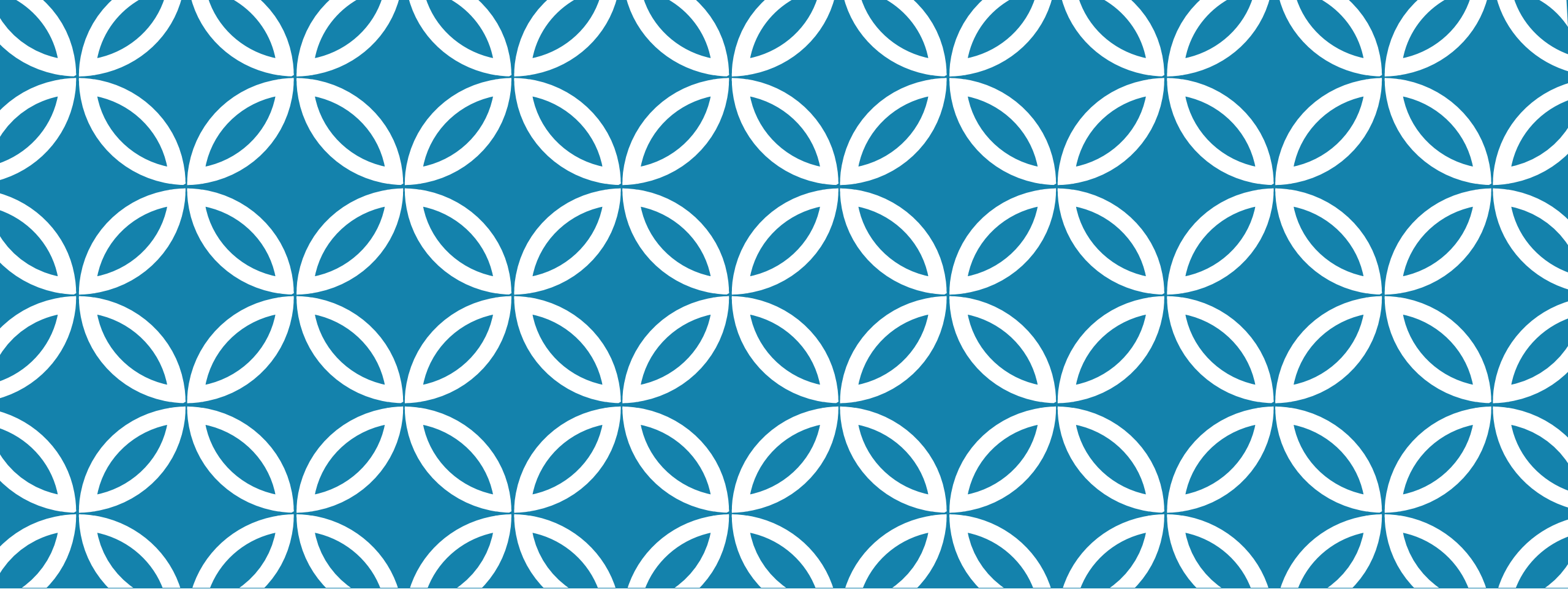




WORK-FAMILY MANAGEMENT AND REMOTE WORK IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

Kristen M. Shockley
University of Georgia

THESE ARE 'UNPRECEDENTED' TIMES

In mid-March 2020, many daycare centers closed



Many organizations transitioned to full remote work



WHAT STRATEGIES ARE WORKING PARENTS USING DURING COVID-19 WHEN KIDS ARE HOME?

Explored this question in a sample of 274 heterosexual dual-earner couples with kid(s) under age 6

Focus on gender



“What is you and your spouse’s plan for dealing with both of your work commitments during the upcoming period when your normal childcare is disrupted? Please be as detailed as possible.”

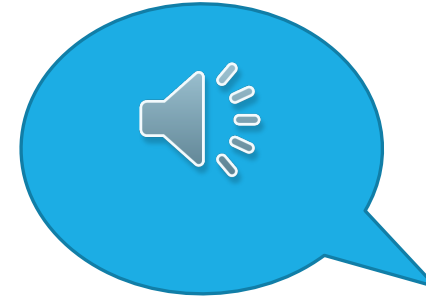
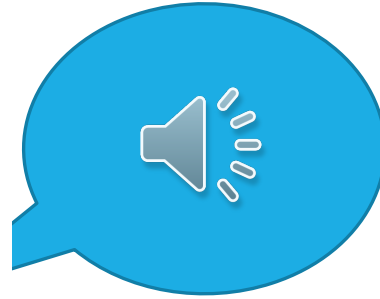
“How will you have to adjust your work role during this time?”

“How will your spouse have to adjust his/her work role during this time?”



How are these different strategies linked to wives’ and husbands’ family functioning, health, and job performance?

EXAMPLE OPEN-ENDED RESPONSES



CONTENT CODING PROCESS: KEY FACTORS

Who is working remote? Husband? Wife? Both?

Do they have outside help for childcare?

Is each person adjusting their work shifts (e.g., working night or different days)?

Is each person adjusting their total number of hours worked?

How are they dividing childcare during normal work hours?

- One person doing all childcare during work

- One person doing most of the childcare except occasional relief

- Having mini-shifts throughout day while both are remote

- Both remote alternating watching child with spouse based on meetings

- Alternating working days with spouse

- Full outsourcing

- Partial outsourcing

- Staggering shiftwork

HOW CAN WE DISTILL DOWN ALL OF THESE CATEGORIES?

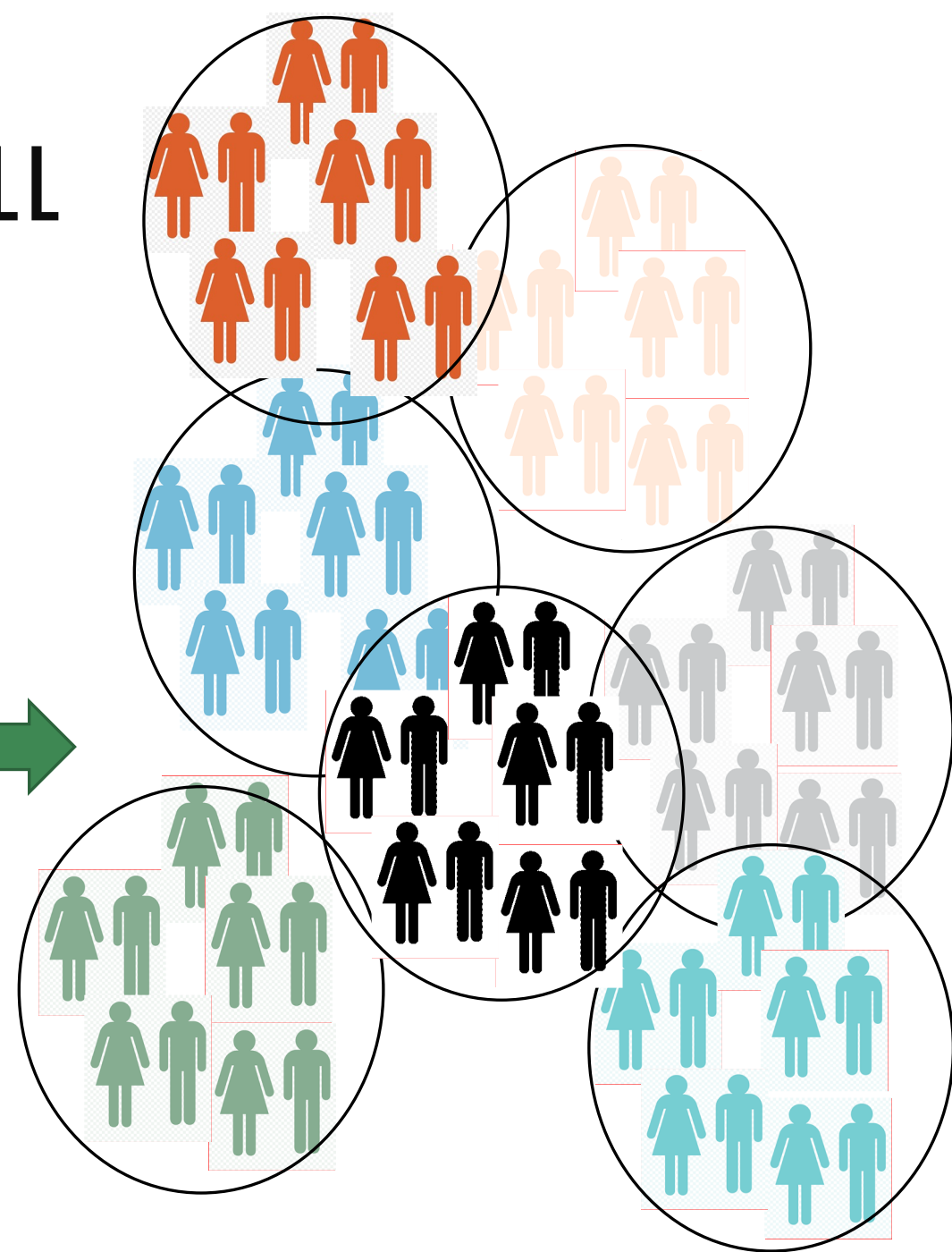
Latent class analysis



Wife remote
Husband not remote
No outside help
No shift adjustment for H or W
Wife reducing hrs
Husband not changing hrs
Wife doing all labor



Wife remote
Husband remote
No outside help
No shift adjustment for H or W
No hour adjustment for H or W
Mini-shifts throughout day



THE 7 STRATEGIES

Wife remote and does it all (22.2%)

Wife remote and husband pitches in on occasion (9.6%)



Outsourcing fully OR partially outsourcing with wife filling in gap (13.3%)

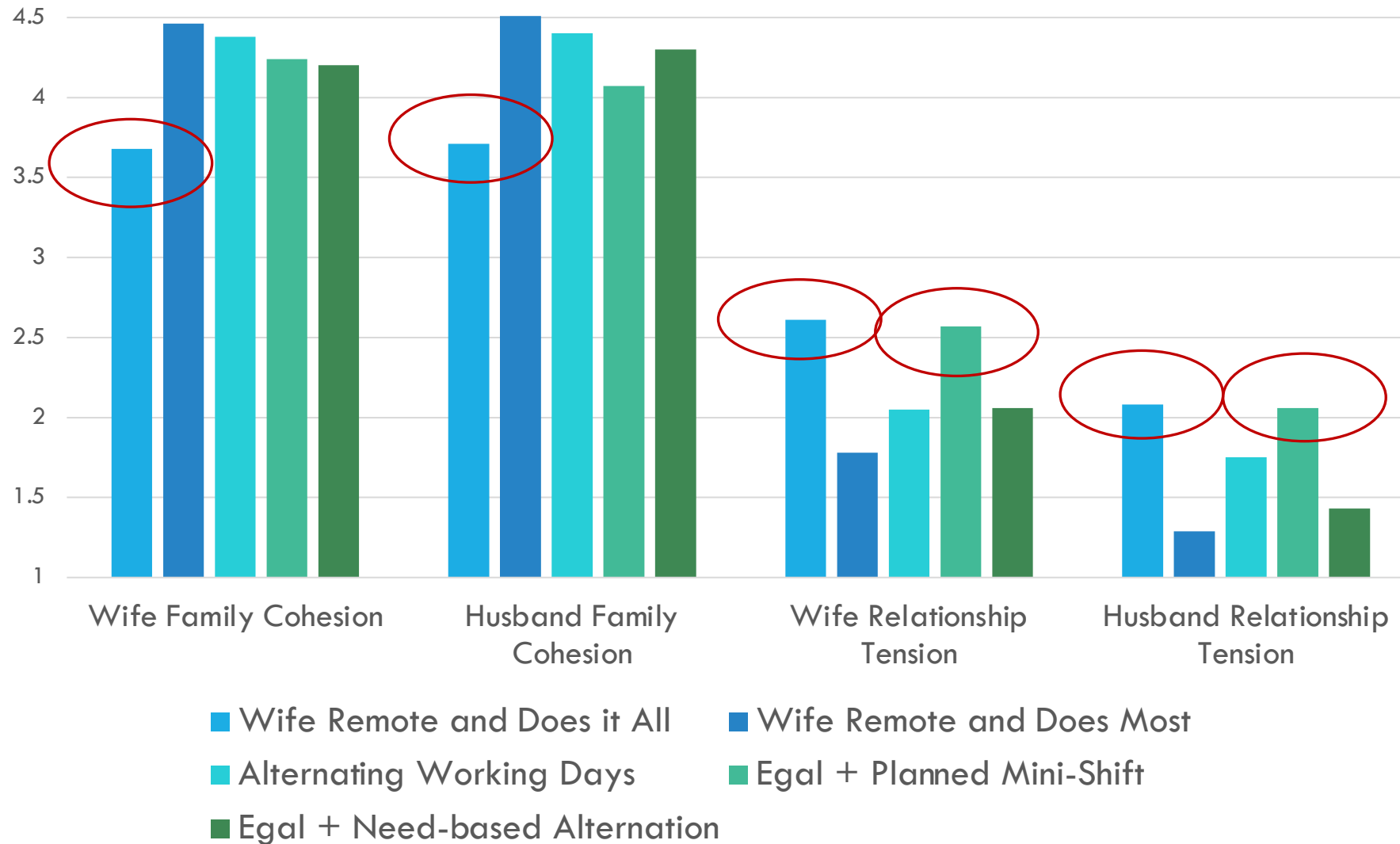
Staggering shiftwork OR husband does childcare (10.4%)

Egalitarian remote workers with planned mini-shifts (16.6%)

Egalitarian remote workers with daily need-based alternation without reducing work hours (14.4%)

Alternating working days while not remote and reducing hours (13.5%)

HOW DO STRATEGIES RELATE TO FAMILY FUNCTIONING?



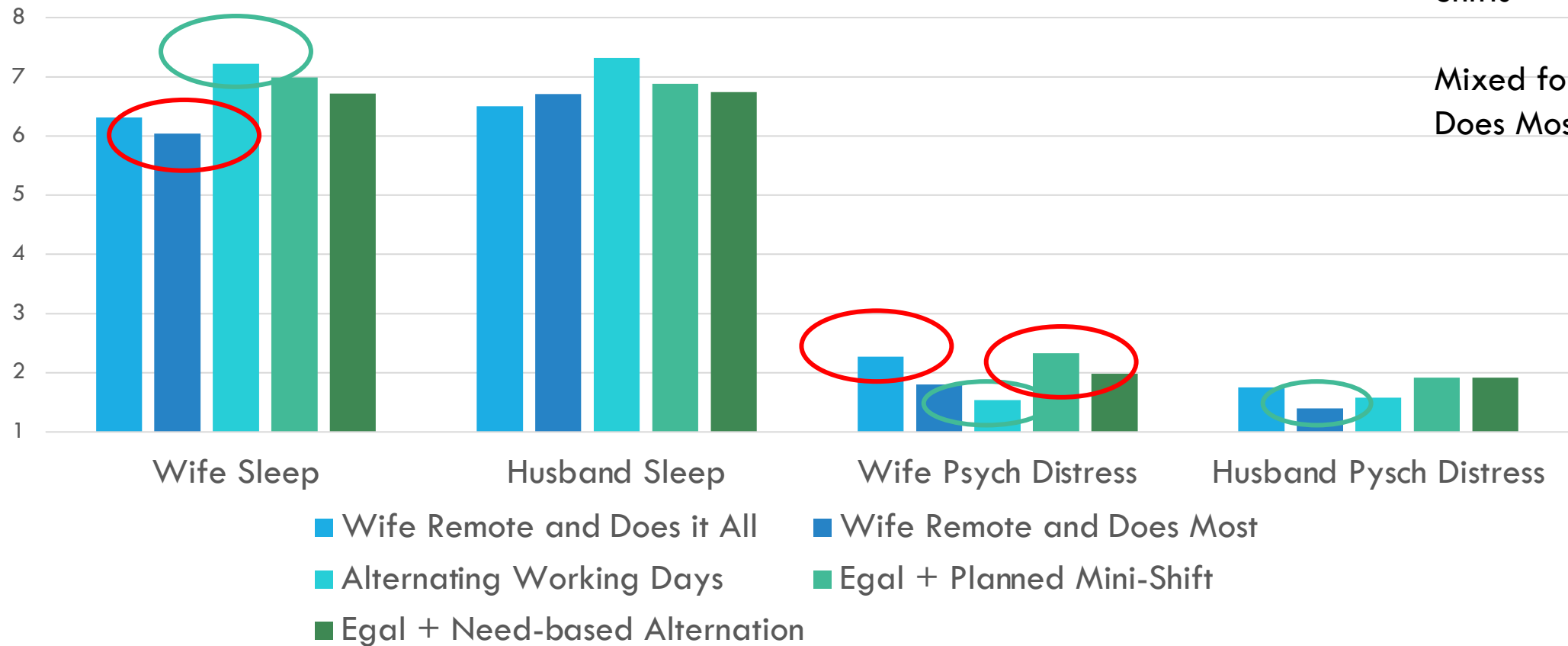
Worst for Wife
Does All and
Egal + Planned
Mini-shift

HOW DO STRATEGIES RELATE TO HEALTH?

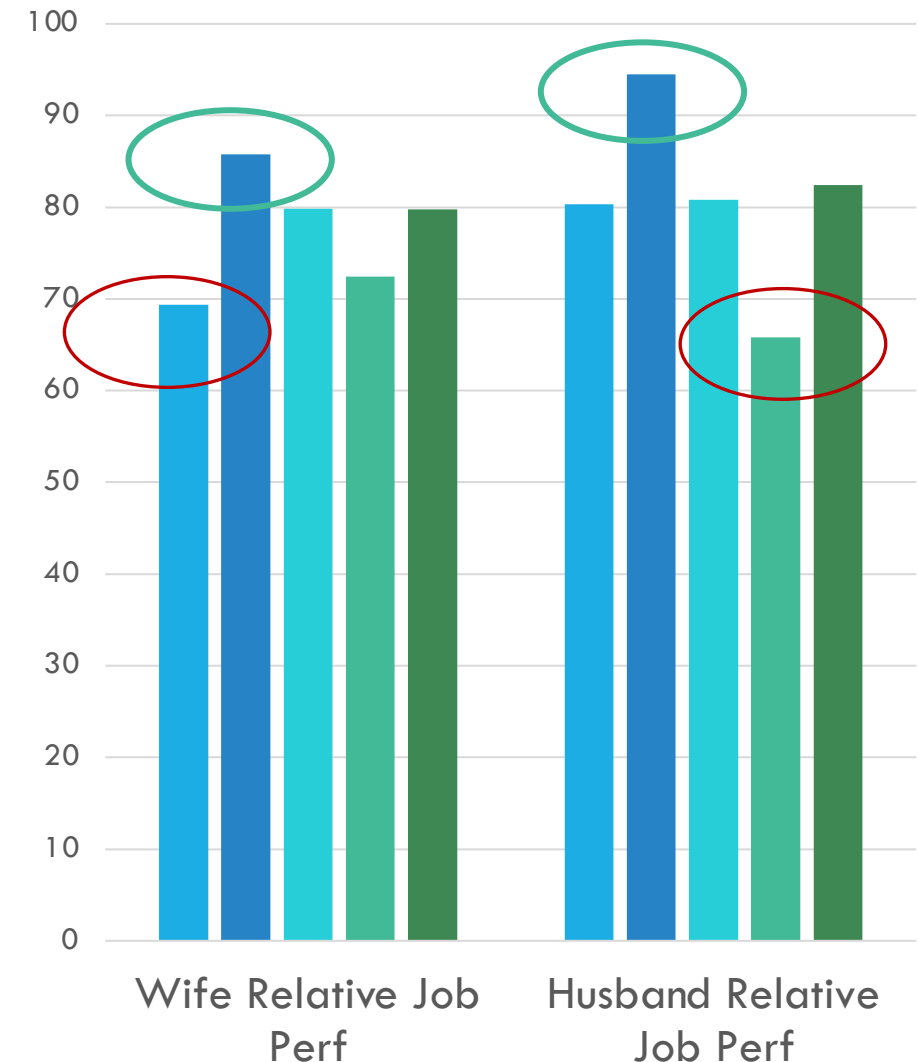
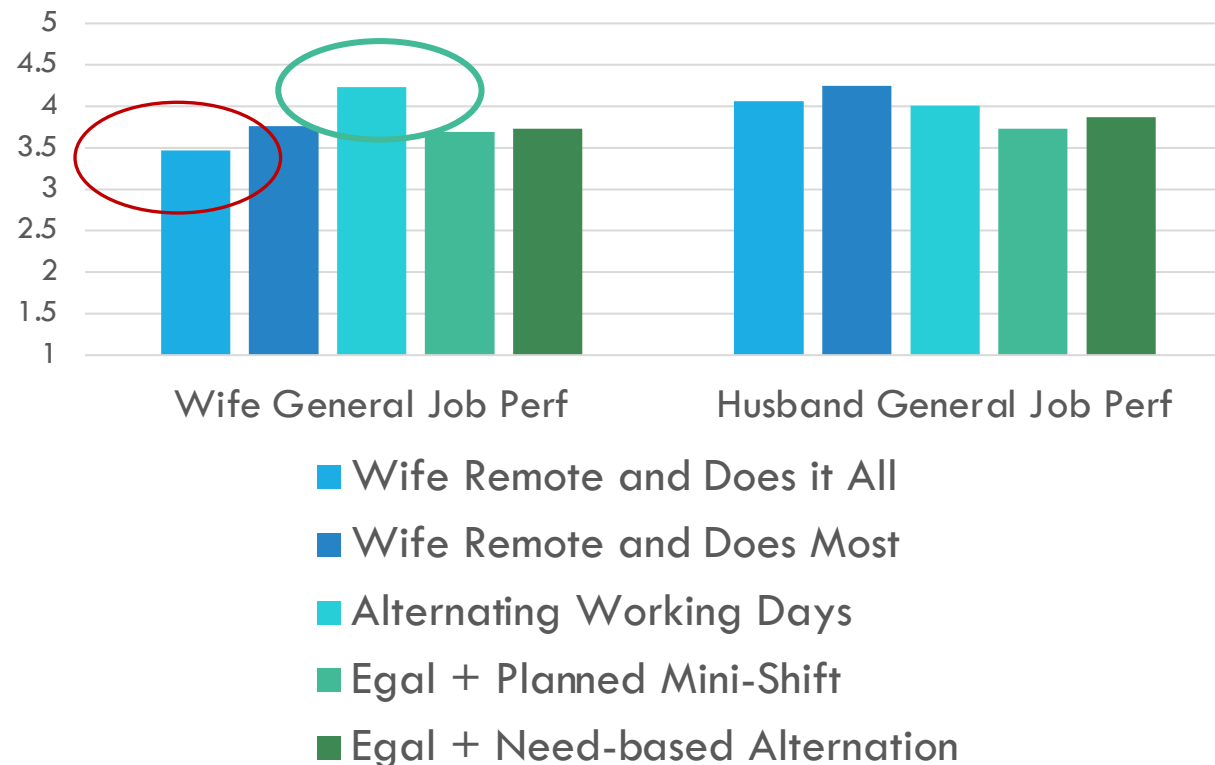
Some favorable effects for Alternating Days

Some negative effects for Wife Does All & Mini Shifts

Mixed for Wife Does Most



HOW DO STRATEGIES RELATE TO PERFORMANCE?



OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

A substantial proportion of couples (44.5%) were engaging in some egalitarian strategies, but a lot were still gendered in traditional ways (36.6%).

- Long-term effects?

Generally, **Wife Does it All** had the poorest outcomes for wives, but also not great for husbands.

- But outcomes pretty good for the Wife Does Most!

Of the egalitarian strategies, **Alternating Days** seems to be the most advantageous.

Of the remote egalitarian strategies, **Need-based Alternation** better than **Mini-shifts**.

Limitations – can not assert causality; inherent differences based on nature of jobs vs strategy?

Twitter Could End the Office as We Know It

This is the company's most disruptive move yet.

Post COVID-19, Coinbase will be a remote-first company

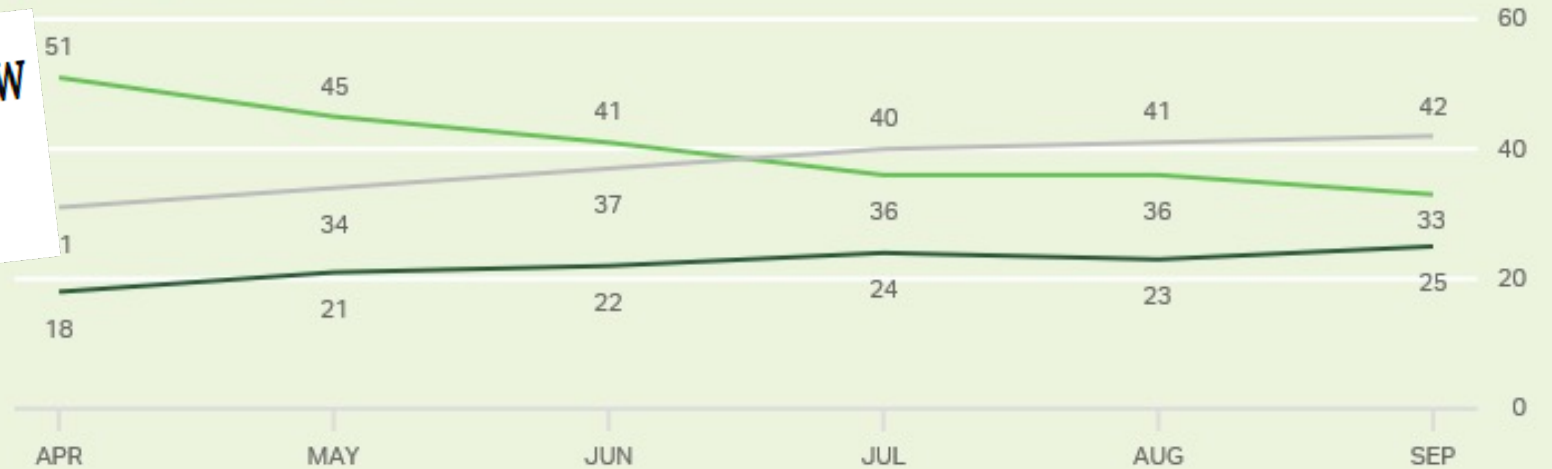
Brian Armstrong [Follow](#)
May 20 · 6 min read ★



U.S. Workers' Frequency of Remote Work in Response to COVID-19

To what extent are you working remotely to avoid catching or spreading the coronavirus?

Always Sometimes Never



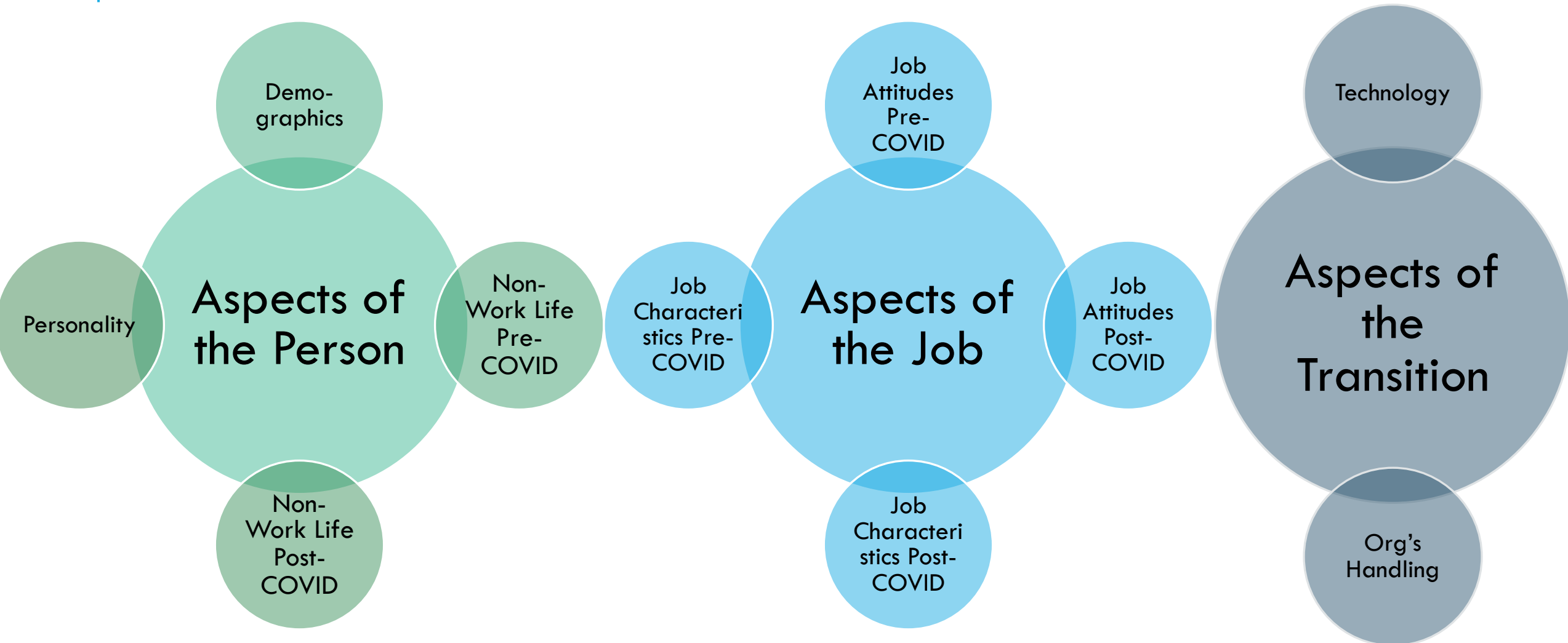
GALLUP, 2020

Facebook Starts Planning for Permanent Remote Workers

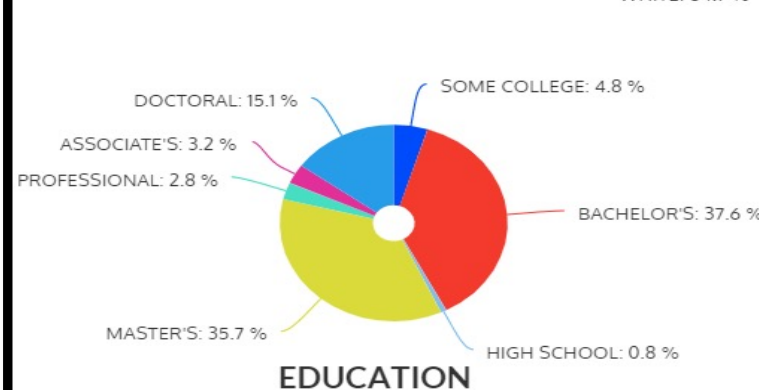
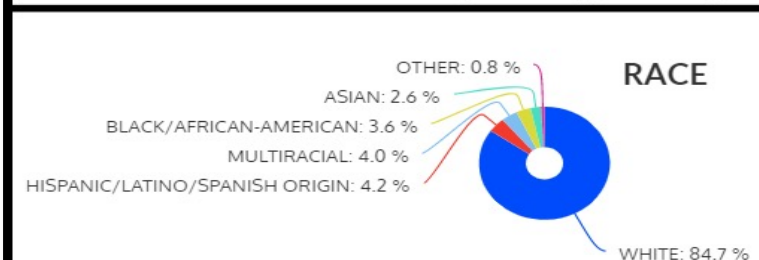
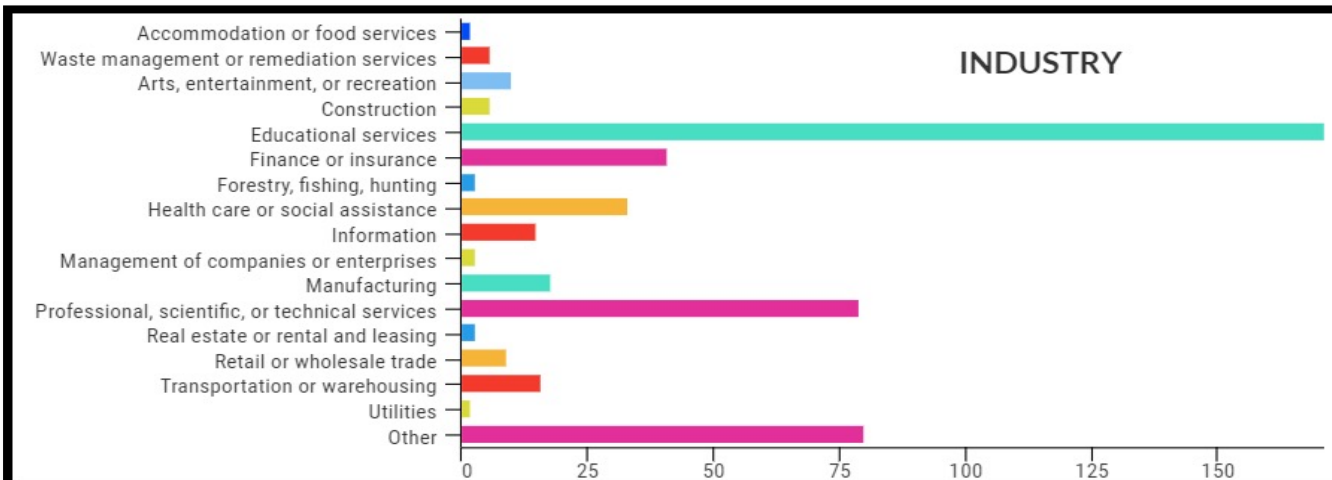
Shopify Is Joining Twitter in Permanent Work-From-Home Shift

Big picture question:

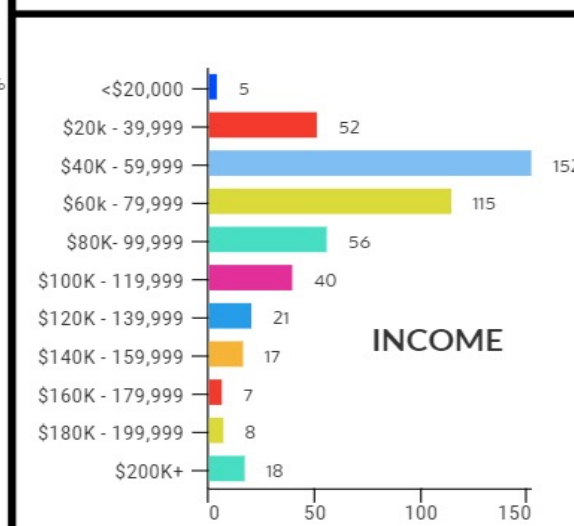
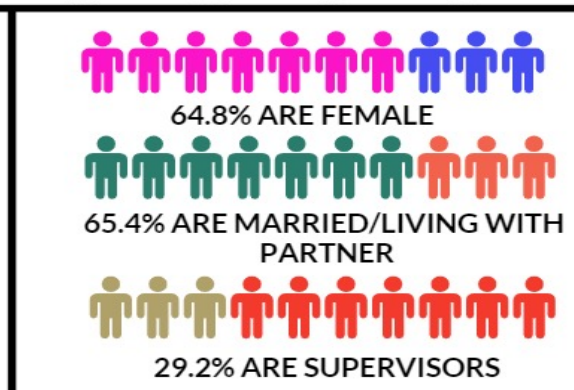
What matters most in predicting people's wellbeing (adjustment, stress, and job performance) during remote work?



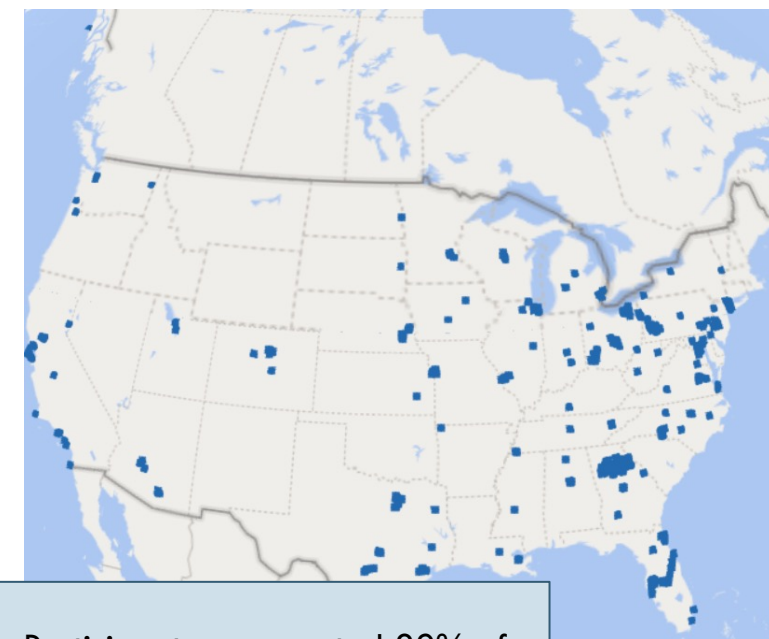
ASPECTS OF WORK BEFORE TRANSITION	ASPECTS OF NON-WORK BEFORE TRANSITION	ASPECTS OF THE TRANSITION PROCESS	ASPECTS OF WORK AFTER TRANSITION TO REMOTE WORK	ASPECTS OF NON-WORK AFTER TRANSITION	INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCE VARIABLES	DEMO-GRAPHICS
Task interdependence	Exercise Frequency	Difficulties with technology	Job demands	Change in alcohol consumption	Conscientiousness	Age
Communication frequency with supervisor	Sleep quality	Assistance from org in setting up technology	Work flexibility	Sleep quality	Trait anxiety	Gender
Communication frequency with coworkers	Sleep quantity	Organizational accommodations	Job insecurity	Sleep quantity	Home-to-work segmentation prefs	Percentage of household income
Frequency of face-to-face communication	Perceived stress	How smoothly org handled transition	Adequate supervisory support	Perceived stress	Work-to-home segmentation prefs	Income
Job demands		Work criticality to society	Change in task variety	Spousal respect of boundary preferences*	General comfort with technology	Education
Job-related information exchange		Work criticality to colleagues	Job-related information exchange	Division of childcare with spouse*	Self-discipline	Marital status
Adequate supervisory support		Work criticality to customers	Supervisor trust	Family intruding on work*		Job tenure
Job performance (self-rated)		Organization's remote work mentality	Supervisor poor management style			Organizational tenure
Job satisfaction		Remote work expectation setting	Social isolation			Number of adults in household
Work engagement			Comfortable workspace			Number of children In household
Burnout			Productive workspace			Eldercare
Work-nonwork balance			Weekly work hours			Supervisor status
Belongingness at work						



AVERAGE AGE OF 36.16
WORKING AN AVERAGE OF 42 HOURS /WEEK
AVERAGE JOB TENURE OF 5.72 YEARS

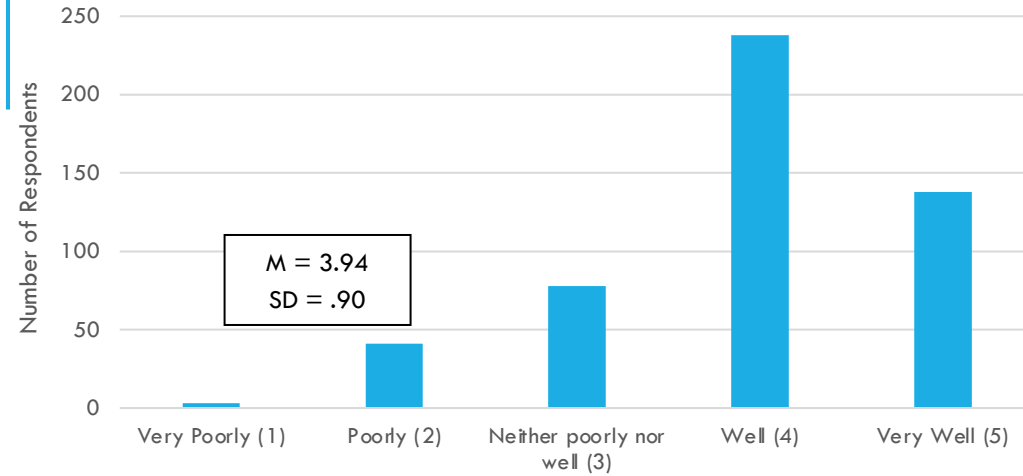


- 498 full-time employees who were fully remote due to COVID-19, but were not working remotely previously
- Data collection took place between 4/27/20 and 6/13/20

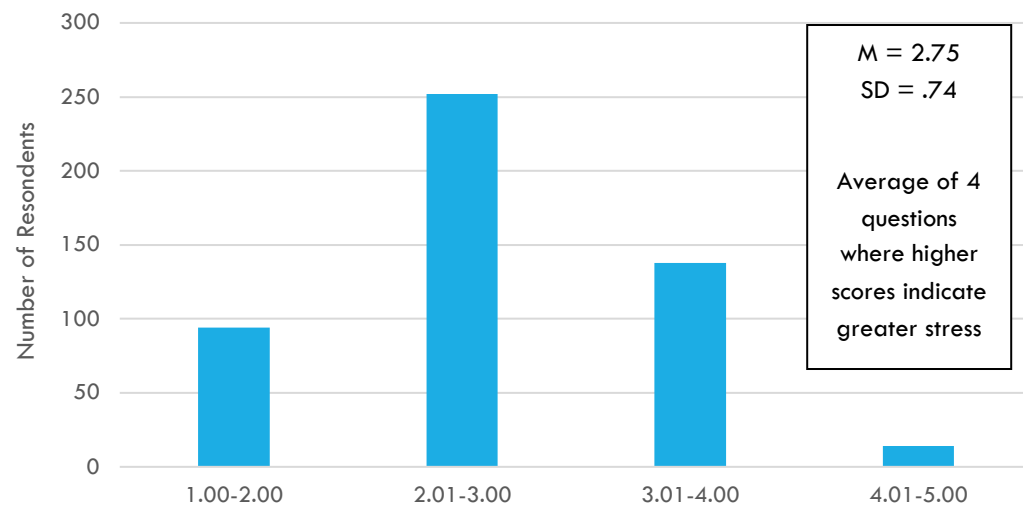


Participants represented 82% of the 50 U.S. states, with the largest number from Georgia and Pennsylvania.

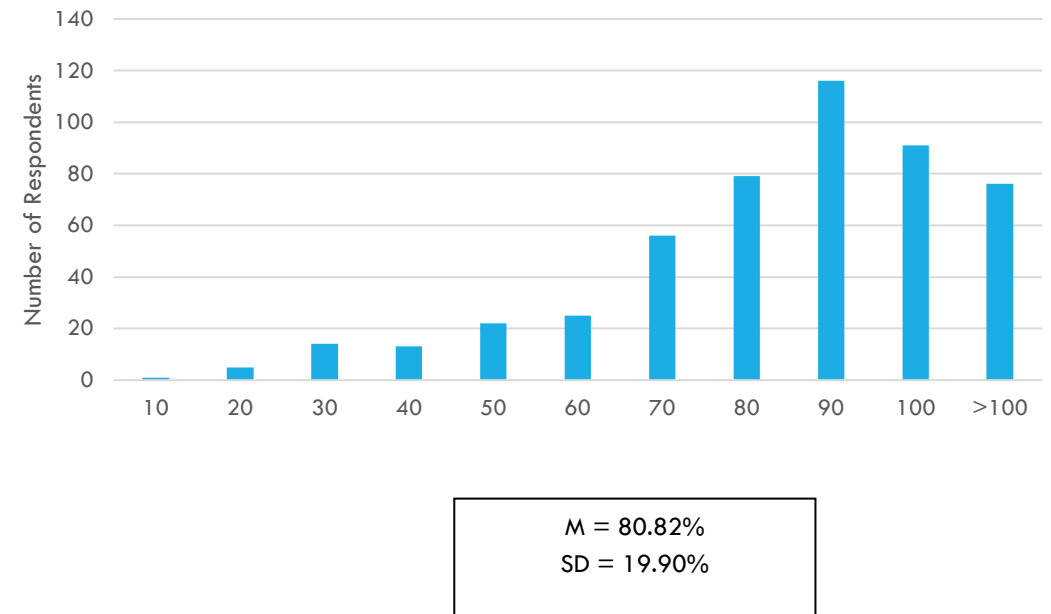
Overall, how well have you adjusted to working remotely?



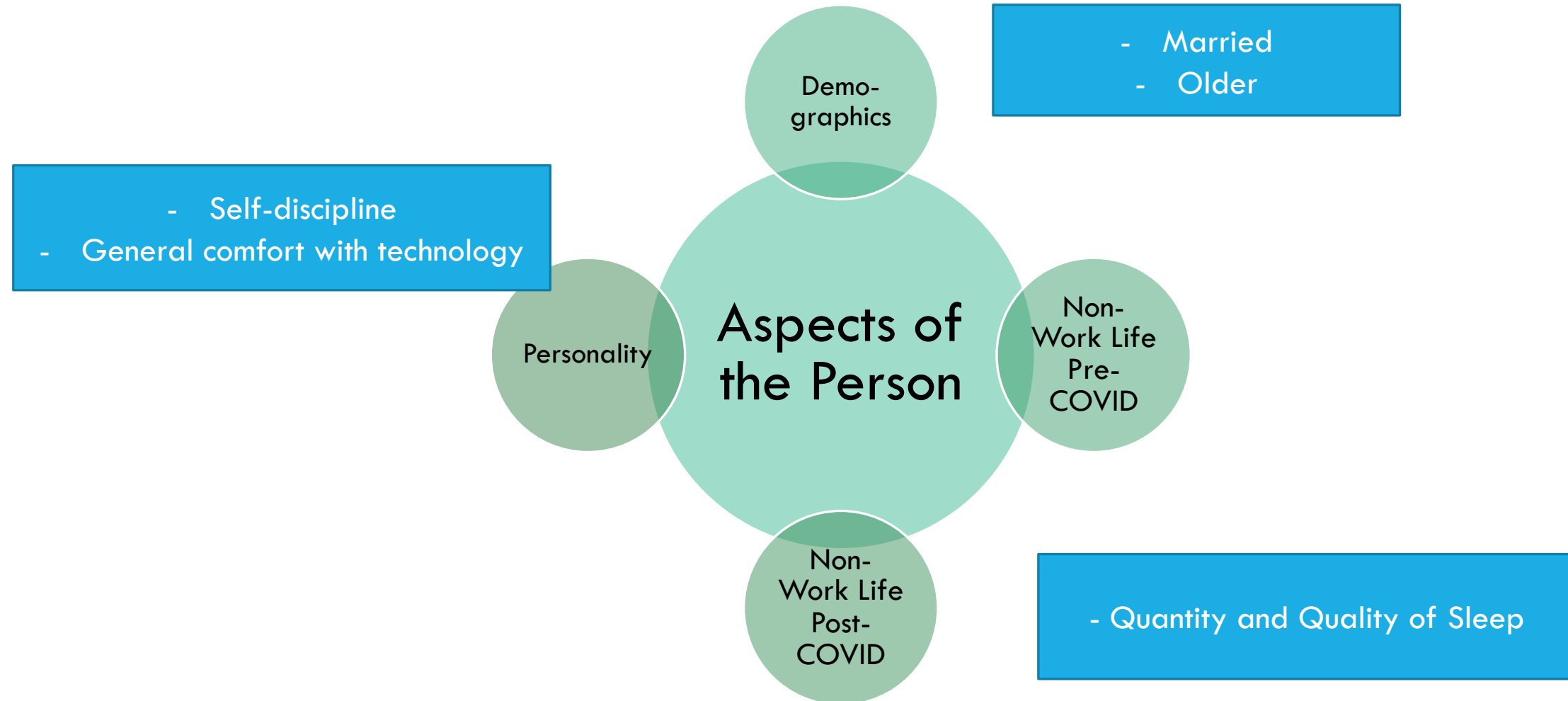
Stress levels during remote work



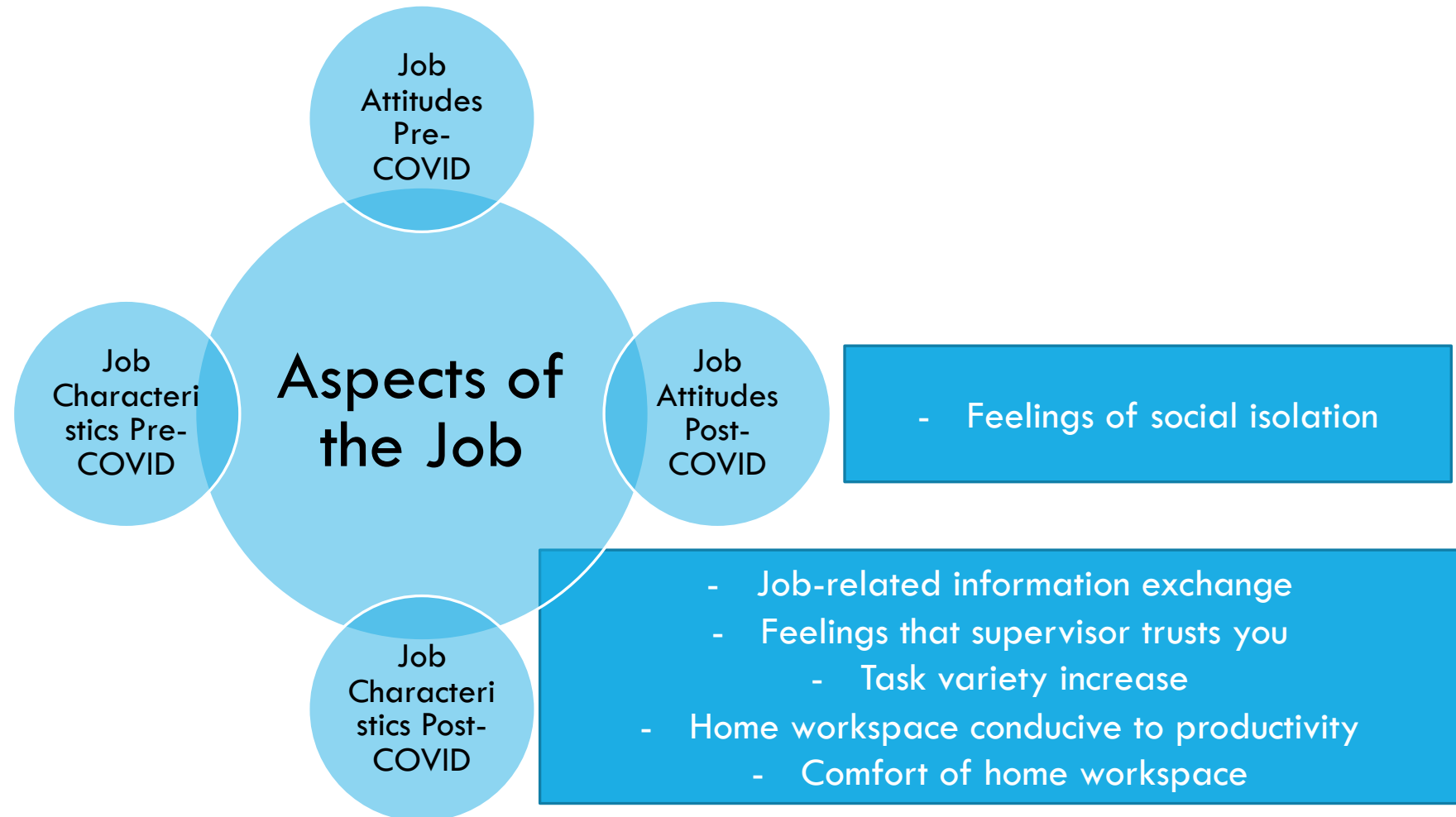
Assume your performance level before the COVID 19 outbreak was 100%. Since you have been working remotely post-COVID-19 outbreak, what would you say your average performance level has been out of 100%?



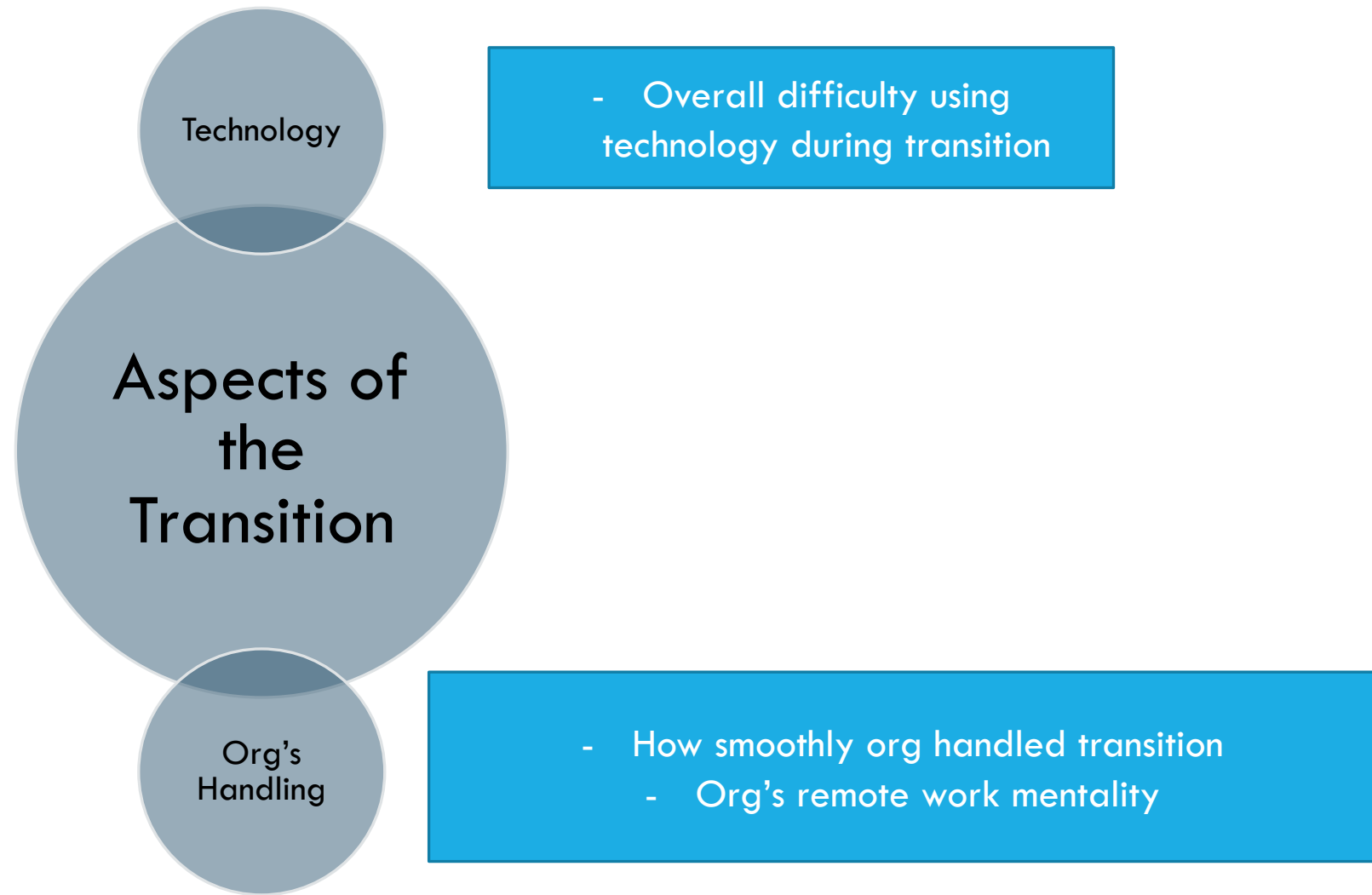
SIGNIFICANT PREDICTORS OF OVERALL ADJUSTMENT



SIGNIFICANT PREDICTORS OF OVERALL ADJUSTMENT



SIGNIFICANT PREDICTORS OF OVERALL ADJUSTMENT



- How smoothly org handled transition
- Org's remote work mentality

- Feelings of social isolation

- Overall difficulty using technology during transition

- Married
- Older

- Self-Discipline
- General comfort with technology

- Quantity and Quality of Sleep

- Job-related information exchange
- Feelings that supervisor trusts you
- Task variety increase
- Home workspace conducive to productivity
- Comfort of home workspace



JOB PERFORMANCE RELATIVE TO PRE-PANDEMIC



Workspace at home
conductive to
productivity



Increase in the
variety of tasks
involved in job



Organization's
handling of the
transition



Sleeping well during
remote work



Feelings of social
isolation

STRESS LEVEL DURING REMOTE WORK



Stress levels before
the pandemic



General proneness
to anxiety



Feelings of social
isolation



Sleeping well
before pandemic

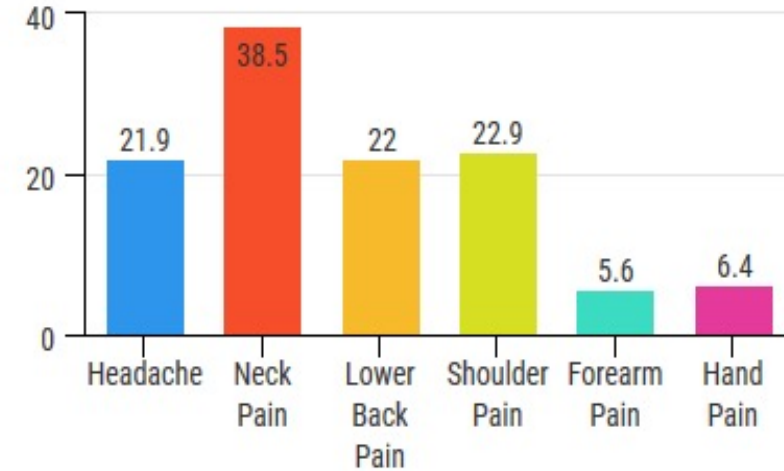


Workspace at home
conductive to
productivity

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Overall, people are faring pretty well during remote work due to COVID-19 (or at least early stages)
- The main factors that seem to matter are related to:
 - Social connection
 - Nature of workspace
 - Sleeping well
- Little about job itself, demographics, supervisor

% OF PARTICIPANTS EXPERIENCING SYMPTOMS "FREQUENTLY" OR "ALL THE TIME" OVER STUDY PERIOD



PRACTICAL ADVICE

Social isolation

- Use a shared social calendar to schedule remote social activities that anyone can attend
- Schedule remote coffee breaks, lunches, and happy hours
- Video game hour (or some other game that can be done together virtually) on Fridays
- Increase serendipitous meetings (can be done through Slack app Donut, which randomly pairs people together for meetings).

Sleep Quality

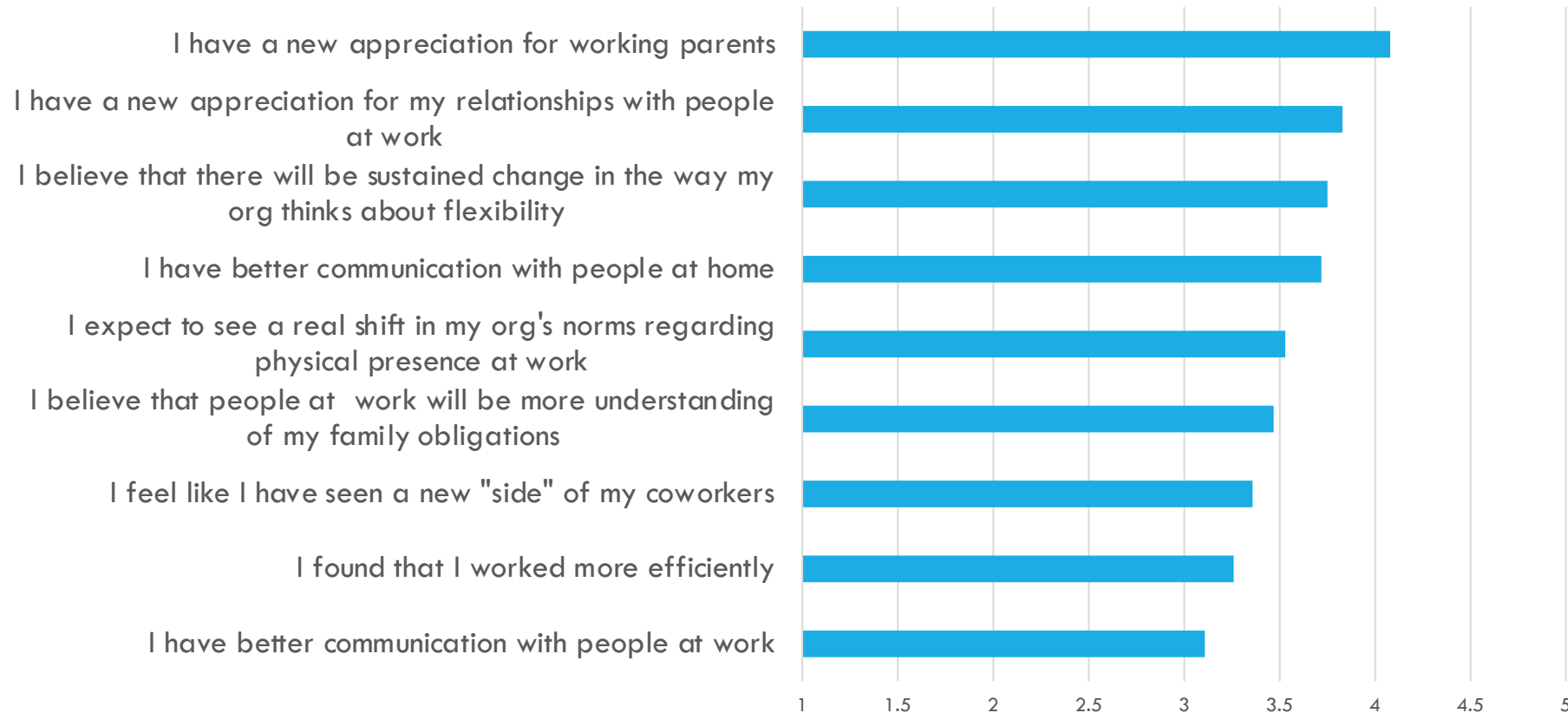
- Advocate for effective sleep hygiene practices such as unplugging from electronics 30-60 minutes before bed
- Reduce expectations for being “on” after hours

Organizational culture

- Have a crisis plan in place
- Offer adequate technology and equipment to employees AND training on how to use it.
- Promote goal-setting to help with motivation
- Communication quality is key – establish norms surrounding this

PANDEMIC “SILVER LININGS”

Due to remote work brought on by COVID-19...



THANK YOU! QUESTION

More information on studies can be found:

Remote Work Grant --

<https://iwillugaresearch.wixsite.com/website/publications>

Couples Study –

Shockley, K.M., Clark, M.A., Dodd, H., & King, E.B. (2021). Work-family strategies during COVID-19: Examining gender dynamics among dual-earner couples with young children. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 106, 15-28.



"I really don't mind coming into the office to work."