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The Trucking Industry, Working From Home, COVID-19, and Positive Social Change Effects

Martin Lulgjuraj
Walden University

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Walden University

College of Management

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Martin Lulgjuraj

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revisions required by the review committee have been made.

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Walden University 2024

Abstract

The Trucking Industry, Working From Home, COVID-19,
and Positive Social Change Effects

by

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MS, Bellevue University, 2021

MBA, University of North Texas at Dallas, 2016

BA, University of Texas at Dallas, 2014

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Management

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Abstract

During the COVID-19 pandemic, a pivotal shift was witnessed as leaders in the trucking industry's logistic companies transitioned to work from home. The overarching problem this research addressed was the need to understand the effect of the trucking industry's logistic companies' crisis management policy of remote leadership during the pandemic on their leaders' ability to promote positive social change. Grounded in the conceptual framework of leadership adaptability and crisis management, the primary research question centered on the implications of the work-from-home policy on leadership's positive social change capacities within trucking logistics firms. A qualitative approach integrated in-depth, semistructured interviews with comprehensive website reviews. The data were analyzed using an inductive coding approach, leading to the identification of patterns and emergent themes. Key findings revealed that while some leaders experienced challenges in communication and engagement, many found innovative ways to inspire, engage, and drive positive social change, even in remote settings. A majority emphasized the critical role of adaptability and leveraging digital tools for effective remote leadership. While remote leadership presented hurdles, it also unlocked unique opportunities for promoting societal change. Recommendations based on the study's conclusions include further training for leaders in digital communication tools, creating platforms for leaders to share best practices in remote leadership, and integrating adaptability modules in leadership training programs. By understanding the potential of remote leadership during crises, organizations can be better equipped to drive positive societal transformations, amplifying the global good in the 21st century.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother, Katrina Lulgjuraj, and my wonderful wife, Marielena Lulgjuraj, and my father, Louvigie Lulgjuraj. My wife has been a rock for me, offering unwavering support and encouragement as we navigated the challenges and tribulations of this dissertation journey together. This accomplishment also fulfills a childhood promise I made to my mother, demonstrating her faith in my abilities and her role in shaping who I am today. Above all, I thank God for giving me the strength, perseverance, and wisdom to complete this dissertation, which allowed me to make a meaningful contribution to the world through my research.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

The COVID-19 outbreak substantially impacted the ability of organizations to conduct daily activities while simultaneously promoting positive social change (PSC; Ventriglio et al., 2021). According to Walden University (2022b), promoting PSC includes community service, random acts of kindness, and mission-driven company operations. Promoting this kind of change, of course, has its own set of obstacles, including lack of community support, cultural barriers, and conflicting ideological values. Long et al. (2021) suggested that COVID-19 made it much more difficult for organizations to promote PSC, both in the United States and worldwide. Because of disruptions to business, the economy, and everyday life, individuals and corporations were compelled to make difficult choices regarding operations and individual financing (Norheim et al., 2020). These choices may have long-term ramifications in the lives of individuals and organizations.

A lack of understanding exists about how the effects of working from home policies made during a global pandemic may ultimately limit the ability of company leaders to promote PSC. My objective in this qualitative exploratory case study was to examine the working from home policy and its relationship to the promotion of PSC among leaders from logistic companies in the trucking industry during the COVID-19 pandemic. The potential implications of this study may be of benefit during future pandemics, which are widely agreed to be inevitable. As a result of the information gathered from this study, those in logistic organizations in the trucking industry may

better understand how working from home has influenced their leaders. In addition, a corporation can implement policies that may allow it to function effectively during a global pandemic while at the same time promoting PSC within the organization and the larger community.

In this chapter, I began by providing background for this study, introducing the problem, outlining the purpose of the study, and presenting the research question to address the problem. Next, I presented the conceptual framework for this study and discuss the assumptions, delimitations, and limitations that set the study parameters. The chapter concludes by highlighting the potential significance of the findings and by defining key terms that have contextual meanings in the study.

Background of the Study

The recent pandemic was driven by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), an infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus (World Health Organization [WHO], 2022). The majority of those infected with the virus experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without further treatment. Unfortunately, a small minority of those who do recover experience what has come to be called “long COVID,” a condition in which various symptoms of the disease continue for weeks or even months. Some individuals become critically ill and require medical attention. Older people or individuals who have underlying medical conditions, such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, or cancer, are more likely to suffer from serious consequences of the virus (WHO, 2022); however, morbidity and mortality have occurred in all age categories. The

long-term consequences of the disease have yet to be determined. The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted thousands of established practices in the U.S. economy and society (Tusl et al., 2021) and forced the United States to implement lockdowns that disrupted the country's routine operational procedures. Many organizations had to make considerable modifications to their operations, and one option was to have their employees work from home during the COVID-19 pandemic (Kaushik & Guleria, 2020). Other modifications stipulated that indoor dining was no longer available in most restaurants, that real estate showings were mostly conducted virtually, and that corporate America offered increasing work from home options.

Logistic companies in the trucking industry are a crucial element in a country's economy and are essential to any organization's operations (Gurtu, 2021). Logistic companies are responsible for the delivery of products and materials to businesses. The COVID-19 pandemic impacted freight in the United States (Nehiba, 2021), limiting the number of products transported in the country. Without the delivery of products to businesses, the financial, labor, and consumer markets were adversely affected (U.S. Department of Transportation [USDOT], 2022). Because of the unpredictability of the financial, labor, and consumer markets caused by the COVID-19 disease, logistic companies were forced to adapt their operations in order to combat the pandemic (Sperry et al., 2022), although logistic companies in the trucking industry pledged to their stakeholders and communities that they would maintain a certain level of productivity (Geerts et al., 2021). Schippers and Rus (2021) argued that the kinds of decisions that an

organization makes have the potential to impact the community. The logistics organizations' commitment entails financial benefits for stakeholders as well as a social contribution to the community.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on truck driver experiences and workplace safety, personnel health, and stress levels in the trucking industry has harmed trucking industry institutions (Sperry et al., 2022). Because of the possibilities and risks that emerged as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak, organizations have implemented new safeguards (Boiral et al., 2021). These safeguards, as noted by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA, 2020), include the following:

- Continually educate personnel and riders on how to manage and reduce COVID-19-related hazards;
- Prior to a shift, screen workers, contractors, and visitors for symptoms using an interview/questionnaire and infrared thermometer readings while keeping as much physical distance as feasible;
- Encourage employees at workstations and stations to wipe clean (with at least 60% alcohol) the truck, telephone, and microphone at the beginning and conclusion of each shift; and
- After a known exposure to COVID-19, require workers to self-quarantine in accordance with federal, state, and local health authorities' recommendations.

Traditionally, logistic companies have used a hierarchical management structure. Hierarchical management is an approach to workplace leadership in which power is

transferred in tiers and subordinates receive commands from superiors (Backhaus et al., 2021), although most strategic decisions involving the COVID-19 pandemic required a vote by a board of trustees.

Leaders from logistic companies in the trucking industry can make strategic decisions that can impact social change (Pomytkina et al., 2020). During a pandemic, the ability of corporate boards and policymakers to integrate and make sense of information is critical to their decision-making effectiveness. PSC in the trucking industry embraces community building, education, health, and safety (Litchi, 2022). The trucking industry promotes community building by providing mutual support among drivers, their families, and their supporters. Sensitivity and conflict resolution training and investing resources to help companies attract and retain truck drivers are examples of education for PSC in the trucking industry (Litchi, 2022).

PSC in the trucking industry is achieved by creating a culture of respect within the industry and enacting rules to ensure that drivers are treated fairly and equitably. Businesses must ensure the emotional and physical health of their employees at home, in the office, and on the road in order to comply with trucking industry health and safety regulations (Litchi, 2022). There is currently no research that shows a link between the benefits of working from home and leaders' ability to effect PSC during the COVID-19 pandemic. An investigation of this scope was well warranted because it may provide organizations with a better understanding of how they should react in the future to better implement work-from-home policies in the event of another global pandemic.

Problem Statement

The focus of this study was the work-from-home policy that leaders from logistic companies in the trucking industry, including directors, managers, and board members, were forced to make during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is common knowledge that, since the start of the pandemic, most people in the United States have had to follow changing government and state policies, adjust finances, alter their employment situations, and make complex personal and financial decisions (Munywoki, 2020). Since earlier pandemics did not have the technology that is available today, this was the first real opportunity to understand how working from home during a pandemic would affect leaders of organizations and constituted a very important part of preparing for future pandemics (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2018).

Since pandemics are rare, this understanding is particularly important in the face of corporate amnesia, a condition in which corporations and other kinds of cooperative groups forget how to do business (Lee et al., 2021). Although researchers have investigated many aspects of the working from home phenomena, the topic has not been explored in terms of how this intervention has affected leaders' ability to promote PSC in logistic companies in the trucking industry. Even though there is at least some research on work from home and leadership in logistic companies from the trucking industry, there is little to no evidence to suggest that working from home may result in positive social changes. The specific problem addressed through this study was the extent to which the working-from-home policies necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic

significantly influenced the ability of directors, managers, and board members from logistic companies in the trucking industry to promote PSC.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative exploratory case study was to investigate how working-from-home policies during the COVID-19 pandemic affected the ability of directors, managers, and board members from logistic companies in the trucking industry to promote PSC. More specifically, this study explored the work-from-home policy implemented by the leaders of companies in the trucking industry and the consequences of working from home on the ability of leaders to implement PSC. There is no evidence available at this time as to the extent to which, if at all, working from home impacted an individual leader's potential to generate PSC, including the enhancement of worth, dignity, and progress of individuals, cultures, institutions, organizations, societies, and communities (Walden University, 2022a). The impact of working-from-home policies on an organization's capacity to promote PSC may be best understood in terms of a leader's ability to bring about that change. The information obtained from this study has the potential to help businesses put systems in place to make society better in even the most difficult of times (Stephan et al., 2016).

Research Question

RQ1. How did the trucking industry's logistic companies' crisis management policy of having leaders work from home during the COVID-19 pandemic affect leaders' ability to promote positive social change?

Conceptual Framework

The theories and concepts that formed the foundation of this study included rational choice theory (RCT; Smith, 1779) and legitimacy theory (Schöpoiu-Burlea & Popa, 2013). According to RCT, people look to their self-interest to make decisions that benefit them the most (Smith, 1779). People analyze their alternatives and choose the one they believe may best benefit them. Legitimacy theory describes how organizations adopt and create voluntary social and environmental initiatives in order to fulfill their social responsibilities, which allows for the accomplishment of their goals and enhances their odds of survival in a volatile and uncertain environment (Dowling & Pfeffer, 1975). RCT and legitimacy theory have been adhered to across all aspects of organizational life but have more often been applied to leaders and corporate policy decisions made during crisis. Framing this study by using RCT and legitimacy theory facilitated the exploration of how working from home during the COVID-19 pandemic affected the ability of directors, managers, and board members in logistic companies in the trucking industry to promote PSC (Naimi, 2020; Tang, 2017).

RCT defines an individual's choice as a social phenomenon that can be acknowledged in some way as rational and that, given the situation, meets the interest of that individual (Witteck, 2019). RCT has proven useful in many areas of life and in academic disciplines such as economics, philosophy, sociology, and psychology. The individual credited for the creation of RCT in 1776 is philosopher Adam Smith, a Scottish economist who proposed that human behavior best suits people's interests

(Fitzsimons, 2017). By the 1950s and 1960s, RCT had moved to the social sciences from economics (Online MSW Programs, 2022). Sociologists George C. Homans, Peter Blau, and James Coleman suggested that RCT be linked to social exchange (Fitzsimons, 2017). The same group of sociologists also believed that rational calculations, exchange of cost, and rewards encouraged social behavior. RCT is relevant when the situation meets one of the following four criteria (Burns & Roszkowska, 2016, p. 197):

- All behaviors are considered to be rational when the individual is contemplating the cost and rewards;
- The cost of an action or exchange must not outweigh the reward;
- If the value of the reward depreciates below the value of the acquired cost, the individuals will stop the activity, or a relationship will be terminated; and
- Individuals will use resources to maximize the reward.

According to Wittek (2019), making a choice is a process involving the use of judgment and assessment. The concept of choice is based on many variables that lead to an individual's decision. Therefore, an individual's choice is complicated and requires cognitively weighing all relevant variables for the desired outcome (Lin et al., 2020). The decision-making process is separated into two categories: normative and cognitive.

Normative choices address how an individual ought to deal with reason, and cognitive choices are directed more towards the logic and probability of a rational choice (Davis & McDermott, 2020). RCT was used as a conceptual lens for this exploratory case study in order to reach a deeper understanding of how logistic organizations in the trucking

industry experienced the working-from-home policies during the COVID-19 pandemic and how these policies might have affected the ability of leaders to promote PSC.

RCT indicates that choices are made by an individual or group that best suit their needs, situation, and goals (Witteck, 2019). Additionally, RCT influences judgments, assumptions, and foundations of decision-making by organizations regarding their operations (Oppenheimer, 2008). Because this study explored the consequences of the decision to work from home for logistic companies in the trucking industry during the COVID-19 pandemic, RCT was chosen as a framework to help explain the actions that result from these choices (Ellis, 2021) and the use of reasonable judgment to make rational choices that align with preferences (Grossmann et al., 2020). In this study, I explored how the choice of logistics organizations in the trucking industry to work from home may have affected leaders' ability to promote PSC.

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, organizations have been making choices in a way that leaders deem fit for the situation (International Finance Corporation [IFC], 2021). The approach to decision-making has had to change from normative and cognitive decision-making to adaptive decision-making. An adaptive decision-maker is concerned with choosing an alternative when none of the options are clearly superior (Feldman Hall et al., 2020). Adaptive decision-makers choose between alternatives through information acquisition and an evaluation of each alternative's attributes. Also, RCT assumes the need to challenge underlying individual and group economics and social behaviors (Blakely, 2019) in order to determine if the decisions that are made are

rational. Because the COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted both the decision-making of leaders and federal and state health policies, in-depth questions about a larger society may show how logistic organizations in the trucking industry's working-from-home policy may have affected their ability to promote PSC.

Legitimacy theory offers the broad view or assumption that an entity's activities are desirable, legitimate, or suitable within some socially formed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions (Rendtorff, 2020). Schöpoiou-Burlea and Popa (2013) explained that legitimacy theory is a concept that assists organizations in adopting and creating voluntary social and environmental initiatives in order to fulfill their social obligations and constitutes an approach for managing stakeholders' views of the requirements for achieving social stability. Organizations attempt to operate within the boundaries and conventions of their local communities for their activities to be seen as legitimate. Because boundaries and standards do not stay the same, organizations need to be proactive, which is based on the idea of a social contract.

A company is legitimate when it is deemed just and deserving of support. Therefore, legitimacy is not an abstract evaluation of the corporation's rightness but rather a measure of society's opinions of the sufficiency of corporate behaviors (Rendtorff, 2020). According to Li et al. (2018), one of the primary motivations for firms to disclose environmental information is the need to comply with legal responsibilities. Environmentally sound methods open the door to a myriad of business opportunities. The marketing benefits that come with having a positive reputation for environmental

stewardship are among them. For businesses to realize the benefits of having a positive public image, they must take on social and environmental duties for the community they serve. Environmental and social reports are used by businesses to provide positive information about their activities to the general public. As a direct result of providing this information, legitimacy has come to be seen as a factor that is crucial to the survival of businesses in the trucking industry as a whole (García-Sánchez et al., 2020). In this study, legitimacy theory helped to examine the potential of directors, managers, and board members of logistic companies in the trucking industry to encourage PSC during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nature of the Study

To address the research question, this qualitative study used an exploratory design (Yin, 2018) involving interviews with leaders in the trucking industry to explore how working from home during the COVID-19 pandemic affected the ability of directors, managers, and board members from logistic companies in the trucking industry to promote PSC. According to Yin (2018), case studies are suited for research in which it is difficult to separate a phenomenon's variables from its context. In this study, the consequence of the decision-making regarding operations in the trucking industry was bound within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, a case study design provides space for in-depth examination of contemporary phenomena (consequence of the decision-making) within the real-world context of the COVID-19 pandemic (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Yin, 2018), thus making it a strong choice for this qualitative research.

Using thematic analysis for the interview data allowed the identification of themes that were common as a consequence of the working-from-home policy and the promotion of PSC by directors, managers, and board members from logistic companies in the trucking industry during the COVID-19 pandemic.

For this study's research design, data were collected through organizational leader interviews and analysis of freely available organizational documents from public sources concerning freight, work-from-home policies, and the consequence of the decision-making. First, a semistructured interview protocol was developed to address the problem and purpose of the study. Next, I recruited leaders such as directors, managers, and board members from major logistic trucking companies to participate in individual interviews regarding the working from home consequence of the decision-making in the transportation industry during the COVID-19 pandemic. Finally, freely available organizational documents indicating implementation of changes based on government mandates and in-house organizational decisions made during the COVID-19 pandemic were reviewed (Wulff, 2019). These documents are in the public domain and available online via both government and organization websites. Data analyzed in this study included interview transcripts and notes from the document analysis. The documents needed for analysis came from logistic companies from trucking organizations and government agencies.

Definition of Key Terms

Choice: The process of identifying what alternatives are available and then selecting the most preferable one based on some consistent criteria is characterized as choice (Asikhia et al., 2021).

COVID-19: Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, previously known as 2019-nCoV, and was discovered after an epidemic of respiratory sickness cases in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China (Cennimo, 2023; WHO, 2022).

Economy: When human actors locate, develop/exploit, process, and trade in limited resources, they are referred to as participating in the economy (Cohn, 2021).

Enterprise impacts: This term refers to direct employment in the trucking sector, indirect effects stemming from the expenditure of trucking firms, and induced effects caused by the spending of trucking industry employees (Texas Department of Transportation [TDOT], 2021).

Freight operations: This is the actual task of transporting items from a shipper to a recipient and is a part of logistics (or supply chain) management (Kermanshah et al., 2020).

Job security: In most situations, job security refers to an employee's sense that their work, or an essential component of their employment, is secure (Hur, 2019).

Operational decisions: Operational decisions are ones that are modified more often in accordance with current external and internal situations and typically have effects that last little more than a year or even a day (Yue et al., 2014).

Organizational leadership: Organizational leadership is a management practice in which leaders assist in the establishment of strategic objectives for the business while inspiring members within the group to effectively complete tasks in support of those goals (Tokar, 2020).

Organizational management: Organizational management is the kind of management whose practitioners try to help the company achieve its goals by being efficient with all of the processes and resources available to the company (Bucăța, 2018).

Organizational policies: These are the policies and procedures that employees must follow in order for the organization to operate effectively (Foote et al., 2005).

Positive social change (PSC): A PSC may be characterized as an intentional process that includes the production and implementation of ideas, techniques, and actions with the objective of enhancing the worth, dignity, and progress of individuals, cultures, institutions, organizations, societies, and communities (Walden University, 2022a).

Public policies: A government choice to act or not act in order to address an issue is referred to as public policy (Swinkels, 2020).

Qualitative case study: A qualitative case study is a detailed description and examination of a bounded system (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Social isolation: This involves a lack of ties with and frequency of interaction with friends, family, and the community (Escalante et al., 2021).

Strategic decisions: A strategic decision is one that takes into account the whole environment in which a business works, as well as the total resources and people that make up the organization, as well as how they work together (Alhawamdeh & Alsmairat, 2019).

Triangulation: Triangulation in research refers to using numerous methodologies or data sources to understand phenomena thoroughly (Carter et al., 2014).

Assumptions

As a researcher, I made the assumption that the leaders from logistic companies in the trucking industry whom I recruited for this study furnished me with accurate information on their experiences in order to provide me with high-quality data. My assumption was that the evidence I collected provided credibility to the research indicating that the COVID-19 pandemic had disturbed and influenced an organization's decision-making processes regarding operations. As a novice qualitative researcher, I acknowledge that personal bias cannot be removed from research but that attempts to limit personal bias can be mitigated by using triangulation and member checking (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Creswell & Poth, 2018). Because I came to this qualitative research with professional experience in the trucking industry, my experience and understanding of the topic guided the way this qualitative research was carried out and the data interpreted.

Throughout this qualitative research, I made an effort to acknowledge any personal or professional unexamined beliefs that might have allowed repercussions to manifest that might have impacted data collection, analysis, or interpretation of the data. To address my assumptions throughout this investigation, I considered whether I received the data for other purposes and inquired with the leaders who provided the data if they believed my interpretations were representative of their own thoughts. I assumed that the rigor of the research met standards of reliability and validity, that logistic companies in the trucking organizations utilized similar decision-making processes, and that leaders had adequate experience prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. My last assumption was that the leaders' replies to the interview questions were genuine and that they did not lie or leave out any material that would alter the study's outcomes.

Limitations

A study's limitations encompass any qualities, behaviors, activities, or influences that may affect the research process and its conclusions (Ross & Bibler Zaidi, 2019). One potential limitation of this study was the challenge of finding leaders willing to volunteer their time to participate in the interview process. Since the COVID-19 restrictions had been lifted, many individuals from logistics companies in the trucking industry were playing catch-up due to the financial pressures caused by the pandemic. Consequently, these individuals might have had limited time to spare. Another possible limitation was the sample size and representation, which could affect the generalizability and transferability of the study's findings. Transferability is demonstrated by showing readers

how the research study's conclusions might be applied to various locations, circumstances, periods, and people (Korstjens & Moser, 2017). The sample in this study was relatively small and specific to the trucking logistics industry, which may not be representative of other industries that also implemented work-from-home policies during the pandemic. Additionally, the potential for researcher bias and the reliance on self-reported data may have posed limitations.

Confirmation bias is the tendency to interpret new information as reinforcing previously held beliefs or ideas (Shah, 2021). As a researcher, I was cautious of asking leading questions, wording bias, and question-order bias to prevent the introduction of bias into data collection and information analysis. Self-reported data may be subject to recall bias or social desirability bias, as participants might provide responses that they believe are expected, rather than an accurate reflection of their experiences and perspectives. The cross-sectional design of the study limited the ability to infer causality or examine the evolution of participants' experiences and perspectives over time. A longitudinal design might have provided a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of remote work policies on promoting PSC during the pandemic.

Lastly, it is important to acknowledge the inherent limitations of qualitative research, such as the interpretation of subjective data influenced by the researcher's perspectives, values, and beliefs. While efforts were made to enhance the trustworthiness of the study through strategies such as triangulation and respondent validation, these inherent limitations must be considered when interpreting the findings.

Scope and Delimitations

In the scope of this qualitative research, I focused on leaders from logistic companies in the trucking industry using a purposeful sampling strategy. The leaders were responsible for directing the actions of their organizations towards the realization of widely acknowledged visions and agreed-upon corporate objectives. The data were gathered through interviews in which participants discussed the organizational decisions surrounding the working-from-home policy and how these decisions had affected the leaders' capability to produce PSC. One major delimitation bound this study: the leader population. The scope of the research included leaders from logistic companies in the trucking industry and an inquiry into whether the working-from-home policy made because of conditions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic affected their ability to promote PSC. Because this study focused only on working from home experiences from logistic companies in the trucking industry, those experiences are the only ones reported. Findings from this study may not describe the experiences of leaders from other industries regarding organizational decision-making during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant because the research may provide organizations with data to better understand the working-from-home policy during a global pandemic that may potentially prevent or promote PSC. With an understanding of how external factors affected business operations and how those interventions affect corporate leaders, the data gathered from this study can potentially contribute to greater PSC and better

practices during a time of crisis. This study may add to the existing knowledge on decision-making, RCT, and social change specific to logistic companies in the trucking industry. Because pandemics are uncommon, the data acquired in this study may be one-of-a-kind owing to the uniqueness of the times, but it may serve as a steppingstone for future research on the issue.

Understanding an organization's economic and social decision-making during the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly decisions about the economy, job security, and government policies, may assist organizations in conducting interventions to promote positive societal change in the case of future pandemics. The economy, job security, and government policy are all reaction components for a company. These reaction components are associated with having a negative impact on an individual's job performance and ability to lead others (López-Cabrales & Bornay-Barrachina, 2019). Chen and Sriphon (2021) suggested that managers need a high degree of leadership to direct personnel toward an organizational objective in times of crisis. The outcomes of this study may provide insight for PSC inside the firm during a pandemic and provide data for future academics interested in examining corporate decisions and behaviors during a pandemic. This study may add to the existing body of knowledge on decision-making and RCT. In this study, the data may be unique because of how rare pandemics are, but they could be a good starting point for more research on the subject.

Significance to Practice

This qualitative research is potentially significant to the practice of leadership as the findings may help organizations develop interventions that may aid businesses in educating their leaders to promote PSC during a global pandemic. The information gathered and the themes that emerged from leader interviews may contribute to preserving the corporate culture that is linked with PSC. Organizational culture is often defined as the collection of beliefs, values, standards, patterns of action, and understandings held by members of a company that distinguishes it from other businesses (Balaji et al., 2020). Every facet of an organization's practice is impacted by its culture, from punctuality and tone to contract conditions and employee incentives (Balaji et al., 2020). Workers are more likely to feel at ease, supported, and valued at work if the company culture is aligned with their requirements.

A company's internal operations influence employee connections, interactions, and accomplishments. Internal operations practices have an impact on a variety of elements, including employee connections, interactions, and successes. These techniques often have an influence on individuals. Internal practices are the most closely related to the organization's core culture. As a result, how consistently the firm aligns these operations with the core culture may significantly impact the organization's overall success. Internal practices include how the company is set up and organized, how jobs are done, and what each person does for the company.

Significance to Theory

The findings from this study can potentially provide knowledge that may be utilized by organizations to make better operation choices during a global pandemic and to enhance crisis management abilities in order to continue to promote PSC even in difficult times. Crisis management is the process of identifying a danger to an organization and its stakeholders and devising a strategy for responding to it effectively and efficiently (Miguel et al., 2022). Even though the number of businesses preparing for disasters has risen since September 11, 2001, the figure is still meager. Leaders in some organizations think that crisis planning is unnecessary, while others get overwhelmed while preparing for every possible problem (Ghaderi et al., 2021). Even people in charge of developing strategies may find them excessively simple or ineffectual when a crisis arises. Organizational crises are circumstances with a low chance of occurrence but a substantial effect on a company's competitiveness and viability that threaten that competitiveness and viability. Therefore, one of the most crucial leadership challenges is creating and executing an organizational structure capable of dealing with stressful situations (Jha, 2021). Adequate crisis preparation may be done via the formation of a crisis team, the analysis of vulnerabilities, the development of strategies, the implementation of plans, and the evaluation of plan performance (Mikušová & Horváthová, 2019).

Significance to Social Change

Should there be another global pandemic, this study's findings may have a significant impact on social change because it may help organizations make operational decisions that may allow them to implement effective policies while not preventing their leaders from promoting PSC. The findings may also offer insight into an individual's work behaviors, which would be beneficial. The structure of an organization may sometimes be the source of resistance to social change during a global pandemic (Malhotra et al., 2020). People who previously had minimal contact with one another may suddenly be required to collaborate in order to make the change. Employees may be required to adjust the equipment they are required to use during a pandemic and the way they perform their duties. Both are difficulties for individuals because they often force work outside of their comfort zone.

Summary

The problem that was addressed in this study is that working from home in conditions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic may have significantly influenced the ability of directors, managers, and board members from logistic companies in the trucking industry to promote PSC. In response to the problem identified, the purpose of this qualitative exploratory case study was to investigate how working-from-home policies during the COVID-19 pandemic affected the ability of directors, managers, and board members from logistic companies in the trucking industry to promote PSC. More specifically, this study explored the work-from-home policy used by leaders from logistic

companies in the trucking industry and the consequences of that policy on the promotion of PSC. Findings from this study may add to the existing knowledge base related to organizational decision-making, legitimacy theory, and RCT. Because pandemics are not a frequent occurrence, the data collected in this study may be distinctive due to the uniqueness of the times, which has the potential to be a stepping-stone for future research in the field.

This chapter provided the background of the study, introduced the research problem, defined the purpose of the study, and highlighted how the research problem aligned with the research questions. Next, the chapter presented the conceptual framework guiding the study followed by the nature of the study, assumptions, limitations, and delimitations before closing with a discussion of the potential significance of this qualitative research. Chapter 2 provides a critical review of the literature relevant to this study. This is followed by a description of the methods and procedures in Chapter 3, where detailed information about the research design, research subjects, data collection, and data analysis procedures is provided. Chapter 4 is designed to evaluate data in order to synthesize a huge quantity of information in order to answer research questions, study potential concerns, and explore options. Lastly, in Chapter 5, the findings are given significance by linking them to previous theory, research, policy, and practice, as well as projecting them to future theory, research, policy, and practice.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The issue that prompted this search of the literature was the work-from-home policy that leaders, such as directors, managers, and board members from logistic companies in the trucking industry, made during the COVID-19 pandemic. The purpose of this qualitative exploratory case study was to investigate how working-from-home policies during the COVID-19 pandemic affected the ability of directors, managers, and board members from logistic companies in the trucking industry to promote PSC. This qualitative research has the potential to fill a gap in the existing body of knowledge by concentrating on the way in which the work-from-home policy may have affected an organizational leader's capacity to encourage PSC in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. This chapter provides a comprehensive literature review that will cover the basis of the argument and will provide a strategy that will show the approach taken to researching the phenomenon.

Literature Search Strategy

This literature review includes an analysis of peer-reviewed publications and books that are relevant to the qualitative research question and problem. This qualitative research may contribute to closing a knowledge gap about how business choices made during the COVID-19 pandemic may have impacted leaders' capacity to drive PSC in their organizations. Several articles were gathered from a range of databases, including the JAMA network, SAGE Journals, E3S Web of Conferences, BMC Public Health, MDPI, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Journal of Management*, *Journal of*

Business & Economics Research, U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics, Political Psychology, *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, and Sage Publications. The essential terms that were looked for were as follows: *rational choice theory, legitimacy theory, decision-making, organization management, strategic decisions, job security, economy, government/state policies, COVID-19, organization leader, individual choice, positive social change, crisis management, and organization interventions.*

Conceptual Framework

RCT proposes that several factors will determine an individual's or an organization's selection of choices. Individual influences, traditions, businesses, culture, and ambitions contribute to a person's or an organization's rational deliberation, including a consideration of the potential consequences and benefits of a choice (Fitzsimons, 2017). RCT is relevant to both individual and organizational decision-making and can be applied to the following:

- business and economics—individuals bartering for items or purchase behaviors;
- politics—behavior of politicians, political issues, and voting behaviors;
- sociology—the social change (social phenomena) of individuals' actions; and
- addiction—diagnose the addiction motivation and produce an alternative that would be beneficial to the individual.

Additionally, RCT corresponds with the order of argument to describe something before one can predict and explain behavior. In this study, I used RCT to explain why logistic organizations in the trucking industry made the choice to work from home during the COVID-19 pandemic. Nicola et al. (2020) stated that this kind of threat is not only present in primary sectors like agriculture and petroleum and secondary sectors like manufacturing, but also in tertiary sectors such as education, transportation, operations, and business services. The finance industry anticipated job layoffs and a decline in confidence in the capital market as the economy declined. These outcomes suggest that the economy was perceived as high-risk and implied a low level of trust and confidence in the world's response to the pandemic (Gans, 2020). Organizations responded to these perceived low levels of trust and confidence by making modifications to their operations to meet these challenges. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, RCT may explain why leaders from logistic companies in the trucking sector wanted to keep their employees and chose to spend less in their communities due to decreased certainty, perceived risk, and lack of confidence in available information. As RCT suggests, a person makes a rational judgment based on all available information to identify the most appropriate choice and attain the best possible outcome according to their personal goals.

According to classical preference theory, the concept of rational choice is based on the following foundational properties:

1. Pairwise—people's preference judgments are made in pairwise comparisons.
2. Completeness—all alternatives from which one chooses are comparable.

3. Transitivity—allows two pairwise relations to be inherited by a third pair.
4. Reflexive—any alternative is as good as itself. (Oppenheimer, 2008, pp. 3–4; italics in original)

Three assumptions are then added to these formal properties:

5. Maximization—individuals are presumed to always choose their most preferred alternative.
6. Stability—the preference orders are stable over time and scenarios.
7. Uniqueness—individuals have but one preference ordering. (Oppenheimer, p.4; italics in original)

Fumagalli (2020) then suggested that a perfect empirical fit does not necessarily correctly imply its causal processes, because criticism of its weakness or opportunity is always possible. In that case, RCT could be used in an inductive study, focusing on uncovering decision choices under stress that presently do not have accepted constructs and variables.

Legitimacy theory is founded on the notion that a social contract exists between a society and business (Nishitani et al., 2021). Organizations attempt to align the social values connected with or suggested by their operations with the standards of acceptable conduct in the broader social system of which they are a part (Dowling & Pfeffer, 1975). When these two value systems are congruent, the organization's legitimacy can be ensured. When there is a genuine or potential divide between the two value systems, organizational legitimacy is jeopardized (Dowling & Pfeffer, 1975). The constraints

created by societal norms and values and responses to these restrictions highlight the necessity of examining organizational behavior while paying attention to the surroundings (Dewiyanti, 2021).

Professors John Dowling and Jeffery Pfeffer are credited with developing legitimacy theory and identifying organizational legitimacy as its foundation (Nishitani et al., 2021). Other scholars have started to notice that, within the restrictions of legitimacy, an organization might take the initiative to engage in legal activity to achieve legitimacy by mounting a series of strategic activities on the legitimacy of organizational research and legalization strategy (Tang, 2017). The following are some examples of legalizing measures that businesses may choose to implement:

- Regulatory legitimacy—Comply with the directives of the appropriate authorities, such as the government.
- Normative legitimacy—Adhere to societal norms.
- Cognitive legitimacy—Conform to the business activities.

The emerging economic, social, and environmental issues need organizations and governments to follow laws, principles, and norms, as well as to voluntarily share social and environmental data in order to assess compliance (Martela et al., 2021). As a result, legitimacy theory serves as a legitimate component in the dissemination of environmental information. The legitimacy strategy of an organization is a technique that plays an extremely essential role in determining how its stakeholders—investors, workers, customers, suppliers, and so forth—see the organization.

Legitimacy is a key concept for logistic companies in the trucking industry that explains why companies engage in certain activities, as well as how practical steps, such as those related to environmental sustainability, are perceived by stakeholders (Ellram et al., 2022). To acquire environmental legitimacy from logistic companies in the trucking business, the institution must fulfill freight transportation emissions legitimacy. The following are three possible legitimacies:

- pragmatic legitimacy
- moral legitimacy
- cognitive legitimacy

First, the pragmatic legitimacy of an organization is established by the self-interested calculations of the audiences who are most directly relevant to the institution (Bowen, 2017). Second, moral legitimacy is when something is morally acceptable, which means it follows the rules of ethics (Bonsón et al., 2021). For instance, a government may assert that it has legal legitimacy because its laws and leaders are established in accordance with the provisions of its constitution. The government may be accused of lacking moral legitimacy if the actions it takes do not comply with moral criteria. Finally, cognitive legitimacy is the notion that institutional actions are desirable, legitimate, or suitable because they correspond to preexisting views about how to organize labor and provide societal value (Svensson et al., 2019).

Literature Review

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, organizations have had to follow U.S. government policies, adjust finances, alter their employment situations, and make difficult corporate and financial decisions. Only limited qualitative research and little reliable data are available regarding the experiences of individuals who may have been affected by the work-from-home policies of their organizations during the pandemic. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore how working from home during the COVID-19 pandemic affected the ability of directors, managers, and board members from logistic companies in the trucking industry to promote PSC.

Trucking Industry

The trucking sector is a segment of the economy responsible for transporting consumer goods from one point to another (Kubanova & Kubasakova, 2020). Trucking companies provide a vital service to Texas manufacturers and consumers by acting as a connection between international and domestic businesses that cross state lines (TDOT, 2019) and connect terminals at airports and seaports, as well as freight train lines and pipelines (TDOT, 2021, p. 112). Without the trucking sector, Texas's economy would be severely hampered. These consequences of running a trucking organization are known as enterprise impact, which is made up of the direct employment in the trucking sector, indirect effects coming from expenditure by the trucking industry, and induced impacts caused by the spending of trucking industry employees on goods and services (Holguin-Veras et al., 2021).

The trucking industry estimates that 1.5 billion tons of freight with a total value of \$1.2 trillion are moved by trucks to, from, and within the state of Texas yearly (TDOT, 2021, p. 98). The state of Texas increased 195 million tons of freight and \$664 billion in value over this period (TDOT, 2021, p. 98). Texas was responsible for more than two thirds of the total freight tonnage in the United States and over one half of the total value of the freight that traveled between its origins and destinations (TDOT, 2021, p. 98). According to the TDOT (2021), the trucking industry in Texas is responsible for sustaining 1.1 million jobs, \$62.7 billion in yearly labor income, \$91.6 billion in annual gross state product, and \$7 billion in annual state and local tax revenues (p. 98).

Direct employment in the trucking industry is divided into several subsectors. The bulk of direct trucking jobs are held by employees of private trucking corporations like H.E.B. and Coca-Cola, as well as other businesses that manage their own fleets (Blanco & Tan, 2009). Direct industrial labor supported about 491,000 jobs, including those working for both simple and more complex freight trucking organizations, truck drivers managing private fleets for other organizations, and self-employed truckers. Trucking contributes \$35.3 billion to Texas's gross state product (GSP). This sum includes \$6.7 billion in federal, state, and local taxes and \$30.5 billion in labor income. In the supplier sectors, indirect assistance supports about 274,000 jobs, \$17.7 billion in labor income, \$30.8 billion in GSP, and \$7.3 billion in tax revenues (TDOT, 2021, p. 100). Spending labor money generates an extra 290,000 jobs, \$14.5 billion in labor income, \$25.5 billion in GSP, and \$5.2 billion in tax revenue (TDOT, 2021, p. 100).

Previous estimates indicate that the state will see a 78% rise in truck tonnage by 2040 and that trucks will account for 56% of all freight handled (TDOT, 2011, para. 1). Most of the goods transported by the trucking industry in Texas are agricultural items. Live animals, feed, cereal grains, fish, meat, and other agricultural products such as fertilizer and milled grain are handled (Heller & Keoleian, 2000). Texas has the most extensive roadway and interstate network in the United States. In terms of population and yearly car miles travelled, Texas comes second, only after California. The highways of I-10, I-30, and I-40 are significant to the economy of Texas because they link the state to economic hubs throughout the United States (Denbow, 2018). Because there are no restrictions and easy access for the Texas trucking sector to travel throughout the country, the trucking industry should not run into any problems in growing as predicted.

As the trucking industry grows, there will be a greater need for employees to work in the logistics division of the trucking industry. Logistics coordinators, engineers, analysts, managers, directors, and clerks are among the positions in highest demand. Workers in logistics contribute to the administration of information, inventories, commodity handling, packaging, shipping, and storage, as well as other supply chain management tasks (Rushton et al., 2022). Logistics ensures that the relevant products are delivered on time, with the required quality, and at the lowest possible cost (Šulyová & Koman, 2020). This qualitative study focused on logistics managers, directors, and board members because those individuals are more likely to work from home, both during normal times and during a pandemic, than truck drivers who move freight. The leadership

tasks these individuals perform from home include the following (Automotive Industrial Partnership, 2021):

- Select carriers and negotiate contracts and pricing.
- Plan and monitor inbound and outbound deliveries.
- Resolve any problems or concerns.
- Research the best shipping methods, routes, and carriers.
- Work with other divisions to integrate logistics into business policies and practices.
- Ensure that all operations comply with applicable laws, rules, and International Organization for Standardization (ISO) standards.

By performing these and other tasks, logistics employees develop and improve the value of companies by enhancing merchandise and maintaining product availability.

Trucking Industry Rational Choices During COVID-19 Pandemic

Individuals affected by the COVID-19 pandemic made choices that reflected their personal experience, which differed from one person to the next. Grossmann et al. (2020) suggested that individuals make choices that are consistent with their preferences.

Herfeld (2018) suggested that this behavioral structure could provide valuable insight into individual decision-making. RCT provides a conceptual framework that allows for the identification of other elements that go into the process of rational decision-making, which include, but are not limited to, religion, upbringing, culture, education, and race.

RCT has established foundational properties and made reasonable assumptions to explain

the behaviors of leaders to ensure job security and maintain liquidity. RCT has the potential to provide insight into the decisions of leaders from logistic companies in the industry regarding work-from-home policies and how those behaviors may be linked to the ability of leadership to promote PSC.

RCT provides concepts, models, and mathematic structures that provide help in understanding certain independent situations that define behavior (Klautau de Araújo et al., 2021). RCT suggests that individuals behave in ways that reflect their preferences when a decision is made and that they also make assumptions regarding the behavior of others in a situation before making a rational choice (Herfeld, 2018). To that end, the U.S. Department of Defense has funded a \$6.5 million multiscale project intended to better understand the assumptions people make in implementing better COVID-19 safe behaviors policies (Moore & McAlpine, 2020), and as a result of this project, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (2020) provided safety behavior recommendations for the trucking industry during the COVID-19 pandemic, including wearing a mask, using hand sanitizer, and wearing gloves. Incentives, disincentives, leadership, and altruism influence much of human behavior and decisions (Chan, 2020). The nature of rational choice examines an individual's behavior but has not yet been explored from the trucking industry during the COVID-19 pandemic. Particularly critical and relevant to the pandemic, RCT impacts decisions made by organizational boards that will determine if their actions are for the common good or are self-serving (Zyuzev, 2021). The use of RCT in this study will connect the work-from-home policy to the

COVID-19 pandemic to determine how that policy influenced the promotion of PSC (Moore & McAlpine, 2020). Individuals in the community are more likely to interact with trucking industry groups to promote PSC if they believe they are not infected with the virus and their organizations are reputable.

Groups, teams, or committees rather than individuals make most decisions in the world of modern business. One of the benefits of involving groups in decision-making is the opportunity to consider a wide variety of viewpoints and approaches (Zhang et al., 2020). Organizations in the trucking sector must have a diverse group of people to take advantage of this benefit. When there are many different people in a group, those people will have many different perspectives, ideologies, prejudices, and attitudes toward a decision (Zhang et al., 2020). Lunenburg and Ornstein (2011) described some of the benefits of making decisions by consensus as follows: more information and skills are available to address an issue, a wide variety of possibilities are considered, the final choice is better understood and accepted by all group members, and a higher commitment among all group members is necessary for a successful final decision.

The advantages of collaborative decision-making can be hampered in certain circumstances because of specific and powerful external influences, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. The trucking industry may utilize various techniques to overcome these pressures and boost collaborative decision-making. Some strategies include the nominal group approach, brainstorming, the Delphi methodology, and rational inquiry (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2011). When the COVID-19 virus began to spread in the United States,

organizations had to make decisions that were well outside the parameters of normal decision-making. When organizations make these kinds of decisions, they are generally addressing problems that may complicate a company's operation. In the case of the pandemic, organizations had to deal with multiple problems regarding finances, budgeting, and operations with little time to address those issues. Organizations were required to concentrate on short-term and immediate social effects, including those that related to accessibility, movement, and activities and impacts that are health-related, financially-related, and community-related (Jones & Lucas, 2012).

Organizations in the trucking industry encountered two issues while facing decisions concerning these areas of social effects as described by Jones and Lucas (2012): the first involved business methods and modifications used by trucking businesses, while the second focused on the workplace safety of truck drivers. As part of the supply chain for the two issues, commercial truck drivers played an essential role in the response to the pandemic by transporting necessary supplies like medicine, food, fuel, and personal protective equipment (Federal Emergency Management Agency [FEMA], 2022) but had difficulty themselves accessing food, showers, and rest since many petrol stations, including Pilot/Flying J, TA-Petro, and Love's Travel Stops, and most restaurants chose or were required to close or reduce their operations during the pandemic. State and municipal governments were considering collaborating with truck stop owners to provide drivers with clean, safe facilities, showers, and hot meals. State and municipal governments frequently collaborate with logistic companies, particularly

independent truck owners, to guarantee drivers access to such personal protective equipment as masks and gloves. Truckers are less likely than other workers to have health insurance; uninsured employees in the trucking industry account for 15% of the workforce, whereas other transportation industry workers account for only 10% (Reagan & Saphores, 2020). As a consequence, many states needed to consider taking on the responsibility of implementing a viral testing program for the trucking industry.

Trucking Industry's Legitimacy During COVID-19 Pandemic

For a trucking company to continue to exist, the organization will naturally do whatever it takes to justify its activities. During the COVID-19 pandemic, legitimacy may be described as the ability of leadership to comply with new public health instructions on the assumption that people generally believe everyone is complying (Glenn et al., 2020). Consequently, most organizations adopted the COVID-19 pandemic operational standards to demonstrate their legitimacy, including providing medical supplies and cleaning stations; providing food, paper products, and other emergency supplies, and, once a vaccine was available, encouraging employees to get vaccinated. According to Dewiyanti (2021), for a company to attain legitimacy, it must make every effort to ensure that its activities are conducted in accordance with the boundaries and norms set by society. Trucking companies should adhere to the Legitimacy Theory's idea of a social union between society and business (Nishitani et al., 2021). During the COVID-19 pandemic, Legitimacy Theory was directly related to much organizational

behavior and to the people those organizations served, thus giving those organizations the potential to bring about constructive social change.

For organizations to maintain legitimacy during a time of crisis, they will need to have standards, policies, and procedures in place to deal with emergencies. A crisis management plan involves forming a multifunctional crisis response team, evaluating organizational risk, anticipating a proportional reaction, developing situational plans and playbooks, and maintaining plans, policies, and processes under constant review and evaluation (Fung et al., 2020). If a company has developed an excellent crisis management strategy, it will be able to rescue itself, keep its employees safe, safeguard its brand and profits, and comply with and satisfy the legal obligations of the local community. Because such a plan has been developed, an organization will be one step ahead of the crisis and well prepared to deal with a crisis when it occurs. During the COVID-19 pandemic, organizations in the trucking industry had a hard time ensuring that their actions were consistent with society's new standards in order to obtain legitimacy. State and local governments had been exploring short-term relief for long-term success on behalf of the trucking industry (Falk et al., 2020). A key element to the success of the transportation industry and to its legitimacy was infrastructure, and, due to the lockdowns, infrastructure construction was at a standstill. The lockdowns restricted local and state authorities from permitting new contracts to address the infrastructure problems (Falk et al., 2020). In response to this problem, the federal government

addressed the issue with the Coronavirus Economic Relief for Transportation Services (CERTS) program (U.S. Department of the Treasury [U.S. Treasury], 2021).

The CERTS program was designed to support transportation service providers. Under the program, a total of \$2 billion in grants were made available to companies that had experienced more than 25% loss of annual revenue (U.S. Treasury, 2021). The CERTS program provided protective measures for workers, customers, leases, rents, insurance, and interest on debt (U.S. Treasury, 2021) and helped organizations maintain legitimacy and cover applicable overhead and operational expenses. Since the COVID-19 pandemic created an economic crisis and a worldwide response of uncertainty (Chirumbolo et al., 2021), many in the transportation industry experienced job insecurity because of all the layoffs and the revenue losses that were being forced on most companies. According to Dickens et al. (2020), most organizations (83%) used the subsidies provided by the CARES Act to keep their current staff in place and prevent layoffs. In 2020, the average global worker has lost 8.8¢ per hour, which, in turn, resulted in a loss of 255 million full-time jobs due to working-hours lost (International Labour Organization [ILO], 2021). Because of the effect of the pandemic on the trucking industry, the expectations of employees regarding their personal job security changed.

In June 2021, the Biden-Harris Administration formed the Supply Chain Disruptions Task Force to address supply chain blockages in the short term (The White House, 2021). This task force included the Trucking Action Plan (TAP) as one of its components. The TAP was created in order to strengthen America's trucking workforce

and to encourage growth in the trucking industry (The White House, 2021). The administration identified the following actions it would take immediately: implement measures to lower the hurdles that prevent drivers from obtaining CDLs, launch a three-month-long challenge to accelerate the growth of registered apprenticeships, concentrate outreach and recruiting efforts on veterans, and protect driving jobs as a cooperative effort between the Department of Transportation and the Department of Labor (The White House, 2021). These dramatic efforts made by the United States government to promote truck driving encouraged individuals to enter the profession, aiding with freight operations.

The private sector oversees most freight operations in the United States, but the United States government also has a role in freight operations, since it owns and manages the nation's roadway infrastructure, ports, and interior waterways and regulates and taxes freight traffic. The pressure on carriers to enhance operations comes not just from increased freight transportation but also from the need for innovative logistical arrangements and the need for smaller, more frequent shipments, where dependability is critical. Capacity shortages and congestion may not hamper the country's freight network in the short term but they may reduce the predictability and dependability of freight operations in the long run. Developing sustainable freight transportation systems is made difficult by the presence of multiple dynamic uncertainties and inherent sustainability concerns. Sustainability risks are prospective hazards that might adversely affect a system's sustainability (Kermanshah et al., 2020).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, trucking organizations were forced to change their freight operations, and some trucking organizations shut down completely. The decisions that were made following the pandemic were focused on employee safety and the sustainability of freight. During the pandemic, businesses in the trucking sector were compelled to impose policies that mandated staff education, worker screening, workplace sterilization, and self-quarantine for their personnel (Occupational Safety and Health Administration [OSHA], 2020). Online training and Zoom meetings were chosen as the methods by which businesses in the trucking industry intended to educate their staff members on the appropriate behavior during the pandemic. The training sessions included topics like donning face coverings and gloves, practicing proper hand hygiene, maintaining social distance in the workplace, and learning how to achieve physical isolation (Occupational Safety and Health Administration [OSHA], 2020).

The Trucking Industry and Positive Social Change

PSC is any action taken by an individual or an organization that improves human situations and the conditions of society as a whole (Morris, 2017). Although PSC seems to be unique from other types of social change and may even indicate the existence of negative social change, the addition of the word “positive” to the term simply indicates that people’s lives are improving as a direct result of the change (Yildirim & Güler, 2021). These changes can take place on many fronts, including those of people, organizations, families and friends, communities, and governments at the local, state, or federal levels. Several different forces can drive PSC, such as monetary shifts,

technological advancement, and conflicts with existing institutions. Social scientists believe individuals with higher levels of education, who may be open to new experiences, are more likely to support social change initiatives (Stephan et al., 2016), and there are a great number of both major and minor ways to bring about constructive societal change. According to Walden University (2022b), some of the approaches are as follows: perform random acts of kindness, create a mission-driven company, participate in community service, and vote with your pocketbook.

All these methods of PSC can make significant changes in society, especially during a time of crisis. Both organizations and society as a whole need to be conscious of their surroundings and the PSC initiatives that may be essential for their unique situations (Stephan et al., 2016). Given that the COVID-19 virus is new, and that the public health situation is changing quickly, employees, supervisors, and leadership in general must be up-to-date on the latest developments and advances in how to respond to the pandemic (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund [UNICEF], 2020). Maintaining an awareness of current events may help protect families, workers, children, and communities. Some of the essential issues to be aware of include news about the virus, techniques for reducing viral transmission, changing health procedures, social service standards, statistics on emerging children's safety problems, and national and municipal laws and regulations governing the crisis. Supervisors and employees must collaborate to determine the most appropriate and correct course of action for the well-being of personnel, children, and their communities. The goal of all organizations should

be to make positive societal change a high priority without at the same time causing significant social disruption (Stephan et al., 2016).

One method that organizations used to achieve PSC during the COVID-19 pandemic was through community engagement. Community engagement is the process through which people of a community work together to make choices about their community's future (Gilmore et al., 2020). The words "community engagement" commonly refer to a particular initiative assisted by local governments or community-based groups. COVID-19's widespread impact and ease of transmission between people require social and community solutions. Countries throughout the globe are urged to review current community involvement structures and employ community engagement techniques to promote preventive and control measures that are unique, acceptable, and suitable to a given social situation (Gilmore et al., 2020).

In spite of the lockdown protocols in place to prevent viral transmission, trucking institutions nevertheless had various ways to stay connected with their communities. Some approaches included social media, traditional media, zoom meetings, and public meetings, a traditional method of getting people together to collaborate on a specific topic (Cretney, 2018). Community gatherings bring together diverse stakeholders to achieve a common goal and are one way of addressing the challenges the trucking industry faces because of current trends in supply chain management, e-commerce, the growing use of technology, and increased infrastructure and regulation (Hooper & Murray, 2019). Because of the increasing number of drivers of heavy trucks—a number expected to rise

to 2 million in the United States by 2026 (O'Brien et al., 2020)—this kind of community involvement is essential for the future of the trucking industry.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) temporarily lifted the generally established working hour limitations when the pandemic started to take its toll (O'Brien et al., 2020). These rules were originally implemented to prevent tired, overworked workers from driving on busy roads. Fatigued drivers are more prone to crashes when pushed to their physical and mental limits. It is possible that some truck drivers may still be working extra hours to satisfy their obligations and make ends meet, even though these working hour limitations are no longer waived. As stay at home orders began to end and more truckers returned to work, they needed to be more aware of rusty drivers and their tiredness. According to Bradshaw et al. (2021), the COVID-19 pandemic has had nine significant societal repercussions, all of which have affected the trucking industry, including (a) "Increased importance of local communities"; (b) "Low and unstable levels of trust in governance"; (c) "Widening geographic inequalities"; (d) "Exacerbated structural inequalities"; (e) "Worsened health outcomes and growing health inequalities"; (f) "Greater awareness of the importance of mental health"; (g) "Pressure on revenue streams across the economy"; (h) "Rising unemployment and changing labour markets"; and (i) "Renewed awareness of education and skills" (pp. 8–9). These nine long-term impact areas will serve as a valuable starting point for additional interaction and understanding of how the trucking

industry can work together with the community to solve these problems in order to promote PSC.

Interactions between employees and their employers often display the characteristics of social exchange. Social exchange connections need a commensurate benefit to be shared between a giver and a receiver (Xu et al., 2020). For instance, salary structure impacts the employees' contentment; when employees are dissatisfied with their compensation, they are more likely to consider leaving their jobs (Yukongdi & Shrestha, 2020), but when workers receive significant support from their managers, their desire to leave the organization decreases (Murray & Holmes, 2021). Managers are a critical part of social change. Managers and supervisors are the ones who implement the new policies or make judgments on how the procedures are measuring up to the corporation's goals. Managers are also accountable to themselves and the rest of the team. Managers are individuals that deal with planning, organizing, motivating, and controlling. As a result, it is critical to examine and explore managers' functions, psychological characteristics, and impact on the management process (Tovmasyan, 2017).

Managers in an organization generally carry great responsibilities and are therefore crucial to social change and can be a positive force. PSC strategies span many change processes and outcomes. The steps necessary to achieve the goal of PSC are as follows:

- (1) clarify the nature of PSC as a process, (2) develop an integrative framework that specifies two distinct PSC strategies, (3) take stock of and offer a

categorization scheme for change mechanisms and enabling organizational practices, and (4) outline opportunities for future research. (Stephan et al., 2016, p. 1250)

The PSC strategies differ in terms of time spent on the targets of change efforts and the resulting quality, timeliness, and scope of social impact. Strategies for PSC are diverse combinations of different change processes that are enabled and seen as unique blends of change methodologies and organizational practices. PSC was challenging to implement during the COVID-19 pandemic. Because of the new societal norms of social distancing and government lockdowns, the practice was difficult to implement. With the COVID-19 pandemic altering so many conventions, to which was added the danger of infection, random acts of kindness became increasingly rare, reducing the general level of happiness and well-being (Rowland & Curry, 2018).

Among many possible acts of kindness to self and others are being a good neighbor, praying or meditating, being committed to whatever you do; letting your principles influence your spending, and paying it forward (Bourgeau, 2017). PSC began with the individual, and the individual can make changes regardless of where they are or what conditions they are confronted with. Even though the pandemic has limited social contact, PSC can still be brought about. Global freight volume is expected to increase from 54.69 billion tons in 2015 to 92.1 billion tons in 2024 (Haas et al., 2020).

Transportation industry trends influence this rapid rise in volume. These trends are classified as having external and endogenous influencing factors. Exogenous influences

are external forces that influence a business (Buckley, 2021). A trucking company deals with those exogenous factors with smart truck fleet management (STFM).

Punte et al. (2017) described STFM as a holistic and integrated approach to the energy management of truck fleets. It is comprised of five pillars: (a) fuel management; (b) driver and staff skills development; (c) vehicle, system, and component specifications and preventive maintenance; (d) performance monitoring; and (e) information technology utilization (p. 7). The existence of such a framework would make it easier to harmonize the many different programs that are designed for road freight operators and might also make it simpler to share information across the numerous ongoing local projects. “Smart Truck Fleet Management can be introduced in a country or market in three ways: training course [sic], knowledge products, and building a community of Smart Transport Managers together with their customers and partners,” and data gathered from various initiatives worldwide demonstrate that the three strategies discussed above are effective (Punte et al., 2017, p. 8). If the change is done more carefully in many different markets, it may be possible to bring about significant results.

The Impact of Trucking Industry Decisions on Employees

Most organizations consider decision-making a single event that happens at a specific moment, one that is filled with unique subtleties, politics, power struggles, and institutional past (Akinci & Sadler-Smith, 2018). Organizations that grasp the concept of decision-making as a single event will make considerably better judgments than those who continue to believe that decisions are occurrences over which they alone have

control. Some decision-making procedures are significantly superior to others. Organizations often employ an advocacy approach, which maybe the least beneficial technique for getting things done. The advocacy approach is the active support of a notion or goal communicated via strategies and procedures that may influence the attitudes and decisions of people and organizations (Feliks et al., 2021).

Organizations too often see decision-making as a competition, fighting passionately for their favored solutions, providing selective facts, suppressing crucial contradictory material, and staying firm in the face of resistance (Toma & Butera, 2015). An inquiry approach, in which leaders consider multiple different ideas and work together to choose the most appropriate response, is far more powerful. When transitioning from advocacy to investigation, some essential criteria must be considered: (a) Encouraging constructive conflict rather than disagreement on a personal level, (b) making sure that everyone is aware that their perspectives are considered even if they are eventually rejected, and (c) being able to judge when it is appropriate to end the discussion (Deutsch, 1994; Eylon & Linn, 1988; Kay & Skarlicki, 2020). Suppose that these essential considerations were considered whenever an organization makes a decision. In that case, the organization has a high probability of choosing an effective option without impeding its operations and ensuring that the company's legitimacy is maintained.

Decisions taken by a company might result in tension with its workforce, which in turn can have a psychological impact on those workers. According to the American

Disability Act (ADA), if individuals do nothing to address their mental illnesses, the capacity to function normally in both their personal and professional lives will be impacted (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services [HHS], 2021). The decisions of leaders of organizations will impact their workers' activities and their mental health. The COVID-19 pandemic altered the ways in which businesses functioned, and in many cases the amount of work to be done increased because so many workers were choosing to remain at home. An increase in the required labor may result in increased stress and strain, while insufficient income may generate tension in their daily lives.

A company's PSC is critical in ensuring that workers feel like they are part of a supportive community, which decreases employee stress levels and enhances productivity. When an organization makes crucial choices, the impact on the emotional well-being of its leaders must be taken into account. Emotional well-being is not just a moral commitment but can also benefit a company financially. The trucking industry's workforce has a significantly higher risk of mental health problems than other professions (Witteveen & Velthorst, 2020). The mental health of leaders in the trucking industry plays a significant role in promoting PSC. If an organizational leader cannot function properly in their own life due to the stress and strains of work, their ability to promote PSC may be compromised.

Leaders may boost their resilience during this challenging time by organizing wellness webinars for at-home workers and encouraging better hygiene and self-care practices, which are prevalent health problems in the United States (Mental Health

America [MHA], 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic has created new pressures that have significantly challenged the mental health of individuals. Mental health issues have resulted in increased symptoms for employees with preexisting mental health issues and a rise in the number of employees coping with mental health conditions such as depression and anxiety (Gurney, 2022). This situation was made worse by a reduction in the availability in mental health services; in the second quarter of 2020, more than 60% of countries globally experienced interruptions in their services, with 67% reporting disruptions in counseling and psychotherapy and 65% in critical harm reduction initiatives and habits (World Health Organization [WHO], 2023).

Mental health services in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries followed similar trends. Fourteen percent of psychiatric clinics in Italy were closed at the beginning of April 2020; 25% had shortened their hours, and 88% community day hospitals had closed (Carpiniello & Vita, 2022). Seventy-five percent of non-urgent encounters were conducted remotely, usually via phone (OECD, 2021). During the COVID-19 pandemic, other Internet mental health tools became increasingly popular (OECD, 2021). A government helpline for people in mental distress received 1,000% more calls in April 2020 than in April 2019, while the usage of self-screening questionnaires on the charity Mental Health America (MHA) website had increased during the pandemic (Shalit & Gettas, 2020; Mental Health America [MHA], 2023).

Ethical business practices are essential to the trucking industry in order to have any opportunity of bringing about PSC. Organizations in the trucking sector are under increasing pressure to behave ethically while still executing their operations in the most cost-effective, efficient, and productive manner possible (Turyakira, 2018). Other ethical considerations made by organizations in the trucking industry include safety concerns relating to the pandemic. The safety decisions in the trucking sector consisted of social distancing, mask-wearing, and sanitation workstations (Occupational Safety and Health Administration [OSHA], 2020). Customers are more mindful of the legitimacy of the organizations they financially support. Small and medium-sized businesses have been hurt the most in the trucking industry because they do not have the capital, knowledge, and connections needed to follow ethical standards (Turyakira, 2018).

Ethical corporate practices may inspire individuals to pursue additional beneficial actions. When individuals witness the ethical actions of organizations, they are more likely to participate in extracurricular activities such as creating cooperatives, restoring dilapidated houses, and cleaning up their communities, all of which may impact the environment (Igras et al., 2020; Walden University, 2021). As a result, when people believe they have the resources to deal with significant problems, they develop the drive and aptitude to use such resources successfully. Consequently, ethical decisions by organizations in the trucking industry can lead to long-term PSC. In most cases, social action, like other forms of community organization, seeks to achieve both short-term and long-term goals. Although the goals of a particular short-term action will vary, the long-

term goals of most organizational initiatives are to promote more justice and social equality (Igras et al., 2020). When a social action movement is well run and able to keep its momentum over time, it has the potential to lead to a genuinely democratic society where everyone's opinion counts.

To ensure the safety of their employees, trucking companies have made the operational decision to enable workers to work from home. Various trucking organizations opted to continue operating from their offices and take other safeguards to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus. There are advantages and disadvantages associated with working from home, and one of the drawbacks is the increased likelihood of social isolation. Although past research established that social isolation is one of the significant downsides of remote work, its prevalence has undoubtedly increased because of the pandemic (Escalante et al., 2021). Empirical evidence shows that employees' behaviors, performance, attitudes, and overall well-being are affected when individuals work in isolation (Sahai et al., 2021). Individuals who have suffered social isolation often report increased feelings of loneliness, which has been related to declining job satisfaction, poor performance, and increased stress (Galanti et al., 2021). A socially isolated individual is prone to experiencing anxiety and lower self-esteem. The warning signals of harmful social isolation include:

- Avoiding social interactions, including those that were once enjoyable
- Canceling plans frequently and feeling relief when plans are canceled
- Experiencing anxiety or panic when thinking about social interactions

- Feeling distress during periods of solitude
- Feeling dread associated with social activities
- Spending large amounts of time alone or with extremely limited contact with others. (Tulane University, 2020, para. 4)

Because of its adverse effects, depression is one of the more harmful signals that are associated with social isolation. Depression makes it difficult for individuals to carry out the activities of their everyday lives and can also cause an individual to isolate themselves from society and their communities (Elmer & Stadtfeld, 2020). Quantitative research has shown that organizations have seen the following benefits from having their employees work from home: improved “work–life balance,” “improved work efficiency,” and “greater work control” (Ipsen et al., abstract, 2021). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, trucking companies are now aware that the vast majority of office work may be completed successfully from the comfort of an employee’s home. Working from home saves money and time for all parties involved and results in a stronger team owing to increased productivity, employee satisfaction, and corporate culture (Kaushik & Guleria, 2020).

The COVID-19 Pandemic Impacts on Trucking Operations

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, organizations have been required to comply with a wide variety of restrictions imposed by state and local governments (OECD, 2021). Even though the restrictions were put in place with good intentions, they had a substantial negative impact on the ability of fleets to do their jobs

in an effective manner. In particular, the reaction to the pandemic saw the closing of facilities operated by the state, such as rest areas and service plazas, which significantly negatively influenced the health and well-being of truck drivers who were hauling freight (American Trucking Associations [ATA], 2020). For instance, just a few days after the COVID-19 pandemic began impacting the U.S. Northeast, rest spots and service plazas throughout the area sealed their doors (ATA, 2020). When seeking a spot to stop and relax, utilize washroom facilities, or find something to eat while simultaneously delivering essential supplies that keep our communities safe and nourished, truck drivers suddenly found themselves with few alternatives. Other than service areas, few options exist for parking trucks, so the fact that these state-operated facilities were shut down at a time when there was an increasing demand for freight deliveries was a significant loss. Not long after these operations were shut down, organizations representing the trucking industry informed legislators of the tremendous impact that their actions would have (ATA, 2020).

As a direct result of this intervention, several service facilities and rest areas located around the Northeast reopened their doors. Along with other workers in critical infrastructure operations, the member companies of the trucking community had great difficulty acquiring non-medical grade personal protective equipment (PPE) for their drivers. This was necessary to reduce their exposure to COVID-19 while maintaining the legitimacy of the supply chain. Several states mandated the wearing of face masks whenever individuals were in public, and truck drivers are not immune from these

mandates. In compliance with these laws, the trucking sector was able to effectively obtain more than 100,000 face coverings, which were then given to a variety of trucking enterprises and groups around the nation. Along with following these new regulations, it was important for drivers to be able to restock the bottles of hand sanitizer they always carried with them. A partnership between Protective Insurance and Hotel Tango, a custom distillery headquartered in Indianapolis, Indiana, resulted in the shipment of 550 gallons of hand sanitizer to 10 different truck stops and transportation enterprises located around the country (ATA, 2020). The entities responsible for the hand sanitizer's transportation saw to it that it was distributed to the various locations. Organizations within the trucking sector were already purchasing more hand sanitizer, so that it could be distributed around the country. Since these goods have been dispersed to many public places, all truck drivers can get their hands on them and keep themselves as safe as possible.

The government ordered substantial portions of the economy to shut down and a significant portion of the population to remain inside their homes due to COVID-19. The shutdown resulted in a significant decrease in the need for transportation. Because of the continued importance of freight transportation to the population's ability to survive, freight travel was spared the most devastating effects of the pandemic. In addition to events that were required to be shut down, many sporting and entertainment events, corporate activities, and other events involving big groups of people remained closed throughout the pandemic (World Health Organization [WHO], 2020). Large portions of

the population have deliberately curtailed their typical activities and movements out of fear of contracting the sickness and intend to continue showing extreme care for some time. The trucking industry remained the dominant means of freight transportation even throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. “In 2020, trucks moved 10.23 billion tons of freight,” even though that was “down from 11.84 billion tons the previous year.” In addition, “Trucks moved 70.9% of the value of surface trade between the U.S. and Canada and 83.8% of cross-border trade with Mexico, for a total of \$695 billion worth of goods” (ATA, 2021, para. 3). To support this level of productivity, new operational features have been introduced as a consequence of the pandemic, including increased use of digital and contactless technologies, a redefined understanding of the nature of office work, and innovative approaches to recruiting truck drivers. The trucking industry has made these adjustments to its operating procedures to ensure that production may continue while considering the safety of the workforce.

When creating a policy, it is essential to give careful consideration to the audience that the policy is intended to address. These objectives might be as broad as the whole population, certain families, or groups of people who match a particular need (Torjman, 2005). The selected goal is connected to the more comprehensive objective, which explains, either directly or indirectly, which aspects of the more comprehensive objective the proposed policy will or ought to affect. In response to their existing circumstances or to find a solution to a problem, corporations and other kinds of organizations often develop various policies to control and manage their operations. Depending on their

intended use, policies may be organized into administrative, future, horizontal, or proactive categories (Torjman, 2005). Proactive policies result directly from a choice made with a specific objective. The most notable instance of this idea is found in the national skills and learning agenda. Knowledge and education are increasingly being acknowledged as crucial factors that may be employed to leverage critical solutions that may be used to open doors to economic success and social well-being (Serrat, 2017). Putting the value of education and knowledge into perspective is made possible because both may be used to promote PSC. During the COVID-19 pandemic, trucking organizations have used a proactive policy to have their employees work from home out of concern for their safety and production.

Organizational Leaders and the COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic began in late 2019 in Wuhan, China, before spreading internationally and growing into a global health disaster that has produced unprecedented global instability (Cennimo, 2023; WHO, 2022). Catastrophes like the COVID-19 pandemic provide authorities with a plethora of challenges. Leaders must recognize possible problems in a rapidly changing environment, comprehend a growing threat using the information available to them, make critical decisions in response to those threats, and coordinate those responses. When there is a crisis, people seek counsel from their leaders, and leaders should be open to advice from those they lead. Organizational leaders should be transparent, honest, and vulnerable while talking with their staff in order to establish open communication (Groysberg et al., 2021).

Leaders should show themselves as totally human and acknowledge the humanity of their workers. Although maintaining social distance is very important to prevent the spread of the virus, establishing psychological proximity between leadership and those at risk has never been more critical (Groysberg et al., 2021). This shared psychological proximity includes trusting each other, agreeing on goals and strategies, and understanding essential facts similarly. To achieve psychological closeness, organizational leaders must first earn trust, demonstrate active listening skills, and become intimately close during a crisis (Groysberg et al., 2021). As the management consulting firm Korn Ferry has pointed out:

the challenges facing CEOs and other leaders are not simply strategic—they are inextricably linked to the people they lead, the human bonds that organizations have built with their employees, customers, and other stakeholders. As importantly as making high quality strategic decisions—they must consider and respond to everyone touched by the organization in a thoughtful, empathetic, and positive manner. (Korn Ferry, 2020, p. 2)

Purposeful leadership requires concentrating on the congruence between employee incentives and the organization's goal (Horan, 2020), while empathetic leadership is a leadership style that focuses on relating to people and understanding their perspectives (Kock et al., 2018). Organizational leaders need to speak to their employees clearly, convincingly, and assertively while staying calm. Leadership in the kind of crisis situation brought about by the pandemic should emphasize equality and less on hierarchy

(Maryville University, 2020). Inspiring leaders can positively affect people around them and encourage others to succeed and promote worth (Saleh & Ati Mabad, 2017). In sum, courageous leaders can persevere through adverse circumstances (Chapman, 2020).

These leadership behaviors help to bring about PSC through open communication, promoting worth, and offering inspiration (Walden University, 2021), enhancing the capacity of leaders to encourage PSC. Although trust is essential in bringing about these kinds of changes, the pandemic has placed a strain on the relationship between leaders and followers, including trust. Trust is a person's conviction or expectation that another person's actions or motivations are honest, fair, and founded on integrity, particularly in vulnerable situations (Ahern & Loh, 2020). Although the degree of trust may vary from situation to situation, confidence in prior behavior may be a source of trust but trust can emerge as a consequence of new connections formed inside or outside of an organization (Ahern & Loh, 2020). Even without particular or extensive pandemic expertise, leadership may still be proactive and prepared.

Crisis Management

A crisis in an organization is something that management and stakeholders see as important, unexpected, and possibly disruptive (Miguel et al., 2022). It threatens the organization's objectives and has far-reaching ramifications for its stakeholder relationships. Organizations use crisis management to cope with a disruptive and unexpected occurrence that might hurt the company or its stakeholders, such as a natural disaster or terrorist attack (Hayes, 2022). During the COVID-19 pandemic, businesses

were compelled to close their doors around the globe, millions of workers were sent home, and essential services had difficulty operating. Crisis management encompasses all operations carried out in a manner that is planned, organized, and logical to eradicate the condition referred to as a crisis (Branicki, 2020). The methodological nature of crisis management planning makes it possible to begin the decision-making process incrementally, establish a team to put these choices into practice, and make new decisions based on the outcomes of the practice. Pre-crisis, crisis, and post-crisis management are the three forms of process management often employed to resolve crises in companies (Branicki, 2020). The management's goal throughout the pre-crisis phase is to recognize the warning signs of a crisis and turn the adverse effects into a successful outcome. This first stage of crisis management is the stage in which a possible state of crisis is forecast and required steps are planned to avert a crisis. Crisis management is the kind of management that occurs during a state of crisis. The post-crisis process had begun after the crisis has been resolved.

At this juncture, the leaders and managers of the organization need to identify acceptable solutions that can be adaptable to changes and that provide new dimensions to their operations and plans. Making prompt decisions and putting them into action is essential in high-pressure circumstances. As a direct result, crisis management calls for leaders with something like a vision. Foresight into the future, establishing a clear vision and setting goals for the organization's future, and motivating others to strive toward accomplishing these are all essential components of modern-day leadership management.

Leaders with foresight and vision can accurately evaluate their team members' possibilities and convince them that they can perform more successfully than they did in the past (Imam & Chambel, 2020). Therefore, leaders with a vision will immediately act when they see the warning signs of a crisis, and then direct the employees and the organization in accordance with their new course of action. When it comes to crisis management, the fact that certain managers have the option to adhere to laws strictly is the most critical challenge. Because they want every one of their operations and activities to be written down in the law, they cannot make snap choices when unexpected things happen (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration [SAMHSA], 2019). Overall, company management may suffer due to this circumstance; if so, leaders and managers must be able to make split-second decisions when necessary.

According to Alzoubi and Jaaffar (2020), there is a five-stage approach for coping with a crisis, including (a) signal recognition, (b) signal research and defense, (c) damage containment, (d) recovery, and (e) knowledge acquisition. Signal recognition is concerned with identifying warning indications and taking protective steps. Second, research and defense involve an active search for and elimination of risk factors. Third, harm containment involves the steps taken to control the spread of the crisis. Fourth, the process of getting back to regular operations is referred to as "recovery." Lastly, people acquire knowledge by reviewing their crisis management efforts and learning from the situation. When faced with stressful events like the COVID-19 pandemic, leaders are responsible for consciously choosing to have a level head and remain calm (Brassey &

Kruyt, 2021). Leaders must have the ability to step back from a difficult or high-stakes scenario and select how to respond rather than responding automatically. Effective leaders must get used to feeling uncomfortable and can see hardship from different perspectives. A purposefully calm leader does not allow fear to cause them to become unhinged (Brassey & Kruyt, 2021). An uncertain circumstance may be transformed into one filled with optimism and possibilities by reframing a danger as an opportunity for learning and creativity. When channeled appropriately and reframed as a positive force, stress may be beneficial, helping to maintain high energy levels and a positive attitude even in the face of adverse conditions.

Compassion and acceptance of oneself and others are necessary for leaders who intentionally want to maintain a calm demeanor (Brassey & Kruyt, 2021). It is natural for humans to respond rashly when confronted with stressful situations. We may look back on this and feel ashamed of ourselves. Leaders must underscore their need for self-care and compassion for themselves in times like these. It is important to remember that while people cannot alter what happened in the past, individuals can alter how people think about the past and how we will approach the future. There is more to practicing excellent self-care than adhering to healthy eating, sleeping, and working out routines. To be able to connect with one's fundamental intents and purpose, it is also necessary to refrain from engaging in self-criticism or perfectionism. An organizational leader's ability to empathize with others will improve if they put these techniques into practice themselves. Maintaining a level of composure by conscious effort may have a beneficial

multiplicative impact on communities. Extensive studies have investigated how people are “wired” to communicate their feelings with one another (Abdullah et al., 2021).

When leaders feel impatient, scared, or irritated, their followers begun to follow the same pattern, and their sense of safety diminishes. The emotions that leaders experience have a significant influence on an organization. On the other hand, when a leader is calm and optimistic at the same time, the group can come up with more creative ways to deal with problems (Brassey & Kruyt, 2021). A condition of crisis is one that cannot be predicted, which interferes with the organization’s usual operations and calls for prompt action to be taken. Because a crisis cannot be anticipated in advance and can deactivate regular processes, it is necessary to design an effective crisis management system and to have good management competence. A well-thought-out strategy for managing crises may help mitigate the harmful effects of possible crises and guarantee that organizations are ready for any eventuality. Because it is irresponsible to accept that the organization will inevitably face a crisis and to do so in this way, it is also irresponsible to assume that a crisis will never confront the institution and to refrain from taking any preventative measures or developing a crisis response strategy. If companies want to achieve their goals, they must first recognize the possibility of various stages of crisis and then establish the requisite structure, systems, operation procedures, and strategies for an effective response.

Summary and Conclusions

Leaders in the trucking industry may have experienced low levels of trust and confidence in the economy during the pandemic. Using RCT and Legitimacy Theory may provide an understanding of how the work-from-home policy taken by trucking institutions may have impacted leaders' ability to promote PSC during the COVID-19 pandemic. Maximizing their alternatives means securing their current position, a rational calculation leading to the best possible outcome. Those times had no precedence, allowing for an exploratory case study of leaders' experiences and decision-making. This chapter critically reviewed the literature relevant to this study. Topics covered include a literature search strategy, a conceptual foundation based on RCT and Legitimacy Theory, and a literature review covering the trucking industry, the COVID-19 pandemic and RTC, the COVID-19 pandemic and Legitimacy Theory, the trucking industry and PSC, the impact of trucking industry decisions on employees, the COVID-19 pandemic impacts on trucking operations, leaders and the COVID-19 pandemic, crises management. The next chapter will present the methods and procedures used in this study, along with details regarding research design, leaders, data collection, data analysis, procedures, and trustworthiness.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this exploratory case study was to investigate how working from home during the COVID-19 pandemic affected the ability of directors, managers, and board members from logistic companies in the trucking industry to promote PSC. More specifically, this study explores the work-from-home policy used by leaders from logistic companies in the trucking industry and the consequences of that policy on PSC. This chapter discusses the methodology, leaders, and reliability of the study. The overall goal of Chapter 3 is to present sufficient information so that a qualified researcher might replicate the study.

Research Design and Rationale

Qualitative research focuses on observation, lived experiences, and individual opinions (Creswell & Poth, 2018) and involves understanding and exploring a social or human problem. In a qualitative study, in order to capture detailed content on how individuals describe their lived experiences, the researcher creates a holistic picture, reports the views of key players, and analyzes their words while conducting the study in a natural setting (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The qualitative research began with assumptions regarding the conceptual/interpretive framework to inform the researcher of the problem being addressed. Data are collected in a natural setting and analysis of data can be both inductive and deductive to establish themes and patterns. The final presentation of the data includes the voices of the players, the reflections of the researcher, interpretation of the complex problem, and contribution to the literature (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

A case study approach was selected for this investigation in order to develop a deeper understanding of how leaders from logistic companies in the trucking industry have experienced working from home during the COVID-19 pandemic, which may have affected their ability to promote PSC. The purpose of the case study was to offer a comprehensive picture of the case via the data analysis of various sources of information detailing the facts of the case where I discovered themes or concerns (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Case studies may be broken down into the following categories:

- Instinct—a one-of-a-kind instance of remarkable interest in and of itself that must be documented and discussed
- Instrumental—a study of a single example with the goal of understanding a specific topic, issue, or concern
- Collective—several instances chosen to highlight an issue, problem, or worry

Creswell and Poth (2018) suggested that philosophical truths are held by rational approximations, which can only be obtained through a dialog with others and through reflection. I can only portray interpretations of the truth but cannot measure it. With individuals talking jointly about their experiences, I can construct and interpret their truths from a thoughtful dialogue (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The central research question guiding this study was the following:

- RQ1. How did the trucking industry's logistic companies' crisis management policy of having leaders work from home during the COVID-19 pandemic affect leaders' ability to promote positive social change?

Case studies are useful in conducting social science research because they describe the experience of a specific occurrence constrained by time and location in order to enlighten others about that experience. Exploratory case study approaches are excellent for examining interventions with unclear outcomes because they allow for the analysis of ambiguous settings (Yin, 2018).

Role of the Researcher

My obligation as a researcher was to develop research questions, conduct interviews with a sample of leaders, and conduct a literature review relevant to the subject under examination. To address the study topic, I gathered and evaluated data through conducting interviews, maintaining a notebook, and examining tangible artifacts such as government papers and databases of leaders from logistic companies in the trucking industry. As a qualitative researcher, my job was to understand the thoughts and emotions of the leaders. Understanding their thoughts and emotions was complex because it required individuals to speak about often highly personal topics. Sometimes the events being studied were no longer fresh in the leaders' memories, making it difficult to relive old experiences. My main job was to protect leaders and their data, regardless of how they were gathered. Mechanisms for such protection must be adequately communicated to leaders and authorized by a competent research institutional review board prior to the start of a study (Brady, 2015).

I would have risked biasing my results if I had inadvertently interpreted facts to meet my beliefs or included just the information I thought promoted my assumptions, and

I may also have induced bias if I only integrated data that those I interviewed believed were significant. I attempted to mitigate such biases through triangulation. The only way that I, as a researcher, could eliminate my assumption bias was by analyzing all the information gathered and then evaluating it with an open and objective mind. I attempted to maintain a consistent practice of constantly reevaluating perceptions and answers and was wary of making assumptions based on previous experiences. I tried to keep the questions simple and avoid any wording that would produce a biased answer. I avoided asking leading questions and queries meant to generate a response from the respondent that supported a particular assumption.

Methodology

The methodology explains the rationale that underlies the selection of leaders and discusses the apparatus and instruments developed specifically for this study. A strategy for analysis, the process for recruiting leaders, data collection, data analysis, and trustworthiness are included in this section. My intention was to provide enough information regarding these parts of the study to ensure that other researchers may reproduce the general structure of the research successfully.

Participant Selection Logic

In qualitative research, purposeful sampling is often employed to identify and choose information-rich examples linked to the topic of interest. A purposeful sample is a set of items, people, or objects gathered from a wider population (Creswell & Poth, 2018). According to the findings of Zyphur and Pierides (2019), researchers may benefit

from using purposeful sampling to identify people with firsthand experience of the event. This exploratory case study's leaders were chosen from multiple sites in the Dallas–Fort Worth, Texas, metropolitan area; many were native Texans. For this qualitative study, I sought volunteers from logistic organizations presently employed in the trucking industry who had worked from home and were willing to offer some of their time in return for the chance to participate in the research. TCI Logistics, Buchanan's Logistics, and Flock of Freight Logistics are examples of the kinds of trucking organizations from which leaders were recruited for this study.

I contacted leaders who had been purposefully selected through social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram, which saved time and provided broader access to a larger audience (Muduli & Trivedi, 2020). Finding an organizational leader who lives in a minority culture or is a marginalized person was a great addition to the sample. Potential leaders were asked questions to see if they qualified for the study, which are presented in Appendix A. These leaders were strategically selected to gather diverse sets of data and to explore lived experiences from different circumstances at the economic and social levels. The target group for this study consisted of individuals between the ages of 18 and 64 who were currently employed in logistic companies in the trucking industry, including managers, directors, and board members who worked from home during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Researchers are aware that the size of a sample changes according to several different criteria, one of which is the depth of the data that each organizational leader

might contribute (Beck, 2021). For example, when leaders provide more information about their experiences, the required number of samples might be reduced (Beck, 2021). This study involved a diverse group of 10 participants, consisting of seven males and four females; because of their unique backgrounds and experiences, they provided a rich source of data sufficient to reach data saturation (Hennink & Kaiser, 2022). Data saturation takes place when the leaders' descriptions become repetitive and redundant and are offering no new or different ideas (Beck, 2021; Creswell & Poth, 2018). In this study, data collection continued until data saturation was met. The sample size of 10 participants aligns with research that indicates that six interviews should be expected to yield a researcher a 70% chance of data saturation, while 12 should produce a 92% chance (Guest et al., 2020).

Instrumentation

A qualitative research instrument is a tool for collecting, measuring, and analyzing data relevant to one's study objectives (Yin, 2018). In qualitative research, in contrast to quantitative research, the researcher plays a significant role in the process and may even be seen as one of the qualitative instruments (Leigh, 2022). The researcher typically chooses the research instrument linked to the study approach. After conceptualization and choosing units of analysis are done, the next step is to choose or develop a research instrument appropriate to the qualitative study. The following is a list of some qualities that should be considered when choosing an instrument:

1) acceptable and trustworthy; 2) relying on a conceptual framework, 3) the individual variables in the study are connected; 4) it is necessary to collect data appropriate for and relevant to the subject of the research; 5) capable of conducting experiments to test hypotheses or provide answers to specified research questions while the inquiry is ongoing; 6) unbiased and suitable for the environment, the people, and the differences that exist at the research location; 7) comes with instructions on how to operate the instrument that is unambiguous and specific. (Teachers College, Columbia University, 2022, para. 3)

According to Trigueros et al. (2017), three primary types of research instruments are available. Observation, questionnaires, and interviews are the three main types of research instruments. These are described as follows:

- Observation—watching what people do—is a nonexperimental method that researchers use to learn what is going on.
- Questionnaires refer to any and all methods of measurement that entail the process of asking open-ended questions of leaders online or on paper.
- Interviews are interactions in which an interviewer poses verbal questions to elicit verbal replies from an interviewee.

Even though the three sources listed above are the most prominent and most frequently used, case studies can use a variety of other sources of information. Evidence may come from any combination of the following possible sources: documentation, archival records,

interviews, physical artifacts, direct observations, and participant-observation (Yin, 2018, p. 114).

This study used a qualitative method due to the nature of the research and the research instrument used. Because I was doing a qualitative research case study, the research instrument I chose for this study was interviews, organizational documents, and government archival records. The interview technique includes three sorts of interviews from which to choose: structured, unstructured, and semistructured (Adhabi & Anozie, 2017). The interview method that I chose for this study was a semistructured interview because it is an interview that is not directed in any specific way, with open-ended questions and the utilization of serendipitous engagement. For the semistructured interview, I created an interview protocol (Appendix C), which was intended to answer the core research question:

RQ1. How did the trucking industry's logistic companies' crisis management policy of having leaders work from home during the COVID-19 pandemic affect leaders' ability to promote positive social change?

Because the same information was solicited during each interview, each should be seen as an individual source with a unique point of view, which made it less likely that there were problems with credibility when using a standard interview protocol (Patton, 2015). The basic questions that were asked in the semistructured interviews were open-ended questions that allowed leaders to create answers on their terms and communicate them

verbally (Yin, 2018). In one way or another, all questions focused on the study's research question.

I created a semistructured interview containing open-ended questions that was both valid and reliable. Reliability is a concept related to data accuracy and consistency, while validity describes how accurately a test can measure what it claims to be measuring (Patton, 2015). I was assisted by specialists with expertise in this area to analyze the reliability and validity of the qualitative instrument and determine that it matched with my research questions. These experts were university management professors with extensive experience in research procedures.

Field Study

Field studies are preliminary investigations that are carried out on a smaller scale at the beginning of a larger research project to establish whether crucial components of the full research study will be feasible (Bunyan et al., 2017). Qualitative interviews provide a plethora of information and details that help understand other people's experiences. Conversely, untrained researchers could find it challenging to conduct qualitative research interviews successfully. According to Roud (2021), doing field test interviews before conducting a full study is necessary for qualitative research, in that a preliminary study allows an opportunity for experience, practice, change, and revision.

A researcher conducting a field study aims to gather information for qualitative research and comprehensive study to follow. In addition, thanks to a pilot project, researchers can test out different interviewing strategies and ideas based on their personal

experiences in conducting these interviews (Majid et al., 2017). In a field like the social sciences, field tests are generally used in one of two ways: either as a preliminary form of a more extensive study—known as a “feasibility study”—or as a way of trying out a particular qualitative research instrument (Malmqvist et al., 2019, p. 2). Before a research design is finalized, field tests are often done to improve the planned study’s validity, reliability, and feasibility. For this qualitative research, I conducted pilot interviews in a semistructured format in order to locate and remove any problems that existed in my interview strategy (Appendix C). The field study for this project involved three interviews to confirm that the full proposed qualitative research was feasible.

In Chapter 4 of this dissertation, I describe a field study as a research method employed to investigate the phenomenon within its natural setting. It involved me immersing myself in the field or real-world context of the study to gather data firsthand. Through the field study described in Chapter 4, I provided a deep understanding of the subject under investigation by observing, interacting with, and collecting data from participants directly within their natural environment. This chapter highlights the field study’s specific objectives and research question. It describes the methodology and procedures for selecting participants, collecting data, and what emerged from the field study. In Chapter 4, I explain how the field study was implemented, providing a clear and comprehensive description of the research approach employed.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

This qualitative research recruited participants from logistics trucking companies in the United States, primarily from the Dallas-Fort Worth region of Texas. As subjects for this study, I focused on managers, directors, and board members who had worked from home during the COVID-19 pandemic. I contacted these individuals through social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram; using social media proved to be time-efficient and provided access to a large audience (Muduli & Trivedi, 2020). Since I succeeded in acquiring a sufficient number of participants for this research, I only needed to broaden my search to include more companies (Hennink & Kaiser, 2022). These leaders were strategically selected using purposeful sampling to gather a diverse set of subjects that allowed for the exploration of lived experiences from different circumstances at the economic and social levels.

Data collection is a series of interrelated actions to collect quality information about established research questions (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The data in this study were collected using triangulation from three sources: leader interviews, government documents, and organization websites, the latter two of which were freely available in the public domain. I chose relevant websites based on my research question following a process as such:

1. **Examination of Websites:** I carefully examined 52 websites, assessing them based on three critical criteria: content, design, and usability.

2. Criteria Assessment: a). The content was evaluated on the relevance and quality of the information provided. b) The layout, visual appeal, and ease of navigation assessed the design. c) The usability was checked for user-friendliness and accessibility.
3. Categorization: The websites were segregated into two categories: government and organizational.
4. Selection for Relevance and Trustworthiness: The 16 most relevant and trustworthy websites from the government sector were meticulously chosen. I similarly selected 15 organizational websites that adhere to comparable standards of relevance and credibility.

Using qualitative methods, I evaluated themes and narratives, emphasizing measurable data such as user engagement. This approach emphasizes the importance of matching the research method to the research questions. I ensured that all the findings were intricately related to my research questions and that everything was meticulously documented. This meticulous documentation was carried out to ensure reliability and to meet the high standards that are expected from qualitative research. Qualitative research interviews attempt to understand the leaders' points of view, unfold their meanings, and uncover their lived experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). I asked open-ended questions with the awareness that the personal biases of the interviewees might influence their responses (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The interviews were designed as a social conversation and were conducted in a secure and safe physical place.

According to Davis et al. (2020), an interview is a structured social interaction between the interviewer and interviewee to obtain information. Once the interview process was complete, the interviews were transcribed. Following transcription, I sanitized the data set to remove any identifying information before data analysis. Howland et al. (2020) suggested that knowledge is created when reciprocal communication occurs between the interviewer and interviewee. A qualitative research interview attempts to comprehend an individual's world from their perspective to uncover a person's lived experience. Individuals are selected for interviews based on what is being examined and the type of questions being asked (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The interviewee must, of course, understand each question asked during the interview.

The interview process was a vital part of this qualitative research because it was one of three sources of data collection. Potential participants were asked a set of preliminary questions to see if they qualified for the study (Appendix A). Once an organizational leader was determined to be qualified and agreed to participate in the study, a letter of introduction (Appendix B) was sent to each person, and an interview time was scheduled. Interviews were conducted in a natural setting or through video-conferencing technology such as Zoom, Skype, or Facebook in a secure place where only I and the organizational leader could converse. Prior to the beginning of each interview, each participant reviewed and signed the informed consent form. I explained the meaning of informed consent, detailed how each leader's confidentiality would be protected, and

informed each subject that participation in the study was voluntary and that they were free to skip any question or withdraw from the study at any time.

The interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes using an open-ended, structured interview protocol (Appendix C). During the interview, I asked leaders about their firsthand knowledge of the COVID-19 pandemic. I then determined the participants' lived experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic, their use of work-from-home procedures, and what situations may have influenced their ability to promote PSC (Creswell & Poth, 2018). After each interview, a debriefing included a detailed, goal-oriented review of data shortly after its collection (McMahon & Winch, 2018). An outside transcription service transcribed the data from the interviews after signing a required non-disclosure agreement (Appendix D). After the interviews were transcribed, I conducted member-checking for accuracy and verification (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Data Analysis

The purpose of this qualitative exploratory case study was to examine how working from home during the COVID-19 pandemic affected the ability of directors, managers, and board members from logistic companies in the trucking industry to promote PSC. The data analysis was carried out using a thematic approach. Thematic analysis is an analytic data processing method used to identify patterns, meaning, and themes (Peterson, 2017). After the interviews were conducted and all the information was gathered, I sanitized the data set, and transcripts were uploaded and the coding process begun using the ATLAS.ti qualitative analysis software, a data analysis system that

makes it simple to analyze qualitative data for the purpose of conducting qualitative research. By using the software, I was able to organize the data, create a master code list, form code groups, and identify code networks and emergent themes (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In addition to conducting interviews, I analyzed government and organization websites, the details of which can be found in Appendix F and Appendix G. During the interviews, I used active listening and adaptive questioning, tailoring my questions based on the participants' responses. I employed probing questions to dive deeper into relevant topics, aiming for a comprehensive understanding of each participant's perspectives. Inductive coding was used to conduct the thematic analysis. Inductive codes refer to codes, words, or short phrases, which I used to summarize the basic topic of a passage in the data (Saldaña, 2021). Inductive coding is a ground up approach to the coding process that uses the actual language of the participant (Saldaña, 2021). Inductive coding was appropriate for this study to identify themes and concepts and reflect the leaders' lived experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. The coding process was conducted in three phases: (a) first cycle: inductive coding; (b) second cycle: creating categories; and (c) third cycle: identifying emergent themes.

The first cycle of the coding process involved inductive coding. In this cycle, I assigned codes to passages of text using inductive codes (Saldaña, 2021). During the second cycle of the coding process, I began to create categories by combining and refining the codes created in the first cycle. The third cycle of the coding process was used to identify emerging themes across the data set in order to capture the leaders'

experience and how the working-from-home policy affected their ability to promote PSC (Saldaña, 2021). Thematic analysis includes all three steps of the coding process, and I utilized a codebook (Appendix E) to assist with organizing code categories into themes (Creswell & Poth, 2018). After I had finished processing all the information collected from the interviews, I next applied data triangulation. Data triangulation is a form of analysis to assure that the findings are as accurate as possible. The triangulation process included interviews that were crosschecked and compared with data from organizational web sites as well as records maintained by the government.

Issues of Trustworthiness

In qualitative research, nonnumeric data such as text, video, or audio are collected and evaluated to better understand concepts, views, or experiences. Qualitative research may be used to develop an in-depth grasp of a topic or to generate innovative research ideas. This study's primary objective is to use qualitative research that can be trusted in terms of its credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability to address the research question.

Credibility

Credibility is a crucial parameter when assessing the authenticity of qualitative research or determining if the findings of a study are authentic and accurate. Data triangulation was used to demonstrate the credibility of this qualitative research. Data triangulation combines various data sources or methodologies for data analysis to improve the credibility of a research project (Yin, 2018). When many research

approaches provide the same or similar findings, one has a significant basis for confidence in the findings and an increased ability to demonstrate the reliability and validity of those findings. The fundamental concept of credibility drives the strategy of triangulation. Following the interviews, I employed a second approach to ensure credibility, such as member checking. Member checking is also known as responder confirmation, a technique for determining the credibility of the results. The data is returned to the subjects to confirm the transcript's accuracy and assess whether it corresponded to their personal experience of the interview (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Transferability

The term “transferability” refers to the extent to which qualitative research findings may be extended or used for research conducted in different settings or environments; when looking at data from a qualitative point of view, the person performing the generalizing is the primary person responsible for transferability (Korstjens & Moser, 2017). Transferability may be improved if the qualitative researcher presents sufficient information about the study setting and the assumptions crucial to the investigation. The individual wishing to “transfer” the findings to a new setting, rather than the original researcher, bears ultimate responsibility for determining the defensibility of the transfer.

Dependability

The dependability of qualitative research is the consistency of the results over time. The research process is recorded, enabling someone outside the study to monitor,

audit, and critique the study. Dependability is an important quality indicator in ecological and conservation research projects in the early phases of testing results in numerous settings to build trust in the evidence (Moon et al., 2016). The reader may examine the degree to which suitable research procedures have been followed thanks to a detailed description of the approach and methodologies used, assuming one is provided. Researchers should record study design and execution, including approach and methods, data collection, and project reflection. Improving the research process's openness, reflexivity, or self-assessment of subjectivity may minimize bias and promote dependability (Moon et al., 2016).

Confirmability

All qualitative research, to some extent, is subjective, and it is equally necessary to keep in mind that the conclusions of a study should reflect the phenomena that are the topic of the investigation, not the preferences of the researcher who conducted the study (Moon et al., 2016). If researchers ignored certain perceptions in the belief that they were unrelated to the research questions, they would risk the study's confirmability. Asking subjects their thoughts on which perceptions impact the topic under examination can mitigate this risk. Perception of the influence of reflexivity on personal interviews might be reduced via awareness of the possibility of that effect. Finally, an independent auditor knowledgeable in qualitative data analysis can increase confirmability.

Ethical Procedures

Prior to data collection, I obtained authorization from Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) to ensure the study adhered to relevant standards and posed only minimal risk to the participants. Data collection commenced only after receiving IRB approval. To safeguard the identities of the leaders involved, consent forms and assigned alphanumeric numbers were kept unlinked throughout the process. Signed consent forms were securely stored digitally on an encrypted zip drive, while all physical copies were promptly destroyed. I was the sole individual with access to this password-protected zip drive. To further protect participants' privacy, the data on the zip drives will be electronically wiped and the drives physically destroyed three years after the study's conclusion. Leaders were not compensated for their participation, were informed of their right to withdraw at any time without penalty, and understood that the study posed a low degree of risk, as detailed in the informed consent form. They were also made aware that no direct benefits from participating in the research were guaranteed.

Summary

This case study seeks to develop a deeper understanding of how working from home during the COVID-19 pandemic affected the ability of directors, managers, and board members from logistic companies in the trucking industry to promote PSC. The central research question guiding this study was:

RQ1. How did the trucking industry's logistic companies' crisis management policy of having leaders work from home during the COVID-19 pandemic affect leaders' ability to promote positive social change?

In addition to this central research question, the purpose of this qualitative exploratory case study was to investigate how working-from-home policies during the COVID-19 pandemic affected the ability of directors, managers, and board members from logistic companies in the trucking industry to promote PSC. Data was collected using semistructured interviews and a variety of techniques to insure trustworthiness. Thematic analysis of data involved inductive coding, and data triangulation was employed.

This chapter provided an introduction to qualitative research, addressed the approach that would be employed, and described the sample that would be included in this inquiry. Following that was a review of the methodologies used for this research regarding data collection and analysis. The chapter's last subject was an evaluation of the ethical questions raised throughout the investigation. After presenting the findings from this qualitative study and how they relate to the research question for this project, the following chapters will examine the implications and significance of those findings.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this qualitative exploratory case study was to investigate how working-from-home policies during the COVID-19 pandemic affected the ability of directors, managers, and board members in logistic companies from the trucking industry to promote PSC. The research question that I addressed through this exploratory case study was the following:

RQ1. How did the trucking industry's logistic companies' crisis management policy of having leaders work from home during the COVID-19 pandemic affect leaders' ability to promote positive social change?

This chapter's content is organized into seven sections. The research setting, participant demographics, data collection, data analysis, trustworthiness, study outcomes, and a summary are all included in this section. The research setting section includes information about the organization, the data collection site, and circumstances that may have influenced participants or the study's interpretation.

The participant demographics section summarizes participant characteristics pertinent to the research. The data collection section indicates the number of participants from whom data were gathered; states the locations, frequencies, and durations of the data collection instrument; and contains a description of the data recording procedure. The part on data analysis goes through the process of transitioning from deductive to inductive coding, which results in more comprehensive representations such as categories and themes. Details on particular codes, categories, and themes arose from the data. The

part on trustworthiness addresses components and concerns pertinent to this qualitative investigation. At the same time, the section on study outcomes gives the specifics of the study's findings in answer to the research question. Finally, the results of the investigation are summarized.

Field Study

I first developed a semistructured interview guide with open-ended questions to perform the field test. These questions were designed to prompt in-depth discussions around the research question, yet they were flexible enough to allow me to probe further or follow up based on the participant's responses. After creating the guide, I selected three participants representative of the larger study group. These individuals were then interviewed, and each conversation was recorded and transcribed verbatim to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the data collected. Following transcription, I imported the data into qualitative data analysis software, Atlas.ti. I carefully read each transcript multiple times, assigning codes to text sections representing distinct ideas or themes. The original research question was the driving force behind this coding process, and it was also inductive, allowing themes to emerge from the data. Through this rigorous process of coding and recoding, several key themes emerged. These themes gave me a deeper understanding of the research topic, providing nuanced insights that confirmed and challenged my initial hypotheses. By refining these themes, I was able to develop a comprehensive understanding of the data and identify areas for further exploration in the main study. Conducting a field test served as a critical preliminary step in the research

process, with the primary objective of evaluating the feasibility of the main study's research design, procedures, and data collection instruments.

By conducting a field study, I assessed the appropriateness of the research design and gauged the reliability and validity of the data collection tools before embarking on the main study. The participants involved in the field study and the resulting findings displayed predominantly positive outcomes, suggesting that the research design was appropriate and the data collection instruments were both reliable and valid. I identified some areas for improvement based on the feedback from the participants in the field study. Accordingly, the data collection instrument and data analysis strategies were refined to optimize their effectiveness and align more closely with the research question. Although the field study did not directly influence the sample size or the overall research question of the main study, it played a crucial role in refining the research procedures. The insights gained from this preliminary step ensured a smoother execution of the main study and minimized potential issues that could have arisen during data collection. The field study offered invaluable insights into the data collection process, which allowed the fine-tuning of data analysis strategies to address the research question better.

Research Setting

There were no major personal or organizational conditions that directly affected the participants. It is crucial to highlight that the study was conducted in a period of political and social turmoil, which may have influenced the participants. For example, there had been riots in major city streets and official policies that forced individuals to

wear face masks. Additionally, the organizations where the study was conducted had experienced some management and leadership changes, in part as a consequence of the pandemic, which could have potentially impacted the participants. These modifications occurred before the research began, and there is no indication that they had any substantial influence on the participants or their experiences. Budget cuts did not directly affect the study or the participants, as the funding for the research was secured prior to the budget cuts. It is worth noting that the budget cuts during the COVID-19 pandemic did impact the overall functioning of the organizations, which could have directly or indirectly affected the participants. Essentially, while there were no direct personal or organizational conditions that impacted the participants or the study results, it is important to consider the potential indirect effects of the political and social context in which the study took place, certain changes in personnel, and recent budget cuts that may have affected the organization and its functioning, which could have potentially influenced the participants' experiences during the pandemic.

Participants

The data from Table 1 include a group of 10 individuals, each with their own backgrounds and experiences. These participants were carefully selected from a broad metropolitan region. All participants were full-time workers in midlevel management or higher positions with at least 3 years of experience in their present employment. All were employed by logistics companies within the trucking industry and had firsthand experience of working at home during the COVID-19 pandemic. This ensured that the

participants were well qualified to provide insights into the challenges and opportunities faced by leaders in the industry during this unprecedented period.

Table 1

Participants Table

Participant	Occupational background	Years in trucking	Education level
Participant 1	Director	15	Bachelor's
Participant 2	Manager	5	Bachelor's
Participant 3	Manager	12	Master's
Participant 4	Director	7	Bachelor's
Participant 5	Manager	24	Bachelor's
Participant 6	Vice president	35	Bachelor's
Participant 7	Manager	6	High school
Participant 8	Manager	7	High school
Participant 9	CEO	33	Master's
Participant 10	Director	15	Master's

The participants exhibited a range of academic diplomas or degrees. The participants in the study had different lengths of employment at their current company, with a mean (average) of 7 years and a standard deviation of 1.3 years. The participants each managed a mean (average) of six direct reports. It is important to acknowledge that purposeful efforts taken to incorporate various backgrounds and experiences enabled the

research to capture a wide range of opinions. This approach contributed to an understanding of the challenges and opportunities experienced by leaders during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the strategies employed to adapt to the rapidly changing landscape of remote work. Table 1 illustrates the diverse range of participants and their varying backgrounds.

Data Collection

After obtaining approval from the Walden University Institutional Review Board in the spring of 2023 (04-03-23-1160113), I proceeded with data collection. For this qualitative research study, the primary objective was to gain insight into the experiences of leaders in logistic companies in the trucking industry during the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly in regard to the shift to remote work. To this end, a sample of 10 leaders from various logistic companies operating in the Dallas–Fort Worth region of Texas were recruited who had firsthand experience of working from home during the pandemic and were able to provide insights into the challenges and opportunities of remote work in the industry. Purposive sampling was employed to strategically select participants, ensuring the inclusion of diverse themes and perspectives. Qualitative researchers use purposive sampling to choose participants who can provide insights for a study. This method involves intentional selection based on specific criteria or qualities to gather comprehensive, pertinent, and detailed data on the research topic. This sampling method allowed for a comprehensive exploration of lived experiences across various economic and social circumstances. A sample size of 10 participants was deemed appropriate for

this qualitative study as it facilitated the collection of rich, detailed data reaching saturation while still being manageable for analysis.

Leader interviews constituted the main source of data and were conducted either in person or via videoconferencing technology. In order to qualify for the study, potential participants were asked a set of preliminary questions regarding their work experiences during the pandemic. Upon qualification and agreement to participate, each received a letter of introduction, and an interview time was scheduled. Each interview lasted around half an hour and was conducted using an open-ended, semistructured interview approach (Appendix C). During the discussions, I consistently followed the set guidelines and probed the leaders about their personal insights into the COVID-19 outbreak. We explored their challenges and adaptations during the pandemic, their transition to remote work protocols, and any situations that affected their potential to drive PSC. The interview process was structured as a social conversation and was conducted in a secure and safe environment. Once the interviews were completed, the data were transcribed and sanitized, with any identifying information removed to ensure anonymity.

An outside transcription service was utilized to maintain the accuracy of the data. Following the transcription, I engaged in member checking by sharing the transcribed data with participants, allowing them to confirm or correct the interpretations, thereby ensuring the data's accuracy and validity. The data collection process began on April 4, 2023, and concluded around May 10, 2023. Interviews were scheduled every Tuesday and Thursday at 10:00 a.m., providing ample intervals for comprehensive data analysis.

All data were recorded digitally and securely stored on password-protected devices. Consent to record the interviews was obtained from each participant prior to beginning the interview. Throughout the data collection phase, the process adhered strictly to the predetermined protocol. No unexpected challenges or unusual circumstances arose. In situations where participants hesitated to share particular details, I respected their preferences, always ensuring that their confidentiality was maintained. I also performed a process called member checking. This process ensures that the findings and interpretations align with the participants' intended meanings and experiences. Member checking enhances the credibility, validity, and ethical integrity of research by actively involving participants in the validation of a study's results. This process ensures that the researcher's findings and interpretations align with the participants' intended meanings and experiences. It enhances the credibility, validity, and ethical integrity of the research by actively involving participants in the validation of the study's results. Through this qualitative research study, I aimed to provide insights into the experiences of leaders in the trucking and logistics industry during the COVID-19 pandemic, specifically focusing on the transition to remote work. By examining the unique perspectives of these leaders, I sought to uncover the challenges and opportunities of remote work in the industry, ultimately contributing to a broader understanding of effective leadership and management strategies in times of crisis.

Preliminary Data Analysis

In order to ensure the correct interpretation of the data and the detection of relevant patterns, the process of progressing inductively from coded units to larger representations, including categories and themes, was made up of a number of steps as follows:

1. **Familiarity with the data:** The first stage was to familiarize myself with the data by immersing myself in them through multiple attentive readings of interview transcripts, field notes, and related documentation in order to acquire a comprehensive grasp of the experiences and viewpoints of the participants.
2. **Initial coding:** I began by assigning descriptive codes to the segments of the data that I felt best represented significant concepts, ideas, or patterns. The responses of the participants were summarized and categorized using these codes, which served as labels. Some examples of initial classifications were “limited the potential to participate in the community,” “protective measures,” and “legitimate by having clear set of rules and values.”
3. **Classifying codes into categories:** In order to create more general groups, I categorized codes that were identical, similar, or very close to one another. These categories reflected higher level concepts that included numerous facets of the data and were used to organize them. For instance, the codes “back to old practices” and “still participate in activities” were combined to create a

category that was referred to as “performing activities as they used to before pandemic.”

4. Identifying themes: This step required me to evaluate the categories and the links between them in order to locate the overarching themes that summed up the data and provided an answer to the research question. The categories helped give rise to a number of themes, including the hindrance in positive social activity.
5. Refining and reviewing the themes: The themes were reviewed and evaluated to make sure that they appropriately represented the data and that they were backed by an adequate amount of evidence. I reviewed the data and the quotations from the participants to double check that the themes were accurate and to search for any potential inconsistencies or holes in the analysis.
6. Presenting the themes and findings: The final themes, along with the categories and codes that correspond to them, were presented in a way that was both clear and consistent. Participant quotations were utilized as necessary to stress the importance of the themes and to give a rich, contextualized understanding of the findings. During the course of the investigation, I was able to locate instances of discrepancy or evidence that did not confirm the predominant themes and patterns. The cases presented different perspectives or experiences that either contradicted, challenged, or

expanded the broader understanding of the research question that was being studied.

In order to incorporate contradictory cases into the analysis, I did the following:

1. I recognized and documented the contradictory cases that were found in the findings, making sure that they were not ignored or disregarded in the process.
2. I investigated the many hypotheses that could explain the discrepancies, including individual differences, contextual factors, and methodological problems, among others.
3. I revisited the data and reexamined it to ensure that I had not neglected to include any pertinent information or incorrectly misconstrued the responses of the participants.
4. I integrated contrasting examples into the findings by identifying these examples as another theme: When I presented the findings of the research, I described the contrasting cases and emphasized how those cases led to a more complete and nuanced understanding of the phenomenon that was being investigated.

The research showed a dedication to rigor, reliability, and credibility by including cases that did not fit the established pattern in the analysis as a separate theme. This helped to ensure that a wide variety of experiences and points of view were taken into account and reflected in the conclusions.

Software-Assisted Analysis

During this qualitative research, I employed Atlas.ti, a software tool for qualitative data analysis, to assist with the coding process. By using this tool, I was able to effectively organize and analyze the wealth of textual and multimedia data I had gathered from interviews, organizational websites, and government document. I began with importing my data into Atlas.ti, which included transcriptions of interviews, organizational websites data, and relevant government documents. The software's user-friendly interface allowed me to navigate through the data with ease, highlighting and annotating relevant segments for further analysis. Once the data were input, I started the coding process by creating a codebook (Appendix E) containing a list of codes representing themes, concepts, and patterns that I had identified during the preliminary analysis.

Atlas.ti facilitated the organization of these codes into hierarchical structures, making it simple to create parent and child codes to demonstrate relationships between different concepts. The software's built-in coding tools, such as the code manager and quotation manager, enabled me to assign codes to relevant data segments. The drag-and-drop functionality allowed me to associate specific quotations with their respective codes. Additionally, the software could be used for the creation of memos, which I used to document my thoughts and reflections on the data throughout the coding process. Atlas.ti's visualization tools, including the network view and code co-occurrence tools, proved invaluable in identifying relationships between codes and uncovering underlying

patterns in my data. The representations aided my comprehension of the interplay between themes, fostering a deeper and more detailed analysis.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

To demonstrate evidence of trustworthiness in my research, I employed the following strategies to address credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. These strategies were essential in ensuring that my research was rigorous and well grounded, providing a solid foundation for further exploration and knowledge generation.

Credibility

To ensure the credibility of the study, I employed multiple strategies as outlined in Chapter 3. These strategies included triangulation, prolonged engagement with the research context, and member checking. During data collection and analysis, I achieved triangulation by using different data sources, such as interviews, observations, and document analysis. Prolonged engagement in the field allowed me to develop a deep understanding of the research context, thereby reducing the risk of misinterpretation. Lastly, I conducted member checking by sharing findings with participants, allowing them to confirm the accuracy of the interpretations, at times to add or refine comments, and to provide feedback for any necessary adjustments

Transferability

I addressed transferability by providing a detailed description of the research context, participants, and data collection methods, as described in Chapter 3. These

descriptions should hopefully enable readers to understand the study setting and determine the extent to which the findings may be applicable to other contexts.

Additionally, I documented all methodological decisions and changes throughout the research process, ensuring transparency and allowing future researchers to replicate or adapt the study to different settings.

Dependability

To ensure dependability, the researcher maintained a clear audit trail, as outlined in Chapter 3. This comprised thorough documentation of the study process, including data collection, data analysis, and decision-making. The audit trail allowed for an examination of the study's consistency and trustworthiness. Additionally, I conducted a peer debriefing process in which an independent researcher familiar with the subject matter reviewed the data, analysis, and findings. This process confirmed that there were no biases or inconsistencies in the research from an external perspective.

Confirmability

I addressed confirmability by maintaining reflexivity and transparency throughout the research process, as discussed in Chapter 3. I engaged in reflexive journaling, documenting my thoughts, experiences, and potential biases to ensure that personal perspectives did not unduly influence the study's findings. I documented methodological decisions, offering a transparent account of the research process. This approach allowed for an assessment of the study's neutrality and ensured that the findings were based on

participants' experiences and perspectives, rather than on my biases or preconceived notions.

Study Results

To achieve data saturation, I conducted interviews with 10 individuals, utilizing data triangulation to develop a comprehensive understanding of the subject under investigation. To address the research question, I organized the content according to the themes and patterns that emerged from the thematic analysis. The research question addressed in this study is:

RQ1. How did the trucking industry's logistic companies' crisis management policy of having leaders work from home during the COVID-19 pandemic affect leaders' ability to promote positive social change?

The results of the study inspired the development of fifteen primary themes, each of which is accompanied by quotes serving to reinforce, demonstrate, and validate the themes. The process of obtaining the data is shown in Table 2 and the codes and categories that developed the themes are displayed in Table 3.

Table 2*Research Question, Interview Questions, and Data Analysis*

Research question	Interview questions	Types of data	Analysis
How did the trucking industry's logistics companies' crisis management policy of having leaders work from home during the COVID-19 pandemic affect leaders' ability to promote positive social change?	<p>What are your thoughts on your organization's work-from-home policy during the COVID-19 pandemic?</p> <p>In what ways did the COVID-19 pandemic work-from-home policy prevent you from promoting positive social change? If not, why not?</p> <p>How do you think your organization handled the COVID-19 pandemic crisis?</p> <p>What practical strategies could your organizations use to avert future chaos during a crisis and promote positive social change?</p> <p>In what ways do you believe your organization to be legitimate?</p> <p>How has your organization legitimized its efforts to promote positive social change during the COVID-19 pandemic?</p>	Semistructured open-ended question interviews, organizational websites, and freely available government documents.	Thematic analysis

Table 3*The Thematic Analysis Table*

Themes	Subthemes (categories)	Initial codes
Employee perspective on remote work	Employee well-being and safety	Safety
	Safety and social connection	Employee safety but miss the social interaction
Positive social activity before pandemic	Employee motivation for better work	Meeting people
	Volunteer work	Positive social activity
	Participating in donation and being environmentally friendly	
	Participation in events	Walk for change event
	Educating children Food donation, social change participation	
Positive social activity during pandemic	Volunteering during remote opportunities	Positive social activity during pandemic
	Nonparticipative	Cannot participate in social events
	Affecting the positive social activities	Job involving face-to-face interaction
	Participating in activity with protective measures	Positive social activity during COVID and its difficulty
	Pandemic made the positive social activity challenging	Positive social activity during COVID
	Engagement through social media	
Positive social activity after pandemic	Performing activities as they used to before pandemic	Positive social activity after COVID
	Unable to adapt to change	
Challenges	Employee struggle Work–life balance	Challenge while working at home
Safety in pandemic Equipping remote workers	Handling the crisis	Protective measures
	Company providing facilities to employees	Equipment
Future policy	Dealing with future crisis	Policies

Themes	Subthemes (categories)	Initial codes
Government policies	Government policies do affect the business	Government policies
Hindrance in positive social activity	Pandemic didn't hinder the positive social activity	Hindrance from promoting positive social change
Legitimate practice	Legitimacy by clear set of rules Legitimacy by complying with legal requirement, superior relationship with clients	Legitimate business
Legitimate practice during pandemic	Legitimacy by giving significant value to our clients Legitimacy by partnership Legitimacy by giving education	Legitimate business Legitimate effort during pandemic
Strategies preventing future chaos	Strategies by having contingency plan Strategies by improving the communication with clients, improving technology	Strategies
Partnership	Partnership with clubs Partnership with environmental sustainability organization	Promoting positive social activities
Technology usage	Technology available to use at home	

Theme 1. Employee Perspective on Remote Work

As the world grappled with the COVID-19 pandemic, many organizations quickly pivoted to a remote work model to ensure the safety of their employees. The employee perspective on this transition was predominantly positive, as they recognized the importance of this move to safeguard their well-being. One participant expressed, “I think that our work-from-home policy during the COVID-19 pandemic has been essential to ensuring the safety and health of our employees. It was a challenging time for everyone.” This statement underscores the vital role that the remote work policy played during this unparalleled crisis, emphasizing its importance in preserving the health of the workforce.

Echoing this sentiment, another participant remarked, “I believe that our organization's work-from-home policy during the COVID-19 pandemic was necessary to ensure the safety of our employees and prevent the spread of the virus.” Such testimonials reveal a collective understanding and appreciation for the necessary precautions taken during the pandemic. While the remote work policy was lauded for its protective measures, there was also a sense of longing for the camaraderie of the workplace. As one employee poignantly added, “I do miss the in-person interactions with my colleagues and the sense of collaboration that comes with being in the office.” This sentiment resonates with the challenges of remote work navigating the nuances of virtual communication and missing the spontaneous moments of teamwork and interaction that physical workplaces offer.

Theme 2. Positive Social Activity Before the Pandemic

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, organizations strongly engaged in positive social activities for the betterment of their employees and the broader community. Such initiatives not only boosted employee motivation but also emphasized community involvement and environmental responsibility. One participant reflected on the vibrant office culture, mentioning, “Correct, that was just like meeting people and trying to make sure people were motivated to get promoted and stuff.” Volunteering was another commendable act, with a participant sharing, “My participation has mostly been volunteering work. I coached a little league football team, for instance, teaching kids’ sportsmanship and leadership skills. “Many organizations were also deeply committed to environmental causes. A respondent stated, “We have been striving to lower our carbon footprint and be more environmentally friendly.” Community outreach events were popular, but sadly, the pandemic put a halt to these activities, as one individual recalled the company's initiative to “raise food for the food bank every three months.” Direct aid to the needy was also a focus, with actions such as “Volunteering at the local food banks, preparing meals, and assembling essential supplies for the homeless.”

Theme 3. Positive Social Activity During Pandemic

The global pandemic brought about unprecedented challenges, altering the dynamics of our daily lives and work patterns. Even amidst the turmoil, companies and individuals persisted in their pursuit of positive social activities. These activities not only maintained a sense of community and purpose but also exhibited resilience and

adaptability. Reflecting on this unique period, one participant emphasized the importance of interpersonal connections and motivation, saying, “Correct, that was just like meeting people and trying to make sure people were motivated to get promoted and stuff.” Such a statement underscores the continued dedication towards ensuring employee motivation and well-being, even in remote and isolated working conditions. Volunteerism didn't cease either; it merely adapted. Another participant detailed their personal involvement by sharing, “My participation has mostly been volunteering work. I coached a little league football team, for instance, where obviously there's no pay involved and you're trying to teach the little kids' sportsmanship and some leadership skills and that kind of thing.” This quote illustrates the enduring spirit of giving back to the community, demonstrating that even amidst restrictions and lockdowns, there were avenues to impart positive values and instill leadership skills in the younger generation.

Theme 4. Positive Social Activity After Pandemic

As the world began to heal and adapt in the aftermath of the pandemic, companies and individuals resumed their commitment to positive social activities. The recovery phase provided an opportunity to not only reconnect with pre-pandemic traditions but also innovate and create new avenues for social engagement and responsibility.

One participant, reflecting on their personal commitment to social responsibility, said, “I still do my duty that I believe every person has to society, and that's something I strongly believe in.” This sentiment embodies the resolute spirit of individuals who, despite facing unprecedented challenges, maintained their dedication to societal welfare.

Companies, too, were undeterred in their commitment. As one representative expressed, “It was something we tried not to compromise on in all of our COVID-19 policies. We had to figure out how to do that.” This highlights the adaptability of organizations and their willingness to explore innovative solutions in light of the challenges posed by the pandemic. With restrictions lifting and a semblance of normalcy returning, there's an atmosphere of anticipation and excitement. As described by one respondent, “But, since we're going back out into the world, we can do the more fun events, like the free plantings and house building, or we can actually have a little fun and meet people.” Such comments paint an optimistic picture of the future, indicating a resurgence of community events, team-building activities, and opportunities for positive societal impact.

Theme 5. Challenges

The shift to remote working, brought about by unforeseen circumstances, introduced a myriad of benefits for employees worldwide. It wasn't without its unique set of challenges. A prominent concern echoed by many was the struggle to delineate boundaries between professional and personal spheres, resulting in a complicated work–life balance. As one participant succinctly put it, “Yes, I think that's one of the main problems with working from home. One issue with working from home was trying to find that work–life balance.” To navigate these complexities, many sought strategies such as setting strict schedules, designating specific work areas within the home, and taking regular breaks. These adaptive techniques aimed to reclaim the balance and ensure that

the scales did not tip too heavily to one side. In understanding these challenges, companies and employees alike are better poised to evolve and optimize the remote working paradigm for the future.

Theme 6. Safety in Pandemic

In the face of the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, organizations worldwide had to adapt rapidly to ensure the safety and well-being of their employees. The responses, as gathered from participant testimonials, underscore the urgency and effectiveness of these adaptations. One participant remarked, “We quickly implemented safety protocols and hygiene measures to protect our employees and our customers.” This proactive approach was pivotal in mitigating the spread of the virus within workplace environments and ensuring that both employees and clientele felt secure. Further echoing this sentiment, another participant shared, “I believe our organization handled the COVID-19 pandemic crisis pretty effectively. We quickly implemented safety protocols and hygiene measures to protect our employees and our customers.” This statement not only acknowledges the swift response of the organization but also its comprehensive approach that took into consideration both the internal workforce and the broader customer base. Beyond the immediate environment of the workplace, many organizations recognized the necessity of remote work. One testimonial detailed, “We were quickly able to adapt to remote work and implement safety measures to ensure the wellbeing of our employees.” This transition to remote work arrangements, supported by appropriate

safety measures, was crucial in ensuring continuity of operations while also safeguarding employee health.

Theme 7. Equipping Remote Workers

The onset of the pandemic introduced challenges to businesses across the globe, prompting a swift transition to remote work. This shift necessitated ensuring that employees were well-equipped to handle their tasks from home seamlessly. The testimonies of several participants shed light on the proactive measures their organizations took to facilitate this transition. One participant detailed the comprehensive approach of their company, stating, “Yes, everybody who worked from home or was an employee had a company-paid cell phone. That way, if they needed to utilize the internet due to the fact that they didn't have it, they could use the wi-fi from their cell phone and also a company laptop. Also, if your employees didn't have a workstation at home set up at all, we would send monitors, keyboards, and mice.” This exemplifies the lengths to which companies went, ensuring their workforce had the necessary tools for a seamless work-from-home experience.

Another participant highlighted the pre-existing infrastructure of their organization that made the transition smoother, remarking, “Most of our employees already had access to company equipment to do that stuff. There were a few special circumstances where people were doing that, and we helped out with some things, but because of the nature of our business, a lot of our people were able to work from an offsite type thing anyway, and being able to log into the work server, so to speak, allowed

them to do their work from whatever location they were at.” This emphasizes the advantage of having a remote-ready infrastructure even before the pandemic. Addressing the importance of maintaining communication and collaboration, another comment highlighted, “We provided them with tablets, webcams, and things of that nature to go to home meetings.” This underscores the importance of not just providing equipment for task completion but also ensuring the continuity of team interactions and collaborations.

Theme 8. Future Policy

The ability of an organization to swiftly and effectively respond to crises hinges on the presence of robust and clear-cut policies. These policies not only guide immediate responses but also shape long-term strategies to handle similar situations in the future. Through the insights of participants, the significance of having such measures in place becomes abundantly clear. One participant emphasized the importance of adhering to recognized and authoritative guidelines, stating, “We do have a protocol, and basically, our protocols are in line with the C D C, and we follow their steps and their playbook.” This highlights how organizations align themselves with established health institutions, ensuring their actions are in line with scientifically-backed practices. Another participant touched upon the broader implications of having solid policies in place. They elaborated, “We can establish clear protocols and contingency plans to respond quickly to any crisis or emergency situation. We can also invest in technology and infrastructure to enable remote work and communication.” This underscores the holistic nature of crisis

management, from immediate responses to the longer-term investments that can ensure business continuity and resilience.

Theme 9. Government Policies

Government policies, particularly during times of crisis, play a pivotal role in shaping the trajectory of business operations and public perception. As the pandemic surged globally, organizations were compelled to pivot swiftly, responding not only to the health crisis but also to the fluctuating policies set by governing bodies. These policies, while essential for public safety, sometimes posed unforeseen challenges for businesses. A participant offered a reflective critique on the government's handling of information dissemination, commenting, "I do feel that the government probably could have done a better job of mitigating and eliminating misinformation being spread through social media, especially in those first few months where there was a lot of hoopla and a lot of unknown and uncertainty.

I guess maybe they could have done a better job, as far as distributing information, or as far as the distribution of information being more factual or fact-based." This sentiment underscores the necessity of accurate and timely information dissemination, which can significantly influence public sentiment and behavior. Further emphasizing the tangible impact of government policies on business dynamics, another participant remarked, "Yeah, I mean, any time that a government or any policy affects your ability to do business efficiently and, quite frankly, in person, things tend to be easier, especially when in the business world, it is definitely easier. A human being must

be present to carry out certain tasks.” Despite these challenges, the resilience and adaptability of businesses shone through as they navigated these obstacles. The participant added, “It therefore had an impact, but we discovered workarounds; we discovered a different way to do it that might not have been quite as quick, but we managed to accomplish the same task by discovering alternative means that were still effective.” The testimonials emphasize the intricate relationship between government policies and business operations, suggesting that while there are inevitable challenges, the spirit of adaptability and innovation remains undeterred in the face of adversity.

Theme 10. Hindrance in Positive Social Change

The onset of the pandemic introduced a myriad of challenges that significantly impacted traditional forms of positive social activities. The inability to host physical events led organizations and individuals to pivot and adapt. Yet, despite these challenges, the dedication to fostering PSC remained unyielding. One participant shared, “I don't think it slowed it down. I think it just changed it. You can't just do the physical events anymore, so we just had to move them to something else. In some cases, it could slow it down just by virtue of staying at home and social distancing. But, as far as our commitments go, I don't think it slowed us down on that.” This sentiment was further echoed by another participant who expressed, “I don't think that the work-from-home policy has negatively impacted my ability to contribute to PSC. In fact, I have found new ways to engage with my community and advocate for important causes through online platforms and social media.” While the nature of social activities underwent a

transformation, the spirit to make a difference remained constant. As seen from the participants' insights, many found alternative avenues to sustain their commitment to PSC, reflecting resilience and adaptability in times of adversity.

Theme 11. Legitimate Practice

Legitimacy in organizational practices is foundational for its long-term success and reputation. By adhering to clear missions, values, and ensuring consistent transparency, accountability, and compliance with industry regulations, an organization affirms its commitment not just to its stakeholders but also to the broader community. A genuine commitment to delivering results and offering excellent customer service underscores the authenticity of these practices. One participant confidently remarked, “I believe that our organization is 100 percent legitimate. We comply with all relevant laws and regulations, uphold high ethical standards, and provide excellent service to our clients.” This testimony was mirrored by another who said, “I believe my organization to be legitimate; we're necessary within our regulations, and we comply with all legal requirements. We have a good reputation in the industry, and we maintain good relationships with our clients.” These insights shed light on the unwavering commitment of organizations to uphold legitimacy, not just as a mere compliance routine but as an ingrained part of their core values, further emphasizing the importance of ethical operations in today's business landscape.

Theme 12. Legitimate Practice During the Pandemic

During the unprecedented challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, the true essence of an organization's commitment to legitimate practices came to the fore. Organizations had an opportunity to demonstrate their allegiance to PSC, not just through words but through tangible actions. These actions, ranging from partnering with local organizations to promoting diversity and inclusion, and from supporting employee volunteerism to implementing sustainability initiatives, have played a crucial role in enhancing the legitimacy of organizations as socially responsible entities during this crisis. A participant commented, “Our organization is legitimate because we definitely prioritized safety and sustainability and kept our customer satisfaction rate very high.” This sentiment reflects a broader understanding of legitimacy, where the emphasis isn't solely on the organization's core operations but extends to the wellbeing and satisfaction of its stakeholders.

Another participant shed light on the multi-faceted approach their organization adopted during this period: “I think our organization is legitimate, not only because we prioritize the wellbeing of our employees and our customers, but also because we care about their safety. We don't do things that are morally or ethically wrong. We adhere to regulations that the industry sets for us. We try to collaborate with nonprofits. We try to distribute supplies to people who are in need, whether it be food or clothing, especially since we just got through a pandemic. But not only that, but we also did it during the pandemic.” These insights underscore the commitment of organizations to uphold and

even strengthen their legitimate practices amidst a global crisis, further showcasing the resilience and adaptability of socially responsible businesses.

Theme 13. Strategies Preventing Future Chaos

In a rapidly changing world, organizations have recognized the importance of preparing for unforeseen challenges. This preparation is essential not only for business continuity but also to ensure that organizations can continue to promote PSC even in the face of adversities. The emphasis on establishing clear protocols, devising contingency plans, and investing in cutting-edge technologies is gaining traction as more businesses look to prevent future chaos. One participant shared her perspective, noting, “To avert future chaos during a crisis and promote good social change, our organization could invest in more robust remote work technologies and communication tools. Additionally, we could establish partnerships with community organizations and non-profits to provide support during a crisis and engage in more socially responsible.” Her statement underscores the two-fold approach organizations need to consider: technological preparedness and community collaboration.

Echoing similar sentiments, another insight was shared: “To avert future chaos during a crisis and promote social change, our organization has established and improved its communication channels and made better contingency plans. We've also established partnerships with our community organizations to increase our ability to affect positive social change.” This underscores the significance of not only having a strategy in place but continuously refining it based on experiences and evolving needs. Strategies that have

been identified to foster resilience “during a crisis and promote good social change include implementing robust crisis management plans that address different scenarios, continuous communication and engagement with employees, and embracing digital technology and innovation.” Organizations that blend technological enhancements with community collaboration are better positioned to weather future storms and continue their mission of fostering positive societal change.

Theme 14. Partnership

In the modern business landscape, organizations are realizing the value of partnerships in amplifying their impact. Beyond just profitability and efficiency, these collaborations play a significant role in driving positive social and environmental change. A core focus area in these partnership endeavors is integrating eco-friendly practices into business operations, and promoting positive community engagement. One participant shed light on such a community-driven initiative, sharing: “During the COVID-19 pandemic, we were doing some volunteer work with the local Boys and Girls Club, doing different virtual events that they had hosted. I know a coworker was helping out with a kind of reading group there where they were reading to small groups, numbers of kids’ reading books, and things like that virtually to them; these kids would tune in on Zoom from home on a laptop or anything like that.

We would read books to them and just really do what we could to try to create that environment and find the success we hadn't previously found.” Such partnerships embody the spirit of collaboration in challenging times, using technology to bridge gaps

and ensure that the younger generation remains connected and enriched. On the environmental front, the emphasis on sustainability is clear. “From a logistics end, if you're talking about a physical, actual environmental sustainability thing, you can partner with, for instance, one of your waste companies to make sure you're recycling things like the plastic off your pallets or the wood pellets themselves, or reusing things that are reusable in that atmosphere where you're using the stuff that you have to dispose of.” This focus on responsible disposal and recycling is essential in the context of environmental conservation.

The participant elaborated further: “Then when you dispose of it, you're doing it appropriately, so you're helping the environment, and that partnership comes in when, when your volume gets high enough, you can say, it can be a first, it can be a financial thing. Say you're talking about an individual site that's moving a lot of palletized products through it. The logistics that we do is routing those different things, but what do we do with the excess—pallets, plastic, packaging materials, whatever it may be? If we can't reuse it, we have to dispose of it. Well, is it important for us as a company to have a recycle bin outside that facility versus just a garbage bin?” These insights underscore the value of strategic partnerships. Whether it's through community engagement or responsible waste management, these collaborations are crucial in driving positive change in society and the environment.

Theme 15. Technology Usage

In the dynamic and fast-paced world of logistics, technology has emerged as an indispensable ally. Leveraging state-of-the-art technology allows businesses to streamline operations, improve efficiency, and navigate through disruptions more seamlessly. During the pandemic, with its unique challenges, the importance of these digital tools grew manifold, extending to employees working from home and ensuring business continuity. One participant elaborated on the scope and significance of these technological solutions, noting: “Some of them, from say, basic computer programs that are going to help us route our logistics stuff more efficiently, interfacing with others, if you're talking about shipping and receiving, interfacing with some of the main shipping characters, and being able to use their systems integrated into our systems.” This integration speaks volumes about the adaptability and flexibility offered by technological advancements in ensuring that shipments and deliveries remain unaffected, even when external challenges arise. Adaptability remains at the core of this technological embrace. In situations where traditional operations meet unforeseen challenges, technology serves as a beacon to find alternative solutions.

Drawing a parallel with real-life situations, the participant shared: “When you have a blockage to your normal commerce and normal activities, finding the best route around that, whether it's an actual physical route or an idea route where you're using software and understanding versus a physical route, is like when a truck driving down the road has to go around a different way because there's an accident or something in the

road. Technology helps you do that, whether you're in a truck or a GPS system that has smart intelligence and avoids the intersection where that accident is.” Such insights underscore the indispensable role technology plays in today's logistics operations. From routing optimization to smart integrations, it ensures smoother operations, offering solutions both in the tangible world of roads and routes and the intangible realm of software and systems.

Government Websites

In exploring how did the trucking industry's logistic companies' crisis management policy of having leaders work from home during the COVID-19 pandemic impact leaders' capacity to promote PSC, I sought to understand the impact on leaders' capacity to promote PSC. I used an extensive methodology combining government websites and semistructured interview data for this research. A detailed website review was incorporated to enhance the depth and extensiveness of my research. I examined 16 government websites, of which 15 were deemed appropriate for doing research of this magnitude (Meschede, 2019). The government websites were evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. **Industry-Specific Relevance:** Websites associated with organizations within the trucking and logistics domain were chosen.
2. **Crisis Management Documentation:** Mention or document the company's pandemic strategies, from formal statements to blogs or pamphlets.

3. Official Communication: Direct communications or company leadership statements on the pandemic response
4. Remote Work Policies: Insights on the organization's adaptation to remote work, emphasizing leadership's role, tools used, guidelines, and feedback mechanisms
5. Promotion of Positive Social Change: Initiatives or campaigns by the company targeting positive societal transformation during or post-pandemic
6. Transparency and Verification: Clear, verifiable information aligned with the interview insights
7. Alignment with Government Policies: Insights, especially regarding work-from-home directives, that coincide with governmental regulation.

This web evaluation method was pivotal in offering a broader contextual foundation, contrasting the observations of respondents with documented industry practices. To dive deeper into the experiences of these leaders, I conducted semistructured interviews (Appendix C). It was essential to gauge how these leaders navigated this novel work dynamic and their level of engagement. I probed into the government legislation and regulations to discern if the shift to remote leadership was by choice or a necessary compliance act.

During these interviews, I further explored the operational challenges and advantages these leaders faced, prompting participants to narrate their daily struggles and unanticipated hurdles. Central to my research question was understanding the influence

of remote work policies on leaders their abilities to promote PSC. To ensure a thorough understanding and capture diverse perspectives, I employed purposeful sampling to select interview participants. I chose ten participants purposefully, emphasizing those who could provide rich insights concerning the implications of the work-from-home policy during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially in the trucking logistics sector. After identifying the recurring themes from these interviews, I cross-referenced them with the data from government websites for accuracy, further enhancing the credibility and depth of my research. Table 4 showcases the emergence of seven themes, accompanied by categories and corroborating material from government sources.

Table 4*Government Websites Theme Analysis*

Themes	Subthemes (categories)	Initial codes
Safety in pandemic	Safety protocols	Safety
Legitimate practice	Legitimacy by adhering to protocols	Legitimate effort during pandemic
	Legitimacy by prioritizing well-being of employees	Legitimate effort during pandemic
	Legitimacy by adherence to regulatory policies	Legitimate effort during pandemic
	Legitimacy by complying with laws	Legitimate effort during pandemic
	Legitimacy by prioritizing safety	Legitimate effort during pandemic
Government policies	Hindrance by government policies	Government policies
	Following the guidelines of government	Government guidelines
	Government could play a better role	Government played role
	Adhere to government policies	Government policies
	Government role in COVID	Government played role
Positive social change activity	Helping through donations	Positive social change during COVID
Future policy	Policy to prevent future crisis	Strategies
Employee perspective on remote work	Employee well-being and safety	Work-from-home policies
Collaboration for promoting social change activity	Collaboration with organization	Collaboration

Theme 1. Safety During the Pandemic

Amid the global health crisis, ensuring the safety and well-being of employees became the paramount concern for organizations worldwide. This theme, "Safety During the Pandemic," goes beyond basic protective measures. It encompasses comprehensive safety plans, stringent regulations, and proactive actions taken to safeguard against the threats of COVID-19. Under the OSH Act, employers are responsible for providing a safe and healthy workplace free from recognized hazards likely to cause death or serious physical harm (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2022). One of the standout measures adopted by many companies was the facilitation of remote work. Allowing employees to operate from the safety of their homes significantly minimizes the risk of virus transmission. One participant reflected on the swift adaptations: "We quickly implemented safety protocols and hygiene measures to protect our employees and our customers." Such testimonies highlight the resilience and determination of businesses to navigate these testing times by prioritizing the health of their teams and clients.

Theme 2. Legitimate Practice

The foundation of any successful organization lies not just in its profitability or market dominance but also in its commitment to ethical standards and the well-being of its workforce. The theme, "Legitimate Practice," encapsulates this essence. It accentuates the significance of practices that are not only legally compliant but are also morally upright and centered around the welfare of their employees. One participant expressed their trust in their organization's integrity, stating, "I believe my organization to be

legitimate due to its adherence to regulatory requirements, ethical practices, and quality services delivered to its clients. According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency [FEMA] (2023), "FEMA has stood strong on the front lines alongside our partners to help people and communities nationwide respond to this virus. Our direct support allowed health systems to remain staffed and equipped to deliver care; food remained on the tables of anyone who needed it, and all levels of government had the financial assistance to support their communities by providing billions of dollars in emergency funding (p.1)." The recent pandemic underscored the need for preparedness and flexibility in business strategies. Organizations that were proactive in approaching such unforeseen events fared better. The participant highlighted the lessons learned and replied, "The pandemic has shown us the importance of being prepared for the unexpected. Moving forward, our organization will invest more in risk management and contingency planning to ensure we can respond effectively to future crises and continue positively impacting our society." This statement reflects a vision for a future where businesses are driven by profit and the principle of doing right by their employees and society.

Theme 3. Government Policies

Navigating the intricacies of government regulations and policies is a complex task for businesses. The theme "Government Policies" brings the challenges companies often face when balancing their social responsibilities and adhering to governmental mandates. While it is essential for organizations to respect and follow established

guidelines, it sometimes impedes their aspirations to make a broader positive social impact. According to The Department of Homeland Security [DHS] (2022) “The objectives of the SAFER Program are to assist local fire departments with staffing and deployment capabilities to respond to emergencies and ensure that communities have adequate protection from fire and fire-related hazards. Local fire departments accomplish this by improving staffing and deployment capabilities, so they may more effectively and safely respond to emergencies (p.4).” Reflecting on this dilemma, a participant expressed, "I'm going to say no once more. We follow the CDC guidelines with everything they require of us, and everything they have asked of us, we've done. To say that they're more legitimate would almost be like saying that when we followed, we followed everything. To the letter of the law." Such sentiments underscore the complexity of aligning business practices with governmental policies, particularly when these policies might unintentionally restrict companies from reaching their full potential and contributing positively to society.

Theme 4. Positive Social Change Activity

The pandemic shook the world unprecedentedly and revealed the innate capacity for compassion and community support inherent in many businesses. Under the theme "Positive Social Change Activity," we explore the commendable efforts made by companies to give back and aid the frontline forces during these testing times. Although not mandated, these acts signified the inherent goodwill of organizations wanting to make a difference. According to Federal Emergency Management Agency [FEMA] (2011)

“Appreciating the actual capabilities and needs of a community is essential to supporting and enabling local actions. For example, in response to past disasters, meals ready-to-eat (MREs) have been used to feed survivors because these resources were readily available (p.8).” A participant elaborated, “We would help with the police department. We would go donate things to them. If food pantries were opened, we would try to keep them stocked with just any small things that we could still contribute to that were around and available. We would take lunch to the firefighters, and the same with the police department, for sure.” Such gestures, while appearing simple, had profound implications. They showcased the spirit of togetherness and the genuine desire of businesses to support the community and the people on the frontlines battling the challenges of the pandemic.

Theme 5. Future Policy

The theme of “future policy” is prominent within organizational preparedness and adaptability. This theme underscores the importance of policies for any organizational crisis. Rather than reactivity, proactivity has become the organizational mantra for navigating through unforeseen challenges. According to Occupational Safety and Health Administration [OSHA] (2021), “OSHA strongly encourages employers to provide paid time off to workers for the time it takes for them to get vaccinated and recover from any side effects. Employers should also consider working with local public health authorities to provide vaccinations for unvaccinated workers in the workplace (p.1).” The participant's response gives a deeper insight into this proactive mindset: “It's actually just

ours. We saw that the government called an end to the pandemic and everything like that, but we wanted to make sure that we have measures in place for future pandemics and for future crises that are not attached to them, so we have a response, and we're not waiting for a response from the government to form a response. We already have a response in place." This sentiment reflects the importance of internal resilience, foresight, and the determination to remain one step ahead, ensuring the organization's longevity and stability amidst the turbulent tides of change.

Theme 6. Employee Perspective on Remote Work

Businesses faced an urgent need to reimagine their operational structures during the COVID-19 pandemic's global upheaval. The concept encapsulated by the theme "Employee Perspective of Remote Work" was central to this transformation. This theme not only delves into the strategies, plans, and regulations instituted to protect employees from the COVID-19 virus but also spotlights the emotional landscape of these workers, many of whom felt a deep-seated longing for the familiar hum and rhythm of the office environment. The National Health Institute [NIH] (2020), states, "To protect members of its workforce and comply with guidance from the Office of Personnel Management, NIH limited onsite work, work-related travel, and in-person meeting attendance beginning on March 16, 2020, a period referred to as maximum telework (p.4)." One participant, the president of a logistics firm, articulates this delicate balance by stating, "Well, as the president of a logistics firm, I think that our work-from-home policy during the COVID-19 pandemic has been essential to ensuring the safety and health of our employees. It was

a challenging time for everyone, and we had to adapt quickly to ensure that our business operations continued to run smoothly while at the same time protecting our employees." Through this lens, we get a firsthand view of the struggles and triumphs of leadership during a crisis, trying to strike a balance between maintaining business continuity and nurturing the well-being of their teams.

Theme 7. Collaboration for Promoting Social Change Activity

In today's dynamically evolving corporate landscape, the significance of social responsibility has taken on a renewed urgency. This sentiment is crystallized in the theme of "Collaboration for Promoting Social Change Activity." Organizations have begun to recognize the power of collaboration as a formidable tool to bolster and promote social activities that resonate with their core values. Providers and suppliers eligible to participate include certain types of pharmacies and other health care providers who are enrolled in Medicare and able to furnish ambulatory health care services such as preventive vaccines, COVID-19 testing, and regular medical visits (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services [CMMS], 2022). The collective synergy of such collaborative endeavors, along with such inclusions, has the potential to instigate meaningful change at multiple levels within society. An insightful participant shared their organization's journey in this domain, reflecting, "We did a really good job partnering with organizations to support causes we care about. We were very encouraging of our employees to volunteer, donate to various organizations, and also publicly acknowledge and support the importance of social responsibility." This narrative underscores the

importance of joint efforts and organizations' commitment to leveraging their resources, workforce, and influence to leave a lasting imprint on the causes they hold dear.

Organization Websites

In my endeavor to address the research question, how did the trucking industry's logistic companies' crisis management policy of having leaders work from home during the COVID-19 pandemic impact leaders' capacity to promote positive social change? I extensively reviewed organizational websites within the trucking and logistics domain. The prime objective was to ensure that the data collected was of the utmost quality and relevance and directly answered the posed research question. Establishing a stringent criterion was pivotal. I selected 17 organizational websites to verify and support my findings. Catallo et al. (2014) highlighted using 15 organizational websites in their research study. The organizational websites were meticulously chosen based on the following:

1. **Relevance to the Trucking and Logistics Industry:** The sites should belong to entities within this domain, ensuring the specific nature and relevance of the insights.
2. **Documentation of Crisis Management Strategies:** These sites should explicitly mention or document their crisis management strategies during the pandemic, spanning formal proclamations to blog entries and pamphlets.

3. **Direct Communication from Leadership:** Sites that offered direct communications from leadership about the company's pandemic response were highly sought after, providing a window into top-level decisions and perspectives.
4. **Details on Remote Work Policies:** The emphasis was placed on how leadership adapted to remote work. Details on remote work policies included comprehensive information about tools, guidelines, and feedback mechanisms related to remote work.
5. **Initiatives Promoting Positive Social Change:** Given the centrality of positive societal transformation to my research question, sites highlighting initiatives or campaigns fostering such change during or post-pandemic were preferred.
6. **Transparency and Accessibility:** Data from these websites must be transparent, verifiable, and easily accessible.
7. **Anonymity and Privacy:** Ethical considerations drove me to mask the names of organizations referred to, prioritizing confidentiality and eliminating potential biases.

This review process provided valuable insights into how the trucking industry navigated the pandemic challenges, particularly leadership's role in fostering positive societal change in a remote context. My research was further enriched by integrating these website reviews with findings from semistructured interviews (Appendix C). Through purposeful sampling, I selected ten participants who could offer deep insights into the

challenges and responses during this crisis. After synthesizing the information from these sources, nine distinct themes emerged, each supported by evidence from the chosen websites. These themes comprehensively picture the industry's pandemic response, seamlessly connecting theoretical considerations with real-world actions. Detailed classifications of these themes are presented in Table 5, emphasizing the study's credibility, focus, and ethical standards.

Table 5*Organization Websites Theme Analysis*

Themes	Subthemes (categories)	Initial codes
Safety in pandemic	Safety protocols	Safety
Handling of crisis situation	Shifting to remote work	Handled the situation
	Handled by prioritizing security measures	Handled the situation
	Equipment for working from home	Handled the situation
Positive social activity	Improve communication channels	Social activities during COVID
	Carried the activity even in COVID	Social activities during COVID
	Just slow down the activities	Social activities during COVID
	Social changes got prevented	Social changes got prevented
Social change activities	Social changes during and after COVID	Difference in social activity
Changes in business activities during crisis	Business in COVID	Deal with clients during COVID
Dealing with crisis	Adaption to survive	Adaption
Future policy	Policy to prevent future crisis	Strategies
Employee perspective on remote work	Conflicting situation	Work-from-home policies
	Increase in productivity	Work-from-home policies
Legitimate organization	Legitimacy by prioritizing safety	Legitimate effort during pandemic

Theme 1. Safety in a Pandemic

During the height of the pandemic, one prominently surfaced theme was "Safety in pandemic." This theme underscores the gravity of instituting a work-from-home policy, not merely as an operational shift but as a cardinal measure to shield employee safety and holistic well-being amidst the escalating crisis. When reflecting upon this, participants vividly recalled their prompt actions, stating, "We quickly implemented safety protocols and hygiene measures to protect our employees and our customers." This sentiment of prioritizing health and well-being was echoed on organizational websites, with one prominently noting, "Our highest priority during this time remains the safety and well-being of our staff, customers, and business partners." The convergence of these responses highlights a collective understanding of the urgency and necessity to pivot toward a safety-first approach during unprecedented times.

Theme 2. Handling Crisis Situations

In the throes of the pandemic, a recurring theme that emerged was "handling crisis situations." Central to this theme was the spotlight on a company's agility and aptitude in responding to COVID-19 challenges, specifically endorsing remote work and bolstering home office environments. Participants shared a sense of pride and commendation regarding their company's approach. One participant reflected, "Overall? I think our organization handled the COVID-19 pandemic crisis very well. We were quickly able to adapt to remote work and implement safety measures to ensure the well-being of our employees. We also continued to provide essential services to our clients

and customers during these challenging times." This sentiment was mirrored in organizational communications as well. For instance, on their website, their company encapsulated their commitment by stating, "While ensuring the safety of its employees remains a top priority, our company is focused on supporting all economic activity and the U.S. and global supply chains that provide vital goods and services to consumers, businesses, and institutions." The alignment of these responses accentuates the concerted efforts companies have invested in seamlessly adapting to the evolving landscape while ensuring the well-being of their employees and the continuity of essential services.

Theme 3. Positive Social Activity

Amid the profound challenges posed by the pandemic, an enlightening theme that emerged was "positive social activity." This theme delves into the nuanced impacts the COVID-19 epidemic has on social activities. Intriguingly, while the pandemic did usher in a temporary deceleration in these activities, it did not halt the spirit of community engagement and societal contribution. Participants keenly observed and testified to this resilience. One recounted, "I would say that by supporting our local charities and food banks, like I told you, we're really big on the food banks, and implementing sustainability incentives, we've also provided essential services to our communities in need. I guess we've also encouraged our employees to stay involved in our communities and support social causes while working remotely."

Organizational narratives underscored the pivotal role of communication during these times. As one organization insightfully remarked, "The importance of

communication is often diluted in conversations about contingency planning. However, a clear communication flow helps promote transparency for all the stakeholders in your supply chain. It helps transition roles and responsibilities smoothly during a disruption. With a communication strategy in place, you can reach out to different partners in the supply chain quickly." Drawing these threads together, it becomes evident that despite the adversities, a collective drive towards positive social action, rooted in robust community engagement and the power of clear communication, persisted.

Theme 4. Social Change Activity

The multifaceted repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic manifested in a myriad of ways, leading to the emergence of the theme titled "social change activities." This theme underscores the stark differences observed of social change initiatives when comparing the periods before and after the pandemic hit. Participants vividly articulated the seismic shifts that ensued as the pandemic took hold. One of them shared, "Absolutely, it was night and day as far as PPE, masks, gloves, and social distancing, it really threw a wrench in the process of what we used to be able to get done, and an hour and a half almost doubled in time with the six feet and social distancing, and just the time to go through and help and distribute the food and things like that at the food banks was just massively increased between pre-COVID and COVID."

From the organizational perspective, a similar cognizance of these transformations was evident. One organization delineated its adaptive measures by

stating, "Since the outbreak, the company has followed a comprehensive, enterprise-wide management process to ensure operational success for its customers, while prioritizing safety for its employees and partners. The company closely follows governmental health guidelines by providing PPE such as masks and gloves, informs its employees of new safety standards, and disinfects facilities as recommended."

Synthesizing these perspectives, it is clear that while the pandemic posed significant challenges, it also highlighted the agility of individuals and organizations in recalibrating their approach to social change activities amidst evolving circumstances.

Theme 5. Changes in Business Activities During Crisis

The intricate tapestry of challenges brought forth by the COVID-19 pandemic elicited many reactions, leading to the crystallization of the theme titled "changes in business activities during crises." Central to this theme is an exploration of the adaptability and resilience displayed by companies in maneuvering through the constraints of the pandemic to sustain their operations and serve their stakeholders. Participants echoed sentiments of deepened empathy and enhanced service delivery during these tumultuous times. One participant encapsulated the sentiment by saying, "We wanted to ensure that our clients were taken care of in that aspect. Other services that we were able to provide to our clients and customers included a lot better customer support.

Definitely being able to connect with them on a deeper level and understand them, since we were all going through the same thing, helped us provide that next level of care,

and we were able to actually connect with them a lot better." Organizational stances emphasized a blend of precautionary measures and operational continuity. One organization elucidated its strategic shift by articulating, "Our process includes daily monitoring and attestation practices to ensure all staff are healthy. Employees will follow site-specific instructions regarding face masks and distancing when on customer property for sales visits or pickup and delivery of freight. No contact pickup and delivery service is available." Combining these vantage points reveals an overarching narrative of businesses recalibrating their strategies and pivoting to weather the storm and strengthen their bonds with stakeholders in these unprecedented times.

Theme 6. Dealing With Crisis

The unexpected and pervasive challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated swift, decisive action by companies worldwide, leading to the emergence of the theme "dealing with crisis." This theme underscores the adaptive strategies companies employed to navigate the multifaceted challenges of the pandemic while safeguarding their operational continuity and employee welfare. Reflecting on this turbulent period, a participant shared their perspective, stating, "It was a challenging time for everyone, and we had to adapt quickly to ensure that our business operations continued to run smoothly while at the same time protecting our employees." Similarly, from an organizational standpoint, the overarching narrative underscored the strategic imperative of proactive planning and collaboration. The organization highlighted, "To protect lives against the pandemic, governments have moved towards a more active role in medical supply chains.

Over the past few months, we have demonstrated that sufficient planning and appropriate partnerships within the supply chain can play a key role as governments work to secure critical medical supplies during health emergencies such as this." These perspectives illustrate a landscape where companies, amid an unprecedented crisis, rallied their resources and forged partnerships to uphold their commitments to stakeholders and broader societal responsibilities.

Theme 7. Future Policy

Navigating the intricacies of organizational challenges, especially in unpredictable crises, leads us to the pivotal theme of "future policy." Central to this theme is the understanding that proactive planning, through policy formulation and implementation, equips organizations with the resilience to withstand and thrive amid adversity. A participant illuminatingly expressed their perspective: "We can establish clear protocols and contingency plans to respond quickly to any crisis or emergency situation. We can also invest in technology and infrastructure to enable remote work and communication." An organizational website echoed the sentiment by emphasizing the tailored strategies needed for specialized sectors, stating, "Our healthcare supply chain is uniquely complex and requires special solutions and capabilities. Through customer care, we're able to provide top-tier service that will make a difference in the wellness of our communities." These views highlight the collective consensus on the importance of forward-thinking policies in ensuring organizational resilience and continued service excellence, regardless of external pressures.

Theme 8. Employee Perspective on Remote Work

The global pandemic has sparked many discussions and considerations about its effects, leading to a shift to remote work. The theme "employee perspective of remote work" emerges as a crucial focal point in this dialogue, capturing the nuanced experiences of workers during this unprecedented transition. The work-from-home strategy was seen as a protective shield, ensuring the safety of employees and their loved ones. The work-from-home policy simultaneously sparked challenges in maintaining seamless work interactions. As one participant candidly shared, "It was very conflicting because, first and foremost, I wanted to ensure the safety of our employees and their families. Second, I've realized that our work is so dependent on our interactions with each other, with our employers, and with the people that we serve. It was challenging." Reflecting this sentiment from an organizational standpoint, a statement from a company website acknowledged the global mobilization of their operations in response to the crisis, emphasizing, "We're open for business, and our operations are being mobilized around the world to deal with this global crisis. We have been largely focused on bringing the much-needed supplies to protect and support frontline employees from all industries." These insights underscore the complexities of the remote work landscape, reflecting its advantages in ensuring safety and its challenges in maintaining the dynamism of workplace interactions.

Theme 9. Legitimate Organization

The theme "Legitimate organization" gains traction in a world shaken by the pandemic, shedding light on how entities fortified their credibility amidst the turbulence. Focusing on safety, streamlined service delivery, and nurturing robust partnerships became the linchpins of such endeavors. A participant echoed this commitment by highlighting their organization's steps: "Our organization has tried to promote PSC by supporting initiatives that address the pandemic's impact on communities, such as providing donations and partnering with local organizations to provide support. We also took many steps to promote diversity and inclusion within our organization. We try to promote equality, and we try to promote social justice for all our workers at all levels of the company." This grassroots perspective is complemented by an overarching view from an organization's standpoint. As an exemplar, a logistics organization emphasizes their adaptability and unwavering commitment, stating, "With a globally recognized track record of delivering exceptional international auto logistics, global access, and industry-advancing innovation, you can be sure that our organization will always evolve with you." The fusion of these insights underscores that a dynamic mix of safety emphasis, service efficiency, and collaborative growth is at the core of organizational legitimacy.

Summary

The COVID-19 pandemic introduced unprecedented challenges to various industries, including trucking. Faced with the global health crisis, many logistic companies in this sector initiated a crisis management policy, which included having

their leaders work remotely. The primary research question I sought to answer was: How did the trucking industry's logistic companies' crisis management policy of having leaders work from home during the COVID-19 pandemic affect leaders' ability to promote positive social change? One of the central themes emerging from participants' feedback and organizational websites was the swift adaptation of safety protocols. Leaders, even from the confines of their homes, ensured safety measures were implemented for those on the front lines. By prioritizing the well-being of their staff, they set an industry standard, reaffirming their commitment to societal welfare. Technology became an indispensable tool during this period. Now working remotely, leaders leverage technology for business continuity and to promote PSC.

From virtual events with local community groups like the Boys and Girls Club to routing optimization ensuring timely delivery of essential goods, technology was at the forefront of these initiatives, as highlighted in our themes and corroborated by organizational websites. Through the lens of organizational legitimacy, leaders in the trucking industry, despite being remote, ensured that their organizations remained socially responsible. Their partnerships with local organizations, community outreach, and eco-friendly practices demonstrated their commitment to PSC and environmental impacts. This commitment was a testament to their dedication to upholding societal values even during a pandemic. The proactive steps taken by leaders to avert future disruptions were another essential theme. Leaders showed an unwavering commitment to their mission and the broader societal good through clear communication, contingency

planning, and technological investments. The commitment was evident in statements from participants and information from government data on industry responsiveness.

A critical factor that emerged from our themes was the emphasis on partnerships. Whether collaborating with environmental sustainability organizations or engaging with community groups, leaders recognized the value of collective action. Partnerships facilitate the promotion of positive social activities and environmental responsibility. While the shift to remote work for leaders in the trucking industry's logistics companies was abrupt, their commitment to promoting PSC remained strong. By leveraging technology, prioritizing safety, forming partnerships, and being proactive, they not only navigated the challenges of the pandemic but also reinforced their dedication to societal well-being. Government data and organizational websites further substantiate these claims, painting a picture of an industry that is resilient in the face of adversity and unwavering in its commitment to positive change.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this qualitative exploratory case study was to investigate how working-from-home policies during the COVID-19 pandemic affected the ability of directors, managers, and board members from logistic companies in the trucking industry to promote PSC. The nature of this study was to address the research question; this qualitative study used an exploratory design (Yin, 2018) involving interviews with leaders in the trucking industry to explore how working from home during the COVID-19 pandemic affected the ability of directors, managers, and board members from logistic companies in the trucking industry to promote PSC. The pandemic's particular challenges made it necessary to conduct the study, and it was especially important to understand how key decision-makers in logistic companies have handled the new normal given their commitment to societal improvement while working remotely. One key finding was that leaders rapidly implemented safety protocols, highlighting their unwavering commitment to the well-being of their workforce and the broader community. Another key finding was that technology is essential in maintaining business operations and promoting social change, as seen in collaborations on virtual community events. Despite the remote working environment, leaders consistently showcased a sense of organizational legitimacy, emphasizing their dedication to positive societal values and actions.

Interpretation of the Findings

The research findings provide insight into the intersection of organizational response during the COVID-19 pandemic, technological innovations, and leadership's

commitment to the well-being of stakeholders and PSC. By comparing the findings with the literature from Chapter 2, I can decipher how they confirm, disprove, or extend existing knowledge. The findings align with the research by Glenn et al. (2020), which emphasized the significance of legitimacy during unprecedented times like the COVID-19 pandemic. Within the complex framework of organizational responsibilities, specific industries, such as trucking companies, faced acute pressures. For these organizations, maintaining their public image and trustworthiness was about not just business continuity, but also aligning with the more considerable societal expectation of safety and accountability during a global crisis. This thrust towards legitimacy is markedly observed in how swiftly and decisively organizational leadership reacted. Leaders' immediate response to formulating and implementing safety protocols was more than a functional necessity. It became a testament to their unwavering commitment to the well-being of their employees and the communities they serve. These actions were not isolated incidents but resonated with a broader narrative, confirming the predominant sentiment and general expectation about how organizations ought to behave during such challenging times.

The agile adoption of public health measures served as a compliance metric and showcased these organizations' intrinsic values and dedication to societal welfare. The findings reiterate the intertwined relationship between organizational conduct and societal expectations, particularly during global emergencies. Chapter 2 delves into the concept of PSC, defined by Morris (2017) as actions or shifts that enhance human living

conditions and societal structures. This foundational understanding positions PSC as critical to societal evolution and progress. The most recent research findings enhance this idea by illuminating the transformative role of technology in catalyzing such changes, particularly in the modern context characterized by remote work. In an era where physical interactions have been limited due to global crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, technology has emerged as a tool to ensure business continuity and as a pivotal agent for fostering and nurturing societal values and constructive actions. One cannot overlook the profound implications of how businesses and communities have harnessed technology during these trying times.

Once deemed a luxury or an exception, remote work became the norm for many, safeguarding livelihoods and ensuring economic stability. Technology also paved the way for fostering community spirit and unity. Virtual community events, which saw a significant surge during this period, serve as a testament to this claim. These events, ranging from educational webinars to cultural showcases, not only kept the communal spirit alive, but also demonstrated the resilience and adaptability of societies in the face of adversity. The seamless transition to these virtual platforms underscores society's ability to adapt and evolve, using technology as a beacon of hope and progression. Technology's role has transcended its conventional utility, positioning it as an enabler of positive change and societal advancement. According to scholars such as Dewiyanti (2021) and Nishitani et al. (2021), organizational legitimacy primarily focuses on how well organizational actions align with societal norms and expectations. Historically, this

concept has been anchored in tangible measures and observable actions within the physical realm, often rooted in the traditional settings of business operations. The findings from the recent research offer a fresh, nuanced perspective on this established theory.

Leadership has risen to the challenge of proving organizational legitimacy in an era of remote work and virtual interactions. The research illuminates that leaders have effectively conveyed their organization's dedication and alignment with cherished societal values even when removed from conventional office environments. This significant adaptation sheds light on the evolving nature of organizational behavior and its ability to uphold legitimacy in diverse settings. What emerges from these findings is an expanded conceptualization of organizational legitimacy. It moves away from being a construct merely defined by physical manifestations or visible actions in brick-and-mortar settings. Instead, it gravitates towards a more holistic understanding encompassing tangible and intangible domains. With its unique challenges and dynamics, the virtual world can serve as a platform where organizations reinforce their credibility, trustworthiness, and alignment with societal expectations. This shift suggests that, in the digital age, the underpinnings of organizational legitimacy are multifaceted. Organizations are now tasked with maintaining their legitimacy in the physical realm and the vast and ever-evolving digital landscape.

The research findings have delved deeper into the intricate interplay between leadership's mental well-being and the ensuing effects on PSC, shedding light on

subtleties that might previously have been overlooked. The mental state of those at the helm can have profound implications for the broader social environment, especially in sectors characterized by heightened stress, such as the trucking industry, as documented by Witteveen and Velthorst (2020). Chapter 2, while offering a comprehensive overview of the facets of PSC, did not delve deeply into the individual psychological factors that can influence such change. The recent findings bridge this gap by underscoring a leader's emotional health as an internal personal matter and a critical determinant of how organizations contribute to societal betterment. One can conclude from the findings that a leader experiencing emotional or mental turmoil may find it difficult to lead or support initiatives that aim to improve society. Their decisions, judgment, and ability to inspire need to be improved, consequently affecting the collective drive of their organization towards positive change. A sound emotional and mental health leader can inspire their organization with clarity, vision, and purpose, fostering an environment conducive to driving positive social initiatives.

The spotlight on the trucking industry serves as a microcosm that underscores the broader implications of this relationship in other high-stress professions. By their very nature, leadership roles come laden with responsibilities and pressures, and in sectors where the stakes are exceptionally high, the emotional toll on leaders can be amplified. These roles make it imperative for industries to recognize and address the mental well-being of their leaders as a priority. While the foundational concept of PSC remains intact, the findings augment understanding by drawing attention to the pivotal role of mental

well-being in leadership. The concepts emphasizes that for PSC to be holistic and sustainable, the emotional health of those guiding such change cannot be sidelined. Recent research findings shed new light on the symbiotic relationship between a leader's mental well-being and its potential implications for PSC. According to Witteveen and Velthorst (2020), this is even more apparent in industries known for their high stress levels, such as the trucking sector. While Chapter 2 offers an in-depth exploration of the multifaceted dimensions of PSC, it does not encapsulate the profound impact of individual psychological well-being, especially for those in leadership roles, on shaping these changes.

The current findings enrich this discourse, suggesting that leaders' emotional and mental health is not merely a personal concern but is intrinsically linked to how organizations navigate the path to societal improvement. The data imply that leaders grappling with emotional or psychological challenges could face hurdles in championing or aligning with initiatives geared towards societal enhancement. Such challenges cloud their decision-making process, temper their inspiration levels, and perhaps inadvertently redirect the organization's trajectory away from fostering positive societal change. Leaders who maintain a robust emotional and mental equilibrium can act as lighthouses, guiding their organizations with unwavering determination and a clear vision and engendering an ethos conducive to PSC. The emphasis on the trucking industry provides a tangible framework, drawing attention to the broader repercussions this relationship might hold in other sectors known for their intense stress dynamics. The weight of

organizational aspirations frequently rests on leadership, which comes with various responsibilities. In environments where the pressure is magnified, addressing leaders' mental well-being transcends the status of a mere HR checkbox, becoming a strategic imperative.

Limitations of the Study

Certain limitations arose during the execution of the study, which should be considered when interpreting the findings. The study had limited participants, so the findings may not apply to a larger population. The sample was drawn from a specific industry, which may not represent the experiences of other industries that also implemented work-from-home policies during the pandemic. In a qualitative study, there is always a potential for researcher bias in data collection and analysis. Although efforts were made to maintain reflexivity and reduce bias using an initial field test and respondent validation, the potential for bias cannot be eliminated. The study relied on information provided by the participants themselves, which could have been affected by memory or social desirability biases. Participants might have provided responses that they believed were expected rather than an accurate reflection of their experiences and perspectives. The study also employed a cross-sectional design, which limits the ability to infer causality or examine the evolution of participants' experiences and perspectives over time. A longitudinal design might have provided a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of remote work policies on promoting PSC during the pandemic.

In a qualitative study, the findings are based on subjective data interpretation, which may be influenced by the researcher's perspective, values, and beliefs. While efforts were made to enhance the study's trustworthiness through triangulation and respondent validation strategies, the inherent limitations of qualitative research should be acknowledged. Given these limitations, the study's findings should be interpreted cautiously. The research provides insights into the impact of work-from-home policies on employees and logistics companies in the trucking industry during the COVID-19 pandemic and the strategies for promoting PSC during a crisis. Future studies may address these limitations by employing a more extensive and diverse sample, using mixed-methods approaches to triangulate findings, and considering longitudinal designs better to understand the evolution of experiences and perspectives over time.

Recommendations

Recommendations for future research can be made based on the strengths and limitations of the current study and the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. These recommendations are grounded in the study's findings and aim to address the limitations encountered while expanding upon the insights gained. The following suggestions are offered for future research to ensure these recommendations are within the study's boundaries.

Conduct a Longitudinal Study

The current study employed a cross-sectional design, which limits the ability to infer causality or examine the evolution of participants' experiences and perspectives over

time. Future research could adopt a longitudinal design to explore the impact of remote work policies on promoting PSC during and beyond the COVID-19 pandemic. This approach would enable a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing the success of remote work policies and their effects on organizational and societal outcomes.

Investigate Other Industries

The present study focused on the trucking logistics industry, which may differ from other industries implementing work-from-home policies during the pandemic. Future research could examine the experiences and perspectives of leaders in other industries, comparing and contrasting findings to identify commonalities and differences in the challenges, opportunities, and strategies for promoting PSC. Such comparative studies may contribute to a more robust understanding of the broader implications of remote work policies.

Explore Personality Differences

This study acknowledged the potential influence of individual personality traits, job roles, and coping mechanisms on participants' experiences and perspectives regarding remote work policies and promoting PSC. Future research could delve deeper into the role of these individual differences, examining how factors such as personality, job satisfaction, and work–life balance influence the outcomes of remote work policies and the ability to promote PSC.

Use Quantitative or Mixed-Method Designs

While the current study provided insights into participants' experiences and perspectives through qualitative methods, quantitative research could complement these findings by examining relationships between variables, identifying potential predictors of successful remote work policies, and promoting PSC. A mixed-methods approach combining qualitative and quantitative data could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

Explore the Use of Various Technologies

The study revealed that participants leveraged virtual platforms and technology to maintain social responsibility initiatives during the pandemic. Future research could explore the effectiveness of various virtual platforms and technologies in facilitating PSC and the challenges and opportunities associated with their use. This line of inquiry could inform the development of best practices for logistics companies in the trucking industry seeking to maximize the potential of virtual platforms and technology in promoting PSC.

Explore Organizational Culture and Positive Social Change

This study touched upon the importance of organizational legitimacy and the role of organizational support in promoting PSC during the pandemic. Future research could investigate further into the relationship between organizational culture, support, and the promotion of PSC. Investigating the factors that contribute to a supportive organizational culture and the role of leaders in fostering such an environment would provide insights for logistics companies in the trucking industry aiming to enhance their social

responsibility initiatives. The current study focused on the experiences and perspectives of leaders in the trucking logistics industry.

Include Frontline Employees

Future research could examine the policy implications of remote work policies and their impact on promoting PSC from a broader perspective. This line of inquiry could provide valuable information for policymakers, organizational leaders, and stakeholders in developing guidelines and recommendations for implementing remote work policies that effectively balance business continuity and social responsibility. The suggestions for future research are derived from the strengths and weaknesses of the present study, along with the literature analyzed in Chapter 2. By addressing these areas of inquiry, future research could contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of remote work policies on promoting PSC and inform the development of best practices for logistics companies in the trucking industry navigating the challenges and opportunities presented by remote work and crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. By focusing on different industries, individual differences, and the role of technology, future research could help identify strategies that are most effective in promoting PSC across various contexts. Conducting this research will increase our knowledge and provide helpful guidance for logistics companies in the trucking industry and leaders who want to balance business continuity with social responsibility in today's interconnected and rapidly changing world.

Implications

PSC means improving social, economic, and environmental conditions for people, families, groups, and society. This study can positively impact social change on many personal, family, organizational, and social levels. This section will delve into the implications of the study's methodology, theory, and empirical findings. I will provide recommendations for practical application. The findings of this study can help leaders working remotely to identify and overcome challenges associated with remote work during crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Remote work may improve employee job satisfaction, mental health, and well-being. By understanding the strategies and tools that enable effective communication, collaboration, and productivity, individuals can better adapt to remote work and contribute to PSC within their organizations and communities. As remote work continues to become more common in the modern work environment, the study's findings can help families better understand the challenges and opportunities associated with working from home. Remote work may improve work–life balance, reduce stress, and enhance family relationships.

By recognizing the importance of maintaining social responsibility initiatives during crises, families can engage in virtual and community-based activities that contribute to PSC. The study's findings can inform logistics companies in the trucking industry about implementing practical work-from-home policies and crisis management plans that support employee well-being and maintain business continuity during crises. By promoting a culture of resilience, adaptability, and social responsibility, logistic

companies in the trucking industry can foster PSC within their communities and industries. Logistic companies in the trucking industry use the findings to invest in digital technology, employee support resources, and virtual collaboration tools, ensuring that remote work remains a viable and productive option in the future. This study's findings can also inform policymakers and stakeholders about the need for comprehensive policies and regulations that support remote work and promote social responsibility during crises. By understanding the challenges and opportunities of remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic, organizational leaders can develop policies that encourage their organizations to adopt flexible work arrangements and prioritize employee well-being, thus contributing to PSC at a broader societal level.

This study contributes to the existing literature on remote work and crisis management by using a qualitative research approach, which provides rich and in-depth insights into leaders' experiences in the trucking industry. This study extends the theoretical understanding of remote work, crisis management, and PSC by examining the challenges and opportunities faced by leaders in the trucking industry during the COVID-19 pandemic. The findings can inform the development of new theories and models that better capture the complexities of remote work and its impact on promoting PSC during crises. The study's findings contribute to the empirical literature on remote work and crisis management by providing evidence of the challenges and strategies employed by leaders in the trucking industry during the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, these findings can inform future empirical research on remote work and PSC and help identify

best practices for organizations in various industries. Several practical suggestions may be made based on the study's findings:

1. Organizations should invest in digital technology and virtual collaboration tools to support remote work and facilitate employee communication, collaboration, and productivity.
2. Leaders should prioritize employee well-being and mental health during crises by providing resources, support, and flexible work arrangements that accommodate individual needs and circumstances.
3. Organizations should develop comprehensive crisis management plans that address the challenges associated with remote work, promote business continuity, and ensure the safety and well-being of employees.
4. Leaders should actively engage in social responsibility initiatives, leveraging virtual platforms and technology to maintain and strengthen their commitment to PSC during crises.
5. Organizations should develop comprehensive crisis management plans that address the challenges associated with remote work, promote business continuity, and ensure the safety and well-being of employees.
6. Policymakers should consider the challenges and opportunities presented by remote work during crises when developing policies and regulations that support flexible work arrangements and promote PSC at the societal level.

This study thus highlights the potential impact of remote work and crisis management on PSC at various levels, including individual, family, organizational, and social. By understanding the challenges and opportunities associated with remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic, leaders, organizations, and policymakers can work together to promote a culture of resilience, adaptability, and social responsibility that contributes to tangible improvements in the well-being of individuals, families, organizations, and societies. This study has important implications for methodology, theory, and empirical research, as well as practical recommendations to bring about PSC. It serves as a foundation for future research and action.

Conclusion

The heart of this study is the examination of the impact of the trucking industry's logistic companies' work-from-home policies during the COVID-19 pandemic on leaders' ability to promote PSC. The findings reveal the significance of adaptability, resilience, and effective communication in navigating the challenges presented by the pandemic, while maintaining business continuity and social responsibility. Logistic companies in the trucking industry and leaders must be prepared to innovate and embrace new strategies to continue promoting PSC in the face of adversity, such as leveraging digital technology and virtual platforms to maintain social responsibility initiatives. This study underscores the need for a comprehensive understanding of the complexities and nuances involved in managing remote work during a crisis and highlights the potential for fostering resilience and promoting PSC even amidst challenging circumstances. By

learning from the experiences and strategies employed during the COVID-19 pandemic, leaders, organizations, and policymakers can work together to create a more resilient and socially responsible future that benefits individuals, families, organizations, and society as a whole.

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Appendix A: Invitation to Participate and Preliminary Questions

Dear organizational leaders:

My name is Martin Lulgjuraj, and I am a doctoral student at Walden University. I am currently exploring how working-from-home policies during the COVID-19 pandemic affected the ability of directors, managers, and board members from logistic companies in the trucking industry to promote positive social change. If you could spare some of your time for this qualitative research, it would be greatly appreciated. If you decide to participate, the interview process could take up to 60 minutes of your time. The interview process may take place face-to-face or online via Zoom or Skype. You have the option to choose from what is best for you in your current situation. The data obtained from the interviews will be kept confidential, and identity will be concealed. If you are interested in participating in the study, contact me at 214-994-7781 or e-mail me at martin.lulgjuraj@waldenu.edu. If you decide to participate in the research study, please complete the preliminary questions below and send your responses back via e- email or call me at the number listed below to get to my mailing address. I would like to thank you in advance for your consideration of my research.

Sincerely,

Martin Lulgjuraj

martin.lulgjuraj@waldenu.edu

Preliminary Questions:

- What is your name?
- What is your contact information?
- Where do you live?
- What is your occupation?
- Are you willing to share how organizational decisions regarding working from home may have affected you?
- Are you willing to authenticate the accuracy of the transcript after the interview?
- Would you be willing to verify the transcript through e-mail?

An electronic signature will be used to validate any data that is used in the study.

According to the Uniform Electronic Transactions Act, an e-mail address, a typed name, or any identifying marker is the legal basis for authentication. If both parties come to terms electronically, it is just valid as a written agreement.

Appendix B: Introduction Letter

The Trucking Industry, Operation Decision-Making, COVID-19, and Positive Social Change Effects

Dear organizational leaders:

I want to take the opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Martin Lulgjuraj, and I am a doctoral student at Walden University. At the present time, I am exploring how working-from-home policies during the COVID-19 pandemic affected the ability of directors, managers, and board members from logistic companies in the trucking industry to promote positive social change. I am happily married with no children, and I currently reside in Fort Worth, Texas. I am originally from Rochester, Michigan, and the son of immigrant parents. You have agreed to participate in a research study that aims to understand and explore how did logistic companies in the trucking industry's work-from-home policy during the COVID-19 pandemic affect leaders' capacity to engage in community activities that promote positive social change? Your valuable participation will consist of an audio-recorded interview lasting approximately 60 minutes on a mutually agreed date. After the interview, I will send you the interview transcript to review and confirm the accuracy of what was stated in the interview. Upon completion the study, I will send you a summary of the findings. I would like to thank you in advance for participating in this study. I look forward to scheduling your interview session and learning about your experiences concerning the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sincerely,

Martin Lulgjuraj

martin.lulgjuraj@waldenu.edu

Appendix C: Interview Protocol

Interview Protocol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greet the organizational leader and announce myself. • Inform the organizational leader of the purpose of the study. • Inform the organizational leader of the process of the interview. • Let the organizational leader know that the interview will be audio recorded. • Make sure that the organizational leader understands the interview guidelines and has a clear understanding that they are free to stop the interview at any time. • Ensure the organizational leader's confidentiality. • Ensure the organizational leader's identity will not be revealed in the dissertation.
Discussion Purpose	<p>The purpose of this qualitative exploratory case study is to investigate how working-from-home policies during the COVID-19 pandemic affected the ability of directors, managers, and board members in logistic companies from the trucking industry to promote positive social change.</p>
Discussion Guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organizational leader will be informed to respond to the questions asked. • If the organizational leader does not understand the question, they will inform the researcher.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organizational leader will also be informed that the researcher's role is to listen, ask questions, and answer any questions they may have. • The researcher will assure the leaders that his or her personal information, identity, and experiences will be treated anonymously. • The leaders are encouraged to speak freely and truthfully. • The interview will be documented through audio recording and written notes so the data can be reviewed for analysis. • The organizational leader will be encouraged not to reveal any identifying information or names. • Names and identifying information will be disregarded. • The leaders will be free to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.
<p>Interview Question</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your thoughts on your organization's work-from-home policy during the COVID-19 pandemic? • In what ways did the COVID-19 pandemic work-from-home policy prevent you from promoting positive social change? If not, why? • How do you think your organization handled the COVID-19 pandemic crisis?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What practical strategies may your organizations use to avert future chaos during a crisis and promote positive social change?• In what ways do you believe your organization to be legitimate?• How has your organization legitimized its efforts to promote positive social chain during the COVID-19 pandemic?
Conclusion	<p>The data collection process will be explained to the organizational leader, and the researcher will answer any questions that the organizational leader has. Upon completion of the interview, the researcher will thank the organizational leader for their time.</p>

Appendix D: Transcriber's Pledge of Confidentiality

As a transcribing typist of this qualitative research project, I understand that I will be hearing audio of confidential interviews. The information on these tapes has been revealed by research organizational leaders who participated in this project on good faith that their interviews would remain strictly confidential. I understand that I have a responsibility to honor this confidentiality agreement. I hereby agree not to share any information on these tapes with anyone except the primary researcher of this project. Any violation of this agreement would constitute a serious breach of ethical standards and I pledge not to do so.

Transcribing Typist (Print Name)

Transcribing Typist (Signature) Date

Appendix E: Codebook

Themes	Sub-themes (categories)	Initial Codes	Description/Theme Definition	Example from Raw Data

Appendix F: Government Websites

https://www.ilo.org/asia/WCMS_224121/lang--en/index.htm

<https://www.fema.gov/press-release/20230209/following-unprecedented-response-pandemic-fema-announces-agency-will-close>

<https://www.fema.gov/case-study/collaborative-community-resilience-multi-jurisdictional-hazard-mitigation-planning>

<https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus/faqs>

https://www.ilo.org/asia/WCMS_224121/lang--en/index.htm

<https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/homeland-security/fy-23-nofo>

https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_afg-safer-2022-nofo.pdf

https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/fema_whole-community_120211.pdf

https://www.ilo.org/asia/WCMS_224121/lang--en/index.htm

<https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2022/people-working-from-home.html>

<https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus/standards#workers>

[https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1904/1904.39#1904.39\(b\)\(6\)](https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1904/1904.39#1904.39(b)(6))

<https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus/ets>

<https://www.osha.gov/recordkeeping/2014>

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html#infection_control

<https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus/hazards>

Appendix G: Organization Websites

<https://www.cevalogistics.com/en/keeping-your-supply-chain-running/advisories>

<https://about.ups.com/us/en/newsroom/statements/keeping-the-american-and-global-economy-moving.html>

<https://about.ups.com/us/en/newsroom/statements/keeping-the-american-and-global-economy-moving.html>

<https://about.ups.com/us/en/newsroom/statements/keeping-the-american-and-global-economy-moving.html>

<https://pk.kuehne-nagel.com/en/-/knowledge/how-to/contingency-planning-for-supply-chains>

<https://about.ups.com/us/en/newsroom/statements/keeping-the-american-and-global-economy-moving.html>

<https://www.fedex.com/en-us/coronavirus.html>

<https://www.dhl.com/us-en/home/press/press-archive/2020/dhl-express-mobilizes-to-provide-robust-response-throughout-the-americas-to-covid-19-pandemic.html>

<https://www.xpo.com/help-center/covid-19/>

<https://about.ups.com/us/en/our-stories/customer-first/ups-healthcare-offers-expanded-capabilities.html>

<https://www.dhl.com/us-en/home/press/press-archive/2020/delivery-of-covid-19-vaccine-dhl-study-shows-how-public-and-private-sector-can-partner-for-success.html>

<https://about.ups.com/us/en/newsroom/statements/keeping-the-american-and-global-economy-moving.html>

<https://www.dhl.com/us-en/home/press/press-archive/2020/dhl-express-mobilizes-to-provide-robust-response-throughout-the-americas-to-covid-19-pandemic.html>

<https://pk.kuehne-nagel.com/en/-/knowledge/how-to/contingency-planning-for-supply-chains>

<https://www.dhl.com/us-en/home/supply-chain/industries/auto-mobility.html>