

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused global health and economic issues. Governments worldwide implemented lockdowns and social separation to stop the pandemic. These lockdowns forced millions of workers to work remotely. Thus, communication technology is used to maintain corporate continuity and staff productivity. Lockdowns require communication technologies. Organizations used digital tools and platforms for Communication, collaboration, and task management when the workplace became inaccessible. This quick move to remote work has revealed the pros and cons of using communication technologies at home. Organizations must understand the global impact of communication technologies on staff productivity during government-mandated lockdowns to adapt and build effective methods. This literature review critically examines how communication technology affects staff productivity during government-mandated lockdowns worldwide. The review will summarize current understanding, show knowledge of relevant literature, compare and contrast opinions, and display research and writing skills. Communication technology during government-mandated lockdowns has had a major impact on employees' productivity, bringing opportunities and obstacles that need more study to improve remote work effectiveness.

The Impact of Communication Technology on Employees' Productivity

a. The shift to remote work

Government-mandated lockdowns caused a dramatic shift to remote work, which uncovered several advantages and difficulties of doing business from home. Increased flexibility, shorter commutes, and potential cost savings for businesses and employees are advantages (Ceballos et al. 2020, p.105069). Additionally, remote work can help individuals achieve a better work-life balance by enabling them to effectively balance their personal and professional obligations (Carillo et al., 2021).

However, working remotely also comes with several difficulties. Employees may find it challenging to draw boundaries between their personal and professional lives, which can increase stress and the risk of burnout (Beno & Hvorecky, 2021, p.641199). Additionally, a lack of social engagement and solitude can harm an employee's mental health (Patanjali & Bhatta, 2022). Additionally, distant employment can hinder Communication and lessen the efficacy of teamwork and collaboration (Edelmann et al., 2021, pp. 408-415).

The transition to remote work has occurred in both the public and private sectors during government-ordered lockdowns. To ensure business continuity and reduce disruptions, businesses in the private sector have adopted telework (Etheridge et al., 2020). To varied degrees of success, businesses across various industries, including IT, finance, and telecommunications, have adapted to remote work (Chen et al., 2021; Okereafor & Manny, 2020).

To maintain the availability of public services, government organizations in the public sector have adopted telework as well (Edelmann et al., 2021, pp. 408-415). Navigate bureaucratic procedures, ensuring data security, and solving digital disparities among personnel are just a few of the particular difficulties the public sector must overcome (Edelmann et al., 2021, pp. 408-415; Conger, 2020, pp.327-331).

b. Work from home experiences and productivity.

Several factors influence employee productivity while working remotely during lockdowns. Due to fewer workplace distractions and shorter commutes, some employees claimed to be more productive (Etheridge et al., 2020). Others, however, encountered obstacles to productivity, including unsuitable home office setups, increasing caregiving obligations, and difficulty with work-life balance (Patanjali & Bhatta, 2022 p.09722629221074137).

Organizational aspects are also very important for productivity when working remotely. The productivity of employees can be increased through supportive management, transparent Communication, and the availability of critical resources (Chen et al., 2021, p.120645). Additionally, businesses that support the growth and training of their staff members are better equipped to adjust to remote work settings and keep up productivity (Yaseen et al., 2021, pp.4-18).

Studies have found mixed results comparing production levels before, during, and after lockdowns. According to some research, the lockdown enhanced productivity because of fewer workplace interruptions and more people focused on finishing their tasks (Beno & Hvorecky, 2021, p.641199). Other research, on the other hand, revealed that productivity fell off during lockdowns, maybe due to the difficulties of remote work, including social isolation, inadequate workspace, and elevated stress (Patanjali & Bhatta, 2022 p.09722629221074137).

Some workers stated a desire for a hybrid work style that combines both remote and in-office work as lockdown constraints loosened and firms started to return to the physical workplace (Carillo et al., 2021, pp.69-88). This choice implies that to maintain productivity over the long term, a balance between the advantages and disadvantages of remote work may be necessary.

Technological Solutions and Strategies for Enhanced Productivity

Organizations have been forced to investigate and practice several technology solutions and methods to sustain productivity and business continuity in the face of the extraordinary obstacles provided by worldwide government-mandated lockdowns. These technologies have

enabled workers to do their work efficiently from home while preserving their engagement, drive, and security from any cybersecurity risks.

a. The Role of cloud computing and FinTech in remote work

With the help of cloud computing, enterprises have given employees secure access to vital resources and apps from their home offices during the lockdown (Chen et al., 2021, p.120645). Employees have collaborated efficiently even when they are geographically distant thanks to cloud-based collaboration technologies like file-sharing services and video conferencing software (Alhomdy et al., 2021 p166-174).

FinTech has also significantly contributed to keeping businesses open throughout the lockdown. Financial institutions have used digital technology to give clients continuous access to online banking, digital payments, and remote customer assistance (Chen et al., 2021, p.120645). Additionally, financial institutions have increased their productivity and efficiency during the lockdown by streamlining internal procedures, including risk management and regulatory compliance, thanks to FinTech technologies (Chen et al., 2021, p.120645).

b. Online learning and training for employees

Many firms used online learning and training platforms to ensure that personnel kept up with their skill and knowledge development throughout the lockdown (Yaseen et al., 2021, pp.4-18). To upskill and adapt to the shifting work environment, these platforms have given employees various educational tools, including e-learning courses, webinars, and virtual workshops (Yaseen et al., 2021, pp.4-18).

During the shutdown, businesses engaged in employee training and development improved overall performance and productivity (Yaseen et al., 2021, pp.4-18). To keep staff

members interested and motivated while working remotely, these businesses have been able to quickly adapt to new technology and procedures (Biswakarma et al., 2021, p.573585).

c. Cybersecurity Challenges and solutions during lockdown

The shift to remote work during the shutdown has created new cybersecurity challenges for enterprises. Cybercriminals have targeted telecommuting employees with phishing attacks, ransomware, and other cyber threats due to the increased reliance on digital Communication and remote access to organizational resources (Okereafor & Manny, 2020). To combat these issues, businesses have deployed various cybersecurity measures to safeguard their digital assets and staff devices, including multi-factor authentication, virtual private networks (VPNs), and endpoint security solutions (Okereafor & Manny, 2020). Through training and Communication, firms have also raised employee knowledge of cybersecurity threats, ensuring that staff members embrace the best practices for secure remote work (Conger, 2020, pp.327-331). Overall, ensuring productivity and company continuity during the lockdown has been made possible by successfully applying technical solutions and initiatives, including cloud computing, FinTech, online learning, and cybersecurity precautions. These technologies have enabled businesses to adapt to the remote work environment and reduce any hazards that may come with it.

Organizational Responses to the COVID-19 Outbreak

The COVID-19 outbreak has forced organizations from various industries to adopt quick and creative solutions to adjust to the new normal of remote work and social isolation measures. These organizational measures have been essential for assuring business continuity, maintaining worker productivity, and dealing with the particular issues the epidemic has brought forth.

a. Changes in business travel practices

Businesses have reevaluated their travel procedures and chosen virtual alternatives to reduce health hazards and abide by lockdown regulations due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Becken & Hughey, 2021 pp.108-127). This change has resulted in a greater reliance on video conferencing and virtual meetings, enabling businesses to continue crucial Communication and collaboration while saving money and having a smaller environmental effect (Becken & Hughey, 2021, pp.108-127). As a result, even after the pandemic has passed, many firms are considering adopting these distant communication strategies.

b. Organizational level responses and strategies in academic institutions and SMEs

The pandemic has negatively impacted academic institutions, forcing them to adjust quickly to remote teaching and learning methods. To ensure the continuity of education, these organizations have used various tactics, such as utilizing online learning platforms, virtual classrooms, and digital materials (Biswakarma et al., 2021, p.573585). Additionally, educational institutions have had to change how they evaluate student achievement, moving toward online tests and assignments (Yaseen et al., 2021, pp.4-18).

Similarly, small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) encountered particular difficulties during the lockdown, forcing them to modify their business practices and personnel administration to the new remote work environment. To retain their productivity and competitiveness, SMEs in Western Lithuania have implemented various organizational reforms, including reorganizing work processes, digital transformation, and new communication tools (Strakien et al., 2021 pp.210-225).

c. The importance of information systems management during the pandemic

Since firms have to quickly change their IT infrastructure and procedures to support remote work and business continuity during the pandemic, effective information systems management has been essential (Conger, 2020, pp.327-331). To support the smooth functioning of remote workforces, new technologies have been deployed and integrated, such as cloud-based collaboration tools, remote access solutions, and cybersecurity measures (Alhomdy et al., 2021, p.166-174; Okereafor & Manny, 2020).

Additionally, information systems managers have been crucial in monitoring and assessing the functionality and security of their IT infrastructure during the epidemic, allowing them to detect and fix any possible problems quickly. Enterprises have relied heavily on good information systems management to negotiate the pandemic's obstacles and sustain productivity and resilience in these uncertain times.

Contrasting Views and Discrepancies in the Literature

Recognizing the divergent points of view and contradictions in the literature is essential to understanding the global influence of communication technology on workers' productivity during imposed lockdowns. These variations can be linked to the inconsistent efficacy of online learning and training programs and the various effects of remote work on productivity across nations and industries.

a. Differences in the impact of remote work on productivity across countries and industries

It has been discovered that different nations and industries have considerably different effects of remote labour on productivity. For instance, research by Aksoy et al. (2022) showed that while workers in the US and Germany had increased production during the epidemic, those in the UK and Latin America saw decreased productivity. Additionally, Aksoy's (2022)

organizational characteristics were very important in influencing how productive individuals were in the IT sector during the pandemic.

These productivity variances can also be ascribed to variations in communication technology adoption, the type of work, and the degree of remote work readiness across different industries. For instance, compared to industries that can easily adjust to remote work, like IT and software development, those that rely largely on in-person connections, like the hospitality and retail sectors, have had more difficulty maintaining productivity during lockdowns.

b. Discrepancies in the effectiveness of online learning and training

There has been discussion in the literature regarding the efficacy of online training and learning programs during the pandemic. While some studies have noted benefits such as increased access to educational resources and scheduling flexibility (Alhomdy et al., 2021, p.166-174), others have raised questions about the standard of instruction and the difficulties students and teachers have in adjusting to online learning environments (Yaseen et al., 2021 pp.4-18). Additionally, several variables can affect how effective online learning and training are, including the accessibility of digital infrastructure, the tech-savvy of educators, and the degree of student participation (Biswakarma et al., 2021, p.573585). To better understand the intricacies of remote learning and training and to develop strategies for maximizing their efficiency in various circumstances, further research is required due to the disparities in the literature.

Strengths and Limitations of the Literature

A comprehensive understanding of the global impact of communication technology on employees' productivity during government-mandated lockdowns requires a critical analysis of the strengths and limitations of the existing literature.

a. Methodological strengths and weaknesses of the studies

Cross-sectional surveys, longitudinal analyses, and case studies are just a few of the several study designs and methodologies used in the papers covered in this review. These strategies have offered insightful information about how communication technology affects productivity during lockdowns. There are several restrictions worth noting, though. For instance, some studies' use of self-reported data (Etheridge et al., 2020) may add biases such as social desirability or recall bias, which may impact the validity of the results. Additionally, many studies have concentrated on particular countries or industries, limiting the applicability of the findings in various circumstances (Ceballos et al., 2020, p105069; Becken & Hughey, 2021, pp.108-127).

b. Gaps in the literature

Several gaps still exist despite the existing literature's great contributions. First, additional longitudinal studies are required to evaluate the long-term effects of communication technologies and remote work on worker productivity (Beno & Hvorecky, 2021, p.641199). Additionally, the research could benefit from deeper examinations of the elements that affect how foreign labour affects productivity differently in different nations and sectors (Aksoy et al., 2022).

Second, while the literature has looked at how communication technology is used in remote work, less focus has been given to the possible drawbacks of technology use, such as increased stress, burnout, or an imbalance between work and personal life (Carillo et al., 2021

pp.69-88). Future studies should investigate these topics to understand better the effects of communication technologies and remote work on workers' wellbeing.

There is also a need for more research on the best practices and policies for mitigating cybersecurity risks related to lockdowns' increased reliance on communication technology, even though some studies have addressed the topic of cybersecurity in the context of remote work (Okereafor & Manny, 2020). The security and integrity of an organization's digital infrastructure could be maintained this way, and the potential for communication technology to boost worker productivity might be fully realized.

Conclusion.

The global influence of communication technology on workers' productivity during governmental-mandated lockdowns has been examined in this literature review, which concludes. The results show that moving to remote work has given organizations and employees opportunities and challenges. Several variables, including the accessibility of technology resources, the adoption of online learning and training, and the deployment of efficient cybersecurity measures have significantly influenced the effectiveness of remote work arrangements. The literature has also drawn attention to differences between how remote work affects different nations and sectors of the economy and the need for more study to fill in the knowledge gaps on the long-term impacts of communication technology on productivity and employee wellbeing. This review has highlighted areas for further research to improve our understanding of the Role of communication technology in remote work by critically analyzing the existing literature, which has given valuable insights into the factors that influence employee productivity during lockdowns. Organizations must adopt and adapt to communication

technologies that boost productivity while ensuring the well-being of their employees as the world continues to struggle with issues brought on by the COVID-19 epidemic and others.

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