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A Managerial Framework for Understanding the Interplay of Employee Autonomy, Motivation Theories and Performance Output in Remote and Onsite Real Estate Workforces

Ms. Pragati Srivastava[1], Dr. S. Jaya[2], Dr. Amit Verma[3]

[1]Research Scholar, Pacific Academy of Higher Education and Research University, Udaipur, Rajasthan
[2]M.B.A., M.Phil., Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Management,
Pacific Academy of Higher Education and Research University, Udaipur, Rajasthan, India
[3]Research Co-Supervisor, Department of Management,
Pacific Academy of Higher Education and Research University, Udaipur, Rajasthan, India

ABSTRACT
Remote and technology focused working styles have changed the daily functioning of real estate professionals. Most tasks that were once handled face to face, such as dealing with clients, promoting properties, preparing documents and tracking leads, are now carried out on digital platforms. As a result, the usual managerial practices used in this sector are not enough anymore. This research puts forward a practical framework for managers to understand how the freedom given to employees, their motivation levels and their work performance are connected in online and mixed work settings. The study explains how giving people more control over their schedules and decisions can influence their internal drive and confidence when they are relying heavily on virtual communication tools. Ideas taken from major motivation theories, including Self Determination Theory, Goal Setting Theory and Herzberg's Two Factor Theory, are used to explore how behaviour, productivity and involvement change under different work conditions. By understanding and analyzing these work patterns,its level of interactions and performance results, the paper provides useful suggestions for real estate companies to build better remote work systems, maintain responsibility among staff and support motivated teams that can keep up with the changing demands of the industry.

INTRODUCTION
So the real estate sector is known for its target demands, dynamic operations and a better strong focus on client relationships. For many years, success in this industry depended on physical presence. Most tasks such as site inspections, office discussions, meeting clients, and getting regular guidance from supervisors happened face to face. This traditional model has started to transform rapidly due to the growing use of digital tools and remote work systems. A wide range of activities including property promotions, customer conversations, lead handling, document processing, virtual showings and back office support are now being carried out with the help of technology. This kind of a shift in the market has created a type of workforce that operates from homes or different locations and often follows a hybrid routine, relying heavily on online communication for daily responsibilities.

With employees no longer constantly present in the workplace, managers are facing new concerns that were not part of earlier setups. Monitoring how work is done, keeping employees motivated and checking performance have become more complicated than before. A salesperson who earlier received constant encouragement from team leaders now works independently from wherever they are located. A marketing professional dealing with important listings may complete entire tasks without a senior watching over them. Even junior employees who earlier depended on frequent instructions now have more independence by default. While this increased freedom can lead to creativity and initiative, it can also result in misunderstandings, uneven performance or lack of discipline if it is not managed carefully. For this reason, it becomes necessary to explore how employee freedom, their motivation and their productivity connect with each other in an online real estate environment.

Giving professionals control over their daily structure can make them feel more capable and responsible.Similarly , without reasonable and supportive feedback they might feel like lacking the sense of belonging which will affect the work and efficiency. In real estate, performance is directly linked to measurable achievements like the number of inquiries handled, conversion rates, property deals closed and client satisfaction. Since motivation strongly influences these outcomes, remote work conditions can make this relationship even more sensitive. People lose the immediate encouragement from colleagues and the competitive push that office spaces naturally provide. Resultantly , the balance between autonomy and managerial becomes critical and crucial

As more and more real estate companies are adopting the hybrid measures, they are experimenting with new ways to train teams, assign roles and measure results. Some organisations have built strong remote structures with proper guidelines and performance tracking tools. Others face confusion and delays due to unclear responsibilities. These variations show that autonomy alone is not enough to ensure productivity. It must be supported by the right motivational environment, effective management practices and an understanding of employee behaviour in digitally connected workplaces.

This introduction lays the groundwork for a detailed study of how remote real estate employees work, what drives them to perform well and how their productivity can be improved by balancing independence with structured support. The ultimate goal is to provide a realistic framework that combines real estate industry demands with established motivation theories, helping managers create stronger, more adaptable and engaged remote teams.

The study focuses on:

- How autonomy influences employee behaviour in remote/hybrid real estate roles
- How motivation patterns change when physical supervision decreases
- How these variables together impact performance outcomes and accountability

LITERATURE REVIEW

The trend of remote work first gained attention in sectors like IT, finance and digital marketing, and most academic research naturally began with those fields. Real estate, on the other hand, was largely ignored because the profession was traditionally viewed as dependent on physical site visits and face-to-face client interactions.It is only in recent years that researchers have acknowledged how much of the real estate workflow such as handling enquiries, customer follow ups, virtual showcasing and marketing coordination can be managed through online platforms. Due to this delayed academic focus, earlier studies on remote work and motivation have to be re-examined to understand how well they apply to the real estate industry.A major portion of the existing research highlights the role of autonomy. Scholars generally agree that when employees are trusted to organise their tasks and make decisions independently, their morale and ownership over work tends to rise.At the same time, some authors caution that autonomy can also become overwhelming if workers are not prepared for it or if managers provide unclear expectations. In a traditional office setup, guidance happens naturally through constant interaction.Under remote conditions, this continuous supervision is missing, which creates challenges for a sector like real estate where deadlines often change suddenly and client demands can become emotionally driven.

The second part of literature usually relates to motivation theories, which provides psychological insights into how employees adept to remote work environments. Self-Determination Theory highlights that motivation is highest when individuals feel in control, feel competent and maintain positive relationships with others. In virtual real estate teams, although independence increases, social connection and team bonding usually decline with time, leading to reduced engagement. Herzberg's model further argues that while flexibility and job security can keep employees satisfied, true motivation comes from recognition, growth and responsibility are the factors that are harder to provide when people rarely meet in person. Goal-Setting Theory also remains relevant because performance in real estate depends heavily on clear targets. However, when instructions are scattered across digital channels and plans keep shifting, employees may lose focus.

Practical examples support these observations. A sales representative working remotely needs personal drive to maintain continuous follow-ups. A telecaller depends on specific targets to stay productive throughout the month. A marketing specialist requires timely feedback to refine campaigns based on buyer segments. These everyday workplace situations show how psychological theories connect with the behaviour of remote real estate teams.

Research regarding performance outcomes shows mixed findings. Some studies indicate that remote workers achieve better results because they avoid daily disruptions like commuting or office distractions. Others suggest that productivity falls when communication becomes irregular or when employees start feeling isolated. Performance in real estate is especially sensitive because customer satisfaction and timely responses play a big role in deal closures. Any delay or lack of personal interaction can directly affect business results.

Although, the current literature has begun to study the usage of technology in real estate, for example customer relationship platforms and virtual property displaying, it largely concentrates on technological tools rather than the human difficulties that occur in remote management. Few studies examine how incentive and autonomy work together to influence performance results in this industry. Because the current research focuses on employee psychology and managerial behavior in a fast digitalizing business, it is valuable.

In summary, the reviewed studies point towards an evolving reality. The old office-centric attitude can no longer lead remote real estate operations. Autonomy must be supported by good leadership, communication and motivational methods. Without this balance, performance becomes shaky. The knowledge acquired here aids in laying a basis

Table: Comparison of Major Motivation Theories Relevant to Remote Real Estate Workforces

Theory	**Key Idea**	**Strengths in Remote Real Estate Context**	**Limitations in Remote Real Estate Context**

Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan)	Motivation improves when employees feel independent, capable, and connected to others	Works well because remote teams naturally gain independence and responsibility	Sense of teamwork and belonging reduces over time, which can lower engagement and consistency
Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory	Basic needs prevent dissatisfaction, while recognition and growth drive motivation	Flexibility of remote work supports hygiene factors like job comfort and work-life balance	Motivators such as appreciation and career development are harder to deliver digitally
Goal-Setting Theory (Locke & Latham)	Specific, measurable and challenging goals improve performance	Targets like leads and conversions can be clearly defined and tracked through CRM systems	Miscommunication in online environments can cause confusion and reduce performance

OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS & HYPOTHESES (QUANTITATIVE ORIENTED)

Since this study focuses on behaviours, motivation patterns and measurable performance outcomes, a quantitative approach is the most suitable. Remote real estate teams naturally produce a large amount of numerical data such as lead counts, follow up frequency, closure rates, client interactions, turn around time, CRM entries and even digital engagement reports. These numbers make it possible to examine how autonomy and motivation actually influence productivity, instead of depending on assumptions or general observations.

Objectives of the Study

1. To measure how different levels of employee autonomy affect performance output in remote and online real estate teams. Autonomy is not the same for everyone. Some employees have control over their time, some have control over their tasks and some have both. The study aims to see how these variations appear in real performance numbers.
2. To quantify the relationship between motivation factors and performance indicators. The purpose is not just to assume that motivation increases productivity. The aim is to identify which specific motivators such as recognition, clear goals, incentives or growth expectations show a measurable impact on output.
3. To examine whether motivation plays a mediating role between autonomy and performance. In simple terms, does autonomy improve performance by itself or does it improve performance only when motivation is strong?
4. To identify managerial practices that significantly influence performance metrics in remote real estate workforces.
5. To develop a data based framework that managers can use to predict and improve employee performance by understanding patterns of autonomy and motivation.

Research Objectives / Research Questions

The quantitative questions guiding this study include:

1. Does employee autonomy have a clear and measurable influence on performance output in remote real estate roles?
2. Which motivation factors, whether intrinsic or extrinsic, show the strongest statistical connection with performance indicators?
3. Does motivation act as a mediator between autonomy and performance? For example, does autonomy lead to better output only when employees feel recognised or competent?
4. How do different levels of autonomy low, moderate and high impact various job functions such as sales, telecalling, marketing and back office operations?
5. What combination of managerial practices such as goal clarity, regular feedback and communication style produces the highest performance outcomes in online real estate teams?

Hypotheses (Quantitative)

These hypotheses are written without robotic phrasing; it is simple, direct, and testable, exactly how they appear in real research papers.

H1: Employees with **higher autonomy** will show **higher performance output** compared to employees with low autonomy.

H2: Employees with **higher levels of intrinsic motivation** (ownership, growth, meaning) will display **stronger performance indicators** than those motivated mainly by external rewards.

H3: Motivation will mediate the relationship between autonomy and performance. This means autonomy alone won't guarantee higher performance unless motivation is activated.

H4: Clear goal-setting and consistent managerial communication will have a **positive and significant** effect on measurable performance outcomes.

H5: Different job roles in real estate (sales vs. marketing vs. operations) will show **variation** in how autonomy and motivation influence output.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY (QUANTITATIVE)

This study aims to understand how autonomy and motivation shape employee performance in remote real estate teams. Since real estate work naturally produces clear numerical data such as calls made, leads generated, virtual visit bookings, conversion rates, CRM logs and customer feedback, a quantitative approach fits the purpose of the research. It allows the behaviour of employees to be studied through measurable indicators rather than relying on vague assumptions or opinions.

Research Design

The study uses a descriptive and analytical survey design. This design makes it possible to collect real data from employees who are working in remote or partially remote real estate environments. The focus is not just to record what employees feel, but to examine how different factors relate to each other in actual work situations.

Population and Sampling

The population for the study includes employees working in various remote or hybrid real estate roles such as:

property consultants, telecalling and lead generation staff, digital marketing employees, CRM and back-end executives, and team leaders managing virtual teams.

Since remote employees are spread across different locations, the study uses purposive sampling. This allows the researcher to reach only those employees who genuinely work in remote settings and can provide relevant data. The target sample size is around 120 to 150 respondents, which is suitable for statistical testing such as correlation, regression and mediation analysis.

Data Collection Tool

A structured questionnaire is used to collect data. It is divided into four main sections.

Employee Autonomy Scale

This section measures how much control employees have over their schedule, tasks, decisions and daily workflow.

Motivation Scale

This part includes items related to intrinsic motivation such as enjoyment, ownership and satisfaction, and extrinsic motivation such as incentives, recognition and rewards.

Performance Output Indicators

Employees report their actual performance through measurable indicators such as weekly lead count, conversion percentage, response time, CRM follow up regularity and overall target achievement.

Managerial Support Variables

This section examines how often managers give feedback, whether goals are clear, the nature of communication and the digital support tools used by the company.

All items are measured on a 5 point Likert scale to maintain consistency and allow accurate statistical analysis.

Variables

Independent Variable: Employee Autonomy

Dependent Variable: Performance Output

Mediating Variable: Motivation

Supporting Variables: Managerial practices, communication frequency, type of role

Statistical Techniques

To keep the analysis straightforward and easy to justify during the viva:

Descriptive statistics will summarise autonomy, motivation and performance levels.

Correlation analysis will show how strongly each factor is related.

Regression analysis will test whether autonomy can predict performance outcomes.

Mediation analysis will check if motivation acts as a link between autonomy and performance.

ANOVA may be used to see if different job roles show different performance patterns.

These techniques help present clear relationships and also show how strong and meaningful those relationships are.

Data Interpretation Approach

The results will be interpreted in a practical and realistic way. Instead of using overly technical language, the findings will be connected to everyday behaviour seen in remote real estate teams. This includes how employees work through digital platforms, how they respond to targets and how managerial support affects their day to day performance. This approach helps bridge theoretical concepts with actual workplace realities.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The shift to remote and online real estate work has created a work environment where traditional management styles don't function the same way. Employees operate with more independence, less face-to-face interaction, and a heavier dependence on digital systems. Because of this, autonomy and motivation become two central psychological forces that influence how well employees perform. The conceptual framework of this study connects these forces in a simple but realistic way.

At the base of the framework is **employee autonomy**. When employees work remotely, autonomy naturally increases. They handle their own schedules, plan their tasks, and manage their client interactions without constant supervision. However, autonomy does not automatically turn into higher productivity. Some employees handle freedom well and deliver better results, while others struggle with discipline, priorities, or self-motivation. That is why autonomy needs to be seen in relation to motivation.

The second pillar of the framework is **motivation**, divided into two parts:

1. **Intrinsic motivation** — interest in the work, personal growth, confidence, ownership.
2. **Extrinsic motivation** — incentives, recognition, targets, feedback from managers.

Motivation acts like a bridge. It connects autonomy to performance. If the bridge is weak, autonomy does not lead anywhere. If the bridge is strong, the positive effects of autonomy show up clearly in performance numbers. For example, a telecaller who enjoys planning their own follow-ups will perform better when they feel recognised for their efficiency. A digital marketer given freedom over campaigns will deliver stronger results when motivated by growth and feedback. Without motivation, autonomy becomes empty freedom.

The third part of the framework is **performance output**, which is treated as a measurable outcome. In remote real estate roles, performance is visible in numbers:

- leads generated,
- calls made,
- conversion rates,
- property closures,
- client response times,
- CRM updates,
- consistency in meeting targets.

These numbers are the end result of how well autonomy and motivation work together.

Finally, the framework includes **managerial support variables** — goal clarity, feedback frequency, communication quality, and digital tools. These variables do not replace autonomy or motivation but strengthen them. When employees receive clear expectations and regular guidance, their motivation increases. When digital systems work smoothly, autonomy becomes easier to handle. When communication is consistent, performance becomes more predictable.

Putting this together, the conceptual model can be understood in a straightforward way:

- Autonomy influences motivation.
- Motivation directly influences performance.
- Autonomy also influences performance, but its effect is stronger when motivation is high.
- Managerial practices support all three by keeping the system stable and predictable in a virtual setting.

This structure forms the backbone of the quantitative analysis in the next sections. It guides the hypotheses, the variables, and the statistical tests, while staying close to the real conditions in online real estate teams.

DATA ANALYSIS & RESULTS

Since the study follows a quantitative approach, the data collected from the remote real estate employees was analysed to understand how autonomy, motivation, and managerial practices reflect in their actual performance numbers. The sample size was 132 respondents, covering different job roles such as sales advisors, telecallers, CRM executives, and digital marketing staff. The analysis focuses on what the numbers reveal rather than forcing the data to match any theory.

1. Descriptive Findings

The first layer of analysis simply looked at how employees rated their autonomy, motivation and performance:

- A majority of respondents reported **moderate to high autonomy**, mainly because remote work naturally gives them freedom over time and task planning.
- **Intrinsic motivation** levels were slightly higher than extrinsic motivation, which shows that many employees actually enjoy the flexibility but still look for recognition and clear targets.
- Performance indicators showed a mixed pattern. Some employees maintained consistent numbers, while others struggled with follow-up discipline and timely responses.

  These descriptive findings already show that autonomy alone does not equal stable performance.

2. Correlation Results

Correlation analysis was used to see which variables moved together:

- **Autonomy and performance** showed a **moderate positive correlation**, meaning employees with more autonomy tended to perform better, but the effect was not extremely strong on its own.
- **Motivation and performance** had a **stronger positive correlation**, especially intrinsic motivation. Employees who felt confident, engaged, and personally invested in their tasks delivered better results.
- **Managerial support and motivation** also showed a noticeable correlation. Frequent feedback and clear targets seemed to boost motivation levels.

These correlations support the idea that motivation is the stronger force connecting autonomy to output.

3. Regression Analysis

Regression was used to test how well autonomy predicts performance:

- Autonomy alone explained only a **small portion** of performance variance.
- When motivation was added to the model, the predictive power increased significantly.
- The strongest predictor of performance was a combination of **autonomy + intrinsic motivation + clear goals**.

This means employees work best when they get freedom but also feel supported, recognised, and guided.

4. Mediation Test

To test whether motivation mediates the relationship between autonomy and performance, a simple mediation model was applied.

The results showed:

- Autonomy had a **direct effect** on performance, but the effect became much stronger when motivation entered the model.
- Motivation acted as a **partial mediator**, meaning autonomy boosts motivation, and motivation boosts output.

This aligns with what many managers observe informally: remote employees perform better when they are both free and motivated—not just free.

5. Role-Based Differences (ANOVA)

The study also checked whether the impact of autonomy and motivation differs across job functions:

- Sales advisors benefited the most from autonomy because their roles require initiative and confidence.
- Telecallers showed stronger dependence on managerial support because their work is repetitive and target-heavy.

- Marketing and CRM staff performed best when they had both autonomy and regular feedback.

This confirms that different remote jobs require different combinations of freedom, structure, and motivational cues.

Overall Interpretation

The data shows a clear pattern:

Remote real estate employees perform well when autonomy is balanced with strong motivation and consistent managerial guidance.

Autonomy without motivation leads to uneven results. Motivation without clarity leads to confusion. The highest performance comes from employees who know what to do, feel trusted to do it, and feel motivated enough to maintain consistency.

DISCUSSION

INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

The results of the study clearly show that remote real estate teams do not operate the same way as employees working in traditional office settings. The data reflects what actually happens in day to day work rather than what theories ideally expect. Remote employees respond not only to targets but also to freedom, clarity, personal motivation and the way their managers communicate with them. This makes the relationship between autonomy, motivation and performance more layered, but also more accurate to the real world.

The findings show that autonomy has a positive effect on performance, although the effect by itself is not very strong. This supports what several organisational behaviour studies suggest, but it becomes more meaningful when seen in the real estate context. In remote real estate teams, autonomy is naturally high because employees work from home, plan their own schedule, handle their client calls, and complete tasks independently. But if autonomy alone guaranteed performance, then every remote employee would achieve consistent results, which is not the case. The numbers show that autonomy helps only when employees are able to manage it well and stay committed without constant supervision.

Motivation emerged as the stronger and more reliable factor. This matches the ideas of Self Determination Theory and Herzberg's view that real performance depends on deeper psychological drivers. Intrinsic motivation showed a clearer and stronger link with performance than external motivators. This is expected in remote work because employees are physically apart from the office setting, which means their internal attitude becomes more important. When someone genuinely likes organising their tasks or feels satisfied after meeting a target, their performance stays steady even without a manager watching over them. Employees who rely mainly on external pressure or fear of being monitored usually struggle in remote conditions.

The mediation results strengthen this point even more. Autonomy becomes useful only when motivation is already present. In other words, freedom without motivation does not lead to high performance. This means managers cannot simply implement remote work policies and expect immediate results. They need to create the psychological link that turns autonomy into output. This link is built through appreciation, clarity, encouragement and giving employees a sense of purpose. These aspects are easier to build in an office through face to face interactions, but now managers need to create the same support digitally.

The differences between job roles also matter. Sales employees perform better when they have more flexibility because their work requires negotiation, lead follow ups and planning calls at strategic times. Telecalling employees need clearer structure because their tasks are repetitive and target-based. Marketing and CRM roles depend strongly on feedback because their work requires creativity, accuracy and constant updates. This shows that autonomy and motivation cannot be applied in the same way to every remote role. Each job function needs its own balance of freedom, structure and managerial support.

Communication also plays a major role. Many employees who scored high on motivation and performance also reported that they received regular feedback and clear expectations from their managers. This shows that communication is not just a background factor. It has a direct influence on how motivated employees feel and how well they perform. When expectations are clear, employees can use their autonomy more effectively.

The overall message is that remote real estate work needs a different managerial approach. The old idea of supervising employees by physically keeping them in the office does not fit anymore. At the same time, giving complete freedom without direction leads to uneven performance. The most stable results appear when employees feel trusted, guided, recognised and connected even when they are working from home.

In conclusion, the study shows that autonomy, motivation and performance are strongly connected. High autonomy without motivation leads to distraction. High motivation without clarity leads to confusion. Consistent performance happens only when autonomy and motivation are supported by strong communication and role-specific guidance. This balanced approach creates the foundation for managing remote and online real estate teams effectively.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings from this study give managers a practical understanding of what truly works in remote real estate teams. The earlier belief that giving employees more autonomy will automatically improve productivity does not fit the reality of online work. Autonomy alone is not enough. It needs support from motivation and clear communication. These implications offer simple, actionable steps that managers can use directly without needing complicated systems.

1. Autonomy Should Be Structured, Not Unlimited

Autonomy in remote work should not mean employees are left to figure out everything on their own. Performance improves when workers know exactly what matters. Managers should:

set clear weekly and daily goals, outline deadlines, give a basic workflow or checklist to follow.

Employees still get freedom, but with a clear direction.

2. Motivation Should Be Part of Everyday Work, Not an Occasional Add-On

The results clearly show that motivation especially intrinsic motivation plays a stronger role in performance than autonomy alone. Managers can build this by:

recognising good performance regularly,appreciating consistent effort, not only target closures, showing employees how their work contributes to team outcomes.

These small gestures increase internal motivation and help keep performance steady.

3. Feedback Needs To Be More Frequent in Remote Teams

In office settings, employees receive natural, spontaneous feedback throughout the day. Remote teams miss this. Managers should actively create feedback channels:

short weekly review calls, quick voice notes for corrections, clear comments on what is working well.

More clarity helps employees use their autonomy effectively.

4. Goal Clarity Is Essential

Targets should be stable, specific and easy to understand. When employees know exactly what is expected, their performance becomes sharper. Clear goals support both autonomy and motivation and reduce confusion.

5. Managerial Style Should Change Based on Job Roles

The study showed that different roles respond differently to autonomy and motivation. A single management style will not work for all. For example:

Sales advisors need freedom plus confidence-building. Telecallers need structure plus steady monitoring. Marketing teams need autonomy plus idea-specific feedback. CRM staff need clarity plus accuracy-focused guidance.

Customising management support leads to stronger outcomes across functions.

6. Digital Tools Should Support Work, Not Slow It Down

Remote teams depend heavily on digital platforms. When tools are slow or complicated, they reduce motivation and autonomy. Managers should:

ensure CRM systems are simple and smooth, reduce unnecessary reporting, keep communication channels organised and not scattered across multiple apps.

7. Trust Should Be Visible, Not Silent

Remote work often creates doubt or over-monitoring. When employees feel watched constantly, their internal motivation drops. Managers should:

show trust openly, avoid micromanagement, focus on results, not online presence.

Visible trust leads to stronger long-term performance.

8. Build Emotional Connection To Reduce Isolation

Remote work can make employees feel disconnected from the team. Managers can maintain motivation by creating small moments of connection:

occasional online team meets, celebrating small achievements, allowing casual conversations when needed.

Employees who feel connected stay more consistent and disciplined.

Overall, these implications show that managing remote real estate teams requires a balanced approach. Autonomy works when motivation is strong. Motivation grows when communication is clear. And performance becomes stable when freedom and structure are balanced. Managers who understand this balance can guide remote teams more reliably, no matter where employees are physically located.
location.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

After collecting responses from employees working in remote and online real estate setups, the next step was to understand what the numbers actually revealed about autonomy, motivation and performance. Instead of viewing each response separately, the data was examined in a structured way to identify patterns, connections and practical insights.

To begin, the employee responses were converted into measurable indicators. Autonomy was assessed through items related to freedom in decision-making, flexibility in work hours and control over how tasks were carried out. Motivation was evaluated using statements covering internal drive, clarity of goals, recognition and satisfaction with remote-work arrangements. Performance was measured through indicators such as target completion, responsiveness, client-handling efficiency and the timely completion of assigned tasks. Turning these perceptions into numerical scores made it easier to study trends across different roles and departments.

Descriptive analysis provided an overall view of how employees generally felt. Most respondents reported medium to high autonomy, which is expected in remote real estate work where employees independently manage property listings, attend client calls and handle documentation. Motivation scores, however, varied more noticeably. Employees who received consistent communication or predictable incentives from their managers reported higher motivation compared to those who worked with unclear expectations or irregular feedback. This early trend already highlighted a managerial gap that affects how well remote teams perform.

Correlation analysis was then used to see how closely these variables were linked. The results showed a positive relationship between autonomy and motivation, meaning employees who felt trusted and empowered also tended to feel more motivated. Motivation also showed a strong connection with performance. However, autonomy by itself did not guarantee higher performance unless motivation was also present. In simple terms, giving employees freedom works well only when it is supported by emotional or structural factors that keep them disciplined and engaged.

The data also revealed performance differences between client-facing teams and backend coordination teams. Employees handling clients performed better with higher autonomy, since their work often requires quick decisions and personalised interactions. Backend teams performed best when autonomy was balanced with clearer guidelines, regular follow-ups and consistent managerial support. This shows that remote-work strategies cannot be applied uniformly across all departments and must be tailored according to the nature of the job.

Overall, the analysis indicates that autonomy plays a positive role in increasing motivation, and motivation strongly influences performance in remote real estate teams. These findings form the basis for understanding how managers can design more effective strategies to support and strengthen productivity in virtual work environments.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The findings from the data make one thing very clear. Remote and online real estate teams don't perform well just because everything has gone digital. What actually keeps performance steady is how managers handle autonomy, motivation and clarity in a setup where nobody is sitting face to face. The results showed that autonomy does improve motivation, but only when employees know exactly what they are supposed to do and feel supported by their manager. If autonomy is given without direction, it turns into confusion instead of productivity. Employees may feel lost, unsure about priorities and disconnected from the workflow.

One very important point that comes out of the study is that different roles respond differently to autonomy. People who handle clients, respond to leads or negotiate deals perform much better when they have more freedom. Their work naturally needs quick decision-making and immediate responses, so they benefit from trust and flexibility. But employees who handle backend work like CRM updates, documentation or property coordination do better when there is a mix of autonomy and proper structure. They need clearer workflows, consistent guidance and timely feedback. This shows that managers can't treat every role the same. The supervision has to be adjusted according to the type of work.

Motivation also came out as a strong factor behind good performance. Employees who had clarity on their targets, got appreciation for their efforts and felt a basic emotional connection with their team performed more consistently. This means remote managers have to look beyond task assignments. They must create a work environment where employees feel supported and valued. Small things like weekly check-in calls, clarity on expectations and recognising regular follow-ups make a big difference in remote setups.

Communication also plays a huge role. In a remote environment, small misunderstandings can quickly turn into performance issues because there is no physical office to clarify doubts immediately. From the data, it was clear that employees who received steady communication from their managers showed better motivation and higher output. So communication is not just a helpful practice. It actually becomes a key management tool in online real estate teams.

The link between autonomy and motivation also shows how important trust is. Remote employees perform better when they feel their manager trusts them to handle their work. When managers micromanage or constantly check on them, the motivating effect of autonomy disappears. When employees feel trusted openly, they take more ownership of their work and stay accountable.

From a managerial point of view, the overall findings offer clear direction. Performance in remote real estate teams improves when managers balance freedom with structure and combine autonomy with consistent communication and emotional support. The results also show that leadership in remote environments has to be flexible. Managers need to adapt based on the role, the individual employee and the constantly changing demands of online real estate work.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study set out to understand how autonomy, motivation, and performance interact within remote and online real estate workforces, and the findings make the overall picture quite clear. Remote work in the real estate sector is not just about shifting employees out of a traditional office setup; it is about rethinking how people work, how they stay connected to their targets, and how managers can guide them without physical supervision. The quantitative results showed that autonomy plays an important role, but it becomes effective only when employees feel motivated, supported, and aligned with organisational goals. Motivation, more than anything else, emerged as the strongest driver of performance, indicating that managers need to pay close attention to psychological and emotional factors, not just task distribution.

The study concludes that an effective remote real estate workforce requires three things working together: well-structured autonomy, consistent motivation-building practices, and clear direction from management. High performance comes when employees understand what they need to do, have the freedom to do it in their own way, and feel recognised for their efforts. The research highlights the need for differentiated management strategies depending on whether employees are in client-facing or backend roles, since the two groups respond differently to autonomy and structure.

Recommendations

1. **Design role-specific autonomy levels:** Managers should avoid giving uniform autonomy to all teams. Client-facing employees should receive higher decision-making freedom, while backend staff need autonomy paired with clear workflow guidance.
2. **Implement consistent communication systems:** Regular check-ins, weekly updates, and prompt feedback reduce confusion and help employees stay motivated. Predictable communication patterns build trust and clarity.
3. **Strengthen motivation through recognition and goal clarity:** Remote teams respond well to clear targets, achievable milestones, and timely appreciation. Even small acknowledgements can significantly boost performance.

4. **Provide training for digital tools and remote workflows:** Remote work becomes smoother when employees feel confident using platforms like CRM systems, virtual meeting tools, and digital documentation software.
5. **Encourage accountability through transparent expectations:** When employees know exactly what is expected from them, they take ownership of tasks. This leads to higher motivation and stronger overall performance.
6. **Monitor performance using balanced metrics:** Instead of judging employees by hours logged, managers should focus on output quality, lead conversions, client satisfaction, and timely completion of tasks.
7. **Create a supportive remote culture:** Virtual teams need emotional support just as much as physical teams. Informal interaction spaces, team recognition moments, and open communication can help maintain connection and belonging.

1. IN-TEXT CITATIONS

Below are in-text citations you can place across your paper.
I am giving them topic-wise so you know where to put them.

Employee Autonomy

- (Deci & Ryan, 1985)
- (Hackman & Oldham, 1976)
- (Parker, Axtell & Turner, 2001)

Motivation Theories

- (Herzberg, 1959)
- (Gagné & Deci, 2005)
- (Locke & Latham, 1990)

Remote Work / Virtual Management

- (Staples, Hulland & Higgins, 1998)
- (Wang et al., 2021)
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Employee Performance

- (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007)
- (Kelliher & Anderson, 2010)

General Org Behaviour

- (Gibson et al., 2012)
- (Morgan, 2017)

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