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From crisis to opportunity: Career shocks and remote work shifts triggered by COVID-19

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Abstract. *Purpose.* This study investigates the influence of the recent pandemic on remote work and career prospects. *Approach.* Employing the PRISMA framework, the study analyzes relevant literature on novel work conditions and career disruptions within the context of COVID-19, utilizing data from the Scopus and Web of Science databases. The review incorporates 38 studies, offering significant insights into the transformative effects brought about by the pandemic. *Findings.* The findings show the concerns of employees in relation to remote work and job security. A substantial majority of employees prefer to work remotely for at least two days per week, indicating a significant demand for flexible work arrangements. Furthermore, employees desire full-time remote work, highlighting a strong inclination towards a remote work setup. It should be noted that the current study's analysis is limited to the period between 2018 and 2021. *Implications for practice.* These findings hold substantial value for policymakers, employers, and employees, as they provide crucial insights to inform decision-making processes in the post-pandemic work environment.

Keywords: work from home, career shock, remote work, literature review, COVID-19.

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic turned the world of work upside down. There are a lot of news stories about how it affected different work arrangements and contracts, especially for those in permanent jobs (Paraskevis et al., 2020). The recent pandemic brought significant changes to the workforce, including job losses, wage cuts, and shifts in work arrangements (Bick et al., 2020). Remote work emerged as a response, with a whopping 83% of employees expressing a preference for companies that offer remote work options. Surprisingly, proximity to the workplace was associated with a higher risk of job loss (Chhabra, Pal, 2021). But even with its perks, remote work poses challenges for

employers who face issues like employee inexperience, social needs, and performance evaluation, leading some to call workers back to the office (Lam et al., 2015; Spector, 2017). Work-from-home has become a popular way of working due to its flexibility, giving individuals the freedom to balance their professional and personal lives (Bick et al., 2021).

However, it does come with productivity and work quality challenges. Interestingly, while remote work encompasses any location, some workers may thrive more in a home-based setup. For example, those who require significant human interaction might be more productive in an office environment, while others benefit from the flexibility of working from home (Allen et al., 2014). Moreover, the pandemic brought about career shocks for many individuals. These shocks are disruptive and unexpected events that force people to make deliberate career decisions (Akkermans et al., 2018; Mahmud et al., 2020). They can have psychological effects like fear and depression, lingering for an uncertain period. However, career shocks can also bring positive changes to one's career trajectory (Khasina et al., 2021). In this research we focus on work-from-home arrangements and career shocks. From the literature review we found that the availability of home-based work varies across different industries (Dingel, Neiman, 2020). Industries are heavily reliant on social interaction and those with less proximity to employees' homes were hit hard (Baqaee, Farhi, 2022). It's interesting to note that certain professions, like fitness instruction or physical therapy, still require personal interaction even when working from home. Surprisingly, home-based employees experienced job loss rates similar to their on-site counterparts, suggesting that demand circumstances played a role in pandemic-related job losses (Mongey et al., 2019).

This research aims to answer two important questions: How does the pandemic affect the way employees work? And what are the consequences for their career paths? The recent studies on the novel coronavirus have paved the way for us to explore these questions from economic and social perspectives. The quarantine measures have completely transformed our social systems and set the stage for the socio-economic future. Surprisingly, "work from home" wasn't a trendy term in the corporate world before 2018, so there is limited research available on it. That's why we analyze and categorize the literature on new working conditions, such as working from home, and the concept of career shocks. Drawing on relevant theories, we discuss the impact of COVID-19 on remote working (specifically, work-from-home) and its effects on career outcomes. We've looked at various studies like those by J. M. Barrero with colleagues and E. Brynjolfsson with colleagues to compare and understand the findings (Barrero et al., 2021; Brynjolfsson et al., 2020). This research is organized it into several sections. The introduction outlines the research aim and presents the research questions. The literature review in the second section discusses the theories and concepts of work-from-home and careers. In the third section, we explain the methodology. Then, in the fourth section, we present and analyze the results of our content analysis. The fifth section discusses future directions for research. Finally, the sixth section concludes the study.

Theoretical background and literature review

Savickas career construction theory

Career construction theory (CCT) reflects a postmodern strategy for professional development (Brown, 2016). This broader concept explains how, what, and why in career development. People explore their ideal self-concept through actions (Brown, Lent, 2004). Constructivism theory considers various personality types of participants and differing preferences, patterns, and transformations when trying to handle work changes. It uses life concepts to enforce significance regarding the job (Amundson et al., 2014). Making choices that express one's self-concept can help

people create meaningful careers (Rudolph et al., 2018). Career construction theory has remained a popular method of analyzing worker careers in organizations because it considers all needs and priorities of the modern age, such as the constant changes in life and work. This theory cann benefit over the other future career theories because it considers changes occurring in individuals' careers. According to career construction theory, a person's unique personality allows them to implement a variety of job transitions, so vocational character, life aspects, and flexibility to make up the core of Savicka's career construction theory (Savickas, 1997).

a) vocational personality

CCT defines vocational personality as an individual's experience, preferences, beliefs, and abilities. "Realistic Investigative Artistic Social Enterprising Conventional" (RISEC) character traits are discussed in the RISEC framework to describe a person's abilities. For RIASEC, Savicka's career construction theory is equally conceptual. According to this theory, vocational character traits are comparable to skills and behaviors. Career character is the self-organization element of Savicka's career construction theory, just as openness to experience explains self-regulation of the personality skill set. CCT is a meta-theory in the research area of careers (Sharf, 2016). When combined with the Person-Environment Fit Model and Life Thematic Literature, CCT becomes a very comprehensive professional / career theory (McDonald, 2004).

b) career adaptability

Career adaptability is the second aspect of CCT. S. Brown and R. Lent explains career prospects as a way to cope with procedures through which people interact with societies and build their career paths. The process of career adaptation helps to direct this personality expression at the job (Brown, Lent, 2004). Many factors, including but not limited to globalization, changes in technology, and redevelopment of employment, have led to people no longer working for an organization for the rest of their lives. S. Brown and R. Lent describe perceptions, belief systems, and knowledge and skills that are named ABCs of career construction, such ABCs of career construction help people shape their ability to cope with behavior that leads people to fit into the job (Brown, Lent, 2004). Consideration, regulation, enthusiasm, and self-belief are the four aspects of the ability to adapt these to ABCs. Savickas's career formation theory is quite extensive in addressing future chances.

c) life aspects

In this component of (CCT), S. Brown and R. Lent examine the motivations behind work-related behavior and describes the aspects of work life. This perspective explains that career paths are essential for life (Brown, Lent, 2004). What do individuals do and contribute to society? The third and final component of CCT is the life concept. As a result, the career counselor is capable of understanding why a person can make career choices. As a result, counselors can interpret the significance behind the client's career paths. In regard to vocational character and flexibility, Savickas uses "life experience as vital string of consistency" (McIlveen, Patton, 2007).

Theory of happenstance learning by Krumboltz

Krumboltz's learning hypothesis of career choice is an extended version of his social learning hypothesis of career decision (Krumboltz et al., 2013). Although presumptions and suppositions remain the same with each extension, the concept of scheduled happenstance broadens the theory to concentrate and use unexpected opportunities to learn instead of learning through direct experience and observation (Krumboltz, 2009). Environmental variables and events such as learning experiences, planning, and organizing abilities, as well as genetic endowment and particular talents, are all examples. J. D. Krumboltz emphasized the importance of unforeseen accidents resulting (termed happenstance incidents) in sensible choices. Unexpected events sometimes result in successful

career paths, he stated (Krumboltz, 2009). Because it enables you to take advantage of possibilities and fosters an open-minded approach, uncertainty is beneficial and reasonable. Employees should master five abilities to turn obstacles into opportunities. (a) the desire to seek out educational opportunities, (b) persistence in overcoming obstacles, (c) capacity to adapt, (d) willingness to accept risks, and (e) excitement and flexibility to attempt to deal with unforeseen events. To improve such skills and help others take advantage of fortuitous occurrences, people use a variety of techniques (McClellan et al., 2018).

COVID-19 and work from home

Before the crisis, the research found that 80 percent of employees preferred to work from home for some time. More than one-third would accept a wage decrease in return for the opportunity to work from home (WFH) (Lister, 2021). Global Workplace Analytics (GWA) predicts that 30% of the US workforce will work from home one or more days per week following the outbreak. S. Baert with colleagues discussed teleworking's positive characteristics that it increases efficiency and lowers burnout risk (Baert et al., 2020). The survey results show that 85% of surveyed employees and 81% that use digital conferencing believe teleworking will continue (Baert et al., 2020). Others worry teleworking will weaken their relationships with coworkers and employers and limit their opportunities for advancement. Researchers also highlighted the benefits and drawbacks of academic work at home (Aczel, 2021). 70% of the scholars say they would be similar or more efficient if they could do their work at home. Based on their well-being and plans, 66% of them would prefer to work from home more than they did before the lockdown.

For decades, there has been a growing need for flexibility in where and how individuals work (Church, 2015; Parker et al., 2020). There is a clear class distinction between employees who can and cannot telework. 62 percent of employees with a bachelor's degree can WFH, compared to only 23% of individuals without a 4years college diploma. Likewise, most upper-income individuals can work remotely, while lower- and middle-income employees cannot. 47% of employees in Australia, France, and the UK teleworked during shutdowns. In Japan, where there was no countrywide lockdown, the remote working rate increased from 10% to 28% in 2020 (OECD, 2021)information and communication technologies (ICTs).

WFH poses significant challenges for employees if companies are hesitant to embrace remote working, and there is the possibility that new forms of monitoring will accommodate varied "Work-from-home" adjustments (Bhave et al., 2019). The use of innovative practices, such as teleconferencing, has allowed for virtual sightlines in remote work but can also raise anxiety levels and intrude on personal space (Nell et al., 2020). Centralized decision-making and lower work engagement levels may result from lack of evaluation and distant monitoring (Giovanis, Ozdamar, 2021). Employees who have not experienced a shift to remote work are worried about their financial well-being and mental health is negatively affected (Ramarajan, Reid, 2013). Work-life balance is also difficult for employees. Many companies end remote work policies due to disengaged staff, hard-to-evaluate performance, need for physical monitoring, greater value of in-person coaching and motivation, and preference for face-to-face communication (Pinto, 2020; Vershinina, 2022).

COVID-19 and career shocks

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on careers has been the subject of research and examination (Howard, 2019). According to the World Health Organization, the pandemic has both short-term and long-term impacts on society (Remuzzi, Remuzzi, 2020). Higher-educated individuals are more concerned about less appealing job opportunities, possibly due to prior concerns about job loss due to automation and digitization (Autor, 2015). The role of career shocks (e.g., Seibert et al., 2013) in career management has been explored in previous research, and it has been found

that employees are currently experiencing career shocks, necessitating proactive career planning. Career shock is a disruptive and extraordinary event caused by factors beyond one's control, leading to conscious career decision (Akkermans, 2020). Literature on career shock in the context of the pandemic highlights that psychological resources such as career competencies and adaptability may help mitigate the effects of career shock and that the impact of pandemics may vary over time (Akkermans et al., 2018). V. Yilmaz also supported the second insight mentioned by J. Akkermans that if COVID-19 is uncontrollable, its impact will spread like a snowball in personal and professional life (Yilmaz, 2020). Therefore, this research would be valuable insight to people looking to assess career options in COVID-19 (Yilmaz, 2020). The challenges of COVID-19 by using the core idea of generation, which is incredibly beneficial for practitioners looking for explanations for how it influenced career and career advancement (Rudolph, Zacher, 2020).

The effect of the COVID-19 crisis on career outcomes and aspirations were investigated by (Lippens et al., 2021; Yin et al., 2021). Based on the results, 21% worried about losing their work due to the pandemic, 14% were distressed about losing their employment in the coming years, and 26% probably failed to get promotional offers they would have obtained had COVID-19 not happened. Using a qualitative approach, I. Nalis with colleagues examined that career shocks disclosed a unique trend of agentic reactions regarding career shock of various attributes and responses over time (Nalis et al., 2021). His research model represents how distinct shock various features shape post-shock career opportunities. As the study demonstrates, it is necessary to understand the unpredictability of career development, and people have a range of options in case of a shock to their career. Other study argued that the workforce is becoming concerned about career choices due to pandemic fears (Mahmud et al., 2020). Depression from COVID-19, induced by 'Fear of COVID-19,' serves as a facilitator. It implies that as a result of the 'Fear of COVID-19' employees are becoming anxious and depressed regarding their future jobs as it has a long-term adverse effect on human psychology.

Methodology

Coronavirus not only raises concerns about the future of human civilization but has also had a substantial impact on working conditions. In the context of "work from home" during COVID-19, we used the PRISMA framework to explain how articles were selected and rejected. This analysis includes studies from the Scopus and Web of Science databases. The authors accessed the research from 2018 to 2021 using the keyword "working from home". The initial search returned 1057 articles (Figure 1). Inclusion and exclusion criteria are mentioned in the research protocol (Table 1). Inclusion criteria adds the article based on the areas of study: social sciences; business management and accounting (BMA); and psychology (Table 2). The study relies solely on journal articles, book reviews, and conference presentations. As part of the analysis and quality of the materials, we thoroughly consider the abstracts and findings of each published paper. In this review, only papers published in English considered for this study. In addition, we excluded 11 more articles from the research after we sorted the duplicate records out. We identified 24 articles based on the specific criteria outlined.

Descriptive analysis

There were 24 studies chosen for the systematic literature review, including articles, reviews, and conference papers. The primary goal of the year-by-year distribution is to determine the number of articles published in a year that meet the review criteria. Time frame for the published studies were considered from 2018 to 2021.The years 2020 and 2021 are the most prolific, with 13 articles published in 2020 and 20 in 2021. Compared to the past, the number of contributions has increased

in recent years because of the deadly novel coronavirus. The top countries that published the highest number of articles on "working from home or remote working" were the USA, South Africa, and Canada. Social sciences made the highest contribution in groups depending on the subject, with 21 papers in the review. We selected nine studies from the psychology subject as the second largest paper group. Business management and accounting have the third-highest number of articles with 8.
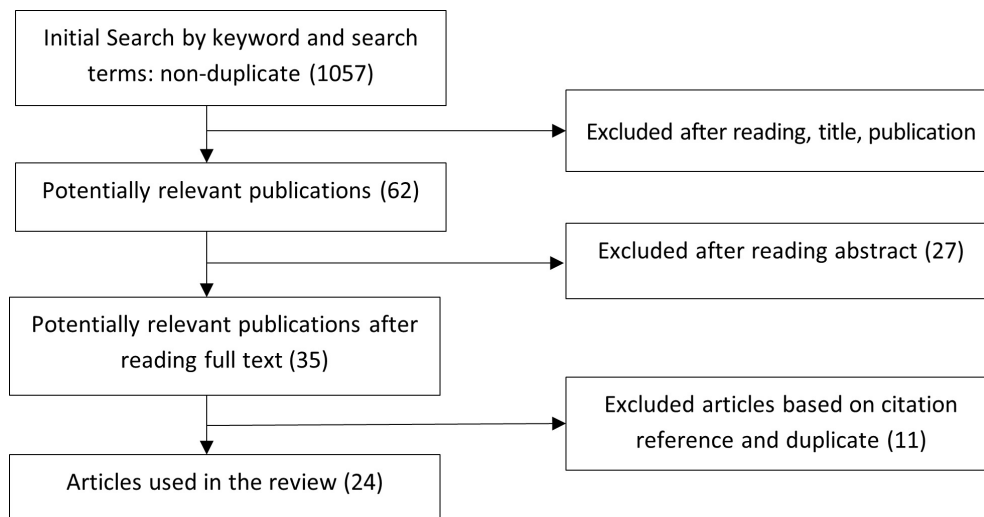

Figure 1. PRISMA framework (Moher et al., 2009)

Table 1. Research protocol

Research protocol	Description
Databases	«Web of science» and «Scopus»
Publication type	Peer reviewed and open access
Document type	Articles, books, working paper and reports
Language	English
Data range (years)	Data range (2018–2021) years
Search field	Title, abstract and keywords
Inclusion criteria	Studies related to COVID-19, WFH and career shocks
Exclusion criteria	Studies not related to COVID-19, WFH and career shocks
Data analysis	Content analysis approach

Table 2. Finding and theoretical support on "WFH / remotely work" and "career shock"

Authors	Theory	Objectives or finding
COVID-19 and working from home		
(Allen et al., 2014)	Role theory	T. D. Allen argued that employees use a variety of tactics to create their ideal boundaries between work and family, and the mixed boundary working practices that result from the use of these strategic planning.
(Coenen, Kok, 2014)	Media richness theory	Working remotely, according to M. Coenen improves performance by facilitating information exchange, cross-functional collaboration, and inter-organizational participation.
(Church, 2015)	No theoretical support	N. F. Church argued that if workplace promotion opportunities remain consistent for employees, then employees have a very positive attitude towards working from home.
(Rupietta, Beckmann, 2016)	No theoretical support	K. Rupietta's empirical findings show that WFH is positively related to work effort. It is also critical to work from home regularly. The more frequently staff WFH, the greater their work effort.
(Kniffin et al., 2020)	Job demands and resources theory	K. Kniffin explained the situation after the pandemic, employers have become more open to adopting «work-from-home» practices because of the sudden, massive, and mandatory switch.

Authors	Theory	Objectives or finding
(Trougakos et al., 2020)	Self-determination transactional theory	J. P. Trougakos found that mentally unsatisfied emotional need hinders employees' abilities to work effectively and engage with their families due to unprecedented situation.
(Dingel, Neiman, 2020)	No theoretical support	J. I. Dingel reported that 37% of employment in the US can be done totally from home, with substantial variance among locations and sectors.
(Waizenegger et al., 2020)	Affordance theory	L. Waizenegger and the team looked into COVID-19's unexpected and imposed challenges, as well as the technical procedures for knowledge workers to accomplish his\her collaborative targets.
(Belzunegui-Eraso, Erro-Garcés, 2020)	No theoretical support	With the outbreak of the COVID-19 disease, A. Belzunegui-Fraso investigated the use of teleworking as a security practice.
(Bick et al., 2021)	No theoretical support	A. Bick discovered that highly educated, high-income, and white workers were more likely to shift to working from home and keep their jobs after the pandemic.
(Farooq, Sultana, 2021)	Adaptation theory	WFH and employee productivity are negatively correlated in R. Farooq's study. Moreover, the study found that gender affects the relationship between WFH and employee productivity.
(Narayanamurthy, Tortorella, 2021)	Organizational change and sociotechnical theory, Social construction of technology theory	G. Narayanamurthy's findings demonstrated that the workplace aspects of COVID-19 influenced employee performance, but not to the same level. Furthermore, it was discovered that technology limits the improvement of employee job performance.
(Gibbs et al., 2021)	No theoretical support	M. Gibbs found that the productivity of employees with children at home was lower than that of those without children. A higher percentage of women had lower productivity, whereas those with a longer tenure in the company performed better. WFH production is changing because of higher coordination and communication costs.
(Aczel et al., 2021)	Boundary theory	B. Aczel's findings highlight how WFH is becoming an essential part of scholars' lives and that we need to understand more about the elements that drive it.

COVID-19 and career shock

Authors	Theory	Objectives or finding
(Akkermans et al., 2018)	Social cognitive and career construction theory	J. Akkermans's analysis of contemporary career development examined how individual factors interacts with contextual factors. Using recent literature on chance events and turnover, they proposed a conceptualization of career shocks.
(Yilmaz, 2020)	Image theory and event system theory	To understand the career implications of the pandemic, J. Akkerman's and V. Yilmaz's study draws on the literature on career shock.
(Mahmud et al., 2020)	Bard theory of emotions, and theory of career development	A novel study by M. S. Mahmud combines the concepts of fear and depression with career anxiety in a global epidemic situation such as COVID-19.
(Rudolph, Zacher, 2020)	Theory of social identity	C. W. Rudolph explained the effects of COVID-19 on career and career development by using generations as a conceptual model.
(Spurk, Straub, 2020)	No theoretical support	D. Spurk explained workers in adjustable work arrangements, such as part-time work or outsourcing labor. According to this study, people working in flexible employment relationships may experience the negative effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on their careers and work.
(Hite, McDonald, 2020)	Conservation of resource theory	Hite discussed the HR need to be proactive in workforce and workplace development in the wake of a pandemic.
(Autin et al., 2020)	No theoretical support	K. L. Autin outlined four new pandemic effects: unemployment, worker mental health, work-family interaction, and employment inequality.
(Drosos et al., 2021)	System theory	N. Drosos proposed a model for holistic career counseling that addresses the effects of COVID-19 on unemployed individuals.

Authors	Theory	Objectives or finding
(Rummel et al., 2021)	Theory of planned behavior, and appraisal theory	According to S.Rummel, several career shocks may be experienced by entrepreneurs before and after they start their businesses.
(Barrero et al., 2021)	No theoretical support	J. M. Barraro assembles many pieces of data, such as the fact that the shock resulted in three to four new hiring for every 10 layoffs in 2020. One-third of the layoffs made at this time is permanent.

Findings and discussion

Today, most working populations are required to work from home due to modern lifestyle, and this is a widespread practice around the world (Vilhelmson, Thulin, 2016). Work environments are redesigning their surroundings to facilitate social distance, even though direct communication with the community is required. Prior scientific studies proposed flexible working opportunities and work-from-home options for jobs (Ivanoff, Podolskiy, 2021). People can communicate virtually more cost-effectively and pleasantly than flying to various areas of the nation or world (Friedman, 2020). Several studies revealed the impact of WFH on work-life balance (Khan et al., 2022; Perrigino, Raveendhran, 2020). Learning from such skeptical situations and implementing that information will be critical to establishing a long-term post-coronavirus career. Thus, this study aimed to examine the effect of COVID-19 on employee's personal and professional life by focusing on work from home, and career shocks during COVID-19. The McKinsey Research Center claims that COVID-19 has fully integrated the discussions about the future workforce into the current situation. It emphasizes the need for a long-term perspective that does not just reconstruct previous systems but also solves problems that provide long-term persistence in the face of natural disasters (Lund et al., 2020).

The impact of working from home (WFH) during the COVID-19 pandemic on work-family balance and the division of household responsibilities (Solís, 2016). It is noted that WFH blurs the line between work and household responsibilities, causing increased work-family conflict (Kupferschmidt, Cohen, 2020). The stay-at-home policies during the lockdown permit only essential workers to work on-site, causing retail and industrial employers to fire workers who could not work from home (Noonan, Glass, 2012). WFH also increases domestic duties and puts additional pressure on family life (McKenna, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant effect on individuals' careers, causing a career shock that has a short and long-term impact on career optimism (Harney et al., 2017; Zaheer et al., 2022). The shift in the workplace due to the pandemic is noted to have been slow initially but is now picking up speed (Altintas, Sullivan, 2017; Demerouti et al., 2007). A simulated working condition seems capable of spreading as companies realize the cost of reductions using very few full-time workers and many more professionals linked via technology (Spreitzer et al., 2017). Abruptly emerging shifts comprehended by specialists can fulfill the demand of susceptible workers. Some employees seem to have very different digital job requirements and procedures than those who live with relatives. A more autocratic or bossy leader may have various training requirements for improving their performance in virtual worlds. People make professional decisions depending on how they value their needs for achievement for their community, and prioritization may vary by career phase (Heslin et al., 2020; Thu et al., 2022). Besides, school closings and the closure of daycare centers are affecting working mothers' need for child care (Alon et al., 2020).

The research findings suggest that practitioners and researchers should pay close attention to the issue of remote work. The study reveals that remote work can be beneficial for companies to become more effective, but a mix of in-person and virtual communication may be best. The success of remote work depends on various factors such as individual ability, task structure, supervisor

support, and technology. Supervisors should provide support and training to ease the transition to remote work. There are policy options available to address specific challenges such as career shock and work from home. The global pandemic has caused anxiety and worry, but it can also be seen as an opportunity to create a more compassionate and respectful future of work for everyone.

Conclusion

The study analyzed the impact of COVID-19 on careers and remote work through a literature review of 38 articles using the PRISMA framework. The results showed that flexible working hours for remote employees are becoming more widespread, with predictions of one in four Americans working remotely by 2021 and 22% of the workforce expected to be working remotely by 2025. Surveys found that remote workers are more productive, engaged, and happier than office workers, with decreased stress, better work-life balance, and longer working hours. However, there is a disparity in productivity between remote workers, with some managers reporting a decline while others report improvement. These findings have implications for the government, organizations, and policymakers.

Future direction

Future research should investigate the impact of COVID-19 quarantines on productivity levels, innovation, and creative thinking when working from home. The impact of working from home on inspiration and honesty at work should also be studied. The consequences of work from home for family dynamics, such as the division of household tasks and childcare responsibilities, should be analyzed. The impact of work from home on mindfulness when living with family members, roommates or relatives should also be studied. The impact of work from home and childcare on gender roles should also be explored. Future studies should investigate the impact of re-opening educational institutions and childcare centers while staff still works remotely and the effect of additional burden of childcare on married individuals.

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От кризиса к возможностям: карьерные потрясения и переходы на удалённую работу, вызванные COVID-19

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Аннотация. *Цель*. В этом исследовании изучается влияние недавней пандемии на удалённую работу и перспективы карьерного роста. *Подход*. Используя структуру PRISMA, в исследовании анализируется соответствующая литература о новых условиях труда и сбоях в карьере в контексте COVID-19, используя данные из баз данных Scopus и Web of Science. В обзор включены 38 исследований, дающих существенное представление о преобразовательных эффектах, вызванных пандемией. *Выводы*. Результаты показывают обеспокоенность сотрудников по поводу удалённой работы и гарантии занятости. Значительное большинство сотрудников предпочитают работать удалённо не менее двух дней в неделю, что указывает на значительный спрос на гибкий график работы. Кроме того, сотрудники желают удалённо работать полный рабочий день, что подчёркивает сильную склонность к удалённой работе. Следует отметить, что анализ настоящего исследования ограничен периодом между 2018 и 2021 годами. *Значение для практики*. Эти результаты имеют значительную ценность для политиков, работодателей и сотрудников, поскольку они дают важную информацию для информирования процессов принятия решений в постпандемической рабочей среде.

Ключевые слова: работа на дому, карьерный шок, удалённая работа, обзор литературы, COVID-19.