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A review of literature on employee wellbeing in hybrid and remote workplace

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Abstract
Hybrid workplace is the new culture. It becomes very important to focus on the mental wellbeing of employees which is affected if factors like work hours, personal time, supportive environment, motivation are not present. The work performance of an employee working remotely or in a hybrid manner gets affected. The excessive use of new technologies and job activities that stretch into personal time define the remote working environment. Each employee is expected to manage various responsibilities while maintaining performance standards and personal welfare, yet without sufficient organizational support, individuals whether away rather than thrive. Technology advancements have led to change in the way we work. Demand for work is rapidly increasing which is ultimately putting pressure on employees. In this study we review the recent literature (2010-2023) on employee wellbeing in hybrid or remote workplace. We will also see how if certain policies are implemented properly can enhance the performance of employees.

Keywords: Employee wellbeing, work hours, personal time, supportive environment, motivation

Introduction
IT-enabled, hybrid spaces pose significant challenges to HRM in terms of how employees navigate the boundaries between their personal and professional spaces (Halford, 2005) [1], as well as how they feel about the multiple locations of hybrid spaces, such as the distinctions between digital and physical IT-enabled spaces. The affective living of a hybrid space is relevant in real-world circumstances, such as when workers switch between meeting rooms, when they are asked to develop a group focus while online and concurrently at different physical locations, when virtual work makes them feel close to distant coworkers, or when they disagree with physical workspaces that are meant to foster serendipity and collaboration. (Irving *et al*., 2020) [2].
We need to properly conceptualise how IT and the physical space together contribute to differently experienced experiences of the workplace if we are to highlight how such experiences of hybrid space occur at the junction of many location physical and virtual worlds. In practice, virtual and physical places seem very different from what HRM envisions them to be. Employees may simultaneously practise and live a virtual world differently in different places, or even the same employees in different spatiotemporal and affective contexts. (Waizenegger *et al*., 2020) [3]. Depending on where it is used, such as at home, at work, when traveling, whether alone or with a group of people in a more or less quiet (open) environment, the same IT-enabled virtual videoconferencing area, for example, is received with different emotions. (Banbury & Berry, 2005) [4]. We review the literature on remote work and employee well-being in this article.

Literature Review
Policymakers, organizations, and Governments, are currently debating this complex topic while looking for both scholarly direction and workable answers. There is a sizable corpus of scholarly research that examines workplace mental health risk factors and associated interventions. Organizations certainly have a moral and legal obligation to protect the mental health of their employees, even though it may not be their top concern given their potential to have a great impact on the world. Organizational managers and leaders need to take into account how the quick changes that are occurring at work affect their employees' mental health as well as prospects for growth and profit.

There is no one-size-fits-all strategy or recipe for developing a mentally healthy workplace because every business has different difficulties. However, there are likely to be both risk factors that may be reduced and protective aspects that can be strengthened within every business. (Harvey *et al*., 2017) [5]. Finding these characteristics and managing them in the complex workplace ecosystem is a challenge for enterprises. (Harvey *et al*., 2017; Petrie *et al*., 2018) [5, 6]. Automation, digitization, machine learning, artificial intelligence, and other sectors have all seen significant technical developments in recent decades. The types of labour that can be done and the types of jobs that are available to us have changed as a result of technological improvements. Jobs nowadays are more intellectually demanding, service-focused, and complex.

The workforce now has unlimited access to information online, the ability to quickly complete cognitive tasks (using software for data analysis, for example), the ability to provide services in-person or remotely (using remote education, for example), and the ability to work collaboratively in real-time with people or teams in other time zones. Overall, technology is increasingly dictating the speed and technique of labor, even in fields like finance, science, education, and health that have historically had far more flexibility in making decisions.

Negative impacts of remote workplace

Workplace technology is typically developed to increase output and improve organisational outcomes, with little consideration paid to the impact on employees. For instance, heavy reliance on technology may produce a "norm of responsiveness" that has been linked to increased perceptions of pressures, inflated expectations for output and performance, and feelings of increased mental fatigue. (Perlow, 2012) [7]. According to studies, technology can speed up work processes to the point where it increases employee stress, overload, weariness, and burnout.

An increase in screen time and sedentary work habits, both of which have been linked to worse physical health outcomes, are also associated with an increase in the use of technology at work. These physical health problems include an increased risk of developing heart disease, diabetes, and obesity, frequently in tandem with concurrent mental health problems. (Duncan *et al*., 2012; Ford and Caspe 2012) [8, 9]. Long periods of screen time and sedentary work practises have also been connected to mental health problems, such as an increase in the number of self-reported symptoms of depression and anxiety. (Machav *et al*. 2017) [10].

More frequently, businesses are implementing artificial intelligence technologies to do activities that were formerly handled by humans. For instance, many companies today use automated "intelligent self-service" systems designed to let customers or clients co-produce the service on the assumption that they have the necessary skills, resources, or help. Examples include ordering food via a mobile app, checking bags at the airport, making online hotel reservations and using self-checkout lines at the grocery store. The systems often only function as intended and are appropriate for ordinary customer requests and needs, despite the fact that many consumers like the simplicity and time savings. As a result, it is normal for consumers to experience significant degrees of annoyance, rage, and frequently dashed expectations in many service professions when they deal with the employee. (Groth and Grandey, 2012) [11]. Employee demands are increased as a result, as they may have to deal with rude customers and perform emotional labour (Groth *et al*., 2019) [12].

Overall, technology is having a negative impact on mental health at work through a variety of means, such as increasing demands, reducing resources, and changing how people view the future, all of which have both direct and indirect repercussions for both employers and employees. According to a large body of research, common mental health issues are linked to a higher risk of development when work characteristics such poor job design, excessive job demand, limited job control, and high effort-reward imbalances are present.

The steps to adopt flexible working

If employees had a say in the creation and adoption of flexible working arrangements, researchers might look into whether this might temper improvements in wellbeing. Additionally, scientists can think about using more reliable techniques, such as the stepped wedge design, in which each participant receives the "treatment or intervention" in waves or steps. This is especially useful when studying changes that are implemented in phases across a region or industry, or when it is not feasible or desirable to assign participants at random to a "control condition" because everyone will eventually be moved from the control to the treatment conditions. (For instance, when the intervention is expected to have positive outcomes or when the intervention is a scarce resource). It is possible to improve the effectiveness of these design methodologies, which are frequently employed in broad health service and implementation science.

Additionally, research is required to create acceptable practices for conscious technology use at work and at home, particularly for young workers who are already accustomed to using technology. Such research could look at changing how people use technology as well as the effects of adding features to technology-based work environments, like pausing the delivery of work messages at crucial times (like late at night or after extended periods of use) or raising awareness of problematic technology use. Additionally, it would be helpful to conduct study on the advantages of the flexibility that technology provides, such as using digital tools at work to complete tasks that were before done in one's free time. (shopping, social media etc).

In the next section, we present the review of recent work in remote and hybrid work environments in Table 1.

Table 1: Literature review on remote work and its impact on employee wellbeing

Title	Summary of the work
"Not all remote workers are similar: Technology acceptance, remote work beliefs, and wellbeing of remote workers during the second wave of the	This study investigates whether different employee groups, based on their work and organisational characteristics (i.e., organisational size, number of days per week working from home, working in teams) and personal characteristics (i.e., remote work experience, having children at home), express various opinions regarding working remotely, accepting the technology required to Work from Home, and well-being. From November 2020 to January 2021, 163 Italian employees who responded to an online survey

covid-19 pandemic”	participated in a study. Based on their jobs, organizations, and personal traits, workers can be divided into five distinct types, according to a cluster analysis. According to ANOVA results, remote workers from large companies who regularly worked from home had a higher acceptance of technology and better-coping mechanisms than the other groups of workers.
"Occupational stress and workplace design”	"The World Green Building Council (WGBC) advocates improvements in employee health, wellbeing, and productivity in buildings as people are about 90% of an organisation's expense and well exceed building costs and energy costs. It was reported that earlier research on workplace design primarily focused on physical arrangement of employees' immediate work area, and ambient environmental qualities of the work area. Building organisation, exterior amenities, and site-planning have been given less attention. Therefore, we examine more closely the health relevance of both proximal and remote aspects of workplace design. Occupational stress is a complex phenomenon that is dynamic and evolving over time. This investigation reviews the existing fundamental conceptual models of occupational stress, workplace design, and connection to nature. It aims to develop an improved model relevant to work place design and occupational stress linked with connection to nature. The proposed improved model is presented with an appropriate causal loop diagram to assist in visualizing how different variables in a system are interrelated. The developed model highlights how connection to nature in workspaces can function as a work resource with a dual effect of improving physical wellbeing and psychological wellbeing.
"Investigating the Role of Remote Working on Employees' Performance and Well-Being: An Evidence-Based Systematic Review",	"Remote working refers to a working model in which employees can pursue work tasks outside the organization due to the use of technology. Several research papers showed that different assumptions are linked to remote work because of the flexibility and autonomy granted to employees when working remotely or from home. This review consistently aims to describe remote work's role in employees' well-being and performance. Using the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews and Meta-analyses (PRISMA) guidelines, 20 peer-reviewed papers published from 2010 until 2021 were selected for this review. Findings showed various and mixed consequences on employees' performance and well-being. Specifically, remote working affects employees' perceptions about themselves and their workplaces and contributes to their physical and mental health, particularly regarding work-life balance. Managerial implications for remote working implementation will be discussed in the paper. © 2022 by the authors.","Humans; Mental Health; Organizations; Teleworking; Workplace; autonomy; employment; innovation; learning; mental health; public health; working conditions; workplace; employee; human; human experiment; learning; mental health; occupational health; perception; practice guideline; Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses; review; skill; systematic review; telecommuting; wellbeing; work environment; work-life balance; workplace; organization; psychology; workplace","employees wellbeing; innovative; intrapreneurial skills; occupational health promotion; positive attitudes at work; smart learning; work-health balance; working environments"
"Post-pandemic office work: Perceived challenges and opportunities for a sustainable work environment"	"The widespread adoption of remote and hybrid work due to COVID-19 calls for studies that explore the ramifications of these scenarios for office workers from an occupational health and wellbeing perspective. This paper aims to identify the needs and challenges in remote and hybrid work and the potential for a sustainable future work environment. Data collection involved two qualitative studies with a total of 53 participants, who represented employees, staff managers, and service/facility providers at three Swedish public service organisations (primarily healthcare and infrastructure administration). The results describe opportunities and challenges with the adoption of remote and hybrid work from individual, group, and leadership perspectives. The main benefits of remote work were increased flexibility, autonomy, work-life balance and individual performance, while major challenges were social aspects such as lost comradery and isolation. Hybrid work was perceived to provide the best of both worlds of remote and office work, given that employees and managers develop new skills and competencies to adjust to new ways of working. To achieve the expected individual and organisational benefits of hybrid work, employers are expected to provide support and flexibility and re-design the physical and digital workplaces to fit the new and diverse needs of employees.
“Factors Driving the Workplace Well-Being of Individuals from Co-Located, Hybrid, and Virtual Teams: The Role of Team Type as an Environmental Factor in the Job Demand-Resources Mode”	An essential task for public health and industrial and organizational psychology specialists is maintaining employees' workplace well-being. This has become more difficult with pandemic-induced changes (i.e., the shift to remote work and the rise of hybrid teams). This research adopts a team perspective to explore the issue of workplace well-being drivers. It is hypothesized that the team type (co-located, hybrid, or virtual) should be recognized as a unique environmental factor, resulting in the need for different resources for members of these teams to maintain their well-being. (2) Methods: A correlational study was conducted to systematically compare the relationship (its significance and importance) of a wide range of demands and resources with the comprehensively measured workplace well-being of members of co-located, hybrid, and virtual teams. (3) Results: The results confirmed the hypothesis. The significant drivers of well-being in each team type were different, and the ranking of the most important drivers within each team type varied. (4) Conclusions: Team type should be considered a unique environmental factor, even for individuals from different job families and organizations. This factor should be considered in practice and research employing the Job Demand-Resources model. © 2023 by the author.","Employment; Humans; Industry; Job Satisfaction; Workplace; correlation; environmental factor; health status; hypothesis testing; psychology; public health; research work; telecommuting; working conditions; workplace; adult; article; controlled study; correlational study; environmental factor; human; organization; telecommuting; wellbeing; workplace; employment; industry; job satisfaction; psychology","hybrid teams; hybrid work; job demand-resources; remote work; virtual teams; workplace well-being

Conclusion

Given that technology will likely continue to play a significant role in the workplace, we anticipate seeing an increase in claims for compensation as well as work-related mental health, safety, and health issues. In order to reduce the negative effects of technology on mental health, organisations must assess their current practices, take preventive measures, invest in the launch and growth of employee assistance programmes (EAP), and, as necessary, provide access to specialised intervention programmes. Dealing with workplace mental health issues comes at a much larger cost than adopting preventative measures to avoid these issues in the first place. (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010) [13].

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