We are IntechOpen,
the world's leading publisher of
Open Access books
Built by scientists, for scientists

5,800
Open access books available

142,000
International authors and editors

180M
Downloads

Our authors are among the

154
Countries delivered to

TOP 1%
most cited scientists

12.2%
Contributors from top 500 universities

CLARIVATE ANALYTICS
BOOK CITATION INDEX
INDEXED

WEB OF SCIENCE™

Selection of our books indexed in the Book Citation Index
in Web of Science™ Core Collection (BKCI)

Interested in publishing with us?
Contact book.department@intechopen.com

Numbers displayed above are based on latest data collected.
For more information visit www.intechopen.com

Chapter

Defining Post-Pandemic Work and Organizations: The Need for Team Belongingness and Trust

Joseph Crawford

Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought forth substantial unrest in the ways in which people work and organize. This had led to disconnection, rapid adaptation, work from home, emergence of a new digital industry, and an opportunity to create anew. This chapter provides a position for the future state of work and organizing, drawing on the belongingness hypothesis, to characterize a revised method of human connection that acknowledges unique differences in online connections. It also explores the role that flexibility and working from home have on organizational outcomes, through changing presenteeism, changes in how people develop trust, and how social resources are deployed. Advancing an understanding of this position creates a possible post-pandemic model of work that acknowledges the current climate and the learnings from before that pandemic. Through genuine acknowledgment of the current and past ways of working, it is possible to build a pathway to heighten employee's sense of belonging and trust. This will support the return to, and evolution of, a form of normality post-pandemic.

Keywords: COVID-19, working from home, sense of belonging, flourishing, belongingness, connectivity

1. Introduction

The word "unprecedented" has perhaps been expressed across 2020–2021 more than any of our past years to describe the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, regardless of the discipline or context within which it is represented. The documented and theorized effects of the pandemic continue to emerge as we collectively seek to understand the uncertainty presented to contemporary conceptualizations of organization, work, work-life balance, and human flourishing. And rightly so, prior to 2020, scholars were exploring related concepts; yet these were exacerbated in their application.

For many, this was manifested in visual and physical forms first. The empty streets of lockdown as a society worked from home, the global toilet paper exodus [1] face masks "fiascos" [2], World Health Organization compliant alcohol-based hand sanitizer at every café, and check-in apps and clipboards on each entrance. Each of these pandemic artifacts offers a symptomatic view of how the world operates and operated across 2020–2022. While many of these will become part of comedy skits and long-term legend for future generations, these will likely be

archived to history books rather than become business-as-usual in ordinary life. Importantly, and notwithstanding, the pandemic has not operated inside a vacuum; technological innovation, climate change, and inequity are also shaping the future of work.

The contemporary workplace upheaval during early 2020 has had a significant effect on attitudes, appetite, and perception of work and organizations. If contextualized within the last 100 years of work and organization, the post-pandemic nexus offers a new and important turn of our understanding of work and its product(s). The late nineteenth century industrialist philosophy of work suggested that for work to be completed, it is done by industry with minimal governmental intervention (e.g., Laissez-Faire capitalism). The industrialist emphasizes the strength of the individual and their resilience (rugged individualism) and deployment of a survival of the fittest mentality (social Darwinism). Added, division of labor, specialization, positional power [3], the rise of charismatic authority [4, 5], and the growth of scientific inquiry [6] emerged as a modernist pursuit for effective and efficient organizational structures. In response, the postmodernist problematized the dehumanized organization to theorize connected workforces rather than alienated or estranged, with an acknowledgment that informal daily lives and lived experiences were also important. This transition was an important signpost in understanding how humans interact and organize for the purposes of *work*.

Skipping forward to pre-pandemic 2019 where much of the work and the organizational landscape was situated in competing sides of the modernist bureaucratic organization and *still* emergent postmodern post-bureaucratic organization. These tensions gave rise to large scale enterprises embedding activities of meaning, often formulaically, into their bureaucratic organizations: employee assistance programs constrained by fixed numbers of free appointments, workload models to support balance that typically fails to recognize implicit roles, free gym memberships with low uptake, renaming our human resources departments to *People and Wellbeing*, and a mental health and behavior policies with arduous hurdles to reporting and responding. While the workplace of today is far from only these catastrophized examples, they highlight the ongoing challenge of balancing the aim to support workplace-directed human flourishing in a rather complex world.

The pandemic created a catalytic event that has infected every corner of business and organizational practices. It has offered a radical change to the nature of work, with much of the rapid responses focusing on back-of-the-napkin redefined continuity over carefully considered strategy for work productivity. The result has been a multi-year international pilot study on new ways of work, learning, and living characterized by flexibility, agility, continuity, and wellbeing (at times) [7]. Yet, do these work principles remain when the world resumes? Has the pilot created a successful environment for future work? Is the post-pandemic landscape the intervention activity required for scholars to create new ways of working, much like Luthans [8] argued for in the need for positive organizational behavior in the early 2000s.

In the same domain, Avolio and colleagues [9] began a discussion on the e-leader, and later updated its definition to highlight that e-leadership is:

> *"A social influence process embedded in both proximal and distal contexts mediated by AIT that can produce a change in attitudes, feelings, thinking, behavior, and performance"* [10].

Indeed, e-leadership has evolved since 2014, and has likely been accelerated and exacerbated in its use during and beyond the pandemic context. The context was seen as a particularly important conceptual addition between 2001 and 2014 [10], and this chapter seeks to prioritize this conceptual exploration.

In this chapter, I advance a position on the future state of work and organizing beyond the COVID-19 pandemic and do so through a theoretical lens of belongingness [11]. The pandemic literature has yet to progress towards clear theoretical positions on post-pandemic work. I will argue that through the sustained human need to belong, we can better understand how working from home, forms of work-based connectivity and technology, and emotional labor and wellbeing can inform the desired future work context. The positioned end-state is informed from a perspective of positive organizational scholarship, and the human pursuit of flourishing at work.

To advance this position, I begin with a theoretical framework that describes belongingness and the belongingness hypothesis. Following, I describe and justify the critical review approach taken, and continue to discuss connectivity, working from home, and future work redesign. The aim of these sections is to connect an understanding of what leaders can do to better understand and support their followers and staff as work begins to resume. Developing a leader's sense of context is a critical component that underpins diverse conceptualizations of leadership effectiveness [12, 13].

2. Theoretical framework

The belongingness hypothesis argues that humans have a "need to form and maintain strong, stable interpersonal relationships" [11]. Indeed, this hypothesis follows two criteria: a few frequent affectively positive interactions; and the interaction being sustained in a temporally stable mutual affective concern for wellbeing. Belonging, from one perspective, should be analyzed from three lenses: social and economic locations, identifications and emotional attachments, and ethical and political values [14]. In an individual's need to belong, and to become a person who "belongs," they seek intrapersonal and interpersonal attachments to membership, identity, origin, beliefs, and social or economic position. Interestingly, Yuval-Davis laments that the politics of belonging can pose socially constructed boundaries within which a normative person can feel they belong [14].

To provide an example, a person performatively articulates their sense of belonging, "I'm a coffee person" and the social and economic context may moderate their comfort in feeling they can belong to this group. This comment may garner respect among colleagues in the work lunchroom, as the majority likely share of their membership to this group. But such discussions may turn political if followed with "I love kopi luwak," the most expensive and ethically questionable coffee bean. Kopi luwak is the practice of a civit (a catlike creature) partially digesting coffee beans to remove the acidity. This may begin a conversation of competing attachments to ethical values or personal constitution. By this, individual's ability to feel they belong to particular groups may be promoted by socially constructed ideas of being and alienated away from socially unappealing ideals. While established standards for how belonging might occur within existing workplace settings exist (e.g., the post-meeting water cooler conversations), the hybrid digital and face-to-face work environment is driven by pandemic-based lockdowns could reinvent some of these practices.

To extend, existing identities can create a sense of belongingness uncertainty. In one study, students were led to believe they would have few friends in their intellectual domain. White students were unaffected, black students saw a reduced sense of belonging. In a follow-up on mitigating doubts, a shared intervention raised the academic success of black students, but not white [15]. Belongingness uncertainty, as I discuss throughout, is likely to be an unconscious factor that will challenge the extent to which employees may attach themselves and their "worker" identity to

their physical workplaces, their home office, or somewhere else. As organizations return to work, there will be a need to consider how employees make sense of their redefined attachment to their colleagues, and to their workplaces.

A focus on understanding and cultivating the human sense of belonging has occurred in education [7, 16], politics [14], and psychology [15]. In this research, I focus on applying aggregate team-level belongingness as a key theoretical foundation for understanding the future design of work. If the belongingness hypothesis [11] holds true, then an individual's feel a sense of belonging to their interpersonal workplace relationships and their sense of individual workplace identity will form a core foundation for how they engage or reengage with work and their organization.

3. Method

This research adopts a critical review method to advance an understanding of the future state of work and organizing beyond the COVID-19 pandemic and do so through a theoretical lens of belongingness. I modeled this work on one of the most significant critical reviews in the field [17]. The focus of this chapter is on creating a clear understanding of how leaders can understand the contextual conditions affecting staff and followers' sense of belonging. While systematic and metanalytic reviews are typically more rigorous, they require an established domain of literature. This chapter focuses on literature and practice that while may have some roots in existing scholarly works, is situated in a context that is largely unknown. Sense of belonging has had a limited discussion in the pandemic literature [7], yet within a future post-pandemic state of work, it requires a critical lens. This critical lens that I apply is focused on examining how existing literature can be synthesized to create a better understanding of the future of work. This remains one of the greatest challenges for post-pandemic leaders.

4. Discussion

4.1 Connectivity

Mutually effective human relationships are a key foundation for a sense of belonging. Prior to the pandemic, work was a common place to meet future friends. However, these relationships tended to have mixed effects on individual wellbeing and workplace performance. While work friendships created higher productivity through trust, creativity, and satisfaction [18], there is also a dark side [19, 20]. These informal social structures, while difficult to adequately capture, likely generate an indirect attachment to workplaces. The morning group coffee, expression of individual-level organizational citizenship behavior on late-night overtime, and establishment of communal norms support individuals to be connected to their peers and their work.

In the early modernist workplace, friendships were likely formed through mutual self-disclosure [21] and perceived similarity [22]. This likely took place in overtime work meetings, the "knock-off drinks," and the indirect or direct benefits attached to physical and proximal workplace connections (e.g., preferential application of existing rules [21]). Contemporary technologies affect this. In one study, social proof (e.g., mutual group membership or group identification) was a central decision rule for when individuals "accept" an online friend request from a person they do not know on Facebook [23]. Yet, there is scant evidence for how digital ways of working affect individual connections in workplaces. Initial pandemic evidence

highlights the shift to working from home created higher rates of loneliness, depression, and suicidal ideation [24]. If working from home is poised as a staple in the return, the effect on those employees beginning their career, or with low social supports, may see the greatest risk.

If the return to work includes heightened face-to-face time, it could include elements of social hypochondria, suspicion, and distrust. The return to work arrived with emotional vulnerability for those who are returning, it may also create forms of in/out-group dynamics with those who were employed pre-pandemic and those new employees. New employees will have only engaged with their peers in limited face-to-face capacity; in parts of the world with large-scale lockdowns, perhaps not at all. Arslan found, however, that perceived belongingness to an organization tended to curve individual effects on loneliness [25]. Effective belongingness approaches therefore may engender a more supportive return climate.

In a review of e-leadership [10], a focus on individual, dyadic, and group level leadership was considered. Importantly, a perspective of affective, cognitive, and behavioral attitudes was applied to understanding how e-leadership exists across multiple groups. Connections as the dyadic level are enabled through leaders supporting haptic and emotional recognition and response drivers [26].

The informal organization is an environment by which individuals organize by self-defined means, often within the confines of formal organizational boundaries. This can take shape in the form of social group outings, the selective Secret Santa the boss did not organize, or weekend getaways. As discussed, workplace friendships can create such informality, but also be a place where work is discussed and decided in the absence of full consultation. These environments will likely be more complex when human connectivity is based on primarily digital interactions. In one study, the Sunflower Movement tended to use social media for its promotional activities rather than networking [27], with an assumption that such networking likely took place in offline environments. The proposition proposed by Metaverse rebranding (Facebook parent company) also suggests growing supply-driven movements within the online social landscapes. In a primarily online workplace, therefore, individuals are likely to make their friendships outside of work or sustain workplace relationships with peers they can meet in person.

Likewise, in hybrid workplaces, it will likely be those best equipped for work (e.g., social, or economic resources) that will be able to make more informal connections through physical proximity. Observational mobile phone data was found to predict 95% of friendship dyads based on their extra-role behaviors (e.g., proximity outside of work hours [28]). These relationships may have formed during work hours; however, they appear to be sustained through out-of-hours social activity. This speaks to suggest that despite potential pursuits of organizations to establish positive social relationships among workers, their role may largely be in generating a spark rather than fanning the flame. An understanding such as this creates optimism among some cynical data on the future of work embedded in the online. It offers assurance that with the right forms of organizational connection, that strong interpersonal bonds may remain possible within work teams.

For leaders to facilitate a connection in purely online and hybrid work environments, effort needs to go to examining the ways organizations facilitate work meet-and-greets. Lambert et al. [29] highlight that across multiple contexts, individuals who were primed with a sense of belonging, social support, or social value had heightened levels of perceived meaningfulness. Organizations therefore may not see the same value they once saw in the casual morning teas in the office and need to be more creative in their approaches to generating social goodwill between their employees.

4.2 Working from home

Working from home is not a new concept, but perhaps its current and prospective application during and beyond the pandemic offers novelty. While working from home was often seen, stylized, and reserved for graphic designers and their MacBook in cafes, cultural norms surrounding working from home are beginning to evolve. The literature is also proliferating in recent years on the topic. Google Scholar reports 20,500 results for "working from home" between 2020 and November 2021. Contrast this to 2000–2019 (16,900 results), and pre-2000 (2520 results). While some evidence argues that previous resistance provides a precedent that the working from home reality will not occur as a "new normal" [30], others argue its benefits [31].

Organizational change literature often discusses iterative changes [32], where changes often evolve over time. For working from home individuals, the likely resistance to return to a regimented and rigid environment, any iterative return to hybrid or fully onsite work may lead to resistance. Indeed, while some individual differences characterized the likelihood of voluntary flexible work designs [33], employees who have engaged in working from home have higher rates of positivity towards the flexible work arrangements [34]. This may speak to adoption models whereby broad acceptance may not always emerge until innovators and early adopters have sustained engagement with the "new" way of working. The design of flexible working from home environments however require careful consideration, as I will go on to discuss.

To provide an example from the working from home scholarship, I present unique differences in our understanding in pre-and during-pandemic environments. Working from home experiment at the NASDAQ-listed travel agency Ctrip (n = 249, [31]), identified a 13% increase in performance, with 9% from working more minutes per shift (e.g., less sick leave and fewer breaks), and 4% to call efficiency (e.g., quieter environment shortening call durations). Yet, despite higher employee satisfaction and retention, performance-based promotion rates declined by 50%. Compare this case study to 2020, a working paper surveying 30,000 U.S. workers argue a move from 5to 20% of work time being conducted from home, with an implied 5% gain in productivity in a post-pandemic environment [35].

To explore some of the potential pitfalls of the limited understanding of working from home, the use of existing primarily digital tools may be used as a parallel. In more established online transitions, the Tinder Revolution can be drawn on to understand how we move key components of our lives online. Emergent evidence on online dating indicates 18–25% of Tinder users were in committed relationships, and that these individuals tended to have more casual sexual behavior [36]. Likewise, compulsive use of the app tended to create worse outcomes for individual wellbeing [37]. The progression online during the pandemic likely had similar effects to employee wellbeing: a key focus of effective leaders. Yet, the context still only represents inertia with rapid change. New ways of working, that leverage online connectivity, may require adaption of existing resource deployment to support a technologically connected and physically disconnected workplace. Importantly, the diminished trustworthiness of some in the online dating environment may point to a greater need for training that supports positive character, virtue, and ethical leadership [38, 39]. Leaders build environments that enable commitment, yet if online environments have reduced psychological attachment to existing commitments for employees (or followers), the existing leader and organizational commitment relationships [40] may not as easily apply to the digital context.

This is salient with arguments that while it may be easier to lie online, issue moral intensity may change the outcome [41]. For virtue-based organizational scholarship [42], a focus on doing something for its inherent good may also be a factor, as opposed to consequentialist perspectives that focus on the potential outcome of the lie. The prospective dark side of working from home will be the reduced moral threshold that individuals – without effectively cultivated moral identities – require to make an unethical decision. In practice, a dyad member may find it much easier to "ghost" an individual when their pair is only visible through digital means than if they were next-door neighbors, had adjacent work offices, or shared a favorite morning coffee routine. While the focus of this chapter was not on leaders, dark side leadership [43] will still have the capacity to take place in online environments.

Returning to how working from home may change the way individuals work, Brown et al. identify that technology used for communication, can satisfy the need to belong, but it tends to follow suite with a higher interest in physical interaction [44]. This means that telework models have the propensity to be successful in cultivating human flourishing, but by different means. An individual pivot may be required, and the visibility of home environments (e.g., Zoom backgrounds) may capture unique vulnerabilities. Likewise, the use of artificial video backgrounds or accessing video conferencing without cameras on can create perceived challenges to inclusion or honesty. Meaningful affective relationships tend to form through mutual disclosure, and where digital barriers are established, these environments may be less conducive to productive and high-quality relationship formation. This may especially be true of early-career or low financial resource professionals without adequate space for a dedicated office at home. For e-leaders, there will be changes needed to enable a focus on understanding how leader and follower authenticity changes with self-disclosure [10, 45].

Interestingly, and notwithstanding, is a question of absenteeism and presenteeism. In a study of 25,465 European workers, there was heightened sickness-based presenteeism [46]. This was highest in individuals who teleworked daily and several times a week, contrasted to those less often and never teleworking. For this, employees who were sick attended work more frequently when this was able to be home-based work. The reduced barriers (infection risk, travel, work attire) may have supplemented this, yet it can lead to self-exploitation. Critically, individuals who have trust-based working time tended to self-report higher presenteeism than those with fixed schedules [47]. The potential normalization also creates risks within the working from home environment. On one side, employee monitoring can be deployed to assure productivity, yet much of the theoretical evidence is inconclusive as to the benefits and costs [48, 49]. Yet, where there are home environments involved that employees do not wish to show their Zoom background for, it is quite likely that a decision to implement monitoring in home offices would cause controversy. These vulnerabilities may create pause for followers as they seek to engage effectively with their managers and leaders. Instead, there perhaps is a required need to support effective and flexible workplaces, there may be a need to support high-quality character building as a safeguard against employee deceit; such an approach has greater potential for long-term success than rigid policies. Leaders are, at least in part, measured on their capacity to enable organizational outcomes and absenteeism and presenteeism can create an impediment to such achievement. Leaders have a direct effect on absenteeism, particularly ethical leaders [39]. However, the online environment will make responsiveness to absenteeism and presenteeism less visible (e.g., an empty office versus staff in a blank Zoom meeting room).

4.3 Redesign of work

The third pillar characterizing new forms of work is redesign. In this, there is a need to examine workflow from a new model. This may seem intuitively salient, yet it is not how much of the pandemic response looked like. In the immediate response, there was sustained evidence of an adapt-to-survive mentality. For some organizations, this was taking a seemingly always face-to-face service and delivering these digitally. These ranged from telehealth consultations using Zoom [49], university curriculums being digitalized [50], to boutique restaurants delivering high-end takeaway [51]. These models have created a form of continuity during uncertainty, yet they also likely contain practices that are yet to be effectively assessed for quality. Indeed, while online education may be possible to enable quality outcomes, online education that is simply recorded versions of face-to-face content is likely lower in quality.

Currently, many sector leaders are innovating new business products and services to support their financial viability; yet, when the pandemic ends, what of those things will remain in their existing form? Indeed, it may be their temporal relevance that supports their profitability or their embeddedness in current work. Whereas Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and similar offer high quality and increasingly popular products, what form do these take in an organization that chooses to have only face-to-face meetings? Or how do organizations move to adapt to hybrid meetings where such products and their rooms are not equipped for adaptive user experiences. This limited example offers important insight – whereas some pandemic-produced products and services may sustain, others may be immediately irrelevant, or require rapid innovation.

In the redesign of work too, is a need to reflect on the changing leader-follower and peer-to-peer power dynamics and organizational cultures that existed during the lockdown periods. While full videoconference meetings have varied perspectives of equity [52], there are invariably challenges that will emerge in an environment where some participants attend by videoconference and others attend in person. This will likely be exacerbated by situations where there is a limited number of participants online, and the majority in person. Such satellite meeting situations can create an environment that preferences those in the room (i.e., ignoring the screen), the person on Zoom (i.e., overemphasized interactions from online participants), but rarely balance participation. In leader-member exchange, the emergence of in- and out-groups is common when leaders prioritize their time with those, they have stronger affective relationships with [53]. When mutually affective relationships are considered, leaders may have better employment relationships with those they can see informally more easily (e.g., in-person) [54]. Leader-follower dynamics that exist in temporally consistent but spatially inconsistent locations will be challenging. Organizational politics is likely to add to that complexity [55]. The potential to create an inequitable scenario does require an address.

Many of the assumptions so far have focused on a return-state environment; that is, one where employees employed before the pandemic are returning in some way. This is unlikely to be true, however, with many employees never having met their colleagues in a face-to-face environment yet. In socialization resources theory, identification of resources required for new employees to be successful in their adjustment and socialization is critical for their role longevity [56]. In a return environment, existing employees will return to a different environment than they left in; and this may require adjustment support. However, those individuals who may be entering the physical workplace for the first time will have an unpredictable set of needs and wants to be associated with their acclimatization with geographically specific work conditions. According to Feldman's model of organizational

socialization, there are three stages: anticipatory socialization, accommodation, and role definition [57]. Some employees may have been initiated to their tasks and adapt to them (stage one), completed initiations and been accepted in (stage two), and have an established work-life balance (stage three). Yet, when they move from distance to face-to-face, some of these elements will require re-socialization. Where an employee may have once started work "late" and finished "early," they may now need to factor in a train ride causing a stage three reset.

Indeed, the redesign of work may also be an opportunity for a critical review of the existing and residual workplace structures that existed during the modernist pursuit for order. Some of these elements (e.g., fixed timesheets, specialization-based job design, and neat corporate hierarchies) could be assessed for their relative value to the contemporary workforce. If the worker now operates more flexibly, perhaps roles should follow outcomes rather than hours completed. Likewise, if informal organizations provide enormous influence in the formal structure, then should the role they play also be more effectively acknowledged and moderated. Are there ways that positive emotions can be embedded into organizational life [58] to create conditions for human flourishing? Are the organizational constraints actually hindering productivity as much as enabling it? This too, when built on a foundation of belonging also seeks to ask how this might be possible through high quality mutually affective relationships at work.

5. Conclusions

5.1 Theoretical contributions

This chapter focused on the application of the belongingness hypothesis to the future post-pandemic landscape. Leadership theory will be challenged by being conceptually adaptive within the new context, examining what concepts from the broader domain of leadership still holds true when conventional physical proximity changes. Indeed, leader distance has been studied [59, 60] and offers conceptual ambiguity when physical distance is both near and far. Early twenty-first century studies articulate that leader-follower physical distance affects performance [60, 61], this research extended to pose new questions surrounding hybrid environments where a leader has mixed proximal distance from their followers.

Additionally, in presenting the belongingness hypothesis in the post-pandemic organization, there is an opportunity for scholars to begin to better understand how leader-follower dyads are formed and maintained when the environmental conditions are not "traditional." That is, when leaders and followers are: i) sometimes face-to-face and sometimes online (e.g., hybrid); ii) always online (e.g., distance work); and iii) rarely face-to-face (e.g., attending annual events only). The chapter poses questions about the future climate of leadership and invites scholars to continue to examine how leader effectiveness may be enabled in increasingly.

5.2 Practical contributions

There are numerous practical contributions offered in this chapter. Leaders must suspend some of their pre-existing assumptions established in the pre-pandemic environment. While the primary brunt of the pandemic will only last a few years, the rapid digitalization and workforce change observed over this time has likely affected ongoing attitudes towards work. Followers will have different perceptions about the value of attending a physical workplace, and productivity and work teams will be affected as a result. This chapter articulates that effective leaders will need

to seek out new environmental conditions to enable their teams to be effective. One way is to enable high-performing teams is through building ongoing and sustained relationships that are built on mutual affective concern for each other's wellbeing. From a practical perspective, this could include establishing replacements for the previous on-campus activities.

5.3 Conclusion

This chapter offered a position on the future state of work and organizing beyond the COVID-19 pandemic. I did this by applying the lens of the belongingness hypothesis. That is, what value is created and what challenges emerge in the current state of work when viewed from a perspective of interpersonal belonging? Within this chapter, connectivity was described as a key challenge. Physical proximity to others supports sustained relationships, and individual assumptions about the relative value of the work contexts in forming meaningful relationships may also offer complexity. Likewise, the influence that digital technologies had on perspectives of working from home was also discussed. The hybrid and flexibility models of work can create inequities within enterprises through inconsistent applications of rules, technologies, and different baselines of moral character. Finally, this chapter discussed how the redesign of work affected future productivity and work-life balance. As the return-state begins, there will be a diverse range of individuals at staggering levels of socialization, and managers may find it difficult to adequately monitor those socialization journeys. This chapter offers a position of hope though, as the potential for humans to build a more enriching and fulfilling workplace may be enabled through support flexibility, but not without appropriate boundaries for working.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Author details

Joseph Crawford
University of Tasmania, Launceston, Australia

*Address all correspondence to: joseph.crawford@utas.edu.au

IntechOpen

References

[1] Paul SK, Chowdhury P. Strategies for managing the impacts of disruptions during COVID-19: An example of toilet paper. Global Journal of Flexible Systems Management. 2020;**21**(3): 283-293

[2] Kefalaki M, Rudolph J, Tan S, Diamantidaki F. Face masks in education: The cases of Greece and Singapore. Thesis. 2021;**10**(1):3-42

[3] Durkheim E. The division of labor in society. Published Dissertation. Translated by G. Simpson. United States of America: Free Press of Glenco, Illinois; 1960

[4] Conger JA. Max Weber's conceptualization of charismatic authority: Its influence on organizational research. The Leadership Quarterly. 1993;**4**(3-4):277-288

[5] Weber M. From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge; 2013

[6] Taylor FW. Scientific Management: Reply from Mr. FW Taylor. The Sociological Review. 1914;**7**(3):266-269

[7] Tice D, Baumeister R, Crawford J, Allen KA, Percy A. Student belongingness in higher education: Lessons for professors from the COVID-19 pandemic. Journal of University Teaching and Learning Practice. 2021;**18**(4):2

[8] Luthans F. The need for and meaning of positive organizational behavior. Journal of Organizational Behavior. 2002;**23**(6):695-706

[9] Avolio BJ, Kahai S, Dodge GE. E-leadership: Implications for theory, research, and practice. The Leadership Quarterly. 2000;**11**(4):615-668

[10] Avolio BJ, Sosik JJ, Kahai SS, Baker B. E-leadership: Re-examining transformations in leadership source and transmission. The Leadership Quarterly. 2014;**25**(1):105-131

[11] Baumeister RF, Leary MR. The need to belong: desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation. Psychological Bulletin. 1995;**117**(3):497

[12] Antonakis J, Avolio BJ, Sivasubramaniam N. Context and leadership: An examination of the nine-factor full-range leadership theory using the multifactor leadership questionnaire. The Leadership Quarterly. 2003;**14**(3):261-295

[13] Hannah ST, Uhl-Bien M, Avolio BJ, Cavarretta FL. A framework for examining leadership in extreme contexts. The Leadership Quarterly. 2009;**20**(6):897-919

[14] Yuval-Davis N. Belonging and the politics of belonging. Patterns of prejudice. 2006;**40**(3):197-214

[15] Walton GM, Cohen GL. A question of belonging: Race, social fit, and achievement. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology. 2007;**92**(1):82

[16] Allen K, Kern ML, Vella-Brodrick D, Hattie J, Waters L. What schools need to know about fostering school belonging: A meta-analysis. Educational Psychology Review. 2018;**30**(1):1-34

[17] Podsakoff PM, MacKenzie SB, Lee JY, Podsakoff NP. Common method biases in behavioral research: A critical review of the literature and recommended remedies. Journal of Applied Psychology. 2003;**88**(5):879

[18] Sias PM, Gallagher EB, Kopaneva I, Pedersen H. Maintaining workplace friendships: Perceived politeness and predictors of maintenance tactic choice. Communication Research. 2012;**39**(2): 239-268

[19] Methot JR, Lepine JA, Podsakoff NP, Christian JS. Are workplace friendships a mixed blessing? Exploring tradeoffs of multiplex relationships and their associations with job performance. Personnel Psychology. 2016;**69**(2): 311-355

[20] Pillemer J, Rothbard NP. Friends without benefits: Understanding the dark sides of workplace friendship. Academy of Management Review. 2018;**43**(4):635-660

[21] Derfler-Rozin R, Sherf EN, Chen G. To be or not to be consistent? The role of friendship and group-targeted perspective in managers' allocation decisions. Journal of Organizational Behavior. 2021;**42**(6):814-833

[22] Byrne D. Interpersonal attraction and attitude similarity. The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology. 1961;**62**(3):713

[23] Belentschikow V, Pfeffel K, Müller NH. Making friends on Facebook: Common group membership as a central decision rule. Computers in Human Behavior. 2022;**126**:107040

[24] Killgore WD, Cloonan SA, Taylor EC, Miller MA, Dailey NS. Three months of loneliness during the COVID-19 lockdown. Psychiatry Research. 2020;**293**:113392

[25] Arslan G. Loneliness, college belongingness, subjective vitality, and psychological adjustment during coronavirus pandemic: Development of the college belongingness questionnaire. Journal of Positive School Psychology. 2021;**5**(1):17-31

[26] MacLean KE. Haptic interaction design for everyday interfaces. Reviews of Human Factors and Ergonomics. 2008;**4**(1):149-194

[27] Tsatsou P. Social media and informal organisation of citizen activism: Lessons from the use of Facebook in the sunflower movement. Social Media+ Society. 2018;**4**(1): 2056305117751384

[28] Eagle N, Pentland AS, Lazer D. Inferring friendship network structure by using mobile phone data. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. 2009;**106**(36):15274-15278

[29] Lambert NM, Stillman TF, Hicks JA, Kamble S, Baumeister RF, Fincham FD. To belong is to matter: Sense of belonging enhances meaning in life. Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin. 2013;**39**(11):1418-1427

[30] Williamson S, Colley L, Hanna-Osborne S. Will working from home become the 'new normal' in the public sector? Australian Journal of Public Administration. 2020;**79**(4): 601-607

[31] Bloom N, Liang J, Roberts J, Ying ZJ. Does working from home work? Evidence from a Chinese experiment. The Quarterly Journal of Economics. 2015;**130**(1):165-218

[32] Rosenbaum D, More E, Steane P. Planned organisational change management: Forward to the past? An exploratory literature review. Journal of Organizational Change Management. 2018;**31**(2):286-303

[33] Lambert AD, Marler JH, Gueutal HG. Individual differences: Factors affecting employee utilization of flexible work arrangements. Journal of Vocational Behavior. 2008;**73**(1):107-117

[34] Giannikis SK, Mihail DM. Flexible work arrangements in Greece: A study of employee perceptions. The International Journal of Human Resource Management. 2011;**22**(02): 417-432

[35] Barerro J, Bloom N, Davis S. Why working from home will stick. Working

Paper 28731. National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper Series. 2021. Available from: https://www.nber.org/system/files/working_papers/w28731/w28731.pdf

[36] Timmermans E, De Caluwe E, Alexopoulos C. Why are you cheating on tinder? Exploring users' motives and (dark) personality traits. Computers in Human Behavior. 2018;**89**:129-139

[37] Her YC, Timmermans E. Tinder blue, mental flu? Exploring the associations between tinder use and well-being. Information, Communication and Society. 2021;**24**(9):1303-1319

[38] Newstead T, Dawkins S, Macklin R, Martin A. The virtues project: An approach to developing good leaders. Journal of Business Ethics. 2020;**167**(4):605-622

[39] Hassan S, Wright BE, Yukl G. Does ethical leadership matter in government? Effects on organizational commitment, absenteeism, and willingness to report ethical problems. Public Administration Review. 2014;**74**(3):333-343

[40] Eisenberger R, Karagonlar G, Stinglhamber F, Neves P, Becker TE, Gonzalez-Morales MG, et al. Leader–member exchange and affective organizational commitment: The contribution of supervisor's organizational embodiment. Journal of Applied psychology. 2010;**95**(6):1085

[41] Logsdon JM, Patterson KD. Deception in business networks: Is it easier to lie online? Journal of Business Ethics. 2009;**90**(4):537-549

[42] Newstead T. Being explicit about virtues: Analysing TED talks and integrating scholarship to advance virtues-based leadership development. Journal of Business Ethics. 2021:1-19

[43] Liu D, Liao H, Loi R. The dark side of leadership: A three-level investigation of the cascading effect of abusive supervision on employee creativity. Academy of management journal. 2012;**55**(5):1187-1212

[44] Brown M, Young SG, Sacco DF. Competing motives in a pandemic: Interplays between fundamental social motives and technology use in predicting (non) compliance with social distancing guidelines. Computers in Human Behavior. 2021;**106892**

[45] Klotz AC, Buckley MR. A historical perspective of counterproductive work behavior targeting the organization. Journal of Management History. 2013;**4**

[46] Steidelmüller C, Meyer SC, Müller G. Home-based telework and presenteeism across Europe. Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine. 2020;**62**(12):998

[47] Ball K. Workplace surveillance: An overview. Labor History. 2010;**51**(1):87-106

[48] Martin K, Freeman RE. Some problems with employee monitoring. Journal of Business Ethics. 2003;**43**(4):353-361

[49] Monaghesh E, Hajizadeh A. The role of telehealth during COVID-19 outbreak: A systematic review based on current evidence. BMC Public Health. 2020;**20**(1):1-9

[50] Crawford J, Butler-Henderson K, Rudolph J, Malkawi B, Glowatz M, Burton R, et al. COVID-19: 20 countries' higher education intra-period digital pedagogy responses. Journal of Applied Learning and Teaching. 2020;**3**(1):1-20

[51] Kostromitina M, Keller D, Cavusoglu M, Beloin K. "His lack of a mask ruined everything." Restaurant customer satisfaction during the COVID-19 outbreak: An analysis of Yelp review texts and star-ratings. International Journal of Hospitality Management. 2021;**98**:103048

[52] Tienken CH. The not so subtle inequity of remote learning. Kappa Delta Pi Record. 2020;**56**(4):151-153

[53] Cropanzano R, Dasborough MT, Weiss HM. Affective events and the development of leader-member exchange. Academy of Management Review. 2017;**42**(2):233-258

[54] Audenaert M, Vanderstraeten A, Buyens D. When affective well-being is empowered: The joint role of leader-member exchange and the employment relationship. The International Journal of Human Resource Management. 2017;**28**(15):2208-2227

[55] Kimura T. The moderating effects of political skill and leader–member exchange on the relationship between organizational politics and affective commitment. Journal of Business Ethics. 2013;**116**(3):587-599

[56] Saks AM, Gruman JA. Getting newcomers on board: A review of socialization practices and introduction to socialization resources theory. In: The Oxford Handbook of Organizational Socialization. 2012. pp. 27-55

[57] Feldman DC. The multiple socialization of organization members. Academy of Management Review. 1981;**6**(2):309-318

[58] Fredrickson BL, Losada MF. Positive affect and the complex dynamics of human flourishing. American Psychologist. 2005;**60**(7):678

[59] Antonakis J, Atwater L. Leader distance: A review and a proposed theory. The Leadership Quarterly. 2002;**13**(6):673-704

[60] Howell JM, Neufeld DJ, Avolio BJ. Examining the relationship of leadership and physical distance with business unit performance. The Leadership Quarterly. 2005;**16**(2):273-285

[61] Meirovich G, Goswami A. Psychosocial and Tangible Distance Between a Leader and a Follower: The Impact on Dyadic Relations. Journal of Leadership Studies. 2021;**14**(4):6-20