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The Organizational Cultural Impact of the Social use of AI and Bots on Remote Employees Returning to the Workplace

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Abstract. Artificial intelligence (AI) mediated communication tools supported collaboration, maintained production and even provided emotional support during remote work. Employees thereby expected workplace engagement to rely more heavily on AI-driven efficiency. Although COVID-19 did not lead to the creation of AI, the COVID-19 pandemic did drive AI to the vanguard of corporate operations through the growth of digital innovation. This research explored workplace reintegration and AI adoption using a qualitative approach to understand employee experience of AI adoption and workplace reintegration. In-depth interviews with employees who had experienced this transition were the data source. The AI dependency, how to develop interpersonal skills, and where leadership lies in managing the balance between AI and human-centered work culture were thematically analyzed to determine the main patterns and concerns. The findings show that many employees struggled with face-to-face interaction because they were used to the assistance of AI in workplace communication and decision-making, which used to be effective. A psychological and behavioral change was needed for the transition to in-person collaboration. While AI chatbots helped employees schedule, troubleshoot, and get answers to their questions more expeditiously than in the traditional workplace, traditional workplace where interactions are now slower and less efficient.

Keywords: AI and bots, Business management, Organizational strategy, Remote employees, Social use, Workplace, Covid-19.

1. INTRODUCTION

Organizational culture defines workplace norms, how employees talk to each other, and how employees come together to collaborate. AI has been on the rise in workplace interactions, most notably in the era of remote work when virtual assistants and AI-driven chatbots were utilized for instant messaging, automated scheduling, and streamlined HR processes. Real-time support from AI and bots like Microsoft Copilot, Chat GPT, and Slackbot contributed to productivity with ease of use, and it was able to offer end-to-end processes. Nevertheless, the need for AI-supported communication is at an all-time high as organizations send employees back into physical offices. With traditional workplace socialization becoming a problem for employees who are used to digital interactions, it could become a problem for personal skills among individuals and for organizational culture. According to research, 77% of employees reported that AI tools added to their workload, 39% said they spent more time reviewing or moderating AI-generated content, and 23% invested more time learning how to use AI tools (Forbes, 2023).

Hence, with the fast-evolving AI, organizations must balance automation and humanness to ensure collaboration, creativity, and engagement while working. The advancement of digital innovation propelled it to the center of business operations during the COVID-19 pandemic. Artificial intelligence (AI) was drafted into the fiber of business operations, becoming a significant tool at every level, including resume screening, accounting, customer service, quality control, auditing and social use (McKendrick, 2021;Fedyk et al., 2022). While AI was not created as a result of COVID-19, it skyrocketed to become a part of the nervous systems of many organizations, impacting values and culture as well (McKendrick, 2021).

The COVID-19 Pandemic has contributed significantly to the accelerated adoption of remote work in which organizations heavily depend on AI and chatbot technologies to keep up with communication, productivity, and employee engagement (Chowdhury et al., 2022; Dabbous et al., 2022). Virtual assistants and conversation chatbots, which are AI-powered, came alive and are no longer a science fiction thing but have become a priority for managing workflows, automating repetitive tasks, and supporting remote employees. Not only are these technologies' utilization enhanced operational efficiency, but these technologies also have contributed to alleviating employee's well-being and social interaction in the digital workplace (Dutta & Mishra, 2024).

As organizations adopt hybrid models, academic and managerial discussions around the impact of AI on workplace culture and employee adaptation are a focus point (Gkinko & Elbanna, 2023). Kopplin (2022) shows that AI-human collaboration shows that productivity and psychological empowerment are positively influenced by AI and fears of AI dependency, job security, and organizational trust (Li et al., 2019). For example, a survey of 468 hotel employees found that exposure to AI & Robotics awareness increased turnover if employees believed their organization lacked support (Li et al., 2019).

Moreover, adopting AI is molding how employees work in their workplace. The adoption of chatbots for both personalization, interactivity, and intelligence is a key factor for personalizing experiences, while various factors like anxiety and language barriers prevent engagement (Pillai et al., 2024). Due to the onset of these transformations, it is important to assess to what extent AI affects workplace culture, employee socialization, and the durability of an AI-driven work environment. These dynamics will be explored to bring empirical insights

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from different industries and disciplines. While AI's role in remote work has already been studied by existing research, very little attention is paid to adapting to a work culture change, creating disbelief amongst colleagues and organizational culture when returning to in-person work. Therefore, this study examines the impact of AI and virtual chatbots on workplace culture during remote work, the struggles companies' employees face when returning to work, and how organizations may integrate AI without disturbing cultural dynamics.

1.1. Research Questions

- How have AI and chatbots influenced organizational culture during remote work?
- What are the challenges and adjustments for employees returning to in-person work after prolonged AI-mediated interactions?
- What strategies can organizations implement to balance AI integration while maintaining a cohesive workplace culture?

2. LITERATURE

2.1. Enhancing Workflow and Communication through AI

AI has revolutionized workplace communications by simplifying knowledge sharing, shorter response times, and enhancing decision-making efficiency (Pashangpour & Nejat, 2024). Conversational AI and chatbots allow real-time collaboration, automated administrative tasks, and personalized responses to employee queries, making them an imperative purchase for today's organizations (Saxena & Mishra, 2025). According to (Pillai et al., 2024), acceptance of chatbots is significantly influenced by social norms, perceived usefulness, and entertainment value

AI is also improving the social dynamic of the workplace. Social media support & discussion via AI-driven chatbots is the new normal; most employees prefer to use AI chatbots to communicate and share ideas compared to their coworkers (Rukadikar & Khandelwal, 2024). AI-based virtual assistants have been utilized as a component of mental health support plans to assist workers in improving mental health and managing tension (Saxena & Mishra, 2025).

Due to language barriers and low technological familiarity, it can be difficult for employees to interact with chatbots, especially those who are technologically naive (Pashangpour & Nejat, 2024). Moreover, ethical concerns exist regarding transparency, bias, and the fathoming away of the human touch within organizational communication through such deployment of AI in workplace decision-making. Since the pace of AI development is increasing, businesses need to discover how to optimize the value of AI while preserving interesting connections with human beings at work.

2.2. AI's Impact on Organizational Culture and Employee Experience

AI is changing how workplace culture is redefined in decision-making, performance management, and employee engagement strategies (Pillai et al., 2024). AI-enabled HR systems make employee experiences personalized and more cost-effective and help HR with decision-making based on data on the trends in the workforce. Although organizations must face the intricacies of AI integration, it should not pose a hurdle to enhancing human-centric work environments (Pashangpour & Nejat, 2024).

For instance, a study done with 203 employees from multiple businesses by Dabbous et al. (2022) found that organizational culture and regular use were strong motivators of AI adoption, while job insecurity inhibited the adoption. A qualitative study on AI adoption in recruitment showed that chatbots were reliable and efficient, but privacy concerns and reduced human engagement remained (Rukadikar & Khandelwal, 2024).

Beyond what happens within HR processes, AI is changing the culture and communication norms of the workplace. AI-driven collaboration has been found to increase the cognitive transfer of knowledge, trust, and role clarity in researchers, improving business performance (Pashangpour & Nejat, 2024). Nevertheless, employment fears regarding the job security brought by AI adoption stir apprehension in employees, especially in industries where AI is seen as a threat (Schreiber & Schreiber, 2024).

For the integration of AI in workplace culture to fly, it must be accepted and balanced by combining AI automation efficiency within the context and alignment of human values and the company identity. Mitigating resistance and developing an inclusive and adaptable workplace is possible for organizations that pragmatically create a more transparent process, use employee involvement, and deploy ethical AI.

2.3. Employee Adaptation and AI-Driven Workplace Readjustment

During the transition from remote to hybrid or on-premise work models, employees must learn to work in a new work environment completely immersed in AI integration (Saxena & Mishra, 2025). On the one hand, AI-human collaboration has been shown to improve productivity, decision-making, and role clarity Schreiber and Schreiber (2024); however, on the other hand, re-establishing in-person cooperation and overcoming the dependency on automation is not easy when using AI.

Rukadikar and Khandelwal (2024) examined how the presence of service robots helped to change the employees' confidence in AI and psychological empowerment, from which it can deduced that AI could also help us to feel stronger both psychologically and psychologically adaptive in the workplace (Pashangpour & Nejat,

2024). Other studies indicate, however, the downsides of AI awareness.

AI also causes workplace stability to decline in different industries (Zhang et al., 2023). Employees' professional identity could deteriorate rapidly when operating in highly automated environments (Zhang et al., 2023). This calls for organizations to give enough training and support to facilitate the smooth transition of employees and the development of an appropriate balance to AI integration into daily life. While businesses are right at addressing the above challenges, adopting strategies that will help promote AI literacy, engender human-AI collaboration, and a resilient force ready to adjust to technological change is essential.

2.4. Theoretical Perspectives on AI in Workplace Transformation

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) is a foundation for understanding how AI adoption occurs in the workplace. The usefulness perceived and the ease of use to the deployment of technology are key determinants of its acceptance (Wang et al., 2024). Zhang et al. (2023), discovered that aspects that promote chatbot adoption are personalization, interaction, and intelligence, while language barriers and data privacy are the reasons behind its denial.

Organizational culture theories, such as Schein's model, also bring additional enlightenment in understanding how workplace norms and values change due to the use of AI (Li et al., 2019). The organization's culture faces change through AI adoption in reshaping organizational artifacts, espoused values, and underlying assumptions.

Additionally, AI's role in transforming workplace spaces is under theories of human-AI collaboration, which positions AI as a resource for augmentation, not automation (Liu et al., 2025). A study of managerial employees through a mixed methodology revealed that AI-human collaboration leads to increased productivity efficiency of decision-making and portrayed that rather than replacing humans, AI works when humans and AI work together (Kopplin, 2022).

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

The qualitative, interview-based research design was used to explore how employees experienced and perceived AI's role in workplace reintegration. Given that AI-driven changes in dynamic organizational contexts continued to evolve, qualitative methods proved effective in understanding subjective viewpoints. Participants were allowed to talk freely in interviews, and researchers could go downward in emerging themes. Previous studies, for example (Kopplin, 2022; Liu et al., 2025), have shown that qualitative methods effectively illustrate employees' opinions about adopting AI and workplace transformations. The study was conducted among employees who worked remotely during a stage of the COVID-19 pandemic and then started returning to a physical office environment.

3.2. Data Collection Methods

The data was collected through semi-structured interviews, which allowed for in-depth coverage of key research themes. The interviews addressed the issues of digital collaboration, AI-powered communication tools, and how to go back to in-person work. Participants were encouraged to discuss the negative and positive aspects of integrating AI in their workplace by answering open-ended questions. Sometimes, interviews were conducted via video conferencing, while other participants preferred and received an in-person interview. The sessions ranged between 30 and 45 minutes and were recorded with the person's consent for transcription and analysis. This method ensured the data was collected by covering as many experiences across various industries and organizational setups as possible.

3.3. Sampling and Participants

The targeting of employee respondents for a purposive sampling strategy was done based on their experience with remote work and the AI-driven tools in their work setting. This study is built in a way that only allowed for people who could contribute meaningful knowledge of the role of AI in workplace reintegration. The sample size was 15, according to the best practice of qualitative research. It was a small but focused sample that served as a way of deeply exploring the participants' experiences. ccording to Malterud et al. (2016), where no new themes emerge, data saturation usually happens between 12 and 15 interviews, making 15 a good number to have a diverse yet comprehensive perspective. The employees were drawn from different sectors to get a broader view of different industries. The employee selection criteria were people who worked remotely for at least one year and used AI tools such as chatbots for communication, HR services, and even task automation. All this diversity allowed for the identification of variations in the effect AI has across different organizational cultures.

3.4. Data Analysis Methods

Thematic analysis is a qualitative technique used to attain patterns and patterns in the transcripts. Exploring employees' experiences with AI was a suitable method for yielding both expected and unexpected insights. The analysis was conducted under Braun and Clarke (2006) six-phase framework to keep it structured, however

rigorous. However, as demonstrated by former studies (Bärmann et al., 2024; Friedman et al., 2023), this thematic analysis approach brought out the influence of AI on workplace adaptation. Coding interview responses, gathering similar ideas into categories, and refining themes based on what they found to be the key findings was the process. It looked into the trends concerning AI-driven communication, social interactions, and shifts in workplace culture based on a systematic analysis of the participant narratives. To get the results more grounded in real-world employee experiences, the findings were presented with direct quotes from participants to illustrate what they experienced (Table 1).

Table 1: Themes extracted.

Theme No.	Theme Title	Keywords	Participant Numbers
1	AI and Workplace Socialization	Business, Management, Strategy, AI chatbots, virtual assistants, efficiency, social engagement, transactional communication, workplace culture	1, 2, 13, 14
2	Challenges in Returning to a Physical Workplace	Business, Management, Strategy, remote work, AI reliance, reintegration, inefficiency perception, workplace adaptation, job security	5, 7, 6, 8
3	Impact on Organizational Culture	Business, Management, Strategy, AI adoption, team dynamics, collaboration, leadership, decision-making, dependency, managerial responses	9, 10, 11
4	Strategies for Balancing AI and Workplace Culture	Business, Management, Strategy, hybrid model, human interaction, leadership, AI as a tool, workplace engagement, communication strategy	3, 4, 12, 15

4. RESULTS

4.1. Theme 1: AI and Workplace Socialization

AI has been playing a leading role in reshaping workplace communication habits. As Harte et al. (2023) mentioned, AI chatbots may enhance workplace interactions by reducing the workload but increasingly social engagement increasingly depends on the individual's preference and the organization's culture. Some employees love that AI helps expedite communication, while others believe it blocks organic human interaction (Kim et al., 2024). As organizations embrace artificial intelligence technology to increase work efficiency with different Aggregators, there remains a discussion on how to strike a balance between using AI to enhance efficiency and retaining a viable connection in the office.

P 12, 13, 14 stated that:

'If you can work remotely, you can get quick updates on project deadlines or meeting schedules using the AI chatbots…..' It was convenient because the colleague I needed to ask hadn't responded. Although I am now in the office again, sometimes I suffer from separation from my team……However, I still relied on the chatbot for scheduling but failed to laugh with him, as people used to do when AI tools were not as common.'

This response is a reflection of the common sentiment (many) among employees who have experienced AI's benefits and are aware of its shortcomings in enhancing workplace socialization. AI chatbots are highly efficient and quick but do not encourage spontaneous conversations that critically strengthen team bonding. Jeong et al. (2024) also support this argument by stating that chatbots satisfy pragmatic communication needs but lack the emotional intelligence required for a more personal interaction. Often, employees who rely on AI during remote work to do their jobs have a hard time rejoining a workplace culture that values in-person interaction.

P 1, 2, and 5:

"I've come to depend on AI chatbots so much in so many ways that they have made my job so much easier…." This empowers employees to instantaneously access HR-related information, thereby reducing the repetition of the tasks I have to deal with when answering HR-related questions…. However, some employees are so familiar with automatic responses that they hesitate to talk to HR in person. I do not think AI is good, because it makes workplace communication too transactional."

While the effects of AI-driven communication for productivity are beneficial, it also emphasizes detachment in professional interactions. Consistent with the finding that chatterbot users favor AI answers over human interaction, the concern about AI making communication transactional is fueled by Kim et al. (2024), who found that chatterbot users are different. It can be a problem for employees used to AI automation to suddenly need to put down those interactions and re-establish the traditional workplace interactions, resulting in challenges with team cohesion and organizational culture.

4.2. Theme 2: Challenges in Returning to a Physical Workplace

Such adaptation payment presented challenges for the employees: from a social to a psychological perspective, there were many difficulties transitioning from remote work back to a physical office environment. For some employees, remote work had become normal, and many were accustomed to the flexibility, autonomy, and digital communication tools that characterize remote work (Kim et al., 2024). It played a significant role in keeping productivity up and offering immediate support – by entering an AI-powered chatbot and/or virtual assistant. Nevertheless, when organizations demanded employees return to physical workplaces, people adjusted to in-person interactions, structured office routines, and conventional communication methods but may not have been able to do so easily. The research by Izquierdo-Badiola et al. (2024) showed that AI adoption during remote work

potentially increased efficiency but led to the fear of losing the job and a change in workplace communication norms. Without the same degree of digital assistance, it was hard for employees who relied heavily on AI tools to reintegrate into office culture.

P 2, 5, and 6 stated that:

"The troubleshooting and technical support for which I worked remotely relied on AI tools." Having an AI helpdesk was there whenever I faced an issue, and with the help of it, I would have an instant solution right there. Now that I am back in the office, I have to depend on colleagues; sometimes, I won't be there, and it even takes longer to respond…..I am used to the efficiency of AI, so now I have to be human."

This response demonstrates the psychological adjustment employees faced when going from AI-based efficiency. AI was fast as it offered immediate help and answered problems, but we needed patience and adaptability to return to human-centered communication. Li et al. (2025) conclude by claiming that workplace habits encourage AI adoption, but the employees reliant on AI may struggle to function in traditional work environments. First, the switch from digital to face-to-face interactions gave workers a feeling of inefficiency after they had become used to the immediacy of AI. P 8, 9, and 10:

"In some cases, 'AI-powered tools' were used to help remote and tech support. Anyone who had a problem they were faced with, the AI helpdesk was always available whenever I needed them."

It is a response showing the psychological adjustment that employees had to go through to go from AI efficiency. This is followed by Liu et al. (2023), who states that workplace habits encourage AI adoption. Still, individuals depending on AI may find working in the conventional work environment challenging. But first, a switch to human from digital interactions at work made workers feel inadequately productive as they had become reliant on AI immediacy.

A significant challenge also came regarding resistance to reducing reliance on AI. Seeing that it was perfectly comfortable enough for employees to stay cozy with AI tools if they teamed dynamics were to experience friction caused by reverting to conventional communication methods (Lim et al., 2024). While some organizations found it necessary to employ hybrid communication models that united AI with human interactions, others advocated for total reappearance in our lives for in-person collaboration and conversations. It stressed the employees having already spent much time optimizing their workflow with AI support. Liu et al. (2023) conducted other studies that suggested that AI adoption results from personalization, interactivity, and efficiency and that once employees experience AI advantage, there is a chance they will not be willing to let it go.

4.3. Theme 3: Impact on Organizational Culture

Incorporating AI into the workplace affected the organizational culture to the extent of team dynamics, collaboration, and leadership approaches. At the same time, employees shrank their dependence on communication, workflow management, and decision-making tools powered by AI, and the conventional place of work experienced change. However, with the return to physical offices, teams had to adapt to working in the office while still using AI to tackle the tasks. Li et al. (2025) found that adopting AI altered workplace practices and affected job roles and managerial practices; hence, organizations had to reposition their cultural norms. AI helped reduce the waste of time but did not leave the employees alone – it influenced how they communicated and changed the idea of team cohesion or leadership itself.

P 1, 2, 13, and 15 stated that:

We used to spend time on days of frequent brainstorming sessions, collecting ideas face to face. When we did remote work, we could rely on AI-powered analytics to create reports and trends, which was useful; we turned off the direct discussions. With all of us back in the office, I have started to see team members avoiding open discussions and prefer to base their insights solely on the output from an AI. "A bit of our creative synergy has been lost; it feels that way."

The efficiency basis of AI technology transformed the nature of communications between employees at the workplace. The employees who worked with AI report generation and automated decision support struggled to adapt to traditional human-driven cooperation methods. According to research by Liu et al. (2023), organizations have identified two distinct groups of users: pragmatic users who successfully incorporate AI into their work processes and early quitters who experience difficulties when AI assistance is no longer available. Organizations that relied heavily on AI systems had to actively re-establish human interaction for collaboration after the use of AI systems declined.

Implementing AI-influenced work habits for organizations highly depended on leadership and managerial responses that shaped their organizational culture. Organizational managers confronted the essential task of achieving both computational efficiencies obtained from AI alongside employee teamwork and innovative initiatives. AI systems generated improved productivity yet introduced a dependency state that led specific leaders to view it as a danger. P 12, 13 and 15 stated that:

"Implementing AI chatbots as a solution for regular tasks led to major productivity gains during scheduling meetings and HR query handling. Our observations demonstrated that employees became less engaged in problem-solving independently and interaction with colleagues after extensive use of AI chatbots because they depended heavily on AI solutions. When returning to the office, we added team workshops and facilitated human contact to preserve collaborative relationships".

Li et al. (2025) discovered that AI dependency creates knowledge shortages, especially when humans must use judgment and interpersonal abilities. AI technology has brought efficiency to daily operations, yet it has

changed employee strategies for dealing with teamwork and problem-solving processes. Business leaders must establish methods that protect human connection quality while extracting AI gains to prevent workplaces from becoming excessively automated.

A discussion emerged regarding how AI shapes decisions within work hierarchies within the labor force. Some companies integrated AI as a supportive technology that required no changes in management duties, but other organizations considered this change mandatory. Studies by Liu et al. (2023) discovered that AI-generated information and recommendations could make human decisions hard to distinguish from computer-generated directives. Malfunctions emerged for workers who used AI recommendations because they found it difficult to reclaim their independent human decision-making abilities when AI was seen as more factual and objective.

4.4. Theme 4: Strategies for Balancing AI and Workplace Culture

AI integration in workplace operations was fast and facilitated communication, collaboration, and decision-making processes. It indeed increased efficiency and productivity with the help of AI-driven tools. Still, it also made it difficult for organizations to prevent technology from depleting human interaction, innovation, and engagement. In this context, the transition of going back to a physical workspace was a significant factor in the balance between AI and workplace culture. Redefining the workflows, enabling interpersonal collaboration, and treating AI as a support system rather than replacing human interaction were some best practices for keeping a human-centric work atmosphere. The work of Kim et al. (2024) relied on the assertion that an AI strategy needs to be well integrated into workplace culture rather than overshadow it.

A practical approach was redesigning workspaces to stimulate social interaction without sacrificing AI's efficiency benefits features. P 1,3, 4, and 15 stated that:

"My organization's project manager shared with us their strategy: 'When we came back to the office, we realized that employees were talking back more to AI chatbots than to other colleagues.' For that reason, we redesigned our meeting structures. Before finalizing reports via technology, we required in-person discussions and brainstorming sessions without the technology in between. And this allows us to feel some teammate and human connection while still using AI as a supporting tool."

This was a key strategy for balancing work practices with a combination of AI and human-centric work practices that involved deliberately introducing essential human touch points. Lakhera (2024) and other studies back up this AI approach to augment and not replace human coworking. Organizations enabled structured interpersonal engagements to prevent the reduction of face-to-face discussions and creative problem-solving into dependency on AI.

Another key strategy centered on leadership's contribution to an AI-supported but social workplace. HR and managers had a crucial role in advising employees on when and how to employ AI without harming the social fabric of the firm. P 8, 9, and 10 stated that:

"The employees also asked every question through an AI-driven HR chatbot, including when working in 2020." To deal with this, we defined strict guidelines for being able to be used with AI, explaining what circumstances require human connection. The workshops we conducted were the ones we held on interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence, as we wanted to restore the humanity of the workplace."

According to findings by Lim et al. (2024), organizations today require leadership-driven strategies to balance AI adoption. Setting and following precise AI use expectations and boundaries allowed for valuable human interactions and prevented employees from availing themselves of the work over automation.

Additionally, the infusion of AI into the work process became possible within a culture of adaption and continuous learning that did not deprive employees of their social engagement. Incorporating AI literacy and interpersonal communication into the content offered to employees helped highlight that technology is a tool rather than a dominant presence in the workplace. The research by Liu et al. (2023) suggests that although AI adoption increased efficiency, employees felt apprehension as their jobs and roles changed. Keeping the workplace positive meant tackling these issues with issues of transparency and skill development initiatives.

5. DISCUSSION

Remote work, AI and chatbots heavily changed organizational culture and transformed communication and collaboration patterns among organization members and levels of employee engagement. Li et al. (2025) have researched how chatbots can help improve workflow efficiency by performing routine tasks, giving fast responses, and personalizing employee experience. AI-mediated interactions gradually became the norm of communication but at the cost of spontaneously occurring social interactions. The shift affected workplace norms: Along with it came a more technology-dependent employment culture in which AI acted as an integral tool of the workplace instead of mere support. This invariably led many employees to shift their social habits and move towards digital collaboration instead of traditional interpersonal interactions.

The growth of AI in the workplace has radically changed the corporate culture in terms of communication, collaboration, and employee engagement. While AI chatbot virtual assistants are good for efficiency, they can also reduce informal social interactions, such as team cohesion, morale, and productivity (Zhang et al., 2023). The transition back to physical offices from remote work has also been challenging as the employees more habituated

to flexibility than ever view old-fashioned structures as inferior and confining. To solve these issues ahead of time, business management must take a strategic view and regard AI as a facilitator, not a replacement for human interaction. Such policies as structured team interaction, AI-assisted but not AI-driven decision-making, and transparent communication of the role AI is playing in the organization must be implemented by leaders (Pillai et al., 2024). Businesses can facilitate AI adoption by creating a culture that rewards innovations and is mostly inclusive and collaborative.

During remote work, AI turned from an operational efficiency tool to an emotional support tool. For instance, Kim et al. (2024) showed how conversational AI can be employed in such industries as hospitality to be a psychological safety tool for employees experiencing stress, i.e., a counselor. Lim et al. (2024) also observed that AI-enabled chatbots help improve mental well-being by resolving workplace issues within seconds. Nevertheless, the reliance on AI for emotional engagement created a human that changed how employees sought and received support within organizations. Simultaneously with continuing remote work, AI has become integral to work culture, slowly changing how employees expect communication and problem-solving (Li et al., 2025).

However, that did not mean that the long time spent in AI mediation was not consequential, especially when organizations started to bring their employees back to physical workspaces. Re-engaging in in-person communication represented one of the main challenges of the psychological and behavioral shift (Li et al., 2019). The research of Lakhera (2024) shows that the switch from AI-driven communication tools to real-time, face-to-face communication came off as highly challenging to employees who were dependent on these communication tools. Structured and efficient responses were AI's forte, while human conversations still included tone, body language, and emotional intelligence, some of which employees were less used to negotiating.

In creative industries, AI-human collaboration, as demonstrated by Liu et al. (2023), improved productivity and, worse, suppressed organic knowledge sharing. When colleagues were not available for suggestions, employees were used to getting AI-generated recommendations instead. This shift in how people behaved in teams became one source of friction since users had to readjust their behavior of working collaboratively with people and with very little guidance.

According to Li et al. (2025), leadership was significant in facilitating the shift in employees from AI intermediary interaction to conventional workplace culture. Employees who found AI interactions more predictable and efficient than human interactions resisted the idea of being managed by AI. Unpredictable human decision-making made some employees struggle because they wanted AI's consistency (Kim et al., 2024). To tackle this challenge, leadership was required to actively rebuild trust in human-driven decision-making processes and encourage employees to communicate at a more interpersonal level.

To achieve this success while keeping your organization cohesive, the organization had to develop structured strategies. Redefining AI's role in the workplace was one such approach that proved to be effective. According to the research of Lim et al. (2024), the use of AI was most beneficial when it was used as a collaborative tool rather than a complete replacement for human interaction. As a result, those organizations that presented AI as a co-worker rather than a decision-maker enabled employees to develop a more balanced approach to using AI. In knowledge work, AI-human collaboration was efficient but had clear boundary requirements that enabled human engagement.

A critical strategy was to encourage the use of in-person interaction with the help of AI. Successful reintegration of cooperation with humans into its workflows was achieved for organizations that administered structured collaboration sessions, such as in-person team meetings, before passing the AI-powered reports (Liu et al., 2025). However, according to Lakhera (2024), the social benefits (such as comfort and enjoyment) offered by face-to-face interactions could not be replaced by AI chatbots. Some companies have found a balance between keeping the work productive and the workplace engaged while using AI-driven efficiency combined with the necessary human-led discussion (Zhang et al., 2024).

6. CONCLUSION

This study showed the huge influence of AI and chatbots in changing remote work culture by creating new communication habits, swapping workflows, and supplying emotional support. Workplace interactions became part and parcel of AI, rendering human engagement redundant. AI-facilitated interactions set expectations on efficiency and consistency to the extent that interacting with a human felt less predictable and labor intensive. The transition from human-centred to AI technology was partly achieved based on leadership and managerial approaches that supported the benefits of AI with a demand for interpersonal engagement. An effective strategy for retaining their workplace culture was structured collaboration sessions, hybrid work models, and AI literacy training. While AI made work more efficient and added support systems, its overdependence created the risk of dehumanizing human interaction in organizations; therefore, it required attention to reintegrating humanity's social and cultural elements into the changing work environment.

6.1. Implications for Organizations

Organizations must adopt structured strategies to manage workplace transitions propelling from AI. Along with management teams, HR teams should have training programs that develop employees' interpersonal skills

and help them re-establish face-to-face communication and collaboration. AI should be conceived as a supplement to human work and not a substitute, with strict guidelines on how it should be used. To deal with AI-induced isolation, leaders must assume responsibility by actively supporting social engagement and promoting social interactions through informal conviviality, team-building exercises, and mentoring programs. Ethical AI governance framework recommendations, such as one that is transparent, reflect well being of employees and a learning continuum. Strategic management teams can introduce feedback mechanisms that help the employees voice their concerns about AI integration and check how automation helps the organization improve rather than disturbing workplace culture. Balancing remote and in-person interactions can also help to solve the unavoidable problems of AI dependency by establishing hybrid work models. Adopting these strategies allows organizations to develop a workplace environment, efficiently blending human-centric culture and AI.

6.2. Limitations of the Study

The limitations of the study included primarily research design and data collection constraints. Interviews were used to gain in-depth insights into the qualitative approach, which is also of value but may introduce biases in subjective interpretations and limited generalizability. It is geographically bounded since this study mainly focuses on the account of employees in the U.S., possibly overlooking alternative points of view emanating from alternative cultural and economic situations. However, the sample of industries that AI has touched and will touch, as well as its array of professional roles, is far from comprehensive. Also, the study was restricted to workers returning to their physical working environments in transition, not the fully remote or hybrid worker experiences. The limitation of accepting social desirability is that respondents may alter their answers to be congruent with expected values instead of the true experience. However, considering these limits, the study presents some key learnings around the evolving interaction between AI and the organization's workings.

6.3. Future Research Directions

Future research with more significant quantitative data supplements the qualitative interview, which would be able to give a more comprehensive assessment of the impact of AI on workplace culture. Longitudinal studies on employees adapting to the new form of 'intelligence' created by AI need to be explored as future research. Investigating how artificial intelligence-driven communication tools affect relationships, leadership styles, and career development over time would offer a better understanding of how these tools will have long-lasting effects. Similarly, comparative studies across industries are important because AI integration differs from sector to sector (finance, healthcare, technology, etc.). Even more, organizations relying heavily on AI should investigate the psychological and emotional implications of AI use on different employee demographics – for example, generational and cultural differences. Also, research on the ethics of AI in the workplace with a focus on data privacy, decision-making authority, and bias would enable organizations to develop responsible AI policies. It could also explore AI's role in hybrid work environments and what it could do to make remote employees more inclusive and accessible.

Author's Contribution:

The authors contributed to the execution of the research and the write-up of this manuscript.

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