DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES ROLE IN REMOTE WORK: FOSTERING COMMUNICATION, TRUST AND ITS IMPACT ON JOB SATISFACTION AND WORK PRODUCTIVITY

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Original research

A B S T R A C T

In today's digital world, the effect of digital technologies on working has significantly expanded, particularly after the pandemic, which transformed a large portion of the working into remote working. This research reflects the impact of digital technologies on encouraging trust and communication in remote workspaces and its effect on work performance and productivity. It inspects how digital tools and platforms in communication add to building and keeping up with trust among remote working groups and improving work productivity and job satisfaction. It concentrates on the quantitative methods approach, joining quantitative surveys to assemble insights from remote workers across various departments of different companies. The findings propose that while using digital technologies for communication, trust in teams, digital tools effectiveness and Remote Work frequency have significant and positive effect on job satisfaction. Similarly, Communication effectiveness, Digital tool effectives and trust in teams have a high and positive impact on work productivity. These insights are helpful for organizations in organizing their remote work approaches and digital tools usage to expand employee productivity and satisfaction.

1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, most of the work has been performed remotely or flexibly for a person to do work and that brings a lot to the organization includes mostly the positive like increasing productivity and performance but there is a question about trust with employees. This study examines the influence of remote work on workplace communication, particularly focusing on trust and relationship building and the use of digital tools. Remote working comes not because of the COVID-19 pandemic but can simply be a "Normal" approach to working in certain organizations, even in "normal" times, where no external emergency compels them as such to do, has sped up digitalization in numerous areas of working activities. Many individuals began remote working, this being the main possibility during the highly sensitive situation to have the option to work. The change from the conventional approach of working to a distant framework, as well as digitalization in general, are executed by the decisions taken by the management in light of variables from the internal and external environment. (Veith et al., 2021) Numerous organizations in the cutting-edge world are considering the chance of executing mixture and remote work courses of action. Understanding the impacts that working remotely has on communication is vital, if a remote

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workforce is to either keep a similar productivity or increment it. (Al-Habaibeh et al., 2021).

Remote work is directly related to productivity, with some evidence of genuine pay increments. Remote work additionally Reducing the stress and decrease in well-being which accompanies an everyday drive, furthermore, carbon emission also decreases, that generation by commuting. (Chatterjee et al., 2020; Choudhury et al., 2021). However, when remote work is completely acknowledged as the new working mode, related effective time management could amplify employees' efficiency and lead to better work performance. (Prodanova & Kocarev, 2021)

So, this study explore the significant role of digital technologies among remote working teams enhancing trust and communication. With the rising pervasiveness of remote work, it is essential to understanding how digitals tools can facilitate remote work.

2. LITRATURE REVIEW

To see the earlier history of humankind working from Home has a long history stretching back to the ages. Around 1.4- 1.9 million years ago, the first working man Homo ergaster used to hunt not far away from home to bring food. Many thousand years after from that, longhouses existed in Britain, where farmers resided and worked. Normally "working regions" in the longhouses were in the center where one could track down the kitchen, turning, winding around, dressmaking and so on. Thus, the longhouses were where individuals lived and worked. During the middle times, when traders used to trade, a large part of the work was finished at home. Indeed, even after the industrial revolutions while the workplace changed still, there were some professions and works that were driven from home, for example, funereal parlors, educating from home and so forth. Although the idea of remote working has existed for quite a while, organizations formally started to offer the chance of flexible working not before 1980. IBM presented then, at that point "remote terminals" in certain employee's homes, so they could work in a more adaptable manner. In 2009, 40 % of the workers at IBM were remote working which brought about decreased working office/place which resulted in higher yearly benefits in terms of productivity for the organization.(Dishman, 2019).The knowledge concerning an organization's administration of the challenges introduced by far-off specialists as far as correspondence can assist with supporting the organization's obligation to variety and incorporation. The impacts of remote work on work environment correspondence are a significant subject since it covers how individuals and groups are changing their techniques for correspondence to the cutting-edge work environment. (Cao et al., 2021).. What individuals needs to accomplish is a cheaper, faster, and greener approach to working. Remote work is one of the flexibilities and is characterized as "performing work at an area other than one's essential office". (Perry et al.,

2018). With the sudden surge of remote work on a global scale, the question arises of how to make remote work really works, and how to effectively progress to remote work, are becoming more widespread attention. The managers and workers find themselves in an uncommon circumstance which requires overall change to cutting edge office and the possibility of current office work. Although how much individuals working remotely has been growing, a great number of people still just work a couple of days out of every week from home and the rest in the workplace. Statistics numbers from the U.S. show that less than 5% of remote workers works full time remotely. As per Staples, there are four vital drivers for organization that needs to do the work in a virtual world. The first and important thing is Information technology (IT), which is a vital part in a virtual working world. It permits workers to work from a distance, the leaders to control the organization and it allows individuals inside the organization to communicate with one another. The second key driver is a compelling correspondence between the manger and the worker. the two last key drivers are, insight and training from remote management/work with the plans around it, and, successful management training, which incorporates the manager's perspective on what is realistic, so that the expectations of meetings, execution and so on can be in accordance with the real world.(Staples et al., 1999)
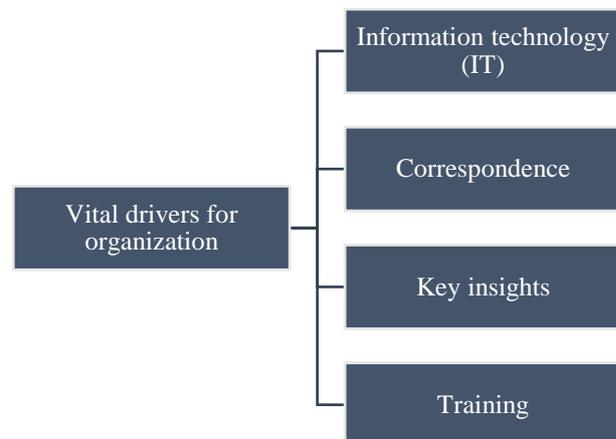

Figure 1. Vital driver for remote working in organization.

2.1 Digital technology in communication

Communication mostly uses networked technologies, which can assist students during their situation by looking through social media platforms like LinkedIn. student can likewise become more proactive during their work insight through organization-endorsed online social media platforms that facilitate teamwork and interoffice communication. The utilization of advanced technologies. Social media might challenge suppositions about conventional work environments by giving alternative settings that embrace partnerships and a worldwide perspective. (Ramlutchman & Veerasamy, 2013). A survey among pathologists was conducted at the time of the pandemic, and 75% had the possibility of

advanced pathology while the rest couldn't understand. 68% of pathologists tracked down trouble in routine working during the Coronavirus pandemic. 95% of pathologists were in favour of computerized pathology as a useful device for determination. (Zehra et al., 2021) Due to rising dependence on advanced digital communications tools, we genuinely should be knowledgeable in how to take advantage of these tools and ensure that correspondence isn't hampered in any capacity. (Cao et al., 2021).

2.2 Effect of remote work on job performance and Productivity

Working from home increases employee flexibility and provides a customized workplace, that boosts work performance.(Troup & Rose, 2012) Consequently, representatives can further develop their job performance by establishing a comfortable workplace that supports their piece of mind. Remote work likewise removes the time spent commuting to the workplace and gives you some additional time and opportunities to complete assigned tasks. The study says that new modes of study enhance the work and give employees the feeling of freedom, job satisfaction and motivation.(Gajendran & Harrison, 2007) Remote work is directly tied to an increase in productivity, with some evidence of real income increase (Choudhury et al., 2021).

The studies revealed that workers with flexible remote working are more stratified, work hard and better manage the long working hours. Another thing for working to have a balance between work life and private life, and the remote working experienced employees have less conflict related to this balance, even though it is a stressful situation and you have to ignore it because you are at work. While a living area turns into a working environment, it very well may be challenging for individuals to differentiate leisure time and work time, and this might be exacerbated by socio-demographic factors, for example, the requirement for child care. (Kniffin et al., 2021) .

2.3 Trust and Effective Communication in Remote working

Trust and communication are two separate behavioral constructs, in remote working teams, they can frequently engage together. Almost all the teams working in remote teams depend on communication through digital. Considering distributed and remote working team members gathered for a specific time to do a project and accomplish associated tasks, creates more dependence on each group of individuals. Sometimes it can create exploitation among team members and that leads to the untrustworthy nature of members, as a result, effects on the project. Remote work is directly related to productivity, with some evidence of genuine pay increments. Remote work additionally Reducing the stress and decrease in well-being which accompanies an everyday drive, furthermore, carbon emission also

decreases, that generation by commuting. (Chatterjee et al., 2020; Choudhury et al., 2021)

The stress induced by the pandemic and the resulting changes lead to an increase in anxiety and a decrease in trust and assumes the right initiative. (Veith et al., 2021). To address this, managers must establish clear goals and eliminate instability and unproductive discussions within their teams. Trust is defined by three main components: "Integrity, ability, and benevolence, and that implies that a trustworthy colleague is honest, capable, and caring" (Kildiushova, 2021). According to Larzelere and Huston (1980, p. 596), trust is defined as "*the degree that an individual trusts someone else (or people) to be kind and legitimate*".

Today, the possibility of returning to pre-pandemic office work is being considered, even though remote work has been utilized by some organizations for the past 20 years.(Caligiuri et al., 2022). The advancement of technology has enabled individuals to use the internet and devices such as computers, tablets, and cell phones. Digitalization has already demonstrated its advantages and disadvantages, and it has a significant impact on the development of remote work skills (Rump & Eilers, 2020). For example, in Germany, some universities offer solutions such as professional retraining and new specializations to acquire the skills and abilities needed for the future (Fritsche & Harms, 2020). A study suggests that trust is formed based on behavioral evidence. Meyerson et al. (1996) argue that, to assess the characteristics if the trustee is the high level of communication that enables the trustor, accordingly influencing "his/her assessment of the trustee's trustworthiness". Some studies suggested that communication among colleagues through the electronic space over the long run prompts trust improvement. For instance, Jarvenpaa and Leidner (1999) highlight how specific sorts of informative ways of behaving help in the creation or breaking of trust all around the world in remote groups or distributed groups (Jarvenpaa & Leidner, 1999). The non-verbal components assume an imperative part in communication as they help build trust to convey messages with emotions and information explanations. The non-verbal components assume an imperative part in communication as they help build trust to convey messages with emotions and information explanations. Although, remote workplaces depend on the nowadays digital technologies and tools (video conferencing, instant messaging etc.).

Apart from all advantages and benefits discussed above, the remote working also have disadvantages especially socially, for example, feeling alone and isolated (Bloom et al., 2015; Perry et al., 2018). The developing patterns of remote working altogether influenced how we communicate inside groups and organizations. New digital and virtual specialized tools like email, texting, video conferencing, and online project management systems replace traditional interaction tools. The absence of non-verbal actions like body language and facial expressions can lead to misunderstanding in communication and it realizes the significance of clear

and brief written communication, as well as in personal communication. In the past, the work environment included both verbal and non-verbal communication components, which were diminished in remote workspaces. (Fayard et al., 2021). As per Neeley (2020), organizations overall are not well equipped for this unexpected change. It tends to be not the same from organization to organization, what resources they need to deal with the crises and have the option to remote work.(Neeley, 2020)

All above studies state every aspects of remote working related to digital communication and its impact on work productivity and job satisfaction but there is a limited study that explain the trust, work productivity and job satisfaction combine while taking about communication through digital tools. So, this study expects to explore the significant role of digital technologies among remote working teams enhancing trust and communication. With the rising pervasiveness of remote work, it is essential to understanding how digitals tools can facilitate remote work.

The goals of this study are to analyses the effect of these technologies on trust, examine their role in developing communication, distinguish difficulties in their utilization, and access their impact on efficiency and job satisfaction. Moreover, the study tries to explain digital technologies encourage a strong and productive remote workplace and aim to give significant insights and suggestions for organizations related remote work systems. By employing quantitative method, the research targeted remote employees, majorly students to identify the challenges and opportunities within virtual work environment.

3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

3.1 Research Design

The study uses a mixed-methods approaches in terms of research design, combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches to explore the role of digital technology in communication and building trust while performing remote working. For this reason, online survey has been generated covering various organizations and departments to gather the data. This data provides quantitative insights into work communications in remote work spaces. An online Survey platform has been used for the questions of the study and the target audience are those who are currently engaged in the remote working in different sectors. The audience includes the employees (entry/Mid/Senior level), Managers, Executives and any others who have relevant experience and have been engaged in remote working previously. Also an interviews has been conducted in order to understand the complexity of remote working using digital technologies helps in communication and trust building. With the help of in-depth interviews with managers and employees, this study getting some insight after exploring their

experience, challenges and others opinions using digitals digital technology in remote working.

3.2 Conceptual model:

The conceptual model, highlights the hypothetical relationships among variables figure 2 that influences the work productivity, job satisfaction and trust building in team in the context of using digital tools in remote working. The dependent variables and independent variables of the model are mentioned in figure 2.
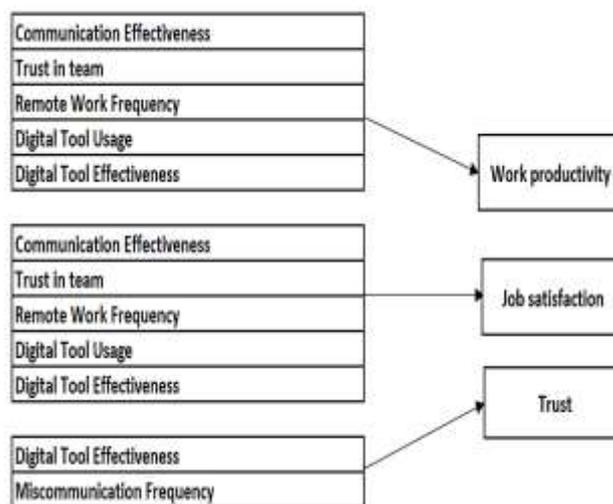

Figure 2. Research Hypothesis

The model aims to explore the trust, jobs satisfaction and work productivity in relationships with digital tools using and effective communication through regression analysis on PLS 4software.

3.3 Data Collection and Analysis

A questionnaire, a part of research problem was conducted in the form on internet using CAWI method includes students of two universities and professionals of several companies working remotely. Total 121 people responded both male and female including mangers, employees and director/executives and among them 114 respondent's data were found accurate to proceeds for analysis. (Figure 3) Additionally, these people mentioned what type digital communication channels (Figure 4) they preferred and what leads to miscommunication while using digital tools. (Figure 5)

3.1.1 Initial key findings

The respondents' feedback is divided into different age groups, with the largest segment falling within the 31-35 age range, accounting for 37.61% of the total. The next most represented group is the 19-25 age bracket, which makes up 22.22% of the respondents. After this, the demographic of 26–30-year-olds comprises 16.24% of the total, with 36-50- and 0–18-year-olds each representing 8.55%. Additionally, the age brackets of 19-25 and 36-50 also have a secondary presence of 3.42% each. Respondents aged 31-35 make up 2.56%, the same percentage as those aged 51-65 and 65 plus.
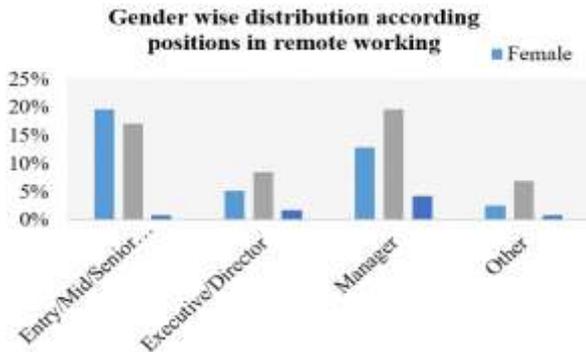
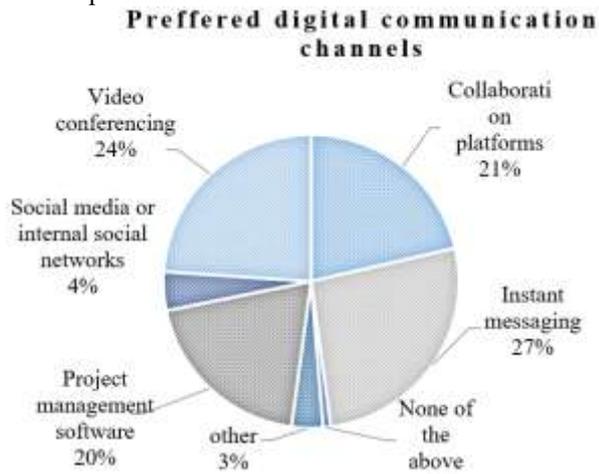**Figure 3.** Demographic relationship vs working position of the respondent

Figure 4. Preferred digital communication channels
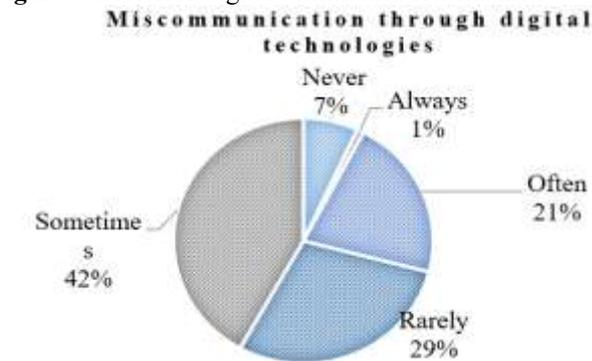

Figure 5. Miscommunication using Digital tools

The respondents mentioned their position along with their remote working frequency, and it shows that employees that are in management or executives are more likely to go for remote working.
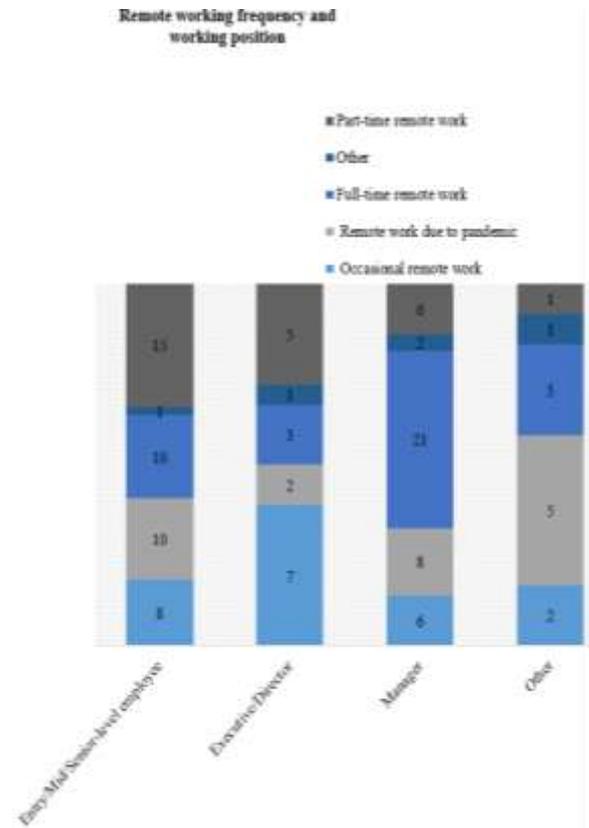

Figure 6. Remote working frequency with respect to working position

The following tables explains the initials analysis of all the variables used for this study, includes demographic variables like age and genders, working related variables and, independent variable and dependent variables.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of the variables

Variable	Total obs.	Mean	St. Dev	Median	Range	Mode
Age	114	3.482	1.524	4	6	4
Gender	114	1.5439	0.64	1	2	1
Remote Work Frequency	114	2.43	1.255	2	4	1
Position	114	1.9825	0.9775	2	3	1
Preferred Communication Channel	114	2.772	1.499	2.5	6	2
Tool Effectiveness	114	2.1228	0.9514	2	3	2
Trust Building Agreement	114	2.0973	0.9446	2	3	2
Most Important Feature	114	3.395	1.374	4	5	4
Miscommunication Frequency	114	3.2193	0.8801	3	4	3
Tool Usage Frequency	114	2.1053	1.0164	2	3	1
Challenges	114	2.447	1.563	2	5	1
Effective Strategies	114	3.175	1.345	3	5	2
Communication Effectiveness	114	3.9912	0.857	4	3	4
Impact on Productivity	114	2.0351	0.8407	2	3	2
Impact on Job Satisfaction	114	2.404	1.103	2.5	3	3

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Using smartPLS to analyze simple model using regression including process like process mediation models. (Hayes, 2017) Based on hypothesis raised in this study, a multiple regression model on smart PSL4 was adopted to get insights and how significantly the indecent variable on depend variables. For each dependent variables a separate model adopted and description shows below along in with tables.

Table 2. Model A: Dependent variable is Job satisfaction

	Unstandardized coefficients	Standardized coefficients	SE	T value	P value	VIF
Team Trust Building	0.194	0.167	0.093	2.073	0.041	1.387
Digital Tool Usage	-0.269	-0.252	0.088	3.057	0.003	1.439
Digital Tool Effectiveness	0.423	0.368	0.095	4.458	0	1.451
Remote Work Frequency	0.191	0.217	0.07	2.724	0.008	1.349
Communication Effectiveness	-0.686	-0.435	0.111	6.157	0	1.063

Table 3. Model B: Dependent variable is work Productivity

	Unstandardized coefficients	Standardized coefficients	SE	T value	P value	VIF
Communication Effectiveness	-0.538	-0.441	0.09	5.967	0	1.063
Digital Tool Effectiveness	0.284	0.319	0.077	3.698	0	1.451
Trust in team	0.175	0.195	0.076	2.31	0.023	1.387
Remote Work Frequency	0.015	0.022	0.057	0.264	0.792	1.349
Digital Tool Usage	-0.059	-0.071	0.071	0.825	0.411	1.439

Table 4. Model C: Dependent variable: Trust building in team

	Unstandardized coefficients	Standardized coefficients	SE	T value	P value	VIF
Miscommunication Frequency	-0.208	-0.14	0.125	1.667	0.098	1.092
Digital Tool Effectiveness	0.551	0.556	0.083	6.621	0	1.092

Table 5. R Squared values

Dependent variables	R-square	R-square adjusted
Trust Building in team	0.283	0.271
Work Productivity	0.446	0.42
Job Satisfaction	0.492	0.468

4.1 Job satisfaction
Multiple regression analysis model for job satisfaction indicates that the R-squared value is 0.492, (Table.5) which means that the independent variables explained almost 50% of variance in job satisfaction. R-Squared represents the amount of variance that can related to the to each of the variables and measures models explanatory power. (Shmueli & Koppius, 2011). The model (Table 2) analyzes the effect of different variables on job satisfaction includes that team Trust Building ($\beta = 0.194$, $p = 0.041$), digital tool effectiveness ($\beta = 0.423$, $p = 0.000$), and Remote Work frequency ($\beta = 0.191$, $p = 0.008$) have significant and positive effect on job satisfaction. In contrast, digital usage Use ($\beta = -0.269$, $p = 0.003$) and effectiveness in communication ($\beta = -0.686$, $p = 0.000$) shows a little negative and significant effects. The variance factors (VIF) for all indicators, for all variables are below the threshold of 10, showing no serious multicollinearity issues. (O'brien, 2007).

4.2 Work Productivity
The regression analysis shows the R-squared value is 0.446, (Table.5) meaning that 45% of the variance in work productivity by independent variables is explained in the model. The model (Table.3) results show Communication effectiveness ($\beta = -0.538$, $p = 0.000$) significant influences, Digital tool effectives ($\beta = 0.284$, $p = 0.000$) and trust in teams Group ($\beta = 0.175$, $p = 0.023$). However, remote work frequency ($\beta = 0.015$, $p = 0.792$) and Digital toll usage ($\beta = -0.059$, $p = 0.411$) shows no signification impact on work productivity. The VIF for all the are blow the thresholds, showing no serious multicollinearity issues.(O'brien, 2007)

4.3 Trust
The model indicates the R-squared value (0.283), (Table 5) indicates 28% of the variance in trust is explained by independent variable in the model. The analysis (Table 4) shows that digital tool effectiveness ($\beta = 0.551$, $p = 0.000$) has high positive impact on trust, while the

miscommunication (β = - 0.208, p = 0.098) has negative impact on trust building in remote work team. The VIF for both variables are below thresholds of 10, showing no extreme multicollinearity issues.(O'brien, 2007).

The analysis highlights the significance of fostering trust, optimizing digital tools effectiveness, and managing work frequency can enhance the job satisfaction in remote workplaces. Also, it indicates that the effective communication tools and team trust are essential for improving work Productivity and the effective digital tools are critical role tom improve trust in remote work place. Different studies also suggest the same as a individual variable, like IBM switched to remote working 2009 resulted in higher yearly productivity for the organization.(Dishman, 2019). That's why almost all the teams working in remote teams depend on communication through digital. (Chatterjee et al., 2020; Choudhury et al., 2021) The pandemic demonstrated to the technology drive companies that their employees can be equally or even more productive working from home. Remote working has both positive and negative impacts on work communications and because of it online communication tools like Zoom and Microsoft Teams are more popular. (Willcocks, 2020)

5. CONCLUSION

The analysis founds certain significate variables that affect positively the job satisfaction, work productivity and trust in remote working. It highlights that there is a critical role of digital tools using for effective communication within remote teams which is supportive and flexible for their work. As most of the variable positively impact on dependent variables but the result is based on the conducting online survey, also have some variables like communication effective have negative effect, which suggests that potential issues in communication process in their organization. As per respondents they faced some challenges in communication like technical issues (40%) along with security concerns, nonverbal cues, difficulty in tracking tasks. this leads miscommunication like most of them mentioned sometimes (42%) they faced miscommunication but not always. For the future to improve effective communication while using of digital tools to enhance further the trust, job satisfaction and productivity needs to ensure smooth operation of digital technologies for remote work, and there should be a better integration while focusing and connecting with their employees. Additionally, incorporating Enhanced security features and improved usability to foster communication and trust, as well as enhancing user interfaces can further enhance the remote working experience.

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