A Study on Remote Working of Employee Motivation and Productivity

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Abstract
The COVID-19 accelerated the rise of remote work, indicating a break from widely accepted conventional working paradigms and igniting debates about its fundamentals, like how distant work affects worker productivity and motivation. The purpose of this study is to determine how employee perception, productivity, and motivation are impacted by remote work. According to the study, remote work may increase worker productivity and motivation by allowing for greater mobility, a daily hour of extra autonomy, and work-life balance. It may also result in increased savings and expenses by lowering daily burden costs. A suitable workload enhances mental health, a well-organized workplace lessens the strain on physical health, and seclusion relieves social anxiety sufferers of some of their obligations. Numerous technological challenges face remote workers, including as unstable cybersecurity, background noise, internet outages, and power outages. The result indicates that there are advantages and disadvantages to working remotely. Employees choose remote employment since it enhances work-life balance. The study demonstrates a strong correlation between worker productivity and motivation. It also exposes restrictions on data insights related to time, flexibility, and potential bias. The organization, policymakers, and academics should take note of this study's findings regarding workplace flexibility and remote work regulations.
Keyword: Impact Of Remote Working, Employee Motivation And Productivity, Work-Life Balance, Autonomy, Expense And Savings, Physical And Mental Health, Technical Challenges.

Introduction
Remote working entails a work arrangement wherein employees can carry out their job responsibilities from a location that is not the conventional office environment, typically from their residences or other distant locations. It commonly entails utilising communication and collaboration tools, including as video conferencing, email, and project management software, to maintain connectivity with co-workers and accomplish tasks. The effectiveness of remote working arrangements might heavily rely on employee motivation and productivity where employees who are driven are more inclined to maintain their involvement,

concentration, and dedication to their tasks, resulting in elevated levels of production. It is crucial research for companies, since it might have a direct influence on the overall efficiency, effectiveness, and profitability of their operations.

For various reasons, it is imperative to conduct research on remote work, employee motivation, and productivity. Digital communication tools and technology play a major role in remote work. To maximize their use, one must comprehend how these tools impact motivation and output. Besides that, traditional work dynamics have changed because of the shift to remote work. Researching this transition offers valuable perspectives on the ways in which teams interact, exchange ideas, and function in remote settings. In contrast to regular office environments, remote employment might have a varied impact on employee happiness. It is possible to determine elements that either support or undermine worker happiness and mental health by looking at productivity and motivation studies. On the other hands, work-life balance, autonomy, and management support are some of the variables that affect productivity in remote work environments. Organizations can develop strategies to improve overall performance by having a better understanding of these dynamics. Hence, organizations must modify their management and operational methods in response to the growing prevalence of remote labour and get ready for future developments in work environments by investigating employee productivity and motivation in remote situations. The development of successful policies, procedures, and strategies for remote work can be aided by evidence-based study on the topic, which is useful for policymakers and organizational leaders.

Studying remote working, particularly focusing on employee motivation and productivity, holds significant importance for various stakeholders, including organizations, employees, and researchers. Organizations can improve productivity by understanding what drives workers in distant environments through research. With the use of this information, they may efficiently customize rules and procedures pertaining to remote work, increasing both organizational performance and employee satisfaction. Feelings of detachment or loneliness can occasionally result from working remotely. Researching motivation aids in developing tactics to maintain workers' motivation, connection, and engagement when they are working remotely. Managers play a crucial role in remote work environments. Understanding motivation and productivity dynamics helps managers adopt supportive leadership practices, such as providing clear goals, offering feedback, and fostering a positive work culture remotely. Working remotely might be flexible, but it can also make it harder to distinguish between business and personal life. Research aids in the development of strategies and policies that promote work-life balance, lessen burnout, and enhance general wellbeing. Technology plays a major role in remote work. Organizations can more effectively utilize technological improvements to improve communication, cooperation, and task management by researching their effects on motivation and productivity. The study of remote work is essential because it represents greater changes in the way that work is done around the world. Acquiring insights helps equip firms for emerging trends including the growing popularity of remote work, hybrid work models, and digital nomadism. By advancing theoretical frameworks and empirical investigations in the fields of organizational behaviour, psychology, sociology, and management, research on remote work adds to the body of knowledge in academia. For the purpose of improving organizational performance, promoting employee well-being, and getting ready for future work trends in a fast-changing global

landscape, it is important to conduct research on remote working, employee motivation, and productivity.

The prevalence of remote labour is increasing worldwide, particularly as a result of the COVID-19 epidemic. However, there is a caveat - certain employers are not particularly fond of the concept of remote working. The objective of this study is to investigate a correlation between the impact of remote work on employee motivation and productivity, as well as the overall perception of employees towards remote work. By doing so, we can determine the potential benefits of remote work where the company can use this insight to continue regulating this work system.

Based on Breck Dumas (2023), Executive adviser Jay McDonald, who holds a Master of Business Administration degree, has discovered many key reasons why employers strongly dislike remote work. Some workers can become distracted with outside responsibilities while working from home, while others become workaholics who put in more hours than they would if they were still commuting to an office. Remote work has had an impact on employees' time management and motivation to complete the tasks. They may rather prioritize outside responsibilities, like grocery shopping, than doing the work, or they may also exert all their energy on work, leading to decreased productivity in the future. Breck added, Imbalanced workloads and inadequate resource allocation can result in burnout, low morale and diminished productivity. Poor time management has resulted in uneven workloads and difficulty finding suitable resources to achieve desired outcomes. Subsequently, the employees will experience pressure to meet the deadline and persistently complete all tasks without any breaks, resulting in burnout, diminished motivation, and reduced productivity that could jeopardize the company's sustainability.

Research Questions
1. What are the general perceptions of remote working among employees?
2. Is there any significant correlation between the impact of remote working and the employee's motivation?
3. Is there any significant correlation between the impact of remote working and the employee's productivity?

Research Objectives
1. To investigate general perceptions of remote working among employee
2. To investigate the correlation between the impact of remote working and the employee's motivation
3. To investigate the correlation

Literature Review
Work life Balance and Autonomy

Remote working is beneficial for employees as well as organization especially during the time of pandemic. However, this logistical shift has led to challenges in the form of adapting new technologies, establishing work life balance, or engaging with co-workers (Flores, 2019). An article was written about a seasoned travel publicist who recently resided in Bali and Thailand for a month and a half, all while maintaining a full-time position at a PR agency in New York. Remote working would have a detrimental impact on certain employees, while others would greatly benefit from the option to work from home.

The occurrence of autonomy is due to certain circumstances and is typically linked to the ability to have flexibility in terms of time and working hours. Eliminating commutes frees up to one hour of extra time each day for the average American employee and offers significant work-life balance (Dennison, 2024). The authors' statements subtly imply that the traditional work structure unnecessarily consumes our everyday time, such as by commuting and dressing up to go to work, which should be used for more valuable task.

Benjamin (2020), has expressed, presence of lack of interpersonal relationship and clear communication hampers the employee engagement and commitment towards organization in the remote working environment. Advancements in technology have expanded from traditional audio calls to include messaging applications, social media platforms, and video calls. As a result, families and friends are now relying on video calls more frequently to stay connected and socialize, particularly during the lockdown. Effective communication is still feasible without the need for face-to-face interaction with coworkers.

Employee's Mental & Physical Wellbeing

According to Wynter (2020), some employees may have more responsibilities while they are working from home such as taking care of their family members and household tasks. The need for multitasking may decrease their ability to focus and cause them to be more stressed. The article by Leon Ho (2023), suggests that the assumption that juggling many tasks is the key to managing a busy schedule is erroneous. Indeed, it could potentially decrease the total productivity and compromise the quality of continuous work due to the divided focus. By hopping between various tasks, our attention was divided, and errors occurred. Both writers concur that multitasking can result in a loss of focus, inadequate rest, and increased stress among employees, hence negatively impacting productivity and work quality endangering the company.

Michael & Smith (2015), assert certain employees may value the flexibility that remote working provides. Employees with young children can derive advantages from increased autonomy in managing their schedules. Women can allocate more time to their families because of enhanced flexibility and the elimination of the commute between home and the workplace. Increased work-life balance prevents depression among women which supports their wellbeing as well as ability to work in a long period time. (Grant; Wallace & Spurgeon, 2013). By maintaining a healthy work-life balance, the working mother can fulfill her responsibilities and provide support to her children's extracurricular activities and academic lives, while still pursuing her own aspirations.

Meanwhile, the study by Magni et al reveals that family-to-work enrichment has positive impacts on remote workers, specifically in terms of reducing anxiety which improves job effectiveness. Besides, Hetal Parikh (2023), also stated that the tradition in office-setting can be overwhelming for people with social anxiety because they may feel pressure to conform to cultural social etiquette or body language expectations. Both authors emphasized that remote working has the potential to lessen employee anxiety by allowing them to spend more time with their families and lowering the pressure to adhere to cultural social norms and body language.

Based Raizman (2020), since there are usually less disruptions in remote work, it can cause employees to forget to have breaks. Indicating that certain employees exhibit a tendency to excessively concentrate on their tasks to the extent that they can remain seated for extended periods without engaging in any physical activity. Alejandra O'Connell-Domenech (2023) argues that the world has been grappling with a long-standing issue of physical inactivity, which seems to have worsened due to the rise of remote work. Such informative writing posing a significant risk to employees' physical health, as evidenced by the World Health Organization's report that physical inactivity leads to around 3.2 million deaths due to various factor such as blood clots, heart attack and others.

Davis et al (2020), indicate that a survey on home office ergonomics has been carried out among the faculty and staff of the University of Cincinnati. The poll reveals a statistic indicating that a significant number of employees found their working environment uncomfortable during the work-from-home time. Based on Sadie Janes (2023), Dr. Ayla Azad, the interim CEO of the Canadian Chiropractic Association says remote work is significantly impacting musculoskeletal health. Both studies revealed that employees encounter unfavorable working conditions at home, which can lead to physical discomfort such as pain in the back and neck or strain.

Organizations and Employees' Expenses
Two writers provide examples of cost reductions in businesses, including rent, maintenance, utilities, equipment, and employee parking charges. (Lupu, 2017; Beno, 2018). In their study, Ford and Butts (1991), provided insights into the costs associated with office space and suggested that organizations might avoid the need for extra office leases by implementing a telecommuting program. In the words of Robert Graham (2023), research indicates that organizations that transition to remote work can save $10,600 per employee each year. Indeed, a corporation with a workforce of 50 individuals has the potential to conserve as much as $500,000. The firm can utilize the savings to invest in employee's development through providing complimentary specialized training, procuring necessary equipment and supplies, offering additional bonuses, and organizing work trips to alleviate stress.

According to Wienclaw (2019), and Ford and Butts (1991), employees can reduce expenses by avoiding the need to travel to the workplace. This includes savings on fuel, vehicle maintenance, parking fees, transit costs, the costs associated with suitable business attire and meals, reduced expenditure on babysitting, kindergartens, and nursing (Lupu, 2017), as well as the absence of fees for afterschool programs (Wienclaw, 2019). Robert Graham (2023) contributed, the advantages of remote work extend beyond cost savings; workers have more

time to rest without commuting, greater flexibility in their work schedules, and increased access to skilled team members from around the world.

However, Puwanto et al (2020), highlight several drawbacks associated with remote work, including the burden of administrative costs on employees, such as electricity, internet, and printing charges. According to Justine Calma (2022), researchers found domestic electricity consumption increased by approximately 5 percent due to the increased amount of time individuals spent at home. National Bureau of Economic Research stated that American collectively spent an additional $6 billion on their household power from April to July 2020 compared to what they would have spent before the pandemic lockdowns. The authors effectively highlighted the expenses that might be hidden cost as they are not covered by the organization, but rather are shouldered by the employees themselves.

Technological Challenges
A survey which conducted by Nexthink stated that 38 percent of employees facing issues with VPN access to critical software. At the same time 37 percent of employee had problem with their Wi-Fi connection and 35 percent of employees faced problem on using video conferencing apps (Roe, 2020). An article in Gurgaon said that the region has experienced power outages and internet connectivity problems because of severe rainfall, which caused waterlogging. Both authors highlighted that certain remote employees are encountering technical difficulties that will impact their concentration and efficiency in completing their tasks.

As to the findings of the research "Understanding Sound Experience" (2020), 42 percent of the participants reported encountering an abundance of ambient noise during virtual meetings. 34 percent of the respondents expressed that they are experiencing stress from having to repeat the same content to their clients. The disturbance caused by noise could induce stress among colleagues and hinder the efficiency of meetings. Excessive noise might potentially harm an employee's reputation and compromise job security, leading to demotivation.

Malecki (2020), recommends that employees should possess knowledge about cyber-attacks and data theft and acquire strategies to protect against them. According to Danny Palmer (2023), employees may utilize their personal computers for remote work, or even if they are using a device provided by the company, they are still accessing it through their home network. This poses a possible cybersecurity threat to the corporation. Both authors noted that remote workers are vulnerable to cyber-attacks.

Underpinning Theory
Self-Determination Theory (SDT), formulated by Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan (1985), is a psychological paradigm that investigates the factors that drive human motivation and action. According to the notion, humans possess inherent psychological demands that propel their motivation and overall well-being. SDT posits that there exist three fundamental psychological needs.

Leslie Pankowski (2023), reported the statements made by Marylene Gagne, a lecturer at Concordia University in Montreal. "Autonomy is especially likely to lead to better productivity

when the work is complex or requires more creativity". As an illustration, the piece highlights Anna, a travel publicist, who successfully held a full-time job while living in Bali and Thailand. Anna's autonomy enables her to organize her employment according to her interests and lifestyle. The available research indicates that granting autonomy in remote work enhances both well-being and performance.

Based on Brian Sims (2024), the goal of developing a competence-led built environment involves taking important measures in the built environment to enhance skills, knowledge, and behaviours. The study examines the negative impact of multitasking on productivity and work quality, although it has a negative impact on mental well-being, it enhances the employee's competence to work diligently and do vital tasks within the given timeframe, hence sustaining productivity.

Feeling psychologically safe allows people to perform their best at home, school, and work (McKinsey, 2023). As an illustration, the study proposes utilizing virtual gatherings and online collaboration tools to cultivate a feeling of connectedness among team members who are working remotely. The study underscores the importance of preserving social relationships in a remote work setting, as it enhances employee engagement and dedication.
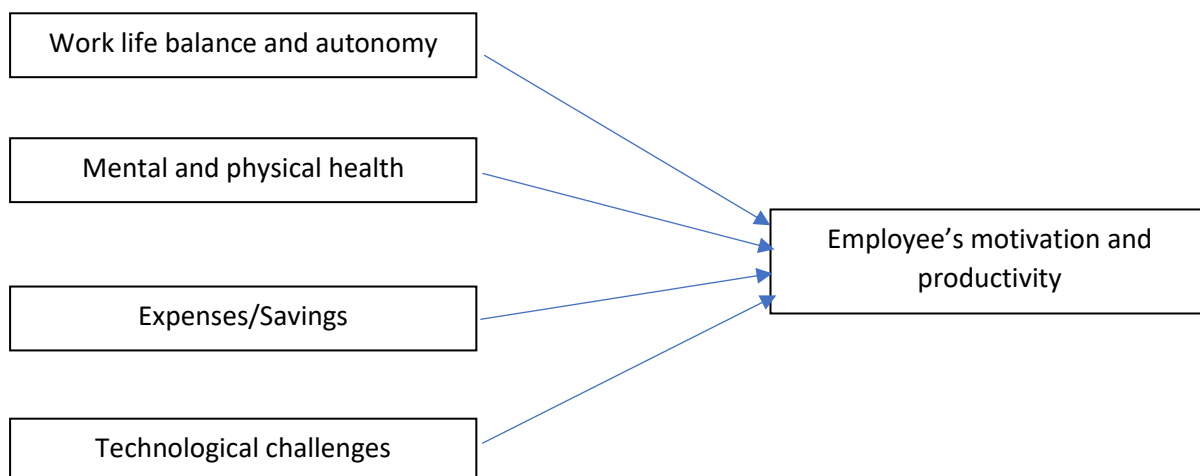

Figure 1: Research Framework

As proven in Self- Determination Theory, the presence of work-life balance and autonomy significantly influences employees' motivation and productivity. These independent variables (IV), as examined in the literature study, grants individuals the liberty to govern their behaviors and make choices in accordance with their personal ideals. An illustrative example is the case of Anna, a travel publicist who works remotely from Bali and Thailand, how the employees can have extra daily hour and free movement while maintaining effective communication with their colleagues. This case demonstrates how having work-life balance and autonomy can result in heightened motivation and productivity as she has been getting enough rest while working.

The well-being of employees, both in terms of their mental and physical health, is an additional set of factors that might impact motivation and productivity. The literature study highlights that multitasking, bad office chair and the probable absence of physical activity can have adverse effects on the mental and physical well-being of employees. Thus, some employees might benefit from having more time with family and reduced anxiety. An employee who possesses sound mental and physical well-being is inclined to exhibit higher levels of motivation and productivity in their professional endeavours as they can work healthily.

Expenses or savings might have an impact on employee motivation and productivity. Implementing efficient financial planning can facilitate investment in staff development while also providing incentives like rewards to enhance motivation. The employee would also experience increased savings from reduced commuting expenses, work wardrobe costs, lunch expenses, and other factors, so enhancing their financial security and reducing stress in their life.

Furthermore, the literature emphasizes that an employee's productivity and general motivation might be affected by their capacity to navigate and overcome technical obstacles such as electric outage, background noise and fragile cybersecurity. The technical hurdles have caused them significant stress and have made it nearly impossible for them to complete the task. This will diminish both motivation and productivity, thereby impacting the long-term viability of the organization.

Statement of Hypothesis
1. There is a significant correlation between the impact of remote working and the employee's motivation.
2. There is a significant correlation between the impact of remote working and the employee's productivity.

Methodology
This study used a quantitative research design, using structured questionnaires to gather data from a sample size of 101 respondents. This method was used to thoroughly examine the correlation between the impact of remote working on employee's motivation and productivity to comprehend overall attitudes about remote work. The population being studied consists of employees from various business sectors including employees, interns, freelancers and fresh graduates. The investigation focuses on individual employees to thoroughly investigate their personal experiences and perceptions of remote work. The population selection is clearly aligned with the research purpose to ensure that the findings represent the experiences of remote workers from diverse backgrounds and circumstances. Therefore, simple random sampling or unrestricted sampling method was used to assure equitable representation of individuals from the population, thus improving the generality of the findings. 101 respondents were chosen from professional networks, relatives, and friends to provide a diverse group and encompass a broad spectrum of experiences and viewpoints in the community aligning with the objective to identify the employees' perception of remote working. Data was gathered by administering online surveys with standardized questionnaires through Google Forms. Reaching out and explaining the questionnaire to potential respondents via social media, course networking platform and personal message

ensured easy access and motivated voluntary involvement helping achieve the research goal of obtaining a general perception of employees towards remote working from a diverse range of experiences and perspectives from the target group. The questionnaire parts cover all the necessary components to thoroughly measure our research aims. Demographics offer essential background knowledge such as age, gender, marital status, education level, job role, working experience and mode to comprehend how various demographic aspects can impact remote working experiences and views. Next, evaluating the presence of work life balance and autonomy in remote working such as flexible time in completing the task, ability to focus both on chores and work, quiet and peace environment, free movement during working hours, save both time and energy, spend more time with family and personal life helps to identify employee's experiences that could potentially help to levitate their motivation and productivity in work. Examining an employee's drive in allocating stable financial assets allows us to understand the reasons why employees engage in remote work such as the ability to reduce transportation, lunch, work attire cost and increase emergency or personal savings for their own use. Furthermore, examining external factors on their mental and physical health allows us to understand the root cause of their diminished motivation and productivity. Examining technical challenges such as insufficient facilities, communication barriers, background noise, internet problems, lack of digital technology knowledge and accessibility or security of the system used helps the organization to identify the issues and regulate proactive measure. The data will be analyzed through demographic, descriptive, reliability, normality, and independent t-test analyses by Excel and SPSS.

Findings
Reliability Analysis
For motivation, the reliability coefficient is α = 0.76, indicating a moderate to good level of reliability. Similarly, for productivity, the reliability coefficient is higher at α = 0.81, suggesting a slightly better level of internal consistency among the items pertaining to productivity. These reliability coefficients signify the extent to which the items within each variable consistently measure the underlying constructs of motivation and productivity, which are crucial for ensuring the validity and trustworthiness of the research findings and conclusions.

Table 2
Reliability of motivation and productivity

Variables	Total Item	Reliability (α)
Motivation	4	0.76
Productivity	4	0.81

Normality Test
For the variable of motivation, the mean score is 3.99, and the 5% trimmed mean is 4.00, indicating that the central tendency of the data is quite stable. The variance is 0.34, with a standard deviation of 0.58, suggesting that the data points are relatively close to the mean. The skewness value is -0.11, indicating a slight leftward skew, while the kurtosis value is -0.35, suggesting a relatively flat distribution with less pronounced tails compared to a normal distribution.

Similarly, for the variable of productivity, the mean and 5% trimmed mean are 3.99 and 4.01, respectively. The variance is 0.39, with a standard deviation of 0.62. The skewness value is -

0.43, indicating a slight leftward skew similar to motivation, while the kurtosis value is 0.33, suggesting a distribution that is slightly more peaked than a normal distribution.

Overall, based on the difference between the 5% trimmed mean and the mean for all variables, there are no extreme values with 1-unit differences. Moreover, the values for skewness and kurtosis between -2 and +2 are considered appropriate to show normal univariate.

Table 3
Normality test of motivation and productivity

Variables	Mean	Trimmed Mean	Variance	Standard Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Motivation	3.99	4.00	0.34	0.58	-0.11	-0.35
Productivity	3.99	4.01	0.39	0.62	-0.43	0.33

Independent Sample *T*-Test Analysis
For the variable of motivation, employees who have experience working from home reported a mean score of *M* = 4.11 with a standard deviation of *SD* = 0.54, while those who have not had a mean score of *M* = 3.73 with a standard deviation of *SD* = 0.61. The *t*-value associated with this comparison is 3.14, with 98 degrees of freedom, and a significance level of *p* = 0.00, indicating a statistically significant difference in motivation between employees who have and have not experienced remote labour. This suggests that employees who have had the opportunity to work from home tend to be more motivated compared to their counterparts who have not had such experiences.

Regarding productivity, employees who have experience working from home reported a mean score of *M* = 4.07 with a standard deviation of *SD* = 0.60, whereas those who have not had a mean score of *M* = 3.79 with a standard deviation of *SD* = 0.63. The *t*-value for this comparison is 2.09, with 98 degrees of freedom, and a significance level of *p* = 0.04, suggesting a statistically significant difference in productivity between employees with and without experience in remote labour. This indicate that employees who have engaged in remote labour tend to be more productive than those who have not. Hence, the first second and hypotheses in this study are accepted because there is a significant correlation between the impact of remote labour with the employee's motivation and productivity.

Table 4
Independent sample t-test between impact of remote labour with the employee's motivation and productivity

Variables	Remote labor (Have you experience working from home?)	M	SD	T	df	Sig.
Motivation	Yes	4.11	0.54	3.14	98	0.00
	No	3.73	0.61			
Productivity	Yes	4.07	0.60	2.09	98	0.04
	No	3.79	0.63			

Discussion

Organization's sustainability relies on employee's motivation and productivity in their remote work arrangement. The impact of remote working is shown to give both positive and negative factors towards employee's motivation and productivity. It can be concluded that a significant number of employees see remote working favourably because of its capability of giving better work-life balance and autonomy that enables them to efficiently manage their time and dedicate more hours to personal goals, such as quality time with their family. By conducting a thorough examination of employee's perception, it becomes clear that remote work provides major benefits including enhanced work-life balance and autonomy, reduced anxiety and more financial savings. Remote working allows employees to work while travelling, providing them with the opportunity to access effective communication while saving energy and eliminates the need for excessive commuting time to the workplace. Additionally, employees can save money on transportation expenses, such as fuel and public transport costs, as well as on lunch and work attire expenses, by commuting less. Remote working is an ideal option for mothers as it allows them to alleviate guilt associated with being away from the children and provides them with additional time to spend with their family. Employees with anxiety benefit from this working arrangement by minimizing the pressure to adhere with societal norms and poor self-perception from their colleagues. These factors all contribute to increased job motivation and productivity. Thus, it is important to acknowledge that if the organization does not provide sufficient allowance support, the employee will have financial stress due to the responsibility for paying their own electrical costs. Despite obstacles such as electric outage and background noise, fragile cybersecurity that are significantly reducing their motivation and productivity, it is manageable for the organizations to provide proactive measures to supply them with advanced secure technology. It is also important for employers to increase employee's awareness on how to improve both mental and physical health wellbeing during remote working where it might impact negatively on an employee's productivity if no proactive measures were taken. Remote workers experience higher levels of stress due to the demands of balancing personal and professional responsibilities, as well as physical discomfort from using inadequate office chairs. Additionally, they face an increased risk of serious health issues such as heart attacks and blood clots. Besides, the employer should provide free ergonomic chairs and regulate a reasonable workload for the employees.

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