

Organizational Rewards in the Online Work Environment. Is There Any Chance of Full Accomplishment ?

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Abstract

When work is done at the employee's home or elsewhere outside the official work environment, some organizational rewards disappear (such as interaction between colleagues, direct support from superiors, etc.), while there is a need for new rewards (technical support, payment for utilities, flexible work schedule, adequate work equipment, etc.). This paper main purpose is to analyze the literature review regarding the organizational rewards in the online work environment and to sketch the proper rewards that attract and maintain employees in the remotely online work. Many studies argue that employees are more productive when they work from home, but despite these, other authors declare vice versa. Even if the remote way of working brings somehow flexibility in employees' s programs, there are cases that confirm that work from home involves longer hours programs than employees are paid, which can generate family problems (Crosbie and Moore, 2004). The main conclusions to which this paper reaches are: working remotely expects higher productivity, working remotely has many disadvantages, and to maintain employees when they work remotely, extra leisure time is needed.

Key words: homework, online, employees, consequences, organizational rewards.

J.E.L. classification: J59, M29, O15.

1. Introduction

The process of human resources' attracting into companies has as first activity the announcement of vacancies, and its purpose is to end with suitable employees (Turnea, 2017). The details that candidates find out during the selection process usually influence the final choice for employment (Boswell *et al*, 2011).

In particular, in the recruitment and selection stages, applicants/ candidates analyze information regarding the package of rewards and benefits they would receive if they reach the final offer of employment. In other words, the recruitment process has as main concepts the job announcement and the applicant, which represents the potential employee and sends the application form to the employer (Cole, 2003). The selection process is associated with individual or group interviews, tests and the so-called candidate, which is actually a past applicant who was already choosed for future interviews and/ or tests (Cole, 2003).

The level of uncertainty in decisions when applying for a job is quite high, given that, the person who is looking for work has a limited access to information (Asseburg *et al*, 2020). However, practitioners in the field point out that attracting and maintaining talent into organizations largely depends on the reward strategy applied (Boswell *et al*, 2011; Pregnolato *et al*, 2017; Bwowe and Marongwe, 2018). Also, it seems that improvements in the employer's attributes in terms of image, values, presence at charities, etc., produce more interests for the potential employees, and thus impact the recruitment and selection practices (Rynes and Barber, 1990 in Asseburg *et al*, 2020).

Regardless of whether the production or service activity is considered, if the work is done in the classic manner (in production or at the office), the reward strategy should be clear, because it appears and develops at work. But what happens when work is done at the employee's home or elsewhere outside the official work environment? Obviously, some organizational rewards

disappear (such as interaction between colleagues, direct support from superiors, etc.), while there is a need for new rewards (technical support, payment for utilities, flexible work schedule, adequate work equipment, etc.).

These arguments bring in the center of attention the research questions of this paper: Is there any chance to fully satisfy employees that work remotely using organizational rewards? Which are the key reward elements in this situation? This paper aims are to analyze the literature review regarding the organizational rewards in the online work environment and to sketch answers to these questions.

2. Theoretical background

Work from home has growing in the last decades (Reshma *et al*, 2015). Homework is defined as a job that is made from home at least 20 hours weekly (Crosbie and Moore, 2004). The “work from home” is equivalent with other concepts found in the literature: teleworking, telecommuting and remote working, and defines flexible work arrangements (Rahman and Zahir Uddin Arif, 2021).

There are three major type of work which can be made remotely (Reshma *et al*, 2015):

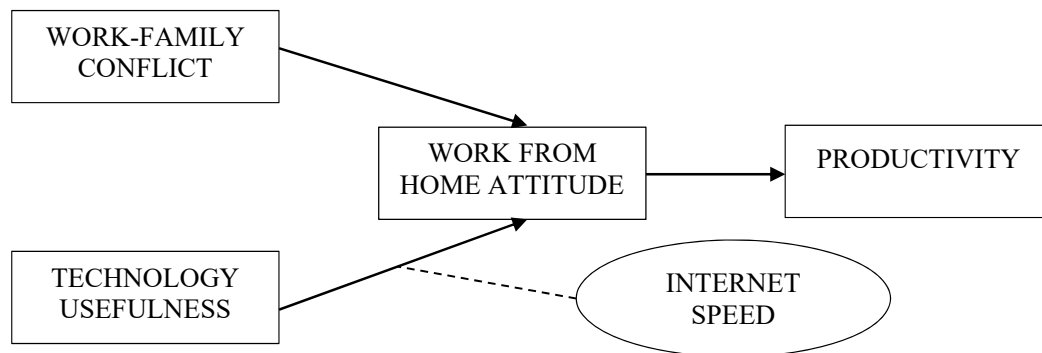
- The work in call centers;
- The work in sales (especially with home made products);
- Consultancy.

The main advantage of the traditional homework occupations is that there is no need for special skills when it comes to perform the working tasks (Crosbie and Moore, 2004).

We can also add to these the following activities that are compatible with the remotely manner of working: outsourcing of support services, accounting services and professional training. All these activities can be successfully made online.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, working from home increased substantially. For example, according to a study made in Egypt, it was registered an increase of 124% in the number of work posts that involves work from home (Bassant, 2021). But by invading personal space with work, there might appear some work-life problems. Before establishing such diagnoses, employees create themselves a “work from home attitude” (AbuJarour *et al*, 2021). Details are presented in Figure no. 1.

Figure no. 1. Factors that influence the work from home attitude and productivity



Source: AbuJarour *et al*, 2021.

According to AbuJarour *et al* (2021), when employees work remotely, they create themselves a specific attitude (AbuJarour *et al*, 2021). Two extremely importing factors that help to create this attitude are: work-family conflict and the perceived usefulness of thechology (AbuJarour *et al*, 2021). The Internet speed moderates the relation between technology usefulness and the work from home attitude (AbuJarour *et al*, 2021). Finally, this model explains that all these factors ultimately influence the productivity (AbuJarour *et al*, 2021).

3. Research methodology

The present research was conducted using content analysis, to clarify the basic concepts in terms of motivation in the remotely work and to establish future directions for a quantitative research. In this regard, useful information was sought about online work, remote work, advantages and disadvantages of online work and ways to motivate employees that work from home.

4. Findings

Working remotely expects higher productivity

Technology favors working from home (Prasad *et al*, 2020, in Bassant, 2021) and makes time more flexible (Bassant, 2021). There are people that declare that when they work from home, they have more free time (Crosbie and Moore, 2004).

There are studies that argue that employees are more productive when they work from home and that, they can improve their work-life balance working this way (Reshma *et al*, 2015; Bassant, 2021). Despite these, other authors declare vice versa (Grant *et al*, 2019, in Bassant, 2021).

Self-efficacy improves productivity and performance when employees are working remotely (Bandura, 2006, in Rahman and Zahir Uddin Arif, 2021). Self-efficacy is high related to professional success (Rahman and Zahir Uddin Arif, 2021). In a study conducted in Bangladesh on 100 professionals, 45% of respondents declared that are productive when they work from home, and 22% of them said they are very productive when they work remotely (Rahman and Zahir Uddin Arif, 2021).

Working remotely has many disadvantages

Unfortunately, this option of work blends family and work and the personal space with the working one (Reshma *et al*, 2015). However, parents can be retained through working remotely, because they can simultaneously take care of childcare responsibilities (Thatcher and Zhu, 2006 in Reshma *et al*, 2015).

Even if work from home is related to job satisfaction, can lead to more stress, work-life conflicts, and negative well-being (Jehanzeb *et al*, 2012). The work from home attitude can affect productivity (Jehanzeb *et al*, 2012).

A tough disadvantage of working from home is working longer hours than employees are paid, which can generate family problems (Crosbie and Moore, 2004). Homework brings time flexibility. However, it is a concern because of managing personal and professional time at the same time (Bassant, 2021). Psychological wellbeing might be affected by the remotely way of working, employees might be unconnected, isolated and loneliness feelings may appear (Bassant, 2021; Rahman and Zahir Uddin Arif, 2021).

Workplace pressure, an affected wellbeing, overload work and missing of human interaction are other consequences that can appear when employees work from home (Charalampous *et al*, 2019 in Bassant, 2021; Molino *et al*, 2020 in Bassant, 2021).

How employees want to be motivated at work

Maintaining motivated employees into organizations can bring high performance and competitiveness, and for such behaviors, rewards and recognition represent success factors in keeping them passionate and self-esteemed in the organizational environment (Danish and Usman, 2010).

The reward strategy consists in intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. While the extrinsic rewards are pay, bonuses, fringe benefits and other career development possibilities, the intrinsic rewards come from the job itself (Hackman and Oldham 1976 in Jehanzeb *et al*, 2012).

Rewards and recognition of merits impacts employees' motivations and bring high performance levels (Ali and Ahmed, 2009; Danish and Usman, 2010). In a study conducted on 568 employees from public and private banks of Saudi Arabia, it was proved that organizational rewards positively influence motivation and satisfaction (Jehanzeb *et al*, 2012). But to maintain workers when they

work remotely, extra leisure time is needed (Reshma *et al*, 2015).

Employees' commitment is based on recognition programs and balanced rewards (Andrew, 2004, in Danish and Usman, 2010). Moreover, recognition leads to motivated people (Deeproose, 1994, in Danish and Usman, 2010). Further, there is a connection between the work itself, motivation, and satisfaction (Danish and Usman, 2010).

There are cases in which, employees who are not performers at work, negatively react to performance-contingent rewards, while employees who perform at work react positively, with less stress, to performance-contingent rewards (Ganster *et al*, 2011).

Work-life balance while performing homework can be achieved through distinguishing the following: personal space and time, care time and space and work time and space (Williams, 2000, in Crosbie and Moore, 2004).

5. Conclusions and future directions of research

After reviewing the literature, it is more than obvious that the remotely work blends family and work and the personal space with the working one. According to Jehanzeb *et al* (2012), work from home can be related to job satisfaction, but also can lead to more stress, work-life conflicts, negative well-being, and affected productivity (Jehanzeb *et al*, 2012).

Homeworking effects on personal life are little known (Crosbie and Moore, 2004). But personal characteristics, such as, personality, aims and skills, are very important in considering this manner of working (Crosbie and Moore, 2004).

Work-life balance while performing homework can be achieved through distinguishing the following: personal space and time, care time and space and work time and space (Williams, 2000, in Crosbie and Moore, 2004). To maintain workers when they work remotely, undoubtedly extra leisure time is needed (Reshma *et al*, 2015).

Given the above, the topic of organizational rewards established in the online work, from home, is interesting and denotes many aspects that still need to be researched. Thus, we list below, possible questions that can be answered in future research in the field:

- What rewards are essential in working from home?
- Are young people differently motivated to work from home compared to other age groups?
- How much free time do people need to accept an online job?
- What other facilities can companies offer to support the remotely work?

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