction

1.1 Problem Indication

The impact of flexible work schedules has become a central theme in organizational research, particularly in the context of evolving work environments. This paper aims to fill the gap in understanding how task complexity moderates the impacts of flexible work schedules on employee outcomes, such as engagement, performance, creativity, and well-being, thereby contributing to the literature by providing insights into the conditions under which flexible work arrangements are most effective. Traditionally, the forty-hour, five-day workweek has been the standard across industries. However, shifts in work culture, technological improvements, and a growing emphasis on employee well-being have prompted organizations to reevaluate traditional work schedules (Bolino et al., 2020). These changing dynamics have been further accelerated by global disruptions such as the COVID-19 pandemic, which pushed employers and employees alike to adopt more flexible patterns of work, including telecommuting and hybrid office models (Wang et al., 2020). In some sectors – such as technology, consulting, or creative industries – flexible work was already on the rise. However, the pandemic context highlighted the potential for remote and flexible work to be sustained long-term in certain companies within these industries, depending on their specific circumstances and adaptability.

Historically, the modern forty-hour, five-day workweek owes much to labor movements in the early twentieth century, particularly when manufacturers like Ford Motor Company famously reduced hours to improve productivity and worker conditions (Meyer, 1981). Over time, this schedule became a global norm embedded in labor regulations across numerous countries. However, the emergence of email, instant messaging, and collaborative software in the late twentieth century raised questions about whether a rigid work structure is suitable for knowledge-based economies (Golden, 2012). The COVID-19 pandemic further spotlighted this debate as organizations were forced to experiment with remote and flexible scheduling at scale (Wang et al., 2020). These historical shifts illustrate how societal and technological forces have redefined what is considered “standard” in work hours, thereby paving the way for current debates about the sustainability of flexible arrangements as a “new normal.”

In parallel with the shift to more flexible schedules, technological advancements and globalization have also played a significant role in reshaping jobs, further influencing the adoption and effectiveness of flexible work arrangements (Autor, 2015). Remote communication platforms, digital collaboration tools, and cloud-based project management systems now allow employees to engage in complex tasks without the constraint of physical proximity (Wang et al., 2020). This evolution extends beyond knowledge-based firms: Even traditional manufacturing sectors have begun experimenting with partial flexibility to reduce commuting times and accommodate varying peak productivity hours (Sekhar & Patwardhan,

2021). As a result, researchers are increasingly interested in mapping out not just whether these flexible systems work, but how and when they are most beneficial. Some argue that the future of work will inevitably rely on fluid, adaptable schedules, prompting policymakers to question whether current labor regulations remain fit for purpose (Burke, 2022). Such policy discussions highlight the timeliness of examining task complexity's role in flexible work contexts.

Organizations are increasingly investigating the potential of flexible work schedules to enhance both operational effectiveness and employee satisfaction; a theme that will be explored in this paper through the lens of task complexity. For example, recent statistics indicate that about half of Dutch workers periodically work from home, reflecting the widespread acceptance of at least partial flexibility in schedules (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 2024; Peters & Van Der Lippe, 2007). Flexible work schedules, which include compressed workweeks, flextime, telecommuting, and four-day workweeks, have become increasingly popular as alternatives that offer greater autonomy and promise improvements in both employee satisfaction and organizational performance (Allen et al., 2013; Angelici & Profeta, 2024; Voydanoff, 2005; Pierce & Dunham, 1992). Research indicates that flexible work arrangements can improve employee engagement, reduce burnout, and strengthen job commitment by enabling better work-life balance (Baltes et al., 1999; Allen et al., 2013). Under the right conditions, such autonomy can also boost productivity and innovation by letting individuals work when they are most productive (Chung & van der Lippe, 2020).

Notably, approaches to flexible work differ across national contexts. In the Netherlands, labor policies often encourage part-time schedules and work-life integration, while in countries like the United States, flexible work tends to be negotiated at the organizational or individual level (Soga et al., 2022). Scandinavia offers further contrasts, with Sweden experimenting with six-hour workdays in some municipalities. Such differences highlight how cultural values and government regulations can either facilitate or constrain the adoption of flexible schedules, affecting employee outcomes in distinct ways (Barck-Holst et al., 2015). Positioning the Dutch experience within this international context underscores why it provides an especially interesting case for studying the interaction between task complexity and flexible scheduling.

Cross-national research on flexible work highlights various successful strategies and potential pitfalls. For instance, in Japan, where an overwork culture remains prevalent, flexible scheduling reforms have faced resistance from organizations committed to traditional hierarchical structures (Ono, 2022). Conversely, remote work policies in Australia have increased rapidly, driven by widespread broadband access and employer incentives (Olawale et al., 2024). Meanwhile, countries across the European Union have implemented varying regulations for teleworking and flextime, creating a mosaic of strategies that either promote or

restrict such arrangements (Eurofound, 2015; Bailey & Kurland, 2002; Sewell & Taskin, 2015). Exploring the Dutch example in this mosaic can offer insights into whether moderate government intervention – alongside a generally high standard of technological infrastructure – can optimize flexible schedules in a way that benefits both employees and employers, especially in complex task settings.

However, while flexible work schedules offer many potential benefits, these positive outcomes are neither guaranteed nor universal. In some cases, flexible work can blur boundaries between professional and personal life, leading to stress or diminished focus (Ashforth et al., 2000; Hunter et al., 2017). Moreover, certain roles or activities may require immediate feedback, structured collaboration, and real-time communication (Delaney & Casey, 2021), which can be challenging when employees set their own schedules. These complexities underscore that flexible work's effectiveness may depend on contextual factors such as job type, individual preferences, and organizational culture (Kossek et al., 2011; Wang et al., 2020). Even within the same organization, one department may thrive under high levels of flexibility, whereas another finds the lack of routine structure detrimental to team synergy.

Building on the discussion of flexible work schedules, task complexity emerges as an especially critical but less explored factor. It significantly impacts the success of these arrangements by influencing the need for synchronous collaboration and real-time input, which are often challenging to achieve in flexible work settings. As jobs become more intricate, demanding diverse skills, significant cognitive effort, and complex decision-making (Wood, 1986), the interplay between flexibility and complexity grows increasingly important. Highly complex tasks often necessitate synchronous collaboration and instant input from colleagues, conditions that may be difficult to achieve under flexible arrangements (Delaney & Casey, 2021). Understanding how task complexity moderates the relationship between flexible work schedules and key outcomes, including engagement, task performance, creativity, and psychological well-being, is thus essential for refining work policies and maximizing both employee flourishing and organizational success. A detailed exploration of this relationship can help organizations determine when a flexible schedule is genuinely advantageous and when it must be paired with additional support or technology to minimize collaboration barriers. Properly designed, flexibility can enable employees to manage work demands on their own terms while maintaining essential real-time connections for tasks that require it. In contrast, an ill-fitting arrangement risks increasing stress, coordination failures, or diminished clarity about task requirements.

1.2 Academic and Managerial Relevance

From an academic perspective, examining how task complexity interacts with flexible work schedules advances the literature rooted in the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model,

which explores how job demands and resources affect employee well-being and performance (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). While flexible scheduling can be viewed as a job resource that potentially fosters engagement and well-being, the presence of complex tasks introduces demanding elements that may erode these benefits. Studying this nuanced interplay fills an important gap by revealing under which conditions flexibility either enhances or fails to improve performance, creativity, and psychological health. Extant literature often focuses on broad outcomes – such as overall satisfaction or turnover intentions – without delving deeply into how particular job characteristics, like complexity, modulate these effects (Kelliher & Anderson, 2010). By examining this aspect, the study can refine theoretical models to better capture the interplay of autonomy and cognitive demands.

Incorporating task complexity as a moderating factor offers a more refined understanding of when and why flexible work schedules succeed or fail. This builds upon the JD-R framework, which acknowledges that job demands and resources operate in tandem. By exploring complexity's influence, this research shows the boundary conditions that determine whether flexible arrangements lead to significant improvements in engagement and effectiveness or merely complicate work processes. It also connects with broader theories on organizational behavior that highlight how role clarity, task interdependence, and cognitive load can affect employee motivation and outcomes (Van de Ven et al., 1976; Parker et al., 2003). From an academic standpoint, these theoretical expansions underscore the importance of situational contingencies and help unify findings across diverse research streams on job design and employee well-being.

From a managerial standpoint, these understandings can guide organizations as they adapt work policies for an evolving professional landscape. Understanding how complexity affects flexible schedules enables managers to customize work arrangements that meet the cognitive and collaborative needs of various roles. Such tailoring not only enhances employee engagement and reduces stress but also ensures that strategic outcomes like productivity, innovation, and high-quality performance are not compromised. Managers, by considering complexity, can offer targeted support – be it technological tools, structured feedback systems, or team-based coordination mechanisms – to ensure that flexible scheduling delivers on its promise of a more effective and fulfilling work experience. This might manifest as distinct “core collaboration hours” for complex roles requiring synchronous interaction, even if employees otherwise enjoy freedom in determining their work times.

1.3 Problem Statement and Research Questions

While flexible work schedules have been adopted to boost employee well-being and enhance organizational performance, the moderating role of task complexity in these processes remains unclear. High-complexity tasks often require substantial cognitive effort

and real-time coordination, which could accentuate or diminish the effectiveness of flexible arrangements. Addressing these gaps is crucial for professionals – such as HR managers, team leaders, and policymakers – who design and implement work policies in knowledge-intensive and service-oriented sectors where task complexity varies widely.

This study focuses on Dutch employees with access to flexible scheduling and uses the JD-R Model to analyze how these schedules affect engagement, performance, creativity, and well-being. The scope is limited to knowledge-intensive and service-oriented roles, where task complexity plays a significant role. In industries such as professional services, government, and technology, tasks can vary widely in their levels of complexity, generating unique demands that could accentuate or undercut the benefits of flexible scheduling.

The main research question, addressing the identified gap, is: How does task complexity moderate the relationship between flexible work schedules and employee outcomes, including engagement, task performance, creativity, and psychological well-being?

To address this overarching question, two sub-questions guide the investigation: (1) How do flexible work schedules individually influence employee engagement, task performance, creativity, and psychological well-being? (2) How does task complexity moderate the relationships between flexible work schedules and these outcomes?

Despite the widespread adoption of flexible work schedules to enhance employee well-being and productivity, their interaction with task complexity is still not well understood. This interaction may considerably impact employee engagement, task performance, creativity, and psychological well-being, potentially through mechanisms explained by the JD-R Model. By systematically investigating these mechanisms, the research aims to offer evidence-based recommendations that can help organizations create policies that are both flexible and sensitive to the complexities of different job roles.

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

The thesis is organized into five chapters. Chapter 2 reviews relevant literature and presents the theoretical framework, integrating the JD-R Model with insights on flexible work and task complexity while formulating hypotheses. Chapter 3 describes the research design, methodology, data collection, and analysis procedures. Chapter 4 reports the empirical findings and discusses whether the hypotheses are supported, focusing on both direct effects and interactive dynamics. Finally, Chapter 5 articulates the implications of these findings, underscores their theoretical and practical contributions, addresses limitations, and suggests avenues for future research.

2 Theory

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model has been widely used to explain how various job characteristics shape employee well-being and performance (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). In this model, job demands refer to specific challenges such as heavy workloads, tight deadlines, or emotionally taxing interactions that require sustained effort and can lead to strain if left unmanaged. By contrast, job resources enable employees to achieve work goals, maintain motivation, and recover from demands. When demands exceed resources, stress and fatigue can arise. In contrast, when resources sufficiently balance demands, employees are more likely to remain engaged, energized, and productive.

Within the JD-R Model, job resources like flexible scheduling activate a motivational process wherein employees gain autonomy and perceive increased organizational support (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). This process elevates engagement and can protect against burnout. Conversely, job demands – whether cognitive, emotional, or organizational – initiate a straining process that may deplete energy and reduce performance if not counterbalanced by sufficient resources (Bakker et al., 2010). Flexible scheduling, if effectively implemented, can thus help employees conserve and replenish crucial resources like time and mental energy. However, the effectiveness of flexible scheduling as a resource may diminish when task complexity increases, necessitating additional tools or managerial structures.

A key advantage of the JD-R Model lies in its adaptability across diverse work settings. Prior research has applied it to a wide range of roles, from healthcare professionals to high-tech knowledge workers, showcasing its flexibility in accounting for varying types of demands and resources. It also aligns conceptually with theories like Conservation of Resources (COR), which focuses on how individuals seek to obtain and defend valued resources against depletion (Hobfoll, 1989). By complementing these viewpoints, the JD-R Model provides a robust foundation for exploring the interplay between new or evolving job resources, such as flexible scheduling, and prominent job demands, including task complexity or time pressures.

Additionally, Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) may shed light on how employees respond to complexity under flexible arrangements, complementing the JD-R Model by providing insights into the relational dynamics at play. When the organization grants autonomy and resources for navigating complex tasks, employees may reciprocate with higher engagement or loyalty. Yet, if complexity overwhelms them due to insufficient support or clarity, the anticipated gains from flexible scheduling might never materialize. Hence, complexity can act as a lens through which employees judge whether the ‘deal’ – autonomy in exchange for performance – is fair and practical. This perspective complements the JD-R framework by underscoring that, beyond mere resource allocation, the relational and

reciprocal nature of workplace arrangements can influence how employees respond to challenging job demands.

Boundary Theory (Nippert-Eng, 1996) suggests that employees psychologically manage “home” and “work” domains through boundary-setting tactics, which is particularly relevant in the context of flexible work schedules that may blur these boundaries. Flexible schedules, while potentially beneficial, can blur these boundaries, making it more challenging for individuals to mentally detach from work (Derks et al., 2014). When tasks are complicated or require frequent synchronization with others, employees may find it difficult to maintain the mental boundaries needed for effective recovery (Weigelt et al., 2021). Accordingly, Boundary Theory reinforces the idea that flexible scheduling is not inherently positive or negative but highly contingent on the nature of the tasks and the level of boundary support provided by organizational norms (Kreiner et al., 2009).

In this study, flexible work schedules are positioned as a significant job resource. By giving employees greater autonomy over when and where to work, flexibility can help them adapt their job environment to match personal preferences, thereby reducing certain stressors (Allen et al., 2013). Yet, not all employees benefit equally from these arrangements, especially when tasks are complex or interdependent and require frequent coordination or synchronous decision-making (Wood, 1986; Campbell, 1988). Task complexity thus serves as a key job demand that may amplify or mitigate the positive effects of scheduling flexibility. Examining how these two factors jointly shape engagement, performance, creativity, and psychological well-being can highlight significant nuances in how organizations should design flexible work policies.

2.2 Conceptual Development

2.2.1 *Flexible Work Schedules*

Flexible work schedules differ from traditional timetables and encompass arrangements such as flextime, telecommuting, compressed workweeks, and four-day workweeks (Allen et al., 2013; Angelici & Profeta, 2020; Campbell, 2023). Flextime typically lets employees choose their start and end times within certain employer-defined constraints (Baltes et al., 1999). Telecommuting permits remote work through technology-based platforms (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007). Compressed workweeks involve the standard weekly hours condensed into fewer days, while four-day workweeks may reduce overall hours and cluster them into a shorter span (Chakraborty et al., 2022; Kossek & Lee, 2008; Calvasina & Boxx, 1975; Laker & Roulet, 2019).

These arrangements can grant employees considerable autonomy in determining their work patterns (Baltes et al., 1999), which has been linked to enhanced job satisfaction and

work-life balance (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007; Golden & Veiga, 2005; Rothbard et al., 2005). By reducing commutes or enabling better alignment with personal responsibilities, flexible schedules can increase employee well-being and possibly reduce the chance of burnout (Chung & van der Lippe, 2020). Organizations that adopt flexible work practices may benefit from lower turnover, better talent attraction, and reduced absenteeism, provided the roles in question are compatible with remote or flexible modes of operation (Scandura & Lankau, 1997; Baltes et al., 1999).

However, flexible work presents several challenges. Asynchronous communication can hamper timely collaboration or feedback (Cummings et al., 2009). Tasks that require in-person meetings, collaborative brainstorming, or projects requiring real-time decision-making may not benefit as much from these arrangements (Golden & Eddleston, 2020). Blurred lines between work and personal life can result in overwork, leading to more stress if employees lack clear boundaries or organizational support for disconnecting (Mazmanian et al., 2013; Hunter et al., 2017; Kurtessis et al., 2015). Managerial complexities also arise when supervisors need to monitor performance and ensure coordination among team members with varied schedules (Bartel et al., 2012; Gilson et al., 2014). Consequently, the degree to which flexible schedules yield positive outcomes depends on factors such as the nature of the work, the cultural support for flexibility, and the technological tools available (Kossek et al., 2011; Wang et al., 2020).

2.2.2 Task Complexity

Task complexity denotes the extent of cognitive processing, collaboration, and adaptability required to complete a work assignment (Wood, 1986; Campbell, 1988; Danner-Schröder & Ostermann, 2020). Some tasks may involve many distinct steps and large volumes of information, while others unfold under dynamic conditions that demand rapid updates and decision-making (Perrow, 1967). A task may also be complex if it calls for high degrees of interdependence, where multiple stakeholders or departments must coordinate efforts in real-time (D’Innocenzo et al., 2014). Additionally, the presence of uncertainty or ambiguity – when outcomes are not straightforward or protocols are unclear – can amplify perceived complexity (Campbell, 1988).

Although high complexity often increases employee workload and can induce stress (Crawford et al., 2010), it can also lead to significant learning opportunities (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Employees who tackle complex tasks can develop advanced skills and derive intrinsic satisfaction from overcoming intellectual challenges (Xie et al., 2019). On the other hand, tasks that are too complex, unsupported, or poorly structured may overwhelm employees, especially when resources such as training or collaborative mechanisms are absent (Bakker et al., 2010). In flexible work settings, complexity can pose additional

difficulties. Employees who require immediate feedback or guidance may struggle to obtain it promptly if schedules differ or if communication remains largely asynchronous (Golden & Raghuram, 2010; Delaney & Casey, 2021). Furthermore, remote work often calls for robust technological tools to handle complex assignments effectively (Wang et al., 2020). The interplay between task complexity and flexible schedules, therefore, depends on whether employees have adequate support, suitable task designs, and sufficient competencies to manage demanding tasks.

2.3 Hypotheses Development

This research examines how flexible work schedules might influence four critical employee outcomes – engagement, task performance, creativity, and psychological well-being – and whether task complexity moderates these effects. Engagement refers to a fulfilling, energetic state characterized by dedication to one's work (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Task performance denotes the effectiveness and efficiency with which employees meet job requirements (Singh, 2018). Creativity involves generating novel, useful ideas for workplace challenges (Anderson et al., 2014). Psychological well-being spans mental health aspects such as stress, emotional exhaustion, and overall life satisfaction (Ryff, 1989). By building on the JD-R Model, the following subsections theorize how flexible scheduling is expected to positively influence these outcomes and why task complexity may attenuate or change the strength of these effects.

2.3.1 Flexible Work Schedules and Employee Outcomes

Flexible Work Schedules and Engagement. Flexible schedules can bolster engagement by granting employees greater control over where and when they work. This autonomy has been linked to heightened motivation and a sense of ownership over one's tasks (Baltes et al., 1999). Employees are often more enthusiastic and psychologically present when they have the latitude to adapt their work hours to personal peaks in energy or to non-work responsibilities, reducing conflicts and distractions (Allen et al., 2013). Organizational support can further strengthen this effect, especially in cultures that normalize flexible arrangements and provide guidance on effective scheduling (Kossek et al., 2011). When employees sense that the organization values their work-life balance, they tend to reciprocate with deeper commitment and involvement (Perlow & Porter, 2009).

However, not everyone experiences enhanced engagement under flexible conditions. Some individuals may struggle with time management or self-discipline, which can hinder their ability to effectively use autonomy (O'Neill et al., 2009; Zhang et al., 2023). The absence of face-to-face interactions might also dampen a sense of team cohesion for some workers,

potentially reducing enthusiasm. However, on balance, empirical research predominantly shows that flexibility, as a form of increased autonomy, correlates with higher engagement levels, prompting the expectation that flexible schedules promote employee engagement.

Hypothesis 1a (H1a): Flexible work schedules are positively associated with employee engagement.

Flexible Work Schedules and Task Performance. The link between flexible arrangements and task performance partly arises from employees' ability to align their work hours with periods of maximum alertness and efficiency (Clark et al., 2014). By reducing rigid constraints, employees can schedule demanding tasks at times when they feel most productive, potentially improving the quality and speed of their work (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007). Reduced commuting or fewer office interruptions can also conserve energy for core tasks, fostering better performance (Bloom et al., 2015). However, this positive outcome requires that job roles be amenable to remote or flexible conditions with minimal need for constant synchronous collaboration. Where roles involve routine interpersonal tasks, on-site presence or overlapping schedules may be crucial for timely coordination (Bartel et al., 2012).

Despite these considerations, evidence indicates that employees who enjoy flexibility often self-report heightened task performance (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007). Ensuring adequate technological support and training can help employees optimize their flexible arrangements, preventing inefficiencies tied to isolation or miscommunication (Wang et al., 2020). Accordingly, many organizations find that well-implemented flexible schedules can lead to gains in productivity as long as the work itself does not mandate continuous direct interaction or immediate feedback channels.

Hypothesis 1b (H1b): Flexible work schedules are positively associated with task performance.

Flexible Work Schedules and Creativity. Creativity hinges on the generation of novel solutions and requires both cognitive freedom and the absence of stifling constraints (Amabile, 1988; Perry-Smith & Shalley, 2003). Flexible scheduling can facilitate uninterrupted periods, enabling employees to engage deeply with complex problems without frequent distractions (Shalley & Gilson, 2004; Shalley et al., 2000). When workers can choose to tackle creative tasks during their most mentally fertile hours, they are more likely to produce innovative ideas (McKay et al., 2021). Autonomy also fosters intrinsic motivation, a key component of creativity, as individuals feel more empowered to experiment and take creative risks (Zhou & Hoever, 2014).

However, flexible work alone does not guarantee creative output. Some employees may thrive in collaborative office environments where spontaneous brainstorming occurs.

Additionally, some organizations have structured processes that stimulate creativity through team-based design sessions or formal innovation programs (Amabile et al., 1996). In such cases, adding flexibility without complementary practices may not significantly enhance creativity (Tierney & Farmer, 2002). Nonetheless, empirical studies suggest that flexible work, combined with a supportive organizational culture, can encourage novel thinking.

Hypothesis 1c (H1c): Flexible work schedules are positively associated with creativity.

Flexible Work Schedules and Psychological Well-Being. Flexible arrangements frequently facilitate better work-life integration by allowing employees to schedule work around personal responsibilities, thereby reducing role conflicts and potential stressors (Byron, 2005; Chung & van der Lippe, 2020). Workers who control their schedules often report lower emotional exhaustion and higher life satisfaction, particularly if they can avoid rush-hour commutes or accommodate family needs (Allen et al., 2013). Greater autonomy can also mitigate some forms of burnout by allowing for breaks during naturally low-energy periods (Fenner & Renn, 2010; Demerouti et al., 2001; Wehrt et al., 2020). However, a lack of clear boundaries, such as working beyond standard hours or feeling perpetually “on call,” can reduce these benefits. This occurs when organizational norms do not promote healthy detachment from work (Kossek et al., 2012).

Overall, existing research links flexible work to positive well-being outcomes, including reduced job-related stress and improved mental health indicators (Berset et al., 2010). These patterns suggest that flexibility functions as a valuable resource, provided it is managed so as not to blur work-life boundaries excessively. The expectation, therefore, is that flexible schedules have a beneficial effect on employees' psychological well-being.

Hypothesis 1d (H1d): Flexible work schedules are positively associated with psychological well-being.

2.3.2 Moderating Role of Task Complexity

Task Complexity and Engagement. When work tasks involve considerable cognitive or collaborative demands, employees may find it more difficult to sustain enthusiasm and focus, even if they can determine their own schedules. While autonomy encourages motivation and enthusiasm by allowing individuals to work at times that suit their energy cycles, tasks such as collaborative projects or client-facing roles require direct and often synchronous feedback. Highly complex tasks – due to their intricacy or because multiple stakeholders need to coordinate – can diminish the motivational benefits of a flexible schedule if individuals spend significant time waiting for input, searching for resources, or troubleshooting issues in isolation.

Under these conditions, the absence of real-time support can erode the sense of progress that might otherwise fuel engagement (Meijman & Mulder, 1998; Delaney & Casey, 2021).

Furthermore, employees facing high complexity may experience mental fatigue that overshadows the benefits of self-directed work hours. In traditional settings, colleagues or supervisors can offer immediate guidance that helps maintain engagement by resolving challenges quickly (Van den Broeck et al., 2010). In more flexible or remote arrangements, delayed or fragmented communication can undercut the positive impact of autonomy by creating uncertainty about how to handle complex issues (Zhang et al., 2023). The net effect is that employees with very complicated tasks might feel less enthusiastic and less inclined to exhibit the vigor typically associated with engagement (Bakker et al., 2005; Xanthopoulou et al., 2007; Wang et al., 2020). Hence, while flexible work schedules should promote engagement in general, high task complexity is likely to weaken that positive association.

Hypothesis 2a (H2a): Task complexity moderates the positive relationship between flexible work schedules and employee engagement, such that the relationship is weaker when task complexity is high.

Task Complexity and Task Performance. Individuals benefit from flexible work schedules when they can adapt their work routines to align with personal productivity rhythms, reduce commuting times, or minimize office-related disruptions (Clark et al., 2014). These advantages often translate into higher self-rated performance for tasks requiring concentration or deep focus. However, some work requires constant collaboration or specialized expertise that must be accessed quickly; therefore, if tasks are complex enough to need frequent real-time coordination or spontaneous problem-solving among team members, flexible schedules complicate the synchronization of work. Employees could struggle to complete tasks efficiently if crucial contributors are unavailable or if essential decisions are continually deferred until overlapping work hours occur (LePine et al., 2005; Delaney & Royal, 2017).

In addition, high task complexity can place heavy cognitive demands on employees, who may find it difficult to organize or prioritize work effectively in a flexible setting unless they have strong self-regulation strategies. The freedom to work during self-chosen hours does not necessarily produce better performance if information must be pieced together from multiple sources or if employees must juggle numerous interdependent activities (Golden & Raghuram, 2009; Wehrt et al., 2022). Under high complexity, the potential performance gains from schedule autonomy can be reduced by delays and miscommunication. Additionally, the mental strain of managing complex tasks without immediate face-to-face collaboration can hinder effectiveness (Ren & Hamann, 2015; Karasek, 1979). Consequently, while flexible work schedules can positively influence performance in many roles, their effect is likely to be less pronounced when task complexity escalates.

Hypothesis 2b (H2b): Task complexity moderates the positive relationship between flexible work schedules and task performance, such that the relationship is weaker when task complexity is high.

Task Complexity and Creativity. Autonomy over work hours and locations can foster creativity by providing the cognitive and temporal space necessary for exploration and deep reflection (Amabile, 1988; Shalley & Gilson, 2009). Yet, the advantages of flexible arrangements are undermined by excessive task complexity, which strains cognitive resources to the point that innovative thinking becomes more difficult (Ohly & Fritz, 2009). Tasks with numerous moving parts or considerable uncertainty can overload employees, reducing their ability to experiment freely with new ideas or solutions (Zhou & George, 2001).

This tension becomes particularly pronounced when complex tasks also require extensive collaboration. While some creative endeavors flourish under autonomy, others thrive on immediate team input and spontaneous exchanges, scenarios that may be harder to sustain in flexible or remote contexts (Baer & Oldham, 2006). If employees must wait for colleagues' input on detailed or rapidly changing tasks, the asynchronous nature of flexible schedules may discourage the fluid idea-sharing pivotal for creativity (Zhang & Bartol, 2010). Consequently, the expected positive link between flexible schedules and creativity becomes less robust when employees face intricate, demanding assignments that strain cognitive and collaborative resources.

Hypothesis 2c (H2c): Task complexity moderates the positive relationship between flexible work schedules and creativity, such that the relationship is weaker when task complexity is high.

Task Complexity and Psychological Well-Being. Flexible work arrangements can promote well-being by easing work-life conflicts and enabling employees to tailor schedules to their personal rhythms (Allen et al., 2013; Chung & van der Lippe, 2020). However, high task complexity can reduce these well-being benefits if employees struggle with demanding assignments without timely feedback or sufficient resources (Meijman & Mulder, 1998). In such cases, scheduling freedom may not alleviate the increased stress caused by unclear or rapidly changing tasks (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2014).

When roles involve substantial complexity, employees risk feeling overwhelmed if critical support structures, such as comprehensive training or peer collaboration networks, are not readily accessible (Cangiano et al., 2018). The stress associated with complex roles might overshadow the relief typically offered by flexible scheduling, particularly if individuals feel compelled to work extended hours to stay afloat (Britt et al., 2016). Hence, while flexible work

can foster better mental health for many, high complexity places notable constraints on that benefit and may diminish its impact on well-being.

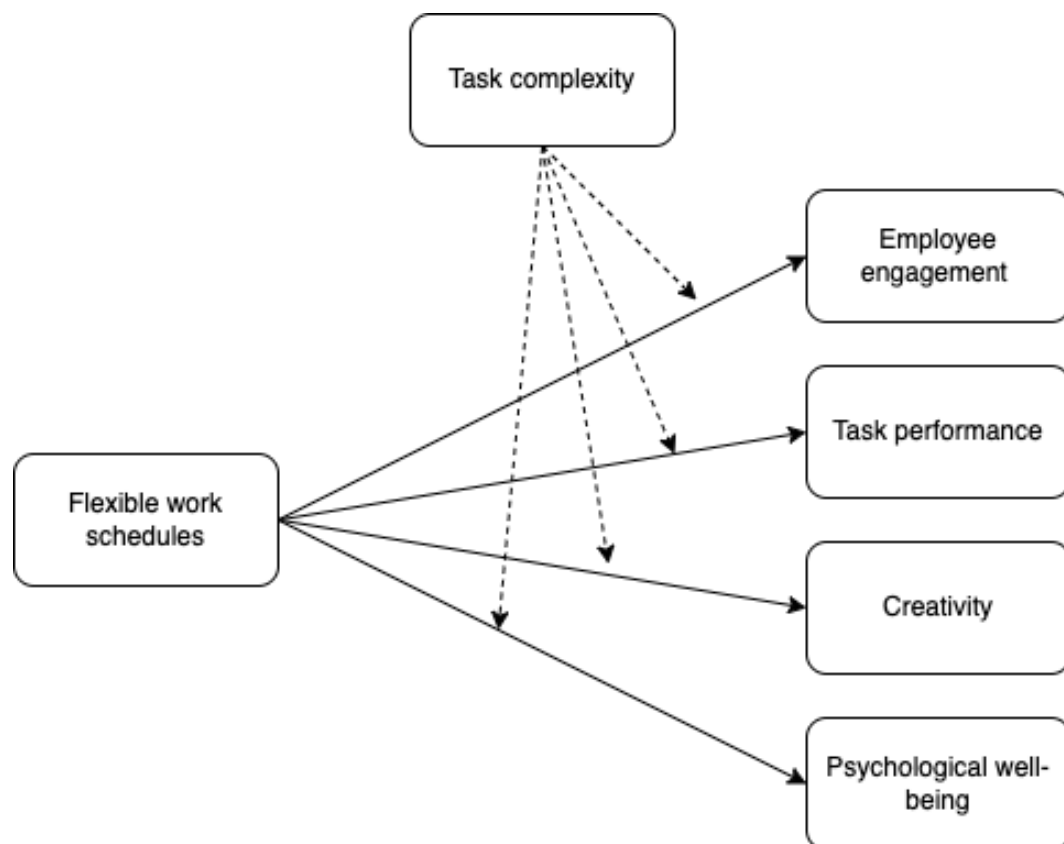
Hypothesis 2d (H2d): Task complexity moderates the positive relationship between flexible work schedules and psychological well-being, such that the relationship is weaker when task complexity is high.

2.4 Conceptual Model

The conceptual model depicted in Figure 2.1 integrates flexible work schedules (treated as job resources) and task complexity (viewed as a job demand) to assess their combined influence on employee engagement, task performance, creativity, and psychological well-being. Flexible schedules are hypothesized to exert positive direct effects on these outcomes, whereas high complexity is expected to moderate – and generally weaken – those relationships. By analyzing these conditions and employee tasks, the model aims to clarify how flexible arrangements shape organizational effectiveness and individual well-being.

Figure 2.1

Conceptual model



3 Methods

3.1 Research Design

This study uses an explanatory survey design to explore how flexible work schedules and task complexity jointly influence key employee outcomes. A cross-sectional approach was chosen because it allowed for data collection at a single point in time, which was necessary due to the project's limited timeline. This approach was also suitable for identifying correlational patterns between flexible work schedules and task complexity, which aligns with the study's objective of exploring these relationships without implying causation (Bell et al., 2022; Kelliher & Anderson, 2010). Although a longitudinal or experimental design might yield stronger causal inferences by capturing how employees' experiences evolve, these methods were beyond the scope and resources of this project. Longitudinal studies could have offered an understanding of changes over time, while experimental designs might have allowed for controlled manipulation of variables to establish causality.

A structured questionnaire was administered to respondents who possessed direct experience with flexible scheduling, ensuring that the study population had practical knowledge of the phenomenon under examination. This design allowed for a quantitative evaluation of both direct and moderating effects in line with the study's theoretical framework derived from the JD-R Model. The subsequent analytical strategies involving Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) were selected to holistically assess construct validity and the interplay among variables.

3.2 Sample and Setting

Data were gathered from 186 employees working in various industries in the Netherlands, including information technology, government, real estate, and professional services. These sectors were chosen because they actively implement flexible scheduling practices, such as remote work options and adjustable hours, offering a diverse landscape of roles and tasks. Organizations ranged in size from fewer than 10 employees to more than 500, capturing both small-scale firms and larger corporations. This coverage improved generalizability by incorporating participants with varied roles, seniority, and work environments.

A convenience sampling method (Porter et al., 2018) was used due to time limitations and the need for swift access to participants (Peterson & Merunka, 2013). While this method enabled quick data collection, it introduced biases that limit the generalizability of the findings, as the sample is not representative of the broader population. Efforts were made to reach as broad a demographic and occupational range as possible through professional networks and referrals. Before distributing the main survey, a pilot test was conducted with 15 participants

recruited from professional networks spanning IT, education, and finance. These individuals completed an initial version of the questionnaire and offered feedback on item clarity and relevance. Based on their input, several items were rephrased for greater precision, and one redundant item measuring remote work frequency was removed. The pilot also guided the decision to provide additional instructions clarifying how to interpret the 'compressed workweek' question, minimizing misinterpretation. As a result, the final survey instrument was both more concise and better aligned with participants' experiences. The final dataset comprised 126 valid responses after excluding cases with significant missing data, incomplete surveys, or failed attention checks. This sample size met recommendations for achieving acceptable statistical power (Field, 2018). Initially, 186 responses were collected, but 60 were excluded based on these criteria to ensure the reliability and validity of the final sample.

During data cleaning, standardized scales and composite variables were computed to maintain consistent metrics across constructs. For instance, remote hours worked were transformed into a per-day measure by dividing total weekly remote hours by the number of days worked, allowing for more accurate comparisons among participants with dissimilar schedules. This step minimized measurement errors and facilitated direct comparisons regarding the extent of remote work.

3.3 Data Collection and Ethical Compliance

Data were obtained through an online questionnaire administered via Qualtrics, which provided a secure interface and straightforward distribution to employees. Respondents received a link through organizational channels, professional contacts, or personal networks. The survey remained open for three weeks, during which participants received a personalized email invitation and a reminder after one week to encourage participation and reduce nonresponse bias. The questionnaire contained items covering flexible work schedules, task complexity, employee engagement, task performance, creativity, and psychological well-being, as well as questions on demographic and background variables.

Ethical compliance was achieved by adhering to Institutional Review Board (IRB) standards (TISEM Institutional Review Board (IRB) | Tilburg University, n.d.) and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in the European Union (GDPR.eu, 2019). Each participant provided informed consent, with assurances regarding confidentiality and the exclusive academic purpose of the research. All collected data were anonymized; no personally identifiable information was stored. Two simple attention checks (Meade & Craig, 2012) were embedded within the survey (e.g., asking respondents how many minutes are in one hour) to detect inattentive or careless responses (Kung et al., 2017). Individuals failing these checks or providing incomplete data were removed from the final sample.

3.4 Measurements

All constructs in this study were operationalized using established scales with documented reliability and validity. A composite variable of each construct was created by averaging standardized scores of these items.

Flexible work schedules were assessed with items adapted from Allen et al. (2013). Respondents rated their perceived flexibility regarding when and where work is performed (e.g., “I can control the times at which I begin and end work”). A five-point Likert scale, from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), captured the degree of perceived schedule autonomy.

Task complexity was measured using a scale primarily informed by Wood (1986) and Campbell (1988). Items addressed the extent of intricacy and diversity in employees’ daily tasks (e.g., “My job requires coordinating several tasks at once”). Responses were recorded on a five-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree); in addition, a composite score was calculated similarly to flexible schedules.

Employee engagement was evaluated with a version of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES), following Schaufeli et al. (2002) and Knight et al. (2016). Vigor, dedication, and absorption were assessed through statements like “I feel bursting with energy at work,” rated on a seven-point scale ranging from 1 (never) to 7 (always).

Task performance was captured via a self-assessment tool adapted from Williams and Anderson (1991). Respondents rated items such as “I complete my tasks efficiently” on a five-point scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). However, self-ratings may introduce biases such as overestimation of performance or social desirability bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003). It remained a practical choice given confidentiality constraints and the unavailability of supervisor ratings (Conway & Lance, 2010).

Creativity was measured with the instrument proposed by Zhou and George (2001). Sample items include “I suggest new ways to achieve work goals,” with responses on a five-point scale (1 = never; 5 = always).

Psychological well-being was examined using Ryff’s (1989) scale, which assesses dimensions such as autonomy, environmental mastery, and purpose in life. Respondents indicated the degree to which statements like “I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I live” applied to them using a six-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 6 = strongly agree).

An interaction term between flexible work schedules and task complexity was created by multiplying their standardized scores, consistent with best practices for testing moderation effects. Control variables included age (Ng & Feldman, 2010), gender (Xie et al., 2019), tenure (Lewis et al., 2013), job role or department (Wang et al., 2020), education level (Chen et al., 2023), and urban-rural classification (Enquête Expert, 2023). These were incorporated to account for alternative explanations of variations in employee outcomes.

3.5 Analysis

All analyses were performed using Stata 18.5, selected for its robust capabilities in handling complex statistical models and its compatibility with the study's analytical requirements, such as Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). Stata was chosen over other software options due to its advanced features and user-friendly interface, which facilitated efficient data analysis. Following data entry and coding, preliminary screening was performed to search for outliers, assess normality, and confirm that there were no major coding errors. Any severe deviations from normality, as well as evidence of heteroscedasticity or multicollinearity, were examined through diagnostic tests. Detailed results for normality tests, variance inflation factors, and heteroscedasticity checks are provided in Appendix C. To verify internal consistency, Cronbach's alpha tests were conducted, which revealed acceptable values for every value ($\alpha > 0.700$). Expect task performance ($\alpha = 0.593$), prompting cautious interpretation of that variable in subsequent analyses.

The psychometric robustness of each scale was verified through Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). These procedures confirmed that items were correctly associated with their intended factors, factor loadings above 0.400, and showed acceptable model fit, a Comparative Fit Index (CFI) above 0.900. So, no items were excluded. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was then used to test hypothesized paths and interaction effects (Hair et al., 2020). The decision to apply SEM aligns with the intention to simultaneously analyze the direct effects of flexible work schedules, the moderating role of task complexity, and the inclusion of multiple outcome variables (Bollen, 1989). Where minor missing data remained, Full Information Maximum Likelihood (FIML) estimation was applied under the assumption that data were missing at random (Enders, 2010; Newman, 2014). This approach maximized the use of available data while preserving unbiased parameter estimates and standard errors.

4 Results and Analysis

4.1 Preliminary Analysis

All surveys underwent rigorous screening to ensure data reliability. Responses with more than 10% missing values or those that failed embedded attention checks were removed, leaving 126 usable observations. Normality was assessed using the Shapiro-Wilk test, which revealed that most variables deviated from normal distributions ($p < 0.050$). Considering the sample size and the ability of SEM to moderate deviations from normality, the main analyses proceeded carefully (Kline, 2010). A Breush-Pagan/Cook-Weisberg test indicated heteroscedasticity in some models ($p = 0.043$). Although heteroscedasticity can affect standard errors, robust standard errors were used to mitigate biases in regression estimates. Multicollinearity was evaluated with Variance Inflation Factors (VIF), and all VIF values fell below 5, indicating that multicollinearity was not a threat to model stability (Hair, 2018).

Construct validity was examined via Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). The EFA showed that most items coherently loaded onto their expected constructs, with factor loadings exceeding 0.400, distinguishing flexible work schedules, task complexity, and the employee outcomes of engagement, performance, creativity, and well-being. Model fit indices from the CFA, such as an RMSEA of 0.128 and a CFI of 0.879, suggested that while the core factor structure was robust enough to proceed, improvements could be made by refining the measurement model or addressing possible sources of measurement error to improve overall fit. Cronbach's alpha values generally exceeded 0.700, consistent with acceptable reliability (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), except for the task performance scale, which fell to 0.593. This lower alpha, coupled with lower-than-ideal Average Variance Extracted (AVE) in some constructs, pointed to some overlap among items. This suggests that self-assessed performance may partially capture broader attitudes about engagement or well-being, showing a need for further refinement of the measurement scales to ensure distinct constructs. Nonetheless, the scale was retained to maintain the theoretical scope of the study. Detailed outputs for the analysis are provided in Appendix C.

4.2 Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Table 4.1 presents the descriptive statistics and the Pearson correlations for the standardized variables. The means close to zero reflect the standardization process. Standard deviations indicate variability in perceptions and experiences related to flexible work schedules, task complexity, and the four outcomes. Psychological well-being correlated positively with engagement, aligning with theoretical expectations that healthier, more satisfied employees often display stronger engagement. Other correlations generally followed anticipated directions based on prior research, though the magnitudes were modest in some

instances. This pattern shows the importance of using a multivariate approach such as SEM, which accounts for concurrent effects and controls.

Table 4.1

Descriptive statistics of key variables and correlations

	Variable	Mean	SD	Min	Max	1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Flexible work schedules	-0.012	0.660	-2.188	1.066	1					
2.	Task complexity	0.000	0.550	-1.398	1.555	0.096	1				
3.	Employee engagement	0.000	0.817	-3.619	1.198	0.205	0.340	1			
4.	Task performance	0.010	0.352	-0.879	0.575	-0.058	0.058	0.343	1		
5.	Creativity	-0.003	0.814	-2.106	2.073	0.024	0.381	0.168	-0.063	1	
6.	Psychological well-being	0.000	0.727	-4.178	1.142	0.058	0.361	0.481	0.337	0.306	1

Ages within the sample ranged from 22 to 72 years, with the majority (over 60%) reporting more than ten years of total work experience. Participants held roles in government, information technology, and real estate, among other sectors. This diversity facilitated a rich cross-section of work settings and varying degrees of both flexibility and complexity. Although reliance on a convenience sample may constrain external validity, potentially limiting the generalizability of the findings, the diversity of industries and roles increased the chances of identifying specific examples of flexible scheduling practices and varying task demands.

4.3 Regression Results

The main structural models were tested using SEM to clarify both the direct relationships between flexible work schedules and employee outcomes, as well as the proposed moderating role of task complexity. Age, gender, job tenure, education level, and industry or departmental affiliation were included as controls to account for alternative explanations. Full Information Maximum Likelihood (FIML) estimation was used to handle any small residual missingness (Enders, 2010). The following sections summarize the principal findings, with reference to the corresponding hypotheses.

4.3.1 Structural Equation Model Results

Employee Engagement. Flexible work schedules exhibited a significant positive relationship with engagement ($\beta = 0.178$, $p = 0.049$). Higher perceived flexibility corresponded to greater engagement, supporting hypothesis 1a. Task complexity also showed a significant positive effect on engagement ($\beta = 0.200$, $p = 0.009$), implying that more cognitively demanding work may energize employees under certain conditions. However, the interaction term was non-significant ($p = 0.881$), indicating that task complexity did not weaken or

strengthen the effect of flexible scheduling on engagement. Hypothesis 2a, which proposed a negative moderating impact of complexity, was not supported.

Control variables revealed that age had a particularly strong influence, with older employees reporting significantly higher engagement ($\beta = 0.425$, $p < 0.001$). Part-time employees ($\beta = -0.185$, $p = 0.016$) and students ($\beta = -0.161$, $p = 0.049$) reported lower engagement, while those with one to three years ($\beta = 0.326$, $p = 0.005$) or over ten years of tenure ($\beta = 0.329$, $p = 0.005$) reported higher engagement. Employees in IT departments showed significantly lower engagement ($\beta = -0.231$, $p = 0.005$).

Table 4.2

Key SEM results for employee engagement

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	z-value	p-value
Flexible work schedules	0.178	0.097	1.830	0.049
Task complexity	0.200	0.077	2.600	0.009
Interaction effect	-0.012	0.078	-0.150	0.881
Age	0.425	0.121	3.530	0.000
Employee status: part time	-0.185	0.077	-2.400	0.016
Employee status: student	-0.161	0.082	-1.970	0.049
Tenure: 1-3 years	0.326	0.115	2.840	0.005
Tenure: more than 10 years	0.329	0.117	2.800	0.005
Department: IT department	-0.231	0.082	-2.840	0.005

Task Performance. SEM estimates revealed no significant direct relationship between flexible work schedules and self-reported performance ($\beta = -0.065$, $p = 0.560$), failing to confirm hypothesis 1b. The interaction between flexible scheduling and task complexity also did not attain significance ($\beta = -0.069$, $p = 0.482$), providing no evidence that complexity moderates this relationship. Consequently, hypothesis 2b was not supported.

Age emerged as a strong predictor of task performance ($\beta = 0.417$, $p = 0.003$), with older employees reporting higher levels of performance. Employees in rural areas reported significantly better task performance ($\beta = 0.206$, $p = 0.021$), while those in sales departments had lower performance ($\beta = -0.270$, $p = 0.011$).

Table 4.3

Key SEM results for performance

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	z-value	p-value
Flexible work schedules	-0.065	0.112	-0.580	0.560

Task complexity	0.155	0.102	1.520	0.130
Interaction effect	-0.069	0.098	-0.700	0.482
Age	0.417	0.143	2.920	0.003
Rural/city: rural	0.206	0.090	2.300	0.021
Department: sales	-0.270	0.106	-2.550	0.011

Creativity. Contrary to expectations, flexible work schedules did not significantly predict creativity ($\beta = 0.137$, $p = 0.202$), offering no support for hypothesis 1c. Meanwhile, task complexity had a positive, significant impact on creativity ($\beta = 0.299$, $p = 0.001$), suggesting that complex assignments foster innovative thinking. The lack of a significant interaction ($\beta = 0.007$, $p = 0.940$) meant that hypothesis 2c, proposing weaker benefits under higher complexity, was not supported.

Among the control variables, employees in rural areas reported lower creativity ($\beta = -0.260$, $p = 0.004$). Tenure of four to six years ($\beta = -0.260$, $p = 0.024$) negatively impacted creativity, whereas those in professional services ($\beta = 0.223$, $p = 0.013$) and operations departments ($\beta = 0.173$, $p = 0.040$) reported higher creativity levels.

Table 4.4

Key SEM results for creativity

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	z-value	p-value
Flexible work schedules	0.137	0.107	1.280	0.202
Task complexity	0.299	0.089	3.350	0.001
Interaction effect	0.007	0.095	0.070	0.940
Rural/city: rural	-0.250	0.087	-2.890	0.004
Tenure: 4-6 years	-0.260	0.115	-2.260	0.024
Industry: professional services	0.223	0.090	2.480	0.013
Department: operations	0.173	0.084	2.050	0.040

Psychological Well-Being. Flexible work schedules showed a significant positive influence on psychological well-being ($\beta = 0.263$, $p = 0.005$), in line with hypothesis 1d. Task complexity was also positively related ($\beta = 0.192$, $p = 0.021$), but the interaction effect was not significant ($\beta = -0.096$, $p = 0.233$). Providing thus no empirical support for hypothesis 2d, which anticipated a negative moderation by complexity.

Among the control variables, age was again a significant predictor ($\beta = 0.475$, $p < 0.001$), with older employees reporting greater well-being. Part-time employees ($\beta = -0.190$, $p = 0.009$) experience lower well-being, while students ($\beta = 0.362$, $p < 0.001$) reported higher

well-being. Tenure of one to three years ($\beta = 0.214$, $p = 0.024$) and over ten years ($\beta = 0.296$, $p = 0.007$) positively influenced well-being. Employees in government ($\beta = -0.306$, $p = 0.004$) and real estate sectors ($\beta = -0.189$, $p = 0.036$) reported lower well-being, while those in other departments showed a slight increase ($\beta = 0.135$, $p = 0.034$).

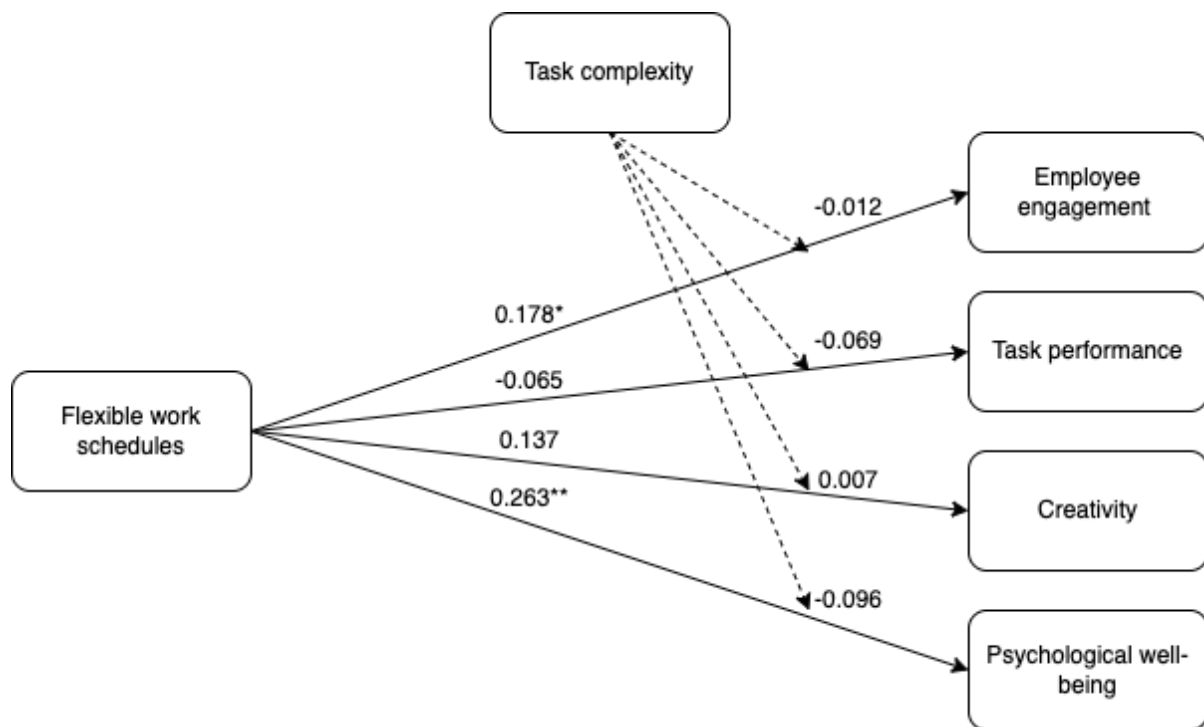
Table 4.5

Key SEM for psychological well-being

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	z-value	p-value
Flexible work schedules	0.263	0.094	2.810	0.005
Task complexity	0.192	0.083	2.310	0.021
Interaction effect	-0.096	0.080	-1.190	0.233
Age	0.475	0.122	3.890	0.000
Employee status: part time	-0.190	0.073	-2.610	0.009
Employee status: student	0.362	0.079	4.570	0.000
Tenure: 1-3 years	0.214	0.095	2.260	0.024
Tenure: more than 10 years	0.296	0.110	2.700	0.007
Industry: government sector	-0.306	0.105	-2.910	0.004
Industry: real estate	-0.189	0.090	-2.100	0.036
Department: other department	0.135	0.063	2.130	0.034

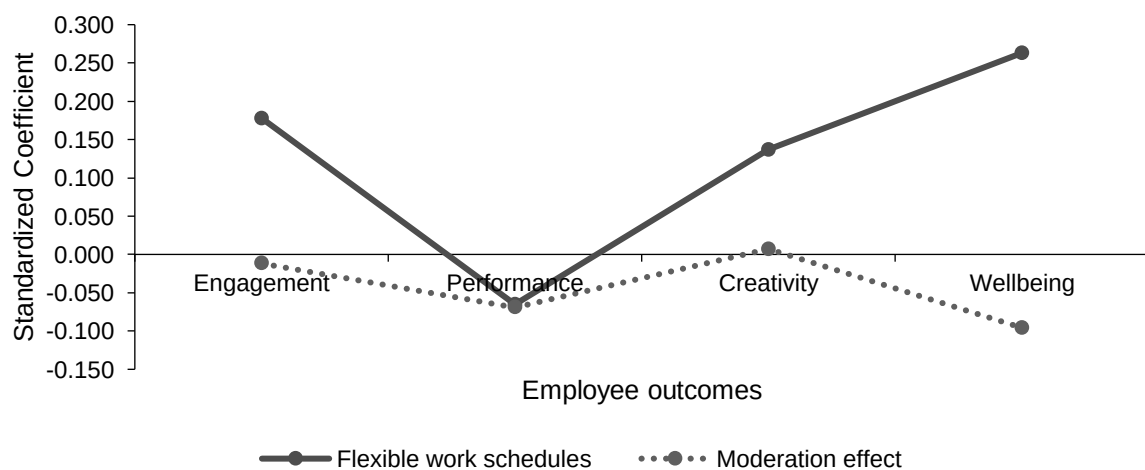
4.3.2 Interpretation

The conceptual model in Figure 4.1 illustrates the hypothesized relationships between flexible work schedules, task complexity, and employee outcomes, including engagement, task performance, creativity, and psychological well-being. The model highlights the direct effects of flexible work schedules and the moderating effects of task complexity on these relationships.

Figure 4.1*Conceptual model with effects*

Note, * $p < 0.05$. ** $p < 0.01$. *** $p < 0.005$

Figure 4.2 depicts the effects of flexible work schedules (main effect) and their interaction with task complexity (moderating effects) on the four dependent variables. The lines illustrate how engagement and well-being significantly improve under flexible schedules, while performance and creativity exhibit only slight and statistically insignificant changes.

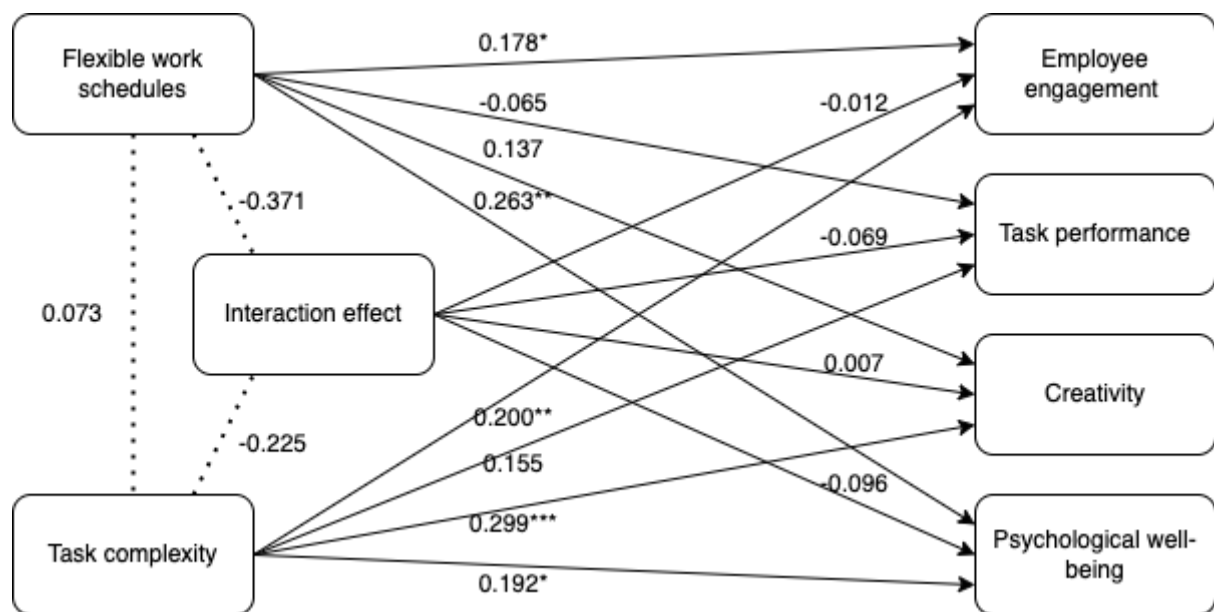
Figure 4.2*Effects of flexible work schedules and moderation by task complexity*

Note. * $p < 0.05$. ** $p < 0.01$. *** $p < 0.005$

The structured equation modeling path diagram, illustrated in Figure 4.3, captures the hypothesized relationships between flexible work schedules, task complexity, their interaction effect, and the four employee outcomes. All path coefficients are included in the diagram to provide a complete view of the relationships. The correlation coefficients of the covariance between endogenous variables are also displayed to highlight their interdependence.

Figure 4.3

Structural equation modeling path diagram



Note. *p < 0.05. **p < 0.01. ***p < 0.005

A summary of all hypotheses, specifying which ones were supported, is provided in Table 4.6. The overall pattern indicates that flexible schedules promote engagement and well-being but do not substantially affect performance or creativity within this sample. Task complexity independently aids engagement and creativity, yet its proposed moderating role was not evident.

Table 4.6

Key findings hypotheses

Hypothesis	Supported?
H1a: Flexible work schedules are positively associated with employee engagement.	Yes
H1b: Flexible work schedules are positively associated with task performance.	No

H1c: Flexible work schedules are positively associated with creativity.	No
H1d: Flexible work schedules are positively associated with psychological well-being.	Yes
H2a: Task complexity moderates the positive relationship between flexible work schedules and employee engagement, such that the relationship is weaker when task complexity is high.	No
H2b: Task complexity moderates the positive relationship between flexible work schedules and task performance, such that the relationship is weaker when task complexity is high.	No
H2c: Task complexity moderates the positive relationship between flexible work schedules and creativity, such that the relationship is weaker when task complexity is high.	No
H2d: Task complexity moderates the positive relationship between flexible work schedules and psychological well-being, such that the relationship is weaker when task complexity is high.	No

4.3.3 Supplementary Analysis

The supplementary analysis clarifies the relationships between flexible work schedules, task complexity, and employee outcomes, providing insights that support the primary findings. This section examines the robustness of the results.

The analysis reveals that task complexity and flexible work schedules independently impact employee outcomes in distinct ways. Psychological well-being was positively influenced by flexible schedules ($\beta = 0.245$, $p = 0.046$), highlighting how autonomy reduces stress and promotes emotional health. However, flexible schedules did not significantly affect employee engagement, task performance, or creativity ($p > 0.050$), suggesting that while flexibility enhances well-being, it may not directly increase productivity or innovation.

The interaction between flexible work schedules and task complexity was significant ($\beta = -0.562$, $p = 0.006$) in the supplementary analysis, indicating that task complexity moderates the effectiveness of flexible arrangements. This finding contrasts with the primary SEM analysis, where the interaction effect was not significant, suggesting the need for further investigation into these differing results. Specifically, high task complexity appeared to diminish the positive effects of flexibility on certain outcomes. This finding aligns with the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model, which posits that job demands can counteract the benefits of job resources in highly demanding contexts.

Table 4.7*Multiple regression results*

Variable	Without moderation effect				With moderation effect			
	Coefficient	SE	t-value	p-value	Coefficient	SE	t-value	p-value
Task complexity	-0.018	0.143	-0.120	0.902	-0.108	0.130	-0.830	0.409
Interaction effect					-0.562	0.197	-2.850	0.006
Employee engagement	0.061	0.104	0.590	0.556	0.058	0.097	0.600	0.552
Task performance	-0.304	0.196	-1.550	0.126	-0.358	0.188	-1.910	0.061
Creativity	-0.007	0.088	-0.080	0.940	0.041	0.081	0.510	0.615
Psychological well-being	0.330	0.125	2.640	0.010	0.245	0.121	2.030	0.046
Gender: female	-0.411	0.154	-2.670	0.010	-0.391	0.147	-2.670	0.010
Employee status: self-employed	1.123	0.430	2.610	0.011	0.917	0.349	2.620	0.011
Employee status: student	-2.612	0.555	-4.710	0.000	-1.861	0.578	-3.220	0.002
Industry: government sector	0.642	0.203	3.160	0.002	0.552	0.182	3.030	0.003
Industry: real estate	0.485	0.202	2.400	0.019	0.535	0.185	2.890	0.005
Department: customer services	-0.713	0.302	-2.360	0.021	-0.595	0.274	-2.170	0.034

5 Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Conclusions

The empirical findings demonstrate that flexible work schedules significantly boost employee engagement and psychological well-being. However, they do not consistently enhance task performance or creativity. This inconsistency may be attributed to the need for real-time coordination and the nature of certain tasks that require synchronous collaboration, which can limit the effectiveness of flexible schedules in improving these outcomes. These outcomes reinforce the idea that providing autonomy – particularly over the timing and location of work – can help employees align their schedules with personal rhythms and reduce stress. Such alignment is closely associated with increased energy levels and emotional health, a pattern that is evident in the robust positive coefficients for engagement and well-being.

In contrast, the absence of a reliable performance or creativity boost suggests that merely granting scheduling freedom does not guarantee tangible improvements in output quality or innovative capacity. The interplay of synchronous communication and the need for real-time coordination may overshadow potential gains from autonomy, thereby explaining the lack of consistent improvements in task performance and creativity. Additionally, an environment conducive to ideation is crucial. These patterns confirm the selective effectiveness of flexible arrangements identified in previous research and illustrate the importance of situational factors – such as task interdependence or the presence of robust technological infrastructure – that can facilitate or hinder the advantages of flexible schedules.

The data further indicate that task complexity independently encourages higher engagement and creativity while not consistently altering the effects of flexible work schedules. This finding implies that employees who tackle cognitively challenging tasks may naturally exert more effort or think more creatively regardless of scheduling autonomy. Nevertheless, the hypothesized moderating effect did not emerge in the structural equation modeling, suggesting that organizations promoting flexible work should not assume that more complex tasks will either undermine or amplify the benefits of autonomy in a uniform manner.

5.2 Discussion

Multiple theoretical frameworks and empirical studies illustrate the partial yet selective benefits of flexible work schedules. On one hand, research affirming flexibility's capacity to improve well-being and engagement aligns with the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007) and Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000), both of which conceptualize autonomy as a catalyst for motivation by allowing individuals to align their work with personal needs, thereby reducing stress. Empirical support for these positive

outcomes is found in Allen et al. (2013), who observed that employees who can adapt their work hours to personal responsibilities often report higher job satisfaction and lower burnout.

On the other hand, some scholars argue that improvements in performance or creativity are not guaranteed, a notion reflected in Gajendran and Harrison's (2007) meta-analysis showing that while telecommuting can bolster some employee attitudes, it may not invariably translate into productivity gains. The findings of this study align with such caution: flexible schedules may not compensate for the heightened coordination demands of certain tasks or the cultural emphasis on face-to-face collaboration in many organizations. Some roles demand immediate access to colleagues or specialized resources, conditions that do not always coexist with asynchronous or autonomous working patterns (Bartel et al., 2012). These limitations can suppress the performance boost sometimes associated with remote or flexible policies and also temper expectations regarding enhanced creativity, particularly when spontaneous brainstorming or prompt feedback is vital (Shalley & Gilson, 2004).

There is also divergent evidence on task complexity. Van den Broeck et al. (2010) proposed that complexity can magnify the role of job resources, yet this study's analysis found no significant moderation effect on the relationship between flexibility and key outcomes. A possible explanation lies in evolving technologies that ease communication gaps, thereby neutralizing the hindrances of complex tasks under flexible schedules. The inconclusive moderation effect nevertheless suggests that complexity's role is more nuanced than traditional theories might predict. Researchers such as Ohly and Fritz (2009) caution that excessive complexity can stifle creativity if employees lack sufficient cognitive bandwidth, but these negative effects may be offset when organizations have supportive norms, stable technological platforms, and well-structured team processes.

5.3 Implications

Contrary to expectations from some JD-R studies (Van den Broeck et al., 2010), task complexity did not moderate the resource effect of flexible scheduling on performance or creativity. This may indicate that employees facing high cognitive demands can use modern communication tools to overcome the challenges of asynchronous work. Alternatively, as communication technologies evolve, the notion of 'complex' tasks may shift toward a more fluid interplay between synchronous and asynchronous collaboration, challenging older assumptions about how demands undercut autonomy's benefits.

This research extends the dialogue surrounding job autonomy by showing that flexible work schedules most reliably improve motivational and health-related outcomes rather than operational metrics such as performance or creative output. Scholars can build on these observations by examining a wider range of mediating and moderating factors, including specific types of autonomy that go beyond scheduling latitude. Greater precision in

distinguishing between schedule control, task-specific discretion, and broader role-based autonomy may uncover richer explanations of how employees manage their jobs under flexible conditions.

From a practical perspective, these findings suggest that organizations aiming to bolster engagement and psychological well-being can benefit from implementing flexible work practices. However, managers should not assume that flexible schedules guarantee performance or creativity increases. If enhancing productivity or innovation is a key objective, organizational leaders may need to supplement flexible work policies with collaborative tools, frequent feedback opportunities, and knowledge-sharing structures. Managers who oversee teams with highly complex tasks should be aware that adding flexibility alone may not suffice to optimize performance. Additional measures, such as clearer task coordination protocols and explicit collaborative windows, can help employees tap into the advantages of autonomy without compromising collective efficiency or creative synergy. The findings also imply that employees in environments where tasks are demanding should be given training in self-regulation or offered systematic support, such as scheduled check-ins or virtual huddles, to ensure they do not experience a sense of isolation or misalignment in their workflows.

The implications of these findings could significantly impact organizational policy by inspiring the implementation of flexible work practices, informing human resources strategies to focus on employee well-being, and guiding leadership development to support autonomy and collaboration. Flexible schedules emerged as a strong factor in shaping employee engagement and well-being, underscoring the need for empathy and adaptability in managerial approaches. Task complexity likewise showed a meaningful relationship with engagement and creativity, although it did not moderate flexible scheduling. Managers might benefit from explicitly identifying tasks or roles that require intensive collaboration and ensuring that tools, schedules, and communication protocols are in place to facilitate the timely coordination of complex work. Establishing shared “core hours” or regular digital touchpoints can help employees sustain a sense of connection and immediate feedback, even in highly flexible settings. For instance, consider a software development team tasked with intricate code reviews. If allowed complete freedom over work hours, developers may struggle to secure rapid feedback from colleagues in differing time blocks. However, an organization could designate a daily ‘core’ collaboration slot – say, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. – during which all team members overlap online to troubleshoot or brainstorm while still permitting flexible start and end times. Such partial structuring harnesses the motivational benefits of autonomy while ensuring that high-complexity tasks do not stall due to communication gaps.

At a broader level, these findings speak to national discussions on labor-market policies aimed at supporting work-life integration. Policymakers considering legislation to promote telework and compressed schedules should recognize that autonomy alone may not

guarantee productivity gains, especially for tasks requiring significant collaboration. Introducing policy incentives for companies to invest in collaboration technology or to train managers in remote leadership may be just as crucial. Such measures could enhance the overall efficacy and adoption of flexible work practices, ensuring that employees in complex roles do not encounter additional stressors or communication hurdles.

5.4 Limitations and Future Research

5.4.1 Limitations

The first limitation concerns the cross-sectional design, which cannot definitively establish causal relationships. Many organizational researchers emphasize that data collected at one point in time risks conflating short-term fluctuations with enduring trends (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Without longitudinal data, it is uncertain whether flexible schedules truly foster sustained engagement or if their effect weakens once initial enthusiasm fades.

A second limitation arises from the reliance on self-report measures, notably for task performance. Studies like Conway and Lance (2010) show that self-assessment can lead to overly positive evaluations or forgotten past performance, which may explain the weaker reliability and Cronbach's alpha for the performance scale. This issue highlights the need to complement subjective self-ratings with objective metrics or supervisor evaluations.

A third limitation is that contextual factors, such as leadership style, the strength of organizational culture, or the availability of real-time collaboration tools, were not formally controlled. The JD-R Model and broader organizational behavior literature repeatedly stress that the impact of job resources, like flexible scheduling, can be significantly influenced by these contextual elements (Kossek et al., 2012). In particular, cultures that do not explicitly support boundary management or asynchronous collaboration may erode the positive effects found in more open, technology-enabled workplaces.

5.4.2 Future Research

Longitudinal or diary-based studies could verify whether the initial positive relationship between flexible work schedules and employee well-being continues over time, or if any measurable productivity improvements gradually emerge. Other lines of research might explore how culturally varied contexts shape the effectiveness of flexible scheduling, examining whether norms around hierarchical decision-making or shared accountability moderate employees' ability to work autonomously. Additionally, there is a need to investigate how leadership practices, such as remote coaching or virtual feedback loops, might adapt to maintain real-time collaboration in complex roles, potentially preventing the dilution of any productivity or creativity advantage.

Researchers should expand the scope to fields like healthcare, manufacturing, or education, where scheduling norms differ more drastically from the typical “office” environment. Delving into how front-line medical staff, shift workers, or faculty members integrate flexible scheduling under demanding conditions could reveal the boundaries of the autonomy-well-being nexus. More granular inquiries might examine personality factors – for example, whether high self-efficacy or conscientiousness predisposes employees to thrive under flexible, complex conditions, while others struggle in the absence of external structure.

Another intriguing direction is to couple flexible scheduling with interventions that specifically target performance and creativity. Studies could test the additive value of training programs for self-regulation, formal creativity workshops, and advanced collaborative technologies to verify whether they amplify the beneficial synergy of autonomy and complexity.

5.5 Concluding Remarks

In summation, flexible work schedules reliably enhance engagement and psychological well-being, reflecting the motivational strengths of autonomy. Despite this, their influence on performance and creativity is neither uniform nor guaranteed, especially when frequent collaboration and immediate feedback are critical. Task complexity increases engagement and creativity on its own but does not inherently change the effects of scheduling freedom. A deeper understanding of these dynamics can help organizations balance flexible policies with the structured support necessary for various tasks, cultures, and individual differences. By continuing to refine both theoretical models and empirical methods, researchers and practitioners can create work environments that maximize autonomy without compromising the interconnected demands of modern workplaces, ensuring that flexibility remains not just a trend but a meaningful driver of sustainable performance and well-being.

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Appendix A.

Usage of Artificial Intelligence

The analysis and coding in Stata were partially supported by AI tools, which were used to streamline data management processes and perform syntax checks. AI-assisted grammar reviews were performed to ensure clarity in the textual components. Additionally, AI-based brainstorming helped refine potential survey questions and research angles. No AI-driven content was used literally without review and adaptation to maintain academic integrity and ensure alignment with the study's objectives.

Appendix B.

Survey

This appendix contains the final version of the survey administered for this study. The instrument was designed how flexible work schedules and task complexity influence, engagement, performance, creativity, and well-being.

Exploring the impact of flexible work schedules and task complexity on employee outcomes

Introduction

Dear Participant,

My name is Niels Vermeer, and I am a master's student in Strategic Management at Tilburg University. I am conducting a research study as part of my thesis to explore how flexible work schedules and task complexity impact employee engagement, performance, creativity, and well-being.

Purpose of This Study

The aim of this study is to gain insights into the experiences of employees working in the Information Technology (IT) and professional services industries in the Netherlands. Your participation will contribute to a better understanding of work practices and help organizations design better work environments.

What Participation Involves

This survey will take approximately 10–15 minutes to complete. Your participation is voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time without penalty. All responses are confidential and will be used solely for academic purposes. No personally identifiable information will be collected. There are no risks associated with participating in this study.

Contact Information

If you have any questions, please contact Niels Vermeer at N.P.A.Vermeer@tilburguniversity.edu.

Consent

By proceeding with the survey, you acknowledge that you have read the information above and agree to participate in this study.

Section 1: Flexible Work Schedules

Please indicate your level of agreement regarding your work schedule.

1. **How many hours do you work in a week?**

Please enter a number of hours:

2. **How many days do you work in a week?**

Please enter a number of days:

3. I can choose to work from home or another location I prefer.

- ☐ Never (1)
- ☐ Sometimes (2)
- ☐ About half the time (3)
- ☐ Most of the time (4)
- ☐ Always (5)

4. On average, how many hours per week do you work from home or places other than the office?

Please enter a number of hours:

5. I can choose when I start and end my workday.

- ☐ Never (1)
- ☐ Sometimes (2)
- ☐ About half the time (3)
- ☐ Most of the time (4)
- ☐ Always (5)

6. My job allows me to adjust my work schedule to accommodate personal appointments.

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (2)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (4)
- ☐ Strongly agree (5)

7. I have control over organizing my daily work activities.

- ☐ Never (1)
- ☐ Sometimes (2)
- ☐ About half the time (3)
- ☐ Most of the time (4)
- ☐ Always (5)

Section 2: Task Complexity

Please indicate your level of agreement regarding the complexity of the tasks you perform at work.

8. My job requires me to handle multiple tasks at the same time.

- ☐ Never (1)
- ☐ Sometimes (2)
- ☐ About half the time (3)

- Most of the time (4)
- Always (5)

9. I am responsible for managing the performance of other team members.

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Somewhat disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Somewhat agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

10. To show that you are paying attention, please select 'Somewhat agree' for this statement.

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Somewhat disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- **Somewhat agree (4)**
- Strongly agree (5)

11. I frequently collaborate with colleagues from different departments.

- Never (1)
- Monthly (2)
- Weekly (3)
- Daily (4)
- Every hour (5)

12. Unforeseen problems arise during my work activities.

- Never (1)
- Monthly (2)
- Weekly (3)
- Daily (4)
- Every hour (5)

13. My job requires complex problem-solving skills.

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Somewhat disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Somewhat agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

14. I often have tight deadlines to meet in my job.

- Never (1)
- Monthly (2)
- Weekly (3)

- Daily (4)
- Every hour (5)

15. I need to analyze a lot of information to perform my job effectively.

- Never (1)
- Sometimes (2)
- About half the time (3)
- Most of the time (4)
- Always (5)

16. The completion of my tasks depends on the deliverables of coworkers.

- Never (1)
- Sometimes (2)
- About half the time (3)
- Most of the time (4)
- Always (5)

17. I must make decisions with incomplete information.

- Never (1)
- Monthly (2)
- Weekly (3)
- Daily (4)
- Every hour (5)

Section 3: Employee Engagement

Please indicate your level of agreement regarding your engagement at work.

18. I feel energized when I am working.

- Never (1)
- Rarely (10%) (2)
- Occasionally (30%) (3)
- Sometimes (50%) (4)
- Frequently (70%) (5)
- Usually (90%) (6)
- Always (7)

19. I am enthusiastic about my job responsibilities.

- (Same scale as above)

20. I am proud of my performance at work.

- (Same scale as above)

21. I become deeply immersed in my work activities.

- (Same scale as above)

22. Time passes quickly when I am working.

- (Same scale as above)

Section 4: Task Performance

Please indicate your level of agreement regarding your performance of the tasks you perform at work.

23. I complete my work tasks efficiently.

- Never (1)
- Sometimes (2)
- About half the time (3)
- Most of the time (4)
- Always (5)

24. I proactively address work tasks without needing reminders.

- (Same scale as above)

25. I effectively coordinate with my team to achieve common goals.

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Somewhat disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Somewhat agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

26. Select the statement that best describes your typical approach at work.

- I focus on completing tasks accurately, even if it takes more time. (1)
- I focus on completing tasks quickly, even if it means sacrificing some accuracy. (2)

27. When faced with challenging tasks, how do you usually respond?

- Break it down into manageable parts and tackle it systematically. (1)
- Seek assistance or delegate when possible. (2)
- Put it aside and focus on easier tasks. (3)

28. I can be relied upon to perform my job duties well.

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Somewhat disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Somewhat agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

Section 5: Creativity

Please indicate your level of agreement regarding your creativity.

29. I often suggest innovative ideas to improve work processes.

- Never (1)
- Sometimes (2)
- About half the time (3)
- Most of the time (4)
- Always (5)

30. I come up with creative solutions when faced with work challenges.

- (Same scale as above)

31. I seek new ways to achieve work objectives.

- (Same scale as above)

32. I am open to experimenting with different approaches to my work.

- (Same scale as above)

33. I contribute original ideas that benefit my team or organization.

- (Same scale as above)

34. To show that you are paying attention, how many minutes are in one hour?

- 0 (1)
- **60 (2)**
- 3,600 (3)

Section 6: Psychological Well-Being

Please indicate your level of agreement regarding your psychological well-being.

35. I feel confident in my ability to handle personal responsibilities.

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Somewhat disagree (3)
- Somewhat agree (4)
- Agree (5)
- Strongly agree (6)

36. I have strong and trusting relationships with others (colleagues and/or friends).

- (Same scale as above)

37. I see myself as continually growing and developing.

- (Same scale as above)

38. I have a clear sense of purpose in my life.

- (Same scale as above)

39. I am able to make decisions independently.

- (Same scale as above)

40. I have a positive outlook toward myself.

- (Same scale as above)
-

Section 7: Workload and Productivity

Please answer the following questions about your productivity and workload. Your honest perceptions are appreciated. As stated in the introduction, this information is used solely for academic purposes.

- 41. Please enter the approximate percentage (0–100%) of your working hours you feel are productive.**

Please enter a percentage:

- 42. Do you believe you could complete your job responsibilities in fewer hours than you currently work?**

- No (1)
- Yes (2)
- Not sure (3)

- 43. Considering your current job responsibilities, approximately how many hours per week do you believe are necessary to complete your work effectively?**

Please enter a number of hours:

- 44. What factors contribute to times when you are not productive at work? (Select all that apply)**

- Frequent interruptions (e.g., meetings, calls)
- Lack of motivation or engagement
- Waiting for information or input from others
- Unclear instructions or expectations
- Personal distractions (e.g., social media, personal calls)
- Excessive workload or unrealistic deadlines
- Other: (Please specify)

- 45. Would a more flexible work schedule have any impact on your productivity?**

- It would increase my productivity (1)
 - It would decrease my productivity (2)
 - It would have no significant impact (3)
 - Not sure (4)
-

Section 8: Demographic Information

Please provide the following demographic information.

- 46. What is your age?**

Please enter your age in years:

- 47. What is your gender?**

- Male (1)
- Female (2)
- Non-binary / third gender (3)
- Prefer not to say (4)
- Other: (Please specify)

48. What are the numbers of your postal code?

Please enter the numerical part of your postal code:

49. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- Primary education (1)
- VMBO, MBO1 (2)
- HAVO, VWO, MBO2-4 (3)
- Bachelor's degree (HBO/WO) (4)
- Master's degree (HBO/WO) (5)
- Doctorate, PhD (6)
- Other: (Please specify)

50. Employment status:

- Employed full time (1)
- Employed part time (2)
- Contract/Temporary (3)
- Self-employed (4)
- Retired (5)
- Student (6)
- Disabled (7)

51. How many years of total work experience do you have?

- Less than 1 year (1)
- 1–3 years (2)
- 4–6 years (3)
- 7–10 years (4)
- More than 10 years (5)

52. How long have you been working at your current organization?

- Less than 1 year (1)
- 1–3 years (2)
- 4–6 years (3)
- 7–10 years (4)
- More than 10 years (5)

53. Which industry do you work in?

- Information Technology (IT) (1)

- Government Sector (2)
- Manufacturing and Production (3)
- Professional Services (4)
- Real Estate and Housing Associations (5)
- Other: (Please specify)

54. Department/Function:

- Information Technology (1)
- Human Resources (2)
- Finance and Accounting (3)
- Marketing (4)
- Operations (5)
- Sales (6)
- Research & Development (7)
- Administration and Support Services (8)
- Customer Service (9)
- Other: (Please specify)

55. What is your current job role?

Please specify:

56. Do you currently hold a supervisory or managerial position?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

57. If yes, how many employees do you directly supervise?

- None (1)
- 1–5 (2)
- 6–10 (3)
- 11–20 (4)
- More than 20 (5)

58. Approximately how many employees work at your organization? (If your organization has multiple locations, how many work at your location?)

- 1–49 (1)
- 50–249 (2)
- 250–999 (3)
- 1,000 or more (4)

59. What is the name of the company you are working for?

Please specify:

60. Typical work arrangement:

- On-site (1)

- Remote/Telecommuting (2)
- Hybrid (combination of on-site and remote) (3)

Dear Participant,

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this survey. Your input is highly valued and will play a crucial role in advancing our understanding of how flexible work arrangements and task complexity affect employee experiences and outcomes.

Stay Informed:

If you are interested in receiving a summary of the research findings once the study is completed, please feel free to contact me at the email address below.

Questions or Comments:

Should you have any questions or comments about the study, do not hesitate to reach out.

Contact Information:

Researcher: Niels Vermeer

Email: N.P.A.Vermeer@tilburguniversity.edu

Once again, thank you for your valuable contribution!

Kind regards,

Niels Vermeer

Master's Student, Strategic Management

Tilburg University

Note: This survey is formatted to enhance readability and align with academic standards for survey instruments included in scholarly publications.

Appendix C.

Data analysis output

This appendix presents the statistical procedures and results that underlie the main findings. It includes data screening and assumption checks, exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses, model fit indices, descriptive statistics, and details of the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) process.

i. Data screening and assumption checks

Normality

A Shapiro-Wilk test was performed to examine residual normality for each primary variable. As shown in Table C.1, most variables yielded p values below 0.050, suggesting non-normal distributions. Given the moderate sample size and the robustness of structural equation modeling (SEM) to minor deviations from normality, subsequent analyses proceeded with caution (Kline, 2010).

Table C.1

Shapiro-Wilk test for normality

Variable	N	W	V	z	p-value
Flexible work schedules	117	0.938	5.811	3.937	0.000
Interaction term	117	0.876	11.723	5.507	0.000
Employee engagement	124	0.900	9.860	5.136	0.000
Task performance	120	0.965	3.413	2.750	0.003
Creativity	123	0.982	1.764	1.273	0.101
Psychological well-being	124	0.864	13.476	5.837	0.000

Note. A p-value less than 0.050 indicates deviation from normality

Heteroscedasticity

A Breusch-Pagan/Cook-Weisberg test assessed non-constant error variance across levels of the independent variables. Table C.2 shows a significant test result, $\chi^2(5) = 11.480$, $p = 0.043$, indicating heteroscedasticity. To mitigate potential biases in regression estimates, robust standard errors and diagnostic checks were incorporated.

Table C.2*Breusch-Pagan/Cook-Weisberg Test for Heteroscedasticity*

Test statistic	Value
Chi-square (5)	11.480
p-value	0.043

Multicollinearity

Variance Inflation Factors (VIF) were computed to detect collinearity among the main predictors. Table C.3 illustrates that all VIF values remained below 5, minimizing concerns about multicollinearity (Hair, 2018).

Table C.3*Variance Inflation Factors*

Variable	VIF	1/VIF
Psychological Well-Being	1.490	0.670
Employee Engagement	1.390	0.721
Task Performance	1.230	0.811
Creativity	1.160	0.866
Interaction Term	1.020	0.976
Mean VIF	1.260	

ii. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

An Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was performed to investigate the underlying factor structures for each key construct, using eigenvalues greater than 1.000 to guide factor extraction. A Varimax rotation was applied when more than one factor emerged.

Flexible work schedules

Table C.4 and Table C.5 present the eigenvalues and factor loadings, respectively, for the flexible work schedules construct. Two factors explained approximately 66% of the variance (Factor 1 = 44.4%; Factor 2 = 21.6%), suggesting possible multidimensionality. Items Q3_std, Q5_std, Q6_std, and Q7_std loaded strongly onto Factor 1, whereas remote_hours_std and Q60_std showed moderate loadings on Factor 2.

Table C.4

Eigenvalues flexible work schedules

Factor	Eigenvalue	Difference	Proportion	Cumulative
Factor1	2.664	1.369	0.444	0.444
Factor2	1.295	0.677	0.216	0.660
Factor3	0.618	0.072	0.103	0.763
Factor4	0.546	0.053	0.091	0.854
Factor5	0.493	0.110	0.082	0.936
Factor6	0.383	.	0.064	1.000

Table C.5

Factor loadings flexible work schedules

Variable	Factor1	Factor2	Uniqueness
Q3_std	0.699	0.174	0.481
Q5_std	0.720	-0.324	0.377
Q6_std	0.734	-0.414	0.290
Q7_std	0.756	-0.353	0.305
remote_hours_std	0.488	0.697	0.276
Q60_std	0.555	0.616	0.312

Task complexity

As shown in Tables C.6 and C.7, two significant factors accounted for 45.7% of the variance (Factor 1 = 30.3%; Factor 2 = 15.4%). Items Q13_std and Q15_std loaded strongly on Factor 1, while Q16_std exhibited a weaker loading.

Table C.6*Eigenvalues task complexity*

Factor	Eigenvalue	Difference	Proportion	Cumulative
Factor1	3.334	1.642	0.303	0.303
Factor2	1.692	0.716	0.154	0.457
Factor3	0.975	0.078	0.089	0.546
Factor4	0.897	0.016	0.082	0.627
Factor5	0.882	0.117	0.080	0.707
Factor6	0.765	0.050	0.070	0.777
Factor7	0.715	0.069	0.065	0.842
Factor8	0.646	0.144	0.059	0.901
Factor9	0.502	0.094	0.046	0.946
Factor10	0.408	0.225	0.037	0.983
Factor11	0.183	.	0.017	1.000

Table C.7*Factor loadings task complexity*

Variable	Factor1	Factor2	Uniqueness
Q8_std	0.571	0.222	0.625
Q9_std	0.593	-0.412	0.479
Q11_std	0.462	0.361	0.656
Q12_std	0.443	0.245	0.744
Q13_std	0.681	0.363	0.405
Q14_std	0.418	0.270	0.752
Q15_std	0.643	0.205	0.545
Q16_std	0.400	0.058	0.836
Q17_std	0.583	0.253	0.596
Q56_transformed_std	0.585	-0.689	0.183
Q57_transformed_std	0.594	-0.703	0.154

Employee engagement

Table C.8 and Table C.9 reveal that a single dominant factor explains most of the variance in employee engagement (eigenvalue = 3.040, 99.1% of variance). Items Q18_std through Q22_std show strong loadings (> 0.700), except Q21_std at 0.469.

Table C.8*Eigenvalues employee engagement*

Factor	Eigenvalue	Difference	Proportion	Cumulative
Factor1	3.040	2.720	0.991	0.991
Factor2	0.320	0.337	0.104	1.096
Factor3	-0.017	0.087	-0.006	1.090
Factor4	-0.104	0.069	-0.034	1.056
Factor5	-0.173	.	-0.056	1.000

Table C.9*Factor loadings employee engagement*

Variable	Factor1	Factor2	Uniqueness
Q18_std	0.862	-0.187	0.221
Q19_std	0.888	-0.228	0.159
Q20_std	0.852	-0.022	0.273
Q21_std	0.469	0.408	0.614
Q22_std	0.749	0.257	0.373

Task performance

A six-factor solution for task performance explained only 29.3% of the variance across the first two factors, as shown in Tables C.10 and C.11. Items Q28_std and Q41_std displayed stronger loadings, but many items exhibited high uniqueness, hinting at a complex, multidimensional structure.

Table C.10*Eigenvalues task performance*

Factor	Eigenvalue	Difference	Proportion	Cumulative
Factor1	2.691	0.688	0.168	0.168
Factor2	2.003	0.386	0.125	0.293
Factor3	1.617	0.258	0.101	0.394
Factor4	1.359	0.163	0.085	0.479
Factor5	1.196	0.052	0.075	0.554
Factor6	1.144	0.155	0.072	0.626
Factor7	0.989	0.030	0.062	0.687
Factor8	0.959	0.147	0.060	0.747
Factor9	0.813	0.163	0.051	0.798

Factor10	0.649	0.032	0.041	0.839
Factor11	0.617	0.012	0.039	0.877
Factor12	0.605	0.079	0.038	0.915
Factor13	0.526	0.078	0.033	0.948
Factor14	0.448	0.063	0.028	0.976
Factor15	0.384	0.384	0.024	1.000
Factor16	0.000	.	0.000	1.000

Table C.11*Factor loadings task performance*

Variable	Factor1	Factor2	Factor3	Factor4	Factor5	Factor6	Uniqueness
Q23_std	0.187	0.727	0.104	0.204	-0.075	0.044	0.377
Q24_std	0.328	0.660	-0.146	-0.035	0.072	-0.123	0.414
Q25_std	0.274	0.280	-0.343	-0.358	-0.365	-0.331	0.358
Q28_std	0.797	-0.198	-0.340	0.414	0.078	0.038	0.031
Q26_transformed_std	0.252	-0.183	0.640	0.114	0.214	-0.101	0.425
Q27_transformed_std	0.251	0.203	0.468	0.188	0.261	-0.361	0.443
Q28_std	0.797	-0.198	-0.340	0.414	0.078	0.038	0.031
Q41_std	0.534	0.292	-0.229	-0.430	-0.077	0.113	0.374
Q43_percentage_std	0.379	-0.242	0.091	-0.459	0.226	0.341	0.412
Q44_1_std	-0.197	0.046	-0.161	0.407	-0.261	0.311	0.603
Q44_2_std	0.596	-0.264	0.399	-0.011	-0.135	0.019	0.398
Q44_3_std	0.110	0.249	0.298	-0.056	-0.185	-0.094	0.791
Q44_4_std	0.257	0.297	0.226	-0.261	0.200	0.645	0.270
Q44_5_std	0.404	-0.130	0.332	-0.169	-0.480	-0.252	0.387
Q44_6_std	-0.104	0.631	0.233	0.332	-0.013	0.173	0.396
Q44_7_std	-0.011	0.162	-0.241	-0.161	0.691	-0.359	0.283

Creativity

Table C.12 and Table C.13 indicate that creativity loaded onto a single factor, which explained approximately 109.6% of the variance (due to rounding during rotation). Items Q29_std through Q33_std demonstrated strong loadings (e.g., Q31_std = 0.849).

Table C.12*Eigenvalues creativity*

Factor	Eigenvalue	Difference	Proportion	Cumulative
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Factor1	2.891	2.837	1.096	1.096
Factor2	0.055	0.094	0.021	1.116
Factor3	-0.040	0.081	-0.015	1.101
Factor4	-0.121	0.026	-0.046	1.056
Factor5	-0.147	.	-0.056	1.000

Table C.13*Factor loadings creativity*

Variable	Factor1	Uniqueness
Q29_std	0.754	0.432
Q30_std	0.776	0.398
Q31_std	0.849	0.280
Q32_std	0.617	0.620
Q33_std	0.788	0.379

Psychological well-being

Table C.14 and Table C.15 illustrate that two major factors emerged for psychological well-being. Q40_std loaded the most strongly at 0.732, while Q38_std also performed well at 0.702. The other items showed moderate contributions (0.406–0.588).

Table C.14*Eigenvalues psychological well-being*

Factor	Eigenvalue	Difference	Proportion	Cumulative
Factor1	1.964	1.602	1.063	1.063
Factor2	0.361	0.317	0.196	1.259
Factor3	0.044	0.146	0.024	1.283
Factor4	-0.102	0.081	-0.055	1.227
Factor5	-0.183	0.055	-0.099	1.129
Factor6	-0.237	.	-0.129	1.000

Table C.15*Factor loadings psychological well-being*

Variable	Factor1	Uniqueness
Q35_std	0.456	0.792
Q36_std	0.406	0.835

Q37_std	0.465	0.784
Q38_std	0.702	0.507
Q39_std	0.588	0.654
Q40_std	0.732	0.465

iii. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

A CFA was conducted for each latent variable to validate the factor structures indicated by the EFA.

Flexible work schedules

Table C.16 summarizes the CFA for flexible work schedules. Items Q3_std, Q5_std, Q6_std, and Q7_std revealed strong loadings (0.534–0.760). The items remote_hours_std and Q60_std displayed comparatively moderate loadings, implying their lesser contributions to the underlying factor, though both remained significant ($p < 0.001$).

Table C.16

CFA flexible work schedules

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	z-value	p-value
Q3_std				
FlexibleFactor	0.534	0.083	6.460	0.000
_cons	-0.016	0.094	-0.170	0.864
Q5_std				
FlexibleFactor	0.668	0.068	9.870	0.000
_cons	0.013	0.094	0.140	0.888
Q6_std				
FlexibleFactor	0.738	0.061	12.010	0.000
_cons	0.033	0.094	0.350	0.728
Q7_std				
FlexibleFactor	0.760	0.060	12.690	0.000
_cons	-0.002	0.094	-0.020	0.982
remote_hours_std				
FlexibleFactor	0.281	0.101	2.780	0.005
_cons	-0.036	0.094	-0.380	0.705
Q60_std				
FlexibleFactor	0.345	0.098	3.530	0.000
_cons	-0.013	0.094	-0.130	0.894

Task complexity

Table C.17 shows the CFA loadings for task complexity (ComplexityFactor). All items load significantly ($p < .001$) but vary in magnitude (0.338–0.633). Notably, Q16_std loads at 0.338, reflecting a weaker, albeit significant, association.

Table C.17*CFA task complexity*

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	z-value	p-value
Q8_std				
ComplexityFactor	0.505	0.087	5.780	0.000
_cons	0.044	0.094	0.470	0.639
Q9_std				
ComplexityFactor	0.517	0.096	5.380	0.000
_cons	-0.036	0.094	-0.380	0.701
Q11_std				
ComplexityFactor	0.404	0.099	4.090	0.000
_cons	0.020	0.094	0.210	0.834
Q12_std				
ComplexityFactor	0.366	0.096	3.810	0.000
_cons	0.022	0.094	0.240	0.812
Q13_std				
ComplexityFactor	0.633	0.089	7.090	0.000
_cons	0.019	0.094	0.200	0.842
Q14_std				
ComplexityFactor	0.355	0.098	3.640	0.000
_cons	0.016	0.094	0.170	0.864
Q15_std				
ComplexityFactor	0.593	0.082	7.260	0.000
_cons	0.006	0.094	0.060	0.949
Q16_std				
ComplexityFactor	0.338	0.096	3.500	0.000
_cons	-0.007	0.094	-0.070	0.943
Q17_std				
ComplexityFactor	0.515	0.087	5.920	0.000
_cons	-0.014	0.094	-0.150	0.880
Q56_transformed_std				
ComplexityFactor	0.507	0.117	4.340	0.000
_cons	-0.013	0.094	-0.140	0.892
Q57_transformed_std				
ComplexityFactor	0.516	0.117	4.410	0.000

_cons	0.002	0.094	0.020	0.985
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Employee engagement

As documented in Table C.18, four of the five engagement items loaded strongly onto the latent factor (0.700–0.928). Q21_std loaded somewhat lower at 0.390 but remained significant. This pattern aligns with the EFA findings.

Table C.18

CFA employee engagement

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	z-value	p-value
Q18_std				
EngagementFactor	0.890	0.025	35.570	0.000
_cons	0.010	0.094	0.110	0.912
Q19_std				
EngagementFactor	0.928	0.021	45.030	0.000
_cons	0.038	0.094	0.400	0.688
Q20_std				
EngagementFactor	0.855	0.030	28.270	0.000
_cons	0.040	0.094	0.430	0.669
Q21_std				
EngagementFactor	0.390	0.084	4.640	0.000
_cons	0.048	0.094	0.510	0.610
Q22_std				
EngagementFactor	0.700	0.052	13.330	0.000
_cons	0.032	0.094	0.340	0.731

Task performance

Table C.19 presents the CFA outcomes for task performance. Loadings ranged from 0.056–0.607, confirming earlier reliability concerns (Cronbach's alpha = 0.593). This suggests that the scale may capture varied aspects of performance or overlap with attitudes like engagement.

Table C.19

CFA task performance

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	z-value	p-value
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Q23_std				
PerformanceFactor	0.381	0.184	2.070	0.039
_cons	0.042	0.094	0.450	0.653
Q24_std				
PerformanceFactor	0.495	0.180	2.750	0.006
_cons	-0.002	0.094	-0.020	0.981
Q25_std				
PerformanceFactor	0.343	0.117	2.920	0.004
_cons	0.024	0.094	0.250	0.802
Q28_std				
PerformanceFactor	0.333	0.140	2.370	0.018
_cons	0.116	0.094	1.220	0.221
Q26_transformed_std				
PerformanceFactor	0.086	0.152	0.560	0.573
_cons	0.033	0.094	0.350	0.723
Q27_transformed_std				
PerformanceFactor	0.209	0.128	1.640	0.102
_cons	0.035	0.094	0.370	0.711
Q41_std				
PerformanceFactor	0.607	0.119	5.120	0.000
_cons	0.048	0.094	0.510	0.610
Q43_percentage_std				
PerformanceFactor	0.226	0.167	1.360	0.175
_cons	0.000	0.094	0.000	0.997
Q44_1_std				
PerformanceFactor	-0.160	0.129	-1.230	0.217
_cons	-0.045	0.094	-0.480	0.634
Q44_2_std				
PerformanceFactor	0.311	0.194	1.600	0.109
_cons	0.029	0.094	0.300	0.761
Q44_3_std				
PerformanceFactor	0.158	0.121	1.300	0.192
_cons	-0.005	0.094	-0.050	0.960
Q44_4_std				
PerformanceFactor	0.325	0.113	2.880	0.004
_cons	0.012	0.094	0.120	0.902

Q44_5_std				
PerformanceFactor	0.269	0.152	1.770	0.076
_cons	-0.030	0.094	-0.320	0.746
Q44_6_std				
PerformanceFactor	0.112	0.202	0.550	0.579
_cons	-0.048	0.094	-0.510	0.612
Q44_7_std				
PerformanceFactor	0.056	0.131	0.430	0.668
_cons	0.014	0.094	0.140	0.885

Creativity

Creativity items (Q29_std to Q33_std) generally had strong standardized loadings between 0.617 and 0.871, as shown in Table C.20. Q32_std was comparatively lower at 0.617 but remained statistically significant, consistent with the EFA results.

Table C.20

CFA creativity

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	z-value	p-value
Q29_std				
CreativityFactor	0.759	0.048	15.970	0.000
_cons	0.011	0.094	0.120	0.908
Q30_std				
CreativityFactor	0.789	0.043	18.320	0.000
_cons	0.015	0.094	0.160	0.873
Q31_std				
CreativityFactor	0.871	0.033	26.270	0.000
_cons	-0.020	0.094	-0.210	0.831
Q32_std				
CreativityFactor	0.617	0.064	9.590	0.000
_cons	-0.015	0.094	-0.160	0.870
Q33_std				
CreativityFactor	0.790	0.043	18.210	0.000
_cons	0.001	0.094	0.010	0.989

Psychological well-being

Table C.21 depicts the CFA for well-being. Item Q40_std exhibited the highest loading (0.789), while Q38_std also loaded strongly (0.690). The remaining items fell in a moderate range but were still significant ($p < 0.001$).

Table C.21

CFA psychological well-being

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	z-value	p-value
Q35_std				
WellbeingFactor	0.459	0.088	5.220	0.000
_cons	0.141	0.095	1.490	0.137
Q36_std				
WellbeingFactor	0.404	0.091	4.420	0.000
_cons	0.135	0.094	1.430	0.153
Q37_std				
WellbeingFactor	0.425	0.098	4.340	0.000
_cons	0.075	0.094	0.790	0.428
Q38_std				
WellbeingFactor	0.690	0.073	9.420	0.000
_cons	0.040	0.094	0.430	0.670
Q39_std				
WellbeingFactor	0.607	0.077	7.910	0.000
_cons	0.050	0.094	0.530	0.598
Q40_std				
WellbeingFactor	0.789	0.064	12.320	0.000
_cons	0.062	0.094	0.660	0.511

iv. Model fit

Reliability analysis

Cronbach's alpha values for the main constructs are displayed in Table C.22. Most scales achieved acceptable reliability (i.e., $\alpha > 0.700$; Nunnally, 1967). The task performance scale fell below 0.600, highlighting the need for interpretive caution.

Table C.22

Reliability analysis

Variable	Items in scale	Cronbach's alpha
Flexible work schedules	6	0.735
Task complexity	11	0.770
Employee engagement	5	0.876
Task performance	15	0.593
Creativity	5	0.871
Psychological well-being	6	0.822

Convergent and discriminant validity

Convergent validity. Convergent validity was examined through the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and Composite Reliability (CR) metrics (Fuller et al., 2015). The AVE is the sum of the square root of the coefficients of the CFA divided by the number of coefficients. The CR is calculated by the sum of the coefficients of CFA divided by the sum of the coefficients plus the error of the square root of the coefficients. Engagement and Creativity demonstrated good convergent validity (AVE > 0.500, CR > 0.700, Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Other constructs had acceptable reliability but lower AVE values, suggesting a need for potential refinement of items or scales.

Table C.23

Convergent validity

Variable	AVE	CR
Flexible work schedules	0.342	0.737
Task complexity	0.236	0.766
Employee engagement	0.605	0.878
Task performance	0.095	0.509
Creativity	0.592	0.878
Psychological well-being	0.337	0.741

Discriminant validity. Discriminant validity was assessed using the Fornell-Larcker criterion. The square root of the AVE for each construct should be greater than its correlations with other constructs. Engagement and flexible work schedules showed good discriminant validity. However, Task performance did not meet the criterion, indicating potential overlap with other constructs such as engagement and well-being. This suggests that the items for task performance may not be distinctly measuring a unique construct and may overlap with other variables.

Table C.24

Correlation matrix

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
1. Flexible work schedules	0.585					
2. Task complexity	0.096	0.486				
3. Employee engagement	0.205	0.340	0.778			
4. Task performance	-0.058	0.058	0.343	0.309		
5. Creativity	0.024	0.381	0.168	-0.063	0.770	
6. Psychological well-being	0.058	0.361	0.481	0.337	0.306	0.580

Note. Diagonal elements (in bold) are the square roots of AVE.

Global model fit. Comparisons to a saturated model yielded moderate misfit ($\chi^2_{ms}(9) = 25.574$, $p = 0.002$). RMSEA exceeded 0.080 (0.128), indicating suboptimal fit. CFI and TLI both fell below 0.900, although the SRMR of 0.072 remained slightly below 0.080. These results indicate potential areas for model refinement but do not wholly invalidate the measurement approach.

Table C.25

Model fit

Fit statistic	Value	Description
chi2_ms (9)	25.574	Model vs. saturated ($p = 0.002$)
chi2_bs (15)	152.095	Baseline vs. saturated ($p = 0.000$)
RMSEA	0.128	Root mean squared error of approximation
RMSEA 90% CI,	(0.071-0.188)	Lower-upper interval
pclose	0.016	Probability RMSEA ≤ 0.050
CFI	0.879	Comparative fit index
TLI	0.799	Tucker–Lewis index
SRMR	0.072	Standardized root mean squared residual

CD	0.793	Coefficient of determination
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v. Sample characteristics

Table C.26 shows that the standardized means are near zero, reflecting the standardization procedure.

Table C.26

Descriptive statistics of key variables

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Flexible work schedules	117	-0.012	0.660	-2.188	1.066
Task complexity	124	0.000	0.550	-1.398	1.555
Employee engagement	124	0.000	0.817	-3.619	1.198
Task performance	120	0.010	0.352	-0.879	0.575
Creativity	123	-0.003	0.814	-2.106	2.073
Psychological well-being	124	0.000	0.727	-4.178	1.142

Correlation analysis

Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated to examine the relationships among key variables, in Table C.27 Psychological well-being has a high positive correlation with employee engagement.

Table C.27

Pearson correlation

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
Flexible work schedules	1					
Task complexity	0.096	1				
Employee engagement	0.205	0.340	1			
Task performance	-0.058	0.058	0.343	1		
Creativity	0.024	0.381	0.168	-0.063	1	
Psychological well-being	0.058	0.361	0.481	0.337	0.306	1

Sample characteristics

The mean age of respondents was 42.896 years (SD=12.684), ranging from 22 to 72 years. Out of 119 respondents, 50 identified as male (42.02%), 66 as female (55.46%), 2 preferred not to say (1.68%), and 1 identified as other (0.84%). Most respondents have more than 10 years of total work experience and varied tenures in their current organizations. Respondents primarily worked in the Government Sector (45.30%), followed by Information Technology (23.93%), and Real Estate and Housing Associations (22.22%).

Table C.28*Cross-tabulation of tenure*

Years of total work experience	Years in current organization					Total
	Less than 1 year	1-3 years	4-6 years	7-10 years	More than 10 years	
Less than 1 year	3	0	0	0	0	3
1-3 years	8	5	0	0	0	13
4-6 years	1	3	3	0	0	7
7-10 years	0	2	6	1	0	9
More than 10 years	10	20	9	10	37	86
Total	22	30	18	11	37	118

Table C.29*Age distribution*

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Age	115	42.896	12.684	22	72

Table C.30*Gender distribution*

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	50	42.02
Female	66	55.46
Prefer not to say	2	1.68
Other	1	0.84
Total	119	100

Table C.31*Industry distribution*

Industry	Frequency	Percent
Information Technology (IT)	29	24.37
Professional Services	6	5.04
Other	1	0.84
Government Sector	56	47.06
Real Estate and Housing Associations	27	22.69
Total	119	100

vi. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis

An SEM was performed to assess both direct and moderating effects of flexible work schedules and task complexity on engagement, performance, creativity, and well-being. Control variables included age, gender, tenure, education, and industry. Full Information Maximum Likelihood (FIML) addressed missing data under missing-at-random assumptions (Enders, 2010).

Engagement

Table C.32 summarizes the SEM results for employee engagement. Both flexible schedules and task complexity displayed significant positive relationships with engagement, though their interaction was non-significant. Various control variables, including age and tenure, also influenced engagement.

Table C.32

SEM results for employee engagement

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	z-value	p-value
Flexible work schedules	0.178	0.097	1.830	0.049
Task complexity	0.200	0.077	2.600	0.009
Interaction effect	-0.012	0.078	-0.150	0.881
Female	0.008	0.095	0.090	0.931
Prefer not to say	-0.032	0.064	-0.500	0.620
Other gender	-0.108	0.082	-1.310	0.190
Medium city	-0.042	0.067	-0.630	0.529
Smaller town	-0.034	0.074	-0.450	0.650
Village	0.059	0.072	0.820	0.413
Rural	0.019	0.077	0.250	0.805
Vmbo-MBO1	-0.010	0.067	-0.150	0.881
Havo, vwo, MBO2-4	-0.181	0.133	-1.360	0.173
Bachelor	-0.147	0.159	-0.930	0.354
Master	-0.174	0.154	-1.130	0.258
Doctorate, PhD	-0.047	0.072	-0.650	0.514
Part time	-0.185	0.077	-2.400	0.016
Self employed	-0.025	0.067	-0.370	0.714
Student	-0.161	0.082	-1.970	0.049
Experience 1-3 years	0.029	0.107	0.270	0.790
Experience 4-6 years	-0.004	0.097	-0.040	0.965

Experience 7-10 years	-0.015	0.111	-0.130	0.894
More than 10 years	0.096	0.159	0.600	0.548
Tenure 1-3 years	0.326	0.115	2.840	0.005
Tenure 4-6 years	0.200	0.103	1.950	0.051
Tenure 7-10 years	0.095	0.084	1.130	0.258
Tenure more than 10 years	0.329	0.117	2.800	0.005
Government sector	-0.134	0.110	-1.210	0.224
Professional services	0.049	0.076	0.650	0.514
Real estate	-0.056	0.093	-0.610	0.544
Other industry	0.057	0.065	0.880	0.380
Finance, accounting	0.051	0.083	0.620	0.536
HR	0.045	0.066	0.680	0.497
IT department	-0.231	0.082	-2.840	0.005
Operations	0.075	0.071	1.060	0.290
Sales	-0.054	0.088	-0.610	0.543
R&D	-0.107	0.084	-1.280	0.200
Customer services	0.083	0.070	1.190	0.235
Other department	0.096	0.065	1.470	0.142
Gender	0.425	0.121	3.530	0.000
Constant	0.018	0.288	0.060	0.950

Task performance

Table C.33 indicates that neither flexible schedules nor task complexity predicted self-reported performance significantly. Their interaction also showed no effect. Certain demographic controls, such as age and departmental background, emerged as stronger predictors.

Table C.33

SEM results for task performance

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	z-value	p-value
Flexible work schedules	-0.065	0.112	-0.580	0.560
Task complexity	0.155	0.102	1.520	0.130
Interaction effect	-0.069	0.098	-0.700	0.482
Female	0.052	0.103	0.510	0.612
Prefer not to say	0.100	0.078	1.280	0.201
Other gender	0.139	0.101	1.380	0.166

Medium city	-0.026	0.080	-0.320	0.746
Smaller town	0.040	0.084	0.480	0.634
Village	0.063	0.088	0.720	0.471
Rural	0.206	0.090	2.300	0.021
Vmbo-MBO1	-0.096	0.082	-1.180	0.237
Havo, vwo, MBO2-4	-0.141	0.162	-0.870	0.383
Bachelor	-0.172	0.194	-0.890	0.375
Master	-0.118	0.188	-0.630	0.530
Doctorate, PhD	-0.112	0.086	-1.300	0.192
Part time	0.051	0.092	0.550	0.582
Self employed	-0.077	0.083	-0.930	0.350
Student	0.126	0.094	1.340	0.180
Experience 1-3 years	0.000	0.132	0.000	1.000
Experience 4-6 years	-0.046	0.119	-0.390	0.699
Experience 7-10 years	-0.026	0.136	-0.190	0.850
More than 10 years	0.206	0.192	1.070	0.285
Tenure 1-3 years	-0.036	0.117	-0.310	0.759
Tenure 4-6 years	0.108	0.122	0.880	0.378
Tenure 7-10 years	0.004	0.105	0.040	0.969
Tenure more than 10 years	0.075	0.137	0.550	0.582
Government sector	-0.154	0.131	-1.180	0.238
Professional services	-0.120	0.092	-1.300	0.193
Real estate	-0.075	0.113	-0.660	0.510
Other industry	-0.069	0.079	-0.870	0.382
Finance, accounting	0.095	0.088	1.080	0.281
HR	-0.032	0.081	-0.390	0.694
IT department	-0.053	0.085	-0.630	0.532
Operations	0.007	0.087	0.070	0.940
Sales	-0.270	0.106	-2.550	0.011
R&D	-0.092	0.095	-0.970	0.332
Customer services	-0.056	0.084	-0.670	0.504
Other department	0.103	0.079	1.300	0.194
Gender	0.417	0.143	2.920	0.003
Constant	-0.860	0.697	-1.230	0.217

Creativity

Task complexity positively influenced creativity ($\beta = 0.299$, $p = 0.001$), whereas flexible schedules alone were non-significant. Table C.34 details these findings along with the role of certain controls (e.g., industry type, tenure).

Table C.34

SEM results for creativity

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	z-value	p-value
Flexible work schedules	0.137	0.107	1.280	0.202
Task complexity	0.299	0.089	3.350	0.001
Interaction effect	0.007	0.095	0.070	0.940
Female	0.037	0.098	0.370	0.710
Prefer not to say	0.135	0.077	1.770	0.077
Other gender	-0.008	0.097	-0.090	0.931
Medium city	-0.137	0.076	-1.790	0.074
Smaller town	-0.122	0.081	-1.510	0.130
Village	0.145	0.087	1.660	0.097
Rural	-0.250	0.087	-2.890	0.004
Vmbo-MBO1	0.019	0.079	0.240	0.808
Havo, vwo, MBO2-4	0.155	0.154	1.010	0.313
Bachelor	0.023	0.184	0.130	0.900
Master	0.144	0.179	0.810	0.420
Doctorate, PhD	-0.022	0.083	-0.270	0.790
Part time	-0.055	0.088	-0.630	0.530
Self employed	-0.098	0.080	-1.230	0.219
Student	0.070	0.091	0.770	0.438
Experience 1-3 years	-0.197	0.127	-1.550	0.120
Experience 4-6 years	-0.008	0.115	-0.070	0.943
Experience 7-10 years	-0.044	0.131	-0.340	0.737
More than 10 years	-0.122	0.186	-0.660	0.510
Tenure 1-3 years	-0.053	0.114	-0.470	0.640
Tenure 4-6 years	-0.260	0.115	-2.260	0.024
Tenure 7-10 years	0.015	0.100	0.150	0.877
Tenure more than 10 years	-0.141	0.130	-1.080	0.280
Government sector	0.005	0.127	0.040	0.971
Professional services	0.223	0.090	2.480	0.013

Real estate	0.086	0.116	0.740	0.458
Other industry	-0.084	0.077	-1.100	0.271
Finance, accounting	-0.134	0.081	-1.660	0.096
HR	-0.019	0.078	-0.250	0.805
IT department	0.085	0.081	1.040	0.296
Operations	0.173	0.084	2.050	0.040
Sales	-0.012	0.101	-0.110	0.909
R&D	-0.008	0.095	-0.090	0.932
Customer services	0.021	0.082	0.260	0.798
Other department	-0.017	0.077	-0.230	0.821
Gender	0.174	0.103	1.690	0.090
Constant	0.285	0.313	0.910	0.362

Psychological well-being

Table C.35 shows that flexible schedules ($\beta = 0.263$, $p = 0.005$) and task complexity ($\beta = 0.192$, $p = 0.021$) both fostered well-being; however, the interaction term was non-significant. Controls such as part-time status and student status also exhibited notable coefficients.

Table C.35

SEM results for psychological well-being

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	z-value	p-value
Flexible work schedules	0.263	0.094	2.810	0.005
Task complexity	0.192	0.083	2.310	0.021
Interaction effect	-0.096	0.080	-1.190	0.233
Female	0.120	0.080	1.490	0.137
Prefer not to say	0.013	0.061	0.220	0.829
Other gender	-0.060	0.079	-0.770	0.444
Medium city	-0.079	0.062	-1.270	0.205
Smaller town	0.087	0.066	1.320	0.186
Village	0.067	0.069	0.970	0.334
Rural	0.078	0.071	1.110	0.266
Vmbo-MBO1	-0.020	0.064	-0.320	0.748
Havo, vwo, MBO2-4	0.004	0.128	0.030	0.977
Bachelor	0.001	0.154	0.010	0.994
Master	0.078	0.151	0.520	0.603

Doctorate, PhD	-0.035	0.068	-0.520	0.601
Part time	-0.190	0.073	-2.610	0.009
Self employed	-0.021	0.066	-0.320	0.747
Student	0.362	0.079	4.570	0.000
Experience 1-3 years	-0.127	0.106	-1.210	0.227
Experience 4-6 years	0.016	0.093	0.170	0.866
Experience 7-10 years	-0.020	0.107	-0.190	0.853
More than 10 years	-0.088	0.152	-0.580	0.561
Tenure 1-3 years	0.214	0.095	2.260	0.024
Tenure 4-6 years	0.046	0.098	0.480	0.635
Tenure 7-10 years	0.143	0.085	1.690	0.092
Tenure more than 10 years	0.296	0.110	2.700	0.007
Government sector	-0.306	0.105	-2.910	0.004
Professional services	-0.002	0.073	-0.030	0.976
Real estate	-0.189	0.090	-2.100	0.036
Other industry	0.015	0.062	0.240	0.812
Finance, accounting	0.038	0.065	0.580	0.564
HR	0.033	0.063	0.520	0.605
IT department	-0.006	0.065	-0.080	0.932
Operations	0.128	0.069	1.850	0.064
Sales	-0.030	0.082	-0.360	0.716
R&D	-0.016	0.074	-0.220	0.823
Customer services	0.084	0.066	1.270	0.203
Other department	0.134	0.063	2.130	0.034
Gender	0.475	0.122	3.890	0.000
Constant	-0.040	0.289	-0.140	0.889

vii. Regression analysis

A supplementary multiple regression analysis, presented in Table C.36, partially aligns with the main SEM findings. The interaction between task complexity and flexible work schedules emerged as negative and significant ($\beta = -0.562$, $p = 0.006$), indicating that high task complexity can mitigate certain advantages of flexibility. This result echoes the JD-R framework premise that heavy demands can offset resource benefits. In addition, flexible work schedules continued to bolster psychological well-being ($\beta = 0.245$, $p = 0.046$), mirroring the SEM outcome. However, neither performance nor creativity reached significance ($p > 0.050$), reinforcing the broader SEM conclusion that flexibility does not uniformly enhance all performance-related dimensions. Engagement did also not reach significance. Certain controls – such as self-employment ($\beta = 0.917$, $p = 0.011$) and specific industry sectors (e.g., government, real estate) – also displayed notable coefficients. Taken together, the regression analysis corroborates the primary SEM results, emphasizing that while flexible schedules elevate well-being, their impact on performance and creativity remains more nuanced.

Table C.36

Regression with moderation effect

Variable	Coefficient	Standard error	t-value	p-value
Task complexity	-0.108	0.130	-0.830	0.409
Interaction effect	-0.562	0.197	-2.850	0.006
Engagement	0.058	0.097	0.600	0.552
Task performance	-0.358	0.188	-1.910	0.061
Creativity	0.041	0.081	0.510	0.615
Psychological well-being	0.245	0.121	2.030	0.046
Age	0.004	0.009	0.500	0.616
Female	-0.391	0.147	-2.670	0.010
Prefer not to say	0.300	0.422	0.710	0.480
Other gender	-0.029	0.760	-0.040	0.970
Medium town	0.038	0.220	0.170	0.864
Smaller town	0.045	0.172	0.260	0.794
Village	-0.205	0.154	-1.330	0.188
Rural	0.097	0.219	0.440	0.659
HAVO, VWO, MBO2-4	0.119	0.554	0.220	0.830
Bachelor (HBO/WO)	0.351	0.556	0.630	0.531
Master (HBO/WO)	0.127	0.561	0.230	0.821
Doctorate, PhD	0.827	0.793	1.040	0.301

Other	0.355	0.703	0.510	0.615
Employed part time	0.149	0.148	1.010	0.316
Self-employed	0.917	0.349	2.620	0.011
Student	-1.861	0.578	-3.220	0.002
1-3 years experience	0.214	0.361	0.590	0.555
4-6 years experience	-0.763	0.403	-1.890	0.063
7-10 years experience	-0.609	0.426	-1.430	0.158
More than 10 years	-0.274	0.405	-0.680	0.502
1-3 years tenure	-0.122	0.218	-0.560	0.577
4-6 years tenure	0.336	0.264	1.270	0.208
7-10 years tenure	0.198	0.270	0.730	0.466
More than 10 years tenure	0.184	0.238	0.770	0.442
Professional Services	-0.566	0.458	-1.230	0.222
Other industry	-0.003	0.272	-0.010	0.993
Government Sector	0.552	0.182	3.030	0.003
Real Estate	0.535	0.185	2.890	0.005
Human Resources	0.392	0.298	1.320	0.193
Finance and Accounting	-0.131	0.296	-0.440	0.660
Operations	0.095	0.298	0.320	0.751
Sales	0.611	0.558	1.090	0.278
Research & Development	-0.150	0.227	-0.660	0.512
Other department	-0.003	0.209	-0.020	0.988
Administration and Support Services	-0.201	0.251	-0.800	0.426
Customer Service	-0.595	0.274	-2.170	0.034
Constant	-0.342	0.647	-0.530	0.599

Table C.37*Regression without moderation effect*

Variable	Coefficient	Standard error	t-value	p-value
Task complexity	-0.018	0.143	-0.120	0.902
Interaction effect				
Engagement	0.061	0.104	0.590	0.556
Task performance	-0.304	0.196	-1.550	0.126
Creativity	-0.007	0.088	-0.080	0.940
Psychological well-being	0.330	0.125	2.640	0.010

Age	-0.008	0.009	-0.890	0.379
Female	-0.411	0.154	-2.670	0.010
Prefer not to say	0.336	0.441	0.760	0.449
Other gender	0.182	0.794	0.230	0.820
Medium town	-0.025	0.230	-0.110	0.913
Smaller town	0.049	0.182	0.270	0.789
Village	-0.159	0.172	-0.920	0.360
Rural	0.154	0.232	0.660	0.511
HAVO, VWO, MBO2-4	0.446	0.588	0.760	0.451
Bachelor (HBO/WO)	0.483	0.584	0.830	0.411
Master (HBO/WO)	0.336	0.588	0.570	0.569
Doctorate, PhD	1.165	0.846	1.380	0.173
Other	0.800	0.735	1.090	0.281
Employed part time	0.228	0.162	1.400	0.165
Self-employed	1.123	0.430	2.610	0.011
Student	-2.612	0.555	-4.710	0.000
1-3 years experience	0.395	0.390	1.010	0.315
4-6 years experience	-0.592	0.427	-1.390	0.170
7-10 years experience	-0.433	0.457	-0.950	0.348
More than 10 years	-0.022	0.420	-0.050	0.959
1-3 years tenure	-0.260	0.238	-1.090	0.278
4-6 years tenure	0.285	0.277	1.030	0.309
7-10 years tenure	0.091	0.290	0.320	0.754
More than 10 years tenure	0.122	0.252	0.490	0.629
Professional Services	-0.217	0.476	-0.460	0.650
Other industry	0.096	0.293	0.330	0.746
Government Sector	0.642	0.203	3.160	0.002
Real Estate	0.485	0.202	2.400	0.019
Human Resources	0.215	0.314	0.690	0.495
Finance and Accounting	-0.343	0.329	-1.040	0.301
Operations	-0.228	0.306	-0.750	0.458
Sales	0.361	0.599	0.600	0.549
Research & Development	-0.232	0.240	-0.970	0.336
Other department	-0.098	0.229	-0.430	0.671
Administration and Support Services	-0.409	0.267	-1.540	0.130

Customer Service	-0.713	0.302	-2.360	0.021
Constant	-0.620	0.745	-0.830	0.408