

# THE IMPACT OF WORK-FROM-HOME ON WORK-LIFE BALANCE: A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS (2012-2025)

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## ABSTRACT

This study presents a comprehensive bibliometric analysis of research examining the relationship between work-life balance (WLB) and work-from-home (WFH) arrangements published between 2012 and 2025. Using Web of Science as the primary database, the analysis is conducted on 89 articles identified through the search terms "Work Life Balance" OR "WLB" AND "Work from Home" OR "WFH". The publication trend reveals a significant surge in scholarly interest following the COVID-19 pandemic, with peak productivity observed in 2022 (28 publications), followed by continued substantial output in subsequent years. Sustainability emerged as the leading publication venue (6.74% of articles), with PLOS ONE ranking second (5.62%). The institutional analysis identified the Swinburne University of Technology as the most productive institution (4.49% of publications). Geographically, research contributions were dominated by the United States (28.09%), followed by India (14.61%) and Australia (11.24%), with notable citation impact from studies originating in the Netherlands (456 citations). VOSviewer is applied to analyse and visualise research collaboration networks and keyword co-occurrence patterns using Web of Science data. The citation analysis demonstrates remarkable growth in scholarly influence, from minimal citations in 2012 to 1,622 total citations by 2025, with an average of 18.22 citations per article and an h-index of 19. Keyword co-occurrence analysis confirms the central focus on COVID-19 (43 occurrences), work-life balance (31), work from home (24), and telework (22), with emerging emphasis on stress, family conflict, satisfaction, mental health, and burnout. This bibliometric assessment highlights the rapid evolution and increasing scholarly importance of research examining the relationship between remote work arrangements and work-life balance in the contemporary workplace environment.

**Keywords:** Work-life balance, Work from home, COVID-19, Bibliometric analysis

## INTRODUCTION

The relationship between work-life balance (WLB) and work-from-home (WFH) arrangements has become a critical area of inquiry, particularly following the global COVID-19 pandemic that forced unprecedented shifts in workplace dynamics. This sudden transition to remote work challenged traditional work paradigms and prompted scholars across disciplines to investigate the implications for employees' well-being, productivity, and work-life integration. As organisations and employees navigate the evolving landscape of remote and hybrid work arrangements, understanding the scholarly discourse surrounding WLB and WFH has become increasingly important.

Bibliometric analysis offers a powerful methodology to map the intellectual structure, evolution, and impact of research in this domain. By quantitatively analysing publication patterns, citation networks, authorship collaborations, and thematic trends, bibliometric studies provide valuable insights into the state of knowledge and research directions in a particular field. This approach is particularly valuable for emerging interdisciplinary domains like the WLB-WFH nexus, which spans organisational psychology, management studies, public health, technology adoption, and gender studies.

This study aims to conduct a comprehensive bibliometric analysis of the research examining the relationship between work-life balance and work-from-home arrangements published between 2012 and 2025. By analysing publication trends, leading journals, institutional contributions, geographical distribution, citation impact, and keyword co-occurrences, this research seeks to map the intellectual landscape of this rapidly evolving field and identify key research themes, gaps, and future directions.

## METHODOLOGY

### 1.1 Data Collection

The data for this bibliometric analysis was retrieved from the Web of Science (WoS) database, which is widely recognised for its comprehensive coverage of high-quality scholarly literature across disciplines. The initial search strategy employed the search terms "Work-Life Balance" AND "Work from Home" within the Topic Search (TS) field, which includes titles, abstracts, and keywords. This preliminary search yielded only 90 documents. To ensure a more

comprehensive dataset, the search strategy was refined to include related terminology: TS = (("Work-Life Balance" OR "WLB") AND ("Work from Home" OR "WFH")). This expanded search retrieved 97 documents published between 2012 and 2025.

After filtering by document type, 89 research articles were selected for analysis, excluding early access papers (7), review articles (6), and book reviews (2) to ensure consistency in the analysed corpus. The data collection was conducted on March 25, 2025, capturing publications up to this date.

### 1.2 Analytical Tools and Procedures

The bibliometric analysis was conducted using VOSviewer (version 1.6.18), a software tool specifically designed for constructing and visualising bibliometric networks. VOSviewer was employed to analyse:

1. Publication trends over time
2. Journal productivity and impact
3. Institutional contributions
4. Country-wise distribution and international collaborations
5. Author productivity
6. Citation patterns and impact
7. Keyword co-occurrence networks

The bibliographic data extracted from the Web of Science was imported into VOSviewer to generate various visualisation maps. For the keyword co-occurrence analysis, a minimum threshold of occurrences was established to identify the most prominent themes in the literature. Similarly, thresholds were applied for country collaboration networks to identify significant international research partnerships.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1.3 Publication Trend Analysis

The temporal distribution of publications on work-life balance and work-from-home arrangements demonstrates a remarkable evolution in scholarly interest over the 2012-2025 period (Figure 1). The field remained relatively nascent until 2020, with only one publication in 2012 and five in 2020. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic marked a significant turning point, catalysing exponential growth in research output. The year 2022 witnessed the highest productivity, with 28 publications, accounting for 31.46% of the total corpus. This was followed by 19 publications in 2024 (21.35%) and 15 publications each in 2021 and 2023 (16.85% each).

**Table 1. Annual Publication Distribution (2012-2025)**

Publication Years	2012	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
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Record Count	1	5	15	28	15	19	6
Cumulative	1	6	21	49	64	83	89

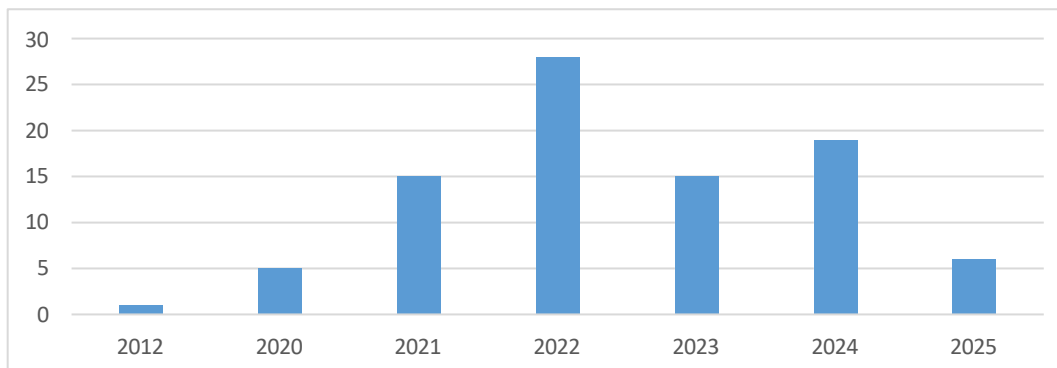


Figure 1. Trend Analysis

The cumulative growth curve illustrates the accelerated expansion of this research domain, particularly in the post-pandemic period. The sharp increase from 2020 onwards indicates the scholarly community's responsive adaptation to addressing the unprecedented global shift to remote work arrangements and their implications for work-life balance. The consistent productivity in recent years (2023-2025) suggests sustained interest in this area as organisations and employees navigate the evolving landscape of hybrid and flexible work arrangements in the post-pandemic era.

#### 1.4 Journal Analysis

The analysis of publication venues reveals a diverse range of journals contributing to the discourse on work-life balance and work-from-home arrangements, spanning management, psychology, health sciences, technology, and sustainability fields (Table 2).

**Table 2. Top Journal Distribution**

Rank	Journal Title	Record Count	% of 89
1	SUSTAINABILITY	6	6.74%
2	PLOS ONE	5	5.62%
3	BMC PUBLIC HEALTH	3	3.37%
3	JOURNAL OF OCCUPATIONAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL MEDICINE	3	3.37%
3	PERSONNEL REVIEW	3	3.37%
4	ECONOMIC COMPUTATION AND ECONOMIC CYBERNETICS STUDIES AND RESEARCH	2	2.25%
4	FRONTIERS IN PSYCHOLOGY	2	2.25%
4	GENDER IN MANAGEMENT	2	2.25%
4	INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH AND PUBLIC HEALTH	2	2.25%
4	JOURNAL OF SYSTEMS AND SOFTWARE	2	2.25%
4	TRAVEL BEHAVIOUR AND SOCIETY	2	2.25%
4	WORK: A JOURNAL OF PREVENTION ASSESSMENT REHABILITATION	2	2.25%
5	ACADEMIC RADIOLOGY	1	1.12%

Sustainability emerges as the leading journal with six publications (6.74%), reflecting the increasing recognition of remote work arrangements as a component of sustainable organisational and societal practices. PLOS ONE ranks second with five publications (5.62%), highlighting the interdisciplinary nature of research in this domain. The prominence of health- focused journals such as BMC Public Health and Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (three publications each, 3.37%) underscores the significant attention to health and well-being implications of remote work arrangements.

The diversity of journals across multiple disciplines indicates the multifaceted nature of the work-life balance and work-from-home nexus, which intersects with environmental sustainability, public health, psychology, management, gender studies, and technology adoption. This interdisciplinary character suggests the complex and multi-layered implications of remote work arrangements for individuals, organisations, and society.

### 1.5 Institutional Contribution Analysis

The analysis of institutional contributions reveals a diverse range of academic institutions actively engaged in research on work-life balance and work-from-home arrangements (Table 3).

**Table 3. Top Contributing Institutions**

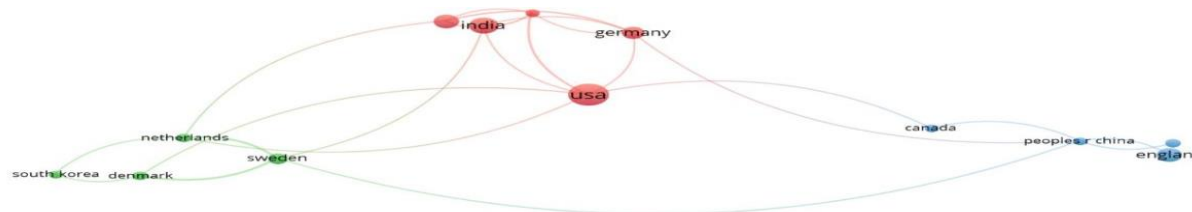
Rank	Institution	Record Count	% of 89
1	SWINBURNE UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY	4	4.49%
2	PENNSYLVANIA COMMONWEALTH SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION (PCSHE)	3	3.37%
3	ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY	2	2.25%
3	BUCHAREST UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMIC STUDIES	2	2.25%
3	HARVARD UNIVERSITY	2	2.25%
3	INDIAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT (IIM) SYSTEM	2	2.25%
3	JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY	2	2.25%
3	KAROLINSKA INSTITUTET	2	2.25%
3	LIVERPOOL JOHN MOORES UNIVERSITY	2	2.25%
3	LUCIAN BLAGA UNIVERSITY OF SIBIU	2	2.25%
3	MONASH UNIVERSITY	2	2.25%
3	PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY	2	2.25%
3	ROYAL MELBOURNE INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY (RMIT)	2	2.25%

Swinburne University of Technology (Australia) emerges as the leading institution with four publications (4.49%), followed by the Pennsylvania Commonwealth System of Higher Education with three publications (3.37%). The institutional landscape is characterised by significant contributions from Australian universities (Swinburne, James Cook, Monash, RMIT), American institutions (Pennsylvania system, Arizona State, Harvard, Penn State), European centres (Bucharest, Karolinska, Liverpool John Moores, Lucian Blaga), and Asian institutions (Indian Institute of Management).

This geographical diversity in institutional contributions reflects the global relevance of work- life balance and work-from-home research. The relatively modest publication counts per institution (maximum of four publications) suggest a dispersed research landscape without dominant institutional players, indicating opportunities for greater institutional specialisation and leadership in this domain.

### 1.6 Country-wise Analysis and International Collaboration

The analysis of country-wise contributions and international collaborations provides insights into the geographical distribution of research on work-life balance and work-from-home arrangements (Table 4).



**Table 4. Country-wise Distribution and Citation Impact**

Rank	Country/Region	Record Count	% of 89	Citation Total	Link Strength	Link
1	USA	25	28.09%	327	9	
2	INDIA	13	14.61%	159	8	
3	AUSTRALIA	10	11.24%	83	9	
3	ENGLAND	10	11.24%	65	1	
5	GERMANY	8	8.99%	127	6	
6	SWEDEN	6	6.74%	171	9	
7	DENMARK	4	4.49%	236	7	
7	NETHERLANDS	4	4.49%	456	8	
7	ROMANIA	4	4.49%	17	1	
10	CANADA	3	3.37%	129	2	
10	MALAYSIA	3	3.37%	11	8	
10	PEOPLES CHINA	R3	3.37%	36	6	
10	SOUTH KOREA	3	3.37%	18	3	
10	SWITZERLAND	3	3.37%	42	0	
15	AUSTRIA	2	2.25%	80	1	

The United States emerges as the dominant contributor with 25 publications (28.09%), followed by India (13 publications, 14.61%), and Australia and England (10 publications each, 11.24%). This distribution reflects the global interest in work-life balance and remote work research, with significant contributions from North America, Asia, Europe, and Oceania.

The citation analysis reveals interesting patterns in the impact of the research. While the Netherlands has only four publications (4.49%), these articles have garnered 456 citations, indicating exceptionally high impact. Similarly, Denmark's four publications have accumulated 236 citations. Sweden, with six publications, has received 171 citations, while India's 13 publications have generated 159 citations. This suggests that research quality and impact do not necessarily correlate with publication volume.

The total link strength metric, which indicates the intensity of international collaboration, shows that the USA, Australia, and Sweden (link strength of 9 each) are most actively engaged in international research partnerships, followed by India and the Netherlands (link strength of 8 each). This suggests a robust international research network addressing the global implications of remote work arrangements for work-life balance.

#### 1.6.1 International Collaboration Network Visualization

The international collaboration network was visualised using VOSviewer to provide a clearer understanding of research partnerships across countries (Figure 2).

**Figure 2. International Collaboration Network Visualization**



The network visualisation in Figure 2 illustrates distinct patterns of international collaboration in work-life balance and work-from-home research. The visualisation reveals three main collaborative clusters distinguished by different colours:

The central red cluster features the USA as a dominant node with strong connections to Germany and several other European countries, demonstrating its pivotal role in facilitating transatlantic research collaborations. The size of the USA node reflects its leading position in publication output (28.09% of all publications) and its high total link strength of 9, confirming its role as a key collaborative hub.

The green cluster comprises the Netherlands, Sweden, and Denmark, illustrating the strong collaborative ties among Nordic and Western European countries. This cluster is particularly notable for its high citation impact, with publications from the Netherlands and Denmark receiving disproportionately high citation counts relative to their publication volume.

The blue cluster includes England, the People's Republic of China, and several other Asian countries, representing another significant collaborative network with growing research contributions in this domain.

The distance between nodes in the visualisation reflects the strength of collaborative relationships, with closer proximity indicating stronger partnerships. The network structure reveals how research on work-life balance and work-from-home arrangements transcends national boundaries, with clear geographical patterns of collaboration that facilitate knowledge exchange across regional research communities.

This visualisation provides compelling evidence of the global and collaborative nature of research in this domain, highlighting the importance of international partnerships in advancing knowledge about the implications of remote work arrangements for work-life balance across diverse cultural and organisational contexts.

## 1.7 Author Analysis

The author's productivity analysis reveals a relatively fragmented research landscape with limited sustained scholarly engagement by individual researchers (Table 5).

**Table 5. Top Contributing Authors**

Rank	Author	Record Count	% of 89
1	Bardoel A	2	2.25%
1	Curtis C	2	2.25%
1	Danut R	2	2.25%
2	Aamir HS	1	1.12%
2	Abdel-aty M	1	1.12%
2	Abubakar IR	1	1.12%
2	Ahmad A	1	1.12%
2	Ahmad Z	1	1.12%
2	Ahmed S	1	1.12%
2	Akbari M	1	1.12%
2	Akhtar S	1	1.12%
2	Akib NAM	1	1.12%
2	Alaka H	1	1.12%

2 Albo Y 1 1.12%

Only three authors (Bardoel A, Curtis C, and Danut R) have contributed two publications each, while the vast majority have contributed just one publication. This pattern suggests that research on work-life balance and work-from-home arrangements is characterised by diverse, one-time contributions rather than sustained scholarly programs by individual researchers. This finding may reflect the emerging and interdisciplinary nature of the field, which attracts contributions from scholars across various disciplines who may not consider this area their primary research focus.

The limited recurrence of individual authors suggests opportunities for developing more sustained research programs focused specifically on the work-life balance and remote work nexus. As the field matures, we may anticipate the emergence of more specialised scholars who consistently contribute to this domain.

### 1.8 Citation Analysis

The citation analysis reveals the scholarly impact and influence of research on work-life balance and work-from-home arrangements (Table 6).

**Table 6. Citation Metrics**

Metric	Value
Total Publications	89
Total Citing Articles	1,447
Citing Articles (without self-citations)	1,425
Total Citations	1,622
Citations (without self-citations)	1,591
Average Citations per Item	18.22
H-index	19

The corpus of 89 publications has generated substantial scholarly impact, receiving 1,622 total citations from 1,447 citing articles. The minimal difference between total citations (1,622) and citations without self-citations (1,591) indicates a healthy citation pattern with limited self-citation practices. The average of 18.22 citations per publication demonstrates considerable scholarly influence, while the h-index of 19 (indicating that 19 papers have been cited at least 19 times each) reflects a significant impact relative to the modest size of the corpus.

**Table 7. Citation Growth by Year**

Year Number Citations	ofCumulative Citations
2012 0	0
2013 1	1
2014 4	5
Year Number Citations	ofCumulative Citations
2015 4	9
2016 7	16
2017 3	19
2018 3	22
2019 8	30
2020 15	45

2021	138	183
2022	392	575
2023	449	1,024
2024	506	1,530
2025	92	1,622

The annual citation distribution reveals a remarkable growth trajectory, particularly from 2020 onwards. Citations increased dramatically from 15 in 2020 to 138 in 2021, followed by 392 in 2022, 449 in 2023, and 506 in 2024. This explosive growth in citations mirrors the surge in research interest following the COVID-19 pandemic and reflects the increasing scholarly and practical relevance of understanding the relationship between work-from-home arrangements and work-life balance.

The citation analysis indicates that research in this domain has not only proliferated but has also gained substantial scholarly influence, reflecting its significance in addressing contemporary workplace challenges in the post-pandemic era.

### 1.9 Keyword Co-occurrence Analysis

The keyword co-occurrence analysis, conducted using VOSviewer, provides insights into the thematic structure and conceptual relationships within the research on work-life balance and work-from-home arrangements (Table 8).

**Table 8. Top Keywords by Occurrence**

Rank	Keyword	Occurrences	Total Strength	Link
1	COVID-19	43	136	
2	work-life balance	31	122	
3	work from home	24	93	
4	telework	22	91	
5	Stress	14	74	
5	working from home	14	46	
7	family conflict	12	50	
7	satisfaction	12	50	
9	job satisfaction	10	35	
Rank	Keyword	Occurrences	Total Strength	Link
9	remote work	10	35	
11	life balance	9	39	
11	pandemic	9	40	
13	gender	8	32	
13	impact	8	35	
13	mental-health	8	32	
16	burnout	7	27	
16	meta-analysis	7	30	
18	behaviour	6	29	

The keyword analysis reveals "COVID-19" as the most frequently occurring term (43 occurrences), highlighting the



pandemic's pivotal role in catalysing research interest in this domain. This is followed by the core concepts of "work-life balance" (31 occurrences), "work from home" (24 occurrences), and "telework" (22 occurrences).

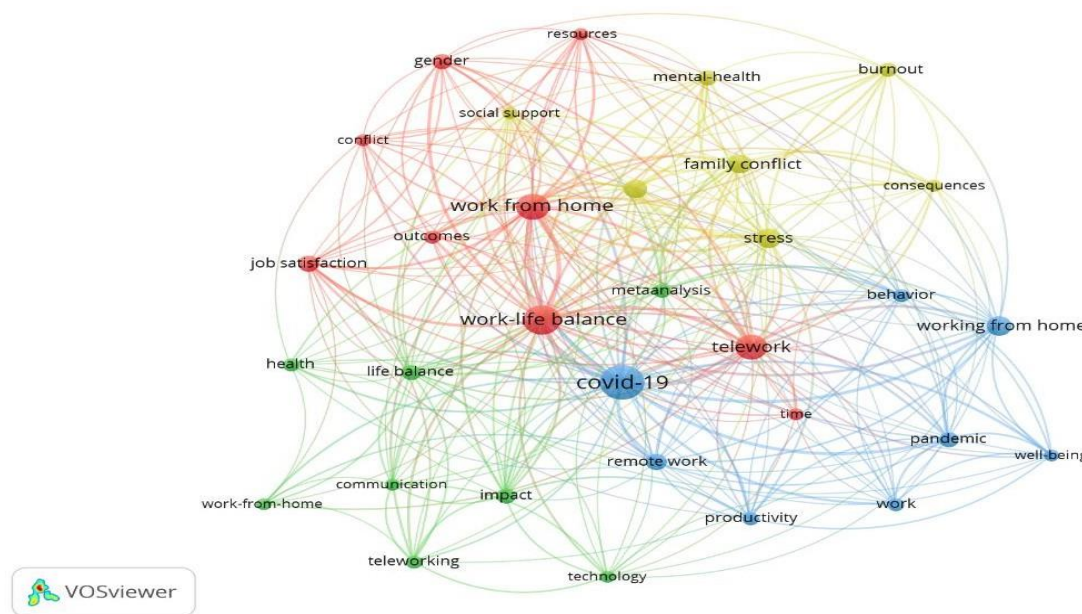
The prominence of terms related to psychological outcomes—"stress" (14 occurrences), "family conflict" (12 occurrences), "satisfaction" (12 occurrences), "job satisfaction" (10 occurrences), "mental health" (8 occurrences), and "burnout" (7 occurrences)—underscores the significant focus on the psychological and wellbeing implications of remote work arrangements. The appearance of "gender" (8 occurrences) indicates attention to the differential impacts of remote work on work-life balance across gender lines.

The total link strength metric, which indicates the frequency of co-occurrence with other terms, shows that "COVID-19" (link strength of 136), "work-life balance" (link strength of 122), and "work from home" (link strength of 93) are most strongly integrated with other concepts in the literature. This suggests that these terms serve as conceptual anchors around which other research themes are organised.

### 1.9.1 Keyword Co-occurrence Network Analysis

Figure 3. presents a comprehensive keyword co-occurrence network analysis that maps the intellectual landscape of work-from-home and work-life balance research from 2012 to 2025. This visualisation, generated using VOSviewer, captures the evolution of this research domain through the co-occurrence patterns of keywords across the published literature. The network illustrates the pre-pandemic research foundations and the significant transformation in research priorities following the COVID-19 outbreak.

Figure 3. Keyword co-occurrence network visualisation of work-from-home and work-life balance research literature (2012-2025).



The keyword co-occurrence network reveals four distinct thematic clusters that characterize the research domain:

- 1. Work-Life Balance Domain (Red Cluster):** Dominated by the central keyword "work-life balance," this cluster encompasses traditional research concerns including "job satisfaction," "gender," "resources," "conflict," and "outcomes." The substantial size of the "work-life balance" node and its extensive connections to other keywords reflect its position as the conceptual foundation of this research field. Notably, the strong connections to gender-

related research indicate persistent scholarly interest in the differential impacts of work arrangements across gender lines. The presence of "social support" within this cluster suggests an emphasis on support mechanisms that facilitate an effective balance between professional and personal responsibilities.

2. **Pandemic-Induced Transformation (Blue Cluster):** Centered around "COVID-19," this cluster captures the pandemic's transformative impact on work arrangements. Keywords such as "remote work," "working from home," "productivity," and "time" demonstrate the research focus on pandemic-driven workplace adaptations. The emergence of this cluster, particularly prominent in literature from 2020 onward, represents a pivotal shift in research priorities. The connections between "COVID-19"

and work arrangement terms illustrate how the pandemic catalysed unprecedented research interest in remote work implementations and their consequences.

3. **Operational and Technological Considerations (Green Cluster):** This cluster aggregates keywords related to "health," "teleworking," "technology," "communication," and "impact." The co-occurrence patterns reveal how technological infrastructure and health considerations became increasingly intertwined in the literature, particularly regarding communication effectiveness and technological adaptation during widespread remote work implementation. The evolution of this cluster demonstrates the growing research emphasis on technological enablers of distributed work arrangements.

4. **Psychosocial Consequences (Yellow Cluster):** Focusing on "burnout" and related psychological impacts, this cluster maps the co-occurrence relationships between "stress," "mental health," "family conflict," and "consequences." The substantial connections to other clusters indicate that psychosocial outcomes have been examined across various contexts of work-from-home arrangements. The prominence of this cluster reflects a growing scholarly concern with the potential negative effects of boundary dissolution between work and personal domains.

The keyword co-occurrence analysis demonstrates significant temporal evolution in research priorities. Prior to 2020, the network showed a stronger emphasis on traditional work-life balance concepts with limited attention to remote work arrangements. Post-2020, there has been a notable expansion in COVID-19-related research, with intensified co-occurrence between pandemic-related keywords and both technological and psychosocial clusters. This shift illustrates how research priorities rapidly responded to the global work-from-home experiment precipitated by the pandemic.

Particularly noteworthy is the centrality of "meta-analysis" within the network, indicating the field's maturation with sufficient primary studies to support synthetic research approaches. The strong connections between work-life balance and burnout-related keywords suggest robust scholarly attention to the psychological consequences of boundary management challenges in remote work contexts.

This keyword co-occurrence visualisation effectively maps the conceptual architecture of work-from-home research as it relates to work-life balance, revealing both the established research trajectories and emerging thematic priorities that have characterised this rapidly evolving domain from 2012 through 2025.

## CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

This bibliometric analysis provides a comprehensive mapping of the research landscape on work-life balance and work-from-home arrangements from 2012 to 2025. The findings reveal several key insights:

1. **Pandemic-Driven Research Evolution:** The COVID-19 pandemic served as a critical inflexion point, catalysing exponential growth in research output and citations. The field expanded from a nascent research area to a vibrant domain with significant scholarly impact within a remarkably short period.

2. **Interdisciplinary Character:** The diverse range of journals, institutions, and thematic clusters indicates the inherently interdisciplinary nature of this research domain, spanning organisational psychology, management, public health, gender studies, and sustainability.

3. **Global Scholarly Engagement:** The geographical distribution of research contributions demonstrates global engagement, with significant contributions from North America, Europe, Asia, and Oceania, reflecting the universal relevance of work-life balance challenges in remote work contexts.

4. **Psychological Focus:** The prominence of psychological well-being themes in the keyword analysis suggests a dominant focus on the mental health and psychosocial implications of remote work arrangements.
5. **Methodological Evolution:** The emergence of meta-analysis as a significant keyword indicates the field's methodological maturation, with scholars beginning to synthesise the growing body of empirical evidence.

Based on these findings, several promising directions for future research emerge:

1. **Longitudinal Studies:** As the immediate pandemic response gives way to more normalised hybrid work arrangements, longitudinal studies examining the evolving impacts on work-life balance will be valuable.
2. **Cultural and Contextual Factors:** More research is needed to understand how cultural, economic, and organisational contexts moderate the relationship between remote work and work-life balance outcomes.
3. **Technological Mediators:** Greater attention to the role of specific technologies, digital tools, and virtual collaboration platforms in shaping work-life balance dynamics would enrich the field.
4. **Policy and Intervention Research:** Future studies should focus on evidence-based interventions, policies, and practices that effectively support work-life balance in remote and hybrid work contexts.
5. **Theoretical Integration:** The field would benefit from stronger theoretical integration, moving beyond descriptive studies to develop more comprehensive theoretical frameworks explaining the complex interactions between remote work arrangements and work-life balance.

This bibliometric analysis provides a foundation for understanding the current state of knowledge in this rapidly evolving field and identifies promising avenues for future scholarly inquiry. As organisations and societies continue to navigate the changing landscape of work arrangements, research on work-life balance in remote work contexts will remain critical for informing evidence-based practices and policies.

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