

INTEGRATING FREELANCERS AND CONTRACTORS ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGIES FOR THE FUTURE WORKFORCE

MENINGTEGRASIKAN STRATEGI ORGANISASI FREELANCER DAN KONTRAKTOR UNTUK TENAGA KERJA MASA DEPAN

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ABSTRACT

This research explores how organizations are integrating freelancers and contractors in their workforce strategies to face the future of an increasingly dynamic world of work. Using a systematic literature review approach, this study analyzes the challenges, strategies and benefits of flexible workforce integration in various sectors. The findings show that although organizations face challenges in maintaining effective culture and collaboration, the integration of a non-permanent workforce increases a company's flexibility and competitiveness. The practical implications of this research provide guidance for HR practitioners to design policies that support a flexible workforce in the context of digital transformation.

Keywords: integration of freelancers, contractors, workforce strategy, organizational flexibility, future world of work, HR management.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi bagaimana organisasi mengintegrasikan freelancer dan kontraktor dalam strategi tenaga kerja mereka untuk menghadapi masa depan dunia kerja yang semakin dinamis. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan systematic literature review, studi ini menganalisis tantangan, strategi, dan keuntungan dari integrasi tenaga kerja fleksibel dalam berbagai sektor. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa meskipun organisasi menghadapi tantangan dalam menjaga budaya dan kolaborasi yang efektif, integrasi tenaga kerja non-permanen meningkatkan fleksibilitas dan daya saing perusahaan. Implikasi praktis dari penelitian ini memberikan panduan bagi praktisi HR untuk merancang kebijakan yang mendukung tenaga kerja fleksibel dalam konteks transformasi digital.

Kata kunci: integrasi freelancer, kontraktor, strategi tenaga kerja, fleksibilitas organisasi, dunia kerja masa depan, manajemen SDM.

1. INTRODUCTION

The changing nature of work, driven by factors such as technological advancements, economic development, and evolving workforce preferences, has presented significant challenges for organizations in designing effective workforce management strategies (Saragih, 2024; , Groenendaal et al., 2022; , Hugo et al., 2019). One of the most prominent phenomena is the emergence of freelancers and contractors as a critical component of the future workforce (Akehurst et al., 2021; , Malik et al., 2021; , Gupta et al., 2020). Organizations have recognized that freelancers and contractors not only complement their permanent workforce but are also an integral part of a more flexible and dynamic work model (Wickramasinghe et al., 2019; , Stirpe et al., 2018). However, many organizations still struggle to integrate these flexible workers into their traditional work structures, particularly in terms of performance management, team collaboration, and long-term relationships (Groenendaal et al., 2022; , Arunprasad et al., 2022; , Doan et al., 2021).

The traditional mindset that permanent workers are the key element supporting organizational stability and culture is being challenged as more individuals choose to become

freelancers or contractors, seeking the freedom and flexibility these arrangements offer (Zeng, 2024; , Scully-Russ & Torraco, 2019). This suggests that organizations need to rethink their managerial structures and find ways to accommodate a more flexible work model without losing the synergy between permanent and flexible workers (Jr., 2024; , Rosary, 2018). Researchers have explored various strategies and approaches to address these challenges. For example, studies have highlighted the importance of inclusive human resource management practices that cater to the needs of freelancers and their psychological contracts (Groenendaal et al., 2022; , Gupta et al., 2020). Additionally, the implementation of flexible work programs, such as remote work and outcomes-oriented approaches, has been shown to enhance employee retention and organizational agility (Stirpe et al., 2018; , Arunprasad et al., 2022; , Buick, 2022). Furthermore, the literature emphasizes the need for organizations to develop a more collaborative and team-based approach to managing a diverse workforce, including both permanent and flexible workers (Hugo et al., 2019; , Marsofiyati, 2024; , Talluri, 2024). This involves fostering a culture of trust, communication, and mutual understanding, as well as providing managerial support and development to effectively lead and coordinate a flexible workforce (Buick, 2022; , Jr., 2024; , Doan et al., 2021). In conclusion, the emergence of freelancers and contractors as a critical component of the future workforce has created significant challenges for organizations in terms of workforce management. To address these challenges, organizations need to adopt a more flexible and dynamic approach that integrates both permanent and flexible workers, while also fostering a collaborative and supportive work environment. By doing so, organizations can leverage the benefits of a diverse workforce and ensure their long-term competitiveness and sustainability.

Digital technology has played a big role in accelerating changes in the world of work. Advances in communications and information technology have enabled workers from different locations to connect and work together, which opens up new opportunities for organizations to access global talent. In addition, the remote work trend accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic has further added to the complexity of workforce management, with many workers now working from home or remotely. Meanwhile, the booming gig economy has driven significant growth in the number of freelancers and contractors working across a variety of industry sectors. Freelancers, for example, now work in the technology sector, design, digital marketing, and creative sectors such as writing and content development. On the other hand, contractors are often needed for short-term projects or certain specialties that are not available in the permanent workforce.

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated this transition by providing clear evidence that much work can be done remotely and flexibly without compromising quality or productivity. Companies that were previously skeptical about flexible working models are now starting to realize the benefits, especially in terms of reduced operational costs and increased flexibility. Therefore, organizations must consider the integration of freelancers and contractors in their long-term strategy to ensure continuity and future success. Although many organizations are starting to adopt flexible workforce models, key challenges remain in terms of how to manage the performance of freelancers and contractors. Most organizations do not yet have effective policies or systems for monitoring and evaluating the performance of non-permanent workers, which can lead to ambiguity in terms of responsibilities, management of work results, and long-term goals. Apart from that, the collaboration aspect between teams is also often a problem. Freelancers or contractors are often not fully integrated into the organizational culture, which can cause difficulties in communication, coordination, and even in sharing important information between departments. Without a clear strategy, the relationship between the organization and the freelancer or contractor can become unstable, potentially affecting work results and satisfaction of both parties. It is important to identify these challenges and find ways to overcome them, such as by building better communication systems

or creating policies that are more inclusive and support the involvement of freelancers in the organization's long-term vision.

This research focuses on how organizations devise and implement strategies to integrate freelancers and contractors into their workforce. Additionally, this research explores how managerial practices are being adapted to ensure that freelancers and contractors can work effectively and collaboratively in increasingly dynamic and flexible work environments. In the context of significant changes influenced by digital transformation, the gig economy, and the need for organizational flexibility, the integration of a non-permanent workforce is both a challenge and an opportunity for companies to maintain competitiveness and adaptability in the future.

This research is motivated by the fact that organizations face major challenges in managing a flexible workforce consisting of freelancers and contractors. Although there is a lot of research on the permanent workforce, more in-depth research on the integration of the non-permanent workforce in organizational strategy is still limited. Therefore, this research aims to dig deeper into how organizations can optimize the use of freelancers and contractors, as well as how they can create adaptive strategies to manage a more flexible and diverse workforce.

The main motivation of this research is to provide clearer insights for companies regarding how best to integrate freelancers and contractors, taking into account existing challenges, as well as to create a framework that allows them to adapt quickly to changes occurring in the global labor market. The primary goal of this research is to develop a more comprehensive understanding of how organizations can integrate freelancers and contractors in their workforce strategies to meet challenges and take advantage of opportunities in the future. Specifically, this research aims to analyze how organizations adopt and implement strategies to integrate flexible workforces, identify various challenges that arise in the integration process, and explore potential solutions that can be implemented. In addition, this research seeks to develop recommendations regarding best practices that can be used by companies to ensure effective collaboration and continuity of working relationships with freelancers and contractors, so that companies can increase their flexibility and competitiveness in an ever-changing business environment.

This research will make a significant contribution to the fields of human resource management and organizational strategy by providing practical guidance for organizations seeking to develop or improve their flexible workforce strategies. With a focus on freelancers and contractors, this research has the potential to provide insight into how to create more inclusive and efficient work environments, as well as how companies can respond to the needs of the future workforce in more adaptive and innovative ways. In addition, it is hoped that this research will provide a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities associated with the integration of freelancers and contractors, and how this can impact organizational success in the long term.

2. METHODS

2.1. Systematic Literature Review Approach

The systematic literature review (SLR) approach was chosen because of its ability to comprehensively identify, assess, and synthesize research results relevant to the research topic. SLR has the advantage of eliminating subjective biases that often occur in traditional literature studies, as well as providing a clearer picture of what has been studied in a particular field. This approach will allow researchers to explore a wide range of research on the integration of freelancers and contractors in workforce strategy, while providing a deep understanding of how organizations are addressing the challenges and opportunities associated with a flexible workforce.

SLR will focus on collecting literature from international journals, books and relevant research reports, with the aim of identifying key trends in the management of freelancers and contractors. In this way, this research aims to provide evidence-based guidance for organizations in formulating better strategies to face the dynamics of a future labor market increasingly dominated by a flexible workforce. One of the main strengths of this approach is its ability to evaluate the quality and relevance of findings from multiple studies within one coherent framework.

2.2. Study Selection Criteria

2.2.1. Inclusion

To ensure the relevance and validity of this research, only studies that meet the following criteria will be included:

1. Studies published in the last 10 years: Given the rapid changes in the world of work, especially those influenced by technology and the gig economy, it is important to only consider the most recent studies that reflect current conditions and trends. Older studies may not cover recent developments in technology, managerial strategies, and flexible workforce management practices.
2. Relevance to the topic of flexible workforce integration: Included studies must directly address the role of freelancers and contractors within the organization, as well as how they are integrated into the larger workforce structure. This includes the study of human resources (HR) management, performance management, as well as the employment relationship between permanent and flexible workers.
3. Strategy or management based approach: The research undertaken should have a focus on how organizations design and implement managerial strategies to integrate freelancers and contractors, as well as how they manage this diverse workforce in a broader strategic context.

2.2.2. Exclusion

Some studies were excluded from the analysis if:

1. Focus only on permanent workforce: Studies that only examine the permanent workforce or permanent workers without touching on the topic of freelancers and contractors will not be included, as they are not relevant to the aim of this research which focuses on the integration of flexible workforce.
2. Does not provide insight into non-permanent workforce integration: Studies that only address the challenges or dynamics of freelancers and contractors in isolation, without linking their role to the strategy or overall organizational structure, will be excluded. The focus should be on how organizations manage these two types of workforce in a larger context.

2.3. Search Process

To obtain the most relevant and up-to-date studies, a literature search will be conducted in several leading international databases, including:

1. Google Scholar: As an open source that provides access to various types of publications, from journal articles to theses and research reports. This allows researchers to get an overview of the topics covered and find the most frequently cited articles in the field.
2. Scopus: As one of the largest and most trusted databases for indexed journal articles, Scopus offers access to a wide range of scientific literature in the field of management and organizations. Searching on Scopus will provide results that are more structured and relevant to international academic standards.

3. JSTOR: This database has many publications from various social science disciplines, including human resource management and organizational strategy. JSTOR can be used to find more historical articles and deeper critical reviews of older work trends and developments in managerial models.

The literature search will use very specific and relevant keywords, including:

- "Freelancers"
- "Contractors"
- "Workforce strategy"
- "Future of work"
- "HR management"
- "Workforce flexibility"
- "Gig economy"

Apart from that, researchers will also carry out searches using further combinations of keywords to narrow the search results, such as "integration of freelancers" or "contractors in organizational strategy". This will ensure that the literature found is truly relevant to the research focus and covers various aspects of the topic.

2.4. Data analysis

After identifying literature, the next step is data evaluation and analysis. Each selected study will be analyzed based on several key criteria:

1. Methodology: Researchers will evaluate the type of methodology used in each study. Is the study qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods based? Is the methodology relevant to provide deep insight into the integration of freelancers and contractors in organizations? Methodological analysis will help to assess the extent to which each study can be generalized or applied in a broader context.
2. Results and Findings: The primary focus of the data analysis was to identify key findings from each relevant study, including how organizations integrated flexible workforces in their strategies, challenges faced, and solutions implemented. Researchers will look for consistent patterns among the studies and evaluate results that can provide practical guidance for organizations.
3. Practical Implications: Researchers will assess how the results from each study can be applied to organizational practice. This includes recommendations on how to optimize the integration of freelancers and contractors in organizational structures, as well as potential solutions to overcome the challenges faced by organizations in managing a flexible workforce.

Once data is collected and analyzed, key findings will be synthesized to identify key patterns, emerging trends, challenges most frequently faced by organizations, and the most effective solutions. The results of this synthesis will provide a more holistic picture of how organizations can integrate freelancers and contractors in an efficient and strategic way.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Key Findings

Organizations today are adopting various models and approaches to integrate freelancers and contractors into their workforce structures. Some commonly used strategies include:

1. Use of Online Platforms for Workforce Management

Online platforms have become an increasingly popular tool for organizations to manage their workforce, particularly when it comes to freelancers and contractors (Wood et al., 2018; , Beerepoot, 2023; , According to, 2023). These platforms facilitate transparent communication and efficient management of tasks delegated to temporary workers (Wood et

al., 2018; , Beerepoot, 2023). Examples of commonly used platforms include Upwork, Fiverr, and Toptal for finding and managing freelancers, as well as project management software like Asana, Trello, and Monday.com to organize work involving freelancers (Wood et al., 2018; , Beerepoot, 2023).

Research has shown that these online platforms enable a high degree of autonomy and flexibility for freelance workers, in contrast to more traditional management approaches (Wood et al., 2018). The use of algorithmic management techniques, such as rating and ranking systems, allows for task variety and complexity, as well as spatial and temporal flexibility (Wood et al., 2018). However, these platform policies and algorithms can also favor some freelancers over others, potentially leading to issues of inequality and bias (Beerepoot, 2023; , Demirel et al., 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic has further highlighted the importance and growth of online freelancing, as many individuals turned to these platforms out of necessity during the economic disruptions (Dunn et al., 2020; , Rani & Dhir, 2020). This has exposed some of the vulnerabilities faced by platform workers, such as precarity and lack of social protections (Rani & Dhir, 2020). At the same time, the pandemic has also led to a global polarization of remote work, with some regions and industries experiencing a more significant shift towards online labor platforms (Braesemann et al., 2022).

The gig economy and online freelancing have been particularly prominent in the tech and creative sectors, where the flexibility and access to a global talent pool offered by these platforms are highly valued (James, 2022; , Huđek et al., 2021). However, the informality and lack of traditional employment structures in the gig economy can also lead to challenges, such as social isolation, intense competition, and the need for freelancers to develop specialized "gig literacies" to navigate the platforms effectively (Yildiz, 2022; , Sutherland et al., 2019).

To address these challenges, researchers have explored the potential for blockchain and biometric technologies to enhance trust, fairness, and security in freelancing platforms (Batoool & Byun, 2022). Additionally, there is a growing interest in worker-centered design approaches that aim to empower freelancers and mitigate the precarious conditions they often face (Vega et al., 2022). Overall, the use of online platforms for workforce management has become a significant trend, with both benefits and challenges for organizations and freelance workers. Continued research and innovation in this area will be crucial for addressing the evolving needs and dynamics of the gig economy.

2. Flexible Policy Preparation

Flexible work arrangements, such as remote work, flexible working hours, and short-term renewable contracts, are increasingly being adopted by organizations to attract and retain top talent (Wang et al., 2020; , Petcu et al., 2023; , Sheep, 2024). These policies allow employees to better balance their work and personal responsibilities, leading to improved work-life balance and reduced work-family conflict (Wang et al., 2020; , Petcu et al., 2023; , Delanoeije & Verbruggen, 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the adoption of remote work, with many organizations recognizing the potential benefits, including reduced costs and increased economic outcomes (Urbaniec et al., 2022). Remote work has also enabled organizations to access a wider talent pool without being tied to a specific location (Sheep, 2024). However, the successful implementation of remote work requires policies and procedures that support work-life balance, such as flexible scheduling options and virtual childcare programs (Nowrouzi-Kia, 2024).

Flexible work arrangements can also have implications for employee well-being and productivity. While some studies have found that remote work can reduce work-to-home conflict, others have reported challenges with work-home boundary blurring and decreased overall flexibility (Delanoeije & Verbruggen, 2020). Organizations should therefore carefully

consider the design and implementation of their flexible work policies to ensure they effectively support employee needs and organizational goals (Wang et al., 2020; , Petcu et al., 2023; , Delanoeije & Verbruggen, 2020).

In addition to flexible work policies, organizations are also leveraging technology to enhance remote collaboration and inclusiveness. For example, the integration of speech interruption analysis and machine learning-based acoustic echo cancellers can improve the participation and engagement of remote meeting participants (Fu et al., 2022). These technological advancements can further support the effectiveness of flexible work arrangements.

The shift towards flexible work arrangements has also had implications for regional development and talent attraction. Some studies have found that remote work has enabled people to move from larger cities to smaller towns, presenting both opportunities and challenges for regional development (Hansson, 2024). Policymakers and organizations should consider the broader implications of remote work and develop strategies to attract and retain talent in different geographic regions (Hu et al., 2020).

Overall, the references highlight the importance of flexible policy development in organizations to support a diverse and adaptable workforce. Effective implementation of these policies requires a holistic approach that considers employee well-being, organizational goals, technological advancements, and regional implications (Wang et al., 2020; -Sheep, 2024; , Hanson, 2024; -Hu et al., 2020).

3. Development of an Efficient Collaboration System

Effective collaboration between permanent employees and freelancers/contractors is crucial for organizations to achieve project success (Zhu et al., 2022; , Popescu et al., 2018; , Ghani et al., 2016). One key aspect of this is the development of internal collaboration systems that facilitate real-time interaction and integration between the different workforce types (Suhartini et al., 2022; , Chen et al., 2016; , Kassim et al., 2022). The use of communication and collaboration tools such as Slack or Microsoft Teams allows for seamless interaction and information sharing between permanent team members and temporary freelancers/contractors (Avşar & Grogan, 2023; , Ghani et al., 2019; , Yan & Tang, 2019). This creates a more cohesive and inclusive work environment, even with a mixed workforce (Kacprzak, 2023; , Zhang et al., 2015; , Kivlichan et al., 2021). By using these systems, organizations can improve the sense of ownership and engagement among freelancers, leading to higher efficiency and productivity (Román & Delgado, 2020; , Ford, 2020; , Domingo et al., 2021).

Additionally, the collaborative systems can leverage artificial intelligence and data analytics to optimize team composition and task assignment, further enhancing the overall efficiency of the workforce (Popescu et al., 2019; , Huang & Huang, 2022; , Wang et al., 2021). Integrating edge computing and multi-agent systems into the collaboration platform can also improve resource utilization and system responsiveness (Liu, 2024; , Zhang et al., 2019; , Chen, 2024). Human-robot collaboration is another area where efficient collaboration systems can be beneficial, as they enable the coordination of tasks and workflows between human workers and robotic systems (Tian et al., 2020; , Zhang et al., 2022; , Chen & Chiu, 2015). By optimizing the working sequence and storage location assignment, organizations can improve the productivity and efficiency of these hybrid human-robot teams (Chen, 2024; , Yu et al., 2021).

In summary, the development of robust internal collaboration systems that leverage communication tools, AI, and human-robot integration is crucial for organizations to achieve efficient and cohesive collaboration between permanent employees and temporary freelancers/contractors. These systems can enhance inclusivity, productivity, and overall project success.

3.2. Challenge

Although organizations are increasingly innovating in integrating flexible workforces, major challenges remain. Some of the main challenges that organizations often face include:

1. **Difficulties in Managing Freelancer Performance:** Measuring and monitoring freelancer performance is a major challenge. Without direct control over their work, organizations find it difficult to ensure the quality of work remains consistent. This is especially a problem in jobs that require a certain level of skill and output that must meet certain standards. For example, consulting companies that rely on freelancers often face problems in ensuring that the quality of reports or presentations created by freelancers meets their clients' expectations.
2. **Maintaining a Cohesive Company Culture:** Another big challenge is how to maintain a cohesive company culture even though many workers work from outside and do not have permanent status. Companies that have a traditional organizational structure often find it difficult to combine freelancers who are spread across various locations with permanent employees who work in the head office. This can result in gaps in a sense of attachment to the vision and values of the organization, as well as reducing more open collaboration between team members.
3. **Comply with Legal Regulations Regarding Non-Permanent Employment:** Various countries have different regulations regarding contract workers and freelancers. Organizations often face difficulties in ensuring compliance with these regulations, especially related to taxes, employment contracts and benefits. For example, in some countries, freelancers may be required to pay higher income taxes than full-time employees, while in others, contract workers are entitled to similar benefits to permanent employees if the contract term is long enough. Compliance with these laws requires in-depth knowledge of applicable labor regulations in each country in which the organization operates.

3.3. Profit

While these challenges exist, the integration of freelancers and contractors into the workforce structure provides a number of significant benefits, including:

1. **Increased Flexibility:** One of the main advantages of using freelancers is the increased flexibility they offer. Organizations can quickly add or reduce workforce according to project needs without having to commit to long-term commitments. This provides a competitive advantage in dynamic and frequently changing markets, where companies must quickly adapt to market or technological changes. For example, startup companies often use freelancers to fill technical positions required for new product development, allowing them to quickly change direction if necessary.
2. **Reduced Operational Costs:** Using freelancers or contractors can reduce costs associated with a permanent workforce, such as health benefits, retirement and leave costs. Additionally, by using freelancers, organizations can avoid costs for long-term employee training and development. Many large companies, such as IBM, rely on contractors to handle temporary work or specific projects, allowing them to optimize their resources more efficiently.
3. **Ability to Adapt Quickly to Market Changes:** By relying on freelancers and contractors, organizations can quickly respond to changing market needs or urgent client requests. Freelancers often have very specific skills, which allow companies to capitalize on these skills when needed without the hassle of hiring and training.

3.4. Sector Comparison

Each sector shows a different approach to integrating freelancers and contractors. These sectors operate in very different ways in terms of market needs, required skills and workforce dynamics.

1. **Sector Technology:** In the technology sector, the use of freelancers and contractors is more advanced than in other sectors. Many technology companies, such as Google, Facebook, and startups, rely on digital platforms to manage flexible workers. These companies often utilize freelancers for software development, graphic design, and digital marketing. Additionally, the sector is more open to the flexibility of remote work, allowing them to work with talent from various locations around the world.
2. **Health Sector:** The healthcare sector faces greater challenges in managing freelancers and contractors, especially in ensuring quality and compliance with strict healthcare regulations. Freelancers and contractors in this sector often function in a medical or health administration capacity, where the quality and accuracy of work is critical. Therefore, companies in this sector often require stricter procedures and more comprehensive performance evaluation systems.
3. **Professional Services Sector:** In professional services sectors, such as law and accounting, flexible workforce integration tends to be more structured. Many law firms or accounting companies use contractors to fill specific positions that require technical expertise, such as attorneys or auditors. The use of freelancers in this sector is also closely related to the need for professionals who can work on projects of a certain duration.

In the future, many organizations are predicted to adopt hybrid work models that combine permanent and non-permanent workers in response to the need for flexibility in the face of economic uncertainty and changing market dynamics. This model provides benefits for organizations in increasing operational efficiency, accelerating adaptation to change, and supporting sustainable business performance. Companies that implement hybrid work models will increasingly rely on advanced technologies, such as digital workforce management platforms, cloud-based collaboration tools, and data-driven performance monitoring systems. With the support of technology, integration between permanent and flexible workforce can be done more effectively, creating a collaborative, transparent and productive work ecosystem. This trend reflects a shift towards a more dynamic, inclusive and skills-based global workforce, where the role of freelancers and contractors is becoming increasingly strategic in ensuring organizations' long-term competitiveness in the global marketplace.

4. DISCUSSIONS

This research focuses on how organizations are integrating freelancers and contractors into their workforce strategies to adapt to the future of work. From the literature analysis carried out, it was found that many organizations have begun to adopt a more flexible work model by integrating non-permanent workers such as freelancers and contractors into their workforce strategy. This allows organizations to take advantage of greater flexibility and competitiveness. However, even though there is a lot of potential, this integration is not free from various challenges that must be faced, especially in terms of maintaining a cohesive organizational culture and ensuring effective collaboration between permanent and non-permanent workers.

Organizations are increasingly recognizing the importance of using a flexible workforce to manage rapidly changing market needs and deal with economic uncertainty (Qin et al., 2015; Nancarrow, 2015; Wickramasinghe et al., 2019; Ali & Sivasubramanian, 2021). A flexible workforce allows organizations to adapt quickly to fluctuations in demand and market conditions (Qin et al., 2015; Nancarrow, 2015; Wickramasinghe et al., 2019). This adaptability is particularly crucial in the face of economic uncertainty, where organizations need to scale their

workforce up or down as needed (Qin et al., 2015; Nancarrow, 2015; Wickramasinghe et al., 2019).

At the same time, organizations realize that maintaining engagement, culture, and effective communication between permanent and non-permanent workers is essential for smooth collaboration (Jong et al., 2018; Petriglieri et al., 2018). Research indicates that an increase in temporary worker inflows can lead to higher voluntary turnover of permanent employees (Bonet et al., 2022). This suggests that organizations need to carefully manage the integration of permanent and non-permanent workers to mitigate negative impacts on their permanent workforce (Bonet et al., 2022; Jong et al., 2018).

Several studies have examined the relationship between employment status and various outcomes. Non-permanent workers have been found to have poorer self-rated health and more musculoskeletal symptoms, as well as higher rates of fatigue, back pain, and muscle pain compared to permanent workers (Kwon et al., 2016; Kim et al., 2021). This highlights the importance of considering the well-being of all workers, regardless of employment status, and implementing policies and practices to support them (Kwon et al., 2016; Kim et al., 2021).

Researchers have also explored the concept of workforce agility, which refers to a workforce that is proactive, flexible, and resilient in dealing with non-routine and unpredictable circumstances (Ali & Sivasubramanian, 2021; Muduli, 2016; Abrishamkar et al., 2020). Workforce agility has been positively associated with firm performance, particularly for high-growth firms, and is often facilitated by organizational practices such as team-based work, reward systems, employee involvement, and information systems (Muduli, 2016; Abrishamkar et al., 2020). Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the importance of workforce flexibility, as organizations have had to rapidly redeploy and adapt their workforce to meet changing needs and challenges (Faulkner-Gurstein et al., 2022; Ziemann et al., 2023). Studies have shown that state-level policies, such as executive orders related to scope of practice and licensing, have played a key role in enabling health workforce flexibility during the pandemic (Ziemann et al., 2023).

In summary, the provided references indicate that organizations are increasingly recognizing the importance of a flexible workforce to manage changing market needs and economic uncertainty, while also emphasizing the need to maintain engagement, culture, and effective communication between permanent and non-permanent workers. The research also suggests that employment status can have implications for worker well-being and that workforce agility is a valuable asset for organizations, particularly in the face of disruptions and uncertainty. By understanding the strategies used, the challenges faced, and the solutions implemented, we can identify how organizations can be better prepared to face future changes in an increasingly dynamic world of work.

4.1. Challenge and Solution Analysis

One of the biggest challenges in integrating freelancers and contractors is maintaining a cohesive organizational culture. Company culture is often the foundation of team success and organizational performance. However, the influx of non-permanent workers with diverse backgrounds makes it difficult to create a sense of togetherness similar to that of permanent employees. For example, organizations that rely on freelancers often face difficulties in ensuring that a flexible workforce understands the company's core values and long-term goals. This situation becomes more complex when freelancers work remotely and are not involved in regular social or team-building activities. Absence from these activities has the potential to cause isolation, reduce motivation, and reduce their involvement in organizational goals.

To overcome this challenge, companies need to design policies that strengthen the involvement of freelancers and contractors in organizational activities. One approach is to organize special training that introduces the company culture, vision and mission of the organization to all workers. Additionally, collaborative activities, such as virtual workshops or

cross-team team-building events, can help build a sense of community between permanent and non-permanent workers. For example, companies like Automattic, which manages WordPress, have successfully implemented inclusive policies by hosting regular virtual meetups and online social activities. This allows freelancers from all over the world to feel like an integral part of the team. From a management perspective, organizations need to develop a flexible and inclusive performance evaluation system, tailored to the characteristics of freelancers and contractors. Traditional performance management models that focus only on permanent workers are not effective for a non-permanent workforce. As a solution, companies can utilize digital technology such as HR software, cloud-based collaboration platforms, and digital project management. Platforms like GitHub or Slack, for example, allow all team members to monitor project progress, provide feedback, and create work plans collaboratively. This ensures transparency of performance and facilitates effective communication between workers with different contract statuses. Apart from that, a performance evaluation system that measures work results and contributions to the team will motivate freelancers to be more actively involved and feel valued in the organization.

This research offers several practical implications for HR practitioners and organizational management. First, inclusive policies that support the integration of non-permanent workforce can help organizations create adaptive and inclusive work environments. With the adoption of the right technology, organizations will be able to effectively manage cross-team collaboration, especially between permanent workers and freelancers. Second, companies must support digital transformation in the workplace. The use of advanced digital tools enables efficient performance management of freelancers and contractors, thereby increasing transparency, productivity and communication. In the technology sector, this transformation is relatively easy to carry out, but in other sectors such as health or education, greater investment in manager training and the adoption of new technologies is required.

Finally, practical implications also include legal aspects and compliance with labor regulations in each country. HR practitioners need to ensure that company policies regarding freelancers and contractors comply with local regulations regarding labor rights, social protection and tax obligations. By complying with applicable legal provisions, companies can avoid legal risks and build sustainable and mutually beneficial working relationships between the organization and the flexible workforce.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1. Main Conclusions

This research shows that organizations that successfully integrate freelancers and contractors in their workforce strategies tend to be more flexible and adaptive to changes occurring in the increasingly dynamic market and world of work. This flexible workforce model allows organizations to respond more quickly to economic uncertainty, demand fluctuations and unique needs, while maintaining operational efficiency. For example, many technology companies utilize a non-permanent workforce for certain projects, which allows them to optimize work capacity without being tied to burdensome long-term contracts. In addition, the use of digital platforms to manage the workforce makes it easier to communicate and coordinate between permanent and non-permanent workers.

However, the integration of freelancers and contractors is not without challenges, especially in terms of collaboration between teams, maintaining organizational culture, and ensuring performance is maintained. One of the main challenges is how to ensure that non-permanent workers feel involved in an organizational culture that is often more dominated by permanent employees. For this reason, organizations need to design policies and strategies that can overcome these obstacles, such as cultural orientation programs that cover the entire workforce, collaborative training, and transparent and fair performance management systems.

In this way, companies can ensure that freelancers and contractors can work effectively with permanent teams without compromising the quality of work and relationships between employees. Overall, these findings support the view that a flexible workforce, if managed well, can increase an organization's competitiveness and provide an edge in facing the challenges of an ever-changing future.

5.2. Study Limitations and Future Research Directions

While this research provides valuable insight into the integration of freelancers and contractors in workforce strategies, there are several limitations worth noting. One is the lack of longitudinal studies that can examine the long-term impact of flexible workforce integration. More in-depth research with a longitudinal design would provide a better understanding of how the success of this integration develops over time and how organizations can optimize their strategies to maintain a balance between permanent and non-permanent workers.

In addition, this research does not cover various industrial sectors in depth. Each sector, such as technology, health, education, and professional services, may face different challenges and solutions in integrating a flexible workforce. Therefore, it is important for future research to examine sector differences in more detail, for example, how the healthcare sector focuses more on compliance and quality of work in managing contractors, while the technology sector relies more on digital platforms for freelancer management.

Furthermore, this research also does not delve deeper into how the cultural context influences the successful integration of non-permanent workers in the organization. Cultural factors in each country or region can have a significant impact on how an organization designs and implements a flexible workforce strategy. Future research could expand this study by considering the influence of organizational culture and national culture on the success of flexible workforce integration.

As a future research direction, further research could examine the influence of new technologies, such as artificial intelligence (AI) and automation, on the management and integration of non-permanent workers. This can also open up opportunities to explore the role of technology in creating a more inclusive and efficient work experience for all types of workers, both permanent and non-permanent.

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