

Teleworking and Its Impact on institutional Control in Organizations

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Abstract

This paper investigates teleworking, its benefits and challenges briefly, and effect on organizational control. Some issues related to teleworking such as flexible work time and its effect on employees Attitudes to teleworking has been discussed. In this line, three stages of teleworking and the changing expectations of management and staff will be explained. Based on these studies, a model for understanding organizational change process will be offered. The model may be utilized by managers during implementation of teleworking in an organization. Also the model suggests appropriate solutions to the challenges exposed by decreasing employee satisfaction following institutional control at every stage of teleworking.

Keywords: Teleworking, flexible work time, employee's attitudes, institutional control.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The world today is the era of change in organizations and occupational components. Because of this change that resulted from rapid development in information and communication technology, the world has been led to the world village. Drucker suggests the future belongs to the communities which can agilely adapt to change. One of these changes is the new way of organizing work, respectively teleworking, or working remotely. Teleworking means reorganizing the components of the job (especially issues related to time and place) conceptually. These changes will affect in other factors such as attitude toward teleworking, Type of organizational control and communications between CEO and Staff. By recognizing the impact of implementing teleworking on organizational components and understanding the process of these changes, appropriate solutions can be applied to each stage of the change.

2.0 DEFINITION OF TELEWORKING

After reviewing literature about remote working (teleworking) a few definitions can be extracted. Some of these definitions are as follows:

- In 1990 the International Labor Organization defines telework as a form of work that is done in the location far from central office. Thus, employees will be separated from personal communication with colleagues. The new technology will lead to the separation by communicational facilitating (Martino, 2004).
- Teleworking is a method of working that allows employees to do their job or part of it out of their work environment. The people are in their homes, a telecommunications center near their home or workplace to carry out other duties career (Bahramzadeh, 2011).
- Teleworking is not a job but a way of organizing work that is built around information processing. Individuals or groups of people away from the employer, the client or the contractor, do their job that involves the use of various types of electronic equipment and employed person, product or result of a remote distance (Parand, 2010).
- International Association of teleworking defines teleworking as a type of job configuration in which the employees are flexible in terms of time (part-time or full-time) and the location (home, remote sites or mobile form) to pay duty and response duties (Ghanbari & Bakhtjoo, 2011).
- Teleworking means working remotely, i.e. work at a place with the help of information technology (Arvola, 2006).
- Teleworking can be used as a flexible solution for satellite offices and mobile workplace in a flexible form to complete the remaining work on holidays or at night (Schnijdirberg, 2011).
- Teleworking is the method for creating work organization based on the work done in flexible time and place by using information technology capabilities (Sohrabi, 2004).

■3.0 BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF TELEWORKING

3.1 The Benefits of Teleworking

Teleworking advocates claim that teleworking create a win – win situation. In this situation, remote working cause cyber benefits for both employers and employees. Some of these supporters have pointed out that remote working is beneficial to society too (Martino, 2004). These benefits can be categorized in threefold including social, personal and organizational benefits. These benefits have been exhibited in Figure 1. Teleworking could potentially lead to some social benefits. Savings in gasoline consumption and workspace, reducing pollution and increasing the productivity and morale are some of these benefits. It can even lead to job opportunities outside the country or abroad for talent and human resource to carry out activities. Schnijdirberg (2011) suggests that decreasing traffic and air pollution, reduction of traffic congestion, decreasing accidents, reduction of rural migration and discrimination.



Figure 1 Benefits of teleworking

Some researchers have mentioned some personal benefits for teleworking. For instance, Parand (2010) suggests reducing the cost and time of traveling, wide range of employment opportunities, improved balance between life and work, flexible working hours, increasing the productivity of employees and creating more jobs for handicapped people are some of these benefits. In addition, increased job opportunities that in turn reduce stress behaviors caused by social interactions and risk of injury or disease has been mentioned by others (Ghanbari & Bakhtjoo, 2011). Also the telework employee will be capable to perform work in unexpected emergencies such as natural disasters (Ghanbari & Bakhtjoo, 2011).

On the other hand, there are organizational benefits by using teleworking. One of the most important of these benefits includes cost savings and increased productivity (Perez et al., 2002). Other organizational advantages of teleworking comprises following profits:

- Reduction of overhead costs (such as costs for cooling, heating, repair, security and space)
- Retaining talent employees: utilizing employees with scarce skills in the work is another benefit of teleworking. Because even during recessions, organizations are faced with a shortage of some skills employees, by using teleworking organizations can preserve people in jobs that need deficient skills as well as talent employees. In addition, when employee family leaves the city, the organization can maintain their talent staff without losing them (Sohrabi, 2004).
- Declining risk by rapid responding to the urgent needs (Bahramzadeh, 2011)
- Dissemination of information: by utilizing web technologies teleworkers usually meet their managers and colleagues at a fixed time and regularly. These situations may increase interactions among organization members that in turn information easily can be disseminated.

3.2 Teleworking Challenges

Most of criticism from teleworking comes from researchers by postmodern perspective. Some of these critiques include performance monitoring, performance measurement, managerial control, organizational culture and interpersonal skills (Kuriand & Bailey, 1999). Postmodernists usually challenge psychological facet of teleworking like fear of social isolation, need to precise planning, attention to technology (Hatch, 1997). Some other postmodernists mention social critiques like legal issues, the election of directors, the selection of teleworkers, attention to staff training and distrust. (Sohrabi, 2004).

■4.0 PAST RESEARCHES ON TELEWORKING

After reviewing literature in the field of teleworking, some the relevant researches are as following:

1. Ravel (2002) studied the impact of telecommunications on temporal patterns of managers and employees. He concluded that telecommunication may be considered in threefold: the effect of time aspects of work. For instance, doing certain tasks, matching telework schedule often change. Second, the effect of time on professional interactions. Teleworkers and their colleagues do not see any problem in coordination this may be due to the telework schedule is flexible. Third, the influence of temporal pattern on individuals and work groups. Teleworking has a significant effect on people's everyday life but its effect on groups has been reported less.

2. Harman (2003) in his paper entitled "The working relationship between teleworker-managers in the field of teleworking" concluded that by start teleworking, the working relationship between employee and manager will change at the same time. He demonstrated change in a three-step model. The first step is to demonstrate the development of labor relations in the field of teleworking. At this stage, the emphasis is on employee performance and managerial control. Teleworkers want to prove their ability to perform and their managers want to ensure that teleworker's performance is preserved. Thus, they control the performance of teleworkers. The second stage is the stage that provides dynamic adoption. In other words, at this stage, the teleworking employees become an individual manager and Emphasis on the authority of the manager and employee autonomy instead of focusing on performance and control to recognize the independence of teleworking to the maximum performance. Finally, the third phase will focus on employee commitment and management support.
3. Dominik (2010) in his paper "Model select alternate teleworking and its effects on productivity and balancing work / life" came to the conclusion that three factors affecting the choice of teleworking are frequency: (a) The length of time that people spend commuting to work (this causes a positive effect on the frequency of teleworking); (b) Having a positive attitude towards teleworking (This factor has a positive effect on the frequency of teleworking); and (c) Fear that teleworking have the negative effect on work life and one's position in an organization (This factor has a negative effect on the frequency of teleworking). The frequency of teleworking means an increase in hours based on time that spend at home and that's the difference of modern telework and telework in the past.
4. Schnijdirberg (2011) did a study called "new methods of doing things and new ways to manage". Experimental data obtained from this study showed that Organizational control considerably for employees working round experience that is different from the regular personnel. Results of this study are summarized in the following three cases: (a) employees who are teleworking experience considerably less than ordinary employees experience organizational control that means they experience less Type A Control (formal performance profiles work) and control type C (communicational feedback) than organizational control process; (b) By increasing the time of teleworking, controlling type A sorely decreases and this will cause to increases the uncertainty in the formal definition of the duties, responsibilities and organizational goals; (c) Third result gives a general concept of Gestalt to research findings. The results clearly show that the organizational control has a positive effect on teleworking employee satisfaction. Employee satisfaction will increase strongly in order to increase the type A, B and C controls. But these controls should be implemented consciously, because the bureaucratic control, including the provision of detailed guidelines frog, have a negative effect on the teleworkers.
5. Noroozian (2007) in his study entitled "Modelling the willingness of employees' teleworking" Expresses that the results of the model indicate that the importance of people attitudes about will have a great effect on willing people to telework.

■5.0 CONTROLLING THE PERFORMANCE OF TELEWORKING

5.1 Organizational Control

Organizations do the planning process to conduct their activities in a way to achieve the objectives, in this way it is always possible to face obstacles and limitations that can cause institutional system to be affected. Each of these obstacles may be the cause of diverting or stopping the motion of organization. Thus, the organizations always need a modifier mechanism or sub-control system to maintain the organization's performance in achieving the targets. (Rezaieean, 2009). Control is the work that compares predicted operation with done process. And if any variation or deviation between what should be and what it is the organization must try to fix and correct actions. (Alvani, 2010).

5.2 Control Tools Based On Bureaucracy

Some of the most famous bureaucracy based control tools include:

- Control Type A: providing clear, written job descriptions and performance requirements stated expectations of employees as well as a clear expression of the characteristics of this type of evaluation of the control.
- Control Type B: Provide a written report of the results of targeted and careers (measured by output) and formal goals should be measurable.
- Control Type C: frequent communication and feedback can be particularly timely feedback to ensure that primary attention to the problem. If the predetermined goals or milestones as not to take it head can react accordingly adopted to ensure that the project will be completed on time. (Schnijdirberg -2011)

5.3 Teleworking And Organizational Control

Control is not an option (all or nothing). If the case was successful, the other may be ineffective or even catastrophic. Control teleworking and trust should also be considered in parallel with the specific methods complement each other, they are not necessarily in succession. (Nokarizi, 2010).

■6.0 THE PROPOSED MODEL

Considering the relationship between each of the factors mentioned in the above studies, and due to the material relating to the organizational control and the types of controls mentioned the proposed model is presented in Figure 2. The model expressed the relations between important factors when implementing teleworking and also described solutions for variation and potential challenges. According to Figure 2, implementation of teleworking will follow many changes of various components in the organization, among the changes, time changes is resulting in flexible work time for teleworkers. This resulted in satisfaction and reinforced positive attitudes towards teleworking. And thereby increases the willingness to work as teleworking and will be provoked concept of "teleworking frequency". With higher teleworking frequency, i.e. increase time of teleworking, traditional and bureaucratic organizational control will be less. Because of that, the direct monitoring on employees decreased slightly, this is not satisfactory to top management. According to the aforementioned studies, and it would cause confusion in job duties and provides dissatisfaction in teleworkers. Now considering the issue of teleworking in three different phases can be

considered in terms of working relations managers and employees and according to the types of organizational controls and features of each of them, every step of teleworking will have an appropriate control actions, This has resulted in managers and employees' satisfaction and willingness to work as a result of teleworking in organization.

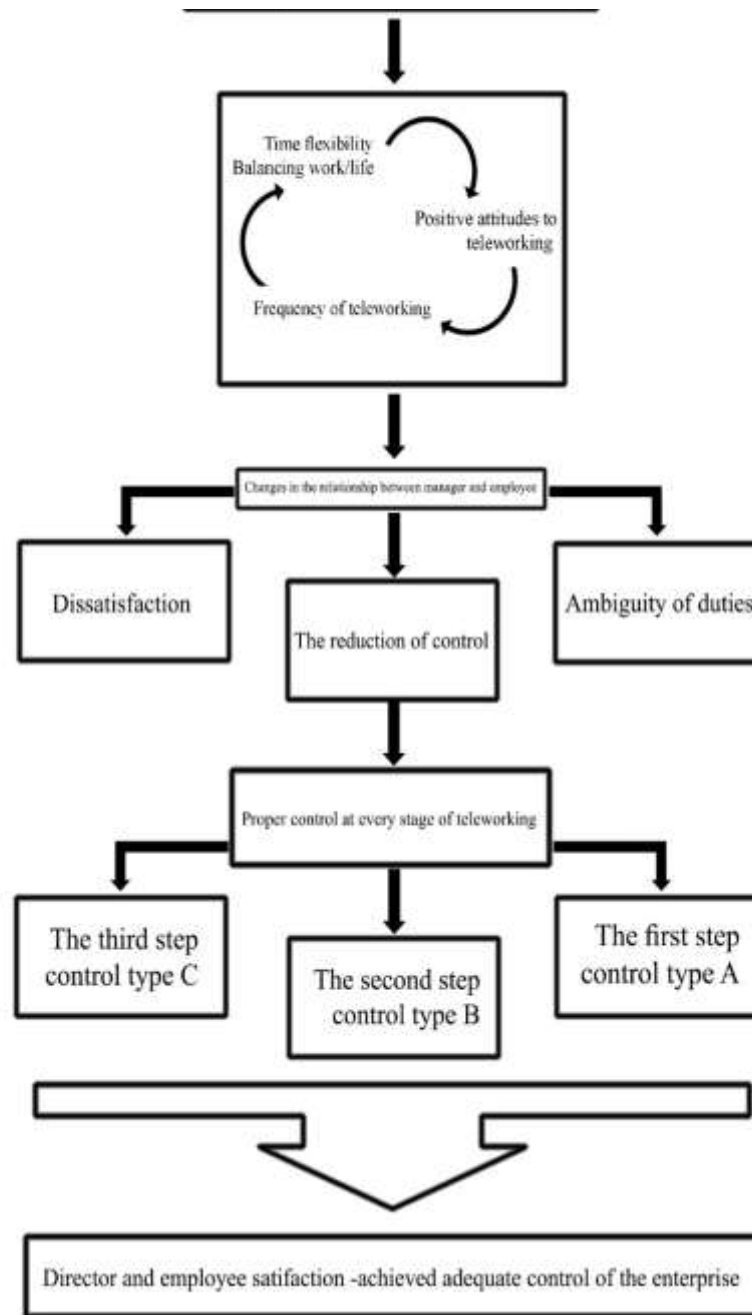


Figure 2 Proposed model for understanding changes in the organization and control of business processes while teleworking

7.0 CONCLUSION

At the beginning of the new millennium, several events including the advent of technology (with a focus on information technology) that radically changed the landscape of the human population. The change in the way they are living and working can be caused by attitudinal and technological changes in the history of human life simulations. The concept of teleworking as a procedure and method for performing organizational processes found its position on social issues and institutional in 1970. Since then a lot of practical and scientific studies have been conducted in this field. Research shows that when teleworking is implemented in an organization interacts as a sub-system with the other sub-systems and influences each other. By systematically looking into the process, useful or non-usefulness of telework for the organization cannot be considered absolute, but its success rate depends on how to interact with other components. In the proposed model, this is

an attempt to consider the matter, although teleworking experience so far has been a success for organizations and communities, However, poor performance or lack of proper communication between teleworking and other organizational elements, will not be useful for organizations and can also have harmful effects, Step towards understanding the process of organizational change in components was carried out during the implementation of teleworking and new methods can be used to manage the work

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