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Pula, Fundiswa

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University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

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The Hybrid Manager in the Digital World of work: South African Energy Sector

Mfundiso Pula

Student number: 1768527

Supervisor: Dr. Jenika Gobind

Wits Business School (WBS)

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TABLE OF CONTENTS **PAGE NO.**

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study 1

1.1.1 Traditional manager versus Hybrid manager 2-4

1.1.2 Energy Sector 4-5

1.2 Research Problem Statement 5-6

1.3 Statement of Purpose 7

1.4 Research Objectives 7

1.5 Rationale 7-8

1.6 Delimitation of the Study 8

1.7 Definition of Terms 9

1.8 Assumptions 9-10

1.9 Chapter Outline 10

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction 11

2.2. Background on emergency of a hybrid manager and remote work 11-13

2.3. The emergency of a hybrid manager 13

2.3.1. Flexibility 13-17

2.3.2. Proposition 1 17

2.4. Challenges for Hybrid Manager 17

2.4.1. Psychological conditions and employee engagement 17-19

2.4.2. Trust 19-20

2.4.3. Proposition 2 20

2.5. Benefits for hybrid manager 20

2.5.1. Work life balance 20-22

2.5.2. Productivity 22-23

2.5.3. Proposition 3 23

2.6. Analytical Framework 23

2.6.1. Theoretical Framework 23-24

2.6.2. Conceptual Framework 24-26

2.7. Conclusion of Literature Review 26

2.7.1. Proposition 1 26

2.7.2. Proposition 2 27

2.8. Summary 27-28

CHAPTER 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Approach 29
3.2. Research Design 30
3.2.1. Research Philosophy 30-31
3.2.2. Research Strategy 31
3.2.3. Choice of Method 31-32
3.3. Data Collection Method 32
3.4. Population and Sample 32
3.4.1. Population 32-33
3.4.2. Sample and Sampling Method 33-34
3.5. The Research Instrument 34
3.6. Procedure for Data Collection 34
3.7. Data Analysis Strategies and Interpretation 34-37
3.8. Possible limitations and challenges of the study 37
3.9. Quality Assurance 37
3.9.1. Transferability 37-38
3.9.2. Credibility 38
3.9.3. Dependability 38
3.10. Ethical Consideration 38-39

CHAPTER 4. RESULTS

4.1. Introduction 40-42
4.2. Interviews with employees 42
4.2.1. Participants experience and support from management 42-44
4.2.2. Participants experience of communication and organisational change 45-47
4.2.3. Participants experience of trust and management style 47-49
4.3. Interviews with hybrid managers 50
4.3.1. Transition period as a hybrid manager 50-52
4.3.2. Challenges of managing remote workers 52-54
4.3.3. Hybrid managers' support for employees 54-55
4.3.4. Hybrid managers learning experience 55-57
4.4. Linking findings with the propositions 57
4.4.1. Findings in relation to proposition 1 57
4.4.2. Findings in relation to proposition 2 58
4.4.3. Findings in relation to proposition 3 58
4.5. Summary 59

CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSIONS OF THE FINDINGS

5.1. Introduction 60
5.2. Proposition 1: Hybrid managers experience of remote work and employee. behaviour 60
5.2.1. Hybrid managers attitude towards remote work 60-61
5.2.2. The behaviour controls used by hybrid managers 61-63
5.3. Proposition 2: Relationship between hybrid managers control and remote. worker loneliness 64
5.3.1. Managers control and employee loneliness 64-65
5.3.2. Adoption and diffusion of remote work 65
5.3.3. Hybrid manager support for hybrid work 65
5.4. Proposition 3: Hybrid manager challenges of remote work to motivate, coordinate and control remote workers 65
5.4.1. Strategies used to motivate and control remote workers 65-66
5.4.2. Team Collaboration 66
5.4.3. Informal communication learning 66-67
5.5. Summary 67-68

CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Introduction 69
6.2. Overview of the study objectives 69
6.3. Conclusion of each proposition 69
6.3.1. Hybrid managers experience of remote work and employee behaviour 69-70
6.3.2. relationship between hybrid manager control and employee loneliness 70-71
6.3.3. Hybrid manager challenges of remote work 71
6.4. Limitations 71
6.5. Recommendations 71
6.5.1. Recommendations for hybrid manager 71-72
6.5.2. Recommendations for the organisation 72-73
6.6. Recommendations for future studies 73-74

REFERENCES 75-94

APPENDIX A: CONSISTENCY MATRIX 95
APPENDIX B: RESEARCH INSTRUMENT 96-97
APPENDIX C: CONSENT FORM TO MANAGERS 98-99
APPENDIX D: CONSENT FORM FOR INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS 100-101
APPENDIX E: ORGANSATION CONSENT FORM 102-103

List of Tables

1. Table for the participants 33
2. Key themes for the study 40
3. Naming conventions of participants 41
4. Key themes for the employee interviews 42
5. The following themes were linked to proposition1 57
6. The following themes were linked to proposition 2 58
7. The following themes were linked to proposition 3 58

List of Figures

1. Job Demand-Resource (JD-R) model 18
2. Work Human-Resource (WH-R) model 19
3. Conceptual Framework for the study 25

CHAPTER 1. Introduction

This introductory chapter provides the background to the research problem statement, research objectives, rationale, statement of purpose, terminology definitions, assumptions, and conclusions as well as the research plan chapter outlines.

1.1. Background of the study

Remote work has been around since the early 1970s when computers made information portable. Remote work can be defined as a flexible style of work between the employer and the employee, where the employee works away from the office, the employee does not interact directly with colleagues, and uses technology as a means for communication (Griffiths and Gilly, 2012). In developed countries, remote work is not new and has existed long before the influence of Covid-19 (Kossek and Lautsch, 2018). Remote workers have become known for working outside the traditional office using computers, laptops, and communication techniques and this has led to the rise of hybrid management.

Hybrid managers can be defined as the type of managers who blend information and communication technology skills with traditional management skills. The popularity of hybrid management systems has been accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic and the use of advanced technology, resulting in many jobs that can be performed remotely in a variety of industries and sectors that have never considered the possibility of working from home (Radović Marković, Stevanovic and Milojević, 2021).

Many professional, technical, and clerical jobs have been impacted using information and communication technologies (ICTs) to conduct business while mobile, at home, or at locations other than the traditional workplace (Brocklehurst, 2001; Tietze and Musson, 2005; Wilson, O'Leary, Metiu, and Jett, 2008).

Amongst these was the Energy sector, where the rise of digital technology and internet services has encouraged the development of remote work, the successful execution of remote work requires technological, social, and organisational support in the form of hybrid manager practices. Organisational processes have undergone significant and unanticipated changes as a result of the present pandemic (Covid-19), including the rise of hybrid managers. Because social distance, or the deliberate physical distance between people, had to be observed after the Covid-19 outbreak and accepted as a helpful preventive tool, remote labour became important (Prin and Bartels, 2020). ICT allows this by enabling employees to operate from any location at any time (Müller & Niessen, 2019). This study aimed at providing some understanding and explanation on how operations of businesses in the energy sector have been impacted by this development.

1.1. Traditional manager versus Hybrid manager

According to Alvesson and Sveningsson (2015), the core function of a traditional manager was to create stability and provide accounts of their work in ways that are more in line with the repetitive and everyday activities such as administration, solving practical and technical issues, providing, and asking for information, listening, and creating a good atmosphere within the organisation. A hybrid manager is an individual who merged computer literacy with business acumen and the skill of management (Earl and Lunt, 1989). Both Alvesson and Sveningsson, (2015) and Earl and Lunt, (1989) agree that the traditional manager is task-oriented versus a hybrid manager who is understood as something closer in bringing stability, administration and considering the well-being of the employees within the organisation. Managers had to adapt to new ways of working to effectively manage employees and sustain performance.

Hybrid managers need to transform in order to reach their business goals by hiring remote workers who value productive virtual environments and can succeed at work. Indeed, in this new employment reality, hybrid management is critical to the survival and growth of an organisation. If a company responds flexibly to a crisis and does not adapt quickly to new technologies, it can lose its competitive advantage and market share. However, it is more difficult to adapt traditional management methods to the environment through information and communication technology (Pulley and Sessa, 2001). Decentralized hybrid workers need to be managed by using new and complicated methods for relationship assessment, performance management, training, and communication (Flood et al., 2019).

Hybrid managers must be more democratic with employee access to information and open to conversation with employees in remote work because of the social and interpersonal distance (Montgomery, 2016). An effective manager's superior social skills, such as those associated with effective face-to-face communication, may not be adequate to lead in virtual environments, where these qualities must be combined with the capabilities to manage many virtual communications platforms. However, many of the assertions made by general management theories can also be applicable to hybrid management, according to Liu et al. (2020). According to Van Wart, Roman, Wang, and Liu (2019) the concept of a hybrid manager, Van Wart, Roman, Wang, and Liu (2019) proposed the following abilities that should be analytically examined: (a) communication (communicate clearly); (b) social (hybrid manager support remote work employees); (c) team-building; (d) technological (appropriate use of relevant information and communication technology); and (e) interpersonal skills (sense of trust, work-life balance, and support of diversity). In remote work environments, hybrid managers ought to demonstrate a more inclusive leadership style (Schwarzmüller, 2018).

Due to a lack of social skills, such as those required for efficient face-to-face communication, hybrid managers may find it impossible to manage remote employees (Romam, 2019). Hybrid managers, according to Cortellazzo (2019), should create a communication where staff members

are free to share their views, giving them a voice in decision-making, fostering autonomy, collaboration, and responsibility, and fostering a happy work environment.

From a management perspective, the key challenges posed by remote work arrangements are numerous. These challenges relate to changes such as the transition from direct monitoring to remote management, the transition from face-to-face to technology-based communication, and the difficulty in maintaining the feeling of a team when members are dispersed (Messenger and Gschwind, 2016). Therefore, it is important to effectively implement a remote work model that allows hybrid managers to effectively manage both remote and office-based workers (Kurland and Bailey, 2002; Lautsch and Kossek, 2018). Companies cannot be managed in the same way as they have in the past if they want to take advantage of the opportunities that remote work offers. According to De Vries (2019), hierarchical management structures are less effective in remote work settings and its social impact mechanisms assist traditional management. But in distant settings, this impact is mediated by advanced technologies, changing the attitudes, feelings, and actions of remote workers (Van Wart, 2019).

Building successful, autonomous, interdependent, and dedicated distant teams is a daily struggle for a hybrid manager in the energy sector (Cortellazzo, Bruni and Zampieri, 2019), and for these teams, trust is essential (Politis, 2014). Remote work involves team members who are physically separated but cooperating on a project using automated tools with little face-to-face communication (Malhotra, Majchrzak and Rosen, 2007). Coordinating tasks across different time zones, places, and cultures is difficult for diverse remote teams (Siebdrat, Hoegl & Ernst, 2014). Therefore, managing a scattered workforce increases the complexity of hybrid management (Hoegl & Muethel, 2016). According to Nayani, Nielsen, Daniels, Donaldson-Feilder and Lewis, (2018), temporospatial distance from coworkers and managers is a common work characteristic shared by distributed workers notwithstanding their diversity.

A remote setting offers chances to connect and communicate with people from all around the world (Cortellazzo, Bruni & Zampieri, 2019). Malhotra, Majchrzak, and Rosen (2007) assert that this choice allows for both thinking globally and acting locally, showcasing the creativity of such a virtual collaboration. Hybrid managers need to discover strategies for luring, retaining, recognizing, and motivating excellent people from all over the world if they want to maintain their competitive advantage in the digital world (Avolio, Sosik, Kahai and Baker, 2014).

Some scholars have emphasized that monitoring and management is an administrator's primary concern and poses a serious obstacle to the adoption and dissemination of remote work models (Kurland and Egan, 1999; Felstead, 2012; Topi, 2004). The main challenge lies in the presence of remote workers and changes in the structure of visibility (Felstead, 2012), affecting the relationship between remote workers and colleagues, and the relationship between these two groups and their managers. According to Dimitrova (2003), remote work continues to be promoted as a tool for reducing office costs and facilitating various forms of restructuring. In addition, many

scholars warned of the challenges of managing remote workers and the damage caused by the lack of team collaboration.

1.2. Energy Sector

The energy sector is one of the drivers of the economy. The increase in price of fuel affected almost everything including logistics sector and not to mention the food price increase in the retail sector. As a key contributing factor in the South African growth domestic product (GDP) it must be run efficiently. This sector requires hybrid managers who not only must know how to plan and control but must have interrelation and intercultural skills to manage and effectively communicate in a diverse team. This sector is currently evaluated in instance like Ukraine and has shown reliance by responding well under the circumstances. In the digital world of work hybrid manager faces many challenges and this study is going to focus specifically on that of the energy sector.

There are three types of remote workers in the energy sector: hybrid workers (working from home and in the office), home workers, and mobile workers. Hybrid remote workers are employees who work both from home and in the office (that is, they work half a day in the office and the rest of the day they work from home or go to the office three days a week). Homebased remote workers are employees who often work from home, but not every day. Remote workers (sales representatives) rarely work at home or in the office. They are constantly on the move and use advanced technology to conduct their daily work (Pérez, Sánchez and de Luis Carnicer, 2007). Therefore, it became evident that businesses in this industry must make sure the proper information technology (IT) support system is set up to accommodate remote workers. Information and communication technology can be seen as a crucial enabler for the energy sector, not just for remote operations but also for the terminals (depots) to improve procedures and reduce waste. The provision of information technology solutions that enable remote workers to connect, collaborate, and access content from Citrix and Share-point is crucial (Bosua, Gloet, Kurnia, Mendoza, & Yong, 2012). Remote work can be made easier and more productive with the use of high- to mid-level information technology support technologies.

In order to establish what individuals and teams need to enable communication and collaboration via (MS Team, Zoom, Skype, etc.) when working remotely, organisations in the energy sector must carefully analyze their current information technology infrastructure and the nature of the work. Legacy systems employed by some of the depots in the fast-paced technological era will fall short of enabling effective remote work (Yonder, 2021). If the energy sector continues to operate using outdated methods, it will lose its competitive edge, client-centricity, competitive advantage, and presence. Information and communication technology is rapidly evolving and pushing organisations to new levels. This study demonstrates that innovative mobile and handheld devices do indeed promote efficient job outputs. Remote work requires the ability to access content from any location (Bosua, Gloet, Kurnia, Mendoza & Yong, 2012).

Due to the high-risk environment, certain managers are more likely than others to have faith in their workers to perform well in a hybrid remote work environment. Management style has a big impact on this because traditional managers don't feel as comfortable with hybrid remote work arrangements. Hybrid managers should communicate frequently and effectively, setting clear expectations and regularly reviewing their progress (DeSilver, 2020). This could be a good starting point for managing remote workers successfully and can aid in establishing a foundation of trust.

To maximize both individual and team productivity in the energy sector, remote work necessitates a new management strategy. Such a strategy may require more effort from hybrid managers in the form of clearly defining requirements and deliverables, setting specific milestones, clearly defining how individuals and teams of remote workers must communicate, and conducting frequent follow-ups (Swart-Opperman, 2020). the hybrid manager's adaption to the new working methods can inspire remote workers to be more productive (Wang, Liu, Qian & Parker, 2020).

1.2. Research Problem Statement

The world of work is moving in a rapid pace that if organisations in the energy sector do not appoint the right individuals on strategic managerial roles will suffer the consequences of losing customers, competitive edge, and market share. The coming together of attributes to form or create a hybrid manager is what is required to compete, manage, sustain, and remain competitive in the digital world of work. Extensive work has been done in South Africa on remote work and how the information and communication technology has influenced or changed the world of work. Therefore, the study intends to investigate the role of a hybrid manager in the digital world of work in the context of the South African Energy Sector.

In terms of managing and enlisting remote workers, productivity outcomes, and welfare, as well as a quantitative component to measure daily experiences of workers on remote and non-remote working days, the always evolving technology presents a challenge to hybrid managers. The organisational lack of information, communication and technology support required for employees to be more productive hugely impacts the triple bottom-line and denies employees the opportunity to collaborate and learn new skills from the global colleagues. Therefore, from hybrid manager perspective the inherent difficulties of legacy systems may be a barrier associated with adoption of the information, communication and technology and measuring the productivity of remote workers.

Keep in mind that some organisations in this sector still rely on legacy systems, as not all legacy systems can be easily replaced. Legacy systems are defined as all business-critical software systems that are highly resistant to change and the failure can have a negative impact on the business. Software upgrading was a process of evolving an existing software system by exchanging, redeveloping, reusing, or migrating software components and platforms when

traditional maintenance methods can no longer achieve the desired system (Khadka, Batlajery, Saeidi, Jansen & Hage, 2014).

In addition, hybrid managers need to deal with employees who cannot undertake work due to loadshedding or blackouts which impose additional workload on them. Rapid technological changes make it difficult for hybrid managers and employees to keep up with the latest skills and capabilities needed to meet all the evolving demands of modern organisations. Both hybrid managers and employees need to improve their skills to effectively execute market-related strategies (Partner, 2020).

It was crucial to comprehend the significance of management because it refers to a variety of roles within an organisation, including those played by hybrid managers. A manager who possesses both solid business acumen and good technical abilities is known as a hybrid manager. Employees who are hybrids can do routine tasks in the user domain and have the technical know-how to create and implement IT application ideas. As can be seen from the definition above, the term "hybrid" has only been in usage for the past twenty years, but managers with these abilities have always existed. As a result, more of these administrators, who became more prevalent in the 21st century, are required. As a result, the phrase "hybrid management" has gained in popularity.

From the description of a hybrid manager, it is clear that a hybrid manager needs to be technically competent and knowledgeable about the organisational needs for which they work. The ability to complete tasks in accordance with organisational criteria is a hybrid manager's most crucial competency. Failure to do so might have an undesirable effect not only in production and unsuccessful communication but could affect organisations triple bottom line and put strain on decision making process.

Organisations need to have a good understanding of the role of hybrid managers. Failure to do so can have a negative impact on the organisation if there is a potential inconsistency between technology and business needs. Different business units communicate using different terms, and hybrid managers can be bilingual or close the gaps between these business units. Information-oriented, abusive business and business-consistent information systems are two distinct fields. Hybrid managers, however, face a significant problem in merging business consistent information systems with information-centric exploratory businesses. In order to advance business and meet deadlines, today's global economy requires a high level of technical expertise together with crucial knowledge regarding hybrid management skills. To bring out the finest talent in managers, it is necessary to identify and develop the essential competencies that cause them to be referred to as hybrid managers over time (CIPD, 2012).

1.3. Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to understand the role of a hybrid manager in the digital world of work in South African energy sector. The hardship of a hybrid manager transition from the old ways (traditional) of doing things and having to adapt in the ever-evolving world of work accelerated by information and communication technology is by no means a simple solution. In the energy sector, the hybrid manager requires advance technology as the key factor of a successful flexible work arrangement and the engine behind remote work. Hybrid managers must be tech savvy given that they need to empower employees to switch from remote work to office and back again seamlessly and intuitive in terms of the information and communication technology.

The ability of the hybrid manager to learn new skills, new ways of thinking, derive new attitudes and roles, and use those persuading and influencing skills to ensure that people perform even when they are not at work is crucial to the success of the organisation in the digital world of work. The capacity to be productive and sustain remote work depends on the availability and utilisation of appropriate technology. To provide effective results, organisations in the energy sector need mobile devices, content access, workspaces, personal workstations, and a supported network infrastructure. Hybrid managers require organisations support with information and communication technology to enable employees to work seamlessly from anywhere and be more productive.

1.4. Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are as follows:

1.4.1 Explore the emergence of the role of hybrid management in the digital world of work in South African Energy sector.

1.4.2 Explore the transition of non-digital manager to hybrid management in the digital world of work in South African Energy sector.

1.4.3 Examine the challenges hybrid management presents in the digital world of work in South African Energy sector.

1.4.4 Examine the opportunities hybrid management presents in the digital world of work in the South African Energy sector.

1.5. Rationale

The rapid advancement and availability of technology coupled with the sudden disruption caused by the covid-19 pandemic; organisations have been forced to let employees work remotely where this is practical. Both employees and managers were not ready for this abrupt change. Whereas before this, managers were used to monitor the work of their employees in

person, now, they have to be content with having to supervise employees who are in different locations at the same time, while supervising other employees who may be present in the work environment at the same time. This pauses a serious challenge to both the employees and managers. Especially for the hybrid manager who must now need relevant skills to manage his or her employees in the two 'worlds' so to speak.

Now the question arises as to how ready the hybrid manager was and what skills they may require now in order to succeed at their work. These questions form a greater portion of the purpose for this study. To understand the challenges faced by the hybrid manager in executing their supervisory role while managing employees working remotely and those working from the work premises at the same time. The study also seeks to explore the type of skills needed for the hybrid manager. It is also envisaged that the study will reveal the kind of support that the hybrid manager will require for him or her to perform effectively.

Given that most organisations were not ready for remote work, findings from this study will assist hybrid managers to better understand the role of a hybrid manager to help them and human resource managers make informed decisions and implement appropriate policies. Findings will also help hybrid managers to better execute processes, policies, and steps in their respective organisations. The study will also identify the skills needed for a hybrid manager to thrive in the new world of work. This may differ from the skills hybrid managers had before the Covid-19 pandemic as information and communication technology skills are now required more than before. Employees will also benefit in that the managers will have a chance to acquire the necessary skills to help them manage better, which benefits the employees indirectly. The results of the study will also contribute to the body of knowledge on this topic.

3.6. Delimitation of the Study

Delimitations are limitations or guidelines set by researchers (Newman, Hitchcock and Newman, 2015). Directors and employees from Trading & Supply, Retail, and Customer operations were representative participant samples. The participants will be chosen from the South African energy industry. Participant interviews will only take place in that region. Last but not least, the sample size only included one case study that involved a single organization-based in Johannesburg. Therefore, the findings of this study cannot be taken to be a general representation of an entire sector in the country. If more case studies for businesses in the same industry could be carried out, there would be more to learn.

1.7. Definition of Terms

The key terms used in this research report are presented in the table below.

1.7.1: Definition of Terms

***Remote work*:** remote work refers to any type of work that takes place outside of a traditional workplace and allows employees to work part-time or full-time while utilizing ICT to communicate and collaborate (Bentleigh, 2016; Bosua, 2016; DiMartino and Wirth 1990).

Hybrid remote work: agreements, either informal or formal, in which remote workers spend one to three workdays outside the office and the rest of the week in the office (Gray, Hodson, Gordon 1993; Standen 1997)

Management resistance to remote work: the definition of management resistance to remote work is a slow or complete refusal to cooperate with organisational change Stanley, Hensher, Stanley & Vella-Brodrick, 2011). Stanley, Hensher, Stanley and Vella-Brodrick (2011) added that management resistance can be intentional or unintentional in general, and that self-aware managers can manage resistance successfully within the federal government. According to Gani and Toleman (2006), any passive or initiative-taking management practices that prevent or forbid the employment of remote employees within an organisation, such as a clear refusal to permit remote work, are considered management resistance to remote work.

Employee Engagement: Maslach, Schaufeli, and Leiter (2009) define employee involvement in terms of energy and commitment, and Schaufeli, Demerouti and Baker (2010) consider motivation, absorption, and dedication as central terms in the definition of work involvement.

***Work-life Balanc*e:** defined as multiple roles" recognizes that demands of work may carry over into the individual's family life and vice versa. This created multiple role conflict (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Kirchmeyer (2000) defined as satisfaction between multiple roles" focuses solely on satisfaction with the many roles.

1.8. Assumptions

Research assumptions are things that researchers say are true but have not been proven (Milbourn, McNamara and Buchanan, 2014). The initial presumption was that this research would be adequate given a population of 12 to 15 department heads and employees of a single oil and gas business in Johannesburg (Gauteng). The final supposition was that participants would openly communicate in a way that enhanced the quality and credibility of the study's

findings The interviewees will be available when the time comes. Other assumptions are based on the research objectives because they are an example of assumption.

I. Explore the emergence of the role of hybrid management in the digital world of work in South African Energy sector.
II. Explore the transition of no-digital manager to hybrid management in the digital world of work in South African Energy sector.
III. Examine the challenges hybrid management presents in the digital world of work in South African Energy sector.
IV. Examine the opportunities hybrid management presents in the digital world of work in South African Energy sector.

1.9. Chapter Outline

This introductory chapter of research focused on providing a background for research while sharing the purpose of the research. While stating the importance of research and therefore research methodology, there are certain factors that influence the hybrid management of organisations in the energy sector. The need for academic research in this area is also provided through literature reviews, empirical research, and a brief overview of the research. In addition, the study design used in this study has been thoroughly researched and shows the division of the next chapter. The next chapter will focus on related literature.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the role of hybrid managers in the world of digital working in South Africa. Therefore, the literature review focused on the inherent difficulties associated with measuring the productivity of hybrid working. Given various elements that could have a beneficial effect on an individual's productivity, it is difficult to quantify productivity accurately in the context of hybrid employment. In order to foster a productive work environment, hybrid work demands a particular management style where frequent meetings, precise milestones, and job deadlines are necessary. This study further examines organisational culture as a key factor in contributing to the training and skills needed to effectively manage hybrid teams. The purpose is to investigate the gaps identified in the literature and apply them to the South African context.

The literature review focused on hybrid managers, covering many aspects of hybrid managers and traditional managers. Mainly focusing on hybrid manager and how they manage remote work, new ways of working, trust, flexible ways of working, and collaboration. A specific reference to the context of hybrid managers and remote work completes the evaluation of existing literature on hybrid managers and organisational culture in terms of their definitions, theories, benefits, and challenges. The literature review was performed by a thorough search of the literature using various related keywords and databases. It is important to note that flexible work, trust, work life balance and collaboration are part of this report, but some aspect of the hybrid manager such as workplace happiness, work attitudes, agile work, and production are not included.

2.2. Background on emergence of a hybrid manager and remote work

Traditionally, managers and their staff members shared a physical office and followed a common schedule. A centralised work organisation permitted managers to directly adjust, inspire, and control the work performance of their employees (Peters & Dulk, 2009). One of the major obstacles managers have been making the transition from managing through direct supervision to managing based on worker output because most businesses had to speed something they knew was coming but was not immediate and incredibly huge. There has been a significant trend towards remote work techniques as firms must discover ways to operate effectively while maintaining employee productivity. In 2020, 88 percent of respondents to a global poll by Klerk, Joubert, and Mosca (2021) reported doing regular work from home.

Employees in the majority of nations, including South Africa, were expected to work from home whenever practicable as of early 2021.

Employees in the majority of nations, including South Africa, were still required to work from home as of early 2021. Prior to Covid-19 pandemic, organisations adopted remote work purely to create convenience and good working conditions (Lin, Zhao, Gao, Lou, Yang, Musa & He, 2020). Most organisations had to adopt hybrid work as most employees want to maintain this "new norm" even after the pandemic has passed (Savic & Dobrijevic, 2022). Working at home or remotely is a flexible work arrangement (FWA) that consistently correlates with the benefits of key organisations such as: Reducing absenteeism (Schaufeli, 2013), improving economic benefits and organisational effectiveness (Khodakarami & Dirani, 2020).

However, lengthy remote work has also been found to have the following drawbacks, including social isolation and lower employee engagement (Sardeshmukh, Sharma, & Golden, 2012; Vander Elst, van den Broeck, 2017). The concept of employee experience is another crucial factor to take into account when assessing how people view their job relationships generally (Plaskoff et al., 2017), and it is connected to employee engagement strategies (Pendell, 2018). Adopting remote work is therefore necessary for the continuity and survival of the organisation, not a choice (Richter et al., 2020).

A well-established research topic in the literature on remote work is hybrid management. According to Gilson, Maynard, Young, Vartiainen and Hakonen (2015), a hybrid manager "emphasizes the significance of effective management in times of crisis, such as the current Covid-19 pandemic, and how they may play a central role in remote work functioning, particularly as they influence how a team deals with challenges and how the team ultimately adapts in the face of such challenges. Industry reports have explicitly stated some of the challenges facing traditional manager who had to transition into hybrid manager; they include promoting new hybrid management styles, managing work-life boundaries, and ensuring well-being of remote workers (Comella-Dorda, Garg, Thareja, & Vasquez-McCall, 2020). In light of the new remote work configurations, organizations must reevaluate hybrid management techniques in order to effectively manage the changing work environment (Carroll & Conboy, 2020). Waizenegger, McKenna and Bendz (2020), hybrid work may have longer work hours compared to traditional ways of working and this may negatively affect people who did not have a desire to remote work.

According to Contreras, Metzger, Beane, Dedhia, Pawlik and Ejaz (2020); Gilson, (2015); Larson & DeChurch, (2020), hybrid work is perceived as prerequisite for high performance and sustainable remote work to explore how hybrid management can be facilitated to support remote work. Management represents a rich field that has been studied from various perspectives. The practices of a hybrid manager in existing remote work literature aims to understand how traditional managers can become hybrid managers.

There is a consensus that hybrid managers working remotely are different from traditional managers and physically integrated teams. According to Gibson, Huang, Kirkman, and Shapiro (2014), hybrid managers emphasize a multifaceted role in the context of remote work and select information and communication technology (ICT) in line with the cultural specificity of remote work members. Remote work fosters a sense of community and purpose throughout the organisation and is a psychologically healthy work environment (Gibson, Huang, Kirkman, & Shapiro, 2014). Meanwhile, Zander, Mockaitis and Butler (2012) see hybrid managers as border crossers, bridge builders, and mixers because they play an important role in driving employee motivation and engagement.

The rise of remote work presents new challenges for hybrid managers in managing a mix of remote and office workers. Remote work does more than just change the work of those who are adopting this virtual work arrangement. It also imposes new demands on managers who need to interpret, adapt, and implement evolving corporate policies associated with this growing and flexible form of work. Hybrid managers often act as gatekeepers to determine if an individual has access to remote work. Hybrid managers need to learn how to work with remote employees, stay connected to them, and ensure that employees perform well, even when they work remotely. The mixed workforce poses challenges for hybrid managers related to coordination, fairness, and motivation of team social integration (Lautsch & Kossek, 2018).

2.3. The emergence of a hybrid manager

This section describes the psychological state and employee involvement (direction, philosophy, approach). It presents a review of the literature that highlights its role in effective business communication with employees. The focus is on its role in the context of the emergence of hybrid managers.

2.3.1. Flexibility

The adaptability of the workplace nowadays allows employees the freedom to select work circumstances to take part in duties connected to company. Managers use flexible work schedules to promote their companies' sought-after employers in fiercely competitive marketplaces while boosting productivity and lowering turnover (Smith & Keeling, 2015). These work routines are frequently used by employees, particularly women, to schedule time with their families and young children. This flexibility is used by a range of employees to cover routine inspections, training sessions, day trips, or vacations (Ter Hoeven & Van Zoonen, 2015).

Scenario – "*Ingrid has started a new role as Project Lead in one of the marketing teams, working from the Rosebank office in Johannesburg. She is doing very well in the role but having worked from home for the last 18 months, Ingrid has appreciated the flexibility to manage school drop offs and pick-ups with children at different schools, sharing home responsibilities equally with*

her partner. Ingrid would like to continue some of this flexibility as she moves to a new way of working".

According to Huws (1996) this model claims to see remote work as a solution to work-life balance problems. Especially for women, with increased flexibility it is easy to combine work and family responsibilities. However, Dooley (2000) argues that one of the benefits of remote work is that childcare responsibilities provide access to work for those who limit their participation in traditional work locally. Silver (1993) envisioned that this model would eliminate the traditional role of increased male participation in the home because of the lack of physical separation between work and family. This is a view that emphasizes entrepreneurship and individual freedom (Haddon & Silverstone, 2000).

2.3.1.1. Workplace flexibility

Different organisations define workplace flexibility in different ways, but the desired results are about the same. The goals of these organisations lead to results such as higher productivity, higher profitability, lower turnover and absenteeism, and better day-to-day engagement, which can bring many benefits to the organisation (Moheet et al., 2016). Flexibility strategies are a crucial tool that must be connected to the objectives of your company. They provide a range of advantages to managers, investors, and staff. Employees are increasingly seeking for companies with flexible policies and adaptable work environments. Corporate users must concentrate on establishing and promoting a culture that is consistent with these projects if they are to accomplish these desired business goals (Moheet et al., 2016).

In addition, many employees decide to stay employed by a specific business due to the flexibility of the work hours. Time is the best predictor of the harmony between work and life, according to earlier studies. This is due to the fact that it requires time to conceive. The availability of personnel to accomplish something is characterised by time. Employees must sacrifice other areas of their lives in order to focus their time and attention on one. Employees can schedule their working hours depending on life events thanks to strategic planning and flexibility, which gives them the chance to attain and enhance their work-life balance (Dizaho & Salleh, 2017; Lonnqvist & Laihonen, 2012).

The adaptability and flexibility of the workplace are viewed from several angles. Setting up business meetings, achieving performance and revenue targets, and managing a team of virtual representatives may be challenging for employers. On the other side, some workers can deem excessive work flexibility insufficient and favor a more structured workplace (Kossek, Thompson & Lautsch, 2015).

Some people have found that the term "flexible work" is corrupt and may understand it as an exclusive benefit for workers rather than as an unneeded expense for the company (Litchfield et al., 2016). Prior studies have shown that reduced physical contact, interpersonal

relationships, and collaboration between coworkers, their bosses, and clients are the main effects of flexible employment (Bartel & Wiesenfeld, 2013; Kossek, Thompson & Lautsch, 2015). People who work in flexible workspaces could feel cut off from the organisational culture and social aspects of the company as a result. In a recent study of staff members of two pioneering organisations, the findings of such distances were reported. As a result, there is less respect and understanding between flexible workers and others within the business when there is a greater physical distance between them (Bartel & Wiesenfeld, 2013).

Conflicts may arise with respect to who is granted the opportunity to work from home which may negatively impact office-based workers (Kossek, Thompson & Lautsch, 2015). Because they may be able to manage their work successfully at home or at work, many employees desire flexibility in their working environments, which leads to conflict and new problems for both employees and businesses.

Employees are typically considered to be drawn to jobs that allow them to balance their personal and professional responsibilities with time freedom. Employees believe that this flexibility allows them to be ready for work and focus on their tasks without worrying about how to monitor requests that occur outside of work. Companies can accelerate their globalization efforts by increasing availability to customer needs in different time zones around the world (Bartel & Wiesenfeld, 2013; Kossek, Thompson & Lautsch, 2015). The goal of fostering strong bonds between employees and their employers is based on the idea of work-life balance.

One of the main reasons employees select flex arrangements, in addition to work-life balance, is to allow them to work and live somewhere than the organisation's workplace. Employees can support worldwide work, for instance, and avoid long commutes by working remotely. By establishing flexible policies that allow them to keep brilliant individuals who otherwise would not have been allowed to work for the company, organisations can increase the number of applicants they can choose from. Workers are able to manage specific aspects of their career thanks to flexible work strategies. When designing work environment flexibility rules for various business needs, these distinctions are significant (Attia, Duquenne & LeLann, 2014; Kossek, 2015). The likelihood that this type of job may be completed under a flexible work arrangement increases as the amount of knowledge and abilities required to fill a position increases. The economic sector has a significant impact on the decision to work remotely (Brenke et al., 2016).

Workplaces that are not conventional have a certain efficiency that lowers absenteeism and attrition while raising employee motivation, satisfaction, and production. They consequently enhance their well-being (Al Horr, Arif, Kaushik, Mazroei, Katafygiotou & Elsarrag, 2016). These workplaces are an additional choice to conventional physical workplaces and can offer hybrid managers and the staff competent and exceptional results in terms of profitability and prosperity. Provision of benefits, which was formerly uncommon, has been the most intelligent strategy employed in recent decades. A work schedule advances workplaces that are not conventional

have a certain efficiency that lowers absenteeism and attrition while raising employee motivation, satisfaction, and production. As a result, this enhances the wellbeing of the workforce (Al Horr, Arif, Kaushik, Mazroei, Katafygiotou & Elsarrag, 2016).

Hybrid managers and their staff can achieve competent and exceptional achievements in terms of profitability and success with the management of hybrid work. The shrewdest strategy used in recent years has been the provision of previously uncommon benefits, such as on-site benefits and childcare, employee financial and psychological support programs, flexible work schedules, remote teams, work-life balance, remote work, and family life to help employees achieve their ideal lifestyle and personal satisfaction (Wadsworth & Facer, 2016). Numerous industries came to the decision that these flexible workplaces are affecting how work styles and collaboration spaces are developing. Implementing brilliant ideas also entails social and physical changes that boost productivity and morale within a business (Blok, Groenesteijin, Schelvis & Vink, 2012).

Blok, Groenesteijin, Schelvis, and Vink (2012) looked into how time zone and geographic location affected workplace flexibility and company results. Only half of the workers, according to the study's findings, successfully adapted to flexible work during a six-month period. Similar to this, some employees chose traditional offices over flexible work arrangements. Numerous studies examine the use of flexible workflows and remote collaboration to develop innovative services and products. Due to the exchange of learning experiences, team participation, and unanticipated internal contributions, remote work is advantageous for the implementation of new products and services. This will enhance the effectiveness and speed of developing innovative products (Coenen & Kok, 2014).

2.3.1.2. Remote Labour

Brenke (2016) demonstrated the existence of other fundamental characteristics of remote labour. Remote workers put in a lot of overtime hours without getting paid. Additionally, there is no correlation between remote work and a household's demographic make-up, and there is evidence that employees who need to work remotely but are prohibited from doing so are less satisfied with their jobs. Employees that work remotely on the other hand, have higher levels of job satisfaction. This study also showed that highly skilled workers, not only those who are flexible, are more likely to be employed remotely. When working from home, employees often have goals beyond just balancing work and family. There is a second reason for this that has to do with the requirement for independence and increased self-control.

The development of adaptable work tools and constant access to online information have completely transformed workplace conditions (Honan et al., 2015). Working remotely affects how innovative ideas are motivated in office settings, making group activities such as cooperation, regular virtual meetings, and continual knowledge exchange more crucial than individual execution (Blok, Groenesteijin, Schelvis & Vink, 2012). Although it is still unclear how

nontraditional workspaces will affect employees' perceptions of their wellbeing and productivity and how they will differ from traditional settings, it is clear that work-life balance increases employees' organisational engagement even though work and family obligations make them less satisfied and cause them to feel more stressed (Germeys & De Gieter, 2017).

Therefore, it is crucial for businesses to provide their employees with opportunities to better both their work and personal life in order to reduce stress at work and boost engagement (Babic, Stinglhamber, Bertrand & Hansez, 2017; Germeys & De Gieter, 2017). Without a doubt, any new working practices or programs involving working from home must occur before or concurrently with social transformation. Additionally, organisational leadership must modify the mechanisms for admiration, incentives, and awareness so that workers can support the new work practices without being concerned about negative outcomes when working outside the typical office setting (Robertson & Vink, 2012).

2.3.2 Proposition 1

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, organisations all over the world are now forced to allow workers to work remotely from home, which has increased the demand for current literature to identify hybrid management difficulties connected to virtual team or flexible work performance (Mysirlaki & Paraskeva, 2020). Due to these exceptional events, it is now more important than ever to deal with the difficulties of working with a remote workforce (Jonassen & Carr, 2020). Hybrid managers and staff are not yet properly trained on how projects can be completed in full-time remote work due to this change. The speed and dearth of academic and hybrid management research on issues with virtual teams and their causes are key contributors to this uncertainty. Due to the relevance and complexity of the subject, this study attempts to fill the present gap in the literature by examining the challenges hybrid managers have while leading teams who operate both remotely and in an office setting.

2.4. Challenges for hybrid manager represented by remote work.

2.4.1. Psychological conditions and employee engagement

The difficulties Covid-19 presents to the company highlight the value of enthusiastic people who endure and prosper during these trying times. Employee involvement is described by Wood, Oh, Park, and Kim (2020) as "a good, gratifying, motivated state of work-related well-being." Employee involvement, according to Bailey, Madden, Alfes, and Fletcher (2017), is the accomplishment of numerous organisations that represent competitive advantages (Schneider, Yost, Kropp, Kind, & Lam, 2018), among them include raising organisational effectiveness, enhancing organizational financial returns (Khodakarami & Dirani, 2020), enhancing dedication and performance, and decreasing absenteeism (Schaufeli, 2013).

Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma, and Bakker (2002), included seven components in their definition of employee involvement: work, purpose, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, challenge, and absorption (immersed in work, fully focused, fun, and engrossed in work). According to Kahn's (1990) theory, psychological safety, the availability of resources at work, and the significance of psychological work all contribute to employee involvement. Employee involvement has repeatedly been linked to this history (Anitha, 2014). Favourable history, such as work resources, good psychological states, positive leadership, and perceived organisational support, are typically associated to increased involvement (Bailey, Madden, Alfes & Fletcher, 2017; Khodakarami & Dirani, 2020). Things like abusive supervision have been linked to lower involvement (Bailey, Madden, Alfes & Fletcher, 2017).

Employee engagement is explained by the process demand-resources (JD-R) framework because of the balance between job demands and job resources (Bailey, Madden, Alfes & Fletcher, 2017; Lee, 2018). Job needs are those aspects of the process that call for prolonged physical and mental effort (for example, cognitive, or emotional) on the part of the employee (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Job sources are those organisational, social, or mental aspects of the process that (a) reduce process demands and the associated physical and mental expenses; (b) are directed at achieving work objectives; or (c) promote personal development, learning, and growth (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004).

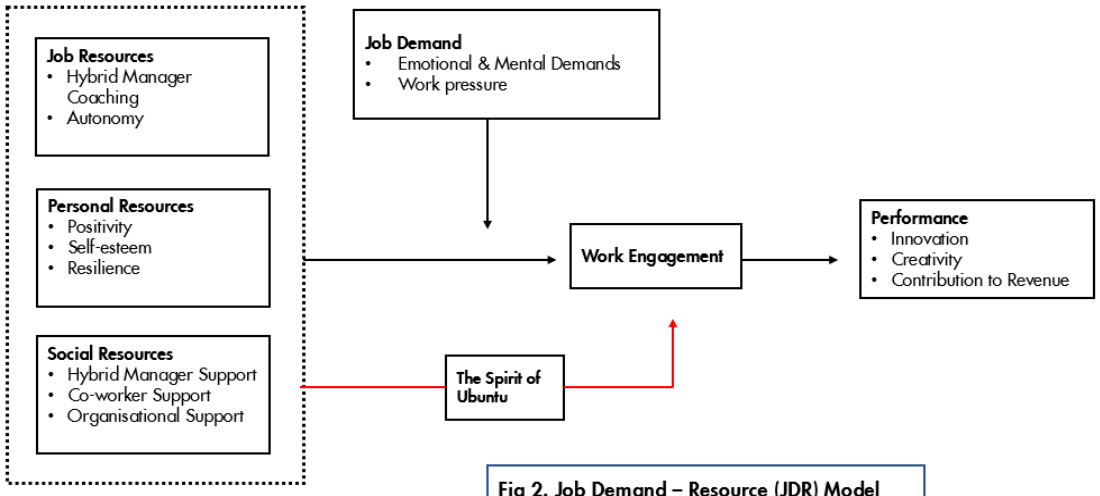


Fig 2. Job Demand – Resource (JDR) Model

Employee engagement is increased when there are more work resources available (Rudolph & Baltes, 2017; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004), but low resource availability deters employees or severe workloads encourage mental withdrawal or separation (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). The Job Demand-Resource (JD-R) model is mainly used to examine both positive and negative interactions between elements that affect engagement in family and work (Tilly & Wood, 2020).

Personal and contextual resources that can be used to enhance results at home and at work could potentially be increased in both the work and home domains (Ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012). The W-HR framework, on the other hand, also explains how the tension between

obligations at home and at work can drain personal resources. For instance, to balance job and family obligations, such as homeschooling due to working from home, the individual might need to keep working till the wee hours of the morning (Du, Bakker, & Derks, 2020). As a result of this circumstance, a person's personal resources are depleted, which eventually leads to role overload and burnout, which is likely to put a pressure on contextual resources (Klerk, Joubert, & Mosca, 2021; Dong, Du & Gardner 2020).

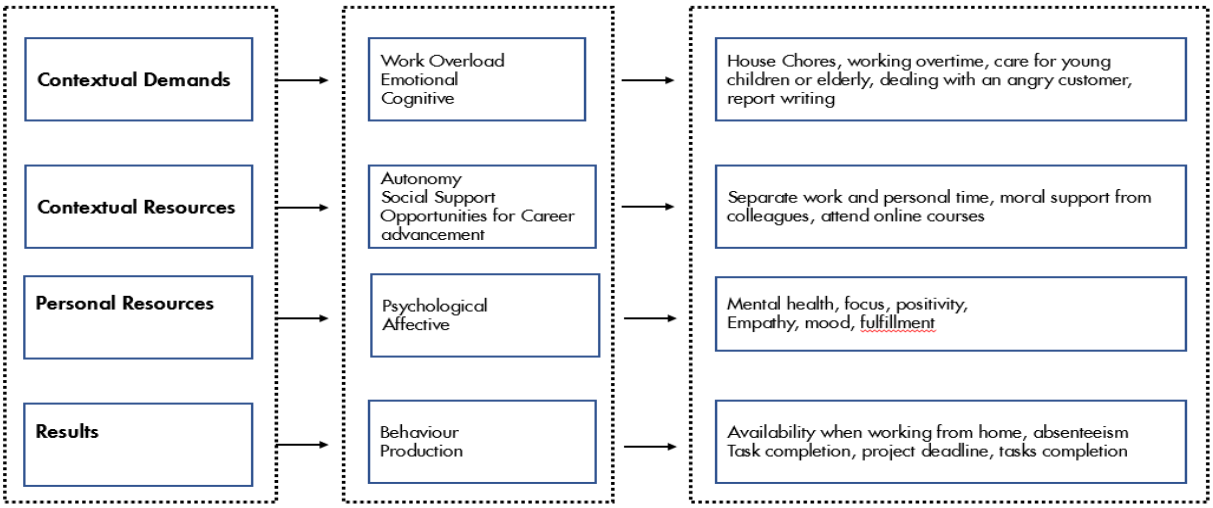


Fig. 3 Work Human Resource (W-HR)

An important psychological process that enables workers to recover from their work-related exertion is psychological detachment, or the feeling of being apart from the workplace (Bakker, Du, & Derks, 2019). By mentally distancing themselves from work-related concerns, people can cease using up the personal resources necessary for productive work. When personal resources are available, one should try to prevent negative work-to-home spillover and to encourage the replenishment of exhausted personal resources (such as engagement) to have a positive impact on wellbeing (Bakker & Oerlemans, 2019). Therefore, it stands to reason that working from home would enhance personal resources and encourage psychological detachment from the workplace. Bakker and Oerlemans (2019) observed that dwelling on work-related issues frequently while working from home reduces one's capacity for psychological distancing and efficient use of one's own resources. Thus, the long-term impact of working from home on resources and wellbeing is unclear and needs more research.

2.4.2. Trust

Prior to Covid19, many employers were hesitant to accept remote work because they expected challenges in terms of monitoring the organisation of their work and the performance of their employees. Hybrid managers lacked trust in their subordinates. However, the new reality created by the advent of the pandemic has influenced the gradual change of such deep-seated ideas that have been collectively nurtured over generations (Radović Marković, Stevanovic, & Milojević, 2021). Trust has proven to be an important factor in managing virtual teams and is

built by setting accurate, mutually understood expectations. According to Titus, Parker and Covin, (2020), "the remote work arrangement is an opportunity for managers to" let go "and build trust by employees, without making the stereotyped assumption that working from home is an excuse for lazy people. Scrutiny is usually applied when both hybrid manager and employee are working in the same place. Not all personality types work equally well outside a structured office. Certain personality types, such as introversion, have been shown to adapt better to work at home, but extroversion, who enjoys sharing ideas from others, has more problems. Therefore, the flexibility and adaptability of operational procedures and new routines can lead to better results. But to embrace flexibility and adaptability, hybrid managers need to take a step back and learn to trust more.

Trust serves as the foundation for social control and coordination in these self-managing teams and trust is what distinguishes a virtual organisation, according to Davidow and Malone's (2020). When a party is in a trust relationship, they are "willing to be susceptible to the acts of another party based on the anticipation that the other will do a certain activity that is significant to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party" (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995). Trust enables team members to engage in unauthorized or unsupervised activities that may be annoying or dangerous due to the behavior of other team members (Jarvenpaa & Shaw, 1998). When there is uncertainty or risk, confidence is necessary (Jarvenpaa & Shaw, 1998).

As virtual organisations expand their operations internationally, the uncertainties and risks faced by virtual teams can increase. In this situation, the virtual team becomes a global virtual team with team members representing cultural and national diversity, and virtual interactions replace all or most face-to-face interactions. In a worldwide virtual team whose members lack formal control or power over one another and must deal with a great deal of uncertainty, trust is crucial. However, many of the social situations that support the conventional definition of trust are eliminated by virtual contexts (Bradach & Eccles, 1989; Powell, 1990). Trust can be influenced by a number of things, including: (a) close personal connections with frequent face-to-face contacts; (b) shared social or demographic traits or affiliations (face-to-face interactions). acts as a stand-in for), (c) anticipated connections, and (d) cooperative conduct (Sitkin & Roth, 1993). The first three of these elements are not present in global virtual teams because of their virtual and global nature. Devereaux-O'Hara and Johansen (1994) how do local hybrid managers build trust among team members scattered from South Africa to United Kingdom and Nigeria to Krakow, who are unlikely to meet in person? it is important to note that building trust can be one of the challenges in the hybrid work and remote work can easily create psychological detachment.

2.4.3 Proposition 2

Managers used to watch employees physically and monitor performance in person. With the new work environment that allows employees to work remotely, it must be challenging for the hybrid manager to manage their employees and their performance. Trust that the manager has in employees to do their work while not at the office and even producing more introduces new challenges for the hybrid manager. This study will explore this phenomenon to gauge the impact of trust on the management of employee performance by the manager.

2.5. Benefits for hybrid manager represented by remote work.

2.5.1. Work life balance

The functionality of managing the stableness of work life balance and stay competitive and dynamic at workplace at the same time as balancing and preserve a healthy and happy lifestyle despite dealing with strain at place of business is work life balance (Kundnani & Mehta, 2014). Work life balance may be described as reaching harmony (agreement) and pleasure in each domain names of private and expert lives. It is taken into consideration that work and own circle of relatives are maximum crucial domain names in any individual's lifestyle. It has been found that each the worker and the employer have understood the significance that there must be an agreement among wok and an individual's private lifestyle, and it must be suitable for both parties (employee and employer). But the stability among work and private lifestyle is essential for any worker or an organisation as it is recognised that there may be a sturdy connection exists among the gratification of worker and the stability of labour and lifestyles. It is noted that remote workers usually revel in extra gratification, minimal conflicts in work, and elevated activity overall performance if they have managed over their timetable of work and vicinity. When remote workers are supplied with numerous alternatives associated with work like they can tailor their timings and vicinity of work on their very own so constructive balance that may be created outside and within the organisation.

Thus, it is imperative for hybrid managers to comprehend that flexible work styles affect the performance of each individual (Campbell, Reyes-Picknell & Kim, 2015). Normal exercise in the domestic workplace usually involves working hours from 8 am to 4 pm, Monday to Friday, with strict time limits (Lirio, 2017). A question then rises as to why a balance in life and work is vital? The research will display that a work life balance will play a significant and vital role in an individual`s life (Lee & Sirgy, 2019). In addition, the research will show that remote working to a certain degree has played a significant role in the work life balance of employees. Additionally, the study will show that there is a gradual reduction in family and work conflicts when employees lean towards remote work (Barbuto, Gilliland, Peebles, Rossi & Shrout,2020). Remote work intensifies the communication between employee and family members as an individual is bound to spend most of the time with family whilst performing the home chores. As a result, this enables

the employee to maintain work life balance (Salomon & Salomon, 1984). Remote work enhances the ability of the employee to balance the demands better of a working life with the family (Nicklin, Cerasoli & Dydyn, 2016). The employers need to be mindful that they need to invest money in technology to enable effective communication so that employees can be able to work remotely (Leonovica & Licite, 2020).

Virtual offices and traditional offices differ in their ability to create and transcend the boundaries between home and work roles. In traditional offices, employees tend to work at specific times and places, requiring psychological effort. In some cases, employees must stay in the office longer to get their work done as soon as possible. Remote work has increased flexibility to the employees in their repetitive schedule which does not require for the employees to be physically present in the office. Therefore, employees have a flexibility to allocate and manage their time based on their needs such as attending school meetings, doctor's appointment, exercise, etc. that normally was an interference in conventional office during normal office hours (Austin & Gamier, 1998). Remote work has a potential of attracting, commit, and engaging scare and valuable employees, enhancing the efficiency of organisation concurrently and the work life quality of employees (Bleijenbergh, Peters & Poutsma 2010).

The everyday existence of a person is impacted with the aid of using the interplay which they have got among their work and home and this outcomes in a wholesome work existence balance. It is likewise found that the remote work ends in the stepped forward existence and work balance of employees, and it is far noted and observed in literature the most effective (Ismail & Spinelli, 2012). Remote working may be taken into consideration as an amazing alternative for majority of the organisations as it affords employees with flexibility for handling their personal running hours together with the goal that this flexibility could be resulted as a high-quality result of extra satisfaction, much less anxiety, enhanced productivity as it gives extra time to employees to spend with their families. Additionally, remote work is viewed as a way to enhance life quality of employees (Mann & Holdsworth, 2003).

Remote work is a method for reducing work and family conflicts by enabling employees to organise, plan, coordinate, and plan their personal and professional lives. Additionally, by enabling workers to spend more time with their family, remote employment helps them improve their work-life balance. The likelihood of conflicts between work and life that can arise when family obligations are involved is the most crucial factor in work-life balance. In order to avoid conflicts between family and work obligations, it is vital to make a clear distinction between the two. Remote work, work life balance and flexibility seem to reduce conflicts on employees (between work and home) and maintains a healthy work life balance and lifestyle (Sarbu, 2018).

2.5.2. Productivity

Employee's productivity was probably one of the most important factors affecting an organisation's performance and success (Wiener, Saunders & Marabelli, 2020). Scholars and researchers have been attempting to pinpoint and explain what motivates particular human behaviour for a very long time (Maslow, 1946; Vernon & Bedford, 1926). Various factors, such as a need for capital goods, globalization, technological advancements, innovation strategies, or a combination of organisational and human factors, have contributed to the establishment of productivity levels (Zaghloul & Trimi, 2017).

While the importance of measuring productivity in the workplace is well known, there is surprisingly little research on this subject (Jääskeläinen, Laihonen, Lönnqvist, Palvalin, Sillanpää, Pekkola, & Ukko, 2012). Regular measurements of productivity-related variables are made for inputs, outputs, and returns. However, while personnel traits, skill growth and learning, and customer-perceived results are thought of as more significant indicators.

Previous studies have demonstrated that typical office efficiency will increase if employees are distributed to various workspaces of their choosing rather than set workstations (Jeyasingham, 2016). The connection between the physical workplace and employee productivity has been the subject of some research. The influence of workplace environment (plan, work area, space, style, light, noise) and architectural aspects are the authors' and researchers' primary areas of interest (Al Horr, Arif, Kaushik, Mazroei, Katafygiotou & Elsarraga, 2016). Numerous studies have demonstrated that the physical working environment can have an impact on employees' health and well-being in addition to their productivity (Al Horr, 2016, Kamarulzaman, 2011, Yousefizadeh & Ghoddusifar, 2016).

Belmen (2016), researched and established a new tool for managing work productivity, a scale that monitors work productivity and helps key stakeholders in an organisation such as hybrid managers. When employees become uncomfortable in the workplace, they tend to feel stressed and tired, which impacts work productivity. In this sense, human reaction to their environment determines their production level and motivation at work (Chin, Chua, Ong, Tan & Wong, 2016).

Pohling, Buruck, Jungbauer, and Leiter (2016) revealed that levels of absenteeism and productivity lost due to health issues might be lowered by general wellbeing, but not by all components of work life (workload, values, control, and rewards). Employee performance and welfare are impacted by identity formation in relation to work environments, according to Greenaway, Cruwys, Haslam, and Jetten (2016). The living and working environments have an impact on an employee's cognitive and mental well-being. Employees in organisations often experience favorable outcomes as either job fulfillment or high performance when they have a sense of identification with a group. When considering ideas connected to worker involvement and well-being, Whiteoak and Mohamed (2016) provide an alternative viewpoint on productivity.

Recent economic studies demonstrate how completing work outside of the workplace reduces employee efficiency, aside the value of remote work as a selected work approach (Coenen &

Kok, 2014). One of the reasons for this can be the challenge of finding the right measure of productivity. In addition, separating workplace variables from various productivity-related factors can be equally difficult (Dutcher, 2012). All in all, the productivity of the office environment is tuned by the wage rate, but the productivity level when working from home is not so well defined (Brown, Tooth, Bullard, Thomas, Chiverrall, Plater & Aalto, 2017).

In conclusion, results used to evaluate employee validity and productivity have historically been expanded to incorporate new tests, such as workplace inefficiency. Uninterrupted Internet connection in most offices is one well-known example of unproductive working behavior. When employees use the Internet for personal or non-job-related activities while at work, this is referred to as cyber slack (O'Neill, 2014). Bored, impulsive, and procrastinating workers are more inclined to utilize the Internet as a diversion from the necessary task. In the end, it is the responsibility of the organisation to create a setting that will increase everyone's productivity.

2.5.3. Proposition 3

Remote work has necessitated the emergence of the hybrid manager. New challenges and opportunities have been introduced as a result of these changes. The current study seeks to determine the benefits associated with remote working and how the hybrid manager can benefit from these benefits.

2.6 Analytical Framework

2.6.1 Theoretical Framework

Conventional managers and their staff members shared a workplace or an office and worked on a shared timetable. These managers could directly coordinate, inspire, and manage employees' work effort due to the centralised work setup. Additionally, it addressed the necessity for employees to amass industry-specific expertise. Trusted workers needed a common history, conventions, and values in order to communicate, work together, and complete the task at hand. An ongoing job relationship ensured this. Van der Wielen and Taillieu (1994) asserted that being present in the regular workplace or office constituted working, whereas being absent did not.

Modern information and communication technologies (ICT) have made it possible to conduct work that is more and more independent of time and place. Nonetheless, hybrid managers could feel compelled to spend time with their staff. By working from home, remote workers are out of sight, making it difficult, if not impossible, to directly been monitored by hybrid managers. Also, traditional time-spatial labor patterns once served as a guide for the temporal boundaries that traditional managers were permitted to impose on their subordinates. Due to the blurring of work and personal life due to home-based remote workers, hybrid managers' jobs are made even more difficult (van der Wielen and Taillieu, 1994).

Due to remote workers' enhanced potential for acting in an untrustworthy manner, hybrid managers' worry about the work being done correctly is likely to grow as a result of their flexibility in terms of time and space. According to Williamson, 1985; Powell and Mainiero, (1999), hybrid managers supporting remote work are required to evaluate the costs and hazards associated with doing so in order to reduce uncertainties. Conventional, managers are paid more for the outcomes they deliver in their various divisions than for the care they show for the work-life balance of their remote employees. It is reasonable to assume that the hybrid model will necessitate greater managerial effort, which is less likely to be supported by individual hybrid managers (Powell and Mainiero, 1999; Williamson, 1985). According to research by Huws (1990), hybrid managers are hesitant to embrace home-based remote work due to concerns about coordinating remote work schemes and supervising employees who work outside of the office.

According to theory, hybrid managers who promote remote work and permit subordinates to operate virtually offered two solutions to the problem of uncertainty. To address issues with uncertainty, strategy number one was to consider new methods for coordinating, inspiring, and managing distant personnel. A second strategy was to stop directly controlling remote workers and start to trust them. The majority of remote work arrangements are high-trust work forms because, according to the research on distant work, the second way is used more commonly (Handy, 1995; Huws, 1990; Leeds and Leeds, 2002; Standen, 2000).

2.6.2 Conceptual Framework

This study examines the nature of the relationships between the pertinent phenomena, such as employee engagement, flexibility, trust, work-life balance, and productivity. The purpose of this study is to examine the role of a hybrid manager in the digital workplace of the South African energy sector. An organisational decision-making framework for hybrid management or remote work is presented in Figure 1 along with elements that may influence these decisions. It can be predicted that hybrid managers or organisations supporting remote work will evaluate the congruence of the remote work with existing systems within an organisation in light of the literature on remote work and Hofstede's thesis on national cultures (Russell & Daniels, 2018).

The culture within the organisational context in which workers operate, as well as the particulars of remote work, all influence the hybrid manager's attitude toward remote work in the energy sector. The hybrid manager should show willingness to subordinates or employees who wish to work remotely if they are operating in an organisational environment that is more favorable to it. The hybrid manager must personally believe in each employee until that belief is betrayed due to poor performance, and must be willing to distribute authority (Council, 2020).

An organisation's ability to support remote work therefore solely rests on the nature of that activity. The organisational support conditions also affect the respective weights of the remote work features and requests.

Figure 2.1. Conceptual Framework for the study

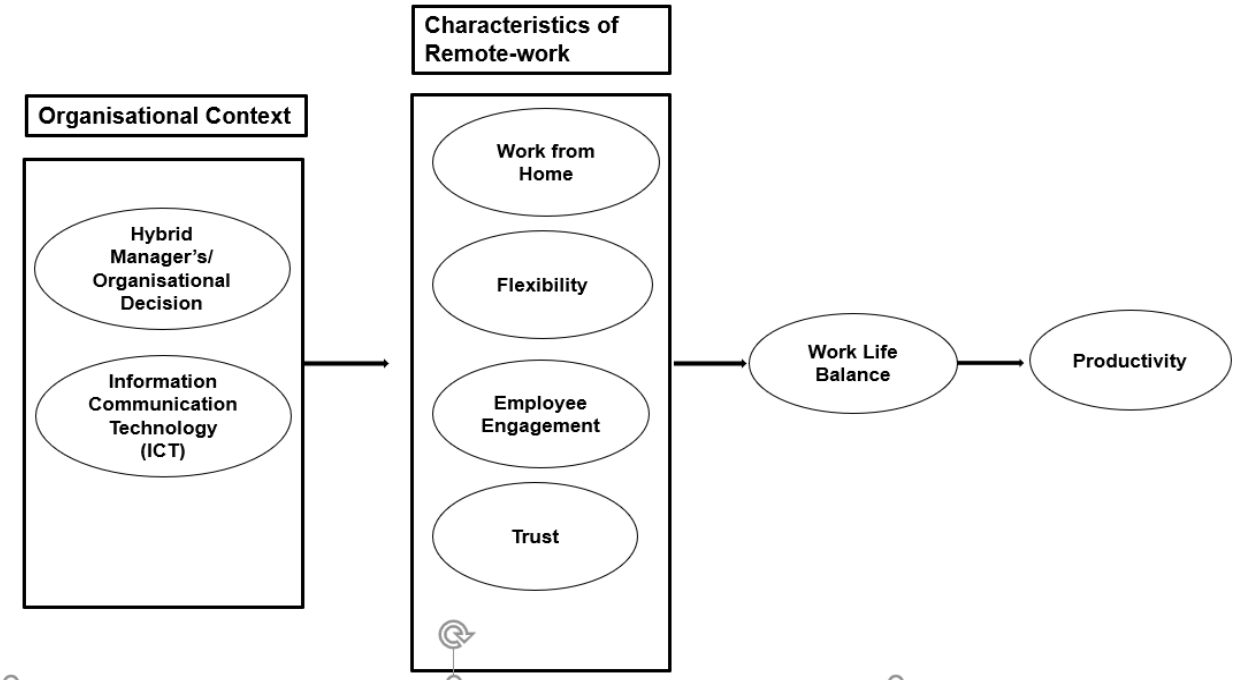


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of Hybrid Manager Decision Making

2.6.2.1. Organisational Context

Hybrid managers may respond in a variety of ways to issues with remote work uncertainty. Hybrid managers may need to use alternate forms of control while managing remotely or they may choose to put their trust in remote staff. Characteristics of both the corporate framework and distant work will influence how much confidence particular hybrid managers may be ready to extend to subordinates (Council, 2020). The organizational settings that are thought to favor remote work and, as a result, increase the trust of hybrid managers. Managing remote workers, according to Russell and Daniels (2018), can bring together several articles on remote work management difficulties. The assumption that managing remote employees requires a particular organisational culture, structure, management style, and supporting management systems, all of which are necessary to both reduce the uncertainty of hybrid managers and to simultaneously empower remote employees, should be the organizational starting point.

2.6.2.2. Information communication and technology (ICT)

The core value of control, according to Stanley and Standen (2000), affects how technology is used as well. Information, communication, and technology (ICT) may make it possible to monitor activities in particular jobs very precisely, such as order-to-cash (OTC) and order-to-deliver (OTD) telephone call centers Stanley & Standen, (2000) by making information readily available to

employees and facilitating quick decisions. Information and communication technology (ICT) can be utilised to improve delegation of authority. Hence, open communication between remote workers and coworkers, between remote workers and hybrid managers, is considered to be crucial using information communication technology (ICT) services such as Microsoft Teams, Skype, Yammer, (Peters & Den Dulk, 2003).

2.7. Conclusion of Literature Review

As managers no longer regularly interact with employees, one of the largest obstacles for hybrid managers is making the transition from direct supervision to employee performance or output-based management. To properly manage hybrid teams and still achieve high performance, hybrid managers must acquire potentially new ways of thinking and acting. Hybrid managers need to think about how they can work together with the hybrid teams. It is crucial to remember that not everyone is suited for remote work. Hybrid managers must therefore look for specific abilities when employing new staff members, as well as for independent and volunteered talent. One of the areas with the fastest rate of growth is the energy sector, which demands special ability and abilities from management and employees.

Prosperity in a remote work environment means happiness for managers to adapt the structure of the company to reduce hierarchies, develop new skills, build long-term and reliable relationships with employees, and protect employees. It means that hybrid managers need to stay competitive while having a real interest in both the organisation and employees. Similarly, successful hybrid managers need to be able to integrate and lead effective hybrid teams to achieve their organisation's goals. Successful implementation of hybrid work requires technical, social, and organisational support. The advent of digital technology and Internet services will drive the advancement of hybrid work.

2.7.1. Proposition 1

Organisations must adapt to digital changes in order to retain employees and increase revenue to survive as the world will not bounce back to the old ways of working and living. In the face of this transition, hybrid managers and employees must be fully prepared for how to run projects remotely full-time.

2.7.2. Proposition 2

It is the hybrid manager's job to find an effective way to lead a hybrid team, as for some organisations, especially in the Energy sector hybrid work may be the future way of working due to the nature of the industry. Building trust through communication and setting clear expectations and accountability may be the first step of building an effective and efficient hybrid team.

2.8. Summary

To properly manage hybrid teams and still achieve high performance, hybrid managers must acquire potentially new ways of thinking and acting. Hybrid managers need to think about how they can work together with the hybrid teams. Worldwide businesses have embraced hybrid workplaces, forcing a growing proportion of workers to participate in full-time remote teamwork. Due to Covid-19's acceleration of remote work, there is now a greater need for current research to highlight the difficulties in hybrid management that arise from the performance of virtual teams or flexible work schedules (Mysirlaki & Paraskeva, 2020).

Traditional managers used to collaborate with their employees in the same environment and monitor their performance in person. With the new work environment which allowed employees to work remotely, this must have brought challenges for the hybrid manager to manage their employees and their performance. Trust that the manager has in employees to do their work while not at the office and even producing more introduces new challenges for the hybrid manager. It can be predicted that hybrid managers or organisations supporting remote work will evaluate the congruence of the remote work with existing systems within an organisation in light of the literature on remote work and Hofstede's thesis on national cultures (Russell & Daniels, 2018).

The hybrid manager had showed willingness to support their employees who wish to work remotely if they are operating in an organisational environment that is more favourable to it. The hybrid manager must personally believe in each employee until that belief is betrayed due to poor performance, and must be willing to distribute authority (Council, 2020). Hybrid managers may need to use alternate forms of control while managing remotely or they may choose to put their trust in remote staff. Information, communication, and technology (ICT) may make it possible to monitor activities in particular jobs very precisely, such as order-to-cash (OTC) and order-to-deliver (OTD) telephone call centers Stanley & Standen, (2000) by making information readily available to employees and facilitating quick decisions. Information and communication technology (ICT) can be utilised to improve delegation of authority.

CHAPTER 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the research methodology used in this research study. This study relied on qualitative methodology that used semi-structured interviews, or the interviews means as described by Good (2000), as tools of collecting, preparing, and analysing data for research (Good, 2000). However, the inductive approach has been chosen for the purposes of this qualitative study. The structure of this section is as follows: section 3.1 research approach, section 3.2 research design, section 3.3 data collection methods, section 3.4 population and sample, section 3.5 the research instrument, section 3.6 procedure for data collection, section 3.7 data analysis strategies and interpretation, section 3.8 possible limitations and challenges of the study, section 3.9 quality assurance, section; and 3.10 ethical considerations.

3.1. Research Approach

The research approach used in qualitative research is the inductive approach. Qualitative research is defined as "study of the nature of a phenomenon" and included "quality of phenomenon, various symptoms, situations in which it occurs, or perspective at which the phenomenon can be perceived", but "range, frequency, and perspective of the phenomenon". Their position in an objectively determined chain of cause and effect (DePasquale, Davis, Zarit, Moen, Hammer, & Almeida, 2016).

Some of the motivations behind the creation of the general inductive analysis approach include the following:

I. Condense a voluminous and diversified body of raw text data into a condensed, summary form.

II. to establish clear links between the research objectives and the summaries of the findings generated from the raw data, and to ensure that these links are both evident (able to be demonstrated to others) and justifiable (in light of the objectives of the study); and

III. to develop a model or theory outlining the fundamental arrangement of experiences or processes that are plainly visible in the text data (Thomas et al., 2006).

This study used an inductive approach because this would enable the researcher to get first-hand insights on how hybrid management systems are put into practice within this organisation. The interviews gave an opportunity for the employees and employers to provide their individual perspectives/understanding on the role of hybrid managers based on their individual experience. Gale (2013) and Charmaz (2014), used interview questions as lenses to identify key ideas and topics. The prospect of enforcing a predetermined outcome is eliminated when a theme is extracted from raw data utilising an inductive methodology (Bradley, Curry, & Devers, 2007; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Walker, & Myrick, 2006).

3.2. Research Design

Conway (2006), defines study design as a study plan that provides an overall framework for collecting, measuring, and analyzing data. Sedibe (2012), define it as a plan for choosing topics, interview locations, and data collection methods to answer interview questions. They also point out that the goal of sound study design is to produce results that are judged to be dependable. For Durrheim and Tredoux (2004), research design was a strategic framework for behavior that acts as a bridge between research questions and the execution or implementation of research strategies.

The qualitative research tools were the utmost suitable in this instance. Open-ended inquiries were used by qualitative researchers to examine the causes and practices of the phenomena (Lee & Krauss, 2015). For a deeper knowledge of the human experience, qualitative research techniques are more appropriate (Nelson, 2017).

3.2.1. Research Philosophy

The research philosophy used in this study is interpretivism. Interpretivism essentially assisted the interviewer to promote the value of qualitative data in the search for knowledge (Kelliher, 2011). In essence, this philosophical and scientific paradigm addresses the uniqueness of a particular situation and contributes to the fundamental pursuit of depth of context (Myers-Scotton, 1997). Like positivism, interpretivism has historical roots in anthropology. However, it is sometimes called anti-positivism because it opposes positivism (Flick, 2014). Interpretivism afforded the interview participants to argue their truth and knowledge which are subjective and are culturally and historically based on individual experiences and their understanding.

It has its origins in the fact that approaches for comprehending knowledge in the humanities and social sciences differ from those utilized in the natural sciences. Human's act based on their interpretation of their world because the world does not interpret itself (Hammersley, 2013). Instead of accepting a single truth that can be discovered through measurement, interpretants adopt a relativistic ontology in which a single phenomenon can have different interpretations. In reality, rather than attempting to generalise the base of understanding to the entire population, academics often prefer to better comprehend the phenomena and its complexity in its own context (Creswell, William, Hanson, Vicki, Plano & Morales, 2007).

In a similar vein, Hammersley (2013), emphasizes that interpretivist assisted the interviewer to understand "the diverse ways of seeing and experiencing the organisation through different contexts and cultures" and try to avoid the bias in studying the events and people with their own interpretations. This is because multiple interpretations develop among human relationships. In the discussion that follows, several benefits of this paradigm are presented from this

perspective. The first benefit is that interpretivist researchers can better comprehend phenomena in their social context by using a variety of perspectives to examine phenomena.

Additionally, interviewer conducted these kinds of research or interviews in a natural setting by using key methodologies like grounded theory, ethnography, case studies, or life histories to gain insider knowledge of the research's objects (Tuli, 2010). This will enable the interviewer to provide more accurate information about the research object. Second, by utilizing the interactive interviewing technique, which "allows researchers to examine an interviewee's thoughts, values, prejudices, perceptions, attitudes, feelings and perspectives, researchers can investigate and prompt things that we cannot perceive" (Wellington & Szczerbinski, 2007). In this approach, the useful information gathered gives researchers improved understanding for eventual action.

3.2.2. Research Strategy

This study will employ a qualitative case study methodology. Melnikovas (2018), claim that a case study technique entails conducting research using a variety of sources of evidence in the setting of real life. Case study research, in the words of (Ridder et al., 2017), scientifically enquires into a real-life phenomenon in-depth and within its environmental context. Such a scenario can involve a person, a group, an organisation, an occasion, or an issue. This approach is taken because the study's participants will be questioned at work, in the context of their surroundings.

Contrary to experiments, the surrounding circumstances will not be under control but rather be a part of the inquiry. There is no sample that adequately represents a larger population in case study research; the sampling is not random. Interviews, archives, and participant observation are prioritised in data collecting for within-case and across-case studies (Nakkeeran et al., 2016). One of the possible benefits of a single case study is the thorough description and analysis to learn "how" and "why" things happen. The case data can help with the creation, extension, or testing of a theory by identifying patterns and linkages (Gomm, Hammerseley & Foster et al., 2000).

3.2.3. Choice of Method

The choice of method used in this study was a qualitative study. It is defined as an iterative process in which an improved understanding of the methodical community will be achieved by making new and important distinctions that may arise from the approach to the phenomenon under study (Aspers & Corte, 2019). According to qualitative researchers, generalizations are unreliable, and the world is complex, dynamic, interrelated, structured, delicate, unpredictable, and understandable through storytelling. It is really comfy to delve into the location's specifics (Malterud, Siersma & Guassora, 2015). Create concepts that make it easier to grasp social phenomena using texts, words, and dialogues (Gephart, 2018; Yauch & Steudel, 2003).

This type of method allowed for researching, recording, examining, and translation of participants perspectives and subjective meanings of their experiences (Patton, 2015). In order

to understand a small range of participants' worldviews rather than the physical realities of objects, qualitative investigations have a humanistic focus (Gephart, 2004), are sensitive to element and study environment (Mayer, 2015; Doz, 2011), and check out hypothesis on large samples (Gelo & Braakmann, 2008).

This approach was unstructured, more open-ended, and flexible. Therefore, it allowed participants to raise issues that they considered important. Interview participants could reveal their views on the phenomenon under investigation without forcing the interviewer to pre-determined concepts or opinions. This was key to the research as flexibility and openness of qualitative research has the potential to reveal new phenomena (De Massis & Kotlar, 2014; Doz, 2011; Sinkovics & Alfoldi et al., 2012; Yauch & Steudel, 2003).

1.3. Data Collection Methods

This study used the semi-structured interview method as an ideal way to collect participant data. Semi-structured interviews consist of several important questions that will help in defining the area to be investigated. However, the interviewer or respondents can also deviate and pursue ideas and answers in more detail. The flexibility of this approach is important to participants, especially when compared to structured interviews; however, it also refines data that may not have been previously considered relevant by the interviewer (Ryan, 2018). This approach will facilitates conducting virtual (via Microsoft Team, Zoom etc.) or face-to-face interviews, allowing interviewer to gain deeper understanding and insight by asking detailed questions and asking participants for clarity when answers are unclear.

The Covid-19 epidemic is one of the reasons this study exists, but at the same time the biggest problem is that organisations allow employees to work remotely (office and home). Therefore, this will limit the possibilities of finding the suitable participants in conducting interviews for this research study.

3.4. Population and Sample

3.4.1. Population

This study used a targeted sampling method. The participants population of this study were intermediate to advanced hybrid managers and employees in the Trade and Supply (T&S), Retail and Customer Operations (Cusops) divisions in the energy sector organisation based in Johannesburg, Gauteng, South Africa. Hybrid managers and employees participating in this interview were selected on the criteria of having had at least a minimum of three years of experience within the organisation. This will give an insight into how the office environment have evolved before and after Covid-19 pandemic and also, individuals will be able to provide some perspective of the change based on personal experience.

The managers and workers in the Energy sector who are qualified to reply to the research questions are listed in the table below. All of the managers and staff members taking part in this study have worked for the company for more than five years. People are the ones who have witnessed the organisation's evolution in the era of the digital workplace.

3.4.1.1. Table for the participants

Description of participants	Number of participants	Number of years with organisation	Number of interviews
Senior Managers	3	>5 years	3
Middle Managers	5	>5 years	5
Employees	7	<3 years	7
Total number of participants	**15**	**13**	**15**

3.4.2. Sample and Sampling Method

Sampling in the qualitative study of Cunningham and Carmichael (2017), is generally not random but will rather be purposive one. In other words, individuals are selected to be fit for purpose with questions related to the field of study, they are experts either way. Morse (2010), stated that qualitative research must be a biased activity (additional emphasis). Rudestam and Newton (2015), add that this is indeed the case since qualitative research greatly contributes to deepening the research and understanding of phenomena. Therefore, it can be decided that sampling is done this way to propose a theory, or at least to collect the most relevant heartfelt insights for proposing a theoretical proposal. Because qualitative sampling provides a smaller sample size than in quantitative studies.

The qualitative sample should be big enough to reveal meaningful data, but not big enough to require a lot of data (Bowen, 2008; Charmaz, 2014; Mason, 2017). Saunders and Townsend (2016), propose a qualitative sample size of 12 to 15 participants per study from various virtual or face-to-face participants until the saturation point is reached. Saturation points are commonly used as a guide during data collection when new information is not collected from interviews, although there are other factors that affect the sample size of qualitative studies (Mason, 2017). Theoretical saturation occurs when subsequent data analysis does not generate new code or additional insights (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The only criterion is that it is ideal for participants to work in a hybrid team environment for at least two years and manage a remote team. The data is divided into two subgroups: hybrid managers and employees (Acharya, Prakash, Saxena & Nigam, 2013).

3.5. The Research Instrument

This study used a semi-structured interview method as the data collection tool. Interview guides were created for use in detailed interview questions with the aim of going beyond the participants' initial answers, followed by sub-questions or probing question. These questions are unrestricted and expressed in order to elicit unstructured responses and stimulate discussion.

To create an interview guide, the interviewer needed to (a) identify the scope of the topic to be investigated, including boundaries, (b) identify the topic category, and (c) identify the stem of the question. When the interview guide was designed, it was then tested over the duration of the interview (McIntosh & Morse, 2015). Interview questions were derived from the research goals and issues.

3.6. Procedure for Data Collection

This section describes the data collection methods used in qualitative research. This study used the one-on-one interviews (face-to-face or virtual) with qualitative data collection methods to enable the collection of a highly personalised information.

Participants will be notified by email, Microsoft Teams message or by telephone. Participants will be notified in advance that the interview will be recorded, so they must confirm their consent to continue recording the interview using Microsoft Teams or a smartphone. Participants will also be informed that the interview may or may not last longer than 45 minutes. Questions will be read aloud from the interview guide and participants will be asked to answer them. Follow-up and exploratory comments by either party are permitted, if required. All interviews will be recorded on Teams or Zoom and then transcribed verbatim to avoid prejudice and allow for a lasting record of what is being said and what is not being said. After the interview, participants will be notified of the interview details.

3.7. Data Analysis Strategies and Interpretation

The process of deriving interpretations from the analysed data was essential for drawing conclusions in this research study using thematic analysis using code, categories, and themes (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018). By adopting a thematic framework and examining the two datasets and can finally group the repetitive thematic patterns from the resulting text and analysing them according to the themes that may occur. Therefore, the interview data will be listed, divided into codes, key questions, and identified and synthesized topics, allowing the interpretation of the results (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018; Bastas & Liyanage, 2018). Interviews will be conducted until a saturation point is detected in the generated topic (Galvin, 2015; Dikko, 2016).

Themes and codes will be relied upon to arrive at the findings of the study. This process is described below.

3.7.1. Latent thematic

Themes will be found in the clear meanings of the data using the semantic approach, without seeking for anything outside of what participants have said or what will be published. Latent thematic analysis will thus involve the creation of themes to interpret data, and the analysis that will be provided is hypothesized rather than descriptive. Thematic analysis will be conducted within a constructionist framework, which aims to theorize the structural conditions rather than focus on motive in order to permit the offered individual narratives. Thematic analysis is looking for recurring patterns of meaning across a data set (interviews).

3.7.2. Thematic analysis: step-by-step guide

The analysis required continuous back-and-forth movement between the complete data collection, the coded data extracts, and the analysis of data to be created. The section discusses the six stages of analysis in outline form.

Phase 1 – familiarize yourself with the data.

The information will be gathered interactively, which gave a rise to prior knowledge of the information and potential initial analytical interests. Additionally, it was important to immerse oneself in the information by reading it often until one is comfortable with its depth and scope. It is advised to read the complete data set before starting to code because ideas and the recognition of potential patterns will develop during this process. In order to prepare for coding, notes will be jotted down at this point. A systematic coding methodology will then be built and specified during the study (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Transcription of verbal data

To undertake a theme analysis, verbal data from the in-person or online interviews will be translated into written form. Although it may seem like a stressful and tiresome task, transcription can be a terrific method to become familiar with the data. The only essential component was that the material from the verbal narrative must be preserved in its original form in the transcript. The accuracy of the transcript will always be checked against the original audio files (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Phase 2 - generating initial codes.

In this stage, first codes are generated from the data. While grouping the data into useful categories, analysis includes the process of coding. The degree to which the themes are "data driven" or "theory driven" will influence how they are coded. In the latter case, the data may be approached with a specific inquiry in mind. A methodical approach through the data set calls for

giving each data item the complete and equal attention it deserves and spotting noteworthy details that could serve as the foundation for recurring themes. Coding for as many potential themes as you can was a good idea. Retaining accounts that diverge from the analysis's main narrative is crucial (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Phase 3 – searching for themes.

By grouping the various codes into probable themes and compiling all the pertinent coded data extracts inside the identified themes, this phase will refocus the analysis at a level of themes rather than codes. The culmination of this phase will include a collection of potential themes, sub-themes, and all data extracts that have been coded in relation to them. The meaning of each motif will begin to become clear at this point. However, nothing will be dropped at this point because it is unclear whether the themes are strong as they are or whether some need to be combined, refined, and separated, or even dropped, until all of the extracts have been thoroughly examined the next step (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Phase 4 – reviewing themes.

Due to a lack of supporting data or data that is extremely diverse, it can now be demonstrated that some of the candidate themes are not actually themes and can instead be combined with other themes to form a single theme. It was necessary to categorise additional topics into internal homogeneity and outward heterogeneity. The information within the themes shall be coherently combined while retaining distinct and recognisable differences between them (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

In two levels, the themes were examined and improved. Reading all of the compiled excerpts for each theme and evaluating if they seem to follow a logical pattern are required for the first level. Only if the candidate themes indeed appear to create a logical pattern can the process move to step two. The second level investigates the relevance of specific themes to the data set and determines whether the candidate thematic map adequately captures the significance of the data set as a whole. The data set must be evaluated in this phase to determine whether the themes relate to the data set and to code any new information inside themes that was overlooked in earlier coding phases (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Phase 5 – defining and naming themes.

At this phase, the themes were defined and refined before being presented for analysis and data analysis. It was crucial to highlight the information in the data extracts that will be presented rather than just paraphrasing the text (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Each subject will be given a thorough investigation, and it had been noted what narrative each theme contributes to. The presence or absence of sub-themes within a topic will be taken into

account as part of the refinement. The breadth and content of each theme has been described at the conclusion of this phase, along with its unambiguous definition (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Phase 6 – producing the report.

When a completely developed subject that includes the final analysis and the report write-up was available, this step will start. A thematic analysis' write-up will present the facts in a way that persuades the reader of the analysis' value and accuracy (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Potential pitfall to avoid when doing thematic analysis.

In the hopes that they can be avoided, this section will examine various pitfalls that could lead to subpar analysis. Failure to analyze the data can be the first trap. The use of the data collecting questions as themes that are provided without any analysis to find themes throughout the whole data set constitutes the second pitfall. A third can be a weak analysis where the themes do not seem to go together, there is too much overlap across themes, and there are not enough instances drawn from the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The fourth trap was when analytic statements are made that do not match the data and cannot be justified by the data. The fifth could involve a discrepancy between the theory and analytical claims made by the proposed theme analysis. In conclusion, the study has failed to demonstrate its theoretical presumptions due to the omission of critical facts (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

3.8. Possible Limitations and Challenges of the Study

This section describes the potential limitations and challenges of qualitative research conducted by one of the energy sector organisations in Johannesburg, South Africa. The small sample size of 12 to 15 participants was a potential limitation of this study. The risk of the selected sample may not represent the entire industry due to its size. Accessing people might be a challenge and getting all the participants to engage with me. Time could be a problem.

3.9. Quality Assurance

3.9.1. Transferability

According to Dennis, Smith, and Wadsworth (2014), transferability was a study outcome that can be translated when participants or topics are switched. When there are multiple participants, transferable outcomes are crucial (Cope, 2014). Other researchers will find it simpler to employ the findings in subsequent studies when they are rigid and dependable (Elo, Kääriäinen, Kanste, Pölkki, Utriainen, & Kyngäs, 2014; Marshall & Rossman, 2014). Consistency and specificity shall be enforced while analysing responses to improve portability. According to Cavalcanti (2017), qualitative research needs to be reproducible and transparent. Additionally, he offered research details, such as industry and geographical data for external validity. He also shared

details about contextual frameworks and presumptions. Additionally, the methods used for data collection and analysis for the study design will be closely scrutinised. To determine if the data are saturated or not, the interview log will be consulted. When no new themes, facts, or codes are discovered, data saturation occurs (O'Reilly & Parker, 2013). Participants were still being interviewed after the data was saturated.

3.9.2. Credibility

Credibility was important for accurate reporting and reliable investigation (Munn, Porritt, Lockwood, Aromataris, & Pearson, 2014). By spending more time assessing the accuracy of participants, observations, member validation, and other checkpoints for efficient data analogy, qualitative researchers strengthen the trustworthiness of their investigations (Houghton, Casey, Shaw & Murphy, 2013). Additionally, interviewers are more trustworthy when they look for subject patterns (Prion & Adamson, 2014). Dependability and strong research are prerequisites for credibility (Anney, 2014). If the participants are confident in and trust the results, the study was also more trustworthy (Houghton, Casey, Shaw & Murphy, 2013). Reduced researcher prejudice was the goal (Baskarada, 2014). Strategies to strengthen the dependability of the interview include participant checks, interview protocols, and multiple data sourcing or triangulation (Durif-Bruckert, Roux & Rousset, 2015). These actions will be taken as part of a plan to strengthen the study's credibility.

3.9.3. Dependability

A quality indicator for reliability was dependability (Battisti, Bucchiarone, Marconi, Maldacea & Ponce, 2014). Dependability provides for the creation of a research audit trail and takes into account shifting research circumstances (Merriam & Grenier 2019; Elo, 2014). By establishing an audit trail and going into detail about each situation, this study's dependability has been boosted. The purpose, sampling, participants, data collecting, data examination, and research outcomes were all contexts.

3.10. Ethical Considerations

To uphold the highest ethical standards, it was vital to safeguard both the study's and the participants' integrity (Maskara, 2014; Pike, 2014). To lessen prejudice, the researcher asked for informed permission (Yin, Doughty, Dillon, Lulay, Eifler & Hensler, 2017). This informed consent ensured the protection of participants.

The decision to take part in this study was entirely voluntary. Participants were made aware that they have the option to refuse to answer any questions or to end the interview at any time as part of conducting an ethical interview (Gibbins, Bhatia, Forbes, & Reid, 2014). Taking part in

the study was not binding but voluntarily (Beskow, Check, & Ammarell, 2014). Participants were advised that should they wish to withdraw from the study, they could do so by contacting me directly by phone or email.

The identities of participants remain anonymous, private, and secret. A good technique to preserve a participant's confidentiality and anonymity while referring to them was to use a fictional name code (Yin, Doughty, Dillon, Lulay, Eifler & Hensler, 2017). This study called participants as “individual participant” (IP – for employees) and (LM – for line managers). The study used fictitious names like IP1 and LM1.

Chapter 4. Results

4.1. Introduction

In addressing the research questions guiding this study, the qualitative research findings of the study are presented in this chapter. A thematic analysis was conducted based on the qualitative data collected during interviews with hybrid managers and employees in various departments within the organisation. The research findings were presented according to the key themes to emerge against the research propositions discussed in Chapter 2 of this study, as outlined below.

After administering the interviews, we found out that there were key themes that kept repeating themselves across all interviewees. These key themes which emerged during the interviews with both hybrid managers employees are outlined in the table below:

Table 4.1: Key Themes for the study

Employee interview participants	Hybrid manager's/ Employees	Hybrid manager interview participants
During the interview Themes	Common Themes	During the interview Themes
1. Participants' experience of transitioning from old ways to the new ways of doing things and support in relation to hybrid managers	1. Flexibility and performance	1. Hybrid manager experience of managing remote workers and its challenges
2. Participants' experience of communication and organisational change	2. Trust and alter management style in terms of communication	2. Hybrid manager reflection on self-awareness, confidence, and trust
3. Participants experience of trust and management style	3. Wellbeing, engagement, and work-life balance	3. Hybrid managers' style and practice of organisational values.

Primarily, eight hybrid managers gave a consent to participate in the study. However, due to unforeseen circumstances and work-related challenges, one of the managers decided not to participate in the study and a replacement was made by an employee. The interviewer did explain on the consent form that the participation within the study was voluntary, had to respect the managers decision to withdraw from participating in an interview session. This withdrawal was data that could have contributed to the transitioning of a hybrid manager in the specific department within the organisation.

The code classification represented in Table 4.2, below, was used to identify the interview participants by assigning descriptions, comments, and quotations to each study participant. To maintain the anonymity of the study participants has been labelled and distinguished according to their participatory role. In this regard, hybrid managers who participated in the interview

sessions have been allocated a ‘HM’ label (for hybrid manager); and employees reporting to these managers, were allocated an ‘E’ label (for employee).

Table 4.2: Naming conventions of participants

Classification of participants	**Code Classification**	
Hybrid Manager interview participants	*Pre-Interview*	*Post-Interview*
Hybrid manager participant 1 (Middle manager)	LM01	HM-PI01
Hybrid manager participant 2 (Senior manager)	LM02	HM-PI02
Hybrid manager participant 3 (Middle manager)	LM03	HM-PI03
Hybrid manager participant 4 (Middle manager)	LM04	HM-PI04
Hybrid manager participant 5 (Senior manager)	LM05	HM-PI05
Hybrid manager participant 6 (Senior manager)	LM06	HM-PI06
Hybrid manager participant 7 (Senior manager)	LM07	HM-PI07
Employee interview participants	*Pre-Interview*	*Post-Interview*
Individual person participant 1	IP01	E-PI01
Individual person participant 2	IP02	E-PI02
Individual person participant 3	IP03	E-PI03
Individual person participant 4	IP04	E-PI04
Individual person participant 5	IP05	E-PI05
Individual person participant 6	IP06	E-PI06
Individual person participant 7	IP07	E-PI07
Individual person participant 8	IP08	E-PI08

The interview participants occupied positions at the middle and senior management level. Some of the hybrid managers who were interview participants had direct reports of the employees who report directly to them. There were fifteen interviews conducted as follows:

The seven hybrid manager interviews were conducted to gather data on the management transition from managing teams in a traditional way versus remote ways of working. Subsequently, eight employees interviews were conducted to gather data on their perception in relation to management capabilities and behaviour to measure the impact this might have based on the employee experiences. The key common themes which emerged from the interviews were: flexibility, performance or employee productivity, trust, wellbeing, and work-life-balance. These themes were discussed within the context of various department at the management, employee, and organisational levels.

Table 4.3: Key themes from the employee interviews

Interview Themes	Sub-Themes
4.2.1. Participants' experience of transitioning from old ways to the new ways of doing things and support in relation to hybrid managers	4.2.1.1. Participants experiences and support from management. 4.2.1.2. Perception of social interaction 4.2.1.3. Participant's perception of micro-management
4.2.2. Participants' experience of communication and organisational change	4.2.2.1. Empathy and change management. 4.2.2.2. Struggle with separating work and family time
4.2.3. Participants experience of trust and management style	4.2.3.1. Relationship with line manager 4.2.3.2. Participants experience of flexibility

4.2. Interviews with employees

It was important to note that there were three specific department being investigated in this research report that were going through change management. All three departments were impacted by change of management where only one from the three managers was appointed internally and the other two managers were fairly new in the organisation. This change in management did not have impact on employees and their working hours.

4.2.1 Participants' experience of transitioning from old ways to the new ways of doing things and support in relation to hybrid managers.

4.2.1.1 Participants experiences and support from management

The findings show that the five out of eight managers provided all employees working remotely before and during lockdown with tools to support them. However, the support has significantly increased since lockdown. This shows that three out of eight managers reported that prior to lockdown their organisation provided employees collaborating remotely with monitors, chairs, and desk. However, the number significantly increased since lockdown whereby managers providing their employees with extra monitors.

Pre-covid we basically had all the tools we had now and during covid, we had skyped as well as teams was just initiating so we did not use it as much. However, we had yammer, SharePoint, power BI, emails, and all of those means of communicating with one another. Pre-covid for my line of work I used to make use of all those tools because we were doing continuous improvement projects, digitilisation was always my top priority and advocating for the use of these tools was always in my scope of work. Thus, I have always used them and encourage people to use those tools too. Also, since my stakeholders were within the South African

environment not just at our head office, the tools were important for me to use daily in a way. Also, I was very flexible from working from home because I knew how to use the tools.

So, during covid-19 I went to the office much less, or not at all as I was still using the exact tools, but we paid more emphasis on yammer and MST from the business perspective which helped me to get more people to start using these tools. From my perspective, it has been pretty much the same with tools the way I interacted to communicate but there has been a definite change in more and more people using the tools that have been made available to us. (E-PI01)

Some participants revealed that due to lack of training or experience most hybrid managers struggled to provide support to their employees in relation to mental health and wellbeing. Yet, a sizable percentage of employees described how human resources had offered advice on how to promote mental health and wellbeing and that the company had anticipated these unusual obstacles. Among the eight remote workers, one mentioned that:

The only support I received was data allowance. That was it with regards to financial and then with regards to emotional and mental health we used to have team check-in every second week. So, my manager just want to find out how everyone was doing via the team check-ins and that was ultimately. (E-PI03)

4.2.1.2. Perception of social interaction

Many participants raised concerns about the professional isolation of remote workers. More specifically, when their performance was not really substantially tied to quantitative output, remote workers were more worried about professional isolation. One of the remote employees, for instance, worked on developing mechanisms that can eliminate human mistake.

The quality of your work should speak for itself and still have the same sort of interaction but on a virtual basis and still be able to reach out to your line manager as often. However, that was not always the case as the office base employees had always been the first preferential when it comes to career promotion time because of their frequent interaction with management. This hindered remote worker career advancement and skill development in the long run. It is funny because a person can be absent minded or not perform whilst right in front of the manager. Hybrid managers should focus on the output instead of wanting to see people face-to-face. (E-PI07)

There was a small number of participants who raised a prevalent concern about the lack of interaction between the hybrid manager and their team members.

I do not think the relationships within teams are strong as we are so used to work in our small corners. I think this has negatively impacted us in a sense that one kept a distance in a relationship. Currently relationships we had with our line managers are completely different and not as strong from the ones we had pre-Covid-19. Currently people still ping you whilst they are just sitting opposite you in the office. (E-PI02)

The autocratic style of leadership was prevalent when remote workers were feeling anxious that they may be forced to return to the office on a full-time basis.

The reason we tag into the office was to check how many times or for tracking purposes not only for access. Why was not that been used to keep line managers accountable instead of punishing everyone. Line managers are not necessarily equipped to manage hybrid teams due to rumors that we might be required to come back to the office. I do not think that they are fully equipped and had an opportunity to reflect on the employee value proposition. Hybrid is the way to retain employees as well. Mandating everyone to come to the office was not going to solve our problems because people can come but also depends how productive they can be. (E-PI07)

4.2.1.3. Participant's perception of micro-management

When asked to describe the hybrid management style, majority of the participants responded by describing the organisational culture of fear and the management styles.

Most of these managers still micromanage people. I do not think micromanagement should exist anymore as you have an obligation as an employee to report such behaviors to HR because that is a form of work bullying. Micromanaging should not be tolerated and should be treated as bullying and be monitored. This should not be happening especially in the 21st century. If you have someone that was performing on low basis, explore the evidence and put performance project in place. (E-PI06)

Subsequently to the statement above, the participant further explained that loadshedding hinder remote work or was one of the contributing factors because of micromanagement.

Managers turn to micro-manage quite a bit when you work from home compared to when you work in the office. I do not know if there is that thing that "I can see you" hahaha. Managers cannot really tell whether you are working or not. But my kind of work can tell whether I work or not because there are numbers involved. (E-PI06)

In relation to micro-management, most participants have mentioned that management should stop micro-managing and constantly check up on the hybrid workers.

Hybrid managers should stop daily check-ins on their teams because pre-covid we only met once a month as a team but when covid hits we had catch up every morning. You are offline for that hour, but you okay because you in the office and everyone can see you in the office. The only difference was when I was at home during covid, and I was away from my desk I felt that my line manager would think that I am not working. (E-PI05)

So, I think that what needs to stop, is that micro-managing and rather to look at the outputs and the timelines you deliver your outputs to make sure those make sense rather than paying attention to the detail of every single step. (E-PI04)

4.2.2. Participants' experience of communication and organisational change

Communication was a consistent finding in the participant interviews. Employees mentioned that the management was inclusive when it comes to communication and organisational change. When further explored the data revealed that management struggled to recalibrate their roles and effectively manage communication. The way hybrid managers communicate had to change to ensure the clear message was convey to employees and to ensure team members are engaged.

When asked how employees experience the implementation of change within the organisation, and specifically the reshape occurred in Mobility, Lubes and Trading and Supply department, most of the participants associated change implementation with communication. The data revealed that employee perceptions of change being managed well relied on clear communication, in advance, and being allowed to engage in decision-making prior to implementation of any change. The management intent seemed to have been communicated clearly in relation to reshape as there were no complaints from the individuals who were impacted by it.

Remember we just went through reshape and a year ago I was part of a global organisation and reshape has made me sit in a local organisation and the kind of skilling and cross skilling I do not have now. Not that it impacted it quite differently though, the role is still the same but must keep the lines of communications open. However, the old ways of thinking and working we can burry. I really think there was no need for anybody to go to office Monday to Friday or whatever work requires for you because the company did not crash during those months we were in lockdown. We can balance work and life, so if it means that we must get more younger people to management to instill this kind of thinking going forward. (E-PI05)

4.2.2.1. Empathy and change management.

Some participants shared the lack of care from management and support from management which was so predominant during covid and resulted in management disrespecting employees. Further to this participant (E-PI07) and (E-PI06) connected their experience of empathy and change management to management behaviour in relation to no care and lack of support on daily challenges faced by employees.

The company culture needs to be explored if it was still relevant in the times we live in now. We are experiencing these problems because the conservative managers occupy big sits in the senior management positions and are not reflecting none of the organisational values. Conflict and problems are bound to happen between management and their subordinates because people below management will fight for change and claim their respect back. We have managers who are dictators and those their management style was not only about spreadsheets

but not showing care about the individuals in a team. Going up the ladder you still get those managers who still care and treat you like a normal person, and you still get those who just do not care and treat you like a tik box exercise. (E-PI06)

It was quite evident that change management was not handled well in some parts of the business with management failing to provide support to remote worker.

In terms of direct line that I was reporting to support was not that great because I can work autonomously as it is something that comes naturally to me. Obviously, you need guidance there and there, but I do not think that I received that kind of support I needed or expected because it was sort of like the blind leading the blind. I was reporting to somebody who did not know the space who recently joined and did not know much. I would say it was quite toxic relationship because there was also that element when people do not see each other in person, line managers developed an element of thinking that people are robot. Basically, expect people to sit in front of the screen 24/7. (E-PI07)

4.2.2.2. Struggle with separating work and family time

Since lockdown, working from home became mainstream, according to the data in this report, and managers have had a steep learning curve when it comes to managing remote teams. In spite of this, managers have been pleased with the outcomes, as their teams have generally performed well during this period. "*I think productivity had increased from working remotely, because if everything was on a call, you can participate in a call, you can multitask to engage your extent, which I think was what people like about being able to do things on calls that you can be at home and you could be cooking yourself something as well as participating in a video conference" (*HM-PI05).

Although there had been a few performance problems, they were mostly ones that existed even before lockdown. Unlike when employees must finish work at the office, where they are unable to combine time for family and work, working from home has been shown to provide balance and quality time for employees to enjoy time with families while balancing time to complete work. In essence everyone who aspires to live a better life was now very concerned about work-life balance.

Some of the highlights from the data was the work-life balance brought by the information communication and technology enabling employees to work wherever and whenever.

Because my current organisation allowed me to steal their time, I am also giving back their time by showing willingness to work extra hours. My organisation allows me to balance my life during working hours, so I am also willing to return the favour. (E-PI05)

One of the themes that came strongly was the work-life balance where majority of employees are struggling to draw the distinction between work and family time especially when working remotely.

On the flip side I do think you can easily lose track of managing your time between work and your personal space. You mostly at home and do not keep track of time, end up putting more hours which also came with a lot of other things which you could suffer from fatigue. You get tired without realizing that you are putting more effort on your work and neglecting the other part of yourself. About 60% of the time, I work in the office, do what I must do and when the time hits, I log off and go home. But I am not discipline enough when I am working from home as I turn to overdo things. (E-PI02)

4.2.3. Participants experience of trust and management style.

The study showed a development of new trust between managers and employees as managers begin to embrace flexibility while working remotely. Some participants have highlighted that manager took note of the fact that face-to-face contact was critical to establish and maintain trust. Due to the organisational mandate or policy all employees are required to spend up to 60% of their time in the office and the remaining 40% remotely which had partially restored trust between line managers and employees. Fractured trust can negatively impact the line manager and employee relationship and eventually productivity.

I have heard and witness certain colleagues that are in the office with their line manager do have the trust element where they know certain things that I would not know because I am working remotely. You do sense the fact that your colleagues are more visible which strengthens their trust relationship with our line manager. (E-IP01)

The data has revealed that repeated face-to-face interactions build trust, relationships and can eventually advance one to climb the cooperate ladder easily while the lack of which may not. There is also perception of high levels of stress, guilt and overwork as remote workers subjected themselves to scrutiny and high level of self-discipline to validate the trust that has been given in them.

You are offline for that hour, but you okay because you in the office and everyone can see you in the office. The only difference was when I was at home during covid, and I was away from my desk I felt guilty thinking that my line manager would think that I am not working. (E-IP05)

For me it was about my deliverables as I always advocate that I do not want to be promoted because you like me because you trust me, and we can have a relationship. I want to be promoted based on my skills and how I do things. (E-IP01)

Further elements of trust emerged as there was a strong drive to demonstrate optimum productivity when working remotely to prove to your line manager that working remotely was

efficient and that you can be reliable and trustworthy employee. This research report reveals that managers principal anxiety concerned time and trust.

4.2.3.1. Relationship with line manager

It was important to note that employees described the health of their relationship with line managers as one that was broken because of lockdown. Following are some concerns emerged from interviews which seem to hinder the manager and employee relationship: unable to network, how do managers put in people's development, how do employees grow within our organisation or prepare for your next move, even if you do but the culture of getting to know you session was missing. The getting to know you played a huge role in building relationships not only with my direct line manager but other managers within the organisation.

I think this had negatively impacted us in a sense that one kept a distance in a relationship. Currently relationships we have with our line managers are completely different and not as strong from the ones we had pre-Covid-19. Currently people still ping you whilst they are just sitting opposite you in the office. (E-PI02)

The employees were asked for the low lights in relation to their relationship with line managers, there were common themes that had emerged from the interviews like, self-efficacy, disrespect, and lack of confidence towards the human resource (HR) department. There was a sense of a strong feeling that managers treat employees as a tik box exercise while some managers show no respect whatsoever for employees. There was a perception that people are working in silos and just want to perform their duties when in the office. However, change management has made things better or worse for some individuals.

The level of disrespect on virtual platforms was not as confident when they can see you in person. When people are behind the screen, they have a specific way to speak to people whereas when they in person there some sort of level of respect that comes with that. With current line manager it was always nice to see in person because I can always take off some of the items I did not manage to do via virtual. It allowed us to get some things done quickly in person and that helps a lot. Also, just conversating taking in that sort of thing. I feel like there are no repercussion towards line managers who disrespect other people, do people even report those behaviors, do people have the confidence to report those behaviors. A "David cannot fight a Goliath"s except story in the bible – so I escalate such behaviors and let Goliaths fight each other. (E-IP07)

4.2.3.2. Participants experience of flexibility.

It was with noting from the data that the organisational management use autocratic style of leadership as they mandated everyone within the orgnisation to work three days in the office and two days remotely.

Line managers are NOT necessarily equipped to manage hybrid teams due to none support of flexible working and the rumors that we might be required to come back to the office. I do not think that they are not fully equipped and did not have an opportunity to reflect on the employee value proposition. Hybrid is the way to retain employees as well. Mandating everyone to come to the office was not going to solve our problems because people can come but also depends how productive they can be. (E-IP07)

In addition to the statement about when a follow up question was asked if there were any communication from the organisation about 60%/ 40% work policy: base on the data it looks like there were no open discussions with employees about how the organisation would like to work in the future and what would be the most benefit to both the employees and managers.

I really do not understand the generic rule that has been introduced after covid that everyone must be 60% work in the office and 40% working from home. Even within the organisation it has been proven that you can work remotely and still be productive. Globally it was a norm working from home even the company results spoke for itself as we received the highest bonusses ever since I joined the organisation. (E-IP05)

The company has mandated people to come back 60% of their time in the office and it was not optional, and this proves that we are slowly going back to the old ways of doing things. (E-IP01)

One of the organisational strategic objectives for 2030 is to reduce carbon emission and management should support flexible working if they are serious about reaching this target.

I think if we can make a significant contribution to our CO2 carbon emission reduction if we can all work remote. (E-IP05)

Loadshedding has come up as the biggest hinder of flexible ways of working. Most participants have mentioned that loadshedding is forcing them to go to the office.

I spent a lot of time working when am home. The long hour has negatively impacted me ergonomically as I am sitting for longer hours. Also, with loadshedding my laptop battery does not last long for the duration I am being loadshedded. So, I lose 20 to 30 min of which I could have used drinking coffee in the kitchen if I were in the office. (E-IP04)

The flexibility enabled by remote work made employees feel more productive and contributed to the individual wellbeing as two participants indicated:

I can be to multi-task for example, take my son for a soccer match and be online performing my duties. Technology has brought about work life balance as I can attend my daughter's picnic and be able to connect and work there. Company culture also allows the work life balance because there are people who are technicians but are not privileged to work life balance. (E-IP05)

With flexible working you get to plan and manage your time better. You do not get to be stuck in traffic for two to three hours whereas if you are working remotely, one could have used that time to login and start working immediately. Flexibility enables you to work around your life easier, for example, you can drop off and fetch your child from school, you can make a quick lunch while working or even run some errands or attend a doctor's appointment without taking a day off. (E-IP02)

4.3. Interview with hybrid managers

Interviews with hybrid managers were conducted after employee interviews and the findings from these interviews will be shared in this section of the research report. Five themes emerged from the hybrid manager interviews. The hybrid managers transitioning to the new ways of doing things and experiences in managing remote workers were shared during the interviews.

1. Transitioning from conventional manager to hybrid manager
2. Managing remotely and effectiveness of working from home
3. Positive or Negative experience of managing remote workers
4. Hybrid managers support for employees
5. Hybrid managers significant learning experiences

4.3.1. Transitioning period as a hybrid manager

When hybrid managers were asked how their experiences has been to transition from being a conservative manager to a hybrid manager and managing the emotion introduced by remote work. The data showed that hybrid managers responded to this question in two folds. First, it was frustrations and emotions these managers had to bear. Second, were managers talking about the transitioning between systems that the organisation has already set up and from that perspective it was not really a struggle.

*I am so within the finance journey that organisation has already set up, well like you said, from the Cape Town days. We had the finance operations there, which meant that as the finance operations kept on closed and we moved the operations into different parts of the world into the five or four hubs that we had currently got this working with people that were intricately sitting in front of you had already the journey had started that helped. (*HM-PI05)

I think that was the hardest transition to be able to managed the team from a motivational point of view, considering that everybody was going through the concerns and the worries of what was happening during the lockdown and also with the pandemic and the concerns around that, what I did institute at that point in time was having one on ones with my team memebrs. (HM-PI03)

Another interesting finding was the experience of the hybrid managers on inhibitors that made remote work impossible. Some of these findings include high emotions and stay connected as a team to ensure that productivity levels continue.

So, that was the hard part, right was balancing the two, managing the emotional part. And then of course, making sure that the business was operating the way it was required to be operating. (HM-PI03)

The biggest thing that I had to do was try to make sure that we have regular connect so people do not feel disconnected. So, we re-establish our Monday meetings and still had our virtual meetings tried very hard to get support in terms of getting people access as most people did not have Wi-Fi. This was all accelerated, so people did not even have the tools. They did not have the Wi-Fi they were spending a lot of money on data so that they could have access. It was a lot of figuring things out and it was very uncomfortable. (HM-PI02)

There was a lot of things that I put in place for myself to be able to deliver. So emotionally it did take a toll because it was lots of conflicting, lots of expectations in terms of delivery and what needed to be done. Having that discussion and giving the expectations relieve that emotional burden after a couple of months. If I can put it that way. (HM-PI07)

Productivity

The hybrid managers had different views in terms of productivity where the majority mentioned that productivity has increased and stated that loadshedding and lack of resources (Wi-Fi, UPS, Data) was the contributing factor. To alleviate that pain, line manager received support from the organisation.

The support was tremendous in terms of understanding. You know there is going to be network issues because there was loadshedding as well. Then you know there was supporting in organising power supplies you know or UPSs for critical roles to make sure that the business itself kept running. So, I think taking care of business continuity was key from you know leadership and organisation and ensuring people were cared for. (HM-PI01)

The two days that we came from home is not there, right? You know, if you it was made very clear in the beginning that if you have any issues with load shedding you can always come to the office. (HM-PI06)

Based on the findings most managers have confirmed that productivity levels increased during lockdown.

Previously, I think productivity had increased from working remotely, because if everything's on a call, you can participate in a call, you can multitask to engage your extent, which I think was what people like about being able to do things on calls that you can be at home and you could be cooking yourself something as well as participating in a video in a conference or a conference

call without really losing out on either side, so some of that individual productivity increased at even being able to read an e-mail the same time as having a conversation where was now in the office when we were back face to face that productivity part declines because now you sitting in front of somebody and you are having a face to face conversation. (HM-PI05)

The data reveals that the transitioning was not easy since management had a responsibility of not only focusing on increasing or stabilising productivity levels but had shown morale support to team members. One of the managers mentioned that employees are permitted to come to the office and work when affected by loadshedding.

4.3.2. Challenges experience of managing remote workers

The data shows that there were few managers that had to change teams during lockdown, and this brought about a shift in their mind set as the focus was on the output not being in control of everything but had to deliver through others.

I think COVID made it a challenge because I could not meet these guys face to face in the beginning, you know, until later on. But I think, you know when I started, the things were just opening up. We are starting to get together, but that was my fear as well that you are going to start my first connect with these guys are all online. You know, like there was no human care element to it. So that for me was quite disturbing. (HM-PI01)

It became pertinent due to lack of discipline, line managers started to experience behavioural issues with employees such as availability of individuals due to back-to-back meeting and managers not clearly communicate expectations which made it difficult to make decisions.

So that was when part of your instant messaging helps with that to say this was really urgent. I need you to come to join and that was how we do it, but it was a challenge, I mean my calendar was a great example. It was extremely difficult to try and find time with me because there were so many engagements that needed to happen, I think a lot of it could just get done a lot faster if we were sitting in a certain space and being able to discuss it quicker, so it takes it requires a lot more planning. (HM-PI05)

Initially I think it was a bit of a challenge and having discussions with the team on what the expectations are and remember when the hybrid model was introduced. (HM-PI06)

Further to this the data revealed that employee's ill-discipline by stealing organisational time did not make things easier for the management.

So, load shedding and also, I think when people started working from home, they kind of did a little bit more personal things like pick up children from school, run to the shops, etcetera. So that also people still felt that it was their right to do right, which was fine. But then obviously the times become a challenge. So aside from the loadshadding drama that we are having also people tend to do a lot of their personal, sometimes personal tasks. (HM-PI07)

Flexibility

Some of the managers mentioned that besides the external issues, employees took full advantage of working remotely situation where some employees identify that as a gap to do house chores or fulfill parental duties.

Tasks that they need to do so collect children from school, go to the shops, go to the doctor or clinic, whatever. So that became increasingly a challenge rather than someone saying, OK, you are not. I need to take a day off today because I need to do this and that and the other then, you know, they are completely off work. But now like if you are trying to ping someone at 12:00 o'clock or 1:00 o'clock, they might not be around to be able to respond to you quick enough. (HM-PI07)

Remote working allows people to have the flexibility of being able to work in their own space. They own time, taking away the commuting, taking away all the additional stress that you have on the roads to get to work. (HM-PI01)

Besides the fact that employees took full advantage of remote work, line managers had their own challenges of not being able to know when to stop working when working from home,

If I found that when I worked from home, I work very long. I did not log off because I did not have traffic work does not stop. I work until my back hurts. So, the disadvantage of working from home sometimes was just that you do not switch off. You just carry on and you end up doing extremely long hours and getting very tired. (HM-PI02)

The data showed some pertinent sub-themes that have emerged such as organisation savings from real estate and individual cost perspective:

Real estate or cost perspective and comfort

I think the other challenge that has come up also was the cost of fuel and getting back to the office every day. So at least now we know we can come at least between two to three times a week. (HM-PI07)

from a cost perspective it if you might manage it and budget it, remote working was more cost effective for you to work from home. I think that was an advantage because it also allowed you to be yourself to be relaxed, to work in your own space and to be able to not worry about am I dressed a certain way, do I have to look a certain way, the icon, was it comfortable for other people? Should I open a window? So, in your own environment, your own space, you have that level of comfort, right? (HM-PI04)

So, I look even in many lights, right, I think that the hybrid weights are a good way because it allows the flexibility for, for staff to be here or not be here and have an engagement with the

line, agree the ways of working. I do think that we are the office environment probably is downscaled with like how it is looking like do we really need two floors. Saving not only on rental but consumable like tea/ coffee and utilities etc.? You know can we save money that particular way or could we say, and everyone works from home and if you need meeting, you have a meeting office and you make those spaces available that kind of way. (HM-PI03)

4.3.3. Hybrid managers support for employees.

Lack of support from the organisation made it difficult for hybrid managers to support their employees working remotely. In addition to this, the data shows that most manager were not fully equipped to manage hybrid team. Subsequently, some managers showed willingness to gradually evolve with hybrid ways of working and continuing to equip themselves.

There was no support if I may if I may put it like that. There was no support from the organization, remember the organisation have given guidelines in terms of return to office. See and three days in and two days out understand which was the guideline that was shared with us beginning of this year and in terms of my team leads and so there's no support that I can give, to be honest with you. (HM-PI04)

I think it was a learning journey. I would not say I am fully equipped because I think you learn a bit more every day, specifically because the longer this hybrid journey is continuing, I think it was also evolving. (HM-PI05)

There was a common trend where most manager kept on referring to the support the organisation provided all employees.

Those two coffee check-ins that we had weekly and helped somewhat in that, you know, the discussion was not only around work, but you know there well-being you know their family's well-being and understanding the difficulties that you know. (HM-PI06)

But I think for me personally, the fact that we have been set up with the right tools, that the lines of communication are not just reliant on teams, for example, on the computer, we can have access to each other via mobile phone. (HM-PI07)

You know that the health aspect and the numbers that were kept emphasized. You know, if you are feeling this way, if you need someone to talk to, you cannot talk to any of us, go to care ways or, you know, call the help Health Center just for assistance. And even, you know, extending that to your family because so many people lost their loved ones during this whole entire process as well. (HM-PI01)

Trust

The data reveals that most managers had to be strategic in winning employee trust by believing that employees will deliver on what they say they will. Managers had to start embracing the truth without retaliation or any form of negative reaction which made employees to feel more open.

That what I say impacts the team, so I need to watch myself and constantly be sober about what comes out of my mouth. Because if I say something and then it was perceived as a retaliation, it was affecting the trust element and people start being scared to talk. So, in order to create the psychological safety and that for people to feel free to tell me the truth, my response was very important. (HM-PI02)

We are all adults, but you start losing trust when people just disappear during working hours. Whether they are doing work when they are working from home, I always emphasize the fact that I do not want to start questioning whether people are working, or I do not want to get to a point where I say to people, I need you to demonstrate that you are online all the time. (HM-PI04)

Data show very few managers who demonstrated some trust issues with employee working remotely.

Yeah, remote work may have impacted it a little bit because suddenly I am sending out reminders about what is expected of them on the days they are working from home. So that may have appeared like, you know, there is a trust issue.

4.3.4. Hybrid managers significant learning experiences

The data revealed that most line managers have learnt to appreciate employee's predicament that impacted everybody that we are in it together. Subsequently, one of the key data findings was when most managers highlighted the fact that hybrid ways of working is not a one size fill all. The management realised that a shift in their mind is required to focus more on the output than the place where employees are performing their duties.

Each person performs the best in different environments and what might may work for one turn. It does not necessarily work for the other person, and so it really is about output at the end of the day. (HM-PI03)

Differently like to realize I am human. The human, the same things that I struggle with. They struggle with. So, my empathy just grew quite a bit. (HM-PI02)

So, I think there is a little bit more of awareness that needs to happen. So, people need to also understand that we had lives before COVID. We had roles before COVID. We had responsibilities before COVID. It does not mean there's a one-size-fits-all. (HM-PI07)

Work-life balance

One of the key data findings was a lack of time management by line managers which filtered down to employees. The data show that most managers struggled with drawing a distinction between work and family time and this resulting to employees being online as long as their line managers were still working.

It was exhausting because you cannot separate rest from work, so work becomes home. Home becomes work, so I needed that line. So, I love the ability to start and finish my day, whereas at home sometimes it is very tough to cut off work, work ends up going into family time. (HM-PI02)

So, let us say for instance that the nanny did not come with, they would need not to take a day off to make sure they could take care of the kids. They can still actually be productive over that period. (HM-PI05)

Management style

The data showed new management styles have emerged as some managers had to be nimble and change the way they use to manage teams. Further to this, managers started using different management styles depending on the situation at the specific time.

You will find that there is no one-size-fits-all you understand this you need to have a way of dealing with different individuals some you know you can lump together to say OK this one this is how I am going to approach them but this one this is how I am going to approach it is like also they the management style. (HM-PI04)

Stop micro-managing.

The findings show that most managers have discovered that their employees are much more productive and motivated when they are not being micro-managed and constantly checked up when working from home.

I have actually learnt to trust my employees more during lockdown instead of micro-managing them every second. (HM-PI02)

Daily check-ins and video calls are a bit too much as it annoyed people, and they perceived you as if you are checking on them whether they are working or not rather than trusting them. (HM-PI06)

Effectiveness of remote work

This was some of the prevalent themes that the data revealed, showing most managers have agreed that their employees have managed well with remote working and productivity has improved in most departments.

Productivity has increased – my team have been very productive working from home. (HM-PI 03)

Yes, productivity has improved, however, some team members have not proven to be worthy of my trust. (HM-PI01)

Importance of communication

The data showed a common trend of communication where most managers were clear that managing remote workers need different skill sets. Some managers had to change their management styles and communication became more prevalent including talking about challenges outside work.

I have learnt to allocate time bi-monthly just to check up on my team and make them feel connected. To achieve team objectives, it is vital to keep regular connects with the team members otherwise you will lose them along the way. (HM-IP01)

Information collected show lack of communication from management perspective on critical decisions which impact employees. Based on the data, below shows a perfect example of no communication by management concluding on the discontinuation of remote work.

I do think that there will be something that we start moving towards being an office more, but they will still be an opportunity for maybe even one day a week or so where somebody could work from home and that is why, like I said, I think we need to make sure that we are ready for the discontinuous hybrid environment. (HM-IP05)

4.4. Linking findings with the Proposition

4.4.1 Findings in relation to Proposition 1: The emergence of a hybrid management in the digital world of work in South African Energy sector.

Table 4.4.1.1. The following themes were linked to Proposition 1:

Themes	Sub-Themes
1. Hybrid manager transition and management of remote workers 2. Emotional aspect of managing remote workers 3. Motivation perspective and communicating expectations clearly.	• The transitioning process has made a shift on how managers use to manage teams and how to better manage remote workers to increase revenue. • Clear communication of expectations relieved the emotional burden between managers and employees. • The motivation part provided a platform of closer connection between line managers and employees.

4.4.2 Findings in relation to Proposition 2: The challenges hybrid management presents in the digital world of work in South African Energy sector.

Table 4.4.2.1. The following themes were linked to Proposition 2:

Themes	Sub-Themes
1. Management experience of shifting the mind-set and finding control 2. Change management and demonstrating care 3. Manager experience of support	• Regular connection occurred between teams. This has resulted to trust amongst employees and their line managers. • Showing care on a personal has resulted in increase in productivity. • Check-in have boosted the team morale as employees were experiencing high workload and working longer hours. • Managers learnt to embrace the truth which enhanced the trust factor and created psychological safety.

4.4.3. Findings in relation to Proposition 3: The opportunities hybrid management presents in the digital world of work in South African Energy sector.

Table 4.4.3.1. The following themes were linked to Proposition 3:

Themes	Sub-Themes
1. Manager's experience of employee predicaments 2. Focus on the output and show empathy 3. Communication and different skill set required	• Relationships were strengthened as managers and employees have shown appreciation and understanding of the issues impacting everyone. • Managers developed trust for employees through holding employees accountable on their deliverables. • Micro-management, the employees felt more productive and motivated as managers stopped the constant checkup.

4.5. Summary

In summary, hybrid managers have shown some positive results which led to significant findings. These findings include clear communication of expectation, regular check-ins, self-awareness that required new set of skills, embrace truth to create psychological safety and management realisation that they are not immune to the predicament faced by employees. Both employees and managers took full advantage of the flexible ways of working arrangements (60%/ 40% rule) offered by the organisation: meaning all employees including line managers are permitted to work three days in the office and two days from home. The participants considered themselves as fortunate by working under this rule mandated by the organisation and majority of them supporting the new ways of working.

The data presented here suggests that hybrid managers feel confident in managing staff who have been working remotely since lockdown. Managers and organisations are now more likely to support remote work and more flexible scheduling as a result of this. By providing tools, professional support, and health support, organizations have also considerably enhanced the support available for workers who work remotely. This support has always existed within the organisation.

According to the research, the business is also more likely to announce future job openings that allow for remote work. This gives the organisation access to fresh talent pools, which is an added benefit. As employees are exposed to the hybrid model or new methods of working, these changes may eventually result in a genuine change in the location and structure of the workplace.

These prospective changes in the energy sector might have a big influence on the organisation's environmental difficulties and carbon footprint, among other things. They could also have an effect on South Africa's job market and economic expansion. All of these potential repercussions must be taken into account by legislators and employers.

CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

5.1. Introduction

The findings shared in the previous Chapter 4 are subject to a detailed discussion in order to elaborate more on the research objectives.

The research objectives of this study are as follows:

1.4.1 Explore the emergence of the role of hybrid management in the digital world of work in South African Energy sector.

1.4.2 Examine the challenges hybrid management presents in the digital world of work in South African Energy sector.

1.4.3 Examine the opportunities hybrid management presents in the digital world of work in South African Energy sector.

Thus, the discussion in this chapter will cover the following:

- The hybrid manager experience transition for managing remote workers not only from motivation and communication perspective but include emotional aspect things,
- The hybrid managers experience required of new skill set in mind shift and regaining control,
- The participants experience of change management and demonstrating care elements,
- The chapter conclusion.

5.2 Proposition 1: Hybrid managers experience of remote work and employee behaviour.

5.2.1 Hybrid managers' attitude towards remote work

The interviews as a whole showed how hybrid managers used a variety of output and behavior to manipulate staff behavior. Also, hybrid managers applied these techniques to both office-based and remote employees. These results are confirmed by Bailey and Kurland's (2002) hypotheses that hybrid managers observe remote work differently. Some managers suggest that the hybrid model is primarily supported by remote workers who must go a great distance as opposed to those who do not. Additionally, these results support a study that found that employees who commute more than an hour to work prefer home-based remote work over those who have shorter commutes or live closer to the office, and that the 60%/ 40% approach gives everyone the same option to work from home. Working remotely frees up time that can be spent on other things, like taking care of children or completing duties around the house.

According to the report, in the past, managers and their staff members shared an office, creating a concentrated work environment that gave managers direct control over how hard their staff worked. Additionally, the data showed that this approach took into account the necessity for

employees to amass industry-specific expertise. The majority of hybrid managers, according to the literature analysis, concur that long-term employment relationships ensure that dependable employees have a shared past and, consequently, share the norms and values required for communication, cooperation, and task completion.

Van der Wielen and Taillieu (1994), who suggest that being at the office or typical workplace was equal to working, but remote work was perceived as being away from work, provide additional support for the findings. The study's contemporary setting, the shift in hybrid managers' use of new information, communication, and technology (ICT), and other factors have caused the study's work to become more and more independent of time and place. Nonetheless, hybrid manager may feel compelled to remain near their employees as a result of this. The study findings are consistent with the idea that when workers work from home, they are out of sight, making it harder, if not impossible, to directly manage them.

The literature study indicates that traditional time-spatial work patterns once delineated the temporal boundaries that managers were permitted to exercise influence over their subordinates. Yet, the line between business and personal life is blurred by home-based remote employment, which makes managing people even more difficult (van der Wielen & Taillieu, 1994). According to the study, managers' doubts regarding the quality of the job being done by remote workers would undoubtedly grow as a result of their increasing ability to operate in an untrustworthy manner. Peters and Den Dulk's (2003) sharp conclusions are supported by the fact that managers who do contemplate remote work must evaluate the costs and hazards associated with it in order to lessen the uncertainty that comes with such a demanding work environment.

Given that managers are primarily compensated for the results they achieve in their business units rather than for the concern they demonstrate for their employees' work-life balance. Peters and Den Dulk's (2004), study suggests that requests for remote work that required more managerial effort was less likely to be supported by specific managers. These findings are further confirmed by (Huws, Robinson, & Robinson, 1990) who shown that hybrid managers are hesitant to adopt the hybrid model or home-based remote work due to worries about coordinating remote work schemes and supervising employees who work from home or remotely.

5.2.2. The behaviour controls used by hybrid managers.

One of the key findings from the interviews was that hybrid managers used a variety of behavior controls, such as audio conference meetings, scheduled face-to-face interaction, behavior evaluation through close supervision and observation, casual conversation and other informal actions, and clearly defined tasks. The study finds that these particular tactics gave managers the ability to control the job transformation process and keep an eye on results. The most frequently used method for bringing team members and/or staff members together for discussions in a single setting was audio conference sessions. According to the report, hybrid managers use audio

conferencing technology to allow workers to call in from various places, including depots, in order to have voice meetings.

The findings show that hybrid managers set specific times for these weekly conference calls or check-ins, using them to distribute and receive information from employees. Further to this hybrid managers scheduled face-to-face interaction with individuals within their teams. For example, *One manager required all team members to attend weekly meetings. Every "last Monday of the month," according to a second manager, the hub "meets for roughly 1.5 hours." The project team will only meet on Fridays now that the design process has ended, said a third manager, acknowledging the importance of in-person communication in the early stages of an office upgrade project (HM-IP4)*. Thus, hybrid manager held weekly video conferences which made subordinates uncomfortable of their living environments. Still other managers met consistently with their teams although less frequently, such as once per month.

The findings further suggested that managers should closely supervised and appraised remote workers and office base workers' behavior through means other than physical observation. During the interviews findings found some of the initial employee assumptions of new appointed hybrid managers evaluated employees work not based on what they did, but on how well they did the work. The findings revealed some managers required remote workers to submit written updates of their daily work activities on remote working days. Burnes, Hughes and By, (2018) supported the study findings that hybrid managers exercised control through casual conversation or other types of informal interactions.

For example, during lockdown one manager asked one of the remote workers, ''*do you have a conducive environment to deliver this project at home*?" Whilst other hybrid managers spent considerable time on the phone with their subordinates, *"I just phone when I need to talk to the team about something (HM-IP2)."* According to Chamakiotis, Dekoninck, and Panteli (2013), to control subordinate behavior, managers are required to use defined tasks and formalised job requirements. While the data revealed that some hybrid managers have displayed some level of control over the subordinates who are working remotely.

Productivity

The results are consistent with a study by Galanti, Guidetti, Mazzei, Zappalà and Toscano (2021), which found that working remotely or from home can have an impact on productivity. Also, the results imply that organisations and workers should take these aspects into account and create policies on how to better manage them in order to see the favorable effects often anticipated from remote work. The first tactic for businesses, HR officers, and employees was to provide more possibilities for connection with coworkers and superiors because communication helps reduce feelings of social isolation. In contrast, the information, communication, and technology (ICT) resources that were available can make significant contributions in this direction. While lean communications, like e-mails, enable an information exchange that is frequently useful for work,

social exchange between people occurs through comfortable forms of interactions, with face-to-face interaction serving as the gold standard.

According to the research done by Bao (2020), it was confirmed that those who work remotely or from home experience much lower levels of productivity than those who operate in an office or onsite. The data findings also show that hybrid workers are frequently interrupted by other activities (such as caring for children or pets or cooking while on the job), which can consume a lot of their time. Additionally, those hybrid workers who lack self-discipline find it difficult to concentrate on their work when working remotely. The data showed that although video conferencing tools or telephone are now very convenient for communication, the efficiency of collaboration still declines as a result of remote work. This was contrary to the perception that unlike onsite, hybrid workers might be too relaxed at home because there was no colleague nearby.

Flexibility

The hybrid manager and organisation can foster an environment where workers can take advantage of flexible work arrangements. The data findings were consistent with Smith (2010), research which found that young job hopefuls give work-life balance issues a high priority when choosing a professional path. Further to this Smith (2010), claimed that young workers have a perception that a healthy work-life balance influences their job happiness, performance, and capacity for moral decision-making, even though work flexibility.

According to the hybrid manager interviews, work-life balance issues were significant to both male and female employees. Also, women performed far better on some interview questions about flexible work schedules. In order to help employees, attained a healthy work-life balance, firms can offer flexible work arrangements that they desire, such as flextime and remote working, according to a study by Smith (2010).

Furthermore, study by Sullivan, Williams, and Jeffares (2012), indicates that remote working may support work-life balance. This conclusion was founded, implicitly or explicitly, on the idea that working remotely allows more flexibility. For instance, it was assumed that employees can alter the timing, location, or volume of paid work to suit personal preferences and increase productivity. Also, in accordance with the study's findings, Irawanto, Novianti, and Roz (2021), asserted that the Covid-19 age was not only arriving to workplaces that forbid flexible scheduling but this was also the period when every employee can do their duties flexibly and increase productivity. Also, people's productivity will rise as they strike a better balance between work and life.

5.3. Proposition 2: Relationship between hybrid managers control and remote worker loneliness.

5.3.1. Managers controls and employee loneliness.

The analysis of the triads was conducted in order to better comprehend the data (remote worker, office base worker, and their respective line managers). The results showed that perceptions of the office base employees, remote employees, and their line managers were broadly in agreement. The interviewees also spoke about their remote working experiences in a way that was consistent with the experiences of the other members of that triangle. The data-revealed experiences that came out of the triad analysis were a sign that employee isolation difficulties and managerial control issues are inextricably related.

The results of the current study show that many remote workers, as well as some managers and office workers, expressed concerns about the isolation of individual remote workers. Evidence supporting this viewpoint was found in the study findings during the interviews. When their performance was not exclusively correlated with quantifiable outputs, remote work employees were more prone to worry about professional isolation. One remote employee who assisted with launch of the remote work program at her company, for instance, made the following observation:

When managers are busy, they very crudely assess their employees' performance by the amount of time they spend sitting on a chair. As a result, remote workers' worries that their compensation may be reduced are undoubtedly valid ones. Helping managers realise that just because an employee set in a chair does not mean that they are producing outcomes is probably the largest obstacle. (HM-IP7)

Turban and Wang (1995), stated that the study on the rise of remote labour came to the conclusion that organisations are responding by shifting their attention from managing inputs to managing outputs. This assertion is supported by the current research report, which notes that a move to manage remote workers simply by results may increase their anxieties about professional isolation. The study found that when line managers evaluated performance based on the outcomes, employees felt they ran the danger of not obtaining a fair review or the rewards and recognition they deserved.

The results of the hybrid manager sessions revealed a high emphasis on evaluating results that might allay some remote workers' anxieties about short-term professional isolation. Several remote workers and line managers then discussed issues with remote working that ultimately impede career advancement and skill development for remote workers. That instance, if hybrid managers, who supervise out-of-sight staff, exclusively concentrate on outputs with the belief that these employees are missing out on learning and professional development. This exclusion may subsequently hinder long-term career growth. In conclusion, invisible employees grow isolated on the job.

5.3.2. Adoption and diffusion of remote work

Bailey and Kurland's (2002) analysis of the reasons why line manager adoption and dissemination of remote work have been gradual is consistent with the findings of the current research study. The data also showed that line managers' readiness to deal with the uncertainty that comes with remote work, as well as their inclination to delegate authority to subordinates, both strengthen management resistance to home-based remote work. According to the research, these two elements may be seen as obstacles from an organisational and departmental standpoint, but less so from the viewpoint of the workers. The conceptual approach of the current study, Hofstede's aspects of organisational culture, is consistent with the two criteria indicated.

5.3.3. Hybrid managers support of remote work.

The data in the current research report indicated that the interest among remote worker was larger compared to the interest among hybrid workers. Further to this the data revealed that even though there is a remote work scheme (60% in the office and 40% remote work) present within the organisation, wide-scale adoption among managers was not guaranteed. According to Huws, Robinson, and Robinson (1990), a key barrier to the expansion of remote work was thought to be line managers' lack of support, which is consistent with the study's findings. Data suggests that hybrid managers may worry, for instance, that workers won't fulfill their obligations when they are not directly seen. According to research by Council (2020); Peters and Den Dulk, (2003), remote work arrangements may make it harder for hybrid managers to perform their jobs. These findings indicating few managers saw no need for the adoption of remote work inside the organisation are supported by research done by Huws (1990).

5.4. Proposition 3: Hybrid manager challenges of remote work - motivate, coordinate and control remote workers.

5.4.1. Strategies used to motivate and control remote workers.

Data from the interviews showed that line managers and employees share the concept that line managers who do permit remote work by subordinates may address the ambiguity problem in one of two ways. Also, the data demonstrated that producing new ways to organise, inspire, and manage remote workers is the first step in tackling uncertainty challenges. Managers can, for instance, call these employees from home to see if they are working and what activities they have completed on any given day. The first strategy can be a tedious exercise, time-consuming and thus, a very costly exercise without providing any guarantee that remote workers were not underperforming.

The interviews with participating employees indicate that hybrid managers need to change their mindset in order to trust remote workers rather than trying to control them. According to a study by Handy, 1995, Huws, Robinson, and Robinson, 1990, Council, (2020), Stanley, and Standen,

(2000), the majority of remote work arrangements are high-trust types of employment since this second method is more frequently used.

The findings showed feelings of a historical connection between attitudes about industrial discipline and status hierarchy and views on time and place. Self-control and remote working used to be associated with higher levels of power, respect, and status, hence they were traditionally improper for subordinates, according to van der Wielen and Taillieu (1994). Likewise, less management monitoring might be needed when employees' autonomy or self-control increase. According to Betz and Luzzo, (1996) study hybrid managers are hesitant to promote the hybrid model because they worry about losing relevance in relation to their own roles. Managers must be willing to cede authority and status, according to the research done by Harrington and Ruppel (1999), in order to permit or encourage home-based remote work.

5.4.2. Team collaboration

Through the interview process, hybrid managers and employees were able to establish trust and share ideals that support team synergy, which in turn depends on communication and unity. Data from Sundstrom, de Meuse, and Futrell (1990) were in line with the findings that team cohesion and communication depend on casual face-to-face interaction, which is encouraged by shared meeting spaces such pause areas and workstations. The research revealed that telecommuting environments frequently lack key factors that promote cohesion. In the current study, managers found that decreasing face-to-face connection undermined trust and that face-to-face interaction was essential for fostering mutuality among teams. Also, a lack of mutual respect and similar ideals hurt team cohesion and, ultimately, productivity. One of the hybrid managers said during an interview:

When workers are placed in an office setting and there is a lot of interaction, productivity improvements are measured... There is a lack of enthusiasm when working remotely that one only noticed in the office. (HM-IP5)

Even though few hybrid managers supported remote work, the findings pertaining to few manager participants revealed that hybrid managers still have trouble creating the desired cohesion among employees. The data shows lack of ability to create synergy within teams' members is further evident when remote workers complained that their managers do not believe they are working while working from home.

5.4.3. Informal communication learning

Irawanto (2020), states that developing team cohesion was another problem hybrid managers encountered. Managers expressed concerns that distant workers were missing informal, interactive learning that occurs around the water cooler, during lunch, or in the kitchen. The manager's comment below is telling and serves as an example of the challenges:

With a remote employee, communication was significantly more challenging. Meetings were rarely the primary means of communication inside an organisation. We discovered that one of the remote employees is probably the least aware of what is happening in the department generally in terms of product ideas and concepts. He can certainly do so for a formal presentation, but those do not occur very frequently in comparison to actual work being completed because individuals just talk to one another to obtain ideas. (HM-IP5)

The data showed that few remote employees complained about their line managers' responsiveness, which is a drawback for remote employees. Employees also complained that some bosses were not always informed of what was going on within the company. Employees that work remotely miss unscheduled, informal, and spontaneous learning opportunities. According to Hall & Richter, 1990, remote workers not only lose out on prospects for career progression but also increase production, which supports the findings.

Piskurich, (1996) asserts that remote workers lose out on these implicit, unstructured learning opportunities, the majority of which take place inside teams and other departments and may be benefited by their proximity to and observation of coworkers (Brown & Duguid, 1991; Zahn, 1991). This claim was supported by the current study report, which notes that working alone and at home rarely offers these kinds of implicit learning possibilities. Remote workers may therefore have significantly fewer opportunities for informal learning and, as a result, professional development.

5.5. Summary

The study's overall conclusions showed that a formal strategy for work-life interaction, like the one adopted in this case organisation, was quite successful. This initiatives success was largely down to the hybrid manager's attitude and behavior. The majority of employees in the organisation were also very committed, satisfied, and engaged. As a result, everyone who benefits—individual employees, managers, and the company—is pleased with the results. In order to achieve work-life balance and happiness with the three days in the office and two days off working arrangements, managerial support for work-life initiatives is a crucial component.

This study also revealed the necessity for hybrid managers to learn how to be successful remote coaches, managers, and create an environment for staff members to interact informally, develop interpersonal organisational networks, and create synergistic team relationships in order for remote work to be a successful workplace alternative and not just a temporary fix. For the sake of team synergy, it is crucial that the workplace be set up so that both office-based workers and remote workers are easily available.

Consequently, the discussion of hybrid managers and remote teams by developing a variety of examples illustrating the level of complexity, in terms of coordination and observation, engaged in various remote managing circumstances, summarizes the study's conclusions. The least difficult remote managing scenario for the hybrid manager headquartered at the headquarters was

part-time remote working (refer to the 60%/ 40% model provided by the organization). It was clear that remote management became more difficult the more away the subordinates work from the office (both in terms of distance and in terms of physical distance for offices), with remote teams offering the most problematic circumstance.

CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Introduction

The research findings were combined and concluded within this chapter. This chapter further provides a conclusion of the findings in relation to the research objectives of this study. This concluding chapter highlights the principal contributions to the research problem amidst the literature review within the fields of hybrid management, employee isolation and control of remote workers. The chapter further explores recommendations for relevant participants which outlines the study limitations and creates recommendation for future study.

6.2. Overview of the study and objectives

The objective of the research was to explore the transition of hybrid manager from old ways to new ways of working in the South African Energy Sector. The problem this study explored was the extent to which hybrid managers managed to maneuver or deal with the challenges brought by Covid-19 such as trust between managers and employees, flexible, work-life balance, employee productivity and mind set shift in management.

The research objectives of the study were outlined as follows:

6.3.1. To explore hybrid managers, experience of remote work and employee behaviour

6.3.2. To examine relationship between hybrid managers, control, and remote worker loneliness

6.3.3. To examine hybrid manager challenges of remote work - motivate, coordinate and control remote workers.

The study employed interview approach to answer the research questions. The participants had to be with the organisation for a minimum of five years (pre and during Covid-19) to provided relevant information that may assist in answering the study questions during interview sessions.

6.3. Conclusion of each proposition

6.3.1. Hybrid managers experience of remote work and employee behaviour.

Different hybrid managers in the oil and gas industry had various views on remote work; some managers said that remote workers who must travel great distances are more likely to embrace the hybrid model than those who do not. The study discovered that not only do employees who commute more than an hour to work prefer home-based remote work over those who have shorter commutes or live closer to the office, but that the 60%/ 40% model provided everyone the same option to work from home. Working remotely frees up time that can be spent on other things, like taking care of children or completing duties around the house.

According to the study's findings, traditionally, managers and their direct reports shared an office space. This concentrated work structure allowed managers to closely supervise, coordinate, and

motivate their direct reports' work efforts. Working from home implies that subordinates are out of sight, making it more difficult for hybrid supervisors to directly supervise these employees, if it is even possible. Hybrid managers must evaluate the costs and hazards associated with remote employment in order to lessen the workplace uncertainty.

According to the report, the majority of managers are reluctant to implement the hybrid model or home-based remote work due to worries about managing employees who work remotely and remotely from home. Information, communication, and technology enable hybrid managers to employ audio conference sessions, scheduled in-person encounters, behavior evaluation through observation and close supervision, casual chat and other informal actions, clearly specified tasks, and work formalization.

The information showed that productivity can go up or down whether working remotely or from home. Yet, the interviewees noted that the organisation conducted successfully and showed tenacity during the lockdown. Indeed, those who work from home achieve much higher levels of productivity than those who work in an office. The study discovered that although video conferencing technologies and telephone are now highly handy for communication, the effectiveness of collaboration still declines as a result of distant work, and hybrid workers may be too comfortable at home since there is no coworker nearby.

According to the research, young workers give work-life balance considerations a high priority when choosing a career. According to the study, young employees feel that having a healthy work-life balance has a favorable impact on their job happiness, work performance, and ability to make moral decisions.

6.3.2. Relationship between hybrid managers control and remote worker loneliness.

The study's findings suggest that managerial control challenges and employee isolation worries are inextricably linked by the experiences that came out of the triad analysis. Furthermore, when their performance was not largely related to quantifiable outputs, remote workers displayed anxiety about their professional isolation.

Further research suggests that the organisation should switch its emphasis from managing inputs to managing outputs. As hybrid managers adopt a new mindset and focus on results, remote workers' anxieties about professional isolation may increase. The study discovered that the perspectives of remote workers and line managers on the barriers to remote work had a long-term detrimental influence on career advancement and skill development for remote workers. This exclusion may subsequently hinder long-term career growth.

According to the research, hybrid managers are hesitant to engage in home-based remote work, which was strengthened by two linked factors: their readiness to manage the unpredictability that comes with distance working, and their readiness to cede authority to subordinates. The results

of the study show that the organisation has given hybrid managers a lot of control over how their employees will be treated.

6.3.3. Hybrid manager challenges of remote work - motivate, coordinate and control remote workers.

A true manager is one who is aware of how important they are as a means of advancement. True management skills include the capacity for inspiration, delegation, and the readiness to cede control. The results show that the solution to coordination, motivation, and control issues for remote workers was to consider alternate approaches. Employee participants claim that hybrid managers must change their perspective in order to trust remote workers rather than trying to control them. Yet, the results of the current study showed that hybrid managers are hesitant to endorse the hybrid model because hybrid managers worry about losing relevance in relation to their own roles.

The study also shows that informal face-to-face connection, which was promoted by shared meeting spaces like pause areas and workstations, is essential for team cohesion and communication. The study revealed that remote working situations frequently lack key factors that promote cohesion. In the current study, managers found that decreasing face-to-face connection undermined trust and that face-to-face interaction was essential for fostering mutuality among teams. Shared ideals and broken trust have a negative impact on employee-manager chemistry and, ultimately, productivity.

6.4. Limitations

The limitation of the study was highlighted as follows:

- The study's limited sample size was one of its limitations. Future research should take into account the specific characteristics and management techniques needed to promote and manage job flexibility, and a more thorough investigation was needed to determine how productivity can be attained.
- The study concentrated on a single city and included only one organisation and a limited number of interview participants. Larger scale studies, covering multiple cities and other organisation within the industry are important to assess the validity of the conclusions.
- The interview participants sample has imbalances where the initial number of hybrid managers was reduced from eight to seven, the research may have benefited from the interviewing sample.
- The study had some imbalances as it mainly focused on the hybrid managers and little was written about traditional managers.

6.5. Recommendations

6.5.1. Recommendations for hybrid manager

Let us begin with a broad observation: new hybrid managers should think about the bigger picture and avoid imitating outdated approaches that might not be appropriate in the (post-Covid-19) scenario. They should instead be open to different management approaches that might be more suitable and work better for everyone, such as emergent and various forms of shared management. For instance, in the Covid-19 environment, a two-hour face-to-face meeting cannot be replicated as a two-hour virtual conference because this will likely result in fatigue. With COVID-19, there was a cause to cut back on the number and length of meetings rather than continue with business as usual, claims Davison (2020).

Hybrid managers need to be aware of difficulties like weariness, technostress, and ultimately burnout that could cause problems. To prevent these problems, managers should be aware of the expectations placed on Covid-19 teams and make sure they have the resources they need, which may not be the same as those available to face-to-face (F2F) teams. Members of distant work teams, for instance, require access to swift and dependable Internet connections.

Due to the disruptions that come with remote work, hybrid managers should encourage involvement of individuals in their teams. In order to build on the already-existing advantages of the Covid-19 remote team context, hybrid managers should identify ways to encourage remote worker team members engagement on an ongoing basis rather than as a once-off activity. They should also work to foster a culture of trust and relationship development. For instance, the members of Covid-19's remote teams were once physically collocated teams whose members regularly engaged in a face-to-face (F2F) environment and, as a result, had built social bonds with one another. Hybrid managers should find ways to maintain, rather than create anew a social context within the Covid-19 remote work environment.

Line managers can begin to manage distant employees based more on outputs than inputs. A concentration on outputs, however, could be constricting for managers who want to actively coach their staff members or for individuals whose work is difficult to quantify. Organizations can use regular communication to supplement an output focus. For many different sorts of workers, information, communication, and technology (ICT) further mitigates the issue of in-person surveillance. Remote workers can electronically transmit work-specific data such as reports, files, graphs, and other observable, quantifiable outputs.

Hybrid managers should help remote workers address work-family issues, including the design of conducive home environments to conduct work related activities or tasks.

6.5.2. Recommendation for the organisation

Hybrid managers should receive mental health training from the organisation. How to develop a mental health awareness program in the workplace requires careful training management. The organisation can kickstart its mental health program by teaching management how to recognise warning signs of impending problems.

One aspect of the solution is to raise awareness and educate employees about mental health and wellness in the workplace but implementing policies to support the conversation also demonstrates to employees the organization's commitment to the issue. A clear mental health policy can assist employees' mental and emotional well-being, educate them on how to deal with problems that do develop, and function as a preventative strategy.

Employees may find it simpler to pay attention to their mental health if there are lunch and learn series, health fairs, or even a meditation or mindfulness class before or after work. Also, advice and suggestions can be distributed directly to staff members via yammer or in the form of a monthly printable calendar with suggested daily wellness activities.

It was impossible to divide workplace mental health and wellbeing into compartments unrelated to general employee performance. Everyone struggles with these symptoms at some point in their lives, including stress, anxiety, sadness, weariness, cynicism, and related physical ailments. Spending the time and effort to develop a program for workplace mental health and wellness positions your company and your employees for the happiest, healthiest future possible.

Organisations should occasionally invite non-collocated people whose jobs depend on one another to their offices so they can get to know one another. Face-to-face engagement builds the basic underpinnings of trust and familiarity, strengthening later remote communication.

Organisations should regularly train hybrid managers to better educate staff members on matters pertaining to data security and cyber security. Additionally, to the 60:40 rule, perhaps the organisation can start to introduce a four day work a week which may enhanced workplace productivity, well-being, talent attraction and retention and grow revenue. The organisation can improve employees value proposition and their morale by implementing four-day work per week.

6.6. Recommendations for Future Studies

Bailey and Kurland (2002), discovered managers' worries about remote work program costs and losing control over remote workers while contemplating future research. In their study, they compared these worries against the consequences of remote work from the viewpoints of employees, such as job happiness, productivity, the value of shorter commutes for employees, and the value of more time with family. Three focus areas were recommended by their study's results. To determine who remote work affects, it was first necessary to research organisational level implications.

The need to research why people remote work was the second issue. Third, there were connections between organisational theory and the necessity to study and emphasize theory-building. Analysis of a hybrid manager's transition process and the difficulties they encounter in the new normal was the main goal of the current study. The relationships between remote work outcomes and manager concerns should be the subject of further study. Such research would aim to explore ways an organisation may facilitate the implementation of remote work.

The conditions that develop and create trust in the workplace are mentioned by Kwenin, Muathe, and Nzulwa (2013), as a means of facilitating communication between remote workers and managers. To pinpoint the main advantages and drawbacks of remote employment, more empirical research is required. A more thorough investigation would increase our understanding of who engages in remote work, why they do it, and what results from it (Bailey & Kurland, 2002). Researchers have looked into a wide range of variables related to the remote work phenomena.

This study, which aimed to add to the body of knowledge, had managers talking about their experiences switching from traditional to remote management and the difficulties that came with the new normal. Trust and control-related concerns are still at the top of the list of variables influencing the adoption of remote work in the business. In order to successfully implement a remote work program, managers are seen as crucial change agents. Hence, the emphasis should be shifted back to looking for similarities in studies of management resistance to change theory connected to the implementation of remote work programs.

Research on the effects on organisations of betrayals of confidence and insistences on control over workers is inextricably linked to empirical conceptions of successful management of organisational remote work programs. Hybrid remote work arrangements, whether informal or formal, in which remote workers spend one to three workdays at most away from the office and the rest of the week from home (Gray, Hodson & Gordon, 1993; Standen, 1997).

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APPENDIX A: Consistency Matrix

Title: The Role of a Hybrid Manager in the Digital World of work in South African Energy Sector						
Objective: To explore the emergence role of a hybrid manager in the digital world of work in South African Energy Sector						
Objectives	Literature Review	Propositions	Constructs	Source of data	Type of data	Analysis
To Explore the emergence of the role of hybrid management in the digital world of work in South African Energy sector	Smith & Keeling, (2015)	hybrid managers experience in managing remote and office base working teams	Emergency of hybrid manager Flexibility	In-depth Interviews Q3	Qualitative	Thematic Analysis
To examine the challenges hybrid management presents in the digital world of work in South African Energy sector	Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma & Bakker (2002). Davidow & Malone (2020).	challenges of a hybrid manager of psychological conditions and employee engagement and trust	Psychological conditions and employee engagement Trust	In-depth Interviews Q3	Qualitative	Thematic Analysis
To examine the opportunities hybrid management presents in the digital world of work in South African Energy sector	Kundnani & Mehta, (2014) Wiener, Saunders & Marabelli, (2020)	Benefits of a hybrid manager from work life balance and productivity of employees	Work life balance Productivity	In-depth Interviews Q4	Qualitative	Thematic Analysis

APPENDIX B: Research Instrument

1. Overview of the research
    - Introduce yourself, explain the research and its objective.
    - Describe the eventual outcome of the research – a research report that provides insight on the emergence of a hybrid manager linked to the world of work theory can create shift in the South African Energy Sector.
2. Consent form – explain consent form.
    - Request consent from the participants (managers and employees) to record the interview sessions.
    - Interviews will be recorded for the purposes of data collection and thematic analysis.
3. Employee interview questions

    The interview session will be open by welcoming and thanking the participant for their time before and after the interview. An example of type of questions that can be asked during the interview are as follows:

    - What is your role within the organisation?
    - How long you have been with the organisation?
    - Can you describe the work environment before and after the advent of information and communication technology?
        - Do you see any improvements in using technology and what are those?
    - How has this change impacted you in performing your responsibilities and deliver timeously?
    - How has the new normal impacted your relationship with your colleagues and line manager?
    - Which of this option would you consider: remote work, hybrid work or office base work?
        - Why this option, please explain?

4. Hybrid manager interview questions

    The interview session will be open by welcoming and thanking the participant for their time before and after the interview. An example of type of questions that can be asked during the interview are as follows:

    - Which department are you managing within the organisation?
    - How long you have been with the organisation?

- Can you describe the work environment before and after the advent of information and communication technology?
    - Do you see any improvements in using technology and what are those?

- What type of support do you get from the organisation? How can it be improved?
    - Is the support provided assist you to better perform in your ole?
- How is the new normal impacting your department in terms of productivity, trust, employee engagement etc.?
    - What is the contributing factor to the challenges and what are you doing to resolve them?
- Can you describe your experience in managing both remote worker and office base workers at the same time using the advance technology?
    - What challenges have you faced and how did you overcome them?

APPENDIX C: Example of Consent form to Hybrid Managers

Dear Individual Person (IP) 1,

Re: Permission to conduct interview with “IP 1”.

I, Mfundiso Pula, studying for a master’s degree in the field of Digital Business at Wits Business School. My research topic explores the advent of a hybrid manager in the digital world of work in South African Energy Sector. The purpose of the study is to determine the hardship of a hybrid manager transition from the old ways (traditional) of doing things and having to adapt in the ever-evolving world of work accelerated by information and communication technology (ICT).

I would like to invite you to participate in the research by volunteering to examine the adaptation of a hybrid manager in the digital era. You have been selected for participation in this study as you hold a management position within the organisation, and your scope of control has influence across all tiers in the business. The timing of the research project will be approximately five months, however, your personal time over the period will be a single interview to be conducted not more than 45 minutes. The parties involved in this process will be myself and willing management participants, and the session will take place in the workplace, or via an online platform (MS Teams or Skype). As part of the research, I would like to record the interview sessions to refer to your responses during the analysis phase of the study. However, confidentiality will be secured, and the recordings will not be shared internally. I will be using artificial name to represent your participation in this study in my final research report.

Please note you will not receive payment or benefits from participating in this research, and neither there are disadvantages nor penalties for non-participation. Should you so wish, you can withdraw your participation from the interview sessions at any time. Should you, at any stage, experience distress or discomfort, you are welcome to remove yourself from the process. I am available to answer any questions you may have regarding the research, and you are welcome to contact me via the details provided below. This research will be documented in the form of a written report, which will be submitted to the Wits Graduate School of Business. The summary of the report will be made available to you on request.

Complaints or concerns regarding this study's ethical procedures can be directed to the University Human Research Ethics Committee, telephone +27(0)11 717 1408.

Yours sincerely,

Student: Mfundiso Pula

Email: 1768527@students.wits.ac.za

Supervisor: Dr. Jenika Gobind

Email: jenika.gobind@wits.ac.za

Declaration and signature of Research Participant

The information contained in this document was explained to me by Mfundiso Pula. I confirm that an opportunity was given to me to ask any question or seek clarification, and they were answered to my satisfaction. I understand that the sessions will be audio recorded, and I hereby consent to participate in this research voluntarily. I have been given a copy of this form.

Name of participant: Signature:

Date:

APPENDIX D: Example of Consent form for Interview Participant

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Permission to conduct interview with “IP 1”.

I am Mfundiso Pula, studying for a master’s degree in the field of Digital Business at Wits Business School. My research topic explores the advent of a hybrid manager in the digital world of work in South African Energy Sector. The purpose of the study is to determine the hardship of a hybrid manager and employee transition from the old ways (traditional) of doing things and having to adapt in the ever-evolving world of work accelerated by information and communication technology (ICT).

I would like to invite you to voluntarily participate in the research. The purpose of the interview is to obtain your feedback on adaptation of information and communication technology, and how it has enhanced productivity, trust and engagement in the workplace. Interview involves responding to a sequence of interview questions. The session will not be conducted more than forty-five minutes of your time. Only one interview session will be held. As part of the study, I would like to record the interviewing sessions to refer to your responses during the analysis phase of the study. Confidentiality will be secured, and the recordings will not be shared internally. I will be using artificial name to represent your participation in this study in my final research report. Your consent to record the interview session using online platforms like MS Team or Skype would be highly appreciated.

Please note you will not receive payment or benefits from participating in this research, and neither there are disadvantages nor penalties for non-participation. Should you so wish, you can withdraw your participation from the interview sessions at any time. Should you, at any stage, experience distress or discomfort, you are welcome to remove yourself from the process. I am available to answer any questions you may have regarding the research, and you are welcome to contact me via the details provided below. This research will be documented in the form of a written report, which will be submitted to the Wits Graduate School of Business. The summary of the report will be made available to you on request.

Complaints or concerns regarding this study's ethical procedures can be directed to the University Human Research Ethics Committee, telephone +27(0)11 717 1408.

Yours sincerely,

Student: Mfundiso Pula

Email: 1768527@students.wits.ac.za

Supervisor: Dr. Jenika Gobind

Email: jenika.gobind@wits.ac.za

Declaration and signature of Research Participant

The information contained in this document was explained to me by Mfundiso Pula. I confirm that an opportunity was given to me to ask any question or seek clarification, and they were answered to my satisfaction. I understand that the sessions will be audio recorded, and I hereby consent to participate in this research voluntarily. I have been given a copy of this form.

Name of participant: Signature:

Date:

APPENDIX E: Organisation Consent Form

University of the Witwatersrand,
Wits Business School (WBS) in the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management

The Graduate School of Business
2 St David's Place, Parktown
Johannesburg
2193
PO Box 98, WITS, 2050

10 July 2022

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Permission for organisational consent to conduct a research study

My name is Mfundiso Pula. I am studying for a master's degree in the field of Digital Business at Wits Business School. I am seeking permission to do research within your organisation. My research topic explores the advent of a hybrid manager in the digital world of work in South African Energy Sector. The purpose of the study is to determine the hardship of a hybrid manager transition from the old ways (traditional) of doing things and having to adapt in the ever-evolving world of work accelerated by information and communication technology (ICT).

The research will entail collecting data from managers and employees respectively by scheduling individual interviews sessions with eight senior or middle management level and seven employees from your organisation.

Interview involves responding to a sequence of interview questions. The session will not be conducted more than forty-five minutes of your time. Only one interview session will be held. As part of the study, I would like to record the interviewing sessions to refer to your responses during the analysis phase of the study. Privacy will be secured, and the recordings will not be shared internally. To maintain confidentiality, the organisation name will remain anonymous and will be using artificial name to represent your employee's participation in this study in my final research report.

Participants will be asked to give their written or verbal consent before the research begins. Their responses will be treated confidentially, and identities (their names and the name of the organisation) will be anonymous. Individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study.

The research participants will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. They will be reassured that they can withdraw their permission at any time during this project without any

penalty. There are no foreseeable risks in participating in this study. The participants will not be paid for this study.

All research data or the recoding will be stored in my personal hard drive and destroyed after my graduation from the Masters' programme to preserved anonymously for reuse for other research studies.

I therefore request permission in writing to conduct my research at your organisation. The permission letter should be on your organisation's headed paper, signed and dated, and specifically referring to myself by name and the title of my study.

Please let me know if you require any further information. I look forward to your response as soon as is convenient.

Yours sincerely,

Mfundiso Pula

Contact number: 083 7904 738.
Email Address: 1768527@students.wits.ac.za

Dr. Jenika Gobind
Contact number: +27 11 717 3761.
Email Address: jenika.gobind@wits.ac.za

Declaration and signature of Organisation Consent

The information contained in this document was explained to me by Mfundiso Pula. I was given the opportunity to ask questions of clarification, and they were answered to my satisfaction. I hereby grant consent for the organisation to participate in this research, and I have been given a copy of this form.

Name of Company:

Name of Company Representative:

Title of Company Representative:

Signature: Date: 10 July 2022



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