

Teleworking: considerations and implications of employment relationships for workers' health

Teletrabalho: considerações e implicações das relações de trabalho na saúde do trabalhador

Teletravel: consideraciones e implicaciones de las relaciones laborales en la salud de los trabajadores

Received: 01/14/2021 | Reviewed: 01/18/2021 | Accept: 01/21/2021 | Published: 01/25/2021

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic caused significant impacts on the labor market, boosting new arrangements and heavily affecting relationships with the work itself and among employees. Aspects related to working conditions, established links, structure and functioning of organizations and the social function of employment were strongly affected. Therefore, the aim of this article is to understand the impacts of teleworking on workers' mental health. To achieve this purpose, a bibliographic search was carried out based on scientific references approaching this theme. The results indicate both advantages and disadvantages of teleworking for the organizations and employees. However, we believe that a primary focus of organizations should be directed towards the management of the effects of these new work arrangements to improve health and promote quality of life and well-being for workers.

Keywords: Teleworking; Pandemic; Mental health.

Resumo

A pandemia do COVID-19 trouxe diversos impactos para o campo do trabalho, potencializando novos arranjos e afetando fortemente as relações com o trabalho e entre os trabalhadores. Aspectos relacionados as condições de trabalho, os vínculos estabelecidos, estrutura e funcionamento das organizações, e a função social do trabalho foram fortemente atingidos. Dessa forma, o objetivo desse artigo foi compreender como o teletrabalho afetou a saúde mental dos trabalhadores na perspectiva dos atuais estudos publicados acerca do tema. Os resultados apontam vantagens e desvantagens do teletrabalho tanto para as organizações, como para os trabalhadores. No entanto, acredita-se que a preocupação central das organizações deve estar direcionada para gerenciar os efeitos desses novos arranjos de trabalho na promoção de saúde, qualidade de vida e bem-estar do trabalhador.

Palavras-chave: Teletrabalho; Pandemia; Saúde mental.

Resumen

La pandemia de COVID-19 trajo varios impactos en el campo del trabajo, potenciando nuevos arreglos y afectando fuertemente las relaciones con el trabajo y entre los trabajadores. Los aspectos relacionados con las condiciones de trabajo, los vínculos establecidos, la estructura y el funcionamiento de las organizaciones y la función social del trabajo se vieron fuertemente afectados. Por lo tanto, el objetivo de este artículo es comprender los impactos del teletrabajo en la salud mental de los trabajadores. Para llevar a cabo esta articulación, se realizó una investigación bibliográfica a través de referencias científicas que abordan el tema. Los resultados muestran que existen ventajas y desventajas del teletrabajo tanto para las organizaciones como para los trabajadores. Sin embargo, se cree que la

preocupación central de las organizaciones debe dirigirse a gestionar los efectos de estos nuevos arreglos laborales en la promoción de la salud, la calidad de vida y el bienestar de los trabajadores.

Palabras clave: Teletrabajo; Pandemia; Salud mental.

1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed people's life and it was necessary to adopt practices to combat the virus, such as isolation and social distancing, and lockdown as the most effective method to minimize the contagion and transmission of the virus worldwide. In the work field, it is noteworthy that the relations between the worker and the work were also affected; the organizations had to adapt to a new work reality, thus adopting teleworking in a compulsory way, without the preparation and the resources necessary.

Although regulated in Brazil, teleworking was still a work modality whose economic viability for companies required further analysis, being defended as a perspective of higher quality of life for workers. A new work modality was imposed to companies. Organization that, until then, had never considered remote work as an intensive practice assumed it as their main modality.

Teleworking, whether by choice of organization of labor activities, or by external impositions such as the pandemic, raised a number of questions, such as on how to ensure favorable conditions of remote work and on how to maintain mental health. The need to implement the teleworking system considering the great distances traveled and the possibility of adapting to the personal routine was the focus of the discussions on this topic, soon replaced by the need for adjustments to economic, social and technological transformations. Finally, the discussions were conditioned to the pandemic scenario, without the opportunity to plan the implementation of the new mode of work.

In this sense, our article aimed at understanding how teleworking has affected workers' mental health. To answer this question, we analyzed how the topic has been discussed, the origin and contextualization of teleworking, considerations about these new work arrangements, and, finally, we pointed out the main effects of this modality on the mental health of workers. In our study, we used a qualitative methodology by means of a bibliographic research. The relevance of teleworking is proven by the large number of studies on the topic in Brazil and worldwide, in addition to being a modality of work that intensified with the COVID-19 pandemic and that requires a reflection in the organizational environment.

2. Methodology

This is a literature review of a qualitative nature. According to Pereira (2018), qualitative methods are characterized by the importance of the interpretation and opinion of researchers about the phenomena, and, as stressed by Ludke and Andre (in Pereira, 2018), among other characteristics, the qualitative method is configured by the analysis of data and information in an inductive process, and when the meaning that people attribute to things and life the focuses of the researcher. Yin (2016) also affirms that qualitative research contributes with revelations about existing or emerging concepts that can contribute to understanding people's social behavior.

In this sense, the research method was outlined to investigate the main theoretical milestones and the evidence found on teleworking. The literature review addressed theories and concepts that used to generate a framework of the arguments, theoretical lines and thoughts of previous researchers. For Breakwell (2010), the existing literature is a rich repository of previous studies and methods that can be used as an invaluable source. The literature review, therefore, allows us to identify useful thoughts and arguments for further studies.

In this section, articles published during the COVID-19 pandemic were prioritized, especially considering the year 2020, so that it was possible to identify strategies in this new scenario of uncertainties and established authors that approach

this topic. Given the complexity of the subject, the research aimed at identifying the main contributions and allowing readers to reflect and assign relevance to the considerations.

In addition to the search for publications that addressed the pandemic context, a search filter was used, and the articles published in English, Spanish and Portuguese in between 2018 and 2020 at *SciELO* base were selected. This time cut was defined due to the complexity and rapid evolution of the theme in recent years with the labor reform in Brazil, the technological developments and the pandemic. Those outside this temporal cut were excluded, and then data were collected in articles that could contribute to the discussion with rich and solid information. By a systematic review, and the established descriptors *Teletrabalho*, *Telework AND Mental Health*, *Teletrabalho e Saúde mental* in the *SciELO* base, the articles found were included in analysis. In total, twenty-three articles were found using these descriptors. The next step were abstract reading and article floating reading, in which those that address relationships among the descriptors were selected and those that approached their implications and panorama identified. At the end of this stage, four other articles that met all the inclusion criteria were included in the review.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Contextualization of teleworking

The concept of teleworking arises in 1970 when American researchers began to worry about the trips taken by professionals to get to work, which resulted in pollution, and sought solutions to this problem (Singh, 2014). As a solution, Jack Nilles suggested modifications in work contexts that, using technology and digital communication, made it possible for workers to perform their activities remotely (Leung & Zhang, 2017).

Teleworking is recognized as a form of work in Brazil with the labor reform (Law No.13,467 of June 13, 2017), in force since November 11, 2017, which changes the consolidation of labor laws (CLT) to adapt the legislation to new work models. Law No. 13.467 / 2017, art. 75-B, refers to telework as the provision of services outside the company's facilities with the use of technological resources (Brazil, 2017).

In this sense, expressions such as teleworking, home office or work at home, virtual work, and remote work are terminologies that will be adopted throughout this article to refer to the work performed outside its traditional context, either in domestic environments or in community spaces (Nohara, Acevedo, Ribeiro & Silva, 2010; Singh, 2014; Sobratt, 2016).

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2018) teleworking must be conceptualized in terms of different variables such as: place/work space; the working time/time (full or partial); type of contract (wage or independent work), and required skills (content of work). Teleworking can also be analyzed in an evolutionary line being currently characterized by its high flexibility and easy accessibility (in the cloud) via smartphones and tablets from almost anywhere on the planet. For Makimoto and Manners (in Messenger, 2019) what was initially associated with the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) such as computers, landlines and fax machines, today is associated with broader concepts such as "digital nomads".

Based on the evolutionary perspective, three generations are addressed: home office, mobile office and virtual office, the latter characterized by a new generation of ICTs, in which the information is stored in clouds and networks, in addition to needing only a small device to be accessed. These new settings change one's perception of teleworking. The instantly access to emails, recent negotiations, messages and news in the palm of the hand may distract the worker from the work activities for a short period if poorly managed. That is, the facilities acquired with virtual work bring with them new issues to be discussed (ILO, 2018).

For Lenita Maria Turchi (director of Social Studies and Policies, Institute of Applied Economic Research – IPEA) in the dialogues proposed by the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2018) there is a rise of new information technologies

with great transformative potential for the forms of production and, consequently, for the organization of work. There is also a certain consensus on this ongoing transformation, and that the traditional model of work and labor relations tends to lose space and that even if this transformation is consensual, it becomes difficult to predict a new scenario in the medium and long term (ILO, 2018). However, some of these relationships were accelerated due to the pandemic, especially teleworking.

Mello and Dal Colletto (2019) emphasize that teleworking should be performed in an appropriate location and with appropriate technologies, the resources and personal characteristics of the employee should be appropriate to work with little or no direct supervision. Moreover, the employer company must accept teleworking as a legitimate service and desirable activity, provide the necessary support and offer updated information technology infrastructure. Regarding the employees, they should feel comfortable in terms of adapting teleworking to their personal habits and work style, its effects on social interactions and on his progress and career. However, according to Messenger (2019) there are still resistances that contribute to reduce the increase of companies' adherence to teleworking. This resistance is caused by various factors related to conservative management, aversion to administrative risk, lack of new parameters for tasks and productivity, limited knowledge of new technologies, telecommunications and resources.

A significantly increased productivity, cost reduction, higher satisfaction rate of professionals and loosening of locomotion spaces, allowing greater mobility to those in which face-to-face work is the only allowed medium are among the perceived benefits for organizations (Rocha & Amador, 2017). Abbad and Legentil (2020) show positive aspects provided by remote work for workers such as increased autonomy, possibility of choice in relation to the work method and greater identity in relation to tasks. Autonomy tends to produce more adequate results due to the flexible working hours; on the other hand, rigid schedules tend to compromise the benefits of this format.

The home office also contributed to maintaining task identity, since the professionals have a greater possibility to start and complete their activity, reducing the dependence on third parties in the process (Hackman & Oldham, 1980). However, if autonomous work is maintained for a long period, as in the scenario of the pandemic, it can intensify the feeling of isolation of the organization's workers from their colleagues, and this characteristic, which is positive in relation to remote work, can become dysfunctional. Rodrigues, Moscon, Queiroz and Silva (2020) argue that home office work implies dealing with the structural and psychological issues of work, and these demands have even greater effects on women and mothers. These various types of resistance are being overcome by reality, but that must be reflected so that one can advance in the continuity of the new modality even after all the changes arising from social distancing (Messenger, 2019).

The management department should also pay attention to task interdependence, since this variable is related to communication among people, and can affect organizational functioning. Tasks that involve dependence on other colleagues can provoke risks due to exhaustion and emotional distress. In this sense, providing social support and constructive feedback can minimize the negative feelings resulting from social isolation, and correlates positively with the results of the work. The organization should also worry about the work context, and contribute to the ergonomic and technological adequacy of its employees, measures such as those described contribute to the worker feeling supported in teleworking.

The main barriers related to the adoption of teleworking consist in conciliating professional, domestic and family tasks. Abbad and Legentil (2020) point out that working in the home office system means dealing with the noises, interruptions and varied stimuli. The environment involves the presence of family members, sometimes children, and work and domestic conflicts may occur. Resources may be insufficient, such as inadequate equipment and furniture and limited access to the internet. The reality imprinted with teleworking requires workers' efforts, greater capacity for concentration and reconciliation between work and domestic activities, cognitive effort for self-regulation and emotional control. This dialogue between the environment and the form will occur in the management of such situations and can produce distress and emotional and physical exhaustion, increasing the possibilities of developing illness.

3.2 Contemporary work configurations

According to Rodrigues et al. (2020), between April and May 2020, the pandemic in Brazil caused the loss of more than one million formal jobs; an increase in the number of unemployment insurance by 39%, more than seven million people had salary reduction or suspension of the employment contract regulated by Provisional Measure No. 936/2020. According to Borges and Andrade (2020) and the ILO (2020), due to the COVID-19 pandemic, approximately 1.6 million people active in the informal economy have lost or have had possibility of losing their livelihood, thousands of companies have had their activities interrupted, which would lead to an acceleration in the number of unemployed in the formal market. Moreover, those that managed to maintain their work activities had to reinvent themselves, without being able to maintain the same quality or performance, remuneration and professional and personal well-being.

Castro et al. (2020) affirm that the precariousness and flexibility of work characterize the main transformations of the work field in the Twenty-First Century. New settings replace previous records marked by strict control over workers, such as Taylorism and Fordism. The flexibility that aims at warming the economy and increasing the number of job opportunities, is effective in the Brazilian scenario via a series of adjustments in employment contracts and changes in the consolidation of labor laws (CLT) regulated by Law No. 13.467/2017. For the authors, the labor reform allowed the flexibility in the relationship between employer and employee when it recognized new work models, such as remote or telework, intermittent work, outsourcing, making the modalities of contractual ties more flexible.

Schwab (2016), Rodrigues et al., (2020), and Bentivi, Carneiro and Peixoto (2020) claim that the formal employment model ceases to be the main work format in this new scenario. Future perspectives point to alternative work relationships, job opportunities according to specific demand, partial and temporary bonds, informal workers subject to exploratory work models (application workers). According to the new work arrangements, transformations in the work field occurs in parallel with digital evolution.

According to Bentivi et al. (2020), these impacts reach more self-employed and informal workers. Flexibility as a strategy used by organizations to adapt to the external environment and stay active produce consequences that are transferred to the workforce and that will focus on weakening and precarious bonds. Antunes (2018), in turn, states, that it was already known that flexibility sickens workers even before the pandemic, because they narrow and confuse the environments between personal and professional life.

Cardo and Lima (2020) make considerations about Law No. 13.467/2017 that regulates teleworking, emphasizing that the legal text defines it generically without establishing the responsibility of the employer; that the equipment and reimbursement of expenses borne by the employee will be provided for in a written contract; and the limitation of Article 75- and of said law, by emphasizing that the “employer must instruct employees, in an expressed and ostensible way, to avoid diseases and work-related accidents” (Brazil, 2017).

Flexibility affects work management, its conditions, organization, and the workers themselves. In precarious work, according to Vargas (2016), there is a loosening of legislation, rights and guarantees of workers. That is, making work more flexible results on precariousness. For the online dictionary of Portuguese, precariousness means “decreased quality and efficiency, make precarious, inefficient, and unsafe”. In this kind of work relationship, workers are increasingly vulnerable, and subjective conditions gain space.

For Druck (2011), and Franco and Faria (2013), precarious employment contracts weaken the worker and affect class solidarity. The precariousness subject workers to a series of mental suffering such as burnout, depression and panic syndrome (Hazan, 2013) and potentiates the mental and physical disorders triggered by the new work modality. Castro et al. (2020) points out that precarious work, characterized by flexibilization, results on risks for workers.

Remote work is accompanied by some autonomy and flexibility; however, in practice, there are higher levels of responsibility on the part of the worker, and increased pressure to achieve the goals and expected results. In this sense, this work format will affect worker's performance, motivation and well-being (Borges & Andrade, 2020; Sandall & Mourão, 2020).

Teleworking, which has intensified with the pandemic, stands out for modifying the traditional design of work affecting knowledge and social function dimensions, as well as physical and ergonomic aspects. Regarding the changes on knowledge dimensions, Borges and Andrade (2020, P.2) points out that "the work may have become more complex, difficult to execute, challenging and requiring new skills under different technological circumstances". Changes related to the social dimension of work, involving social support, interpersonal interaction or relationship and feedback were also changed. It also stands out effects concerning the physical and ergonomic aspects of the work, such as movement and posture, which were affected in the context of the home office. There are also impacts related to the meaning of the task in the virtual work environment, where the relationship with the task gained greater intensity to the detriment of the interpersonal relationship. The absence of teamwork or labor collectives results in difficulty in perceiving the results (Borges & Andrade, 2020).

When analyzing the results of teleworking, Sandall and Mourão (2020) point out that not only the individual performance of the professional should be considered, but also the working conditions, which should be provided by the organization. Therefore, defining the performance parameters expected during the teleworking is essential, since there are interference from external agents in the worker's task activity. Establishing the responsibility of the professional the elements that may influence the results is also necessary.

3.3 Effects of Teleworking on Mental Health

Remote work was created in the nineteenth century and adopted as a strategy to facilitate the movement of people and to improve management practices. In a context of pandemic, in which workers were not prepared and trained to work in this new work design, many of them have come across a feeling of anguish, anxiety and insecurity. This configuration has led these workers to review their relationship with work, and to rethink its meaning.

According to Dejours (1994), the work organization is one of the guiding factors of the worker's mental life. From the elements present in the work organization, what, specifically, can be a source of suffering or damage to health and as satisfaction and motivation must be investigated. New work relationships arise with teleworking, and therefore, investigating its effects on mental health and ways to maintain healthy levels of quality of life and well-being becomes imperative.

In a literature review on the topic, Rocha and Amador (2018) addressed the risks regarding work intensification, the difficulty of separating the environment and time for work, family, personal life; the risk of work extending indefinitely in all periods and spaces of personal life, in addition to the risk of decreasing the opportunities for professional ascent.

Jacques (2003) identified some proposed approaches in the field of mental health in its links with work, its assumptions and its articulation with psychology, particularly with social psychology. The first would be related to the theories about stress, that is, the set of theories about stress in which the use of quantitative methods and the theoretical assumptions of the cognitive-behavioral framework are privileged, in which the work being the attribute of triggering factor of the process, with greater or lesser degree of relevance. The emphasis is on quantitative methods and techniques of assessing stressors, coping strategies or stress itself. Prevention and intervention actions are focused, preferably, on individual stress management by cognitive and behavioral changes, physical exercise and relaxation practices.

Another perspective is in the Work Psychodynamics, which approaches the clinical field of psychology, in particular, the psychoanalytic framework. In this perspective, qualitative methods of collective scope are recommended, based on the clinical model of diagnosis and intervention (Jacques, 2003).

On the other hand, the epistemological and/or diagnostic approaches prioritize the identification of psychopathological frames related to the work, in which it may not be only a triggering, but also a constitutive factor. The assumptions incorporated into historical-critical social psychology are also identified in the authors' argumentation, particularly the reference to the Marxist tradition, seeking to combine the model of social determination of disease with the knowledge of epidemiological studies (Jacques, 2003).

Nevertheless, studies have focused on subjectivity and work. In this scope, studies address gender, ethnicity, work process, technological and organizational transformations. They have in common the privilege to the dimension of the experience and experiences of workers on the daily life and work as expressions of the subject at the intersection of its particularity with the socio-cultural and historical world, in which the experiences of suffering and illness are included without necessarily privileging clinical diagnoses (Jacques, 2003).

Thus, in this plural universe, the classification suggested by Jacques (2003) guides the forms of analysis of the dimension of work and guides regarding the possible relationships between health/mental illness and work, and of meanings about the role of work in the processes of workers' subjectivation.

Given the different approaches, we chose to analyze the theme teleworking from the epistemological and diagnostic perspectives of subjectivity. Some studies conducted before the COVID-19 pandemic already affirmed that it was possible to identify a set of mental disorders and their relation to violence generated by the precariousness of work, as in a study by Antunes (2018).

For Bernardo, Garrido-Pinzón and Sousa (2015), among these disorders are listed depression; burnout; post-traumatic stress disorder; dependence on alcohol and other substances. Souza (2013) corroborated the topic when found that minor mental disorders affect about 30% of employed workers; severe mental disorders, in turn, about 5 to 10%.

In addition to the research base, the psychosocial factors of analysis also stand out. Martinez (2004, p.56) states that "psychosocial factors at work are related to the interaction among and in work environment, work content, organizational conditions and worker's skills, needs, culture, personal extra-work causes, which can, due to perceptions and experience, influence health, work performance and work satisfaction".

The Brazilian Ministry of Health already warned that "among the determinants of worker health are the social, economic, technological and organizational factors responsible for living conditions and the occupational risk factors – physical, chemical, biological, mechanical and those arising from work organization – present in work processes" (Brazilian Ministry of Health, 2001, p.17).

Fonseca and Perez Nebra (2012), in an epidemiological profile study with 90 Brazilian teleworkers, found a positive correlation between more satisfied teleworkers and greater mental suffering. For the researchers, the assumption would be that the most satisfied teleworkers were more involved with work, isolating themselves from social coexistence and the search for improvement in other activities that generate meanings as important as work in the construction of the subjectivity of a healthy individual.

Although these data show mental suffering, it is complex to identify the relationship due to the difficulty of establishing a causal relationship in the relationship health/ mental illness and work (Jacques, 2007). It cannot be denied that they can be present in the execution of the activity or affect the labor capacity of individuals. The results found by Fonseca & Perez-Nebra (2012) arouse attention to the need to seek balance between social life and teleworking. The search for this balance becomes more necessary in lifestyles arising from impositions such as social isolation due to pandemics.

Thus, remote work together with social distancing and less interaction among people modifies the ways of thinking, feeling and acting. It transforms and produces new meanings and modifies the meanings assigned to the work. These meanings can connect with workers' subjectivity and are built based on the conditions and organization of work and its practices.

According to Barros, Álvaro and Borges (2018), these meanings justify “why we do what we do”. In this relationship, the meanings based on the worker’s personal and individual experience with each work modality are constructed, as well as the health-disease process.

For Borges and Barros (2015), work can promote wealth and inequality, health and illness, economic advancement and unemployment, risks, challenges and represent a series of possibilities. However, Borges and Gondim (2020) add that the division of labor is unfair, because it is meant to strengthen labor exploitation, since it is based on surplus value practices, that is, the value that the worker receives for the product or service delivered is not proportional to the real value of their work. For Codo, Sampaio & Hitomi (1995) and Vasques-Menezes (2005) the way work is structured, organized and programmed can be a source of pleasure or suffering to the worker.

Hitt, Miller and Colella (2013) concluded that the way to manage stress in organizations is to allow a certain degree of autonomy in relation to tasks, provide an adequate remuneration, assign work demands within healthy parameters, increase involvement in decision-making, provide resources for career development, improve communication, enable the improvement of skills and establish schedules allowing flexibility. For teleworking, the maintenance of quality of life and stress management should also be considered by organizations.

Teleworking is often used to balance paid work with personal life, and many studies support its usefulness for this purpose. Messenger (2019) emphasizes that Gajendran and Harrison, in a meta-analysis conducted in 2007, pointed out that workers perceive that partial teleworking has its advantages and disadvantages, but that employees involved in the studies reported, on average, a positive impression about its effects. However, the author points out that it is difficult to provide practical advice to employees, supervisors or policymakers based on these results. It is also noteworthy that the analyses were performed before the period of social distancing imposed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. These findings reinforce the need to deepen the theme, because, although studies identify that teleworking is beneficial for some workers because it facilitates child supervision and care, for other parents, teleworking does not necessarily mean spending more time with their children.

In addition to these observations, many children are also in remote studies, synchronous or asynchronous, which require parents to reconcile their own work schedules with their children’s and leisure times (Messenger, 2019). Table 1 shows the impacts and risks of teleworking in the studies surveyed.

Table 1 Impacts and risks of teleworking on workers' mental health.

Risks and impacts	Author / year
“the work may have become more complex, difficult to execute, challenging and requiring new skills under different technological circumstances”	(Borges & Andrade (2020, P.2).
It also stands out effects concerning the physical and ergonomic aspects of the work, such as movement and posture, which were affected in the context of the home office.	(Borges & Andrade, 2020).
The absence of teamwork or labor collectives results in difficulty in perceiving the results.	(Borges & Andrade, 2020).
The formal employment model ceases to be the main work format in this new scenario. Future perspectives point to alternative work relationships.	(Schwab (2016)); Rodrigues et al., (2020); Bentivi, Carneiro & Peixoto (2020).
Work-life balance.	(Messenger, 2019).
Risk of more satisfied teleworkers becoming more involved with work, isolating themselves from social coexistence.	(Fonseca & Perez Nebra, 2012).
Risk of an unfair division of Labor.	(Borges & Gondim, 2020).
Impact on the meaning of work that comes from the worker's personal and individual experience with each work modality.	(Álvaro & Borges, 2018).
They identified negative effects of teleworking, including demotivation, greater professional isolation, and less organizational commitment on days when they worked entirely at home.	(Filardi; Castro & Zanini, 2020).
Risks regarding work intensification, the difficulty of separating the environment and time for work, family, personal life, the risk of work extending indefinitely in all periods and spaces of personal life, in addition to the risk of decreasing the opportunities for professional ascent.	(Rocha & Amador, 2018).

Source: Authors.

Another aspect that telework raises to the debate is how to socialize the new members of the organization, and consequently, favor the feeling of belonging in the culture. Borges and Albuquerque (2014) define socialization as the process in which one becomes a member of an organization. Socialization understands the way in which the individual becomes part of the group and the result aims at make this individual the main subject of the process. In a comprehensive view, considering both a functionalist and a symbolic interactionist perspectives, socialization is the absorption of the rules for achieving goals, and the intervention of the individual on the environment, the activities this individual develops and the subjectivity related to the meaning of the activity performed (Borges & Albuquerque, 2014).

Insertion into a new environment may generate different responses from individuals. Thus, teleworking implies reflecting on the best strategies to promote socialization. Borges and Albuquerque (2014) emphasize that the means of socialization vary from collective or individual to the degree of sequencing of socialization and to how much the beginner should follow the predecessors. With teleworking, therefore, a new challenge arises: socializing at a distance.

Dejours (1994), Coelho-Lima and Bendasolli (2020) emphasize the importance of strengthening the bonds between informal workers by labor collectives. Practices of collaboration, solidarity and cooperation are essential in promoting mental health. Table 2 shows actions that can be implemented to ensure workers' mental health in the context of teleworking.

Table 2 Actions to maintain mental health in the context of work and teleworking

Actions to maintain mental health in the context of work and teleworking according to the authors
Sandall & Mourão (2020) point out that not only the individual performance of the professional should be considered, but also working conditions that must be provided by the organization.
To manage stress in a work context in general, a certain degree of autonomy in relation to tasks, provide an adequate remuneration, assign work demands within healthy parameters, increase involvement in decision-making, provide resources for career development, improve communication, enable the improvement of skills and establish schedules allowing flexibility (Hitt, Miller & Colella, 2013).
Seek development of teleworking practices through mechanisms that help balance professional activities and personal life of teleworkers, paying greater attention to infrastructure, technology and psychological support; and B) introduce management and control tools that aim at minimizing the lack of practice of managers in managing people in this work model, seeking isonomy in the recognition and evaluation of teleworkers (Filardi; Castro & Zanini, 2020)
Invest in practices aimed at socialization and feelings of belonging to culture (Borges & Albuquerque, 2014).
Strengthening work collectives and adopting practices aimed at promoting collaboration, solidarity and cooperation (Dejours, 1994; Coelho-Lima & Bendasolli, 2020).
Development of social, affective and instrumental skills and maintenance of productivity (Abbad & Legentil, 2020).

Source: Authors.

Thus, promoting autonomy to workers, enabling variety and identity with the task, providing social support and feedback practices in the face of this work redesign, especially regarding teleworking, minimizes the negative impacts of teleworking. Contributing to the teleworker to develop social, affective and instrumental skills, in addition to keeping them productive, is to protect them from risks and vulnerabilities (Abbad & Legentil, 2020). It is responsibility of the people management professionals to build management strategies to face the barriers and difficulties presented at work to avoid emotional impacts such as burnout, stress and other illness.

4. Conclusion

The work field experiences a series of transformations that were accelerated with the COVID-19 pandemic, changes that were already present due to the technological revolution, sanitary, economic and social conditions. Organizations and the labor market had to adapt to this scenario by becoming more flexible in relation to work arrangements and contractual ties that resulted in consequences such as the precariousness and greater exposure of workers' subjective conditions.

With the review, we could map the risks and impacts on mental health and identify possible actions to minimize them. The identified strategies result in new fields of research to identify which fields are effective to maintain healthy levels of mental health and especially by professional categories that had different adaptations and impacts due to remote work, such as informal workers, autonomous workers, application workers, who needed to rethink a new way of performing their activities. Although there is already literature on the actions, few longitudinal and field studies in the country were found in this study.

Organizations and their leaders must adopt coping strategies to minimize the negative effects to these workers, as well as the promotion of quality of life in the context of teleworking. Thus, it is necessary to build paths for workers to be protagonists and participate directly in decision-making and innovation processes related to work implementation and design, to define and establish practices and performance indicators, as well as goals and expected results of workers that are working in home office. The actions may include, in addition to clear communication, the way to organize and optimize working time, create conditions and ways to show each worker's results achieved in remote work, and, consequently, ensure the career perspective and recognition.

Managers must adopt managerial practices that support professionals and identify risks and vulnerabilities, in addition to allowing greater autonomy in the performance of tasks (Ferreira & Falcão, 2020; Sandall & Mourão, 2020; Abbad & Legentil, 2020). Regarding socialization, for example, with teleworking, the *modus operandi* should be thought to allow immersion in activities together with leaders and peers, remote socialization included, such as in the case of social isolation imposed by crises such as the pandemic.

Thus, leveraging actions aimed at promoting well-being at work and stress mitigating measures are institutional responsibilities. According to the intervention approaches in occupational psychology presented, creating an environment for listening to these workers is a way of building targeted paths for the promotion of mental and physical health. Adopting management practices that aim at providing emotional and social support, at minimizing possibilities of mental suffering and mental disorders triggered by the new work arrangements. However, the strategies should be thought together to avoid that the maintenance of mental health is treated as the sole responsibility of the worker, reinforced by the discourse of self-care.

The results reinforce the relevance of the theme and the importance of further studies with different methodological approaches, with longitudinal perspectives, with sample groups of different work classes to confirm and identify other impacts of teleworking and new alternatives of addressing them.

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