

THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY  
SCHREYER HONORS COLLEGE

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS

Virtual Work & Organizational Socialization: The Perspectives of Female College Students

KATHERINE MARIAN SCHLEGEL  
SPRING 2022

A thesis  
submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements  
for a baccalaureate degree  
in Labor and Human Resources  
with honors in Labor and Human Resources

Reviewed and approved\* by the following:

Dorothea Roumpi  
Assistant Professor of Human Resource Management  
Thesis Supervisor

Cody Stephens  
Assistant Professor of Labor and Human Resources  
Honors Adviser

\* Electronic approvals are on file.

## **ABSTRACT**

This qualitative study explores how virtual work impacts the organizational socialization process of employees. Twenty semi-structured interviews were conducted with female, college students who have previous or current online work experience. Based on the perspectives and attitudes shared in these personal accounts, implications can be made about employee socialization under the context of virtual work. These interviews unveiled the shared struggles and benefits implicated with the new standard of working away from premises since the global coronavirus pandemic. A qualitative analysis, where participant responses were coded and compared, uncovered notable themes. Young, female employees of this study found aspects of virtual work to be better than originally anticipated but showed a preference for a hybrid model of work. Through supervisor accessibility, development opportunities, clear role responsibilities, job autonomy, and beneficial onboarding, participants found their companies to possess a supportive culture. However, participants felt a low person-organization (P-O) fit and uncommitted to their companies because of shallow connections with coworkers, lack of career advancement, and professional network stagnation. This denotes the importance of corrective action from organizations in the form of diversity and inclusion practices, opportunities for online social interaction with coworkers, consistent feedback and communication, and flexibility of work.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES .....	iii
LIST OF TABLES .....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	v
Chapter 1 Introduction .....	1
Chapter 2 Literature Review .....	4
Organizational Socialization.....	5
<i>Outcomes</i> .....	6
<i>Moderators</i> .....	8
<i>Promoters</i> .....	10
COVID-19 & Work.....	11
<i>Female Employees</i> .....	14
<i>Young Employees</i> .....	17
Key Research Questions .....	20
Chapter 3 Methods .....	21
Sample .....	22
Interview Protocol .....	24
Coding & Analysis .....	25
Chapter 4 Results .....	27
PO-Fit, POS, & WLOC .....	27
Workplace Adjustment, Professional Networking, & Career Advancement .....	33
Organizational Retention & Intention to Work Virtually .....	40
Chapter 5 Discussion .....	48
Results.....	48
Contribution .....	50
Limitations .....	53
Suggestions for Future Research .....	54
Conclusion .....	55
Appendix A Interview Questions.....	57
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	59

**LIST OF FIGURES**

Figure 1. Data Structure ..... 26

**LIST OF TABLES**

Table 1. Study Participants ..... 23

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to express immense gratitude to my thesis advisor, Dr. Dorothea Roumpi. This project would not have been possible without her words of encouragement and thoughtful, detailed feedback. I appreciated her guidance every step of the way and I truly learned so much from working alongside her. She has greatly influenced my interest in human resource management, and I will carry this memorable experience throughout my career.

I would also like to thank the College of Liberal Arts for providing me with the enrichment funding to pursue my research. This university has challenged me to reach my fullest potential and provided me with unwavering support over the course of my college education.

Thank you to the interviewees, who so generously took time out their schedules to participate in this study and contribute valuable insight. It was a pleasure to speak with each of these women about their time working remotely.

Finally, I want to thank my friends and family for always being there for me during this process. Their motivation was so meaningful, and I largely accredit the completion of this paper to them.

## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

A coronavirus identified in December 2019, SARS-CoV-2, caused a pandemic of respiratory illness, called COVID-19 (Johns Hopkins Medicine, 2021). As research has shown, the coronavirus is spread when an infected person breathes, talks, laughs, coughs, or sneezes (Johns Hopkins Medicine, 2021). Since infectious particles accumulate and linger in the air, people gathering indoors can increase transmission of the virus, especially when there is poor ventilation (Johns Hopkins Medicine, 2021). Ways to prevent COVID-19 include mask-wearing, hand hygiene, and physical distancing (Johns Hopkins Medicine, 2021). One initial strategy implemented to reduce close contact were directives to self-quarantine (Moreland, Herlihy, Tynan, et al., 2020). According to CDC and the Georgia Tech Research Institute, during the period of March 1–May 31, 2020, 42 states and territories issued mandatory stay-at-home orders (Moreland, Herlihy, Tynan, et al., 2020). Between the adoption of “social distancing” measures and orders to stay home, many employers and workers alike made a swift, but necessary, transition to remote work. It is estimated that “31 percent of workers who were employed in early March 2020 had switched to working at home by the first week of April 2020” (Dey, Frazis, Loewenstein, & Sun, 2020, para. 1). As of December 2020, the United States Census Bureau found that above a third of U.S. households were working from home more often than prior to the pandemic (Marshall, Burd, & Burrows, 2021). Considering these statistics, it is reasonable to suggest that virtual work will continue long after COVID-19 poses a threat to public health.

This disruption to “business as usual” has led employers to offer more flexible work arrangements in response. For many employees, this means using a computer or telecommunication technology to work remotely from somewhere other than the main office space (Invest Northern Ireland, 2020). Arrangement types vary between companies, and even between positions within a company. Adjusting in this way has allowed business operations to continue, while prioritizing the health and safety of employees. Remote work can be a positive enterprise for both employers and employees. Increased productivity, improved work-life balance, and reduced costs are just a few outcomes that are mutually beneficial (Invest Northern Ireland, 2020). According to a 2020 Pew Research Center survey, out of 5,858 U.S. adults, over half would choose to work from home even post-pandemic (Parker, Horowitz, & Minkin, 2021).

Evidently, the popularity of remote work is widespread, but it does not come without challenges. Three of the most significant struggles experienced by employees is unplugging after work, loneliness, and collaboration and/or communication (Zeidner, 2020). Typically, when employees work in-person, there are opportunities for interaction with coworkers and supervisors throughout the day. The values, expectations, and goals of an organization are communicated to employees on a regular basis. Knowledge-sharing, skill development, and mentorships also form and occur naturally. All these components contribute to the overall culture of a workplace. Therefore, it is important to understand whether employees feel they receive the same opportunities for socialization even when working from a distance.

The shift to virtual work has given rise to various work arrangements, such as telecommuting, hybrid work (a combination of in-person and virtual work), and fully remote (Miller, 2021). This variance regarding the work modes within a single organization could make cohesive onboarding for all employees difficult, particularly for those working entirely online



(Miller, 2021). The ability of employees to identify with their organization; however, might be diminished when removed from the office space (Miller, 2021). Unfortunately, this seems to be the case particularly for female employees. On the surface, remote work appears to be a gender equalizer, but there are detriments to this structure for women (Ibarra, Gillard, & Chamorro-Premuzic, 2020). Domestic responsibilities, limited access to informal networks, exclusion from critical assignments, and less visibility are among some disadvantages (Ibarra et. al., 2020). These observations were made about women currently in the workforce, who have work experience pre-and peri-pandemic. Less is known; however, about young women who are entering a professional world, dominated by virtual work, with little to no comparison. It is yet to be seen whether the incoming generation of female employees will adjust more seamlessly to online work or face greater opposition.

On these grounds, the aim of this study is to explore how virtual work has changed the organizational socialization process for new employees. Specifically, this study focuses on how young, female individuals who worked or are currently working virtually experience their employer's socialization process. Through semi-structured interviews, insights are sought regarding the virtual onboarding and socialization practices used by organizations and the extent to which these practices are perceived to be effective by new hires. Learning how young, female employees handle the transition of work to an online context will help companies to implement more effective initiatives for integrating their workforce. With this clarity, firms can better assimilate their remote workers and begin to improve the "new workplace" (where work arrangements include an online component to some extent) for a broad range of employees.

## Chapter 2

### Literature Review

According to *The Education Data Initiative*, 18 percent of all college students graduate each year, which equates to 4 million recent college graduates entering the workforce (Hanson, 2021). Men compose a greater percentage of U.S. workers, but women have constituted the greatest share of college-educated adults for roughly four decades (Matias, 2019). Despite this difference in education, 96 percent of men are confident they will be able to secure a job in their field within 6 months of graduating, in comparison to 91 percent of women (PennWatch, 2019).

Despite these differences, a commonality shared by many recent graduates, both male and female, is a preference for returning to the office. After polling 500 U.S. college seniors in April 2021, a recruitment software company, iCIMS, found that 64 percent want to work onsite a majority of the time, 34 percent say they would prefer a hybrid arrangement, and only 2 percent showed an interest in full-time remote work (Maurer, 2021). Unfortunately for the incoming generation of workers, their preferences do not align with employment outlooks. Economists, Jonathan I. Dingel and Brent Neiman, used data from the Occupational Information Network to forecast that 37 percent of U.S. jobs can be performed entirely at home (Hicks, 2021). Additionally, the number of employees permanently working remotely on a global scale is set to double in 2021, rising from 16.4 percent to 34.4 percent (Chaves-Dreyfuss, 2020). It will be incumbent upon employers to reconcile this incompatibility between the expectations of recent graduates and the imminent reality of work. Exploring the concept of organizational socialization, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the effect of virtual work will inform organizations about how to successfully onboard the next generation of employees, especially young women.

## **Organizational Socialization**

Baker III and Feldman (1991) define organizational socialization (OS) as “the process of learning the ropes on entry into the organization” (p. 193). From the perspective of Bauer, Bodner, Erdogan, Truxillo, and Tucker (2007), organizational socialization is “the process by which newcomers make the transition from being organizational outsiders to being insiders” (p. 707). More recently, Gardner, Huang, Pierce, Niu, and Lee (2021) view organizational socialization as an onboarding practice that “enhances employee adjustment through learning and development” (p. 2). Employees who feel more accepted into their organizations and informed about its process will be more likely to feel more satisfied with their work, closer with coworkers, responsible for the company’s success, and committed to their positions (Jokisaari & Numi, 2009). Organizations would undoubtedly benefit from making employee socialization an integral part of its operations.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, organizational socialization seems to be a struggle for those transitioning from college into full-time employment. In 2019, Brandeis International Business School interviewed 54 recent college graduates, asking them to describe their experience during this transition (Molinsky & Pisman, 2019). Their responses shared three key dimensions: feedback, relationships, and accountability (Molinsky & Pisman, 2019). Many felt directionless in their jobs without the same immediate and clear feedback from supervisors that they were used to receiving in college classes (Molinsky & Pisman, 2019). Relationships were also more difficult to develop since career success and advancement revolves around building a robust network of colleagues who differ in age, background, and interests (Molinsky & Pisman, 2019). Finally, there is typically more at stake and greater pressure to perform consistently in a professional environment than compared to a collegiate one (Molinsky & Pisman, 2019). These

adjustments, which existed for recent graduates prior to the coronavirus, have the potential to be compounded under a virtual work context. The challenge at hand is two-fold: the well-being of young people is diminished, and the level of contribution expected by organizations, who have invested time and capital into these new hires, is attenuated. Subsequently, it is important to better understand the outcomes, moderating factors, and promoters of organizational socialization for closing this gap.

### *Outcomes*

Properly socializing new employees into an organization can lead to an overall positive experience for employees but can also have significant outcomes for organizations. Successful formal organizational socialization efforts have been associated with increased higher levels of organizational commitment and satisfaction, lower levels of turnover intentions, and decreased levels of stress (e.g., Bauer, Morrison, & Callister, 1998; Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000). At the same time, poor socialization can create a negative, lasting impression on the employee, sabotaging their chances of success from the outset. Based on surveys completed by 140 university students at the end of their co-ops, Gruman, Saks, and Zweig (2006) found a positive association between newcomers' self-efficacy and institutionalized socialization tactics with proactive behaviors. Newcomers show a greater inclination to engage in proactive behaviors, such as feedback-seeking, information-seeking, general socializing, supervisor relationship building, networking, and job change negotiation, when their socialization is structured and formalized (Gruman et al., 2006). When socialization is more individualized, newcomers are less likely to seek feedback and information, build relationships, and socialize (Gruman et al., 2006).

This indicates that organizations should use institutionalized tactics, which include collective, formal, sequential, fixed, serial, and investiture socialization, to encourage newcomer self-efficacy and proactivity (Gruman et al., 2006)

Conversely, divestiture socialization, which is a process that dispels new employees of their distinctive qualities to comply with the organization, can undermine “the ability of newcomers to express their authentic self” (Francesco, Massimo, & Dufour, 2019, p. 506). Employees experiencing divestiture socialization might undergo forms of hazing, such as being assigned undesirable tasks, outcasted from inner circles, and scrutinized for their work (Francesco et al., 2019). In turn, this undermines newcomers' performance, engagement, job satisfaction, and commitment (Francesco et al., 2019). Moreover, divestiture socialization has been proven to reshape newcomers' identity, favor conformity, and prevent the expression of newcomers' creativity (Francesco et al., 2019). This is not a well recommended practice for how employers should go about socializing new hires.

It is important, however, to highlight that all newcomers will not have identical reactions to socialization tactics. Work locus of control (WLOC), which describes personal beliefs about agency over work, is an individual difference that may condition how newcomers respond to socialization tactics (Peltokorpi, Feng, & Pustovit, 2021). Newcomers with an internal work locus of control (those who attribute agency to themselves) were less influenced by both institutionalized and individualized socialization approaches in terms of their social integration, embeddedness, or turnover (Peltokorpi et al., 2021). In contrast, newcomers with an external work locus of control (those who attribute agency to outside forces) benefitted from structured institutionalized tactics. However, unstructured individualized tactics were subversive to their social integration, embeddedness, and reduced future turnover (Peltokorpi et al., 2021).

Altogether, these three studies indicate that organizations need to be selective about choosing which socialization tactics will be used and who will receive them when aiming to achieve the most desirable outcomes.

### *Moderators*

Since organizational socialization encompasses a broad scope of employee sentiments, there are many factors that can play a moderating role on these projected outcomes. Bauer et al. (2007) tested a model on 70 newcomers to discern how adjustment (i.e., role clarity, self-efficacy, and social acceptance) mediated the effects of organizational socialization tactics and inquisition on socialization outcomes (i.e., job satisfaction, organizational commitment, job performance, intentions to remain, and turnover). The rate at which participants sought information was strongly related to role clarity and social acceptance, whereas socialization tactics affected all three adjustments (Bauer et al., 2007). In most cases, institutionalized tactics were positively and significantly correlated with newcomer adjustment (Bauer et al., 2007). When adjustment is successful, employee commitment increases and attrition decreases (Bauer et al., 2007).

The perceived organizational support (POS) of employees can influence socialization outcomes as well. Perrot, Bauer, Abonneau, Campoy, Erdogan, and Liden (2014) found that perceived organizational support (POS) greatly moderates the relationship between socialization tactics and three additional socialization outcomes (i.e., learning the job, learning work-group norms, and role innovation). Newcomer uncertainty can be reduced through perceived organizational support (POS) because they feel more confident contacting seasoned employees

with questions (Perrot et al., 2014). Organizations that engender support from the start of the newcomer's entry can enrich their learning, performance, citizenship behavior, and positive job attitude (Perrot et al., 2014). However, the relationship between institutionalized socialization and role innovation is moderated by perceived organizational support (POS) (Perrot et al., 2014). Since institutionalized socialization is rooted in the organization's strategy, it leaves little room for creativity in relation to the purpose of one's role (Perrot et al., 2014). This could cause newcomers to adopt a more passive or custodial approach to their job (Perrot et al., 2014). It falls on the organization to decide which employee characteristics are most valued and should be promoted through socialization tactics.

Yet, organizational socialization is not entirely contingent upon company efforts. The willingness of employees to self-socialize is also a major determinant of workplace embeddedness. The interactionist perspective, developed in the late 1980s, proposes that newcomer attempts at self-socialization should work in conjunction with the organization's attempts to facilitate socialization (Griffin, Colella, & Goparaju, 2000). Griffin et al. (2000) suggests that predisposition towards certain socialization tactics about their effectiveness is common among newcomers. These organizational tactics may also cause exasperation among employees because they are discouraged from deflecting to their usual behaviors for learning a new job (Griffin et al., 2000). To that end, organizational socialization tactics stimulate newcomers to employ proactive behavior, but it is ultimately at the discretion of the employee to do so.

*Promoters*

There are some practices that organizations can introduce to stimulate and reinforce the organizational socialization process among employees. For instance, organizational socialization is dependent upon how closely linked other internal human resource management policies are with the comprehensive onboarding of personnel (Baker III & Feldman, 1991). This study suggests that for a socialization program to be truly successful, individuals should not only adjust to organizations, but individual efforts should also be incorporated into organizational goals (Baker III & Feldman, 1991). Such tactics are not just an end in themselves, but a broader initiative for changing the culture of a work group (Baker III & Feldman, 1991). However, as organizations change strategy, both the way newcomers are socialized, and the way current employees are resocialized, will have to change as well (Baker III & Feldman, 1991). Many firms currently find themselves in this interim period, transitioning away from conventional practices into the new wave of remote work.

Supervisor support is key to generating positive socialization outcomes, including role clarity, work mastery, job satisfaction, and salary contentment. Despite these benefits, Jokisaari and Numi (2009) discovered that, on average, newcomers' perceived supervisor support declined during the period of 6-21 months after organizational entry (Jokisaari & Numi, 2009). The results showed that when there is a steep decline in perceived supervisor support, role clarity, job satisfaction, and salary will also decrease more quickly over time (Jokisaari & Numi, 2009). Organizational, interpersonal, and resource constraints can explain the reduction in perceived supervisor support (Jokisaari & Numi, 2009). However, this study recommends that organizations make providing supervisors with the necessary means a priority (Jokisaari & Numi, 2009). When supervisors can invest in newcomers long-term, the returns for organizations



are high in terms of newcomer adjustment to work (Jokisaari & Numi, 2009). After a supervisor makes initial introductions to other coworkers, the newcomers can start to form their own informal ties and social network ((Jokisaari & Numi, 2009). Altogether, the support shown by supervisors allows socialization to better channel down to employees joining the organization.

Finally, information acquisition is crucial to promoting the utility of learning in organizational socialization. Results from the study conducted by Cooper-Thomas and Anderson (2002) strengthen the conception of organizational socialization as primarily a learning process. Institutionalized socialization tactics significantly predicted information acquisition across all four domains: social, role, interpersonal, and organizational (Cooper-Thomas & Anderson, 2002). It also affiliated positive attitudinal outcomes by providing a context for newcomer learning (Cooper-Thomas & Anderson, 2002). To encourage learning during the socialization process, organizations should provide employees the necessary skills, rapid feedback on both good and bad performance, and dedicated training (Cooper-Thomas & Anderson, 2002). This equips new hires with the knowledge and abilities to explore and adjust to their new workplace.

## **COVID-19 & Work**

Actions taken to combat the coronavirus pandemic have reverberated into all areas of life. For many organizations and employees, these necessary adjustments caused a substantive change to the manner and mode of work. Among one of the most profound effects was the forced acceleration of “work from home” (WFH) accommodations.

Prior to the pandemic, many employers were reluctant to permit this option due to having less control over the work produced by employees. Kniffin et al. (2021) predicts that the move to

highly virtual work arrangements will lead to increased implementation of employee surveillance technologies. Less direct oversight of employees in the office setting may also prompt a shift away from results-based performance appraisals (Kniffin et al., 2021). However, there is evidence that constant monitoring contributes to lower levels of creativity and centralized decision-making among employees (Kniffin et al., 2021).

Besides intensified employee tracking, the nature of work from home (WFH), compounded with uncertainty about the health crisis, has negatively impacted employee well-being. Stressors such as physical distancing, self-isolation, fear, and financial concerns have induced mental health problems for a large number of people (Şentürk, Sağaltıcı, Geniş, & Günday, 2021). Lower levels of participation in activities outside of the home due to COVID-19 restrictions, along with long working hours, make for a sedentary lifestyle (Şentürk et al., 2021). This is already known to have negative effects on both physical and mental health (Şentürk et al., 2021). Şentürk et al. (2021) also found a strong association between workplace loneliness and stress, and that workplace loneliness predicts depression for remote workers. Social interaction is essential to psychological wellness, but face-to-face interactions are few and far between for employees working remotely during the pandemic.

Digital technologies, such as teleconferencing and instant messaging, maintain lines of communication between employees and partially mitigate isolation. It has also contributed to the rise of “virtual teams,” or groups of geographically distant employees who engage with each other through asynchronous and synchronous e-communication (Kniffin et al., 2021). With moderated social and emotional cues, traditional teamwork problems, including conflict and coordination, can escalate quickly (Kniffin et al., 2021). Formalizing team processes, clarifying team goals, and building structural solutions have been recommended to foster psychologically

safe discussions (Kniffin et al., 2021). Moreover, the use of video calls to collaborate with virtual teams can constitute an invasion of privacy and cause discomfort for some employees (Kniffin et al., 2021). It can be challenging for employees who live with others to maintain a professional background while sharing a household space. This blurs the boundary between work and personal life.

Working from home can also come with many distractions, which makes it difficult to focus on the task at hand. More than reducing work productivity, struggles with concentration has been shown to be a cause of depression by making work life and personal relationships more challenging to balance (Şentürk et al., 2021). While maintaining any sense of normalcy during the pandemic would be nearly impossible without technology, it simultaneously introduced a new host of problems for employees. When looking at new hire trends, Ployhart, Shepherd, and Strizver (2021) found that COVID-19 was not only negatively related to their level of engagement, but it also moderated the relationship between organizational tenure and engagement. This is supported by Kniffin et al. (2021) finding that working remotely can reduce employee access to learning opportunities and timely feedback from supervisors, which is associated with lower organizational commitment and higher risk of turnover. Low employee morale and satisfaction demand a quick and progressive reaction from the human resources management function of organizations.

These unprecedented times compelled companies to pivot in the best interest of their workforce. Roumpi (2021) discussed what lessons organizations can learn from the pandemic and how they can become more resilient when confronted with turmoil moving forward. It is crucial to note that the effects of COVID-19, and other global phenomena like political unrest, climate change, and technological advancement, do not occur in a vacuum (Roumpi, 2021).

Organizations must be flexible and well-equipped enough to help employees cope with exigent change to work conditions. To achieve this, Roumpi (2021) suggests that employers select and train individuals who possess and can build upon a broad set of generic or general knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics (KSAOs). Employees will also be more motivated and committed to the organization when provided with stable compensation, job security, safe work environments, flexible work arrangements, and diversity and inclusion practices (Roumpi, 2021). Carnevale and Hatak (2020) also recommend virtual networking opportunities such as online lunches, coffee breaks, and happy hours to strengthen the employee bonds and improve perceived person-organization (P-O) fit during the pandemic. This takes a full circle back to the importance of proper organizational socialization.

### *Female Employees*

As it has been seen, working from home presents many opportunities, but also many risks, and detriment towards female employees is among them. COVID-19 affected gender in a variety of ways and fast-tracked the use of remote work. A study by Odate and Parmar (2021) investigated the status of women in the workforce subsequent to the 2020-2021 pandemic and identified issues. Besides greater health challenges induced by pandemic-related stress, it was found that the disproportionate adverse effects of COVID-19 included higher unemployment rates among women than men, especially within female dominated industries and women owned businesses (Odate & Parmar, 2021). Furthermore, with the closings of school and daycare programs nation-wide, the responsibility of arranging childcare often fell to women, whether single or married (Odate & Parmar, 2021). It has also been speculated that the pandemic

reasserted the unequal division of labor in households between men and women (Odate & Parmar, 2021). Researchers have proposed that the pandemic's infliction on work will repress women's progress for decades, if not generations, to come (Odate & Parmar, 2021).

It is reasonable to surmise that the wider espousal of teleworking might shrink the gender divide and help “dismantle a corporate culture of ‘presenteeism’ that penalizes women” (Tomei, 2021, p. 260). However, there are still many covert barriers hindering women from succeeding and achieving true visibility in the virtual workplace. According to a survey conducted by the Society for Women Engineers (SWE), approximately one third (31 percent) of 1,791 women reported experiencing dismissive encounters during virtual meetings more frequently than when working in-person (Nguyen, 2020). Research has shown that women find themselves talked over, interrupted, and ignored more often within remote formats than during in-person work (Nguyen, 2020).

It should also be reiterated that the pandemic has ushered in a dissolution of the boundary between home and the office, which has led to longer working hours and more time devoted to caregiving and domestic work—a burden disproportionately shouldered by women (Varriale-Barker, 2021). There are noticeable incongruencies related to gender and family situation. Among families with children, men's work and work performance is impacted for the better, whereas women tend to be negatively affected (Thulin, Vilhelmson, & Johansson, 2019). Not to mention, there is a clear association between social factors and overall perceived time pressure or control over time (Thulin et al., 2019). Regardless of telework practice, women and workers with children experience the highest levels of time pressure in everyday life (Thulin et al., 2019). People who work overtime hours from home on a regular basis are tighter on time than are other groups, and women to a greater extent than men (Thulin et al., 2019). These amplified role

conflicts and time constraints have been an emerging factor in burnout and career fatigue among women (Uchiyama, 2021). Unrealistic expectations for women have not changed, despite the virus's toll on all aspects of life (Uchiyama, 2021).

In connection to income inequality, Bonacini, Gallo, and Scicchitano (2020) discovered that the average labor income could increase if working from home (WFH) becomes more feasible and permanent, but the distribution of this benefit would not be equal among all employees. Work from home (WFH) would disproportionately favor older, highly educated, and high-paid male employees (Bonacini, Gallo, & Scicchitano, 2020). Work from home (WFH) thus risks the exacerbation of disparities existing in the labor market if it is not scrupulously regulated (Bonacini et al., 2020). In addition, it has been suggested that men have a stronger relationship between organizational connectedness and virtual work adjustment than women (Raghuram, Garud, Wiesenfeld, & Gupta, 2001). Women may find it more difficult to be connected with the organization because they do not traditionally have the same access to information networks and power bases as men (Raghuram et al., 2001). Knowing how to improve women's socialization into organizations is a limitation of current research, which this qualitative study seeks to reconcile.

There are some strategies that can be implemented in organizations to mitigate the compounded impact of the pandemic and virtual work on women. Counteracting these effects demand measures targeted on promoting women's re-entry and continued tenure in the workforce (Odate & Parman, 2021). This might include the normalization of flexible work schedules, promotion of work-life balance for women, issuance of family leave for both mothers and fathers, and dispersion of accessible, affordable, and quality childcare (Odate & Parman, 2021). Yet, organizations must be careful to ensure that flexible work arrangements do not place

an additional strain on women. *Wakefield Research* recently surveyed parents who are employed full-time and follow flexible work arrangements (Uchiyama, 2021). Of 500 responses, 40 percent said that this greater flexibility led to an increase in working demands and hours (Uchiyama, 2021). This suggests that flexibility is only beneficial for retaining good employees when there are no other conditions or caveats to taking advantage of such an arrangement. In terms of alleviating compensation inequality, short-term income support measures and long-term human capital interventions should play a more important role in organizations (Bonacini, Gallo, & Scicchitano, 2020). Finally, becoming an ally of female co-workers in the virtual work environment can make a significant difference. This can be achieved by having leaders set an inclusive tone, making it a priority to listen to women's voices, urging male colleagues to speak up about instances of discrimination against female coworkers, and encouraging women to support one another (Nguyen, 2020). If virtual work is to become a fixture in society, reformations will be needed to counter pre-existing gender bias and new challenges for women on the horizon.

### *Young Employees*

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected young people across the world by robbing them of life milestones during a crucial period in their lives. Many students also struggled to complete their studies amidst the pressure of the pandemic and disruptions to their education. This has led many to question their identity, career development, and direction in life. Cohen-Scali and Erby (2021) conducted a study where the photobiographic diaries of seven masters' students were synthesized and analyzed to identify the main psychological difficulties they experienced. Young

people underwent difficulty maintaining social ties, lack of corporate immersion in their work experiences, and poor navigation of young adulthood (Cohen-Scali & Erby, 2021). Based on their findings, the researchers recommend that career counselling interventions be conceived in a coordinated manner to empower young people and help them to develop useful coping strategies (Cohen-Scali & Erby, 2021). These interventions must adopt an engineering perspective, where each person's specific questions are addressed, and a holistic societal mission, which advocates for visionary ideals (Cohen-Scali & Erby, 2021). The goal is to engage and expose individuals to a new understanding of their life.

However, a study from 2017, prior to the coronavirus pandemic, examined the career adaptability and social support of 164 graduating seniors during their final year of college as they transitioned to the workforce (Ghosh & Fouad, 2017). Interestingly, the results suggested that when students are engaging in adaptive behaviors (i.e., adjusting to the work environment, managing expectations), their need for support decreases (Ghosh & Fouad, 2017). By having the ability to plan, control, and confidently cope with challenges to career decision making, they no longer need the same social support (Ghosh & Fouad, 2017). In addition, no gender differences were found in career adaptability between both unemployed and employed young adults (Ghosh & Fouad, 2017). The justification is that graduating male and female college seniors show no developmental differences in how they think about or engage in adaptive behaviors (Ghosh & Fouad, 2017). The sense of control recent college graduates had over their lives in 2017 strongly contrasts with the lack of control felt by college graduates in 2020 and onwards.

Despite the harsh reality that many young people are confronting in a post-pandemic world, there may be a silver lining. Bianchi (2013) explored whether earning a college or graduate degree in a recession or an economic boom has lasting effects on job satisfaction. As it



turns out, “well-educated graduates who entered the workforce during economic downturns were more satisfied with their current jobs than those who entered during more prosperous economic time” (Bianchi, 2013, p. 587). They felt more grateful for their jobs and experienced less intrusive thoughts about how they might have done better, even with the financial and career disadvantages of an inopportune graduation (Bianchi, 2013). The way people feel about their employment outcomes does not necessarily reflect their objective value (Bianchi, 2013). Rather, people determine their own satisfaction based on their personal interpretation of the results and surrounding environment (Bianchi, 2013). However, individual characteristics should not be overlooked. Generally, those who have an affective disposition early in life will continue to have a negative outlook into adolescence and through adulthood (Bianchi, 2013). Still, early-career job experiences may leave an indelible mark on how people navigate and evaluate their jobs well after their work circumstances have changed (Bianchi, 2013). This is why the successful socialization of new hires, especially those who have gone through the pandemic during formative years, is immensely critical. Just the same, companies should not take advantage of the contentment young people might feel with their jobs after having lived through a traumatic event. Recent graduates are fragile and ill-equipped to enter a professional world that is constantly changing around them. If anything, employers have a responsibility to build upon that baseline satisfaction, provide social support, and continue to find ways of making their jobs fulfilling. Young people need to have a positive experience from the start, otherwise problems could arise over the course of time.

## **Key Research Questions**

The influence of the global coronavirus pandemic on organizational commitment, job satisfaction, stress, support, workplace belonging, and income cannot be underestimated. For the purpose of this study, it will be observed how a specific age and gender group has been uniquely affected. Incoming female graduates are laden with the dual tribulation of prolonged social isolation and ingrained gender bias, combined with entering a workforce that is unprepared to receive them and reeling from unforeseen setbacks. Their personal accounts will reveal what organizations have done right and where there needs to be improvement. While much is known about different employee socialization processes and embeddedness mechanisms, there is currently limited research studying what socialization for young, female employees will look like in a virtual context as the nature of work changes. Thus, when seeking to address this gap in the knowledge, two key questions arise:

**Research Question 1:** *What is the impact of virtual work on the organizational socialization process of young, female employees?*

**Research Question 2:** *What changes can organizations implement to better integrate young, female employees who work virtually?*

The following section dictates the method by which these research questions were tested, and how the values, expectations, and perceptions of virtual work held by young, female employees were studied.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Methods**

To gain a comprehensive understanding of the virtual work phenomenon and address this study's research questions, interviews were conducted with young, female college students who have participated, at least temporarily, in virtual work. This methodological procedure allows participants to candidly convey their experiences without limitation and expand upon topics of importance to them. Additionally, under the context of the COVID-19 phenomenon, this methodology allows this study to explore a nascent topic, as it will be imperative to prepare for the next generation of female employees entering a heavily online-based workforce.

A qualitative approach was utilized to extract insights related to the research questions of this study. Specifically, the grounded theory approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was employed for two main reasons. First, the focus on a specific context (Glaser & Strauss, 1967): the study aims to explore the experiences of young, female, college students at a specific university who have had experience with (or currently experience) virtual work. Second, given that the adoption of virtual work by organizations increased dramatically due to the ongoing pandemic, virtual work as the main employment mode, even for new employees, is a relatively new and underexplored phenomenon, and, therefore, the grounded theory approach is an appropriate method for this study's research questions (Murphy, Klotz, & Kreiner, 2017).

This research conducted in-depth interviews to assess the perceptions, expectations, and attitudes of future female college graduates for the benefit of organizations and their potential employees.

## Sample

The sample obtained in this study consists of 20 emerging young, female professionals, ranging in age from 19–23, who are enrolled in college and have previous or current virtual work experience. Of the 20 participants, 16 (i.e., 85 percent) were Caucasian, 2 (i.e., 10 percent) were African American, 1 (i.e., 5 percent) was Hispanic, and 1 (i.e., 5 percent) was South Asian. The mean length of employment in a virtual position for our sample was 9.5 months. Due to the ongoing public health crisis of COVID-19 and ease of scheduling, the 20 semi-structured, qualitative interviews were conducted virtually, recorded, and transcribed to assess emergent themes on virtual work. The sample was solely collected from one large, public university within the United States to maintain consistency of results. Potential subjects were recruited via the messaging app, GroupMe. A formal recruitment message was sent out to selected group chats. Those who fit all the criteria listed in the recruitment message and expressed interest in being interviewed were selected to participate in the study. The snowball sampling technique was also utilized to capitalize on the network of participants and acquire diverse referrals (Ashforth, Kreiner, Clark, & Fugate, 2007; Corley & Gioia, 2004; Roumpi et al., 2020). Interviews were conducted over the course of two weeks from January 31, 2022, to February 13, 2022. On average, interviews were completed within 16 minutes but fell between 10 to 24 minutes depending on the detail and length of response. More information about the participants in this study can be found in Table 1.

**Table 1. Study Participants**

Participant	Age	Year in College (1-5)	Nature of Employment	Industry	Length of Employment (months)
1	21	4	Internship	Hospitality	8
2	21	4	Internship	Retail/Consumer Products	30
3	22	5	Internship	Statistical Software	5
4	19	2	Internship	Interior Design & Marketing	12
5	23	5	Assistantship	Education	24
6	21	4	Internship	Construction & Civil	12
7	20	2	Part-Time	Education	12
8	20	3	Internship	Paint Supplier	2
9	22	4	Part-Time	Sports Entertainment	2
10	21	4	Internship	Aviation	8
11	21	3	Internship	Steel Manufacturing	5
12	22	4	Part-Time	Healthcare	3
13	21	4	Internship	Banking	24
14	21	4	Internship	Tech Industry	3
15	20	3	Internship	Publishing	3
16	22	4	Internship	Personal Organizer	3
17	21	4	Internship	Financial Services	18
18	22	4	Internship	Consumer Product Goods	3
19	22	4	Internship	Sports	2
20	23	5	Internship	Publishing	12

## **Interview Protocol**

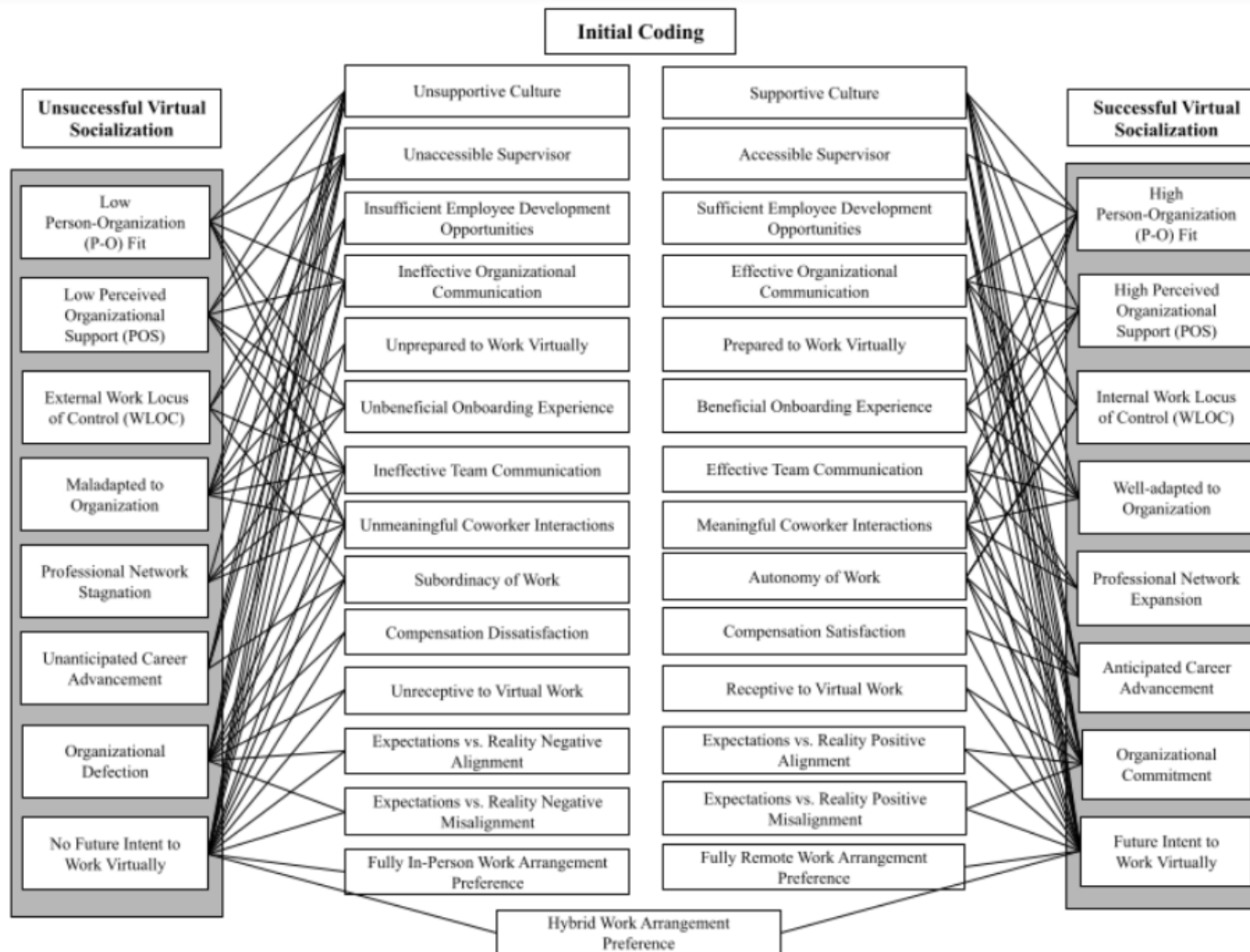
The purpose of grounded theory is to essentially allow important topics and themes to emerge through the narratives that interviewees offer (Murphy et al., 2017). Therefore, it is important that the interview guide offers some structure for the discussion, while giving enough room to interviewees to freely express their opinions. On these grounds, an open-ended, semi-structured interview protocol was developed for the purposes of the study (see Appendix).

The developed interview structure was used to provide threshold talking points for the interviewees and gently direct the conversation. At the beginning of each discussion, the purpose of the interview was explained (i.e., to understand the implications of virtual work related to the socialization process). Participants were asked to answer each question to the best of their ability and told to notify the interviewer of discomfort or confusion at any point during the questionnaire. The interview protocol employed in this study was structured into five sections: (a) demographic information, (b) educational background, (c) employment-related information, (d) organizational socialization experience, and (e) concluding perceptions. Section a, b, and c were included to understand the personal history of each participant and the extent of their familiarity with virtual work. The last two sections of the protocol were designed to address the main research questions. To end the interview, participants were debriefed on next steps, thanked for their time, and reminded that all personal information will remain confidential to the fullest extent of the law and University policy.

## **Coding & Analysis**

The principal investigator coded and analyzed the 20 transcribed interviews for verbatim quotes, emerging themes, and contrasting opinions. The Gioia methodology (Gioia & Chittipeddi, 1991) of qualitative research was used to systematize and assess the data. This technique brings qualitative rigor to the conduct and presentation of inductive research, while outputting credible and defensible interpretations of the data (Gioia, Corley, & Hamilton, 2013). There are essentially two stages of coding involved in the Gioia methodology (Gioia et al., 2013). The initial stage requires the creation of first-order codes based on broad themes identified from the interviews. In terms of this study, some first-order codes included were expectation (mis)alignment, culture supportiveness, supervisor accessibility, effectiveness of team and organizational communication, and meaningfulness of coworker interactions. The second stage includes second-order coding, or aggregated dimensions, which involves taking the first-order codes and developing comprehensive themes. Among these conceptualizations were person-organization (P-O) fit, perceived organization support (POS), work locus of control (WLOC), adaptive behaviors, career advancement, and intent to work virtually. All of the identified themes are grounded in prior research and explored in the literature review. Finally, a data structure (see Figure 1) was created, per the Gioia methodology guidelines (Gioia et al., 2013), to show the relationship between the first and second order themes.

Figure 1. Data Structure





## **Chapter 4**

### **Results**

In this qualitative study, 20 interviews, ranging from 10 to 24 minutes, were analyzed to understand the impact of virtual work on the organizational socialization process of female college students regarding the extent and effectiveness of their immersion. Although each participant's experience is different, the analysis shows commonalities among many of the responses. The findings reaffirm past research, while also establishing new, and at times contradictory, conclusions. Results will be discussed mainly using the eight second-order codes (i.e., P-O Fit, POS, WLOC, Adaptive Behaviors, Professional Networks, Career Advancement, Organizational Retention, and Intent to Work Virtually), in conjunction with supporting evidence from the interview questions and first-order codes.

#### **PO-Fit, POS, & WLOC**

The first three aggregated dimensions identified in the analysis were person-organization (P-O) fit, perceived organizational support (POS), and work locus of control (WLOC). Person-organization (PO) fit is defined as the compatibility between the needs of people and the ability of the organization to fulfill those needs or offer similar fundamental characteristics to those of the individual (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). Perceived organizational support (POS) refers to employees' perception concerning the extent to which the organization values their contribution and cares about their well-being (Eisenberger, 2022). Finally, work locus of

control (WLOC) refers to the extent that an employee believes they can control work-related events (Shannak and Al-Taher, 2012).

When determining whether socialization was successful or unsuccessful, participants demonstrated either a high or low degree of person-organization (P-O) fit and/or perceived organizational support (POS), and an externally- or internally-attributed work locus of control (WLOC). Those who have an external locus of control believe that an outcome is the product of chance, outside influences, or other's decisions (Lopez-Garrido, 2020). Those who have an internal locus of control believe they can influence an outcome through their own actions and behavior (Lopez-Garrido, 2020). Elements of the participant's experience, including workplace culture, supervisor accessibility, availability of development opportunities, organizational and team communication, onboarding, and coworker interactions impacted the following results.

During the interview participants were asked if they identified with the organization's culture. Many participants demonstrated a low person-organization (P-O) fit and felt disconnected from the company culture when working online. The following quotes are examples of participants who experienced low person-organization (P-O) fit.

*“I felt like I was missing something because everyone is obviously going to advertise the company as having a great culture. But it's when you meet people that you actually learn about it, so I felt like it was difficult to know the culture in a genuine sense when working virtually. I didn't feel like I was able to identify with or experience the culture they advertised.”*

*“Given that it's a male dominated industry, I think the culture definitely leans towards, you know, what you perceive to be more masculine activities. So, it wasn't something that I necessarily fit into when I was working there. I definitely think being virtual made it harder to understand or identify with the culture.”*

*“It was pretty easy to pick up on the culture because everyone kept their cameras on during conference calls. But I don't know if I necessarily identified with the culture because I still pretty much felt like an outsider the whole time.”*

Some participants demonstrated a high person-organization (P-O) fit from having informative conversations at the beginning of their jobs. Their perspectives are stated below.

*“During my first few shifts with them, they were really good about explaining their workplace culture, and how it would be if I was working in-person with them. So, I've really felt like I've adapted to the culture there.”*

*“I was able to see themes within the company that every person I met with spoke about. I think this translated into me better understanding the culture and really being able to identify with it.”*

Participants were asked if they felt supported by their organization. Despite experiencing low person-organization (P-O) fit, many participants reported high perceived organizational support (POS) based on the initiative their supervisors and organization took. Four participants expanded upon the support they received from their companies.

*“I definitely felt supported by the organization. They brought in a lot of speakers to talk about diversity and woman involvement. They made it very easy for you to join virtually and organized many special interest clubs within the company. So as a woman in banking, where you're a minority, they made it very easy to get involved. They showed a culture of inclusivity and they really cared about everyone.”*

*“I felt very supported. My company was owned and led by women, so it was definitely a female empowering culture. My supervisors always made sure to let us know we were appreciated and to speak up if we ever had any concerns about our work environment. They were also very receptive to our ideas and encouraged us to voice our opinions.”*

*“I've had the opportunity to speak with a lot of people within the company, even outside of my department when we're working on certain projects, and that kind of thing. So, I do think that they've been supportive in that way.”*

Still, other participants experienced both low person-organization (P-O) fit and low perceived organizational support (POS), citing poor supervisor accessibility as a major factor.

*“I definitely do feel supported a lot less virtually because I'm not physically there in the office. I especially didn't feel supported by my supervisors. I didn't really get to interact with them much more than getting assigned tasks and answering emails. I think you would have more opportunities to converse when working in-person.”*

*“There was definitely a gap in the support I felt from my organization. They did a good job at the very beginning where they would set up meetings for us with other people in our department and executives of the company. But that stopped after a while. And I started to wonder like how am I supposed to learn in a virtual environment where you can’t automatically ask a question or randomly check in with your supervisor.”*

Participants were asked whether they had autonomy over their work and if they considered themselves to be contributing members of the organization. The degree of person-organization (P-O) fit and perceived organizational support (POS) felt by the participants seemed to impact whether they externally- or internally-attributed their work locus of control (WLOC). Those who expressed low person-organization (P-O) fit and low perceived organizational support (POS) were more likely to also demonstrate tendencies aligned with an external work locus of control (WLOC). Participants signaled a lack of motivation and engagement with their roles in the organization.

*“I wouldn't necessarily say that I felt like I had a lot of guidance at times, I was almost kind of directionless. So, I pretty much gave up trying to get feedback from my supervisor and figured my work was good enough. I didn't really feel like I was making an impact in my job.”*

*“I definitely felt out of the loop sometimes and unsure of what job expectations they had for me because communication in the organization wasn't great. Since I didn't really know how to do my job, I just wouldn't go above and beyond. It didn't seem like anyone*

*working there cared much and I didn't feel like I could change that within my short time there."*

Yet, those who indicated high person-organization (P-O) fit and high perceived organizational support (POS) were more likely to also demonstrate tendencies aligned with an internal work locus of control (WLOC). These individuals were given the autonomy, trust, and support to execute projects and facilitate discussions, as mentioned in the following quotes.

*"I was put on a lot of projects because they were impressed with my technological skills. Anything that needed to be done on Excel or something like that, I was kind of given free rein to just run the project. So, I definitely was challenged and had command over my work."*

*"My manager is super friendly and easy to get to know, right off the bat. And I think we have a really good method of communication. He likes for me to kind of manage our weekly talks. So, I really get to take charge of assignments and show what I can do."*

Based on the responses, individuals who identified with their organizations were also likely to feel supported and displayed greater self-determination. Supervisor accessibility, development opportunities, inclusivity, effective communication, and knowledge-sharing with coworkers were all promoters of this outcome. Individuals who did not identify with their organizations were also likely to feel unsupported and displayed less ambition. This happened when individuals perceived their supervisors to be uninvolved, found their organizational culture

unwelcoming, and considered their work to be inconsequential. Still, there were instances of participants who felt supported but did not necessarily identify with their organizational culture. Irrespective of accessible supervisors, abundant development opportunities, consistent communication, and beneficial onboarding, some organizations could not bridge this gap for their employees. Physical detachment and social seclusion from the work environment was enough to overpower constructive efforts from the organization and curtailed the full immersion of virtual workers.

### **Workplace Adjustment, Professional Networking, & Career Advancement**

Additional aggregated dimensions identified in the analysis were workplace adaption, networking, and career advancement. Employees who are well-adjusted to their organization display flexibility and the ability to change in order to become successful. As previously discussed in the literature review, they might demonstrate proactive work behavior, which can be defined as “changing the status quo by taking initiative in order to improve existing circumstances, or to create new ones” (Gruman et al., 2006). Contrastingly, employees who are maladjusted to their organization may suffer from high levels of stress that can impact job performance, as well as their relationships with colleagues and supervisors (Basile, Braiotta Jr., & Pashke, 1977). These employees might demonstrate reactive work behavior or respond to events after they happen, and their pessimistic attitude can spread to those who work closely with them (Basile et al., 1977). Network expansion occurs when employees develop new professional or social contacts internally and externally to their organization (Grant, 2016). Network stagnation happens when an individual’s circle of connections is limited and there are few

opportunities to build new relationships (Wolff & Moser, 2009). Employees who anticipate career advancement perceive an “upward trajectory of their professional journey” (University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences, 2021, para. 3). Unanticipated career advancement occurs when employees believe they are unable to progress or grow further at their current organization (Abele, Volmer, & Spurk, 2011).

One question asked during the interview was whether it was easy or difficult for participants to understand the norms and processes of their organization when working virtually. Some participants reported that it was easy to understand and indicated they were well-adjusted in their roles. This was made possible when job roles were described explicitly, and further clarification could be expedited. Two participants stated:

*“I quickly understood the norms and process of my organization because I worked with a small group of only four people. So, I became really close with my direct manager and team right away. It was easy to ask them questions when I was first hired. But if it was a larger organization, I probably would have been more lost and confused.”*

*“They definitely laid out their expectations for us very clearly. When the internship started, they provided us with a plan that let us know what we would be measured against and what assignments we were expected to complete. I appreciated this because I knew exactly what I needed to do to meet their performance standards. And this encouraged me to reach my fullest potential in my job.”*



Other participants found it more difficult to understand the norms and processes of their jobs and indicated they were maladjusted in their roles. Appropriate conduct was less conveyable in the virtual environment, which made employees feel uneasy about reaching out. These participants illustrated their frustration.

*“I actually thought it was fairly difficult just understanding the methods of communication in terms of like contacting a manager or contacting the other people I was working with. I wasn't sure what the etiquette was like if I should message them or email them or just call them. Nobody really told me how to go about it and I didn't think it was my place to ask right away. So, I kind of had to figure that out by just trying different things but sometimes I would just, you know, get frustrated and step away from my computer a lot.”*

*“It was really difficult for me at first. I was very intimidated to ask questions and interact with my coworkers in the virtual environment. It's one thing to be with people in-person and see them face-to-face and have that human interaction but then you go online, and it always feels less like reality if that makes sense. So, I was extremely intimidated to speak up at times because I didn't want to unmute and interrupt somebody else. I always found it to be a very uncomfortable situation, but it just became something I had to deal with every day.”*

Later in the interview, participants were asked whether it was easy or difficult for them to get to know co-workers when working virtually. They were also asked how often they interacted

with others while working online. This suggested the scope and closeness of their professional network. Frequent communication with coworkers, about work and personal life, made a crucial difference for employees who reported experiencing network expansion, such as the following two participants.

*“We have a lot of different meetings where normally the first twenty minutes is open to discussion about anything you want to share or just get off your chest. We also have virtual happy hours which was nice to decompress and get to know people outside of work. We use a Slack channel too. I actually told my boss I was adopting a new puppy and she’s a big dog person, so we were sending pictures back and forth. Part of the company website is dedicated to highlighting employees’ pets which is another fun way to connect. I really feel like I know the people in my company.”*

*“I had a really easy time connecting with the people I was working with. I was able to send them emails at any time of the day asking questions and they encouraged me to reach out, especially if I was confused about something. I was in constant communication with at least two of my coworkers every day. And then once a week we had a whole team meeting to make sure we were on the same page. I was definitely able to connect with my coworkers and build a relationship with them even outside of the organization.”*

Unfortunately, many participants admitted it was very difficult for them to get to know their coworkers and that they had little to no interaction with others when working online. The persistence of blank computer screens, the absence of sporadic exchanges with colleagues, and

lack of personal investment triggered network stagnation. Three participants portrayed their isolation.

*“It was difficult. It was a little bit awkward sometimes just because a lot of people had their cameras off. So, it's hard to really get to know someone when you can't see their face. And it's all business talk about projects and stuff without a lot of small talk on calls. And I think it just also depends on the people. But I definitely think because it was virtual, it was a lot harder to get to know my colleagues. And if we were in person, I kind of I imagined it being a lot easier to chat at their desk or go get lunch or something like that.”*

*“I felt like it was really difficult to interact with other people beyond the few people I met with on a regular basis. I don't know, because of the whole virtual environment, combined with the fact that was a temporary worker, it just felt like nobody wanted to put in the effort to know me.”*

*“For the people I was working for, like my mentors, and like the people that weren't interns, I feel like it was really easy to get to know them because it was built into our schedule. But getting to know the other interns was harder because there wasn't a lot of socialization online. And there wasn't a time for just like a small group of us to meet in the office. So yeah, it was disappointing to not share that experience with people going through the same process as me.”*

Another question asked of participants was how likely they would return to work for their organization. This denoted whether they anticipated being able to advance their careers by remaining as an employee. Employees who are staying with their company expressed that development opportunities, job fulfillment, and organizational culture were major factors in their decision.

*“I accepted a full-time job with my organization so I will one hundred percent be returning. I think that they did a great job with their virtual internship. And I think, for me personally, the company has a lot of breath where I can explore different areas of my profession and they are also leaders in their industry. So, there are a lot of opportunities for me to expand my knowledge. I personally believe in many of the values and social missions held by the company. I think they have a very supportive culture. I felt like my career would benefit in many ways by returning to this company.”*

*“I really liked the organization overall. And I think it's a great place to work just because of my own career goals, and where I see myself working in the long term. I like the support that I've gotten since being there and the work itself is enjoyable to me. So yeah, it's been a positive experience so far.”*

Other interviewees confessed that they had no intention of returning to their organization. Those who did not expect their careers to progress cited low compensation, inaccessible supervisors, culture exclusiveness, and limited feedback as primary deterrents. According to the participant's accounts, these drawbacks made their choice to leave very easy.

*“I will say, throughout the summer, I felt like I didn't really know where I stood because my supervisor was always very busy. One time I asked her if we could go get coffee while I was in the city, but she never responded. And I've asked her on multiple occasions if we could have a phone conversation and it would never happen. So, I think when you're in-person, it's like, oh it's okay, she's just busy because I can see her physically working in her office. But on a virtual environment, you start to get in your head of like, okay, do they like me? Or are they not responding for a reason? Informal feedback was hard to get. And despite efforts on my end, I did not receive adequate career development or advice. So, I will not be going back to work for this company.”*

*“So, I actually did receive an offer to accept a full-time position, and I did not accept it. Part of the reason I did not accept was purely based on compensation. While they were at market level, it was not necessarily what I had hoped to make. The other reason why I declined was because the organization was not furthering my career. I never felt included in the culture and they offered few development opportunities. There were definitely more competitive offers out there in terms of salary and growth potential. So, I opted to just pursue those and obviously, like my company was very accommodating and understanding, but it is unlikely that I will return.”*

Based on the responses, individuals who were well-adjusted to their work also likely had high person-organization (P-O) fit, high perceived organizational support (POS), and an internal work locus of control (WLOC). Employees who successfully adapted could then concentrate on

expanding their network and advancing their careers. Supervisor accessibility, development and socialization opportunities, supportive culture, daily communication, and visibility of colleagues were all promoters of this outcome. Individuals who were maladjusted also likely had low person-organization (P-O) fit, low perceived organizational support (POS), and an external work locus of control (WLOC). Organizational detachment of employees prevents exposure to new networks and devastates possible career advancement. Limited interaction and guidance, along with low concern for well-being, were symptoms of this outcome. Still, there was a handful of employees who were well-adjusted with large networks but did not intend to return to their organization. This was not a negative reflection on the organization. Rather, the job itself did not align with the individual's long-term career aspirations or COVID-19 caused a change of plans in some way.

### **Organizational Retention & Intention to Work Virtually**

The final aggregated dimensions identified in the analysis were organizational retention and intention to work virtually. Depending on the previously discussed conditions, participants were either committed to their roles or decided to defect from the organizations. Expectations about career advancement is just one predictor of employee loyalty towards their company, but there is much else that influences the urge to stay or go, and even more so during a global pandemic. The two dimensions of organizational retention is commitment and defection. Organizational commitment can be defined as the strong attachment of an employee to an organization and its goals (Juaneda-Ayensa, Clavel San Emeterio, & González-Menorca, 2017). Conversely, organizational defection is when an employee leaves one organization to go work

for another (Latha, 2013). Whether employees had a positive or negative virtual work experience also impacts their intention to work online in the future. Employees who intend to work virtually again are open to working in another role that is entirely online. Employees who do not intend to work virtually will only seek out roles that are entirely in-person after leaving their organization. Employees who reported a preference for hybrid work arrangements could fall on either end of the spectrum. The first-order code of aligned or misaligned expectations with reality should be explained in further detail. A positive alignment means that the employee had a good experience with virtual work, which matched their expectations. A negative alignment means that the employee had a poor experience with virtual work, which matched their expectations. A positive misalignment means that the employee was expecting to have a poor experience with virtual work but had a good experience in reality. A negative misalignment means the employee was expecting to have a good experience with virtual work but had a poor experience in reality. The perceptions of employees before and after undergoing their virtual work projects onto their future employment intentions.

Participants were asked how committed they were to their organizations, and some imparted a high level of dedication. While a good company culture seems to be an overarching source of employee satisfaction, participants also conveyed that job complacency and work-life balance were prominent considerations.

*“I am very committed to my organization. There are lots of opportunities for other jobs. But I totally wanted to return to this job. I love my boss because she's nice and understanding. And now that I got to know the other people I work with pretty well,*

*working virtually has been easier. I don't really want to meet new people and retransition and stuff like that again if I were to go to another company."*

*"My organization's flexibility has made me super committed. I've gotten so used to just being able to do whatever I want when working online. We also switched to a 4/10 schedule, so I get all Fridays off, and I only work four days a week. I have a really great work-life balance right now and I don't know if I would get that somewhere else."*

Other participants were resolved to eventually defect from their organization. The responses of two participants reveal that their companies were not enticing enough for them to stay for an extended period of time. These employees were more self-interested and felt a lack of commitment to their organizations as a whole.

*"I accepted a full-time offer of employment at my current organization. However, I would not say that I am a very committed employee. I took the job because I felt like it was a good career move, not because I love the company. I'll get what I can out of it and probably leave after two years."*

*"My commitment for this organization is low just because I don't feel like anything is holding me there. I didn't really put any roots down. And what I mean by that is I didn't really make a notable contribution to a project or have some great mentor relationship. Especially with being online, I don't even have faces to names. It was just a job to me,*



*and I feel very little obligation to the company. If it works out in my favor, then I'll stay. If not, I'll move on."*

To elicit the future intentions of participants, it was asked whether they would prefer to either work full-time online, in-person, or both (i.e., hybrid). They were also asked to describe any initial expectations they held about virtual work and assess whether those perceptions changed after their experience online. Both of following participant response expressed a desire to work remotely and point towards a positive misalignment of expectations versus reality. They were wary of virtual work at first due to other's opinions and their own concerns; however, these participants came to enjoy the flexibility of being online.

*"My perception of virtual work did change. I guess I kind of had some expectations due to the fact that I did not think it was going to go as smoothly as it did just because I had had an internship the previous year, and it was all in person. So, before COVID-19, remote working wasn't even a thought in my brain as an option. But now that I've been doing it for two years, I actually enjoy the flexibility of it. And I think it's just as effective as being in an office since I've done both. I'm definitely pro remote working, and I would do it full-time again."*

*"I've heard a lot of back and forth about telework. Especially from other employees at the place that I work. Some people like it, some people don't. And I was prepared to not like it. But I had a really good personal experience. It was nice because my work is*

*flexible. I can work from anywhere. And I really like my hours because I work from 7:30pm to 4:00pm so I'm done pretty early and can just log off."*

Other participants saw the value in a hybrid model of work as an ideal balance between in-person and virtual work. These employees also experienced a positive misalignment of expectations compared to the reality of remote work. At first, they did not foresee themselves gaining much from virtual work, either socially or developmentally, but that perception changed over the course of their experience.

*"My expectations definitely changed. I wasn't expecting a lot of interaction online. I thought I would just be working by myself all day. But actually, most of my days were filled with meetings. Still, if I had the choice, I would want to be hybrid just so I could get to know people better, but then have that time at home too. Because mentally, like, it's nice to be in your own space. And I think I'm still productive. Like when it's just like me and my desk and my computer. But I do think being in-person is super important to really understand the culture and just meet people in my network."*

*"I thought there was no way I going to be able to learn anything from just sitting at home and working online. But I definitely learned a lot more than I anticipated because there were people who looked out for me, and it was very easy for me to ask questions. But I think a hybrid arrangement would be perfect because I definitely want the in-person social aspect. And being in an office is something our generation has missed out on so far. It's very important for personal development to be in the workplace and around your*

*bosses. But I think everyone has realized through this just how important work-life balance is too. So, I think hybrid is the best of both worlds.”*

A third segment of employees were adamant about the importance of in-person work. Of the following two responses, the first participant experienced a negative misalignment of expectations with reality. This employee was expecting a fluid transition to virtual work but instead found it unmotivating and mundane. The second participants experienced a negative alignment because their impression of virtual work as ineffective was confirmed. Both participants viewed themselves as more productive in an office setting.

*“At first, I thought virtual work was going to be a really easy adjustment, but I realized kind of how boring it is. And that I am much more productive in an office setting versus sitting at home by my desk, because there's so many more distractions. Whereas going into it, I was kind of like, oh, yeah, I get to sleep in and wear my sweatpants. But I've learned about myself that that it's not good for me in terms of being productive. I would definitely prefer to work in-person.”*

*“I do think I had a little bit of a perception that virtual work was not necessarily effective. I almost have, you know, like that Baby Boomer mindset where you aren't really being productive unless you're driving 40 minutes to an office, sitting down at your desk, and drinking your coffee from the break room coffee machine. So, I don't think my initial perception of virtual work was great. And I think I concluded from my internship, and going forward, that it's not necessarily effective. The reason why I think I'm a strong*

*employee there now is because of the three months I had in-person before the pandemic.*

*So, I am definitely an advocate for in-person work.”*

The previous themes indicated by participants as relevant to their experience are prognostic of whether organizations will retain them as employees and if they intend to work virtually again in the future. Employees with high person-organization (P-O) fit, high perceived organizational support (POS), an internal work locus of control (WLOC), considered themselves well-adapted, and expanded their professional network are more likely to be committed to their organizations and intend to work virtually again in some capacity. These participants specified job contentment, flexibility, and work-life balance as appealing aspects of virtual work. For these employees, the reality of remote work met and/or exceeded their expectations. Employees with low person-organization (P-O) fit, low perceived organizational support (POS), an external work locus of control (WLOC), considered themselves maladapted, and stagnation of their professional network are more likely to defect from their organizations and do not intend to work virtually again in some capacity. These participants specified unmeaningful interactions, unproductiveness, and supervisor inattention as disadvantages of virtual work. For these employees, the reality of remote work failed to meet and/or exceed their expectations. Therefore, they find in-person work to be more stimulating and beneficial. A large portion of employees were receptive to a hybrid model of work. Those who preferred this option oscillated between a combination of favorable and unfavorable aggregated dimensions. Some employees had an overall positive virtual work experience but felt the only missing component was greater social engagement with coworkers and exposure to the organizational culture, which being in-person intermittently could ameliorate. At the same time, employees who had an overall negative

virtual work experience believed much of their dissatisfaction could be resolve with occasional visits to the office. This reveals a cross-sectional consensus, where both groups can agree that a hybrid work arrangement would be most effective.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Discussion**

The option to work virtually heightened during the global COVID-19 pandemic and shows little indication of decline. It is possible that many jobs will become permanently remote positions. By learning how young, female employees are handling the transition of work to an online context, companies can implement effective initiatives for integrating their workforce. Many participants confessed they would have never considered to work online if it had not been for the pandemic and social distancing measures. Virtual work was not intended to be a part of their career trajectory. With this in mind, the study focuses on whether subjects believed they had the same opportunities for socialization in their organizations while working virtually compared to in-person. Most participants were grateful for efforts made to welcome them into their roles and understanding of any deficiencies on the organizations' behalf due to pandemic-related challenges. However, they also expressed ways in which their companies could improve virtual work. These sentiments and suggestions will be examined in the following sections.

### **Results**

The results of these qualitative interviews shed light on how virtual work has impacted the socialization process of female college students. Compelling parallels can be drawn about the number of individuals who reported experiencing each first and second order themes. More than half (55 percent) of the individuals in this study denoted that they encountered a positive misalignment of their expectations versus reality, meaning this discrepancy left them pleasantly

surprise. Interestingly, 60 percent of participants prefer a hybrid work arrangement, 25 percent prefer to work entirely in-person, and 10 percent prefer to be online full-time. An overwhelming 85 percent of the sample felt supported by their organization. This was substantiated by several findings. When asked if they were provided with the necessary equipment, materials, and resources to perform their jobs, every participant confirmed they felt well prepared to work virtually. It was indicated by 80 percent of participants that they were provided with sufficient development opportunities and another 80 percent found their job responsibilities to be clear. Moreover, 65 percent underwent a beneficial onboarding experience, 65 percent were given autonomy in their roles, and 60 percent felt their supervisor was accessible. It is likely that employees felt most supported by their organization in these ways. However, more than the majority of interviewees (70 percent) felt a low person-organization (P-O) fit. This was corroborated by 65 percent of participants who believed their coworker interactions were unmeaningful, 65 percent were uncommitted to their companies, 55 percent did not anticipate career advancement, and 55 percent perceived network stagnation. More employees (55 percent) experienced effective communication within intermediate teams than throughout the organization in its entirety (40 percent). These are areas that have suffered as a consequence of employees' weak identification with their organizations. It is logical that most employees who were interviewed prefer a hybrid model because there are evidently both satisfactory and dissatisfactory components of virtual work.

## **Contribution**

There are decades of research surrounding the methods, importance, and benefits of properly socializing employees into an organization (Baker III & Feldman, 1991, Bauer et al., 2007, Gardner et al., 2021). Without a doubt, socialization is essential to the effective functioning and cooperation of all organizational members. However, there is limited research on how successful socialization can be achieved in an online context. Telework has been popularized unlike ever before because of the global coronavirus pandemic. Due to the changing landscape of work and uncertainty about the virus, organizations were flying blind when it came to remotely managing their workforce. Employers had to react expeditiously with the hope their decisions were in the best interest of organization. With the worst of the pandemic over, it is time to reevaluate norms created during a period of crisis. Since virtual work shows no signs of decline, it is critical to take a closer look at how the socialization process is being approached. Propitiously, this study builds upon previous knowledge about socialization while accounting for the modern realities of work. Moreover, it provides insight from a vulnerable population entering the workforce: young, female employees (Odate & Parmar, 2021, Cohen-Scali & Erby, 2021). Women in the workforce will no longer only be barred by a glass ceiling but also a computer screen. The incoming generation of workers, recovering from an unprecedented event, will set a new precedent about how virtual employment should be conducted and viewed. Therefore, this study seeks to address both concerns of the aforementioned demographic and the shortcomings of virtual work (Kniffin, et al. 2021).

As stated in Research Question 1, this study informs employers about how virtual work impacts the organizational socialization process of young, female employees. The results show that despite having a supportive culture, an accessible supervisor, development opportunities,



clear role responsibilities, and job autonomy, subjects were still unable to make meaningful connections with coworkers, expressed poor person-organization (P-O) fit, felt uncommitted to their company, and perceived career and professional network stagnation. Yet, many subjects reported having a positive misalignment of their expectations versus reality, meaning that they found aspects of virtual work to be better than anticipated. Many participants embraced the idea of hybrid work as well. But it is apparent that virtual work is preventing employees from becoming “organizational outsiders to insiders” because they are physically removed from the office space. Even with resources made readily available to online employees, the communal quality (i.e., close relationships, mentorships, social networks) of in-person work is missing. Most often, employees feel accustomed to working with a small team but detached from the organization all around. When new hires do not feel accepted, their identification with the culture, their allegiance to the company, and their career ambition declines. In these ways, virtual work dilutes the richness of employee socialization.

Research Question 2 asks what changes organizations can implement to better integrate young, female employees who work virtually. Perceptions from the interviewees, along with investigative literature, can inform organizations and HR (Human Resources) practitioners about what strategies should be employed for improving virtual socialization. It must be prefaced that supervisor accessibility, development opportunities, clear job roles, and role autonomy should not be deemed useless for increasing employee embeddedness. These activities contributed to participants’ view of their company as supportive, which means similar initiatives are worthwhile and deserve to be continued.

As Jokisaari and Numi (2009) suggest, organizations should champion their supervisors, so that the same can be done for subordinates. Stable compensation, job security, and safe work

environments should also be prioritized by companies (Roumpi, 2021). Such practices are fundamental to socialization, but additional steps are required with remote work, and especially for women because men achieve organizational connectedness more easily (Raghuram et al. 2001). For instance, one participant felt excluded from the masculine culture of her organization and found it more difficult to infiltrate the group when working remotely. For this reason, diversity and inclusion practices should be instated. Other participants shared that speakers, programs, and groups offered by their organization made them feel involved and welcomed. Women in leadership is also instrumental for inspiring other female employees and creating equal representation in the organization. Several participants also confided that it was often challenging to ask questions, voice an opinion, and reach out to others online for fear of interrupting someone or speaking out of turn. Nguyen (2020) assures that setting an inclusive tone, listening to women's voices, and encouraging male and female coworkers alike to support one another will make a difference. Similarly, young employees need social support and direction at the start of their careers, perhaps through frequent check-ins, one-on-one meetings, and regular feedback (Ghosh & Fouad, 2017). The pandemic has put young people at a disadvantage from the onset, and it will take an all-hands movement to course correct.

Likewise, organizations must make a conscious effort to simulate in-person workplace interactions within the online context. This means hosting online lunches, coffee breaks, and happy hours to strengthen connections between employees. Organizations should urge employees to get to know each other beyond a blank computer screen and provide them with opportunities to do so. It is also helpful to highlight interdepartmental contributions and communicate organizational milestones so that all employees feel enmeshed in the company's accomplishments.

This study pinpoints the obstacles of virtual socialization, complies the perspectives of employees, and provides guidance to organizations on how to improve. Organizations will want to take these findings into consideration because virtual work is the wave of the future. Successful socialization will help companies to solidify their reputations as good employers, retain talent, increase productivity and creativity, better communication, and improve employee well-being. This allows employees and employers to act in accordance moving forward.

### **Limitations**

There are several limitations to this study. First, the number of subjects is relatively small, and the sample was obtained through convenience. The recruitment of participants relied on personal network, relative proximity to the principal investigator, and the snowball effect, which depended on references from interested participants. In total, 20 participants were interviewed, and while their insight was edifying, a larger sample would elicit more comprehensive results. In addition, all the participants attended the same large, public university in the United States. Therefore, these conclusions can be extended to other enrolled students and universities of similar composition, but results could vary among other American and international educational institutions. Since each participant worked at different organizations in various industries, the results may not be applicable to the circumstances of every company.

The second limitation is coding bias. The qualitative analysis was completed only by the principal investigator, which exposes the study to risks of preconceived results and personal biases about themes that emerged during the interview process. To proactively counter this this limitation, a structured interview protocol was followed. Each question was written and designed

to be read to participants in the same manner. Interview questions were formulated and approved ahead of the interviews to ensure credibility and validity of the study. This also proved the interviewer's trustworthiness to the participants, which permitted more honest and detailed accounts.

### **Suggestions for Future Research**

Since previous literature (Baker & Feldman, 1991, Gruman et al., 2006, Perrot et al., 2014) explored the predictors, moderators, and outcomes of organizational socialization, this study sought to illuminate how successful onboarding can be achieved for young, female employees in a post-pandemic, virtual context. It provides updated employee perceptions and identifies what they hope to gain from virtual work. Still, future research could replicate a larger scale version of this study to provide more conclusive results. Further polling and qualitative interviews of young, female employees beyond the limited reach of this study could yield more representative statistics of generational perspectives on virtual work, especially as a greater volume of the recent college graduates enter the market. It would also be valuable to follow up on the original participants of this study in a few years' time to learn about their career outcomes, work arrangement, and length of time employed with their organization to see if virtual work had an impact. Additionally, conducting a comparative study of older, female employees who have worked virtually would be helpful to understand the similar and different needs of these two generations. As previously a noted limitation, this study only uses participants who are citizens of the United States. Future research would benefit from studying the perspectives of virtual employees who belong to diverse nations. Different cultural customs and attitudes could affect

employees' receptiveness to virtual work and dictate how the organization responds. Research in other countries could provide precise and practical solutions based on the strategy, location, and talent pools of the firm.

## **Conclusion**

Informed by the current literature and statistics, this study sought to understand the expectations of female college students before starting virtual work, their evolving experience with virtual work, and their intentions to pursue virtual work in the future. Participants expressed the disadvantages and advantages of working remotely, explained how they were supported and unsupported by their organization, and proposed how their online socialization could be enhanced. Through 20 semi-structured interviews, averaging 16 minutes per interview, illuminating themes emerged. The consensus among participants was that a hybrid model of work provides the ideal combination of work-life balance with social interaction. For many participants, this is the only way they would consider working online again. While the participants perceived their companies to have supportive cultures, they still experienced low person-organization (P-O) fit and intended to eventually defect from their roles. Employers should implement diversity and inclusion, opportunities for online social interaction with coworkers, consistent feedback and communication, and flexibility of work to prevent loss of talent and employee dissatisfaction.

The successful socialization of online employees is a continuous process that should not wane after the first few weeks of work. The initial experiences of young, female employees with virtual work can leave a lasting impression that will abide throughout their careers. Therefore,

proper socialization is critically important to achieve from the beginning. Organizations must remain committed to ensuring all their workers feel visible and appreciated, even when away from the office space.

## Appendix A

### Interview Questions

#### I. Demographic Questions

1. What is your age in years?
2. What is your ethnicity?
  - a.) *White*
  - b.) *Hispanic/Latino*
  - c.) *Asian or Asian-American*
  - d.) *Black or African American*
  - e.) *Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian*
  - f.) *Native American/American Indian/Alaska Native*
  - g.) *Other*
  - h.) *I prefer not to answer/unsure*

#### II. Educational Background

1. Do you attend college?
2. Are you an international student?
  - a.) *Yes*
  - b.) *No*
3. What year in college are you?
  - a.) *Year 1 (Freshman)*
  - b.) *Year 2 (Sophomore)*
  - c.) *Year 3 (Junior)*
  - d.) *Year 4 (Senior)*
  - e.) *Year 5 (Further Education)*
  - f.) *Other*
4. What is your major(s)?
5. What is your minor(s)?

#### III. Employment-Related Information

1. In the past year, have you worked virtually?
  - a.) *Yes*
  - b.) *No*
2. What was the nature of your employment?
  - a.) *Full-time*
  - b.) *Part-time*
  - c.) *Internship*
  - d.) *Co-op*
  - e.) *Self-employed*
  - f.) *Other*

*g.) Unsure*

3. What was the length of your employment?
4. What was your job title?
5. What was the industry of your work?
6. What were your major job responsibilities?
7. Was this position your first time working virtually?
8. Before joining the organization, did you have any initial perceptions about virtual work?
9. Before joining the organization, did you ever consider working virtually?

#### **IV. Organizational Socialization Experience**

1. How easy/difficult was it to understand the norms and processes of the organization when working virtually?
  - Did the organization clearly convey its expectations?
  - How adapted to your organization did you feel?
2. How easy/difficult was it to understand the culture of the organization when working virtually?
  - Did you identify with the organization's culture?
  - How supported did you feel by the organization?
3. How easy/difficult was it to get to know co-workers when working virtually?
  - How often did you interact with co-workers?
  - Did you feel comfortable asking work-related questions of your co-workers?
4. How easy/difficult was it to develop a mentor-mentee relationship when working virtually?
  - Was your supervisor accessible? How often did you receive feedback on your work?
  - How much autonomy were you given? Do you consider yourself to be a contributing member of the organization?
5. How well was information communicated throughout the organization (via email, newsletter, calendar notifications etc.)?
  - Did you feel adequately informed about news and events in the organization?
6. Did the organization adequately provide you with the necessary equipment, materials, and/or additional resources to work virtually?
  - Did you feel prepared to work virtually?
  - If needed, did you receive technological support?
7. What did the organization do to help you adjust as a new employee (e.g., training, virtual social events, introductions to other employees etc.)?
  - Do you think what the organization did was effective?
  - What else could the organization have done to help new employees adjust?

#### **V. Concluding Perceptions**

1. What is the likelihood you would return to work for the organization? How committed are you to the organization?
2. After joining the organization, did your initial perceptions about virtual work change?
3. After joining the organization, would you consider working virtually again? Which work arrangement would you prefer: Hybrid model (i.e., part in-person, part online), in-person full-time, or online full-time?



**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Abele, A. E., Volmer, J., & Spurk, D. (2011). Career stagnation: Underlying dilemmas and solutions in contemporary work environments. *Social Psychology Group*, 107-131.  
[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-4059-4\\_7](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-4059-4_7)
- Baker III, H. E., & Feldman, D. C. (1991). Linking organizational socialization tactics with corporate human resource management strategies. *Human Resource Management Review*, 1(3), 193-202. [https://doi.org/10.1016/1053-4822\(91\)90014-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/1053-4822(91)90014-4)
- Basile, T. J., Braiotta Jr, L., & Pashke, G. F. (1977). MAS approach to employee maladjustment. *The CPA Journal (pre-1986)*, 47(6), 69.
- Bauer, T. N., Bodner, T., Erdogan, B., Truxillo, D. M., & Tucker, J. S. (2007). Newcomer adjustment during organizational socialization: a meta-analytic review of antecedents, outcomes, and methods. *Journal of applied psychology*, 92(3), 707-721.  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.92.3.707>
- Bauer, T. N., Morrison, E. W., Callister, R. R., & Ferris, G. (1998). Research in personnel and human resource management. *Research in Personnel and Human Resource Management*, 16, 149-214.
- Bianchi, E. C. (2013). The bright side of bad times: The affective advantages of entering the workforce in a recession. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 58(4), 587-623.  
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/43185050>
- Bonacini, L., Gallo, G., & Scicchitano, S. (2020). Working from home and income inequality: Risks of a 'new normal with COVID-19. *Journal of Population Economics*, 34, 303-360.  
<https://link-springer-com.ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/article/10.1007/s00148-020-00800-7>

- Carnevale, J. B., & Hatak, I. (2020). Employee adjustment and well-being in the era of COVID-19: Implications for human resource management. *Journal of Business Research*, 116, 183-187. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.05.037>
- Chaves-Dreyfuss, G. (2020). The number of permanent remote workers is set to double in 2021. *World Economic Forum*, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/10/permanent-remote-workers-pandemic-coronavirus-covid-19-work-home>
- Cohen-Scali, V., & Erby, W. (2021). The development of coping strategies for young people to construct their identity in times of the COVID-19 pandemic. *African Journal of Career Development*, 3(1), 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.4102/ajcd.v3i1.38>
- Dey M., Frazis, H., Loewenstein, M. A., & Sun, H. (2020). Ability to work from home: Evidence from two surveys and implications for the labor market in the COVID-19 pandemic, U.S. *Bureau of Labor Statistics*, <https://doi.org/10.21916/mlr.2020.14>
- Eisenberger, R. (2022). Perceived organizational support. *University of Houston*, <http://classweb.uh.edu/eisenberger/contact/>
- Francesco, M., Massimo, M., and Dufour, L. (2019). The dark side of socialization: How and when divestiture socialization undermines newcomer outcomes. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 40(4), 506-521. <https://doi-org.ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/10.1002/job.2351>
- Gardner, D. G., Huang, G., Pierce, J., L., Niu, X., & Lee, C. (2021). Not just for newcomers: Organizational socialization, employee adjustment and experience, and growth in organization-based self-esteem. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, 1-23. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hrdq.21458>

- Ghosh, A., & Fouad, N. A. (2017). Career adaptability and social support among graduating college seniors. *The Career Development Quarterly*, 65(3), 278-283.  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/cdq.12098>
- Gioia, D. A., & Chittipeddi, K. (1991). Sensemaking and sensegiving in strategic change initiation. *Strategic management journal*, 12(6), 433-448.
- Gioia, D. A., Corley, K. G., & Hamilton, A. L. (2013). Seeking qualitative rigor in inductive research: Notes on the Gioia methodology. *Organizational research methods*, 16(1), 15-31.
- Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (2017). *Discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. Routledge.
- Griffin, A. E., Colella, A., & Goparaju, S. (2000). Newcomer and organizational socialization tactics: An interactionist perspective. *Human Resource Management Review*, 10(4), 453-474. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1053-4822\(00\)00036-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1053-4822(00)00036-X)
- Gruman, J. A., Saks, A. M., and Zweig, D. I. (2006). Organizational socialization tactics and newcomer proactive behaviors: An integrative study. *Journal of vocational behavior*, 69(1), p. 90–104. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2006.03.001>
- Hanson, M. (2021). College graduation statistics. *Education Data Initiative*, <https://educationdata.org/number-of-college-graduates/>
- Hicks, M. (2020). The number of people who can telework is higher than estimated. *U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*, para. 2. <https://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2020/beyond-bls/the-number-of-people-who-can-telework-is-higher-than-was-estimated.htm>

- Ibarra, H., Gillard, J., Chamorro-Premuzic, T. (2020). Why WFH isn't necessarily good for women. *Harvard Business Review*, 1–7. <https://hbr.org/2020/07/why-wfh-isnt-necessarily-good-for-women?registration=success>
- Invest Northern Ireland. (2020). Employees working from home, 1-5. <https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/content/advantages-and-disadvantages-employees-working-home>
- Latha, K. L. (2013). A study on employee attrition and retention in manufacturing industries. *BVIMSR's Journal of Management Research (BJMR)*, 5(1), 1-23.
- Lopez, Garrido. (2020). Locus of control. *Simply Psychology*. <https://www.simplypsychology.org/locus-of-control.html>
- Johns Hopkins Medicine. (2021). What is coronavirus?, para.1-14. <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/coronavirus>
- Jokisaari, M., & Nurmi, J.E. (2009). Change in newcomers' supervisor support and socialization outcomes after organizational entry. *The Academy of Management Journal*, 52(3), 527-544. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40390302>
- Juaneda-Ayensa, E., Clavel San Emeterio, M., & González-Menorca, C. Person-organization commitment: Bonds of internal consumer in the context of non-profit organizations, *Frontiers in Psychology*, 8, 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.01227>
- Kniffin, K. M., Narayanan, J., Anseel, F., Antonakis, J., Ashford, S. P., Bakker, A. B., . . . Vugt, M. v. (2021). COVID-19 and the workplace: Implications, issues, and insights for future research and action. *American Psychologist*, 76(1), 63-77. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/amp0000716>

- Kristof-Brown, A. L., Zimmerman, R. D., & Johnson, E. C. (2005). Consequences of individuals' fit at work: A meta-analysis of person-job, person-organization, person-group, and person-supervisor fit. *Personnel Psychology*, 58, 281-342.
- Marshall, J., Burd, C., & Burrows, M. (2021). Working from home during the pandemic: Those who switched to telework have higher income, education and better health. *United States Census Bureau*, para. 1. <https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2021/03/working-from-home-during-the-pandemic.html>
- Matias, D. (2019). New report says women will soon be majority of educated U.S. workers. *NPR*, para. 2. <https://www.npr.org/2019/06/20/734408574/new-report-says-college-educated-women-will-soon-make-up-majority-of-u-s-labor-f>
- Maurer, R. (2021). The class of 2021 wants to work in the office. *SHRM*, para. 2. <https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/talent-acquisition/pages/the-class-of-2021-wants-to-work-in-the-office-hybrid-flexible-salaries.aspx>
- Miller, S. (2021). Find the right workplace flexibility options for your organization. *SHRM*, 1-3. <https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/benefits/pages/find-the-right-workplace-flexibility-options-for-your-organization.aspx>
- Molinsky, A., & Pisman, S. (2019). The biggest hurdles recent graduates face entering the workforce. *Harvard Business Review*, 1-7. <https://hbr.org/2019/04/the-biggest-hurdles-recent-graduates-face-entering-the-workforce>
- Moreland A., Herlihy C., Tynan M. A., et al. (2020). Timing of state and territorial COVID-19 stay-at-home orders and changes in population movement. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep* 2020, (69), 1198-1203. <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6935a2external>

- Murphy, C., Klotz, A. C., & Kreiner, G. E. (2017). Blue skies and black boxes: The promise (and practice) of grounded theory in human resource management research. *Human Resource Management Review*, 27(2), 291–305.
- Nguyen, U. (2020). Does remote work bring about gender equality?, *All Together*, <https://alltogether.swe.org/2020/07/does-remote-work-bring-gender-equality/>
- Odate, K., & Parmar, R. S. (2021). Addressing the detrimental impacts of COVID-19 on women in the workforce: Where do we go from here?, *IJBED*, 9(29), 40-53. <https://doi.org/10.24052/IJBED/V09N02/ART-04>
- Parker, K., Horowitz, J., & Minkin, R. (2021). *Pew Research Center*, 1-32. <https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2020/12/09/how-the-coronavirus-outbreak-has-and-hasnt-changed-the-way-americans-work/>
- Peltokorpi, V., Feng, J., & Pustovit, S. (2021). The interactive effects of socialization tactics and work locus of control on newcomer work adjustment, job embeddedness, and voluntary turnover. *Human Relations*, 75(1), 177-202. <https://doi-org.ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/10.1177/0018726720986843>
- PennWatch. (2019). Female college graduates feel less confident entering the workforce than males. <https://pennwatch.org/female-recent-or-upcoming-college-graduates-feel-less-confident-entering-the-workforce-than-male-counterparts/>
- Perrot, S., Bauer, T. N., Abonneau, D., Campoy, E., Erdogan, B., & Liden, R. C. (2014). Organizational socialization tactics and newcomer adjustment: The moderating role of perceived organizational support. *Group & Organization Management*, 39(3), 247-273. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1059601114535469>

- Ployhart, R. E., Shepherd, W. J., & Strizver, S. D. (2021). The COVID-19 pandemic and new hire engagement: Relationships with unemployment rates, state restrictions, and organizational tenure. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 106*(4), 518–529.  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/apl0000917>
- Raghuram, S., Garud, S., Wiesenfeld, B., & Gupta, V. (2001). Factors contributing to virtual work adjustment, *Journal of Management, 383*-405. <https://journals-sagepub-com.ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/doi/pdf/10.1177/014920630102700309>
- Roumpi, D. (2021). Rethinking the strategic management of human resources: Lessons learned from Covid-19 and the way forward in building resilience, *International Journal of Organizational Analysis, 1*-17. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJOA-09-2021-2974>
- Şentürk, E., Sağaltıcı, E., Geniş, B., & Günday T. O. (2021). Predictors of depression, anxiety and stress among remote workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Work, 70*(1), 41-51.  
<https://doi.org/10.3233/WOR-210082>
- Shannak, Rifat & Al-Taher, Ammar. (2012). Factors affecting work locus of control: An analytical and comparative study. *Jordan Journal of Business Administration, 8*, 373-389.
- Thulin, E., Vilhelmson, B., & Johansson, M. (2019). New telework, time pressure, and time use control in everyday life. *Sustainability, 11*(11), 1-17.  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.3390/su11113067>
- Tomei, M. (2021). Teleworking: A curse or a blessing for gender equality and work-life balance?, *Intereconomics, 56*(5), 260-264.  
<https://www.intereconomics.eu/contents/year/2021/number/5/article/teleworking-a-curse-or-a-blessing-for-gender-equality-and-work-life-balance.html>

Uchiyama, D. (2021). Women, the workforce, and covid-19. *Illinois Bar Journal*, 109(9), 46-47.

<https://heinonlineorg.ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/HOL/Page?handle=hein.barjournals/ilbj0109&id=464&collection=barjournals&index=>

University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences. (2021). What is career advancement? And 12 tips for achieving it, para. 3. <https://www.usa.edu/blog/career-advancement/>

Varriale-Barker, C. (2021). She's come undone: Is gender bias as amplified in the virtual workplace?, *American Bar Association*,

<https://www.americanbar.org/groups/litigation/committees/woman-advocate/practice/2021/shes-come-undone-is-gender-bias-as-amplified-in-the-virtual-workplace/#:~:text=She%20cited%20research%2C%20including%20some,of%20male%20business%20leaders%20agree>

Wanberg, C. R., & Kammeyer-Mueller, J. D. (2000). Predictors and outcomes of proactivity in the socialization process. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 85(3), 373.

Wolff, H., & Moser, K. (2009). Effects of networking on career success: A longitudinal study. *American Psychological Association*, 94(1), 196-206. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0013350>

Zeidner, R. (2020). Coronavirus makes work from home the new normal. *SHRM*, 1-8.

<https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/all-things-work/pages/remote-work-has-become-the-new-normal.aspx>



## ACADEMIC VITA

### Katherine Marian Schlegel

#### EDUCATION

---

**The Pennsylvania State University, *The College of Liberal Arts*** **University Park, PA**  
Schreyer Honors College & Paterno Fellows Program

Master of Science in Human Resource & Employment Relations May 2023 (Expected)  
Option: Human Resource Management

Bachelor of Science in Labor & Human Resources May 2022 (Expected)  
Minors: Communication Arts & Sciences, Dispute Management & Resolution

#### EXPERIENCE

---

**Ernst & Young (EY)** **Philadelphia, PA**  
*PAS Workforce Advisory Intern* *June 2022 – August 2022*

**CAES** **Lansdale, PA**  
*Talent Management & Organizational Development Intern* *May 2021–August 2021*

- Designed and facilitated 2.5 hour in-person training on Behavioral-Based Interviewing to ten engineer managers and three HR leads
- Utilized the ADDIE model to organize and streamline the creation of instructional content
- Conducted research and assessed organizational needs to create and present a high-level proposal for an engineering development program to the SVP, CHRO
- Collaborated with various stakeholders (functional/operations subject matter experts, HR, etc.) to support the creation of career paths for Production Test Technicians

**Allan Myers** **Worcester, PA**  
*Human Resources Intern* *May 2020–August 2020*

- Hired to support the Recruiting Department in all facets of Talent Acquisition and Campus Events
- Transitioned to online instructor-led learning due to COVID-19
- Learned about construction industry, viewed live-streamed job site tours, and participated in Q&A sessions
- Reviewed EEOC announcements in preparation for discussion and to remain updated on current guidelines
- Mentored under the Director of Talent and earned Certificate of Completion in Construction Operation

**Movers Specialty Service** **Montgomeryville, PA**  
*Scheduling Intern* *May 2019–August 2019*

- Collaborated with team of five to process job queue for Northeast and Southeast divisions
- Updated order descriptions, confirmed and rescheduled services as needed, and resolved moving challenges
- Coordinated technician arrival times with both customer and moving company via telephone or email
- Handled high priority moves with discretion and professionalism

**Nocchi Family Law** **Lansdale, PA**  
*Legal Intern* *September 2017–June 2018*

- Filed briefs, faxed documents, answered phone calls, and addressed billing statements
- Opened new cases, drafted memos, compiled pertinent facts, and acted as witness for power of attorney
- Observed attorney-client consultations, attended court hearings, and met with several judges
- Exposed to legal processes of divorce, division of assets, adoption, will preparation, and estate planning

#### LEADERSHIP & INVOLVEMENT

---

Deloitte Leadership Development Center (LDC) - Participant *September 2021–September 2021*  
Schreyer Consulting Group - Member *April 2019–Present*  
Phi Sigma Sigma Sorority - Standards Board, Scholarship & Alumnae Chairman *March 2019–March 2020*  
Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) - Member *February 2019–Present*  
Academic Integrity Committee for the College of Liberal Arts - Member *January 2019–May 2021*