Neapolis University Pafos

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Task 5: Analysis and Interpretation of Qualitative Data

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1 Introduction: interview

Interview topic: Remote Work Experience During the Pandemic.

A)

Interviewer: Can you describe how your work life changed when you started working from home during the pandemic?

Participant: At first, it was honestly very strange. I missed the routine of going to the office, getting coffee with colleagues, just... having that buzz around me. But over time, I started to appreciate the flexibility. I could start earlier, take short breaks when needed, and it made balancing family life much easier.

B)

Interviewer: What aspects did you find most challenging?

Participant: The main challenge was staying focused. There were so many distractions — kids, household chores, even just the temptation to relax. Also, communication with my team became harder. We used video calls, but it wasn't the same. Sometimes misunderstandings happened because we couldn't read each other's body language.

C)

Interviewer: How did your organization support you during that period?

Participant: They tried. We had weekly check-ins, and our manager encouraged us to take mental health days. But I think they underestimated how exhausting constant online meetings could be. I often felt drained by the end of the day.

D)

Interviewer: Looking back, do you think remote work had more positive or negative effects overall?

Participant: Hmm, I'd say mixed. Personally, it gave me more control over my schedule and reduced stress from commuting. But socially, it made me feel isolated. I missed the informal chats — that's where a lot of creativity and problem-solving used to happen.

E)

Interviewer: Would you prefer to continue working remotely in the future?

Participant: Probably a hybrid model. I think a few days at home and a few at the office would be ideal. It keeps the flexibility but still allows that human connection.

2 Practicing qualitative coding

2.1 Open coding

- fragments the data and assigns labels to capture relevant concepts

My approach here is to break down each interview response into meaningful segments and assign initial codes that reflect the core ideas expressed by the participant. I tried to decode each participant's sentence into 2-4 words.

Interview Transcript

Codes & Remarks

A) **Interviewer:** Can you describe how your work life changed when you started working from home during the pandemic?

Participant: At first, it was honestly very strange. I missed the routine of going to the office, getting coffee with colleagues, just... having that buzz around me. But over time, I started to appreciate the flexibility. I could start earlier, take short breaks when needed, and it made balancing family life much easier.

[Strange experience.]
[Missing social interaction.]
[Appreciation for flexibility.]
    Notes: transition from "strange" to "appreciation"

B) **Interviewer:** What aspects did you find most challenging?

Participant: The main challenge was staying focused. There were so many distractions — kids, household chores, even just the temptation to relax. Also, communication with my team became harder. We used video calls, but it wasn't the same. Sometimes misunderstandings happened because we couldn't read each other's body language.

[Distractions at home.]
[Communication difficulties.]
[Lack of non-verbal cues.]
    Notes: human relations and communication difficulties

C) **Interviewer:** How did your organization support you during that period?

Participant: They tried. We had weekly check-ins, and our manager encouraged us to take mental health days. But I think they underestimated how exhausting constant online meetings could be. I often felt drained by the end of the day.

[Organizational support efforts.]
[Exhaustion from online meetings.]
    Notes: disbalanced expectations and reality

D) **Interviewer:** Looking back, do you think remote work had more positive or negative effects overall?

Participant: Hmm, I'd say mixed. Personally, it gave me more control over my schedule and reduced stress from commuting. But socially, it made me feel isolated. I missed the informal chats — that's where a lot of creativity and problem-solving used to happen.

[Mixed feelings about remote work.]
[Increased schedule control.]
[Social isolation.]
[Informal chats fostered creativity and solved problems.]
    Notes: isolation with control over schedule

E) **Interviewer:** Would you prefer to continue working remotely in the future?

Participant: Probably a hybrid model. I think a few days at home and a few at the office would be ideal. It keeps the flexibility but still allows that human connection.

[Preference for hybrid model.]
[Value of flexibility.]
[Need for human connection.]
  Notes: future work model

preferences

2.2 Axial coding

- relates codes (categories and subcategories) to each other, via a combination of inductive and deductive thinking

Then I grouped the initial codes into broader categories and identified relationships between them to form themes. A few attempts were made to refine the list and create properties for each theme.

Initial categories

1. **Work Environment Changes**
   (a) Strange experience
   (b) Missing social interaction
   (c) Appreciation for flexibility

2. **Challenges of Remote Work**
   (a) Distractions at home
   (b) Communication difficulties
   (c) Lack of non-verbal cues

3. **Organizational Support**
   (a) Organizational support efforts
   (b) Exhaustion from online meetings

4. **Impact on Well-being**
   (a) Mixed feelings about remote work
   (b) Increased schedule control
   (c) Social isolation
   (d) Informal chats fostered creativity and solved problems

5. **Future Work Preferences**
   (a) Preference for hybrid model
   (b) Value of flexibility
   (c) Need for human connection

Derived themes

1. **Adaptation and Transition**
   - Adjusting to new work environment
   - Evolving perception of remote work

2. **Social Connectivity**
   - Loss of informal interactions
   - Impact on collaboration and creativity
   - Communication barriers

3. **Work-Life Balance**
   - Flexibility benefits
   - Home distractions
   - Schedule autonomy

4. **Organizational Response**
   - Support mechanisms
   - Meeting fatigue

5. **Hybrid Work Vision**
   - Balancing flexibility and connection
   - Future work model preferences

Relationships between categories

1. The theme of **Adaptation and Transition** is influenced by the **Work Environment Changes** category, as individuals adjust to new routines and environments.

2. **Social Connectivity** is directly related to the **Challenges of Remote Work** category, highlighting how communication difficulties and lack of non-verbal cues impact collaboration.

3. The **Work-Life Balance** theme emerges from both the **Work Environment Changes** and **Challenges of Remote Work** categories, reflecting the dual nature of flexibility and distractions.

4. **Organizational Response** is connected to the **Organizational Support** category, emphasizing the role of support mechanisms and the challenges of meeting fatigue.

5. The **Hybrid Work Vision** theme is derived from the **Future Work Preferences** category, indicating a desire for a balanced approach to work.

Properties:

Adaptation and Transition

- *Duration:* Gradual process over time (initial strangeness to eventual appreciation)
- *Direction:* Negative to positive trajectory
- *Intensity:* Strong initial resistance, moderate acceptance

Social Connectivity

- *Frequency:* Reduced from daily to occasional interactions
- *Quality:* Formal (structured meetings) vs. informal (spontaneous conversations)
- *Impact:* High significance on creativity and problem-solving

Work-Life Balance

- *Control:* Increased autonomy over schedule
- *Boundaries:* Blurred between work and personal life
- *Trade-offs:* Flexibility vs. distractions

Organizational Response

- *Adequacy:* Partial support (good intentions, incomplete implementation)
- *Awareness:* Limited understanding of remote work challenges
- *Consequences:* Meeting fatigue and exhaustion

Hybrid Work Vision

- *Balance:* Integration of remote and office work
- *Priorities:* Flexibility and human connection equally valued
- *Implementation:* Partial week split between locations

2.3   Selective coding

- identifies the core category, systematically relating it to other categories, validating those relationships, and filling in categories that need further refinement and development

From my understanding of the data and the relationships, participant's experience was double-edged. On one hand, there was time and control surge, but on the other hand, there was a lack of human connection and communication difficulties. The core category that encapsulates the main theme of the interview is:

Core category: Navigating Remote Work: Balancing Flexibility and Connection

Narrative: The experience of remote work during the pandemic has been a complex journey of adaptation and transition. Initially, individuals faced a strange and unfamiliar work environment, missing the social interactions that once fueled creativity and collaboration. Over time, they began to appreciate the newfound flexibility that remote work offered, allowing for greater control over their schedules and improved work-life balance. However, this flexibility came with its own set of challenges. Distractions at home and communication difficulties, particularly the lack of non-verbal cues, often hindered productivity and team cohesion. Organizations attempted to support their employees through various initiatives, such as weekly check-ins and mental health days. Yet, these efforts sometimes fell short, leading to exhaustion from constant online meetings. The overall impact of remote work was mixed, with individuals recognizing both the benefits and drawbacks of this new mode of working. Looking ahead, there is a preference for a hybrid work model that combines the best of both worlds.