

Newcomer onboarding process in hybrid work contexts

RESEARCH TOPIC

This study addresses the dynamics related to the onboarding of newcomers in organizations in contemporary **hybrid work contexts**, where the premises of the employer, personal working spaces of employees, and digital platforms for collaboration constitute a single work sphere. While hybrid work contexts present both benefits and drawbacks of remote and in-presence work, the newcomer onboarding process stands out as one of the most impacted by remote working. Specifically, **newcomer onboarding** is the process that supports the transition of newcomers from being organizational outsiders to learning and adjusting to their new role and organization as to become committed insiders who develop the intent of remaining with their organization.

Per approfondire

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RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The CERC study specifically investigates:

- the role of two drawbacks of the remote component of hybrid work contexts inhibiting the development of **affective commitment** of newcomers: **workplace social isolation** and **technostress**
- the role of two factors that were previously investigated in in-presence contexts and that proved to enhance affective commitment: **perceived organizational support** and **perceived supervisor support**.

Moreover, this study considers the possible mediating role of **newcomer adjustment**, intended as a proximal outcome of a successful onboarding and an antecedent of newcomer affective commitment.

METHODOLOGY

Method: survey via web questionnaire

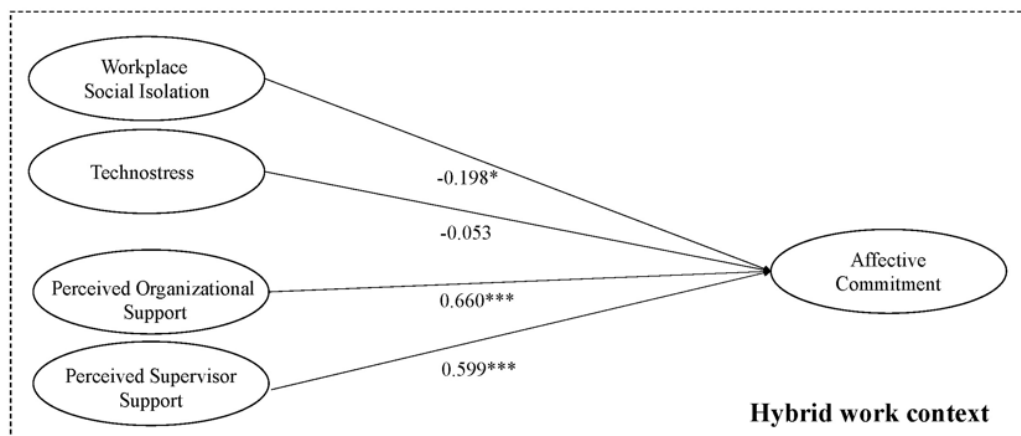
Sample size: 109 employees

Variables: Affective commitment, Workplace social isolation, Technostress, Perceived Organizational Support, Perceived Supervisor Support, Newcomer adjustment

Analysis: correlation analysis, linear regression analysis, mediation analysis

Study period: between April and June 2022

RESEARCH MODEL WITH STANDARD COEFFICIENTS



Primary Data. *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001

KEY FINDINGS

- Affective commitment of newcomers is negatively related to workplace social isolation
- Affective commitment is positively related to both perceived organizational support (POS) and perceived supervisor support (PSS)
- The negative effect of technostress on affective commitment is not significant
- Newcomer adjustment totally mediates the relationship between workplace social isolation and affective commitment
- Newcomers can develop their affective commitment to the organization even if their adjustment is not completed, as long as they perceive receiving discretionary support by the organization and by their supervisors.

IMPLICATIONS

The study offers significant insights by highlighting how **workplace social isolation inhibits newcomer affective commitment** in hybrid work contexts, whereas technostress shows no relevant impact. While POS and PSS remain essential drivers of affective commitment even in hybrid work contexts, the study reveals that newcomer adjustment mediates the negative effects of isolation rather than the benefits of institutional support. Consequently, organizations should **leverage supervisors as role models and socialization agents** and be careful that newcomers feel the **institutional support of the organization** during their onboarding period. Moreover, they should monitor **remote work frequency** to prevent counterproductive effects, ultimately revising onboarding processes with tailored tools and strategies that mitigate the specific risks of the hybrid environment.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the **hybrid work context does not compromise the opportunities for effective onboarding processes** and the development of adjustment and affective commitment. At the same time, it **confirms the challenges posed by workplace social isolation** for the affective commitment development of newcomers. It also **validates the influence of perceived organizational support and perceived supervisor support** as they make employees feel they are valued and supported, while technostress proved not to be significant for the development of affective commitment.

REFERENCES

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