



Remote or Hybrid Employees: Does Work Choice Contribute to Work Success?

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Summary Brief

Remote or Hybrid Employees: Does Work Choice Contribute to Work Success?

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For decades before the COVID-19 pandemic, hybrid or remote work had been an option for a small number of knowledge workers. Yet, pandemic concerns forced virtual work on a wide range of employees across many sectors. Research suggests that some 25% of professional employees may work remotely by the end of 2023. How does hybrid or remote work affect an employee's Organizational Identification, and what effect does this have on Work Success? Study 1 was conducted before the COVID-19 pandemic. Employee Virtual Status and Organizational Identification were shown to have a strong, positive effect on Work Success, which could have important theoretical and practical applications. Study 2, proposed for fall 2022, also will research the effects of Mentoring and Internal Marketing on Organizational Identification and Work Success.

Introduction

In 2019, only 4.1% of those who worked at least part-time worked remotely (Global Workplace Analytics, ND) but this changed in 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic dramatically accelerated the move toward virtual work for many employees across the United States. For decades before 2020, hybrid work had been an option for some workers, but pandemic concerns forced virtual work on a wide range of employees across many sectors. In February 2022, it was projected that 25% of professional employees will work remotely at the end of 2023 (Robinson, 2022).

Yet, this shift has not occurred without debate within industry as to the effectiveness of allowing employees to work remotely; when the COVID-19 vaccine became widely available, many of the largest firms declared that their workforce would return to their respective work sites. As companies decide how to implement remote work policies to include fully remote, hybrid, or a full return to the office, the press is full of stories regarding employee and employer demands. Thus, an investigation into the effectiveness of remote work options is warranted.

Background

Technology Usage, Need for Affiliation, Organizational Justice, and Employee Virtual Status combined to create Organizational Identification. The effect of Organizational Identification was then tested on the endogenous variable of Work Success. Meanwhile, Organizational Identification and Employee Virtual Status were also tested for their direct effect on Work Success. Study 1 data were collected before the pandemic when only a small portion of the population worked remotely. Study 2 will include the additional constructs of Mentoring and Internal Marketing, and the model will be based on changing attitudes and problems identified with remote work by researchers. Study 2 data will be collected in Fall 2022.

Data Collection

Study 1 data were collected for this research using a questionnaire with participants randomly selected from a Qualtrics panel. All survey participants were full-time employees and were compensated with a cash payment of \$2. The final sample size was $n=263$ (42.2% male, 54.8% married/domestic partner, 50.6% had at least a 4-year degree, $M_{age} = 43.29$ years, $Range_{age} = 18-65$). Participants reported telecommuting status, and 46.8% reported telecommuting, which is much higher than nationally reported but may be due to the job categories reported, which included customer service and others that have been more conducive to remote work.

Key Findings

For this Summary Brief, key findings are abbreviated due to space constraints. Study 1 results suggest that an employee's Need for Affiliation and Employee Virtual Status have the biggest contributory effects on Organizational Identification. Meanwhile, both Employee Virtual Status and Organizational Identification have a

strong effect on Work Success, which could offer both theoretical and practical applications in increasingly hybrid and virtual work environments.

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