



The Results of Work Models Applied During the COVID-19 Pandemic*

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to investigate the individual effects and institutional reflections different organizational work models have in terms of employees and to contribute to the field of application and the related literature by explaining their results and effects on work life. The study is based on the phenomenological research design and focuses on the participants' experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study was carried out using the interview method on a volunteer basis with 16 managers. The data were analyzed using MAXQDA 2020 and evaluated by collecting two main categorical themes and 13 sub-themes. The study observed negative aspects such as the ineffectiveness of face-to-face communication, prolonged communication times, experience transfer and socialization problems, and the intertwining of professional life and social life. Positive results were determined such as a reduction in time and money spent on commuting, work flexibility, having the opportunity to spare more time for oneself and family, and reduced office expenses. The following determinations were made: organizations offer different levels of employee support, practices have no standardization, the problems employees experience are preventable with sufficient organizational support, and legal regulations are needed. The results revealed deficiencies to be present in crisis management, the organizations to be unprepared for the crisis, and all organizations to need to review their processes regarding fringe benefits. The study has aimed to contribute to the literature by focusing on the results of the work models that have been applied during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Keywords

Human Resources Management, Organizational Behavior, Working Models, Organizational Practices, COVID-19

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1. Introduction

Lewis Carroll's phenomenon of the Red Queen Effect inspired biologist L. Van Valen's theory where as one species evolves, other species evolve as well, such that relative competition remains the same. Under current conditions, organizations normal capabilities are no longer sufficient. Real success in professional life can be achieved through innovative initiatives and basic skills that others cannot possess or imitate (Ülgen & Mirze, 2018).

Seeing the environment as a whole in terms of organizations requires knowing all the concepts that affect human behavior, such as family, culture, belief, perceptions, tastes, judgments, and physical characteristics, as well as factors such as technological structure, supply systems, legal regulations, labor power, level of competition, and management styles. Organizations connect to the social, economic, and political elements of societies by creating an ecological structure for their labor force with the environment in which they operate (Hawley, 1986, p. 7). The developments in technology and communication tools in particular have forced the individual and the environment to change, and this process is considered the harbinger of radical changes in the finance, trade, education, and service sectors. Changes in organizations due to the environment can affect individuals and societies not only in business but also socially, culturally, and economically. Because many intertwined factors occur between work life and private life, having a balance between them is important for individuals and organizations (Barnett, 1998).

Organizations' productivity, performance, and sustainability goals and the work models they adopt can get reflected into their employees' private lives (Mušura et al., 2013). This causes organizations to consider innovative approaches more in the way they work (Purvanova, 2014). The ever-changing labor market forces organizations to try to retain talented employees and identify factors that increase organizations' attractiveness (Aiman-Smith et al., 2001). Technology enables innovative human resource practices by offering privileges to organizations in diversifying their work models. Organizations should better understand their employees and develop methods suitable for their needs when applying work models.

Due to globalization and competition, organizations must keep up with models that differ from traditional work models (Ulrich, 1998; Nilles, 1998). The search for the systems organizations will undertake to make their process management sustainable will also activate futuristic organizational structures and bring about the concept of future employee management (Slack, 1991). Understanding the results of the applied work models based on many factors is necessary to understand organizations (George et al., 2006:361). Innovative work models are considered to have flexibility in adapting to changing conditions. Basically, these practices serve the interests of organizations

(Burke, 2000). Due to the positive effects innovative work models have on work and family life, the number of studies on the subject have increased (Dex & Scheibl, 2001).

Experienced developments force radical changes in the meaning, content, and application formats of the concept of work. New models in which space and time flexibility are increasingly used have entered work life and brought about unique phenomena. The new process causes work and social life to intertwine and appears alongside the human resource practices that aim to bring the organization and employees into balance by addressing employees' personal aspects more.

Alternative work models that affect employees' social lives in which work life extends beyond the organization's physical conditions have transformed into mandatory practices due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has been accompanied by approaches that have radically changed all processes and work life throughout the world. Although comprehensive studies are found on flexible and remote work models in the literature, the number of studies regarding the results from the alternative work models organizations have had to apply during the pandemic remain insufficient. The current study aims to determine the effects the applied work models have had during the pandemic.

1.1. Developing the Concept of Work

From hunter-gatherer societies to the First Agricultural Revolution, the survival activities of humanity have been evaluated within the concept of work, with ancient humans being thought to have allocated two to four hours a day for these operations (Méda, 2012, pp. 32–37). With the First Agricultural Revolution, the concepts of private property, and management and production where individuals live together have developed and also led to the development of the concepts of government and population growth (Şenel, 1995:28). The Industrial Revolution changed the meaning of the concept of government and caused a new understanding to emerge. With the Industrial Revolution, agricultural societies turned into urbanized factory workers. The Industrial Revolution led to a formal change in the concept of work, separated social life from work life, and developed concepts such as urbanization and unionization. Having developed from the Industrial Revolution to the present day, the concept of work has allowed flexible organizational and employee forms to emerge in which new models are applied (Keser, 2009, pp. 14–25).

Although the concept of work has changed in terms of meaning and form since the first humans to the present, it has not lost its place as the focal point of life (Sabuncuoğlu, 1987, p. 2). The concept of work has evolved from the process of meeting daily individual needs to a process in the Industrial Revolution where people work systematically, which has shaped its current meaning. While having many

definitions, the main concept of work is defined as “the production of goods and services on behalf of oneself or others for material or spiritual benefit by means of one’s physical, mental, or spiritual effort” (Kapız, 2001, p. 1). The common point in all definitions is that individuals create value through production factors in order to meet their material, moral, psychological, and social needs. The concept of work has been influenced by social concepts such as culture, traditions, and beliefs; it shows a developmental process in parallel with humanity and is affected by the social environment in which work is experienced.

To consider the concept of work as the activities that take place just for meeting human needs is not a realistic approach in terms of human resource management. The social and personal areas of individuals who spend almost their entire lives as employees become a part of the concept of work (Chacko, 1983, p. 163). For this reason, evaluating what work means individually and as a social phenomenon rather than just as a shallow definition of meeting needs is necessary to be able to understand the concept of work. Work life involves many different ways of and reasons for working. For example, while the 24-hour shift system is widely used in the health sector, workers in factories work on a 24-hour basis in 8-hour shifts. In addition, many models such as working from home and seasonal work are used by organizations for reasons such as increased employment and greater participation of women in work life. In the recent period in particular, computer and communication technology developments have changed the physical structure of work environments, and this has brought along a process in which new work models are rapidly reflected onto work life. With the COVID-19 pandemic, new work models that intensively benefit from technological infrastructure have become a necessity rather than a preference and are used by many organizations. In this process, employees have been exposed to work models in which organizations have moved away from the physical conditions they offer.

In Turkey, the concept of work is regulated by Labor Law No. 4857. The law regulates contracts that manage work life, such as employee rights, responsibilities, wages, compensation, dismissal, and recruitment processes. Many work models that organizations have applied are determined by these contracts. Organizations design a standard work model with factors such as the work environment, business processes, the way work is done, and the equipment that is used and then make this model available to employees. In this model, employees work under the organization’s physical area of control. In addition, employees are not offered flexibility regarding work hours or location. Employees are responsible for fulfilling their roles in the organization at the place and time expected of them. The applicability of the standard work model is affected by factors such as the sector in which one operates and the work being done. Organizations use different work models depending on factors such as competition, crises, and technological developments.

1.2. Factors Affecting the Concept of Work

The concept of work has been explained as the gains obtained in return for activities undertaken in order to meet individual needs of the individual; it has undergone significant changes, especially with the Industrial Revolution, and has begun to differentiate completely in today's information society. While technology has transformed social life and the environment, it also involves factors that transform work life. Organizations also use innovative human resource practices to keep up with this change. The experienced developments have paved the way for technical advances and resulted in computer-based digital transformations such as autonomous robots, 3D printers, and artificial intelligence, which have started being used in daily life and work life (Şen & Batı, 2020, p. 73). Computers, software, and digital systems have started a process that has changed the meaning of concepts such as workplace, format, and time. Organizations attempt to develop the competencies they need in human resources practices in order to keep up with these changes.

1.2.1. Development of Technology and Communication Tools

The digital systems used in all areas of life have brought innovative human resource practices and eliminated time and space limitations. The process can result in digital systems being replaced by existing systems (Turkish Academy of Sciences, 2020). Communication systems have also changed in connection with technological developments, with face-to-face communication in physical environments being replaced by communication in virtual environments. This situation has been rapidly integrated into work life due to its positive aspects such as speed, time, and economy. The transformation of information into the main source of production has forced organizations to use technological communication tools that are able to access the correct information systems as soon as possible. This situation has paved the way for radical changes in work life and labor planning (Aron, 1967, p. 117). Technology and communication systems have resulted in changes to the traditional organizational structure. Management processes and employment patterns have also been affected by this change with the disappearance of place and time constraints.

1.2.2. Globalization and International Competition

In order to be sustainable, organizations operate a process that affects and is affected by their environment. That they adapt to changing conditions is extremely important in this respect (Çağlar, 2013, p.121). Behind the organizations' desire to adapt to changing conditions exist factors such as productivity, performance, growth, and goal achievement. The developments in technology and communication tools have moved competition from a local environment to an intercontinental environment, and organizations have developed a structure in which they are in constant communication with their employees

and customers through the increase in communication opportunities. These developments have created a flexible structure thanks to the information networks that have forced organizations to compete (Castells, 2013, pp. 326–357). The infrastructure of computers and the Internet has transformed the whole world into a market where one can operate and affect competition. Increased competition has also led organizations to their own specific management and human resource practices.

1.2.3. Socio-Economic Developments and Unemployment

Humanity has moved from being hunter-gatherers to having settled lives through agricultural society; urbanization and production at large levels began with the transition from agricultural society to industrial society, and humanity has reached the present day through the developments in technology, science, and communication found in the information society (Aktan & Tunç, 1998, p. 119). With the development of information technologies, production has evolved from muscle and mechanical power to information power, thus revealing the concept of information society (Webster, 2006, pp. 8–10). Information technologies play a decisive role in economic growth and poverty (Hodrab & Maitah, 2016). Developing technology has revealed new work areas, reduced the need for people in labor-intensive sectors, and accelerated the transition to various work models. While changes in work life have affected sociological and economic life, sociological and economic changes have also changed work life. Production methods, management styles, legal regulations, policies, and cultural changes involve factors that determine unemployment and social life, and organizations adopt different human resource practices in this context.

1.2.4. Sectoral Developments and Generational Differences

Organizations are a part of the sectors in which they operate. While concepts at the sectoral level such as suppliers, customers, and employees show similar characteristics, the concept of competition has also developed in this context. The fact that organizations are under the influence of similar environments forces them to develop features that others cannot easily obtain and that differentiate them from other organizations. Technological developments and advances in information and communication networks have an impact on all business functions, from production processes and supply systems to management styles, sales, and marketing. This has caused a sectoral change in organizations operating in the same field that has been reflected in work styles and brought with it new work models that have no time or place constraints due to the technological developments. Likewise, individual differences such as lifestyles, culture, education, and mentality are reflected in work life. These differences are often evaluated under the concept of generation. Generations are communities that share similar historical processes, that have witnessed the same events, and that share their

social identities (Lagree, 1991, p. 7). Intergenerational differences also include factors that affect work life.

1.2.5. National and Global Crises

Like all living things in nature, organizations are affected by change (Iverson, 1996, p. 122). While organizations survive that are able to adapt to change, those that cannot adapt perish, just like living things. Organizations should adapt their organizational structures by keeping up with the changes experienced regarding competition and sustainability (Tunçer, 2013). In this context, new work models and human resource practices have rapidly been entering work life. However, in addition to the environmental instability, some unexpected and unpredictable situations that affect all individual and their social lives have created risks for organizations, and these situations get grouped under the title of crisis.

Crises occur as a result of many reasons such as pandemics, disasters, war, and political developments. Unexpected, unpredictable, and highly uncertain crises can affect social and work life at the local, national or international level. In addition to the effects on work life, crises also have consequences that affect family life and social life (Kaya, 2002). Crises involve factors that can result in radical changes in work life as well as individual and social consequences. The COVID-19 pandemic that emerged in Wuhan, China in 2019 and quickly impacted the world is also seen as a turning point in terms of individual, social, and work life.

2. Methodology

Interviews are the most preferred method in qualitative research and are a very powerful technique used to reveal individuals' perspectives, feelings, experiences, and perceptions (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). The purpose of the interview method is to enter people's inner world and understand their perspectives (Patton, 1987). As Yıldırım and Şimşek (2013, p. 46) stated in their research that the interview method can be used to analyze role conflicts, work processes, formal and informal communications, employee perceptions, their effects on management functions, and their reflections on individual and family life in organizations that adopt different work practices, as well as managers individual and organizational results. Collecting data using the interview method is thought to be suitable for the purpose of the current study in order to understand it from the eyes of the people and to test the study's arguments.

The questions were determined by scanning the relevant literature and examining the studies on the subject, after which they were first to experts for their opinion. Afterward the final arrangements were made based on the feedback received, and the semi-structured interview form was finalized by interviewing an expert on qualitative research.

This study discusses individual and organizational results such as how employees perceive the different work models that organizations voluntarily or legally implement, how these models reflect on employees' work and family life, their effects on intra-organizational communication and work processes, and role conflicts. The study focuses on the experiences of sector employees who've had different work models applied as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. and it was accepted that it would be correct to Applying the study over different sectors is considered correct for being able to understand the differences in inter-sectoral practices and managerial behaviors. In this respect, the research model uses a phenomenological research design. Phenomenology is used to identify the common aspects as perceived by individuals who've had similar experiences and the essence of the meanings they attribute to these experiences (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). The participants' opinions about their work conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic have been evaluated using qualitative methods with the aim of arriving at the common points that can be obtained (extracted) from their experiences. The study was carried out online due to the pandemic and recorded with the approval of the Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University Scientific Research Ethics Committee.

Research on understanding individuals, the foundation of which was laid with the theory of human relations, still continues with still more research being made by benefitting from many fields of science. Despite the fact that organizations have the same characteristics regarding many issues, different outputs appear as innovative human resource practices. Concepts such as organizational structure, culture, and legal regulations play a decisive role in work conditions. The uncertainty the COVID-19 outbreak caused has forced organizations to implement different work models. In order to determine the results, the employees of organizations that have actively applied these different work models constitute the research population, and the managers who've participated in the research constitute the research sample. In order to determine the study group, the purposeful sampling technique has been used as it can obtain the highest level of data. While purposive sampling allows cases to be handled in detail, it also allows researchers the opportunity to understand cases and explore the relationships between them (Patton, 1987). The current research uses this technique due to the uncertainty of being able to access the study group and the organizations that have implemented work models. Purposeful sampling focuses on the relationship between the research problem and the sample (Sıgır, 2018, pp. 129–130).

During the research, opinions were taken from employees who work under different work models and are thought to have knowledge about the subject; the first participants were determined based on this, and during or after their interview, they directed the researchers to their friends who had experiences appropriate to the research. Thus, participants were also included in the research using the snowball sampling method.

Data saturation and adequacy are important when determining the sample. The minimization or absence of a contributing level of data refers to data saturation, and the level at which the data contributes to the research problem refers to data adequacy (Kanten et al., 2019, p. 943). For this reason, the research was limited to 16 participants on the grounds of data saturation and data adequacy due to number of repeated answers given to the research questions. Table 1 shows the sectors, duties, and interview durations of the participants who were interviewed within the scope of the research.

Table 1
Participating Sector and Task Distribution

National/International	Sector	Duty	Interview Date	Interview Time
International	Cosmetic	Corporate Digital Director (CDO)	27.06.2021	45 min.
National	Retail	Operations manager	02.06.2021	36 min.
National	Energy	Audit Manager	01.06.2021	40 min.
National	Energy	Team leader	04.06.2021	30 min.
International	Cozmetic	Accounting Manager	06.06.2021	30 min.
International	Logistics	Legal Manager	06.06.2021	30 min.
International	Retail	Security Manager	06.06.2021	32 min.
International	Software	System administrator	16.06.2021	30 min.
International	Energy	Financial Controller	06.06.2021	30 min.
National	Energy	Department Manager	13.06.2021	30 min.
International	Cosmetic	Financial Controller	10.06.2021	30 min.
International	Energy	Project Manager	09.06.2021	42 min.
International	Energy	Financial Controller	11.06.2021	30 min.
International	Cosmetic	Financial Controller	09.06.2021	35 min.
International	Energy	Finance manager	09.06.2021	30 min.
National	Retail (Online)	Software Chief	27.06.2021	45 min.
Total				

2.1. Research Problem

Organizations determine their human resource management policies according to the organizational culture, politics, and social processes they adopt (Ferris, et al., 1998). Success is argued to be achievable if common values and understanding are provided within an organization (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). For this reason, organizations have adopted different work policies and applied different work models to help employees balance their work and social lives (Powell & DiMaggio, 1991; Cook, 2009). Policies that integrate social life and work life have been adopted in order to preserve employee productivity and qualified labor power (Barnett, 1999, pp. 151–152). Many factors such as the socio-cultural structure of the environment, the quality of the labor, demographic characteristics, and laws play decisive roles in these processes.

These policies are affected by conditions such as the social-cultural structure of the organizational environment, the labor market and competition. Recently, with the crisis caused by the COVID-19 epidemic, organizations have had to use different working models. The new working models applied have been realized in online environments where technological infrastructure and software are used intensively. The study focuses on the individual and organizational results of the changing conditions, physical infrastructure and traceable new working life. The research question was expressed as follows: “What are the effects that the different work models have had on employees’ family and social lives, and what individual and organizational consequences have reflecting on these effects had on work life?”

3. Findings

The inductive method was followed when determining the research questions, and the data were subjected to content analysis. Content analysis consists of the stages of defining, reviewing, coding, creating themes, and determining and evaluating the findings in order to explain the data (Sığrı, 2018, pp. 186–280). The research data were categorized and coded using thematic content analysis by means of the program MAXQDA 2020. The related codes were connected to each other under the formation of the main themes by considering the repeated words and sentences while coding. In order to ensure the validity and reliability of the research, the created codes were reviewed periodically to avoid generalizations.

3.1. Demographic Findings

The study assessed the participants’ demographic characteristics by associating them with the research problem. Of the participants, 75% are male, and 25% are female; 75% are married, and 25% are single; and all participants have at least a 4-year university degree. While 50% of the participants are 26-35 years old, 50% are in the 36-45 age range. Of the work models, 56.25% were determined to involve remote work, 31.25% hybrid work, 6.25% shift work, and 6.25% classical work models. Of the participants, 62.50% work in international organizations and 37.50% in national organizations.

3.2. Individual Findings

The study was carried out with participants who’d been exposed to work models different from those accepted as the standard work model in their organization’s physical facilities. Although organizations are involved in their work processes, they were determined as having no access to different work models and to even avoid their use. The COVID-19 outbreak is seen as a turning point in the use of different work models. According to the results of the study, individual results were categorized under the

headings of anxiety-psychological wear, communication, balancing work and family life, motivation, personal development, productivity, socialization, and loss of rights, as shown in Figure 1 with respect to frequency.

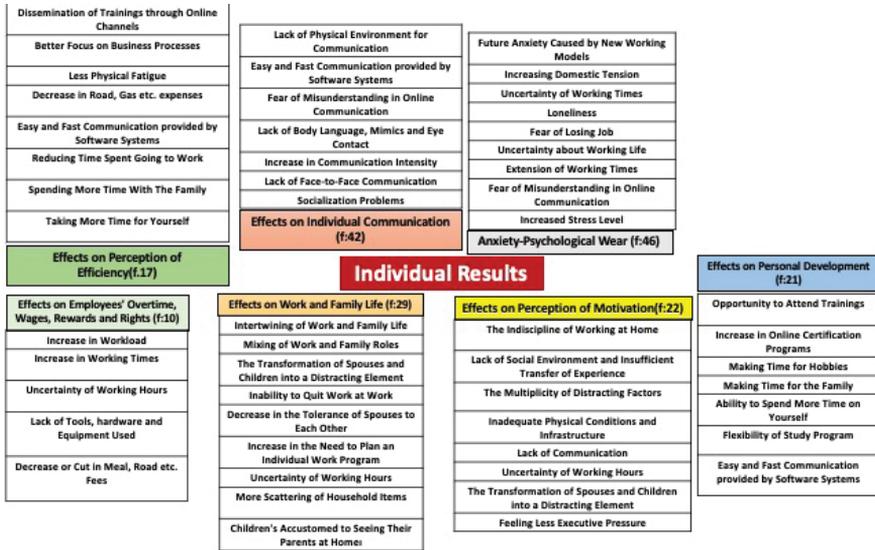


Figure 1. Individual Results of Alternative Working Models

3.2.1. Effects on Individual Communication

According to the research data, the new work models conducted a process that shifted from face-to-face communication to online communication. The number of participants in online communication affects the quality and efficiency of communication. The number of participants and the percentages regarding quality and effectiveness are inversely proportional and its effectiveness is unknown. In addition, online communication methods were determined to be deprived of humane attitudes such as the transfer of experience, socialization, and mimicry and to cause socialization problems by isolating employees.

When you are in the face-to-face work model, you can convey how a person should treat you with body language at least. (Mr. Ö. , 36, Ankara)

Honestly, I felt a bit lonely in that respect because it's not very good not to see people face to face, it's nice to chat with people while working, it's a bit difficult to work from outside every day. In that respect, I may have felt a bit psychologically isolated. (Mr. A., 30, Poland)

The study also shows those who'd never been to an office environment, especially those who'd just started working, to have had more difficulty adapting to the system compared to experienced employees and to also have difficulty communicating. While online communication provides speed and convenience, it also caused problems that

could normally have been solved in a very short time to turn into long processes. In addition, the work models eliminated concepts such as work and work hours, forcing employees to be ready 24/7. One of the biggest obstacles faced by innovative communication processes using technological infrastructure changes depends on whether the employees have sufficient infrastructure and equipment. The inability to question the feedback, which is the most important communication step in online communication, caused individuals to worry about whether they were understood or not. Because the exchange of information during short breaks is out of the question in the new models, the sharing of experience was seen to be interrupted.

We are constantly looking for someone on the teams. Everyone is very busy because everyone is in the same situation. Everyone is calling each other to ask something. Things that could be handled easily began to take more time. The most important thing was this: For example, when we went out to smoke or had dinner together, I could talk to someone for 2 minutes, or when I talked about something that had happened to me, someone could find a solution. (Ms. S., 26, Istanbul)

Especially our newly recruited staff and colleagues started to work from home before they could get used to the environment in the company, without being sincere. In other words, there were friends with whom we had such communication difficulties. We had to part ways with some of them. (Mr. U., 30, Istanbul).

3.2.2. Anxiety and Psychological Wear

According to the results of the research, online work models that do not involve physically going to the organization include factors where employees experience anxiety and are become psychologically worn out. These factors appear as concepts such as misunderstanding, uncertain work hours, attempts to express oneself, fear of losing one's job, and loneliness. With the disappearance of physical controls in particular, a structure in which employees control and internalize themselves was determined to have developed and this internalization to have turned into an element of pressure on employees.

3.2.3. Effects on Work and Family Life

Employees who participated in the study reported being able to spare more time for themselves and their families in the online work models and positively evaluated the flexibility in their work hours. However, employees who are married with children were determined to have difficulties balancing their work and family life, with the new work models causing changes in their domestic roles such as mother, father, and spouse.

Getting rid of the work environment is another advantage, but being at home can cause a different psychological crisis. Because you can't rest at home with your spouse or children, we understood when staying at home during the pandemic that we were actually physically resting while at work, because you cannot get rid of the role of husband and father. (Mr. Y., 38, Çanakkale)

I spend time with my family, so I can do it from any location, yes, it has such beauty. I have to work between 9 p.m.-5:30 a.m., but I have to take care of the baby for 2 hours because my wife is also busy. What happens this time, I have to work overtime to catch up. I have to work long hours at night. My business planning may not be the way I want it to be. (Mr. Ö., 36, Ankara)

While employees consider the new work models as an advantage in terms of flexibly being able to spend more time on themselves and their families, they do not prefer work models not based on office life because they cannot balance work and family life and experience social role conflicts.

Spending more time at home and with my children has been good for me psychologically. To be honest, I feel that way because I'm a mother. In other words, I realized that doing housework, cooking, and taking care of children all the time at home makes me very tired" (Ms. S., 40, Kayseri)

3.2.4. Effects on Perceived Motivation

According to the research data, the change in work models resulted in an adaptation process, to which employees were unable to adjust due to the uncertainty of the processes and their motivation having been negatively affected. This process revealed the concentration and motivation levels to be higher in organizations that had provide their employees with sufficient support. In addition, significant differences were found between single and married employees. Married employees reported being exposed to relatively more distractions and thus were unable to concentrate enough on their work. However, this situation was the opposite for single employees. The absence of distractions and managerial pressure while outside the work environment provided a basis for them to better concentrate on their work and to complete processes more quickly.

I personally need an office environment. I need to take off my pajamas so that I get motivated. Thus, my home office doesn't feel like work to me when I'm sitting at home in my shorts and a shirt. (Mr. Ö., 40, Kayseri)

According to the study results, employees experienced concentration problems due to socialization issues, prolonged work processes, uncertain work hours, and numerous distractions.

3.2.5. Effects on Personal Development

Online systems where the limitations of time and place are eliminated contribute to work life in different ways. The theme of personal development identified within the scope of the study is one of these reflections. Online work systems have left the time spent commuting to work and the flexibility in home work hours to the employees themselves. In addition, the online organization of processes such as training and certification provides a structure where employees can develop themselves as they wish. In addition to improving individual employees' self-development, organizations are able to carry out the training and panel processes they need with lower costs and can involve experts in their processes much faster. Although these processes are seen as an advantage for organizations, the data on their effectiveness remains insufficient.

I was able to get the education online that I should have received by going to another city under normal conditions and staying for 2-3 days. I was entitled to receive a certificate by taking the exam in the province I was in. (Mr. Ö., 40, Kayseri)

We can hold meetings, that we can't normally arrange or invite outside speakers very easily, through Teams because of these logistical conveniences. However, of course, we observe that the quality of interaction provided in those face-to-face meetings decreases when we hold the meetings online. (Ms. M., 41, Istanbul)

3.2.6. Effects on Perceived Efficiency

According to the research data, the employees' perceived efficiency are affected by factors that determine personality traits as well as concepts such as organizational support, work conditions, experience, marital status, and occupation. The study data reflected that employees whom the organizations provide sufficient support focus better on their work, with single employees in particular being able to perform their work functions more efficiently. However, the lack of pressure from checks in the office environment and flexibility in how to do business have a positive effect on productivity. The process is evaluated relatively more negatively for employees who do not receive adequate organizational support and whose home environments are not suitable for working conditions. Providing organizational support when implementing new work models and making managerial, infrastructure, and business processes easier, understandable, and accessible play an important role on efficiency.

It was positive for me; my friends think the opposite, but it was positive for me. I think my productivity has increased. I think I work better, or rather I think I focus better. (Mr. A., 30, Poland)

It had a very serious negative impact. I don't believe there is such a thing as a home office. Frankly, I need an office environment, because I am not a person who works with reports on the computer. (Mr. Ö., 40, Kayseri)

3.2.7. Effects on Employees' Overtime, Wages, Bonuses, and Rights

The research results show the applied work models to not have sufficient regulations on employee rights. While the employees did not suffer any loss in their salaries, losses were determined to occur in terms of fringe benefits and organizational differences related to the subject. No standard applications were found regarding work processes, and different applications were observed through the effect of factors such as organization size, management understanding, and employee approaches. While some organizations meet the needs of their employees such as for computers and Internet access, other organizations adopted a process left things to the employees' own possibilities. Organizations were seen to not comply with the concept of overtime and to communicate with their employees and operate business processes with Internet-based communication tools at all hours. From this point of view, the concept of work hours was seen to have disappeared due to being able to rapidly access employees' online systems. In addition, the study data reflect a serious concern to exist about managers' perceptions of whether or not employees are working because they are not at the office; therefore, efforts are made to have employees be accessible whenever requested.

We were called at lunch during the pandemic, we were called at 1 a.m., we also sat down and held a meeting at 1 a.m. That's why I didn't see much humanism there, frankly. (Mr. N., Istanbul, 33)

It wasn't like this before. Under normal circumstances, we used to work from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Ms. S., 30, Istanbul)

3.3 Organizational Findings

The second main categorical theme obtained within the scope of the study is gathered under the heading of organizational findings. The factors that change at the organizational level are gathered under the sub-headings of belonging, organizational support, work policies, organizational communication, and generational differences, as shown in Figure 2 in accordance to frequency ranges.

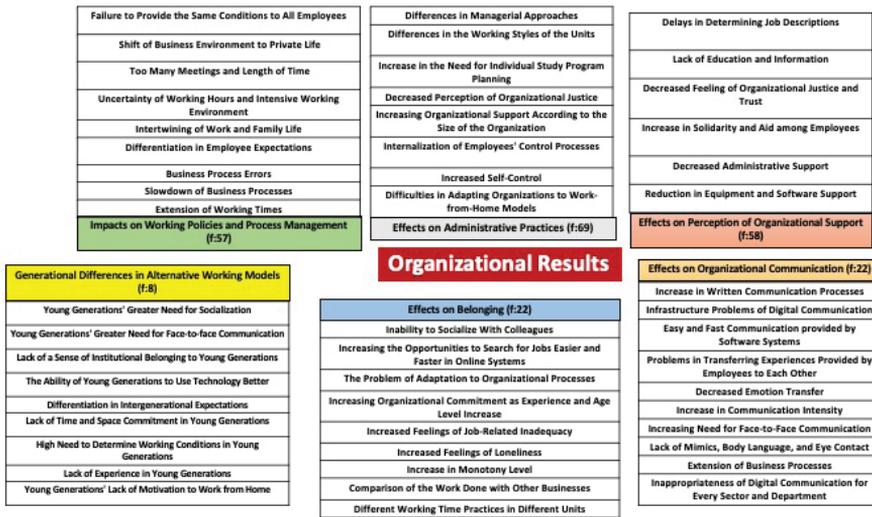


Figure 2. Organizational Findings of Alternative Working Models

3.3.1. Effects on Administrative Practices

The management structure, which determines all of an organization's functions and work processes, fell under the influence of an uncertain environment, as they had not been exposed previously to the COVID-19 pandemic. This situation brought new models regarding work life in which different work models were applied by crisis management. Due to legal and administrative sanctions and health risks to employees, work environments were shifted to employees' social lives. Organizations were forced from a process in which they adjusted and implemented infrastructure and management practices in accordance with their physical environment to a new process in which they tried to adapt to the changing conditions. The pandemic has made management structures and the speed of managers' adaptation to change the determinant of work life. The study data show organizations to have had difficulties adapting to the process with serious uncertainty present before implementing the adaptation, and the organizations to have not been ready for this type of crisis management.

We had a lot of trouble in the first 3 months. We went through this at an incredible level in the 4th month. I tried to complete each task by myself, spending more and more time. But then after the first 3-4 months, everything worked out. Has it become a habit? I don't know how it happened anymore. (Mr. S., 28, Prague)

Within the scope of the research, the employees were seen to be unable to ensure the continuation of the work, a managerial gap to be present, and the processes to be partially completed at the end of a period due to the infrastructure and software deficiencies not meeting organizations' requirements. The problems experienced were

determined to have been identified with attempts made to solve them in the process, and significant differences were seen to occur among the organizations with regard to approaches to solutions.

Of course, we also bought a licensed Zoom program when the epidemic started. At first, we could use it for 1 hour; but after that, the connection was dropped. (Mr. H., 41, Istanbul)

Some things are really learned over time, I'm aware of that. It doesn't seem right to me to say that if I were you, I would have done this. Because there really is uncertainty. (S. Hanım, 30, Istanbul)

Employees experienced in problem-solving reported their working time in the same company to turn into an advantage when managing the process, and they behaved more consciously about when, how, and by whom the work would be done. The uncertainty that was experienced caused variations in employees' work hours as well as anxiety. In addition, the changes to the work environment had taken control away from the manager and transformed into a phenomenon where the employees internalized and checked up on themselves. Managers transformed auditing work into a results-oriented approach and perceived this as getting the job done. They made their employees feel that they were being supervised confidentially.

I had an experienced team. I have been with this company for 7 years. Frankly, it was a very comfortable period for me. It was not a time when I had any difficulties. (Ms. M., 41, Istanbul)

So, we were constantly being asked to do something. For example, at 5:00 pm, it used to be "Let's do this tomorrow morning." But now I had to do this at night. That means staying overtime. It's a constant stress. It was a lot at first, but now it's starting to settle in. (Ms. S., 30, Istanbul)

I think there may have been anxiety about job tracking, because following people's work can be difficult, especially if you are producing a single result in a shared area. (Mr. A., 30, Poland)

I never felt like I had to supervise people, because everyone has their own responsibility related to their work. "Did he do his job? Is the system working properly?" I'd evaluate this result at the end of the day. (Ms. M., 41, Istanbul)

According to the study data, one of the important factors affecting management structure is perceived organizational justice. Employees form a perception by comparing themselves with other employees and other organizational opportunities. This perception is influenced by concepts such as the size of the organization, the support provided, and managerial processes, as well as personal characteristics.

Yes, I think the current company is fair, but my company in Turkey was not at all! (Mr. S., 28, Prague)

As far as we can see from our environment, of course, I do not think that everything is fair. (Mr. N., Istanbul, 33)

I don't believe it's fair. I don't think it's fair. (Ms. B., Kayseri, 40)

Yes, we have exactly the same conditions. There is no difference whatsoever. We are all equal. (Mr. F., 26, Istanbul)

I actually think it's fair because they provided all the material we could use. (M. Bey, 38, Kayseri)

3.3.2. Effects on Perceived Organizational Support

Organizations should consider employees' perceived support in addition to providing them with the support they need to get the job done. In order to fulfill their responsibilities, employees need the support their organizations will offer them, such as equipment, hardware, and software. In addition to the provided infrastructure support, the suitability of managerial processes and managerial support are also important. Within the scope of the study, the degree to which support is realized and employees' perceived support are considered factors that should be addressed separately. Organizations that supply less support than employees expect is considered to signify negative perceived organizational support, and organizations that provide more support than expected is considered to express positive perceived organizational support. Positive and negative perceived organizational support both impact employee factors such as their sense of belonging, performance, and productivity and includes results that directly affect the organization.

When I come to the office, my computer is at hand, and when I want to print something, I can print it out. But I don't have a printer at home. In other words, I collect my office-related work in one day. Obviously, this situation disrupted my routine. (Mr. Ö., 40, Kayseri)

According to the study data, problems were observed to occur regarding providing the equipment that the employees need in this process; although some organizations tended to solve these problems, other organizations left the situation entirely to the employees' own possibilities. Organizations that provide sufficient support for meeting employees' needs are understood to be evaluated positively regarding employee perceptions, and this is reflected onto employee functioning. Organizations that are not prepared to adequately support their employees were understood to experience infrastructure problems and to have different levels of preparation. Two important

problem that were ignored in the work models were the lack of environmental factors that should have been provided to employees outside the organization and the lack of employee training on these subjects.

They sent me a computer by mail from Czechia while I was in Turkey. They said that they can give tables, chairs, equipment and all the support I need so that I can work there more comfortably. They didn't offer anything like paying the Internet fee. My company in Turkey was paying. (Mr. S., 28, Prague)

My Internet was so bad, and this problem didn't seem fixable. There was an infrastructure problem. My Internet was constantly disconnecting. Apart from explaining myself, I could not attend the meetings properly, it was a huge problem for me. (Ms. S., 26, Istanbul)

The speed when you connect the computer to the Internet is not the same as the speed at home, but this is a negligible problem because some companies had no infrastructure at all. They were not ready at all. There was no problem in that direction in terms of connection speed. (Mr. A., 30, Poland)

Employees' expectations and perceptions about support were determined to be reflected in their business processes, and the employees who participated in the research were seen to generally have no expectations from their organizations about the work infrastructure; however, when support was provided, they responded positively. Organizations that had to quickly switch to new work models with the COVID-19 pandemic were determined to need a process for managing the crisis and to have been caught unprepared in terms of infrastructure. Organizations were seen to be unable to provide sufficient support to their employees at the beginning of the process, and the experienced preparation process varied based on the size of the organization, of human resources, and of the economics, as well as the management structure, process management, and managerial approaches.

Normally all our employees have laptops. Apart from that, there are company lines, there is unlimited Internet on the company lines. If there is no Internet in their own home, they have the opportunity to use a mobile phone as a modem and connect. (Mr. H., 41, Istanbul).

The company didn't ask any of us if we had Internet infrastructure. Because each of our employees already had a laptop, I did not have a problem. But the company never asked that. (Ms. B., 41, Kayseri)

Our biggest problem was the lack of computers. Only the admin group had laptops. Everyone else had a desktop computer. If you want your employees to work from home, you need to provide them with computers. We had a little trouble at that time. So, the company was actually not well-prepared in terms of IT. (Ms. A., 34, Istanbul)

Perhaps a little more supportive things can be done psychologically. Don't get too carried away, don't stress. In other words, this process could have been more moderate. (Ms. S., 30, Istanbul)

Employees were understood to have needed information in this process, as in all innovative practices that organizations implement. In addition, an adaptation process was observed to exist: the employees could not reach any standard information system from which they could benefit in this adaptation process, and an informal learning process was experienced where the employees tried to learn by asking each other. Problems were observed to occur in managing the organizational support and support perception process when implementing out-of-office work models.

3.3.3. Working Policies and Process Management

According to the data obtained within the scope of the study, organizations that were not prepared enough for the process were reported to not comply with work hours; therefore, an increase occurred in employee work hours. At the same time, even the simplest transactions slowed down due to the inability to operate the steps of communication. Although the speed of communication has increased, individuals' ability to communicate with each other slowed down due to the increased density. The study's participants felt the concept of standard overtime to not be suitable for today's conditions and to have lost its applicability. Opinions were expressed that different applications will be increasingly used that will reshape white collar work life, especially hybrid work models.

Hybrid models seem to be the most optimal at the moment. (Ms. M., 41, Istanbul)

So, sir, I think this hybrid model will continue. And I definitely think it should be a hybrid model. (Mr. U., 30, Istanbul)

Mixed work models, also known as hybrid work models, are seen to have positive returns for employees and organizations. Hybrid work models have positive effects on organizations' office costs, service fees, and food expenses. Hybrid work models are thought to have more application areas in work life due to reasons such as creating a freer work space for employees, being able to monitor work from anywhere, less time spent on the way to work, and being able to allocate more time to oneself. The change in work models was reported to not be able to be applied to all areas of work, and out-of-organization work models are not yet usable in jobs that need to be managed personally. Employees are always wary of work models that occur outside the physical structure of the organization. Due to reasons such as socialization problems, communication, irregular work hours, effects on family life, and transfer of experience in the master-apprentice relationship, employees want to work in areas within the physical bounds

of the organization for certain periods, and they want the work models that will be implemented in the future to have a structure that includes this.

Maybe in the future it could be like this; We used to go to work for 5 days, now we can go 3 days and work from home for two days. It can make a positive contribution to the company by reducing the costs in the office and the number of floors. (Mr. N., 33, Istanbul)

Due to my job, it is not very likely that I will work remotely. There are things that I need to control in the field, I need to control the productions. (Mr. Ö., 40, Kayseri)

3.3.4. Organizational Communication

Communication in work life is one of the most important factors for getting things done right and on time. Providing infrastructure such as technology, software, telephones, and computers is a prerequisite for realizing communication outside an organization's physical bounds. Even if an organization regulates the communication elements, failures in any prerequisites result in communication barriers. According to the study data, employees do not see online communication as full communication, especially in meetings involving many participants, control cannot be achieved.

For example, I am going to tell something, my voice gets cut off. After that I am misunderstood because half of the sentence is unheard. We had great communication difficulties in this sense. (Ms. S., 26, Istanbul)

How you set the language of communication is up to the administrator. Some managers discard these ice-breaking conversations, some give it a lot of importance. So, in a meeting attended by 20 people like this, it is very apathetic to look at the screen and look at the slide and talk alone. (Ms. M., 41, Istanbul)

The transfer of experience that takes place through face-to-face communication in the office environment was reported to not occur in distance and online communication, and this situation reflects negatively on the organizational culture, employees' sense of belonging, and their professional experience transfer. Employees were determined to attribute different meanings to face-to-face communication, and communicating just for business meetings is not enough. Factors such as body language, facial expressions, sadness, joy, and eye contact are very important for full communication.

Because we don't learn everything just by e-mailing. They also constantly teach us something through social communication: they share their life experiences. (Mr. U., 30, Istanbul)

3.3.5. Sense of Belonging

Sense of organizational belonging is considered an important factor in achieving an organization's goals and objectives. The positivity of this sense of belonging paves the way for a suitable working environment by affecting many processes from personnel turnover rate to organizational image. As with all changes, changes in work conditions also include factors that affect employees. Although not a complete generalization, employees develop an emotional bond with their offices and work environments. In work models where employees stay away from the physical bounds of the organization such as in online and remote work models, processes are observed in which this bond is negatively affected. This process is directly proportional to the time spent in the organization. With the change in work models, employees can take advantage of being able to spare more time for themselves and engage in different pursuits. According to the study results, good work conditions, regulated communications, and administrative processes positively affect the formation of a sense of belonging.

A sense of belonging is a very important thing for companies. I think that creating a sense of belonging is definitely a difficult process. For example, young teams like to work overtime. It has never been possible or very difficult for a fully online platform to keep the feelings of commitment and belonging and relationships as warm and close as before. (Ms. M., 41, Istanbul)

I might not have been able to find a job so easily in Europe. When I was at home, I did my work very comfortably. Because while I was going to a job, I wouldn't be able to do these things or realize my idea of changing jobs. Because think about it this way, I'm already working from home, I don't need to go to work, I can work with any company in the world I want. (Mr. S., 28, Prague)

In such periods, when you are alone with yourself, you can turn to other things. Job interviews are happening, other things are happening, you are not sure whether you feel competent or not. The sense of belonging may have diminished a little. (Mr. A., 30, Poland)

3.3.6. Generational Differences

The study determined the relationship between work models and generational differences. Age-related changes were observed in processes such as employee expectations, compliance, and use regarding the data obtained through the research. Young employees were also reported to be more active and successful, especially in applications with a technological infrastructure, and to be more inclined toward new work models. For this reason, considering intergenerational differences is important in the application of work models.

What I observed was that the age of our team is usually between 27 and 35. Younger friends do not have a very long commitment to the organization. They tend to change jobs more often. But they make good use of the technological possibilities. They are more inclined to these digital things. So, they like things like remote work, a little more flexible work, and working from home. (Mr. U., Istanbul, 41)

The offline world created an environment where they socialized, and their sense of belonging increased. It's a bad thing that it's disappearing in new generations right now. (Ms. M., 41, Istanbul)

4. Discussion

Organizational success is related to the strategies and management policies they implement. In this context, human resource practices directly affect the strategic vision, which is the path to success (Gratton & Truss, 2003). The conflict between organizational strategies and practices can turn into a problem by creating uncertainty (Ferris, et al., 1998). In addition, even when organizational strategies and policies are compatible, managerial practices and employee perceptions can prevent the targeted results from being realized. In this context, managers' roles regarding human resource practices is at the center of the process (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). Organizational policies and practices are mostly shaped by managers' own decisions (Cooper & Baird, 2015). For this reason, even when an organization is suitable and willing to implement different work models, a lack of managerial support may not allow employees to access or benefit from the applications (McNamara et al., 2012).

The development of technology, computers, and communication systems has led to a more comprehensive, continuously monitored structure in which the field of control expands in work life and the individual internalizes control (Barker, 2005). The creation of an auditable work life is based on the comprehensive provision of all data. This concept, which Bauman described as "fear of uncertainty," causes an internalization in which individuals are constantly monitored and employees control themselves (as cited in Foucault, 2005). In today's work life, many organizations apply different work models in order to balance their employees' work and non-work lives. Not enough information exists about the effects of work models that are used as a strategy for retaining and attracting qualified employees based on institutional policies (De Sivatte & Guadamillas, 2013). Studies on understanding employees, whose foundations were laid with the theory of human relations, still benefit from many branches of science today. Despite organizations having similar structural characteristics, the most important factor in obtaining different performance and production outputs is human resources, which is a reference for different applications. As a result of many scientific studies, understanding the structure of the individual only within the organization is understood to be unrealistic; the effects of one's social structure on concepts such as productivity,

performance, and belonging should be considered as a whole, as well as the effect of life outside of work on work life. This situation mutually affects individuals' personal and social lives, as well as organizations' management and functioning.

5. Conclusion

Human resource practices, in which awareness has increased with the development of approaches that have begun to evaluate management as a science, are increasingly making their weight felt these days. The fact that the effect of physical conditions and wages on individual motivation in particular is lower compared to abstract concepts such as perception, expectation, and inference is an indication that no single truth or result exists when dealing with human beings. The foundations of the importance of the psychological, social, and individual aspects of human beings in work life as in all fields have been laid out, with a different perspective being provided to the science of management. This perspective emphasizes the concept of efficiency in organizations as the basis of all approaches understanding, directing, and determining individual behaviors. Today, human behaviors and approaches that are rapidly changing alongside the environment and technology are accompanied by a work life in which work conditions are also changing rapidly. This situation creates a change in the conceptualization of the workplace, one that shifts from the physical area of the organization to the social life of the individual. In work models that have distanced employees from the physical conditions of the organization, the control area is shifted from the manager to the employee, with supervision being internalized by the employee.

Alternative work models offer employees a more independent work structure and work environment where they can control themselves. However, the research data show a process which organizations offer and often compel employees, rather than a model where employees can choose based on their own wishes and opinions. Employees were determined to be unable to make a full choice between the concepts of the office environment and working from home and to experience a dilemma. While the lack of reminders in the physical environment of the organization complicates the problems that can be solved in a short time, online systems are considered an opportunity for organizations with the convenience and speed they provide in recruitment processes. The current study has also determined the concept of transfer of experience in the workplace environment to not occur in the new work models, the reflections of generational differences to become more evident on work life, and young workers to experience more socialization problems.

Alternative work models cause changes in responsibility areas such as housework and child care in family life, showing that male workers have become more involved

in housework. The process is reflected onto family life and causes role conflicts by deteriorating the balance in the roles of mother, father, and spouse.

New work models have completely changed the concept of time and place in work life, eliminating the necessity of being physically present in any country or city, providing organizations with an important opportunity to reach the professionals of the business and making them their employees, while also providing individuals with the opportunity to become employees of many organizations. The epidemic has reshaped the form and meaning of the concept of work, completely changing the field of control, management practices, and internal roles by removing employees from the physical environment of the organization.

The intensity of communication is reported to have increased with digital software and technological infrastructure, and a new order has emerged in which employees are in constant communication. However, the communications that do take place are seen to lack human aspects such as body language, facial expressions, and eye contact, with communication taking place only for business not being perceived as real communication. The intensity of communication has been determined to be a factor of pressure on employees, with employees' work hours and social life being mixed. In addition, the increase in communications using digital systems has started a difficult process in which every employee has to plan and balance their communication time. Problems that can be solved in a very short time in the office environment take more time due to the increasing amount of communication that occurs in out-of-office work models having a negative impact on business processes.

In alternative work models where employees are deprived of reminders in the office environment, problems that used to be easily resolved where employees used to be able to intervene quickly upon seeing a problem now turn into protracted difficult-to-solve problems. In addition, employees used to exchange information and transfer their experiences very efficiently during coffee, cigarette, and tea breaks that were given in the office environment, but they are now deprived of this opportunity in the new work models.

New applications where recruitment and interview processes are carried out online were determined to have been rapidly included in business life during the pandemic. This can be considered as an opportunity for fast and easy recruitment processes with time and space flexibility. New models transform individuals all over the world into organizations' employee potential. However, the sense of belonging and adaptation processes of employees who do not meet face-to-face and who cannot physically come to the organization should be closely monitored.

In alternative work models, infrastructure support for things such as software and hardware is seen to be an absolute condition for the uninterrupted execution of business

processes. In organizations where this support is not provided, employees have been determined to experience anxiety in addition to the interruption of work due to the perception that they are not working. Managerial attitudes toward employees were evaluated as one factor affecting employees' anxiety levels.

Future research should focus on being able to reveal the effects of talent sharing, experience transfer, organizational culture, and generational differences in alternative work models, things which have also been reflected in the data from the current study. In addition, studies on the internalization of supervision and change in employees' managerial roles regarding alternative work models may also contribute to the literature.

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