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Abstract

Purpose The aim of this article is to extend current debates on organizational equality, diversity and inclusion to a consideration of neurodivergence in the remote workplace context.

Design/methodology/approach Drawing on the ability, motivation, and opportunity (AMO) model and an emerging strength-based approach to neurodiversity, this conceptual paper integrates research on neurodiversity at work and remote working to provide a novel AMO model for a neuro-inclusive remote workplace.

Findings Through a theoretically informed discussion of barriers to effective remote work from the perspective of neurominorities, the AMO model for the neuro-inclusive remote workplace is offered to assist organizations in creating an inclusive remote work environment where both neurominorities and neurotypicals can equally contribute to organizational success. Specific examples of how certain barriers to effective remote work can be mitigated are outlined and explained.

Originality The model of interactions between individual and system factors offered enables a better theoretical understanding of the conditions under which high performance of neurodivergent individuals could be achieved with an associated positive impact on their well-being. The paper contributes to recent calls for more equitable and empathetic approaches to investing in employees with different cognitive profiles and does so in the underexplored context of remote work.

Practical implications The conceptual model presented in this paper can assist HR practitioners in developing a comprehensive approach to skill, motivation, and opportunity-enhancing practices that are tailored to the unique needs of neurominorities in a specific context of remote work to generate mutual gains.

Keywords: AMO, strength-based approach, neurodiversity, remote work, Covid-19

„Neurodiversity is a moral, social, and economic imperative; everybody loses when human potential is squandered"
(Doyle, 2021, p. 194)

Introduction

Against a backdrop of a digital transformation era and the changing way people communicate and work (Vrontis *et al*., 2021), organizations are becoming more agile and adaptive (Del Giudice *et al*., 2021) to remain competitive in such dynamic environments (Junni *et al*., 2013). In the context of increased productivity and economic growth, management practices are often accused of reproducing societal inequalities within organizations (Amis *et al*., 2020) and creating differential abilities and opportunities to engage in value creation (Bapuji *et al*., 2020). Unfortunately, whilst societal inequalities within organizations are reinforced, disadvantaged members of society continue to be marginalized (Friedman and Laurison, 2019; United Nations, 2020).

The focus of this paper is placed on the specific group of employees who are often barred from work opportunities and experience significant levels of employment exclusion, i.e., neurominorities (Knapp *et al*., 2009; Krzeminska and Hawse, 2020). Whilst the concept of neurodiversity suggests that all humans vary in terms of our neurocognitive ability, the terms such as neurominority, neurodivergent, or neuroatypical are umbrella terms for the subset of neurodivergent conditions, such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), autism, dyspraxia, or dyslexia (see: Doyle, 2020; Fung and Doyle, 2021) which imply that one's cognitive profile is not 'typical'. Neurodivergent people can find some aspects of their employment very easy whilst others may pose certain difficulties resulting in inconsistent performance (Tomczak *et al*., 2021).

Recent advancements in the use of information and communication technologies (van Laar *et al*., 2017) and an introduction of flexible ways of working (Kossek *et al*., 2006) triggered new challenges for neurominorities in the workplace context (Das *et al*., 2021). For instance, whilst working away from bright lights and background office noise can constitute a sensory break for autistic employees, the associated change in routine can be a very stressful experience. Similarly, for ADHDers the lack of structure associated with a move to remote work can be disorientating and may lead to specific challenges related to the prioritization of tasks and effective time management. If employers are to support and empower neurominorities working from home, a better understanding of their specific needs in such contexts is essential.

Consistently, calls have been made for more research attention in this area as it constitutes one of the most pressing yet still unanswered HR problems (Szulc *et al*., 2021a).

Given the above, in this study, I seek to understand how the varying needs of neurominorities working remotely can be accounted for by tailored HR practices. To do so, I take a conceptual model of neurodivergent abilities-motivation-opportunities for HRM research developed by Szulc *et al*. (2021b) and adapt it to remote-work settings. The new model is based on an extensive literature review and provides a conceptual discussion on the abilities and motivations of neurominorities who work remotely. It further considers what organizational practices can be used to provide opportunities to further enhance the remote work experience for this group of employees. The presented discussion builds on the notions of a strengths-based perspective on mental disorders (Wiklund *et al*., 2020) and neurodiversity (Wiklund *et al*., 2018) which sees the problems that people face in the workplace as associated with limited opportunities for engagement and growth as opposed to individuals' characteristics (see also: Johnson *et al*., 2020). Employing such a perspective enabled several contributions to existing literature to be made.

First, this paper explains how neurominorities may have very specific perceptions of, and reactions to what may only seem like a universal remote-work-focused HR practice. By highlighting that certain practices may constitute barriers to effective performance and one's well-being, I address recent calls to move away from universal Human Resource Management (HRM) as a route to positive employee outcomes (Cafferkey *et al*., 2020; Szulc *et al*., 2021b). Second, through the lens of the ability-motivation-opportunity (AMO) framework (Purcell *et al*., 2003; Kellner *et al*., 2019) and the strength-based approach to neurodiversity (Wiklund *et al*., 2018), the discussion presented in this paper expands the existing model of neurodivergent abilities-motivation-opportunities (Szulc *et al*., 2021b) to the novel context of the remote work environment. The new model ultimately enhances our understanding of workplace well-being from the perspective of neurodivergent minorities and advances existing theory in this area. It also further reinforces recent calls for more theory-driven research in the context of neurodiversity at work (Doyle and McDowall, 2022; Tomczak *et al*., 2021). Practically, critical aspects of HR practice are discussed with implications for the organizational ability to meet business needs through managing its employees working remotely.

This article unfolds as follows. First, an approach to the literature review is presented. Following from this, key debates on remote work and neurodiversity in organizational settings

are outlined. Building on the dynamic AMO model, the abilities and motivations of neurominorities in a specific context of a remote work environment are investigated and organizational practices that can enhance these are further considered. The paper finishes with a discussion of the implications for future research and practice.

Literature Review Approach

A comprehensive web-based search of leading peer-reviewed HR and management journals as well as journals in the field of developmental disabilities was conducted looking for the themes covering neurodiversity at work, remote work, virtual work, and work from anywhere. In doing so, the Google Scholar database was used. The search covered the last three decades (1992–2022). A combination of keywords including "Neurodiver*" OR "Autis*" OR "ADHD*" AND "workplace" AND "remote work*" OR "virtual work*" OR "work* from anywhere" OR "telework*" was used to identify the articles of interest. The search yielded 291 results, out of which, only five texts were identified to deal directly with neurodiversity in the remote work context. Grey literature was purposefully excluded. Wider literature on neurodiversity at work in general was further used to support finding the answer to the following question: how can we support neurominorities in a remote work environment? The subsequent analysis resulted in a refinement of the existing conceptual model of neurodivergent abilities-motivation-opportunities for HRM research (Szulc *et al*., 2021b) to tailor it to the remote work environment. It is essential to mention that the author does not intend to be exhaustive with the model, but the constructs were chosen to illustrate possibilities for neurodiversity research.

Literature Review

Remote work involves performing work-related activities outside of an employee's primary office (Perry *et al*., 2018). Research thus far suggests that remote work arrangements are beneficial to most organizational members (Bathini and Kandathil, 2019; Wood *et al*., 2018) as these usually bring increases in work effort and well-being (Rupietta and Beckmann, 2018). However, the emerging stream of work demonstrates that the erasing boundaries between private and professional lives may also foster unhappiness and burnout (see: Wiklund, 2021).

Indeed, the dual effects of working from home may be associated with the specific characteristics of employees or the context in which they are placed (e.g., Daneshfar *et al*., 2022; Wang *et al*., 2021). For instance, there is growing evidence that the remote work associated with the Covid-19 pandemic had a particularly negative impact on female

professionals in comparison to their male colleagues (e.g., Peck, 2021; Utoft, 2020). Much less, however, is known about the specific impact of remote work patterns on neurominorities. Understanding this appears vital since the vast majority of (remote) workplaces are designed for neurotypicals whereas approximately one in seven employees is neurodivergent in some way (CIPD, 2018). While not all neurodivergent individuals are the same, it is generally accepted that there are common characteristics and behaviors for each group. As indicated in Table I, neurominorities will often have thinking styles associated with unique strengths such as fine detail processing, creativity, innovativeness, and more. However, they may also struggle with stress control, active listening, or hyperactivity, among others. Understanding such unique characteristics appears particularly vital and even more challenging in remote work settings where managers or HR practitioners cannot see their employees face-to-face.

-insert Table I here-

In their recent research, Das *et al*. (2020) and Szulc *et al*. (2021a) coherently demonstrated that a move to remote work somewhat forced by the COVID-19 pandemic resulted not only in certain opportunities but also specific challenges for this community which, at least partly, are not necessarily experienced in the same way by neurotypical professionals. On a positive note, the research conducted by O2 (Grainger, 2021) shows that approximately a third of neurodivergent employees believe that a move to remote work resulted in fewer distractions from other people and hence it increased their productivity. Indeed, for autistic employees, working at home away from bright lights and background noises may constitute a sensory break (Tomczak, 2021) which could lead to an increased ability to remain focused on their work. Similarly, ADHDers may face fewer problems with concentration and attention (Prevatt and Yelland, 2015) in a quiet home environment if they can work undistracted by co-workers.

However, almost a quarter of neurodivergent employees indicate that working from home during the Covid-19 lockdown resulted in some very specific challenges they had to face (Grainger, 2021). Such challenges were triggered by the lack of routine, distractions, and working long hours. For instance, the distortion of structure and routine related to the move to remote work was disorientating for some ADHDers and led to specific challenges associated with task prioritization and effective time management that neurotypicals would most probably not face. Similarly, using e-mails as if it was a synchronous tool resulted in an interruption of thinking time and routine – a situation that could be particularly stressful for autistic individuals (Praslova, 2022). Some autistic people may have also found it difficult to follow virtual calls

due to the difficulties with reading one's body language and tone (Hendricks, 2010). For dyslexics, in turn, engaging in a chatbox discussion during virtual meetings may place greater stress on their writing skills (Bogdanowicz *et al*., 2014). Finally, for those with ADHD, the distracting nature of background noises or the video itself can result in an inability to remain focused (Bubl *et al*., 2015).

The above discussion further supports the argument that it is important to recognize that distinct categories of employees have different needs and require specific HR practices to contribute to organizational performance (Cafferkey *et al*., 2020; Kinnie *et al*., 2005). If remote working arrangements become more prominent in the coming years, a greater understanding of neurodiversity in the remote work context is likely to lead to creation of a more inclusive and engaged organization. It is in such a context where the value of neurominority employees is recognized and appreciated. In the following sections, I, therefore, focus on theory to understand how varying needs of neurominorities can be accounted for by tailored HR practices in the specific context of remote work.

Theoretical framework

The presented considerations are based on the emerging strength-based approach to mental disorders (Wiklund *et al*., 2020). It sees the problems experienced by neurominority employees as a direct consequence of the unpreparedness of the modern workplace (Patton, 2019). More specifically, the approach assumes that existing HR practices are often not designed to effectively address the complexity surrounding the employment cycle of neurominorities (Hayward *et al*., 2019). Similarly, they do not provide sufficient opportunities for engagement or growth (Johnson *et al*., 2020). It is through the lens of the strength-based approach that Szulc *et al*. (2021b) adapted the AMO model (Kellner *et al*., 2019) to better understand the needs of neurominorities in the traditional workplace context. However, the model developed by the authors does not account for the specific conditions associated with remote work environment – which became even more prevalent as we observed an involuntary shift to mass homeworking during the Covid-19 pandemic (Kniffin *et al*., 2020). Engaging in remote work practices can significantly change job demands, autonomy, and relational aspects of work. This, in turn, can have a significant impact on employee outcomes (see Wang *et al*., 2021). It, therefore, appears essential to provide an updated version of the neurodivergent AMO for HRM research that would be relevant to the remote work environment.

The AMO model was initially proposed by Bailey (1993) and later developed by Appelbaum *et al*. (2000). Its acronym stands for the three elements that enhance employee performance. These are individual ability - A, motivation -M, and the opportunity to participate – O (see also: Malik *et al*., 2020). For this article, and following the practice of Szulc *et al*. (2021b), I use the dynamic version of the AMO model introduced by Kellner *et al*. (2019) in my considerations of the neuro-inclusive remote workplace. This version of the model delineates individual-level ability and motivation, and systems-level practices that enhance or inhibit these variables. It also points our attention to the opportunities that overlap at individual and systems levels. Kellner *et al*. (2019) highlight that all dimensions of the model interact with each other as well as with performance. As suggested by Szulc *et al*. (2021b), the model is useful in the context of neurodiversity as it is based on the assumption that individuals do not blindly conform to HR intentions and thus it emphasizes the role of individual characteristics in meeting organizational goals. Aligned with the strength-based approach to neurodiversity, the model elevates the role of individuals and their specific characteristics and therefore emphasizes the need for diversified HR systems that ultimately facilitate achieving mutual gains from HR.

Figure 1 illustrates the model adapted from the work of Szulc *et al*. (2021b) which is further based on the literature review concerning neurodiversity at work and remote working. It relates to the abilities and motivation of neurominorities at individual and system levels and includes opportunities designed to create an inclusive remote work environment where both neurominorities but also neurotypicals can equally contribute to organizational success. Each element of the model is discussed in more detail in the following sections.

-insert Figure 1 about here –

Abilities

Abilities relate to individuals' skills, the occupation-relevant knowledge contextualized in work processes, and effectiveness in social interactions. At an individual level, neurominorities are described as having cognitive functioning different from what is seen as typical (Doyle, 2020). While not all neurominorities are the same, it is generally accepted that there are common characteristics and behaviors for each group (Tomczak, 2021). For instance, individuals with autism often demonstrate above-average analytical thinking and attention to detail (Annabi and Locke, 2019), dyslexic and dyspraxic individuals tend to think innovatively

(Everatt *et al*., 1999), whilst individuals with ADHD have become successful entrepreneurs because of their extraordinary ability to multitask and remain calm under pressure (Antshel, 2018). At the same time, many individuals representing neurominorities may demonstrate poor listening skills or experience difficulties with social interaction, stress control, or maintenance of interpersonal relationships (Doyle, 2020; Hedley *et al*., 2018).

Limited research exploring the experiences of neurominorities of remote working (Das *et al*., 2021; Mellifont, 2022; Szulc *et al*., 2021a; Tang, 2021; Zolyomi *et al*., 2019) suggests that, indeed, collaboration with colleagues and superiors in virtual workspaces may result in significant challenges experienced on daily basis. These include having to deal with distractions during remote meetings, having to pay close attention to non-verbal cues such as facial expressions and body language, or being forced to interact without these cues. Further challenges relate to having to deal with background noises and persistent notifications across a variety of applications during remote meetings or coordinating turn-taking as crosstalk could severely impact the conversation and compromise one's understanding (see also: Zolyomi *et al*., 2019). It was further suggested that similarly to stationary meetings, some individuals find it difficult to pay attention during a meeting if they did not receive a meeting agenda in advance. Others suggested they cannot simultaneously take notes while paying attention to the virtual conversation.

One way to facilitate the ability of a neurodivergent professional to communicate and interact more effectively in the remote work environment is, according to Das *et al*. (2021), to routinize and synchronize agendas, transcripts, recordings, and meeting notes. The authors further suggest that the interactive nature of meeting materials may help neurominorities know where to focus their attention if they miss part of the meeting because they became distracted or needed a desensitization break. A distraction could be further avoided by letting participants switch their cameras off. This could enable avoiding sharing the motor tics associated with Tourette's syndrome (Tang, 2021) or could enable reducing anxiety and cognitive load experienced by autistic individuals that are caused by self-presentation-related worries (Zolyomi *et al*., 2019). It is also suggested that sharing meeting agendas and expectations in advance of remote meetings, following the agenda items during meetings, and sharing transcripts and recordings post-meeting is vital to ensure effective communication (see also: Mellifont, 2022). Such practices should not only be routinized but, most importantly, part of

organizational norms deeply embedded in organizational culture if they are to be effective (Austin and Pisano, 2017; Houdek, 2022; Shore *et al*., 2018).

On a more positive note, some unique abilities characterize certain neuroatypical individuals. For instance, those with ADHD could be characterized by the ability to remain hyper-focused whilst some autistic employees have particular skills in innovative thinking and detailed observations (Armstrong, 2010). However, whilst the ability to remain hyper-focused can lead to extreme productivity, it leads to its challenges, too. In some instances, hyper-focus can spin out of control to the extent that physical needs, like eating and sleeping, are not met (Hupfeld *et al*., 2019). This appears particularly difficult for line managers to monitor in the remote work context. One way to build on this strength and avoid potential challenges is for management and/or HR to decide beforehand how much time each employee can fairly dedicate to certain projects and monitor employees to ensure they stick to agreed plans. Similarly, the ability to think innovatively and engage in detailed observations can be easily disrupted in a remote work context. Specifically, working at home may be associated with certain distractions that make it difficult to find enough time to reflect and focus on new ideas (Szulc *et al*., 2021a). Consistently, management should provide its employees with a sufficient level of flexibility and freedom so that they can set aside the necessary time to enhance their unique abilities to engage in critical reflections and innovative thinking.

Motivation

Motivation sheds light on one's willingness to use their abilities productively and proactively (Purcell *et al*., 2003). Whilst neurominorities generally do not lack motivation at work (Morrison *et al*., 2020, pp. 2-3), they often struggle to have their needs met (Szulc *et al*., 2021a, p. 863). This is because their needs are often misunderstood by others (Doyle, 2020) due to a lack of wider awareness about the specifics associated with atypical cognitive profiles (Hewlett *et al*., 2018). For instance, autistic individuals have specific needs related to having structure and routine in their life (Milton and Sims, 2016) whereas individuals with ADHD may have a strong need for stimulation and can become easily bored with detailed paperwork and routine tasks (Morsink *et al*., 2017). Interestingly, over 4 in 5 neurodivergent employees reported that their greatest challenge at work is the lack of recognition of such differing needs from other people (Beardon and Edmonds, 2007). This is also aligned with an argument that strategies that are commonly used for motivating neurotypical employees (e.g., O'Donoghue and van der Werff, 2021; Szulc, 2020), may not resonate well with their neurominorities counterparts (Parr

et al., 2013). For instance, in their research Parr *et al*. (2013) concluded that, despite their popularity and perceived universality, 'inspirational motivation' and emotion-laden communication tend to be associated with increased anxiety levels and lower job satisfaction for autistic individuals.

Against the backdrop of the pandemic and an associated massive-scale move to remote work (Kniffin *et al*., 2020), we observe new challenges for HR and those managing remote workers (Larson *et al*., 2020). These, however, remain underexplored in the context of neurominorities. Existing limited research in this area suggests that the positives associated with working from home may take the form of being able to manage more accessible and flexible work routines thus positively affecting one's motivation (see: Das *et al*., 2021). At the same time, however, working from home typically increases the hours spent on work-related tasks (Bin *et al*., 2021) and it is not uncommon to work late at night (e.g., Zanhour and Sumpter, 2022). While this is relatively common among employees in general (Shirmohammadi *et al*., 2022), the lack of a cognitive break from work coupled with working long hours and weekends can have a particularly negative effect on neurominorities' mental health and it is more likely to result in exhaustion and burnout (Szulc *et al*., 2021a). For instance, scholars have recently started to investigate the concept of autistic burnout (Raymaker, 2020). It is a long-term mental, physical, and emotional exhaustion experienced by autistic individuals that builds over time, often as a result of either stressful events or transitions (Mantzalas *et al*., 2021, p. 976). This phenomenon further reinforces the argument that the ill-managed transition to remote work may be particularly challenging for autistic employees. One way to combat such a negative experience is to encourage self-care activities in the form of physical exercise (American Occupational Therapy Association, 2020, p. 77) and facilitate line managers in being able to effectively monitor the levels of exhaustion of their neurodivergent employees (Richards *et al*., 2019). This can be achieved with the use of digitization tools in HR for weekly planning of work such as AI-enabled bots or virtual assistants (Malik *et al*., 2022) or by using specifically designed accurate stress monitoring systems (Tomczak, 2022).

Moreover, it was found that neurominorities often express frustration about the number of remote meetings which are scattered throughout the day and result in the insufficient transition time between the meetings and a lack of blocked time slots for undistracted work (Das *et al*., 2021). This appears to be particularly problematic for individuals with ADHD. One solution to this problem may be to introduce asynchronous modes of communication such as emails or

pre-recorded videos that can be conveniently accessed in one's own time (Walkowiak, 2021). If work colleagues are aware of neurodivergence, breaks could be introduced during the meetings to allow individuals to desensitize should they need it.

Opportunities

Neurominorities frequently face obstacles that prevent them from using their skills effectively (Patton, 2019). Hence, it is necessary to build an environment that would allow for the utilization of the possibilities created by diversity both in the context of performance-increasing effects (Roberge and van Dick, 2010) but also in the context of enhanced well-being (Szulc *et al*., 2021b).

Sensitivities to heat, cold, noise, or glare are common for neurominorities, particularly individuals with autism (Pfeiffer *et al*., 2017). Whilst a traditional office layout offers limited opportunities for customization (Tomczak *et al*., 2021), working from home often means that individuals can control sensory stimuli and manage distractions (Szulc *et al*., 2021a). At the same time, management should carefully consider where its employee's home workspace is set up as such an environment is not free from distractions resulting from family members, roommates, or surroundings (Franken *et al*., 2021). For instance, not all remote workers can enjoy a dedicated home office or enough space to designate for work. While a typical employee will usually find it easier to juggle professional work and personal responsibilities (Gajendran and Harrison 2007), this task may appear particularly difficult for neurodivergent colleagues who may suffer from difficulties with effective time management, task prioritizing, and organization of work (Tomczak, 2022). Offering flexible work opportunities may be part of a solution to this problem. For instance, Shirmohamdi *et al*. (2022) encourage offering employees accommodations with regard to the type and dynamics of remote work provided. Employees could choose the number of days or hours of work and how these are distributed to accommodate employees' specific work and family needs. In this way, an autistic employee could choose the time when he or she can work undistracted whereas an ADHD employee can either enjoy a flexible schedule that encourages creativity and harnesses the power of hyperfocus or take advantage of structured routines if they struggle with time management and procrastination.

Another opportunity to overcome what Das *et al*. (2021) refer to as a 'shared sense of struggle' during remote work is to offer support groups as platforms for questions and feedback and as

a place to share strategies for remote work and negotiations for accommodations. For instance, in their research Zolyomi *et al*. (2019) explored strategies for effective video calls from the perspective of autistic individuals and found that they feel significantly more comfortable when they can talk to people with similar cognitive profiles about common experiences and expectations. Similarly, since successful mentoring and coaching relationships are commonly positively associated with employee development and performance outcomes (Kim *et al*., 2013), further support from job coaches or team buddies (Doyle and McDowall, 2015; 2019) may facilitate building on the neurodivergent talent and skills - especially in the remote work settings.

Discussion

This article aimed to integrate an emerging strength-based approach to neurodiversity with the existing research on neurodiversity at work and remote working. I hope to have extended the current debates on organizational equality, diversity and inclusion to novel contexts. Indeed, the unprecedented outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic (Khoa *et al*., 2021) led to remote working becoming the 'new normal' (Carroll and Conboy, 2020). Some have explained the situation as de facto a global experiment of remote working (Kniffin *et al*., 2020; Wang *et al*., 2021). It is in such a context that Wiklund (2021, p. 1210) argued that 'the whole idea of work design takes on a different meaning when people are scrambling to get their homes set up to allow them to conduct work that to some extent resembles what they usually do in the office'. The previously accumulated evidence base on the risks of remote working (e.g., Grant *et al*., 2013) cannot therefore fully explain the challenges associated with remote work in current times (Wang *et al*., 2021), even more so for neurominorities. To address this, I introduced the AMO model for a neuro-inclusive remote workplace which offers several propositions to be taken into consideration by managers, HR departments, and employees. These include, for instance, routinization and synchronization of agendas, sharing transcripts and recordings post-meetings, or not pressurizing individuals to turn cameras on. It is further suggested that management should control the amount of time spent on projects and provide autonomy to engage in critical reflection and innovative thinking. Further propositions relate to encouraging self-care activities, using digitization tools for weekly planning of work, and monitoring stress and exhaustion levels. It is also suggested to introduce meeting breaks or asynchronous modes of communication such as emails or pre-recorded videos that can be conveniently accessed in one's own time. Finally, offering flexible hours of work and setting up support groups and

coaching as a way to share strategies for remote work and negotiations for accommodations could be particularly useful. Emphasizing the need to incorporate more nuanced approaches in the daily management of neurodivergent remote workers, this article generated several theoretical and practical cues, which I discuss next.

Theoretical implications

Theoretically, the model introduced in this article contributes to recent calls to consider human-centered design principles in the development of new work design (Wiklund, 2021). In doing so, it contributes to the emerging strength-based approach to mental disorders (Wiklund *et al*., 2020) and neurodiversity (Wiklund *et al*., 2018; Fung, 2021) where a focus is placed on a person's assets and disabling environmental conditions as opposed to one's weaknesses. Applying the strength-based perspective to the presented conceptual discussion on remote work experience and practice allows for further exploration and elevation of a powerful role of virtual work characteristics in shaping the working experiences of disadvantaged members of society.

Second, the presented conceptual framework highlights the need for examining the strengths of neurodivergent individuals as well as potential adjustments in a novel context of remote work. The model of interactions between individual and system factors enables a better theoretical understanding of the conditions under which high performance of neurodivergent individuals could be achieved in remote work settings with an associated positive impact on their well-being. It therefore partly contributes to answering the calls for existing mainstream HRM research to stop treating employees as an undifferentiated mass (Jiang *et al*., 2017) and to acknowledge the importance of differentiated HRM practices that capture the unique needs of different groups of employees (Cafferkey *et al*., 2020; Szulc and Smith, 2021; Szulc *et al*., 2021b) so that they can be supported in the 'emotionally distraught times' (Malik and Sanders, 2021, p. 16).

Practical implications

Practically, the conceptual model presented in this paper can assist HR practitioners in developing a comprehensive approach to skill-, motivation-, and opportunity-enhancing practices that are tailored to the specific needs of neurominorities in a unique context of remote work to generate mutual gains. It is reiterated that the traditionally understood systems-level practices may constitute a significant challenge for individuals who vary in terms of their neurocognitive ability in comparison to a typical employee (Doyle, 2020; Krzeminska *et al*.,

2019). At the same time, it should be noted that the majority of the suggested improvements (such as sharing meeting agendas in advance and following them during the meetings, encouraging self-care activities, or introducing meeting breaks to desensitize) could translate into universal improvements in remote working conditions with positive impact on performance and well-being for all employees, both neurotypical and neuroatypical ones. However, such accommodations need to be combined with inclusive work designs and environments embedded in the entire organization (Obeidat *et al*., 2016).

Importantly, management spends considerably more effort on considering mental health and well-being as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic (Hamouche, 2021). However, we still do not have sufficient evidence base relating to managing neurodiversity in the remote work environment. What seems to be even more complex, is managing neurodiversity in the remote work environment and in times of crisis. I thus move to the next section where I discuss the limitations of this paper as well as directions for future research.

Limitations and future research directions

This manuscript has some limitations that present avenues for future research. Although the research on neurodiversity at work is gaining increased scholarly attention (e.g., Doyle and McDowall, 2022), the studies exploring the impact of virtual or remote work on neurominorities remain limited in scope. Consistently, the assumptions behind the introduced model need to be taken with caution as these are mainly based on limited research on neurodiversity in remote work environments combined with more generic research on neurominorities. However, as explained earlier, the model is not meant to be exhaustive. Rather, the constructs chosen to be included in the model illustrate possibilities for future neurodiversity research. Scholars interested in this topic should now evaluate the effectiveness of the suggested adjustments. Specifically, they should pay special attention to what particular adjustments work for different individuals and different roles and what their impact is on organizational performance and, above all, on employee well-being (see also: Doyle, 2020; Szulc *et al*., 2021b). Ultimately, in our research endeavors, we should remember what Dr Shore, an autism advocate who is on the spectrum, once said – 'If you've met one person with autism, you've met one person with autism' (see: Flannery and Wisner-Carlson, 2020). This means that individuals diagnosed with autism as well as other neurominorities present with unique strengths as well as difficulties and experience these in different ways. Therefore, HR practitioners, managers, or employers must be prepared with a variety of evidence-based

practices and instructional strategies to engage and support neurominorities. There is a need for future research to develop integrated and comprehensive solutions to the persistent problems faced by neurodivergent minorities in light of such uniqueness. Ultimately, such efforts should facilitate obtaining a more complex understanding and acceptance of what may not be seen as 'typical'. Collaborative research between neurodiversity and organizational researchers may be particularly useful (see: Vogus and Taylor, 2018) to enable neurominorities to fully leverage the greater flexibility and control that remote working provides over their work environments.

Conclusions

Organizations are urged to adapt their approach to the individual rather than to try to adapt the individual to fit. Interestingly, the accommodations introduced in the presented paper are likely to benefit all employees, no matter their cognitive profile. The onus now lies on companies to create an equal playing field that is inclusive to all. If we are to meet the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals of promoting inclusive economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all, all voices must compose a future narrative together.

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Figure 1: AMO model for neuro-inclusive remote workplace

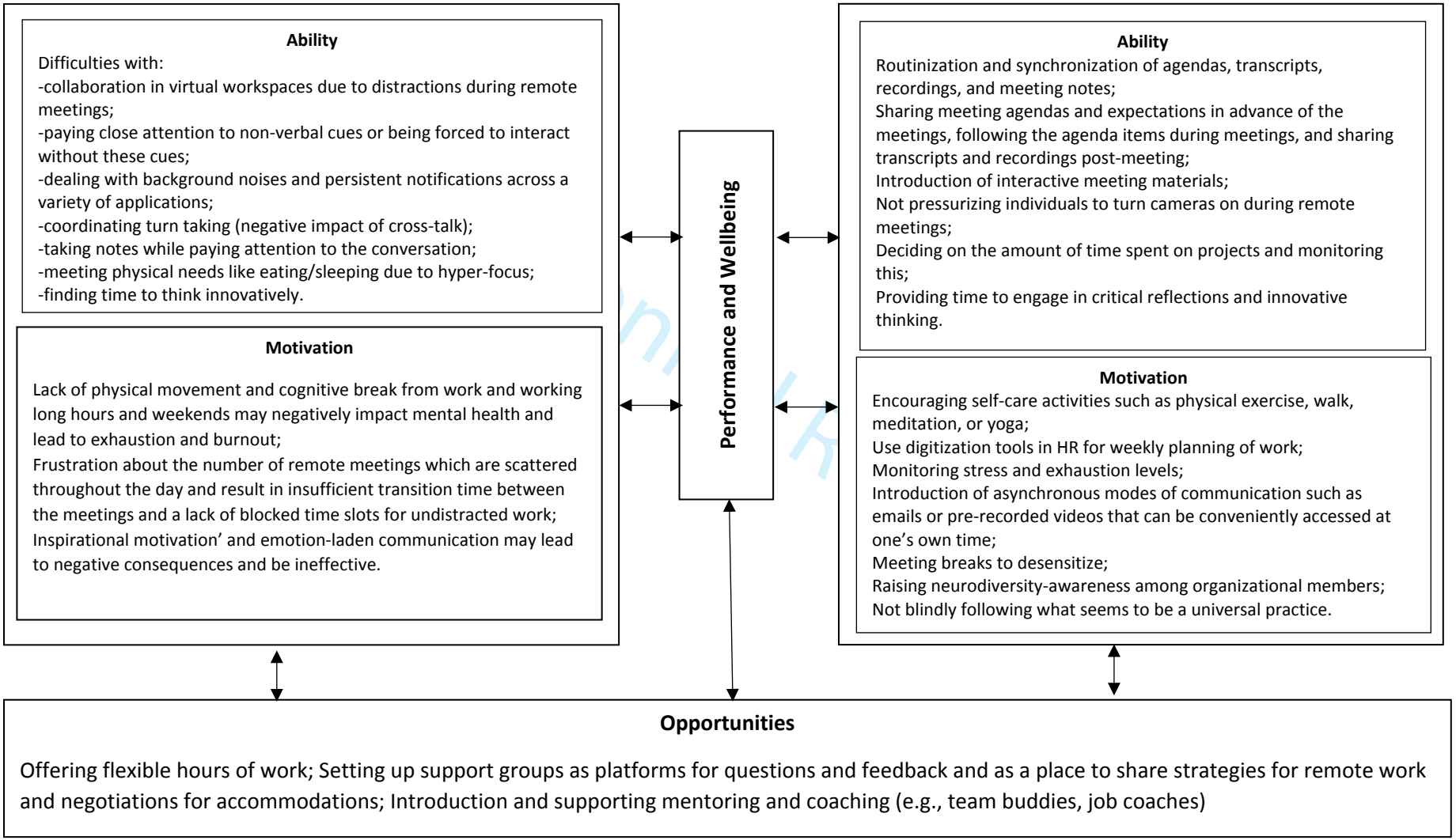

Table I: Neurodiversity and related characteristics

Condition	Common characteristics	
ADHD	Creativity, hyper-focus, energy, passion, entrepreneurialism	Impulsive temper outbursts, hyperactivity, low frustration threshold, poor listening skills, difficulty with maintaining employment, difficulty with team-work
Autism Spectrum Conditions	Concentration, fine detail processing, memory, honesty, sensory awareness	Over- and under-sensitive to light, noise, touch, temperature, difficulty with speech and language, poor listening skills, difficulty with stress control
DCD/Dyspraxia	Verbal skills, empathy, intuition, honesty	Difficulties with planning, movements, coordination, poor spatial awareness, over- and under-sensitive to light, noise, touch, temperature, difficulty with speech and language, poor listening skills
Dyscalculia	Verbal skills, innovative thinking, creativity	Difficulty with number concepts and calculations, poor listening skills
Dyslexia	Visual thinking, creativity, 3D mechanical skills, authenticity, entrepreneurialism	Difficulty with words, reading, writing, spelling, speaking, listening, preference for non-linear thought, distractibility, poor listening skills
Tourette syndrome	Observational skills, cognitive control, creativity, hyper-focus, innovative thinking	Verbal and physical tics, poor listening skills

Sources: Adapted from Doyle (2020) and Szulc et al. (2021b)