

## Remote Working: Examining Benefits, Challenges and Organizational Practices

Mansi Makkar<sup>1\*</sup>, Neetu Rani<sup>2</sup>

Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak

**Corresponding Author:** Mansi Makkar [mansimakkar1104.mm@gmail.com](mailto:mansimakkar1104.mm@gmail.com)

---

### ARTICLE INFO

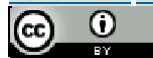
*Keywords:* Remote Working, Work From Home, Work-Life Balance, Digital Technology Organizational Practices

*Received :* 10, February

*Revised :* 15, March

*Accepted:* 14, April

©2024 Makkar, Rani: This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Atribusi 4.0 Internasional](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).



### ABSTRACT

In 2020, during COVID-19 pandemic, to maintain the smooth flow of work and reduce the chance of getting infected and transmitting the virus, businesses had no choice but to shut down the offices and adapt remote working. The development of information and communication technologies has made it possible for workers to work remotely without much difficulty. Like everything, working from home has upsides and downsides of its own. Thus, the objective of this study was to describe the benefits of remote working along with the challenges that comes with it. With the help of existing literature, the study also identified organizational practices that will improve the experience of remote working for employees. The research finds that setting clear goals, use of appropriate communication tools, establish clear remote work policies and norms, flexibility, timely performance assessment and feedback, and mental health assistance enhances the successful implementation and employee's experience in remote working.

---

## INTRODUCTION

The notion of remote work has emerged due to the progress of digital technology and the swift growth of information and communication technology (ICT) (Olson & Olson, 2000). When an employee uses digital technology to arrange to work from a location other than their regular workspace, it may be considered remote work. The concept of remote work with digital technology has gained popularity not only because of the rapid development of ICT and digital technology, but also because of the lockdown measures implemented in response to the COVID-19 pandemic (Mariani & Castaldo, 2020). According to reports, 77% of executives believe that the trend of remote work will continue even after the COVID-19 pandemic (Accenture Report, 2021). Zoom, Google Meet, and other platforms are being used by numerous universities across the globe for online instruction, workshops, webinars, and conferences (Khan, & Eerde, 2018). When employees find it difficult to commute to their offices, the remote work system gives an organization the ability to continue operating. Companies in finance and technology have already popularized the work-from-home trend (Hodgson & Wigglesworth, 2020). Especially IT companies, which are well-known for offering telecommuting options and flexible schedules. This makes sense, since the majority of tech companies are web-based and technology is the most useful tool for working from home. Through the use of video chats, conference calls, VPN networks, and wireless internet, we are able to maintain constant connectivity.

Remote working has many conflicting beliefs. For instance, some individuals have stated that being able to spend more time with their families and cut down on wasted time traveling has improved both their wellbeing and productivity at work (Felstead & Henseke 2017). On the other hand, (Yang et al., 2022) indicated a substantial reduction in social interactions, which can foster teamwork, exchange of information, and innovation at work. Additionally, (Glassdoor Economic Research 2022) highlighted that interns and employees that newly joined the organization suffered the most when the pandemic struck, because of reduced social interaction they could not get adequate training and mentoring. The sense of belonging or organizational commitment, organization culture and professional conduct were all hampered as a result of reduced social interaction (Kirchner et al., 2021). While companies profited from lower maintenance costs for physical workspaces and easier access to top talent globally, HRM protocols designed for physical workspaces were struggling to adapt to the entirely new working arrangements, which make it more difficult than ever to hire, manage, and assess staff. However, as the pandemic is coming to an end, employees who are satisfied and acclimated to remote work environment are refusing to go back to their actual offices and workspaces.

In order to prevent losses from occurring as a result of decreased productivity, organizations need to take all necessary steps to guarantee that employees' productivity stays on level with their offline performance. Therefore, the objective of this study is to identify benefits and challenges of

remote working. The study will also suggest practices and policies to improve the effectiveness of remote working.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

According to the research, remote working is not a novel idea as it has been used for many years (Stoker et al., 2022). However, as technology advanced, these ideas began to proliferate in workplace culture, based on the type of work (Pennington et al., 2022). Employees of companies that work remotely are thought to have a unique arrangement wherein they are not obliged to commute or travel to a specific work location, such as an office, store, or warehouse. Employees can work from any location at any time thanks to developed digital technology and advanced information and communication technology. This system assists a company in continuing to function normally in any circumstance, such as the lockdowns that occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic when workers were compelled to stay at home. In the current situation, the work-from-home culture is not in its infancy; rather, it has significantly increased, and both employers and employees have responded to it with enthusiasm. Flexibility in the place of work has provided numerous benefits to the employees as well as to the companies (Hill et al., 2008). Employers gain from not having to waste money on unnecessary expansion of office space and can save a variety of resources (Morikawa, 2022). Whereas workers at the company are becoming more at ease sitting in their own personal spaces and are not having as much trouble getting to work on time (Yang et al., 2023). While the organizations can continue to run their business during the crisis, employees can work from home and take care of their families. According to James (2016), this style of working gives employees flexibility, which can be very advantageous because it enables them to finish their daily tasks as well as any personal ones they may have throughout the day. Because they can work from home, where they can take care of personal matters, it increases worker efficiency. Employers also benefit from the best possible output from their workforce. Additionally, workers satisfaction will also increase (Dickens, 2005). However, it's amazing to see how Covid-19 changed people's lives to a new normal (Xie et al., 2020). The companies also discovered some of the problems related to WFH, including the fact that most workers didn't have the necessary skills to use modern technologies, data security being one of the biggest obstacles, missing meetings with coworkers which resulted in stress, and employer confidence regarding the caliber of work (Timotius, 2023). (Canico 2016) states that working from home can have a negative impact on organizational performance, which can then have an effect on the culture of the entire company.

This study also outlines how this style of working may raise tension levels due to a shift in the variety of cultural climates. This means that employees frequently do not adapt well to change unless it is perceived as being advantageous to their needs (CIPD, 2016). Although Covid-19 is currently in its decline phase, new insights gained from the virus will still be applied, particularly in the realm of remote working. Though working from home has many challenges but it is still going to prevail for sure due to various attractions

it has. Thus, this research seeks to identify benefits and challenges of remote working. We do, however, differ from previous works in terms of our review as it includes both employee and employer perspective. Considering, the benefits and challenges employee experiences while working remotely could be different from those experienced by employer or organization. The study also aims to outline diverse organizational practices that are crucial in improving productivity in remote working.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study followed a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) technique. An extensive search of peer-reviewed articles, conference papers and other pertinent studies from databases like Scopus, Web of Science and Google Scholar was carried out. Although Remote working gained popularity after COVID-19 pandemic but it was in existence decades ago. Therefore, documents included in the study are from January 2000 to March 2024. The keywords used in the search are: "remote working", "work from home", "benefits", "challenges" "strategies" and "practices". We also conducted a backward and forward citation search of the previously identified articles in order to gather as many relevant articles as possible. There were two stages to the screening procedure for the first search outcomes: title/abstract screening and full-text screening. The goal of this procedure is to guarantee that research works that directly advance knowledge to the research topic are included. Studies with inadequate data, are not in English language and are not related to our research objectives are excluded.

### ***Benefits of remote working***

Employees and organizations both gain from remote working. One advantage of remote work, according to (Wang et al., 2021), is job autonomy. According to (Hunkeler 2018), employees can better align their work preferences when they work remotely. He mentioned that having the freedom to choose when and how to complete tasks is one of the benefits of working remotely for employees. Being able to manage your work schedule can be very helpful in terms of taking care of your personal needs. As long as their work is finished and produces positive results, employees are free to start and end their days whenever they choose. Being able to choose from a wider variety of job opportunities that are not restricted by geography is one of the many advantages of working from home. It has been discovered that working remotely improves employee wellbeing (Lazarova, 2019). It contributes to raising employee satisfaction and morale. (Dimitropoulou 2019) has contended that an accommodating work schedule that enables employees to balance work and family obligations is a more important factor in determining employee satisfaction and morale than compensation and advancements. There is a misconception that employees who work remotely are less productive than those who work in person. In actuality, remote workers have demonstrated a high level of productivity even during the pandemic, which has increased worker efficiency and reduced workplace distractions (Ehsan et al., 2008). Remote workers typically have happier and more devoted teams. This is partly

because working from home has been demonstrated to reduce stress, increase time for interests and hobbies, and enhance interpersonal relationships (Timmerman & Scott 2006). Remote work saves a lot of money for both employers and employees. When people don't have to commute every day, they can cut back on their parking, transportation, and work clothes costs (Raghuram et al., 2001; Felstead & Henseke 2017). Employers can promote diversity and inclusivity through remote work by hiring individuals with a range of perspectives and from diverse social, economic, geographic, and cultural backgrounds (Mattareli & Tagliaventi 2010). Reduced overhead expenses for businesses can include maintenance, utilities, and office space rentals. The money saved can be put back into projects aimed at expanding the business, training staff, or enhancing working conditions (Elshaiekh et al., 2019).

### *Challenges of remote working*

Technology-mediated communication is frequently used by employees who are working remotely, which can cause miscommunication, delays, and a lack of nonverbal signs and signals that are crucial for understanding messages (Allen et al., 2021). Thus, Organizations must put money in the right means of communication and set up clear communication norms to beat these challenges. The buildup of solid interpersonal relationships among teammates may be hindered by the lack of in-person communication and unofficial interactions (Espinosa et al., 2021). Employee motivation, commitment, zeal, and a sense of value to the company are all influenced by efficiency, cohesion, and collaboration-elements that are challenging to attain when employees are working remotely. Building trust between remote employees might take longer than it does with in-person employees. The project as a whole may suffer from a lack of trust among the teammates. To boost communication and confidence in employees, managers must give priority to team-building exercises (Liao, 2017). Difference in time zones also acts as a hurdle in remote working as this can convolute scheduling and obstructs communication in real time (Chong et al., 2023). Further, in remote work environments, keeping an eye on worker performance and guaranteeing accountability can be difficult. Managers may find it difficult to evaluate output and give remote workers immediate assistance and input (Choudhury et al., 2021). (Coffey and Wolf 2018) found that social interaction is essential to human survival. They added that lack of affiliation is another difficulty with remote working. As the likelihood of in-person interaction, direct team meetings and impromptu discussions that are present in a conventional work setting is lacking in remote work environment, it bereave the remote employees of the need for affiliation. Anxiety and burnout is also common across remote workers due to factors like loneliness, lack of management support and absence of work-life balance (Kompier et al., 2021). Lastly, many employees who do work from home feel discontented and unhappy with their position and responsibilities due to lack of insights into overall organization's vision.

## ***Organizational Practices to improve productivity in remote working***

### **Use of effective communication tools**

The most important aspect of working remotely is communication. Without it, workers who work remotely could experience mental and physical isolation from peers and lose out on important news and developments. Also, Cooperation within a team working remotely requires effective communication, and using the right software and devices for communication can greatly improve team output (Kurland & Bailey, 2020). To improve collaboration and close communication gaps, remote workers should be encouraged to participate in virtual team-building exercises, have open discussions, and develop a feeling of belonging. Also, in order to ensure effective and smooth communication, the team's unique needs and work processes should guide the selection of communication tools (Liao, 2017).

### **Providing timely feedback and performance assessment**

In remote working, ensuring accountability and encouraging ongoing growth require timely feedback and performance reviews. To offer helpful criticism and acknowledge achievements, managers should plan periodic meetings with employees and carry performance evaluation (Choudhury et al., 2021). A constant cycle of feedback has the potential to enhance employee involvement, pin point areas of improvement and foster an atmosphere of lifelong learning and growth (Jang, 2020).

### **Establish clear remote work policies and norms**

To ensure adherence and to lay out expectations and norms for employees working remotely, supervisors must draft a policy on remote work. These guidelines have to be modified for your business, the sector, and the individual roles of each worker (Harris et al., 2018). Establishing which policies apply to employees with different schedules compared to those who work remotely is essential if your organization offers a mix of in-office, virtual, and hybrid positions. This way, everyone knows what is expected of them from the very beginning (Espinosa et al., 2021).

### **Clear and realistic expectations**

Establishing precise goals and standards is essential to the success of remote employees. In order to ensure that all employees are aware of their duties and results that is expected from them, supervisor must clarify and outline objectives and tasks of all employees (Allen et al., 2021). Setting realistic, quantifiable goals for your team is crucial for a fully remote business in order to keep track of advancement and employee involvement while also making sure that employees are not overburdened. The clear understanding of the goals promotes accountability, improve collaboration and lessen confusion (Marlow et al., 2018).

### ***Providing mental health support***

Social contacts have significantly decreased as a result of remote work. Living apart from family can cause loneliness for many people. This has a

noticeable impact on worker productivity as well. As a result, managers have a responsibility to promptly assist teammates emotionally, follow up with them, encourage them to take time for mental health, and refer them to counseling if necessary. A 2020 survey on remote work wellness found that remote worker's productivity improved by almost 28% when their organization provided a vigorous wellness program.

***Flexible approach***

Flexibility is very important in remote working. Many workers who work from home do struggle in managing their parents and kids. With flexible working hours, they can better balance their personal and professional lives and work effectively around the schedules of their children. Flexible working will also reduce stress, ultimately leading to better productivity (Yang et al., 2000). Changing to a completion-based work model is one way to help your team and business go through this change more smoothly. This model places more emphasis on an individual's achievements than their number of hours worked (Martins & Shalley 2011).

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

**Table 1. Benefits of remote working**

		<b>References</b>
<b>For employees</b>	Job autonomy	(Hunkeler 2018); (Wang et al., 2021)
	Well-being	(Felstead & Henseke 2017); (Lazarova, 2019); (Dimitropoulou 2019)
	Increased productivity and morale	(Ehsan et al., 2008); (Reilly et al., 2012); (Raghuram et al., 2001); (Felstead & Henseke 2017)
	Financial benefits	(Thompson 2018); (Vartiainen 2012)
	Work-life balance	(Reilly et al., 2012); (Nurmi & Hinds 2016); (Thompson 2018); (Dimitropoulou 2019)
<b>For organization</b>	Reduced costs	(Salazar & Sawyer 2007); (Thompson 2018); (Vartiainen 2012)
	Access to global talent	(Lacey & Cox 2013); (Carlson 2014);

		(Chungade & Kharat 2017)
--	--	--------------------------

**Table 2. Challenges of remote working**

		References
<b>For employees</b>	Communication challenges	(Coffey and Wolf 2018); (Espinosa et al., 2021); (Allen et al., 2021). (Chong et al., 2023).
	Stress and burnout	(Kompier et al., 2021); (Vijayakumaran et al., 2023)
	Family interference	(Wang et al., 2021)
	Building team cohesion	(Liao, 2017); (Lazarova 2019)
<b>For organization</b>	Training challenges	(Kirchner et al., 2021)
	Lack of cooperation	(Liao, 2017); (Marlow et al., 2018); (Vijayakumaran et al., 2023)
	Performance evaluation challenge	(Jang, 2020); (Choudhury et al., 2021); (Vijayakumaran et al., 2023)
	Development of Organization culture	(Kirchner et al., 2021)

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The development of remote work has revolutionized how businesses run, lead their employees, and collaborate virtually. Despite the difficulties, there are a lot of benefits to remote work that encourage both employers and employees to embrace this arrangement. Nowadays, companies all over the world are thinking about adopting remote work as a viable option for the future. While remote working has communication barriers, can cause stress and anxiety in employees and monitoring and evaluating employee performance is a major challenge but it will give employees greater flexibility, opportunity to balance work and life, reduced stress which leads to improved performance. Working in remote setting also save employee expenses in commuting, lifestyle, parking and others. Likewise, organizations get benefit in terms of diversity in

employees, reduction in expenses like office rent, electricity and maintenance. The study demonstrated that working remotely can be difficult and therefore outlined some practices that organizations should offer to improve its effectiveness. Such organizational practices includes regular meetings and virtual get-togethers to keep team members motivated and engaged, use of effective communication tools to improve collaboration and cooperation, timely feedback to foster learning and growth, clear expectations of objectives to specify employee's day, setting of standard remote working guidelines to follow, mental health assistance and flexible approach to ensure productivity in remote working.

## REFERENCES

- Allen, T. D., Golden, T. D., & Shockley, K. M. (2021). How effective is telecommuting? Assessing the status of our scientific findings. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, 16(2), 40-68.
- Choudhury, P., Foroughi, C., & Larson, B. Z. (2021). Work-from-anywhere: the productivity effects of geographic flexibility. *Strategic Management Journal*, 42(4), 655-683.
- Dimitropoulou, A (2019). Top 5 Benefits of Remote Working. CEOWorld.biz, 15 May 2019, Available on: <https://ceoworld.biz/2019/01/29/top-5-benefits-of-remote-working/>.
- Ehsan, N. & Mirza, Ebtisam & Ahmad, Muhammad. (2008). Impact of computer-mediated communication on virtual Teams' Performance: An empirical study. 1 - 8. 10.1109/ITSIM.2008.4632068.
- Espinosa, J. A., Slaughter, S. A., Kraut, R. E., & Herbsleb, J. D. (2021). Team knowledge and coordination in geographically distributed software development. *Journal of Management Information Systems*, 37(1), 7-34.
- Felstead, Alan & Henseke, Golo. (2017). Assessing the growth of remote working and its consequences for effort, well-being and work-life balance. *New Technology, Work and Employment*. 32. 10.1111/ntwe.12097.
- Gibson, C. B. (2018). Elaboration, generalization, triangulation, and interpretation: On enhancing the value of mixed method research. *Organizational Research Methods*, 21(2), 259- 286.
- Harris, J. A., Winskowski, A. M., & Engdahl, B. E. (2018). Types of workplace social support in the prediction of job satisfaction. *The Career Development Quarterly*, 66(4), 369-381.
- Hunkeler, I. (2018). 8 Benefits of Allowing Employees to Work Remotely. <https://recruitloop.com/blog/8-benefits-allowing-employees-work-remotely/>.
- Jang, S. (2020). Managing dispersed teams: Exploring the role of time zones in the context of temporal coordination and virtuality. *Journal of Management*, 46(7), 1226-1253.
- Kompier, M., Ybema, J. F., & Taris, T. W. (2021). The psychosocial work environment and well-being: Research priorities from an occupational health psychology perspective. *Applied Psychology*, 70(1), 104-123.
- Kurland, N. B., & Bailey, D. E. (2020). The advantages and challenges of

working here, there, anywhere, and anytime. *Organizational Dynamics*, 28(2), 53-68.

Lazarova, T. (2019). The economic perspective of remote working places. <https://www.researchgate.net/>.

Liao, C. (2017). Leadership in virtual teams: A multilevel perspective. *Human Resource Management Review*, 27(4), 648-659.

Marlow, S. L., Lacerenza, C. N., & Salas, E. (2018). Communication in virtual teams: A conceptual framework and research agenda. *Human Resource Management Review*, 28(3), 774-789.

Mattarelli, Elisa & Tagliaventi, Maria Rita. (2010). Work-Related Identities, Virtual Work Acceptance and the Development of Glocalised Work Practices in Globally Distributed Teams. *Industry & Innovation*. 17. 415-443. 10.1080/13662716.2010.496247.

Morikawa, M. (2022). Work-from-home productivity during the COVID-19 pandemic: Evidence from Japan. *Economic Inquiry*, 60(2), 508-527.

Nilles, J. M. (1998). *Managing telework: Strategies for managing the virtual workforce* (Vol. 6). Wiley.

Pennington, N., Holmstrom, A. J., & Hall, J. A. (2022). The toll of technology while working from home during COVID-19. *Communication Reports*, 35(1), 25-37.

Pérez, M., Martínez, A., & De Luis, P. (2002). Benefits and barriers of telework: Perception differences of human resources managers according to company's operations strategy. *The International Journal of Technological Innovation and Entrepreneurship*, 22(12), 775-783.

Raghuram, S., Garud, R., Wiesenfeld, B., & Gupta, V. (2001). Factors contributing to virtual work adjustment. *Journal of Management*, 27(3), 383-405. <https://doi.org/10.1177/014920630102700309>

Saval, N. (2021). Remote work and the future of cities. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, 53(1), 3-7.

Sharma, M. (2022). More professionals interested in companies that offer work-from-home indefinitely. <https://www.peoplesmatters.in/news/employee-engagement/more-professionals-interested-in-companies-that-offer-work-from-home-indefinitely-34551>.

- Stoker, J. I., Garretsen, H., & Lammers, J. (2022). Leading and working from home in times of COVID-19: On the perceived changes in leadership behaviors. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, 29(2), 208–218.
- Timmerman, C. & Scott, Craig. (2006). Virtually Working: Communicative and Structural Predictors of Media Use and Key Outcomes in Virtual Work Teams1. *Communication Monographs*, 73, 108-136. 10.1080/03637750500534396.
- Timotius, E. (2023). Work-from-home during pandemic of COVID-19: An investigation study on managers in Indonesia. *International Journal of Productivity and Quality Management*, 38(2), 193–210.
- Wang, B., Liu, Y., Qian, J., & Parker, S. K. (2021). Achieving effective remote working during the COVID-19 pandemic: A work design perspective. *Applied Psychology*, 70(1), 16-59.
- Xie, X., Siau, K., & Nah, F. F. H. (2020). COVID-19 pandemic-online education in the new normal and the next normal. *Journal of information technology case and application research*, 22(3), 175–187.
- Yang, E., Kim, Y., & Hong, S. (2023). Does working from home work? Experience of working from home and the value of hybrid workplace post-COVID-19. *Journal of Corporate Real Estate*, 25(1), 50–76.
- Yeo, R. K., & Li, J. (2022). Breaking the silence of psychological impact while working from home during COVID: Implications for workplace learning. *Human Resource Development International*, 25(2), 114–144.