

# Chapter 11

## Exploring Managerial Perspectives: Digital Transformations and Virtual Workforce Management in the Modern Workspace

**Roma Singh**

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0683-1051>

*Tezpur University, India*

**Runumi Das**

*Tezpur University, India*

### **ABSTRACT**

*In today's highly competitive global business environment, the efficient management of a "scattered" or "distance" workforce is critical for the success of any organisation. The purpose of this chapter is to look into how the debate on digital transformation and leadership has changed in recent years. The approach is mixed. The first section is a review of the literature on digital advancements in various sectors of the economy as well as new trends in virtual workforce management. The second section summarises the conclusions of empirical study based on interviews with managerial representatives from IT, operations, and sales. The study was conducted in Tier 1 cities in India. The results show that managers have adjusted into this new era of employee management from distant places and have undergone necessary training for skill development. However, the rising use of technologies has brought a new set of challenges that need to be dealt with.*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The fourth industrial revolution has been mainly discussed in terms of how advancements in technology and digital transformations have led to the shift from a market economy to a knowledge-based economy. Technology has become increasingly ubiquitous in all aspects of life, including work, social interactions, and civic engagement (Kolade et al., 2021). Likewise the impact of “technological innovation” is primarily seen in altering how a company conducts its operations by putting forward a notion for a new product or elements into an organization’s course of service operation (Torres & Augusto, 2019), leading to “organizational innovation” at large by necessitating new approaches in management, corporate strategy, and business models (Matt et al., 2015).

This emerging digital transformations that affect interpersonal communication is causing employees to face increased demands and pressure in an environment that is constantly evolving (Biedenbach et al., 2022), demanding for a digital transformation strategy which can assist organisations in managing the transformations occurring due to the integration of digital technologies (Matt et al., 2015). Despite such rapid advancements occurring, and challenges encountered in practice, very less is known about employees and organisational respond to such disruptive technologies specially in developing economies (Trenerry et al., 2021).

Similarly, when the world experienced an unforeseen outbreak of coronavirus in 2020, resulting in a staggering death toll of over five million people in two years and causing unprecedented damage to businesses and other institutions. In such circumstances, the ability to bounce back, or resilience, was undoubtedly a crucial trait that decided the endurance of individuals, companies, and the entire mankind in coping with the difficulties (Biedenbach et al., 2022). That is when end number of businesses and institutions all round the globe went virtual, adapting a new form of working in order to sustain itself and survive the catastrophe. This work practice popularly known as remote working or work from home (WFH) mainly “concerns any intellectual work carried out outside the normal place of work, whose effects are sent to the employer using information and communication technologies” as cited by Pokojski et al., (2022) (Battisti et al., 2022). Likely, it was also predicted that more than 85% of the employed professionals were part of certain type of virtual team (e.g, Dulebohn & Hoch, 2017; Raghuram et al., 2019; Morrison-Smith & Ruiz, 2020). This rise in remote employment has been largely welcomed by certain policymakers in low- and middle-income nations, as well as organisations concerned with economic development (Wood et al., 2018). Regardless of these virtual team benefits, researchers show that they deliver a number of challenges when conferred to in- person teams (Dulebohn & Hoch, 2017 ; Alsharo et al., 2017; Morrison-Smith & Ruiz, 2020). Such drawbacks include difficulties in communication and cooperation, as well as complications in monitoring and managing virtual workforce’s. Subsequently, the struggles of managing virtual workforce’s have acquired considerable attention in both scholastic and practitioner publications (Hoch & Kozlowski, 2014; Raghuram et al., 2019). Therefore, empirical investigations revealed that adopting computerisation might contribute in boosting remote monitoring, speeding up work, filling in gaps between tasks, and tracking locations beyond the traditional workplace during working hours (Pokojski et al., 2022). Surprisingly this burgeoning recognition and interest in these teams, has not led to much of the knowledge about successful virtual team management yet (Dulebohn & Hoch, 2017; Ford et al., 2017; Chamakiotis et al., 2021). Therefore, the current study aims to learn about their perspectives on rapidly changing management dynamics, as well as the effects of digital transformations on managerial activities in the modern management era. Recent studies have defined this transformation as a process that “aims to improve an entity by triggering significant changes to its

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