A Social Comparison Perspective to Study Negative Effects of Telework

Christian Maier  
*University of Bamberg*, christian.maier@uni-bamberg.de

Sven Laumer  
*University of Nuremberg*, sven.laumer@fau.de

Caroline Oehlhorn  
*University of Bamberg*, caroline.oehlhorn@uni-bamberg.de

Tim Weitzel  
*University of Bamberg*, tim.weitzel@uni-bamberg.de

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Completed Research Paper

Christian Maier
University of Bamberg
christian.maier@uni-bamberg.de

Sven Laumer
University of Nuremberg
sven.laumer@fau.de

Caroline Oehlhorn
University of Bamberg
caroline.oehlhorn@uni-bamberg.de

Tim Weitzel
University of Bamberg
tim.weitzel@uni-bamberg.de

Abstract

Telework is indisputably important for establishing a positive work-life-balance for employees. Teleworkers are less stressed and more satisfied by work implying turnover intentions that are below half of those of regular office workers. However, recent practical indications suggest that there is also a dark side of telework, meaning that telework has adverse effects for office workers, who, among others, develop feelings of envy. To study these adverse effects for office workers, we use social comparison theory and suggest that a disparity of telework causes negative emotions and adverse behaviors. In developing our research model, we posit that office workers become envy, dissatisfied with their job, develop turnover intentions and perform worse. An empirical study with 269 employees working in one organization with telework arrangements confirms the hypothesized relationships. Therewith, this study contributes to telework research by providing an interpersonal perspective on telework and revealing that there is a dark side of telework for office workers, which organizations should account for to prevent employees from developing adverse emotions and behaviors.

Keywords: Telework, interpersonal, social comparison theory, dark side, turnover intention