Exploring the effects of remote work on employee productivity in Botswana amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic

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A B S T R A C T

The COVID-19 pandemic prompted a widespread shift towards remote work, driven by the imperative of social distancing. This transition has compelled organizations and individuals worldwide to explore alternative employment arrangements. Botswana, like many other nations, witnessed a significant uptake of remote work, leading to the formulation of remote work policies by numerous institutions. To ensure the viability of these policies, it is essential to consider their practicality for both companies and employees. The pandemic offered institutions such as the Botswana Unified Revenue Service (BURS) an opportunity to investigate the efficacy of working from home (WFH) arrangements, which could play a pivotal role in shaping future labor policies to accommodate flexible working hours. This study leverages data from BURS to scrutinize the impact of WFH during the COVID-19 pandemic on employee productivity in Botswana. Employing descriptive qualitative research methods and conducting in-depth interviews with 18 BURS personnel who experienced WFH during the lockdown, the study employs theme analysis and non-probability sampling to analyze the collected data. The findings reveal that WFH contributed to increased employee productivity, underscoring the importance of allocating adequate resources to optimize WFH performance in organizations.

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Introduction

The global community has seen significant repercussions as a result of the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic. Consequently, numerous enterprises and institutions have implemented diverse approaches pertaining to their work environments across various industries on a global scale (Thorstensson, 2021). The practice of remote work has become increasingly prevalent as a component of quarantine protocols implemented to mitigate the transmission of the disease since the inception of the epidemic. The sudden and significant transformation has exerted a profound impact on the realm of business, hence posing challenges for employees as they endeavor to acclimate themselves to the altered work environment. Consequently, the productivity of individuals has also undergone alterations, contingent upon a multitude of circumstances within their new work environment, namely their residence. The ability to work remotely is contingent upon the utilization of information technology. The solutions provided by information technology enable the continuity of corporate operations. Due to the implementation of information technology, employees are able to engage in effective communication with both their colleagues and the business as a whole. This facilitates the completion of tasks through the exchange of written, audio, and visual information. Efficient performance of information technology staff is of utmost importance, particularly during times of a pandemic, for the benefit of all individuals involved. The managers and coordinators play a pivotal role in facilitating their achievement.

The concept of remote work was initially highlighted by Nilles in 1988. The term "telecommuting" or "telework" is used to denote the practice wherein employees have the capacity to work remotely by leveraging technology to facilitate contact with their place of employment (Raiien et al., 2020). The concept of working from home has been described using various words, including remote

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work, flexible workplace, telework, telecommuting, and e-working (Mehta, 2021). These concepts encompass the concept of employees' capacity to engage in remote work, leveraging technology to fulfill their job responsibilities (Raiien et al., 2020). In the study conducted by Al Qalhati et al. (2020), the concept of working from home is explored as a viable alternative work arrangement. This arrangement involves employees carrying out their activities, either in full or in part, outside of the traditional central workplace. The use of electronic media serves as a means for these individuals to engage and communicate with others, both within and outside of the business.

Prior to the onset of the pandemic, the concept of remote employment was perceived as an unattainable aspiration by a significant portion of the population. The feasibility of implementing such a technique was deemed impractical for underdeveloped nations such as Botswana. This was additionally rendered unfeasible due to the necessity of internet access and technological infrastructure for remote work, which poses a barrier in Botswana given the restricted availability of internet connectivity and the prevalent use of desktop computers in many enterprises (Statistics Botswana, 2020). Moreover, the ability to operate remotely necessitates the availability of a tranquil and exclusive workspace to fulfill professional responsibilities, a predicament that may prove arduous for individuals residing in compact dwellings and cohabiting with family members and young offspring (Gatsi et al., 2021). According to a recent study conducted by Dingel and Neiman (2020), it was found that approximately 37% of work positions in the United States had the potential to be performed remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic. This was notably evident in industries such as finance, business management, as well as professional and scientific sectors. Despite the global acceptance of remote work during the pandemic, this practice entails both advantages and disadvantages.

The practice of remote work offers advantages to both businesses and individuals. The advantages encompassed in this context encompass a decrease in the duration of trips, a decrease in the expenses associated with travel, a reduction in the amount of office space required, an increase in employee motivation, a decrease in absenteeism and employee turnover, an enhancement in job satisfaction, and an improvement in productivity (Elshaiekh et al., 2018; Al Qalhati et al., 2020). Several studies have indicated that remote work has the potential to yield several benefits for employees, including the reduction of travel time, a decrease in employee turnover rates, and an enhancement of both productivity and job performance (Torten et al., 2016; Bhatta, 2016; Delanoëije & Verbruggen, 2020). Grant et al. (2019) also made reference to the notion that remote work arrangements have the potential to enhance productivity, flexibility, job satisfaction, work-life balance, and reduce commuting time and expenses. The assertion was further corroborated by Purwanto et al. (2020), whose study revealed that remote work affords employees the ability to exercise flexibility in accomplishing job-related responsibilities, while also yielding financial savings by eliminating commuting expenses.

Similarly, the practice of remote work is not devoid of its own limitations. The decision to immediately deploy the notion of remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic was made without any explicit direction (Raiien et al., 2020). The aforementioned limitations encompass the indistinct demarcation between professional and personal life, diversions, limited social interaction, and the financial burdens borne by employees in relation to remote work (Grant et al., 2019). According to Purwanto et al. (2020), individuals who engage in remote work are faced with the responsibility of covering expenses related to electricity and internet usage. According to Kazekami (2020), employees experienced distractions from their children and family members while working remotely. The phenomenon of blurred boundaries between work and family life has the potential to result in excessive work hours and an inability to effectively detach from work-related activities (Grant et al., 2019). According to Purwanto et al. (2020), there was a sense of isolation among employees as they were physically separated from their colleagues. Managers expressed apprehension regarding potential declines in productivity resulting from remote work arrangements. Additionally, concerns were raised about the potential negative impact on interpersonal connections among co-workers. The study conducted by Gatsi et al. (2021) found that certain factors, such as limited access to the internet, electricity load shedding, inadequate working space at home, lack of necessary equipment, and insufficient training, were not taken into account. In the context of Botswana, a significant proportion of families lack access to internet connectivity and technological devices such as PCs and laptops. Nevertheless, previous research has indicated that individuals who engage in remote work experienced enhanced productivity within the context of their home environment (Grant et al., 2019). According to the study conducted by Bloom et al. (2015), it was observed that job satisfaction was enhanced as a result of remote work arrangements. Arntz et al. (2019) provided more evidence suggesting that remote work arrangements have a positive impact on the level of satisfaction experienced within family life. COVID-19 has made the work from home concept a priority for most governments and businesses. Hence, laws have to be created that will make working from home attractive for both employers and employees.

The objective of this study is to examine the effects of remote work arrangements on employee productivity in Botswana amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, with a specific focus on the Botswana Unified Revenue Service (BURT). The study utilized a descriptive qualitative research approach, including in-depth interviews with a sample of 18 employees from BURT who were engaged in remote work throughout the COVID-19 lockdown period. The purpose of these interviews was to collect relevant data for analysis. The researchers employed a non-probability sampling technique and conducted a theme analysis to analyze the data.
Literature Review

The literature review explained the theoretical foundation and the empirical literature that were used to support the study.

Theoretical and Conceptual Background

Social Exchange Theory

According to Redmond (2015), the Social Exchange Theory posits that there are mutual benefits for both employers and employees in the context of remote employment. In this particular arrangement, the welfare of both the employees and the company is given utmost importance (Croppanzano et al., 2017). According to Lyons and Scott (2012), employees can experience various advantages, including an improved work-life balance and increased flexibility in their schedules. In a similar vein, the employer derives advantages, such as cost savings on workspace and other expenses associated with office operations (Osman et al., 2016). The implementation of remote working due to the pandemic provides employees with the advantage of sustaining their employment while adhering to safety protocols, while employers gain from the employees' ability to continue working and contributing to the business (Prasad et al., 2020). According to Prasad et al. (2020), the establishment of social exchange among workers is crucial in mitigating feelings of isolation, since the absence of social intercourse experienced by distant workers might have a detrimental impact on their psychological wellness. The psychological well-being of employees is contingent upon the presence of social aspects and human connection, which are often lacking in distant working arrangements (Pradhan & Hati, 2019). Hence, the psychological well-being is a crucial factor in enhancing productivity.

Cooper-Thomas and Morrison (2018) argued that the implementation of remote work arrangements may not inevitably lead to enhanced productivity levels. The authors suggest that working from home (WFH) is adversely impacted by interruptions from family members, feelings of social isolation, and a decrease in opportunities for engagement with colleagues. The aforementioned proposition has garnered support from other research undertaken throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, which have shown comparable findings (Gálvez, Tirado & Martínez, 2020; Gatsi, Devi & Devi, 2021; Ingusci et al., 2022). In a recent study conducted by Gatsi, Abdel, Hadi, and colleagues (2021), it was discovered that the everyday responsibilities of working from home during the pandemic resulted in emotional tiredness, thus leading to a decline in productivity. In contrast, Ipsen et al. (2021) have documented enhanced job efficiency as a notable benefit of remote work arrangements during the global pandemic.

COVID-19 within business context

According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2020), COVID-19 is a respiratory ailment of an acute nature that affects people. It is caused by a specific kind of coronavirus and has the potential to induce severe symptoms, and in certain instances, can lead to mortality. Moreover, the World Health Organization (WHO, 2020) has asserted that Coronaviruses encompass a collection of interconnected viruses that elicit diseases in both mammalian and avian species. In a similar vein, Balkhair (2020) provided a definition of COVID-19 as a respiratory ailment exhibiting a clinical range encompassing 80% of cases classified as mild to intermediate, 15% as severe, and 5% as critical, with an overall case fatality rate ranging from 0.5% to 2.8%. According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2021), COVID-19 is characterized as a respiratory ailment that exhibits symptoms akin to those of the common cold, but can also lead to more severe conditions such as severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS). The statement continued by asserting that the virus responsible for the COVID-19 disease is officially identified as severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), previously referred to as 2019-nCoV, denoting the novel coronavirus. Coronaviruses in humans are responsible for respiratory tract infections, which exhibit a spectrum of severity ranging from moderate to fatal (Wang et al., 2020). The initial documented instance was recognized in December 2019 in Wuhan, China (Vyas & Butakhieo, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 was a result of the global spread of the disease, as stated by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (2020).

The symptoms associated with COVID-19 including fever, cough, headache, exhaustion, respiratory distress, and anosmia and ageusia (World Health Organization, 2020). Wang et al. (2020) suggest that in instances of greater severity, infection can lead to the development of pneumonia, severe acute respiratory syndrome, and in some circumstances, mortality. Rothe et al. (2020) suggest that the transmission of COVID-19 occurs through the inhalation of air that is infected with viral particles in the form of droplets and minuscule airborne particles. According to Cui, Li, and Shi (2019), it can be inferred that the risk of inhaling these particles is more pronounced when individuals are in close proximity to one another. Transmission can also ensue via the ocular, nasal, or oral route upon exposure to splashed or sprayed fluids that are infected, as well as through contact with surfaces that have been contaminated (Kampf, 2020). According to Chen et al. (2020), individuals can stay infectious for a duration of up to 14 days, during which they have the potential to transmit the virus to others, even in the absence of noticeable symptoms.

According to Zhou et al. (2020), during the initial phase of the outbreak in December 2019, there were a total of 2,761 laboratory-confirmed infections and 80 confirmed deaths in Wuhan, China. Additionally, as of 26 January 2020, there were reports of 33 cases in 10 different countries. As of March 2020, the global incidence of COVID-19 had experienced rapid growth, resulting in 351,731 confirmed cases and 15,374 fatalities globally, as reported by the World Health Organization (WHO, 2020). Based on the data provided by the World Health Organization (WHO) Covid-19 dashboard, as of May 2022, the global tally of confirmed COVID-19 cases stands at about 530 million, with a reported death toll of 6.3 million. Following the initial documentation of COVID-19, the
Contagion has disseminated across the globe, leading to the declaration of a public health emergency by the World Health Organization (WHO) in late January 2020, and subsequently being classified as a pandemic in March 2020 (WHO, 2020). The World Health Organization (WHO) subsequently released a set of guidelines aimed at mitigating the transmission of COVID-19. These recommendations encompass several measures, such as the compulsory utilization of facial coverings in public settings, consistent adherence to hand hygiene through the use of sanitizers and handwashing, maintaining physical distance from others, and the suspension of public gatherings and events. COVID-19 vaccines have been produced by pharmaceutical companies, which serve to mitigate symptoms and potentially avert mortality (Li et al., 2020). Nevertheless, the World Health Organization (WHO, 2020) has reported that a definitive remedy for COVID-19 has yet to be discovered. Based on the official data provided by the World Health Organization (WHO) Coronavirus (COVID-19) dashboard, the global administration of COVID-19 vaccines has reached around 11.77 billion doses as of May 2022.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, a series of exceptionally stringent public health interventions were conducted on a global scale (Wu & McGoogan, 2020). The implementation of measures to mitigate the spread of the virus resulted in the closure of cities, restrictions on travel, limitations on outdoor activities and gatherings, and constraints on human mobility, leading to the closure of companies (Wu, et al., 2020). As a result of implementing these procedures, Belitski (2021) suggests that there was a direct impact on corporate operations. COVID-19 has had numerous ramifications for the corporate sector.

**Table 1: Effects of COVID-19 to the business**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Effect(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belitski et al. (2021)</td>
<td>Business shutdown, reduced operating hours, job cuts, supply chain disruptions, jeopardizing the R&amp;D processes, cessation of operations, business model changes, loss of key customers, restrictions on products/services, and the use of digital technology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barrero, Bloom &amp; Davis (2020)</td>
<td>Job losses, business closure, reallocation of labour, shift to working from home, and shift to the use of digital technology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guerrieri et al. (2020)</td>
<td>Shutdowns, layoffs, firm exits, and supply disruptions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apeko-Amah et al. (2020)</td>
<td>Business closures and reduced operations, mass layoffs, depressed demand, and shift to greater use of technology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donthu &amp; Gustafsson (2020)</td>
<td>Business closure, reduced demand, loss of jobs, and cashflow problems.</td>
</tr>
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**Source:** Authors 2022

COVID-19 has not only had significant implications for public health, but it has also precipitated a substantial economic disruption (Aum, Lee & Shin, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the closure or downsizing of numerous enterprises, as a consequence of diminished consumer demand during periods of lockdown (Bartik et al., 2020; Belitski et al., 2021; Guerrieri et al., 2022). Nevertheless, it is important to note that the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic do not have an equal impact on all enterprises. For instance, enterprises categorized as important were permitted to continue operations, whilst those falling outside this classification were compelled to cease their activities (Apeko-Amah et al., 2020). Similarly, Donthu and Gustafsson (2020) suggest that larger, well-equipped organizations transitioned to remote working, whereas ill-equipped businesses were forced to cease operations entirely. During the height of the pandemic, the emergence of COVID-19 posed a significant risk to the ongoing viability of certain businesses (Barrero et al., 2020).

The closure of businesses resulted in significant employment reductions on a global scale (Bosio et al., 2020). According to the study conducted by Barrero et al. (2020), a significant proportion of employees in the United States, specifically 77%, experienced temporary layoffs and were placed on leave of absence during the initial months of the crisis. According to a report by the Financial Times (2020), over 3 million individuals in the United States submitted initial claims for unemployment benefits in the first week of May 2020. This brings the total number of applications during the first three months of the year to 33.5 million. The United Kingdom experienced a significant increase in the unemployment rate, reaching its highest level since 2017, due to the ongoing impact of the pandemic on employment opportunities (Thomas, 2020). According to Belitski et al. (2021), it is anticipated that the Covid-19 epidemic would have enduring effects, serving as a transformative mechanism that leads to significant job reallocation and restructuring inside organizations.

The role of supply chains is of utmost importance in facilitating the functioning of the economy (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2020). According to Guan et al (2020), the supply chain is responsible for the transportation of raw materials, intermediate commodities, and final products to both consumers and enterprises on a global scale. PricewaterhouseCoopers (2020) asserts that the efficacy of supply chain operations experienced a decline within the COVID-19 pandemic, as a multitude of supply chain challenges emerged due to extensive labor scarcities and transportation disruptions. The implementation of lockdown measures, firm closures, and the adoption of remote labor arrangements as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic have resulted in disruptions to the movement of...
raw materials, individuals, and finished goods within global supply chains (Hosseini & Ivanov, 2021). Sombultawee et al. (2022) have observed that the impact of COVID-19 on the supply chain is evident through the escalation of manufacturing and shipping expenses, as well as the occurrence of labor scarcity, among other factors. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic originated in Wuhan, China. It is worth noting that China has established itself as a prominent worldwide center for production and distribution over the course of several years (Hosseini & Ivanov, 2021). The aforementioned situation has intensified the existing disruption in the global supply of finished and semi-finished goods to nations that rely on China for trade (Ivanov & Dolgui, 2021).

The COVID-19 pandemic has prompted individuals to modify their spending habits because of the multifaceted consequences it has had on the economy, society, and individuals' mental well-being (Rogers & Cosgrove, 2020). According to Kansiime et al. (2021), consumer expenditure experienced a significant decline during the initial wave of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020. The implementation of governmental restrictions has resulted in a curtailment of consumer options. Consumers were compelled to modify their behavior, prioritizing the allocation of their income towards basic household products and services, while limiting expenditures on discretionary items primarily intended for amusement purposes (Laato et al., 2020; Pantano et al., 2020). A considerable proportion of individuals experienced unemployment and a decline in household income as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic (Montenovo et al., 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on consumer affordability, leading to a notable decrease in demand across several industry sectors.

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a substantial rise in the prominence of digital technology. The utilization of digital technology has played a crucial role in the provision of goods and services to customers in light of the COVID-19 pandemic (Belitski et al., 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a rapid increase in the utilization of digital tools, mostly driven by the necessity to adhere to preventive measures such as mandatory social distance and the restriction of public gatherings (Bartik et al., 2020). Moreover, Barrero et al. (2020) propose that the closure of enterprises necessitated the adoption of remote working as a means of sustaining business operations. Consequently, businesses were compelled to transition towards a technology-centric approach to conducting their operations. According to Belitski et al. (2021), the COVID-19 pandemic has facilitated the transformation of the entrepreneurial economy into a digital and disembodied economy. Despite the existence of flexible work arrangements for an extended period, the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic compelled a significant portion of the labor force to transition to remote work setups (Belitski et al., 2021; Bartik et al., 2020). Donthu and Gustafsson (2020) provided more evidence to support the notion that the crisis has expedited the widespread implementation of remote working as a means for firms to sustain operations during these exceptional circumstances. According to Barrero, Bloom, and Davis (2020), the implementation of efficient remote work arrangements has been crucial in addressing the global health problem by enabling vital company tasks to continue while adhering to social distancing measures. The effectiveness of remote working was tested due to the rapid adoption and substantial migration of workers to virtual work arrangements, as noted by Apedo-Amah et al. (2020). Numerous businesses exhibited a lack of preparedness in adapting to remote work, resulting in a dearth of knowledge regarding optimal strategies for fostering sustained productivity and employee well-being in such arrangements (Apedo-Amah et al., 2020).

The World Health Organization has reported that the global death toll attributed to COVID-19 in 2020 is likely to exceed 1.8 million individuals. Furthermore, it has been claimed by many governments worldwide that there have been around 4.2 million fatalities attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic, spanning from its onset until the conclusion of July 2021. However, it is important to note that the true number of deaths is expected to surpass this figure (Karlinsky & Kobak, 2021). The accurate estimation of global COVID-19 infection and death tolls is challenging due to variations in testing capability, discrepancies in counting, and underreporting (Dong, Du & Gardner, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on businesses, as numerous enterprises experienced the unfortunate loss of human capital as a result.

The practice of working remotely: Working from home (WFH)

Remote work is another name for working from home. Work at home, as defined by Matli (2020), is performed away from a fixed workplace. It's possible to do this either at home or at other locations. Numerous authors have used a variety of words to characterize employees working remotely, including teleworking, telecommuting, remote working, and agile working (Bloom et al., 2015; Grant et al., 2019; Felstead & Henseke, 2017; Galanti et al., 2021). According to Matli (2020), remote work entails carrying out an employer's normal duties through means other than an office. Matli (2020) offered a similar description of the approach, calling it a "working agreement" that enables workers to do their tasks remotely via digital means of communication. Wheatley (2020), on the other hand, defines remote work as being done for pay when away from a traditional office setting, such as from home or while traveling.

Working from home is nothing new, but until recently it was rarely done outside of the developed world (Jalagat & Jalagat, 2019). According to Urbaniec et al. (2022), the "Stay at home" instructions given during the COVID-19 outbreak caused several businesses to relocate their operations from the workplace to the homes of their employees. Businesses that had never considered the possibility of a home-based operation were forced to adapt (Radovi-Markovi, Stevanovi, & Milojevi, 2021). Table 2 displays some of the justifications for telecommuting.
Table 2: Reasons for working from home

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Reasons</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nilles et al (1976); Nilles (1988)</td>
<td>The oil embargo on the USA lead to shortage of oil, and also the enactment of the Clean Air Act which forced countries to consider environment impact of gases emitted by automobiles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streitfeld (2020)</td>
<td>The emergence of the internet lead to companies to experiment with remote working, due to the easy in connection brought about by the internet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allen et al (2015)</td>
<td>The Internet Age brought smaller, more affordable devices and access to connectivity, making it easier for people to be mobile. Computers and the internet paved the way for remote work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunter (2019)</td>
<td>In the 2000s the phenomenon of remote working was driven by cultural changes, as employees progressively demanded greater flexibility to obtain a better work-life balance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erasmus (2020); Vyas &amp; Butakhieo (2021); Xiao et al (2021)</td>
<td>When COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic in 2020, countries had to shut down businesses and institutions almost overnight to protect the safety of their people. Subsequently, remote working, became largely relevant to businesses as the only viable solution to keep institutions and businesses operational and avoid employees getting infected.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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The COVID-19 crisis has hastened the widespread adoption of remote working, which enables businesses to continue functioning normally despite the current uncertain environment. WFH, like any other measure, can have both positive and bad consequences, just like any other measure.

**WFH’s many advantageous effects**

Many individuals in contemporary society often express dissatisfaction with the challenges associated with achieving a harmonious equilibrium between their professional and personal lives (Erasmus, 2020). According to Reilly, Sirgy, and Gorman (2012), individuals who work for a duration of eight hours or more every day often have limited opportunities to spend time with their families. According to Hunter (2019), the practice of working from home (WFH) has been found to facilitate improved work-life balance for employees. This is achieved by eliminating the need for lengthy commutes, so providing individuals with additional time to spend with their family and loved ones. Furthermore, Beňo (2021) expressed the viewpoint that the more casual attire adopted during remote work arrangements provided employees with an enhanced level of comfort and improved work-life equilibrium, ultimately resulting in reduced levels of stress.

Numerous studies have shown empirical data supporting the notion that the implementation of flexible working hours and remote work arrangements is associated with enhanced productivity. This may be attributed to the fact that individuals engaged in remote work tend to exhibit a greater propensity for exerting substantial effort and achieving higher levels of effectiveness in their work endeavors (Felstead & Henseke, 2017; Smith et al., 2018; Ferreira et al., 2021). Thompson (2019) found that individuals engaged in remote work reported consistent or heightened levels of productivity when compared to their counterparts working in traditional office settings. A significant portion of this phenomenon can be attributed to the eradication of daily travel to work and extensive face-to-face gatherings (Thompson, 2019).

According to Nijp et al. (2012), the implementation of remote working allows enterprises to reduce their reliance on larger office premises and instead choose for smaller rental facilities. Lupu (2017) asserts that this practice yields cost savings for companies in terms of rental expenses, utility bills, and other expenditures related to office supplies. In a similar vein, Garg and van der Rijst (2015) proposed that remote work offers time-saving benefits, as well as substantial cost savings for employees in terms of commuting and travel expenses.

Guinaliu and Jordan (2016) define remote work as a work arrangement that allows employees to do their tasks from various locations, extending outside their residential premises. According to Elshaiekh, Hassan, and Abdallah (2019), the inherent flexibility of companies enables them to extend their operations beyond the conventional 9 to 5 workday. The flexibility provided by this freedom is of great importance to organizations seeking to extend their operational hours while facing constraints in terms of workforce availability (Donnelly & Johns, 2020). According to Donnelly and Johns (2020), the use of flexible working hours facilitates the ability to effectively address familial and personal obligations.
According to Raišienė et al. (2020), the implementation of remote working arrangements might contribute to employee retention and mitigate absenteeism in enterprises. Based on the findings of Mungamia, Waiganjo, and Kihoro (2016), it can be inferred that remote workers tend to cultivate favorable perceptions of organizational leadership when they perceive a lack of micromanagement and perceive a high level of trust from their employer. Consequently, employees will experience reduced inclination to seek alternative job opportunities, thereby fostering a heightened sense of commitment and allegiance (Tremblay & Thomsin, 2012). Moreover, employees may exhibit a decreased propensity to engage in unscheduled absences (Monteiro, Straume, & Valente, 2019).

According to Erasmus (2020), the utilization of technology is crucial for the feasibility of remote working. The advent of high-speed internet connections, ubiquitous Wi-Fi availability, cloud computing, project management software, and instant messaging platforms has significantly facilitated the coordination of remote teams, enabling them to operate in a synchronized manner akin to in-person collaboration (Beho, 2021; Ferreira, Pereira, Bianchi & da Silva, 2021). Furthermore, it has been observed that remote employees experience an increased sense of empowerment and confidence in their ability to effectively utilize a wide range of technical tools for remote collaboration (Garg & van der Rijst, 2015).

The adverse consequences of working from home (WFH)

Without a doubt, the implementation of remote work emerged as a favorable resolution to address the difficulties associated with the COVID-19 pandemic (Bonacini, Gallo & Scicchitano, 2021). Nevertheless, it is crucial to acknowledge and address the adverse consequences associated with remote working in order to effectively adopt it in the future.

According to Wang et al. (2020), human beings possess an inherent requirement for engaging in social interactions. Previous research has indicated that in the absence of such engagement, there is a decline in both physical and mental health (Grant et al., 2013; Bentley et al., 2016; Molino et al., 2020). The conventional office work setting facilitates in-person managerial conversations, team meetings, and casual interpersonal interactions, so fulfilling the human desire for affiliation (Wang et al., 2020). Nevertheless, under a remote work setting, the entirety of team members’ interactions with their colleagues transpires exclusively through technological means (Stich, Tarafdar, & Cooper, 2018). The absence of interpersonal engagement among coworkers can lead to diminished cognitive stimulation over an extended period, resulting in feelings of irritation and impeding the ability to effectively address unforeseen obstacles, thereby impeding workflow advancement (Hunter, 2019).

Existing research has demonstrated that individuals occupying higher-paying roles, such as managerial, professional, and consultancy positions, have a greater propensity to engage in remote work arrangements. Conversely, the majority of individuals employed in lower-income occupations face significant challenges in adopting remote work practices (Rysavy & Michalak, 2020; Bonacini et al., 2021). The aforementioned phenomenon has the potential to generate perceptions of inequity among employees, hence leading to feelings of dissatisfaction (Liu et al., 2018). Suh and Lee (2017) found that lower income workers encountered challenges in adapting to remote work due to inadequate access to the necessary resources for performing their job duties outside of the traditional office setting.

Managing work-life balance in a work-from-home (WFH) setting can pose challenges for certain individuals, particularly younger and less experienced employees, as well as graduate students who are in the early stages of their studies. These individuals often thrive in an environment that fosters collaboration and teamwork (Erceg & Zoranović, 2020). In certain instances, it may be necessary for a workforce or research team to operate in a physical location in order to maintain effective team communication (Grant et al., 2013; Hunter, 2019).

The convergence of professional and personal domains among remote workers poses a threat to their psychological well-being (Molino et al., 2020). The practice of employees working from home (WFH) might lead to a perception among family members that the employees are constantly engaged in work, without any breaks or days off. Conversely, family members may also view the employees as being absent, despite their physical presence at home (Erasmus, 2020). Additionally, the personal time of workers is frequently disrupted by impromptu meetings and phone calls outside of regular working hours (Grant et al., 2013).

According to Klopotek (2017), it is fairly uncommon for remote workers, particularly younger individuals, to lack appropriate and dedicated workspaces within their residences that facilitate concentration and privacy. The potential consequences of this circumstance include potential negative impacts on worker performance due to the need to contend with noise and frequent relocation within their homes. Additionally, there is a risk of encroachment upon the organization’s privacy (Grant et al., 2013).

As per Vasic’s (2020) findings, a significant proportion of employees encountered a lack of adequate equipment and resources necessary for remote work. The employees experienced difficulties with internet connectivity, characterized by delayed or nonexistent internet access. This issue arose from the increased demand for internet services resulting from a larger number of individuals working from home simultaneously (Vasic, 2020). Furthermore, it is worth noting that a significant number of employees encountered additional technological challenges, including insufficient hardware resources and the absence of specific software tools (Erceg & Zoranović, 2020). In certain regions of Africa, individuals have challenges associated with intermittent electricity supply, resulting in additional difficulties for individuals engaged in remote work (Gatsi et al., 2021).

The phenomenon of remote working has been found to have the potential to induce feelings of isolation among individuals, which in turn can have adverse effects on their professional trajectories (Wang, Albert & Sun, 2020). Molino et al. (2020) propose that in
situations where individuals have limited or no access to face-to-face interactions with colleagues or meaningful conversations with trusted and respected figures such as role models or supervisors, employees may experience feelings of loneliness and disconnection from their respective organizations. According to Kossek, Thompson, and Lautsch (2015), remote workers may encounter disparities in terms of professional advancement prospects and access to high-profile projects compared to their colleagues who work on-site.

Home offices can be characterized by a sense of isolation, leading to the potential loss of intangible but significant attributes that are challenging to quantify. These attributes, such as the vibrant exchange of ideas among colleagues or the establishment of a cohesive corporate identity and team spirit, contribute to a sense of belonging among staff members (Ingusci et al., 2022).

According to Golden and Gajendran (2019), the use of flexible diaries can pose challenges in coordinating colleagues' work schedules for the purpose of scheduling meetings. According to Meister and Mulcahy (2016), the challenges associated with supervising employees who work remotely and those who work on-site, while holding the same job positions, can impede line managers in effectively carrying out their responsibilities and establishing connections with their team members.

The issue of physical isolation within a team is a significant obstacle, as remote workers are unable to participate in impromptu discussions that occur outside of planned project meetings (Slavković, Stretenović, Bugarčić, 2022). According to Wang et al. (2021), the authors assert that the marginalization of specific team members can exert an impact on the collective functioning of the team, when viewed from an organizational perspective. According to Nakrošienė, Bučiūnienė, and Goštautaitė (2019), distant workers frequently experience a lack of inclusion in important communication channels, encounter difficulties in participating fully in meetings due to their physical absence, and miss out on informal and spontaneous dialogues. According to Nakrošienė et al. (2019), the practice of remote working hinders impromptu talks among team members, resulting in project delays and potential exclusion of remote team members.

The influence of remote work on productivity

Productivity refers to the degree of efficiency exhibited by enterprises, organizations, industries, and the overall economy in the process of transforming inputs, such as labor, capital, and raw materials, into outputs, namely goods and services (Gordon, Zhao, & Gretton, 2015). The efficacy of a firm is contingent upon its equipment and systems, although it is indisputable that at its core, a business is comprised of its personnel. Salolomo and Agbaeze (2019) posit that the implementation of remote work arrangements, commonly referred to as WFH (Work From Home), has been associated with enhanced productivity levels among employees. According to Nakrošienė et al. (2019), despite the utilization of information and communications technologies by workers to access their work activities, employees who work from home are demonstrating enhanced productivity. This assertion is corroborated by the findings of Gajendran et al. (2015), who found a favorable correlation between working from home (WFH) and performance, which can be attributed to the increased autonomy afforded to individuals. Kuruzovich et al. (2021) believe that the correlation between remote work and productivity can be attributed to several factors, including diminished interaction with colleagues, the presence of a conducive home workspace, and the ability to attend to familial responsibilities while working from home. According to Ongaki (2019), there is a correlation between less distractions from co-workers and a suitable office at home, and improved worker performance.

Previous studies have demonstrated that the implementation of flexible work arrangements has been associated with enhanced job performance and productivity (Bae & Kim, 2016; Berkery et al., 2017; Golden & Gajendran, 2019; Vayre, 2019). According to Golden and Gajendran (2019), it is emphasized that granting employees autonomy in determining their work schedule and location leads to a preference for working during their most productive hours. According to Vayre (2019), it is said that the implementation of flexible work arrangements might result in enhanced job quality. This is attributed to the fact that employees are able to complete tasks in a more efficient manner, aligning with their own pace and preferences. Moreover, the implementation of flexible work hours has been found to positively impact job productivity, since it allows employees the freedom to do additional tasks at their convenience, regardless of location or time (Vega et al., 2015).

Similarly, Akbari and Hopkins (2019) suggest that working from home (WFH) enhances productivity by minimizing the time spent on commuting to and from the workplace. In line with previous research conducted by Felstead and Henseke (2017), the use of contemporary technological innovations, such as mobile phones, email, and virtual meetings, facilitates efficient time management and coordination of job tasks. Hopkins and McKay (2019) believe that electronic communication exhibits greater emphasis on focus and organization in comparison to face-to-face interactions. Indeed, it is worth noting that face-to-face communication can be time-consuming as a result of the presence of casual talk that may take place in conjunction with the formal meeting (Houghton et al., 2018). According to Nakrošienė et al. (2019), the utilization of e-mail as a means of communication frequently enhances efficiency by enabling individuals to concentrate on the content of received messages and thoughtfully construct their reply.

According to Gajendran et al. (2015), the correlation between working from home (WFH) and productivity is attributed to the presence of autonomy. In a similar vein, the study conducted by Berkery et al. (2017) revealed that individuals who experience fulfillment of their demand for autonomy exhibit higher levels of job satisfaction and employee motivation. According to Berkery et al. (2017), the reduction of stress ultimately results in heightened levels of overall productivity.

Nevertheless, according to Jackson and Fransman's (2018) assertions, it may be inferred that working from home (WFH) may not definitely result in enhanced productivity. The individuals hold the viewpoint that remote work is adversely impacted by familial...
disruptions, social isolation, and diminished engagement with colleagues in the workplace. Similarly, the study conducted by Abdel Hadi, Bakker, and Häusser (2021) revealed that the everyday responsibilities of working from home (WFH) during the pandemic were positively correlated with emotional weariness, subsequently resulting in a detrimental impact on job performance.

Empirical Literature

During the COVID-19 epidemic, Galanti et al. (2021) undertook a study to explore the effects of remote work on employees' levels of productivity, engagement, and stress. The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of a number of factors—specifically, family-work conflict, social isolation, a distracting environment, workplace autonomy, and self-leadership—on the levels of productivity, job engagement, and stress experienced by employees who worked from home during the epidemic. The present cross-sectional study consisted of the analysis of data acquired from an online questionnaire that was given to employees who were engaged in remote work during the epidemic. The questionnaire was distributed to employees in the United States who were working throughout the pandemic. Hierarchical linear regression was utilized to perform the assessment, and the results were compared to the hypotheses. The findings of the study indicate a negative link between employees' family work conflict and social isolation, and a positive correlation between self-leadership and autonomy, with work from home productivity, and work from home engagement. The study also found a positive correlation between self-leadership and autonomy, with work from home engagement, and work from home productivity. According to the findings of the study, a negative correlation exists between family-work conflict and social isolation with stress caused by working from home. However, neither autonomy nor self-leadership were found to significantly reduce the stress associated with working from home. The findings of the study suggest that various factors relating to individuals and their working environments can both hinder and encourage arrangements for working remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Teodorovicz et al. (2021) carried out a study with the purpose of investigating the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the time allocation of knowledge workers as a direct consequence of the sudden and widespread switch to remote work. The authors focused their attention on how individuals’ daily routines were affected when they were given the option to work from home, and they conducted time-use studies to back up their claims. An analysis of the findings obtained from an online time-use survey was carried out by the researchers. This survey included responses from a representative sample of 1,192 people who were working in knowledge-based occupations. The survey was carried out in two independent waves: the first one, which took place in August 2019, prior to the beginning of the pandemic, included a total of 615 participants; the second wave, which took place in August 2020, during the pandemic, had 577 participants; and the third wave took place in August 2021, after the end of the pandemic. According to the findings of their research, the required switch to remote work that was caused by the COVID-19 outbreak resulted in a considerable reduction in the amount of time spent traveling, while simultaneously resulting in an increase in the duration of activities that were both job-related and personal in nature. However, the outcomes of their study also suggested that the redistribution of resources differed amongst individuals and organizations of varying sizes. According to the findings of their study, managers have a tendency to use the extra time they gain from not having to commute to attend meetings that go longer. It's possible that the motivation for this conduct is a need to make up for the impromptu conversations that so often take place within a traditional workplace environment. It did not appear that the transition to working from home (WFH) had any detectable effect on self-reported markers of overall well-being. The authors also mentioned that the findings that were obtained from the research on how time is used will be used in the analysis of implications for the development of new technologies.

Research and Methodology

The researchers opted for an interpretivist perspective in this study in order to gain insight and comprehend the perspectives of individuals who were engaged in remote work during the COVID-19 lockout at the BURS head office. As a consequence of these factors, the researchers choose to use an interpretivism stance for the present study. The interpretivist approach facilitated the acquisition of data that allowed for the subjective interpretation and personal experiences of individuals working from home, including the examination of its effects on productivity, well-being, and the establishment of a harmonious work-life balance. The study employed a descriptive research methodology as its investigative approach. The descriptive study approach was employed at BURS to acquire and assess qualitative data in order to examine the concept of working from home (WFH) and its effects on productivity, well-being, and work-life balance. This study was conducted to ascertain the potential impact of working from home (WFH) on employees’ holistic well-being and subjective satisfaction. By conducting a comprehensive review of prior scholarly investigations, this study adopted a descriptive methodology to get a profound theoretical comprehension of the phenomenon of working from home (WFH). The primary objectives of this research were to examine the variables that precipitated the implementation of WFH practices and to analyze the effects of WFH on both productivity and well-being. The inquiry pertaining to BURS proceeded with the objective of comprehending the impact of remote work on both production outcomes and employee welfare.

Population of the Study

The research population comprises of a specific group of employees from BURS, encompassing both managerial and non-managerial staff members located at the Head Office. Consequently, the focal demographic of interest for this investigation included of personnel of BURS situated at the Head Office, as indicated in the BURS Annual Report of 2022. The study utilized a non-probability sampling technique. Quota sampling was utilized in this study to ensure that participants were exclusively selected if they were engaged in
remote work during the COVID-19 lockdown period. Quota sampling is a kind of non-random sampling wherein participants are selected based on specified qualities in order to ensure that the overall sample reflects the same distribution of characteristics as the larger population (Wilson, 2016). The study's sample was limited to employees of BURS at their Head Office who were engaged in remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study especially targeted BURS employees who engaged in remote work during the lockdown period, as they were the primary focus of analysis in this study. This research is classified as a qualitative study, and it is widely acknowledged among researchers that qualitative research often involves a limited sample size ranging from 10 to 30 participants (Dworkin, 2012; Boddy, 2016; Vasilieou, et al., 2018; Guest, Namey & Chen, 2020). Hence, the study's sample size consists of 20 participants, specifically workers of BURS, encompassing both managerial and non-managerial staff members located at the Head Office.

Data Collection Procedures

The individuals who consented to participate in the research were contacted through electronic mail in order to schedule a mutually convenient appointment for the interview. The interview schedule was established, and participants were furnished with a consent form, contact data, and an outline of the interview topic to offer them a comprehensive understanding of the interview's content. The duration of each interview ranged from 20 to 30 minutes.

Data Analysis

The researchers utilized thematic analysis as a methodological approach to find and analyze recurring themes within the collected data. The interview responses were individually examined, and pertinent codes were generated based on the content of these responses. The codes were categorized into various themes based on their commonalities.

Findings

The primary aim of this research is to examine the impact of remote work arrangements on employee productivity. In relation to the aforementioned objective, the majority of participants expressed that their productivity had a positive enhancement during the period of remote work. Participants highlighted that one of the advantageous outcomes of working from home (WFH) is the enhanced capacity to concentrate on tasks without being interrupted by external factors. This observation has been reported by certain participants who have expressed that:

Respondent N articulated that within their professional setting, they encounter a substantial volume of customer inquiries. However, while transitioning to remote work, they observed an enhanced ability to concentrate due to the absence of interruptions stemming from customer interactions and telephone calls.

In a similar vein, respondent L articulated that within the workplace, there exists a multitude of distractions stemming from incessantly ringing telephones, interactions with colleagues, and the presence of walk-in clients. Consequently, I was able to allocate a greater amount of attention to my assigned duties when operating remotely as opposed to being physically present in the office.

Several participants ascribed the rise in productivity to their autonomy in task execution and the ability to establish personal schedules. This served as a source of motivation for them to engage in further actions.

The respondent expressed that working remotely provided a significant level of job satisfaction due to the autonomy they had over their work. I performed the assigned duties according to my own methodology.

Respondent R expressed that the experience of working remotely provided them with a sense of autonomy and control over the execution of their responsibilities, resulting in increased creativity and effectiveness in their job.

As the first respondent, I possessed a considerable degree of autonomy and control over my job responsibilities, enabling me to determine the manner in which I executed my obligations. The increased enjoyment led to an increase in my level of engagement and subsequent effort.

Several participants also expressed that working from home (WFH) enhanced their productivity as they saw the necessity to impress their superiors and earn their trust due to the limited or absent supervision.

According to Respondent J, the experience of working from home served as a source of motivation to exert greater effort in their profession, as they lacked direct supervision. In order to establish a sense of trust with my company, I made a concerted effort to increase my level of productivity and output.

According to the response provided by respondent H, the experience of working remotely served as a source of motivation to exert greater effort in their work, as it lacked the presence of immediate monitoring. In order to establish confidence with my managers, I made certain to fulfill my job responsibilities diligently.

However, in contrast, the majority of the participants expressed a common concern regarding the scarcity of resources during the work-from-home (WFH) arrangement, as they were required to rely on their personal internet connection to fulfill their job obligations.
Respondent F expressed a lack of access to essential resources such as internet connectivity, tables, chairs, and computers, which hindered their ability to fulfill assigned responsibilities. Occasionally, the process of delivering content posed challenges due to intermittent disruptions in the internet connection.

Respondent A expressed that throughout the period of working from home (WFH), they encountered a lack of resources provided by the organization. Specifically, they mentioned utilizing their personal internet connection as an example. In certain instances, my ability to engage in virtual meetings would be impeded were it not for my subscription to an internet connection. The lack of control exerted by my company resulted in a detrimental impact on my output.

Respondent C expressed that they were not furnished with the necessary resources to facilitate remote work. Consequently, they resorted to using their personal internet connection and computer, which proved to be suboptimal. The absence of a connection resulted in an inability to engage in work, since the days without internet access rendered me unable to perform my tasks.

In addition, certain participants also indicated that their productivity was adversely impacted by instances of communication breakdowns.

In response to the query, the participant expressed that throughout the period of remote work, the primary mode of communication relied heavily on the internet. However, a notable issue arose due to the absence of internet provision by the employer.

Respondent R highlighted the reliance on internet connectivity for communication during remote work. However, a challenge arose since the respondents were not furnished with internet access and had to utilize their personal resources. This phenomenon occasionally impacted productivity and work schedules.

In general, the results indicate a beneficial effect of remote work on employee productivity at BURS during the COVID-19 pandemic, despite the various difficulties faced by employees.

**Discussions**

The current investigation revealed that the impact of remote work on employee productivity was notably favorable, as all participants reported experiencing an improvement in productivity while working from home. The data suggest that productivity was not negatively impacted, but rather improved, when individuals worked from home. The participants conveyed that the absence of work resources from the company had a detrimental impact on their productivity, however the benefits of the situation outweighed the drawbacks. The current investigation has revealed increased concentration resulting from less distractions as a significant factor contributing to enhanced productivity during remote work. The results of the study revealed that a majority of participants expressed that their productivity significantly increased when they were able to concentrate on their task without any interruptions. The participants made reference to the fact that BURS is an organization that places a high emphasis on customer interaction, resulting in several potential distractions from customers, ringing telephones, and even coworkers. This discovery provides more support for other studies, as noted by Ford et al (2020) and van der Meulen et al (2012), which collectively propose that remote work has a beneficial effect on employee productivity. This positive impact is attributed to the heightened concentration resulting from reduced distractions.

The participants additionally suggested that possessing control over their tasks had a role in enhancing their efficiency. The participants expressed that they were able to establish their own work schedules, which served as a source of motivation for them to increase their productivity and enhance their creativity in their job. According to the findings of Naotunna and Zhou (2018) as well as Galanti (2021), it has been observed that occupations characterized by higher levels of autonomy tend to facilitate the development of creativity among individuals. This is primarily attributed to the fact that greater autonomy in the workplace encourages individuals to take risks and engage in unconventional thinking, in contrast to occupations with lower levels of autonomy. Consequently, the increased autonomy experienced in remote work settings has the potential to significantly enhance the creative capabilities of employees. Several participants also expressed that working from home (WFH) enhanced their productivity as they saw the necessity to impress their superiors and earn their trust due to the limited or absent supervision. The participants expressed a preference for their supervisors to demonstrate trust in their ability to successfully fulfill their given responsibilities when working remotely. Several studies (Osborne & Hammoud, 2017; Wang & Chia-Chun, 2013; Ugwu, Onyishi & Rodriguez-Sanchez, 2014) have already acknowledged that trust plays a crucial role in the effectiveness of remote working. Specifically, these studies have found that when leaders trust their staff, it leads to enhanced productivity in the context of working from home.

All participants indicated that the Business Unit Resource System (BURS) did not offer any resources for working from home (WFH). The results indicate that the absence of work resources provided by the employer has a detrimental impact on productivity. According to De Been et al (2016), the provision of resources such as equipment and suitable work environments is crucial for enhancing productivity. It is imperative for management to take necessary measures in ensuring the availability of these resources, as employees are likely to respond accordingly. Numerous studies have demonstrated the significance of possessing adequate resources in both personal surroundings and access to equipment in order to enhance productivity (Patanjali & Bhatta, 2022; Wu & Chen, 2020; Mustajab et al., 2020). The results indicate that the work environment and available resources play a crucial role in the context of remote work. Russell and Frachtenberg (2021) assert that information technology (IT) poses a significant obstacle in the context of remote labor. The results indicate that BURS employees encountered difficulties in communicating through information technology.
(IT) when working from home (WFH) due to a lack of available resources. Furthermore, participants provided feedback indicating that the conditions of their workplace were not conducive.

In general, notwithstanding the difficulties faced by employees working from home (WFH), the research findings demonstrate that the implementation of this program had a favorable effect on productivity. According to the findings of the study, a significant proportion of the participants indicated that they had higher levels of productivity while working from home (WFH).

**Conclusions**

The objective of this study was to examine the effects of remote work arrangements during the COVID-19 pandemic on the productivity levels of employees. The study's results indicate that participants exhibited higher levels of productivity when working from home. The participants indicated that working from home allowed them to concentrate better, resulting in an improvement in their productivity. This finding is consistent with existing literature, which has indicated that past study supports the notion that working from home (WFH) has a favorable influence on productivity. The study consistently affirms that working from home (WFH) has a beneficial impact on productivity. This can be attributed to enhanced concentration, increased autonomy, and greater flexibility in task completion. Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are proposed to the management of BURS and other public sector organizations in Botswana. These recommendations serve as a guide for policy-making aimed at enhancing the adoption and implementation of work-from-home (WFH) programs. The findings indicate that the organization BURS lacked a well-defined plan for implementing remote work. The observed phenomenon may be ascribed to the abrupt shift resulting from the global epidemic. In the future, it is recommended that BURS should prioritize the development of workforce strategy solutions in order to facilitate the process of workforce transformation.

The achievement of this objective can be facilitated by the formulation of policies and guidelines that delineate a strategic plan for the implementation of work-from-home arrangements. The study's conclusions explicitly identified a shortage of resources as one of the factors impeding production. It is imperative that the Business Unit for Remote Support (BURS) establishes a comprehensive and transparent budgetary framework to adequately allocate resources required for facilitating remote operations. Prior studies have identified apprehensions over the issue of cyber security arising from logins that occur beyond the confines of business domains. The importance of data security should be prioritized by BURS, considering the sensitive nature of the information held by the organization. The establishment of training initiatives for both managerial personnel and employees, encompassing topics such as effective administration of geographically dispersed teams and fostering a more adaptive mindset to facilitate the acceptance of organizational transformations. The implementation of remote working should be facilitated by the development of appropriate processes by BURS. Ensuring comprehensive staff engagement in the development of work-from-home (WFH) strategies and the effective resolution of employee inquiries and apprehensions. The inclusion of employees in the development of work-from-home (WFH) plans can contribute to a seamless transition, since it fosters a sense of ownership among employees. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BURS) should undertake the task of identifying and assessing the necessary modifications in the workplace that are essential for effectively harnessing and capitalizing on emerging work methodologies. The assessment of cultural implications of remote working practices by BURS is necessary in order to guarantee the receptiveness of corporate culture towards novel work methodologies. The establishment of an organizational culture that encompasses trust and openness, as well as the implementation of a robust performance management system and a functional framework capable of accommodating work-from-home programs, should be prioritized. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the varying degrees of success in implementing work-from-home (WFH) strategies among enterprises, with certain entities such as multinational corporations (MNCs) demonstrating more effective approaches. The Bureau of University Research and Statistics (BURS) might consider utilizing these organizations as benchmarks for future reference. The BURS organization may consider conducting an additional survey on the work-from-home (WFH) initiative in order to assess its efficacy and obtain more comprehensive data. This is necessary as the current study's findings lack sufficient significance due to the limited duration of respondents' experiences. Furthermore, exploring potential enhancements and refinements to the program could yield improved outcomes.

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