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RECONFIGURAÇÃO DO TRABALHO CONTEMPORÂNEO: autonomia produtiva e fragilização dos vínculos à luz de evidências empíricas com estudantes do curso superior em Administração

RECONFIGURATION OF CONTEMPORARY WORK: Productive Autonomy and the Fragilization of Employment Bonds in Light of Empirical Evidence from Undergraduate Business Administration Students

RECONFIGURACIÓN DEL TRABAJO CONTEMPORÁNEO: autonomía productiva y fragilización de los vínculos a la luz de evidencias empíricas con estudiantes de la carrera de Administración

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Resumo

Este estudo objetivou analisar a percepção dos alunos do curso de Administração do IFMG – Campus São João Evangelista sobre os novos vínculos profissionais no século XXI, considerando suas experiências, conhecimentos, preferências e percepções sobre produtividade, desafios e relações em ambiente de trabalho. A metodologia utilizada foi quantitativa e descritiva, incluindo um questionário com escala Likert aplicado a 66 estudantes. Os resultados mostraram um consenso positivo sobre a eficácia das novas modalidades, com a maior mediana de concordância para a percepção de mais produtividade com autonomia, alinhando-se à literatura que valoriza a flexibilidade. Contudo, o estudo identificou um problema central principal, que é o desafio na dificuldade em conciliar a vida pessoal e profissional. Para garantir o sucesso a longo prazo de novos relacionamentos, a Gestão de Recursos Humanos deve priorizar o desenvolvimento de competências comportamentais e o estabelecimento de uma cultura que proteja o equilíbrio dos

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colaboradores, abordando a vulnerabilidade identificada.
Palavras-chave: Vínculos profissionais. Gestão de pessoas. Contemporaneidade.

Abstract

This study aimed to analyze the perception of Administration students at IFMG – Campus São João Evangelista regarding new professional bonds in the 21st century, considering their experiences, knowledge, preferences, and perceptions of productivity, challenges, and relationships in the work environment. The methodology used was quantitative and descriptive, including a Likert scale questionnaire applied to 66 students. The results showed a positive consensus on the effectiveness of the new modalities, with the highest median of agreement for the perception of more productivity with autonomy, aligning with the literature that values flexibility. However, the study identified a core central problem, which is the challenge in the difficulty of reconciling personal and professional life. To ensure the long-term success of new relationships, Human Resources Management must prioritize the development of behavioral competencies and the establishment of a culture that protects employee balance, addressing the identified vulnerability.
Keywords: Professional Bonds. Human Resource Management. Contemporaneity.

Resumen

Este estudio tuvo como objetivo analizar la percepción de los estudiantes del curso de Administración del IFMG – Campus São João Evangelista sobre los nuevos vínculos profesionales en el siglo XXI, considerando sus experiencias, conocimientos, preferencias y percepciones sobre productividad, desafíos y relaciones en el entorno laboral. La metodología utilizada fue cuantitativa y descriptiva, incluyendo un cuestionario con escala Likert aplicado a 66 estudiantes. Los resultados mostraron un consenso positivo sobre la eficacia de las nuevas modalidades, con la mayor mediana de concordancia en la percepción de mayor productividad asociada a la autonomía, lo que se alinea con la literatura que valora la flexibilidad laboral. No obstante, el estudio identificó un problema central: la dificultad para conciliar la vida personal y profesional. Para garantizar el éxito a largo plazo de estas nuevas formas de relación laboral, la Gestión de Recursos Humanos debe priorizar el desarrollo de competencias conductuales y el establecimiento de una cultura organizacional que proteja el equilibrio de los colaboradores, abordando así la vulnerabilidad identificada.
Palabras clave: Vínculos profesionales. Gestión de personas. Contemporaneidad.

1. Introduction

In the current era, marked by globalization and technological advancement,

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new forms of work have emerged that are transforming the way teams are managed and how organizations operate. According to Cordeiro, Lamoglia, and Cruz Filho (2019), remote work, autonomous work, and other flexible forms of engagement are creating new models in the labor market. These changes challenge traditional practices and bring both new opportunities and new challenges.

With the advancement of these new work modalities, it has become increasingly common to find professionals hired specifically to perform specific tasks without the need for a traditional employment relationship. Even among those who maintain a formal contract, with a fixed salary and working hours defined by labor legislation, many already perform their activities directly from home, using the company's physical workspace only in exceptional situations.

According to Scherer and Leal (2023), these new work modalities gained popularity at the beginning of the 21st century due to advances in broadband internet, cloud computing, and the emergence of digital platforms for services and collaboration. Macedo (2024) further argues that models such as home office, freelance work, the gig economy, and coworking spaces are becoming increasingly popular, especially in sectors such as technology, communication, marketing, and design. The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, as highlighted by Rosa et al. (2025), accelerated the adoption of remote work as a rapid solution to sanitary restrictions, highlighting the potential and feasibility of this modality on a large scale.

Given this context, this study sought to answer the following research question: what are the main perceptions of students from the Administration program at the Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia de Minas Gerais – São João Evangelista Campus regarding emerging professional relationships in the 21st century?

To address this question, the general objective of this study is to analyze the perceptions of students from the Administration program at the IFMG – São João Evangelista Campus regarding new professional relationships in the 21st century, considering their experiences, knowledge, preferences, and perceptions related to

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productivity, challenges, and workplace relationships. In order to achieve this objective, the specific objectives are: (i) to identify which work formats students have already experienced or know theoretically; (ii) to investigate students' preferences regarding the ideal work model (on-site, remote, or hybrid); and (iii) to analyze students' opinions on the impact of remote work on work–life balance.

The current context of professional transformation requires an understanding of new work modalities, which directly impact the management and structure of organizations (Ricardo Antunes, 2020). This theme has academic importance for theoretical reflection and professional relevance, requiring managers to adapt to these changes (Scherer; Leal, 2023). The study contributes to the understanding of innovations in labor relations and their implications for traditional organizational models. This research is justified by its analysis of how these new forms influence individual aspects such as motivation and productivity, contributing to the advancement of academic knowledge and the improvement of professional practice (Macedo, 2024; Rosa et al., 2025).

2. Literature review

2.1. People management

As stated by Araújo (2021), the field of human resource management represents an area of research and practice focused on the administration of human capital within organizations. Its fundamental objective, according to Idalberto Chiavenato (2008), is to value employees by stimulating motivation and engagement while developing competencies and aligning individual and organizational goals, thereby fostering a healthy work environment that promotes effective leadership practices.

The central element of human resource management lies in the recognition and appreciation of human capital as a fundamental resource for organizational success (Marins, 2022). According to Araújo and Garcia (2006), as well as Hartmann (2022), effective human resource management involves creating a

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healthy work environment that fosters motivation and productivity, where employees develop a sense of commitment and are given the opportunity to fully realize their potential. In this regard, Silva et al. (2020) add that this approach includes promoting employees' well-being and mental health, building a strong organizational culture, enabling upward mobility in terms of professional development and growth, and implementing high-performance leadership strategies. By investing in this area, organizations are able to attract and retain talent, encourage innovation, improve productivity rates, and achieve superior performance in a competitive environment (Da Cruz, 2023).

In the current market environment, Malafaia (2018) argues that human resource management plays an unquestionable strategic role in organizational decision-making. Araújo (2021) further states that with the expansion of new work modalities, the importance of human resource management becomes even more prominent. The author argues that these new arrangements require adjustments in management approaches in order to deal with the geographical dispersion of teams. It therefore becomes essential to establish effective communication channels, monitor performance remotely, enable virtual integration, and safeguard employees' psychological and physical well-being (Leite; Lemos, 2021). Although, according to Hartmann (2022), these new work modalities present challenges, such as the need to build mutual trust and stimulate team members' autonomy, they also offer opportunities to reconfigure work models, take advantage of flexibility, and reshape management strategies in order to achieve significant results in a virtual environment.

2.2. New types of work

New work arrangements have been increasingly adopted in contemporary organizations. These arrangements (including remote work, flexible working hours, project-based work, work autonomy, and other formats) provide employees with greater flexibility regarding location, working hours, and the nature of the work performed (Mendes; Hastenreiter Filho; Tellechea, 2020). This shift in the work

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paradigm results from technological advances, changes in employee expectations, and transformations in labor market demands. Table 1 presents, according to Do Carmo Lucas and Santos (2021), Augusto (2021), Szenkier (2018), and De Abreu et al. (2019), the new work arrangements and their main characteristics.

Quadro 1 – New work arrangements

Modality	**Characteristics**
Remote work	Telework, or remote work, involves professionals performing their activities outside the company's physical premises. This arrangement offers benefits such as flexible working hours, cost reduction for organizations, and greater employee satisfaction due to the elimination of commuting and improved work–life balance (Do Carmo Lucas; Santos, 2021).
Flexible working hours	Flexible working hours allow employees to adjust their work schedules according to their needs, choosing the start and end of the workday as well as their breaks. This arrangement promotes a better balance between work and personal life, increases motivation, and reduces stress (Augusto, 2021).
Project-based word	Project-based work, commonly known as freelancing, involves performing tasks without a fixed employment relationship. Professionals are hired for specific projects and have the flexibility to choose and complete assignments according to their availability and expertise (Do Carmo Lucas; Santos, 2021).
Self-employment	Self-employment occurs when individuals act as independent entrepreneurs, managing their own businesses and providing services to multiple clients. They have full autonomy, including the ability to choose their clients, set their prices, and define their strategies (Szenkier, 2018).
Coworking	Coworking brings together self-employed professionals and entrepreneurs in a shared workspace, fostering collaboration and the exchange of ideas. With workstations and meeting rooms, it provides a stimulating environment for both individual and collaborative projects, as well as networking opportunities with professionals from diverse fields (De Abreu et al., 2019).
Job sharing	In this model, two or more individuals share a part-time position, dividing the responsibilities and tasks of the same role across alternating schedules. This arrangement promotes work–life balance, facilitates knowledge exchange between partners, and offers advantages for both employees and organizations (Szenkier, 2018).
Gig economy	The gig economy (or “odd-job economy”) is a model of work organization based on the performance of short-term, temporary,

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	or on-demand tasks, typically mediated by digital platforms (De Abreu et al., 2019).
Digital nomads	Digital nomads are professionals who use digital technologies to perform their activities remotely without a permanent geographical location, allowing them to work from different cities or countries (De Abreu et al., 2019).

Source: Do Carmo Lucas e Santos (2021), Augusto (2021), Szenkier (2018) e De Abreu et al. (2019).

Configurations such as remote work, flexible schedules, project-based assignments, professional autonomy, and other models provide employees with a broader range of options, allowing them to determine the location, schedule, and nature of their work activities (Government of Brazil, 2022; De Jesus, 2021). According to Ricardo Antunes (2020), this transformation in the work paradigm emerges as a result of technological advances, changes in employees' expectations, and shifts in the dynamics of the labor market.

2.3. The evolutionary dynamics of the labor market

The evolutionary dynamics of the labor market have been characterized by substantial transformations driven by various socioeconomic and technological factors (Paiva, 2023). Within this context, it becomes necessary to examine new work arrangements as responses to contemporary circumstances. According to Almeida (2019), the world of work is undergoing a process of reconfiguration resulting from a series of structural changes caused by globalization, the technological revolution, and demographic shifts. These influences, according to Fontana (2021), have generated a scenario in which the rigidity of traditional work arrangements has gradually given way to more adaptable and flexible paradigms. The emergence of new information and communication technologies stands out as one of the main drivers of this phenomenon, enabling connectivity, mobility, and collaboration on unprecedented scales, as argued by Câmara and Ferreira (2021).

Flexible work modalities (including telework, freelancing, flexible schedules, and coworking) have established new patterns in the organization and execution of professional activities (Mendes; Hastenreiter Filho; Tellechea, 2020). According to

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Lima and Bridi (2019), these approaches provide workers with a greater degree of autonomy, allowing them to manage their time and workplace according to their individual needs and preferences. Furthermore, Fontana (2021) argues that these new work modalities facilitate a better alignment between professional and personal demands, promoting a healthier balance between work and personal life. At the same time, as noted by De Carvalho (2024), such work formats also generate advantages for organizations.

Thus, De Abreu et al. (2019) argue that these models enable organizations to expand access to global talent, regardless of geographical location, thereby increasing opportunities for recruitment and collaboration. Additionally, the authors state that such arrangements contribute to the reduction of operational costs, including expenses related to infrastructure and employee commuting. Consequently, according to Fontana (2021), by granting greater flexibility to employees, organizations can enhance job satisfaction and productivity while simultaneously fostering a more inclusive and diverse work environment.

3. Methodology

With regard to its objectives, means, and purposes, this research is classified as exploratory and descriptive. According to Antonio Carlos Gil (2008, p. 28), descriptive research “has as its primary objective the description of the characteristics of a given population or phenomenon, or the establishment of relationships between variables.” This methodology, according to Marina de Andrade Marconi and Eva Maria Lakatos (2004, p. 186), “observes, records, analyzes, and correlates facts or phenomena (variables) without manipulating them.” Exploratory research, in turn, according to Antonio Carlos Gil (2008, p. 27), “aims to provide greater familiarity with the problem in order to make it more explicit or to construct hypotheses.” Complementing this idea, Sylvia Constant Vergara (2016, p. 47) states that “research is conducted in an area where there is little accumulated and systematized knowledge.”

Regarding the approach to the research problem, the study adopted a

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quantitative methodology. According to Roberto Jarry Richardson (1999, p. 71), the quantitative approach “is characterized by the use of quantification both in data collection and in the treatment of data through statistical techniques.”

The study employed the survey technique, as it allows the systematic and standardized collection of information related to the evaluation of opinions and knowledge within the researched population (Mineiro, 2020). The participants were students from the Administration program at the Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia de Minas Gerais – São João Evangelista Campus. Currently, the program has 111 enrolled students, ranging from the first to the final year of the undergraduate course, who were selected by convenience. The sample was non-probabilistic and voluntary, which means, according to Batista et al. (2021), that only students who chose to participate in the study were included. This approach was adopted due to the ease of access to voluntary participants, as well as time and resource limitations that prevented random selection.

However, in order to establish a participation target capable of providing statistical robustness to the study, the representative sample size for a finite population (N = 111) was calculated, considering a 95% confidence level (Z = 1.96) and a 5% margin of error (e = 0.05), with a maximum population proportion of p = 0.50. Based on these parameters, the ideal sample size for the population of 111 students was approximately 86 participants.

Nevertheless, after the data collection period conducted from September 1, 2025, to October 30, 2025, the final sample consisted of 66 participants. Although the participation of 66 respondents represents a significant portion of the population (approximately 59% of the students), it is lower than the calculated ideal sample size. This deviation has methodological implications for the research. According to Batista et al. (2021), a sample smaller than the ideal results in a margin of error greater than the initially planned 5%. With 66 participants, the margin of error increases, requiring caution when generalizing the results to the entire population of 111 students.

Data were collected through a structured questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale: strongly disagree (1), partially disagree (2), neutral (3), partially agree

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(4), and strongly agree (5), administered via Google Forms. According to Feijó et al. (2020, p. 31), the Likert scale "is known as a summative scale and is the most widely used model for measuring attitudes, preferences, and perspectives." The questionnaire included 12 structured questions adapted from the studies of Trovão and De Araújo (2020), Government of Brazil (2022), and Santos (2013), addressing issues related to the research topic.

The initial phase of the research, structured under Axis 1 (general knowledge), aimed to outline the respondents' knowledge base and professional experience. For this purpose, two categorical questions were used, CG1 and CG2, which allowed the simultaneous selection of multiple options. The questions were respectively: *"I am familiar with the following work arrangements"* and *"I have had professional experience in any of these work arrangements."* The response options included: traditional on-site work, remote work/home office, hybrid work, freelancer/self-employment, temporary work, and coworking work.

The section of the questionnaire corresponding to Axis 2 (experiences and knowledge about the labor market), Axis 3 (productivity and performance), and Axis 4 (professional challenges) was structured using the five-point Likert scale, as detailed in Table 2. The questions in these sections were methodologically coded using the acronym S (for section), followed by the axis number (2, 3, or 4), the letter P (for question), and the sequential number of the item within the questionnaire. For example, the first question of Axis 2 was coded as S2P3.

Table 2 – Questionnarie to be Applied in the research

Code	Section 2 - Experiences and Knowledge about the Contemporary Labor Market
S2P3	I feel prepared to face the professional challenges of the 21st century.
S2P4	I am familiar with the different forms of current employment relationships (formal employment contracts, self-employment, freelancing, remote work, etc.).
S2P5	My academic education has contributed to my understanding of the new dynamics of the labor market.
Section 3 - Productivity and Performance	
S3P6	I believe that the use of digital technologies increases my productivity in the workplace.
S3P7	I am able to manage my time efficiently when working remotely or in a hybrid format.
S3P8	I feel that I am more productive when I have autonomy to organize my tasks.

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Section 4 - Challenges of the Professional Environment	
S3P9	I face difficulties balancing personal and professional life in light of new forms of work.
S3P10	I believe that uncertainty regarding flexible employment relationships is a challenge for my career.
S3P11	I feel that it is difficult to maintain motivation when working outside a traditional in-person work environment.

Source: Trovão e De Araújo (2020), Brasil (2022) e Santos (2013).

The collected data were entered and organized in spreadsheets using Microsoft Excel. Tables were created to tabulate the responses and assign numerical values to participants' answers. The tabulated data were subsequently exported and processed in the software JASP for statistical analysis and detailed interpretation of the results. This software was selected due to its ease of use and applicability for statistical procedures. Initially, during the data organization and cleaning phase conducted in Microsoft Excel, all variables were coded. The questions from Axis 1 (CG1 and CG2), which allowed multiple responses, were transformed into dummy variables, in which each work arrangement became a distinct column, receiving the value "1" when selected and "0" when not selected. The Likert-scale questions were scored from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The data cleaning process focused on identifying and addressing any inconsistencies or missing data, ensuring the integrity of the dataset. For the questions in Axis 1 (CG1 and CG2), the analysis involved calculating absolute and percentage frequencies in order to quantify participants' knowledge and experience regarding each work arrangement. For the Likert-scale questions (Axes 2, 3, and 4, coded as S2P3 to S4P11), the following descriptive statistical measures were calculated for each variable: mean, mode, median ($\bar{x}$), and standard deviation (σ). These measures enabled a detailed statistical description of participants' responses and supported the interpretation of the results.

4. Results and discussion

Axis 1 revealed that the majority of the 66 participants possess solid knowledge regarding contemporary professional roles. Traditional in-person work

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and remote/home office work were the most recognized options, each cited by 66 participants. Knowledge also remained significantly high for freelancer/self-employed work (66 responses) and hybrid work (64 responses). Although temporary work (57 responses) and coworking (49 responses) received less attention, most participants are still aware of their existence.

In contrast to the high level of knowledge, practical experience in these modalities shows a sharper decline in more modern forms of work. Experience in the traditional workplace is almost universal (65 responses), reaffirming its dominance in the labor market. Experience with remote/home office work was also highly reported (57 responses). However, more flexible or innovative forms presented considerably lower experience rates: freelancer/self-employed work (37 responses) and hybrid work (36 responses) were experienced by only about half of the participants. The lowest levels of experience were observed in temporary work (19 responses) and particularly in coworking (10 responses).

The Likert scale questions (Axes 2, 3, and 4) indicate that students from IFMG – Campus São João Evangelista strongly believe in the factors that drive productivity within new professional relationships. A high percentage of respondents recognize the significant contribution of their academic education (71.2%) and report being well informed about current professional relationships (65.1%). The Productivity Index (Axis 3) presented the highest level of agreement in the study, showing almost unanimous confidence in technology (S3P6) and a strong perception of increased productivity (S3P8).

However, the main challenge identified by the participants is personal in nature: 69.7% agree that they face difficulties balancing personal and professional life (S4P9), which represents the most evident concern regarding flexible work arrangements. Although insecurity related to flexible employment relationships (S4P10) is also a significant concern (59.1% agreement), difficulty in maintaining motivation outside the traditional workplace (S4P11) appears to be the least perceived challenge, with the majority of respondents (56.1%) disagreeing with this statement. The study therefore suggests that the primary challenge for future managers does not lie in technology or self-discipline, but rather in managing the

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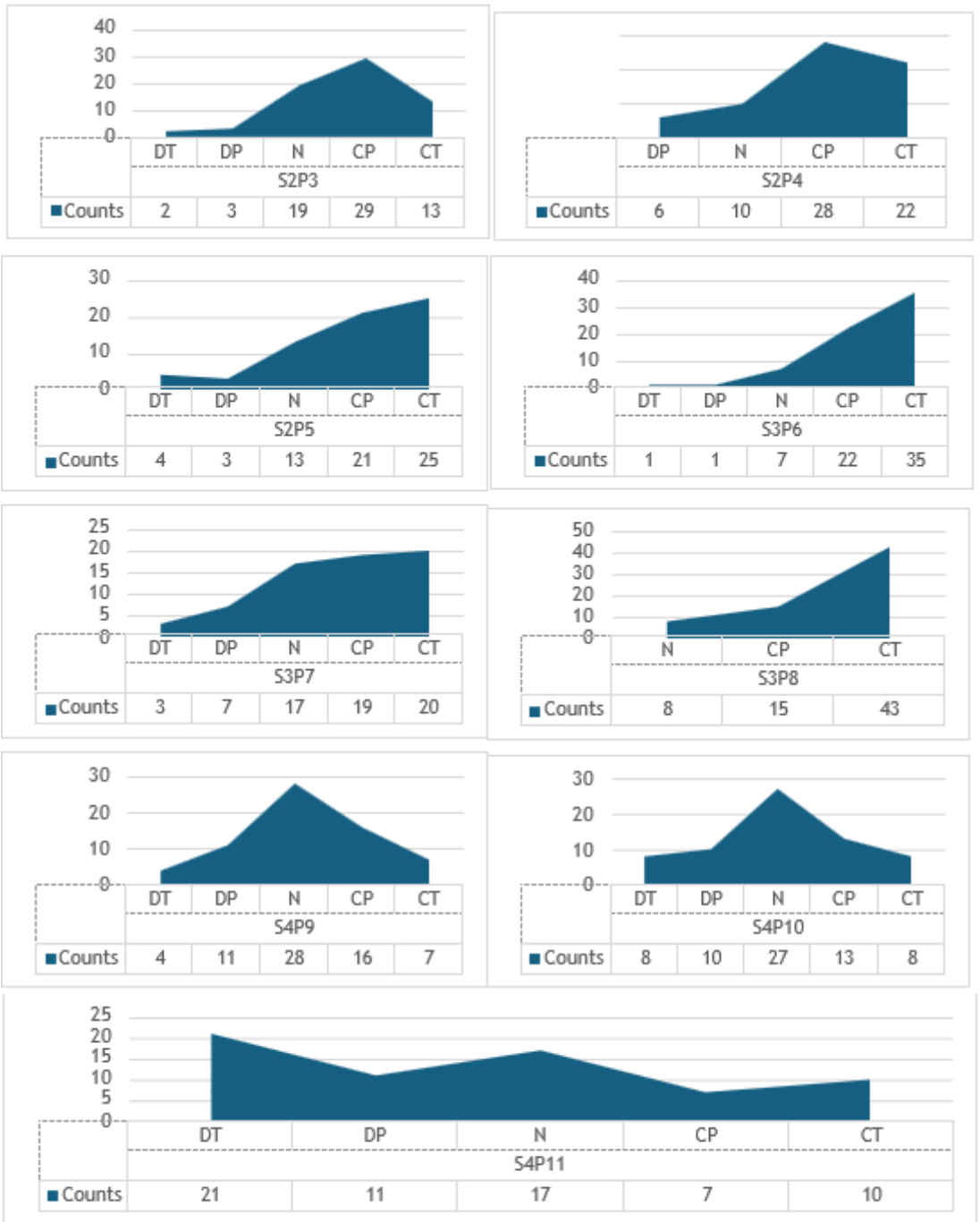
boundaries between professional and personal life.

The distribution of the research participants' perceptions is representatively presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1 - Vote count analysis by question



Source: Research data, 2025.

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The analysis of the means, modes, medians ($\bar{x}$), and standard deviations (σ) of the Likert-scale questions provides a quantitative view of the participants' perception trends (Table 1).

Table 1 – Means, modes, medians, and standard deviations

Código	Moda	Mediana	Média	Inferior	Superior	Std. Desvio	Mínimo	Máximo
S2P3	3.999	4.000	3.727	3.497	3.958	0.937	1.000	5.000
S2P4	4.001	4.000	4.000	3.772	4.228	0.928	2.000	5.000
S2P5	4.897	4.000	3.909	3.627	4.191	1.147	1.000	5.000
S3P6	4.998	5.000	4.348	4.139	4.557	0.850	1.000	5.000
S3P7	4.036	4.000	3.697	3.414	3.980	1.150	1.000	5.000
S3P8	4.999	5.000	4.530	4.357	4.704	0.706	3.000	5.000
S4P9	3.000	3.000	3.167	2.913	3.420	1.032	1.000	5.000
S4P10	3.013	3.000	3.045	2.761	3.330	1.156	1.000	5.000
S4P11	1.148	3.000	2.606	2.256	2.956	1.424	1.000	5.000

Source: Research data, 2025.

Axis 3 (productivity and performance) presented the highest means in the study, indicating a strong positive consensus regarding efficiency in new work models. The highest mean was observed for the perception of greater productivity with autonomy (S3P8) ($\bar{x}$ = 4.53), followed closely by the belief that the use of technology increases productivity (S3P6) ($\bar{x}$ = 4.34). The low standard deviation of these questions (around 0.7) reinforces the strong consensus among students in valuing autonomy and technology as pillars of performance.

In Axis 2 (preparation and knowledge), the means indicate a positive perception of preparedness, with emphasis on academic training (S2P5) ($\bar{x}$ = 3.90) and a good understanding of professional relationships (S2P4) ($\bar{x}$ = 4.00).

On the other hand, Axis 4 (professional challenges) identifies the main area of vulnerability as the difficulty of balancing personal and professional life (S4P9), which presents the highest mean ($\bar{x}$ = 3.16), confirming the group's primary concern regarding work flexibility. Insecurity related to flexible employment relationships (S4P10) can also be perceived as a challenge ($\bar{x}$ = 3.04). However, it is important to highlight that the statement regarding difficulty in maintaining

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motivation (S4P11) presented the lowest mean in the entire study ($\bar{x}$ = 2.60), indicating that motivation is not the main obstacle for this group of students.

The study demonstrates that future managers possess a solid understanding of emerging work arrangements. The most recognized work models (traditional, remote/home office, freelancer/self-employed, and hybrid) reflect the rapid reconfiguration of the labor market driven by globalization and technological advancement. This high level of awareness supports the argument of Scherer and Leal (2023), who state that the popularity of these work arrangements in the twenty-first century is largely due to advances in broadband internet, cloud computing, and digital platforms. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the widespread adoption of these models (Rosa et al., 2025).

One of the most significant findings is the positive consensus among students regarding the effectiveness of these new work arrangements. The study found that the perception of greater productivity associated with autonomy obtained the highest level of agreement, followed by the belief that the use of technology increases productivity. According to Lima and Bridi (2019), flexible work arrangements provide workers with greater autonomy, allowing them to manage both their time and workplace. This flexibility can improve job satisfaction and productivity (Fontana, 2021), while also facilitating the alignment between professional and personal demands.

Despite the strong emphasis on productivity and technology, the main vulnerability identified in the study is personal in nature, as 69.7% of participants reported difficulties in balancing personal and professional life. This finding challenges part of the literature, which frequently identifies improved work–life balance as one of the main benefits of telework or flexible work arrangements (Do Carmo Lucas; Santos, 2021; Augusto, 2021). The results suggest that the challenge for future managers does not lie in technology or self-discipline, but rather in managing the boundaries between professional and personal spheres.

This highlights the importance of human resource management, which Araújo (2021) considers increasingly relevant due to the geographical dispersion of teams. The findings also support the recommendation of Leite and Lemos (2021)

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that managers should prioritize the psychological well-being of employees while addressing both the opportunities and the challenges associated with flexible work arrangements (Hartmann, 2022). According to Malafaia (2018), the most challenging aspect of people management is not maintaining motivation, but rather managing boundaries within the work environment.

Although the study reveals optimism regarding efficiency and technology, it also highlights a major vulnerability: the conflict between personal and professional life. The perception of difficulty in balancing these two dimensions presented the highest mean among the identified challenges. According to Augusto (2021) and Do Carmo Lucas and Santos (2021), flexible work arrangements offer the significant advantage of promoting harmony between different areas of life. However, the persistence of this challenge suggests that, if not properly managed, flexibility may allow work to intrude into personal space, potentially leading to overload and exhaustion.

5. Conclusion

The objective of this study was to analyze the perceptions of Administration students at IFMG – Campus São João Evangelista regarding new professional arrangements in the twenty-first century. The research examined the level of knowledge, the impact on productivity, and the main challenges associated with these emerging work modalities.

The results indicate a strong and consistent consensus among future managers regarding the benefits of autonomy and technology as drivers of productivity. However, the main challenge identified is related to personal constraints, particularly the difficulty of balancing personal and professional life, which presented the highest median among the listed challenges. The low mean associated with difficulty in maintaining motivation suggests that the obstacle lies in managing boundaries rather than in an intrinsic lack of willingness to work.

These findings support the theoretical propositions of Cordeiro, Lamoglia, and Cruz Filho (2019) and Fontana (2021), who associate work flexibility with

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technological advancement and increased efficiency. However, they also raise concerns regarding the ideal of work–life balance often highlighted by authors such as Augusto. According to Araújo (2021) and Hartmann (2022), the effectiveness of these new models depends on the development of behavioral competencies and on people management practices that prioritize well-being and clearly defined boundaries.

This study offers valuable insights for curriculum development and strategic planning in Administration and Human Resource Management programs. It suggests that academic training should focus on strengthening competencies such as self-management, emotional intelligence, and communication, rather than concentrating exclusively on technical skills. Nevertheless, one limitation of this research is that the analysis was restricted to students from a single institution and academic program (Administration). Although the sample is appropriate for the context of management education, caution is necessary when generalizing the findings to other academic programs or professional contexts.

For future studies, it is recommended to expand the research to include the perceptions of managers and employees who are currently working within flexible work models. This would allow data triangulation between academic theory, future professional expectations, and the realities of the labor market. Furthermore, future research should investigate effective Human Resource Management practices aimed at promoting a culture of disconnection, thereby providing concrete solutions to the boundary-management challenges identified in this study.

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