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Identifying Organizational Factors That Promote Psychological Safety in Remote Teams

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to explore and identify key organizational factors that promote psychological safety among employees working in remote teams. Using a qualitative phenomenological design, this research was conducted through semi-structured interviews with 19 remote team members based in Tehran. Participants were selected via purposive sampling to ensure relevant experience with remote collaboration. Interviews were conducted until theoretical saturation was reached. The data were transcribed verbatim and analyzed using thematic analysis supported by NVivo software. The analysis followed an inductive approach to identify recurring patterns and categories grounded in participants' lived experiences. Three main themes emerged: leadership and managerial practices, team culture and interpersonal norms, and organizational structures and processes. Within these themes, subcategories such as transparent communication, supportive leadership, inclusive team norms, and equitable access to digital resources were found to significantly influence psychological safety. Participants emphasized that authentic leadership, consistent feedback systems, informal communication rituals, and structured onboarding played critical roles in creating emotionally secure environments. The presence of trust-building behaviors, open dialogue norms, and accessible infrastructure were reported as essential enablers. Across all themes, the intentional design of both digital systems and interpersonal dynamics was found to be central to sustaining psychological safety in virtual settings. Psychological safety in remote teams is not solely the result of digital connectivity but emerges from the interplay between empathetic leadership, inclusive team cultures, and well-structured organizational systems. Organizations seeking to enhance psychological safety must integrate relational strategies and equitable digital governance practices that support open communication, emotional trust, and team cohesion in distributed work environments. Keywords: Psychological safety, remote teams, digital governance, organizational culture.

Introduction

The global transition to remote work, accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, has reshaped the structures of modern organizations and the psychological dynamics within teams. One of the most crucial yet vulnerable aspects of remote team functioning is psychological safety, defined as a shared belief among team members that the team is safe for interpersonal risk-taking. Psychological safety fosters open communication, promotes innovation, and mitigates the negative effects of workplace stressors. However, in remote settings—where face-to-face interactions are limited and informal cues are minimized—maintaining psychological safety becomes especially challenging. This shift compels a closer examination of the organizational factors that contribute to or hinder psychological safety in digital work environments.

Digital governance and the integration of information and communication technologies (ICTs) into management practices have fundamentally transformed organizational ecosystems [1, 2]. In digitally mediated environments, leadership, communication norms, and organizational structures play pivotal roles in shaping team culture. These transformations raise key questions about how psychological safety can be cultivated remotely and which organizational practices make it

sustainable. Studies show that the digitalization of team workflows—while increasing operational efficiency—can also result in formalism, disconnection, and increased ambiguity if not managed with human-centered strategies [3, 4]. Therefore, understanding the psychosocial implications of digital work structures is essential to developing effective governance models that uphold psychological well-being.

Recent scholarship in digital governance has highlighted both the promise and perils of technology-enabled management systems. On one hand, digital platforms can streamline communication, democratize access to information, and empower decentralized decision-making [5, 6]. On the other, these platforms can reinforce hierarchical control, depersonalize interactions, and limit emotional expressiveness—all of which can undermine psychological safety [7, 8]. This dual nature of digital systems necessitates an intentional design of organizational processes that foster trust, inclusiveness, and psychological well-being.

The literature on digital team dynamics increasingly underscores the centrality of leadership in shaping remote team environments. In physically co-located settings, leaders can draw upon informal cues and in-person rapport to build trust; in remote settings, such dynamics require more deliberate mechanisms. Kristensen and Andersen [9] emphasize that C-suite leadership in digital government must adapt to relational models of governance that prioritize transparency and empathy. In line with this, Wang et al. [10] found that digital governance initiatives were more successful in promoting employee engagement and psychological safety when managers practiced participatory communication and encouraged feedback. Transparent leadership that models vulnerability and provides consistent support can act as a psychological anchor for remote teams navigating ambiguity and distance.

Organizational structures and institutional norms also shape the contours of psychological safety. In traditional work settings, institutional rules and proximity often provide the scaffolding for interaction; in remote environments, these are replaced by digital infrastructures that vary in accessibility and inclusivity [11, 12]. As Albab and Agustina [13] note, even simple systems like digital document management tools can either facilitate smooth coordination or create confusion and isolation depending on their design and governance. Organizational platforms that enable informal communication, allow secure expression of concerns, and support visibility across functions tend to foster psychological safety more effectively. Conversely, systems that are rigid, opaque, or siloed can exacerbate feelings of disconnection and surveillance.

Another pivotal dimension is team culture, which often reflects broader governance logics. In remote teams, psychological safety is frequently a product of informal norms: how members communicate in chat groups, how they respond to mistakes, and whether dissent is tolerated. Capurro et al. [4] emphasize that digital sustainability requires attention not only to infrastructure but to interpersonal dynamics, which can either support or constrain open dialogue. Informal rituals, humor, peer support, and inclusive communication practices serve as invisible threads that hold remote teams together. When these elements are absent or replaced by transactional communication, team members may withhold ideas or emotions, reducing collaboration and creativity.

Scholars in digital transformation have also explored how organizational equity in access to resources affects team safety. Hou et al. [14] show that when digital economies expand unevenly—such as rural areas having poorer access to technology psychological and social outcomes diverge. The same principle applies within organizations: if certain remote workers lack access to proper equipment, technical support, or timely information, their perceived value in the team may diminish. Huang [15] adds that inclusive digital strategies that ensure fair distribution of resources contribute not only to productivity but also to employee confidence and emotional security. Therefore, equitable design of digital infrastructure is not a technical afterthought—it is central to fostering a psychologically safe culture.

Training and onboarding processes also appear to be key mediators in the development of psychological safety. Ngurah Wisnu Murthi et al. [16] argue that digital literacy initiatives are foundational to equitable growth in remote and underresourced contexts. In a parallel organizational context, psychological safety trainings that teach empathy, nonviolent communication, and constructive feedback are foundational to building trust. Lan [6] argues that digital transformation in governance is most effective when it empowers individuals at the grassroots level. Similarly, team onboarding practices that introduce new employees not only to tasks but also to team culture and norms help build trust from the start, enabling quicker integration and more open participation.

Another underexamined factor in the literature is the feedback culture in remote teams. Qi and Tian-zhen [17] note that feedback systems in digital rural governance helped create responsiveness and trust between citizens and institutions. Translated into organizational settings, regular feedback loops—including anonymous surveys, check-ins, and retrospective meetings—help surface unspoken concerns and signal that employee voices are valued. When feedback is both solicited and acted upon, it strengthens psychological safety. By contrast, tokenistic feedback mechanisms that are ignored or bureaucratically processed can erode trust, reinforcing disengagement.

Importantly, the structure of remote teams—often cross-functional, culturally diverse, and temporally distributed requires adaptive governance models. Niu [18] proposes that the digital economy must enable new mechanisms for social coordination to maintain long-term trust and engagement. Digital governance is not only about automating functions but also about designing inclusive systems of interaction. In remote work settings, fostering psychological safety requires structural and cultural mechanisms that accommodate diversity, support autonomy, and preserve emotional connection despite physical separation.

Institutional and regulatory frameworks can also either facilitate or inhibit psychological safety. Nasef et al. [19] highlight how structural reforms grounded in digital governance can improve public sector responsiveness and transparency. These findings underscore the role of policy in setting expectations and values around communication, transparency, and inclusion. Tan and Fong [20] similarly show how governance and legal frameworks affect not only formal systems but also the cultural tone and relational dynamics of digital environments. Organizations with policies that promote psychological health, encourage open dialogue, and protect against retaliation create conditions where remote teams can flourish emotionally and cognitively.

Taken together, these findings suggest a growing need to explore the intersections between digital governance, organizational design, and psychological well-being. Zhang et al. [21] argue that digital government success depends on systemic design of governance models that prioritize user trust, transparency, and participatory practices. While much of this work has focused on macro- or governmental levels, the implications for organizational teams—especially those operating remotely—are profound. The capacity of digital work systems to support psychological safety depends not just on software or platforms but on the underlying logic of human-centered governance embedded in them.

Despite the growing body of literature on digital governance, there remains a notable gap in empirical research that focuses specifically on psychological safety in remote teams through a qualitative lens. Most studies emphasize technology adoption, economic performance, or administrative efficiency, but few delve into the psychosocial experiences of employees

navigating virtual work environments [1, 7]. To address this gap, the present study aims to identify and explore the organizational factors that promote psychological safety in remote teams, focusing on lived experiences of employees operating in digital work environments.

Methods and Materials

Study Design and Participants

This study employed a qualitative research design using a phenomenological approach to explore the organizational factors that foster psychological safety within remote teams. The aim was to gain in-depth insights from individuals with firsthand experience of working in remote environments. Nineteen participants (11 women and 8 men), all professionals employed in remote teams based in Tehran, were selected using purposive sampling to ensure they had rich and relevant experiences concerning psychological safety. Participants ranged in age from 27 to 52 years and represented various industries, including information technology, digital marketing, education, and telecommunication. Recruitment continued until theoretical saturation was achieved, meaning no new themes emerged in the final interviews.

Data Collection

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews conducted either online or in-person, depending on participant preference and availability. Each interview lasted between 45 and 75 minutes and was guided by an interview protocol designed to elicit participants' perceptions, experiences, and examples of organizational practices that enhanced or hindered psychological safety in remote settings. Interview questions covered areas such as communication practices, team norms, leadership behavior, feedback culture, and support mechanisms. All interviews were audio-recorded with participants' consent and transcribed verbatim for analysis.

Data analysis

The data were analyzed using thematic analysis, facilitated by NVivo software to manage and organize the qualitative data systematically. The analysis followed an inductive coding process. First, researchers read the transcripts multiple times to gain familiarity with the content. Initial codes were then generated line by line and clustered into broader categories through constant comparison. Emerging themes were refined through iterative analysis, peer debriefing, and member checking to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings. The process continued until theoretical saturation was reached, ensuring that all major patterns and insights were fully explored and represented in the final results.

Findings and Results

The study included 19 participants, all of whom were members of remote teams based in Tehran. Among them, 11 were female and 8 were male. Participants ranged in age from 27 to 52 years, with the majority (n = 12) between the ages of 30 and 40. In terms of professional background, 6 participants worked in information technology, 5 in digital marketing, 4 in education, and 4 in telecommunications. The participants held various roles, including project managers (n = 4), team leaders (n = 3), specialists (n = 8), and support staff (n = 4). All participants had a minimum of one year of experience working in

remote or hybrid formats, with 14 of them having more than three years of remote work experience. Educationally, 10 held master's degrees, 7 had bachelor's degrees, and 2 possessed doctoral qualifications.

Table 1

Main Categories, Subcategories, and Open Codes Identified in the Study

Main Category	Subcategory	Concepts (Open Codes)
1. Leadership and Managerial Practices	Transparent Communication	Sharing information proactively, Clarifying team goals, Providing updates, Avoiding ambiguity, Addressing concerns openly
	Supportive Leadership Style	Being approachable, Emotional support, Encouraging feedback, Manager accessibility, Validating team input
	Role Clarity and Expectation Setting	Clear task delegation, Defined responsibilities, Performance boundaries, Alignment on roles
	Constructive Feedback Mechanisms	Regular check-ins, Growth-oriented feedback, Two-way feedback loops, Performance conversations
	Modeling Vulnerability	Admitting mistakes, Sharing challenges, Encouraging openness, Leading with authenticity
	Recognition and Appreciation	Verbal praise, Public recognition, Acknowledging contributions, Reinforcing team value
	Conflict Management Approach	Addressing issues early, Neutral mediation, Encouraging resolution dialogue, Creating a safe space for disagreements
2. Team Culture and Interpersonal Norms	Trust-Building Norms	Following through on promises, Confidentiality, Mutual respect, Demonstrating reliability
	Inclusiveness and Belonging	Welcoming different opinions, Social rituals, Active listening, Avoiding exclusionary behavior, Equal turn-taking
	Peer Support	Helping colleagues, Offering guidance, Emotional check-ins, Encouraging collaboration
	Open Dialogue Norms	No judgment zone, Encouraging dissent, Safe questioning, Tolerance for disagreement
	Accountability Culture	Owning up to mistakes, Encouraging peer responsibility, Shared ownership of outcomes
	Informal Communication Channels	Casual chat spaces, Watercooler moments online, Jokes and humor, Non-task-related messages
3. Organizational Structures and Processes	Onboarding and Integration Processes	Welcome meetings, Clarity about tools, Early mentoring, Introductions to norms and team members
	Communication Infrastructure	Clear platform policies, Unified channels (e.g., Slack), Avoiding information silos, Asynchronous norms
	Psychological Safety Training	Empathy training, Trust-building workshops, Scenario-based learning, Debriefing exercises
	Feedback Collection Systems	Regular surveys, Anonymous suggestions, Post-project reflections, Open-ended review forms
	Equity in Access to Resources	Equal access to information, Tech provision for all, Support for digital skills, Timely resource sharing

Leadership and Managerial Practices

Transparent Communication was widely described by participants as a foundation for psychological safety in remote teams. Many emphasized the importance of managers who actively shared relevant updates, set clear goals, and avoided ambiguity in digital communication. Participants mentioned that regular communication helped reduce misunderstandings and fostered a sense of inclusion. One participant remarked, *"Our team lead always updates us on everything—changes in direction, client feedback, even when he's unsure. It makes us feel like we're part of the bigger picture."*

Supportive Leadership Style was highlighted as a key driver of emotional security among team members. Leaders who were accessible, empathetic, and willing to listen were perceived as significantly enhancing the psychological safety climate. Participants appreciated when their managers encouraged personal check-ins and feedback without judgment. As one interviewee noted, *"I feel safe going to my supervisor with anything, even personal issues. She never makes me feel like I'm wasting her time."*

Role Clarity and Expectation Setting emerged as crucial in mitigating confusion and anxiety among remote workers. Participants stressed the value of having clearly defined roles and responsibilities to avoid overlaps or performance stress. They described positive experiences where managers explicitly outlined expectations and workflow boundaries. A respondent shared, "What helps me most is knowing exactly what's expected from me. I don't have to second-guess or over-explain things."

Constructive Feedback Mechanisms were identified as instrumental in building a learning-oriented environment. Participants pointed out that regular and two-way feedback—especially when constructive—allowed them to grow without fear of criticism. They expressed preference for feedback that focused on development rather than fault-finding. One participant stated, *"We have monthly one-on-ones where my manager talks about both strengths and areas for improvement. I never feel judged—just guided."*

Modeling Vulnerability by leaders was also regarded as a subtle but powerful contributor to psychological safety. When managers admitted their own mistakes or discussed challenges openly, team members felt more comfortable doing the same. A participant explained, *"When my team lead shared how overwhelmed he felt during a tough project, it gave me the courage to say I was struggling too. That moment changed our team dynamic."*

Recognition and Appreciation were consistently cited as reinforcing a positive team climate. Verbal praise, public acknowledgments during meetings, and emails recognizing contributions were described as simple yet impactful practices. Several participants noted that appreciation from leadership made them feel valued, especially in the absence of physical office interactions. One respondent put it succinctly: *"Even a simple 'thank you' in our team chat can make my whole day."*

Conflict Management Approach played a vital role in maintaining team harmony and openness. Participants expressed that managers who addressed interpersonal issues early and provided neutral, respectful mediation created a safer space for all. A participant explained, *"Our manager never lets things fester. She talks to both sides immediately but makes sure it doesn't feel like a courtroom."*

Team Culture and Interpersonal Norms

Trust-Building Norms were described as essential for developing safe interpersonal relationships. Participants emphasized that reliability, mutual respect, and confidentiality cultivated a work environment where they could take interpersonal risks. One participant shared, *"I know that if I admit a mistake, my team won't use it against me. That's because we've built real trust over time."*

Inclusiveness and Belonging emerged as another significant factor. Practices such as actively inviting diverse opinions, creating shared rituals, and ensuring everyone had a voice were viewed as contributors to psychological safety. Several participants noted that small gestures—like checking in on quiet members—helped foster belonging. One interviewee recalled, *"When I was new and quiet in meetings, my colleague would always pull me in by asking what I thought. That meant a lot."*

Peer Support within the team was repeatedly cited as a buffer against stress and isolation. Participants reported that teammates who offered help, shared resources, or simply checked in emotionally created an environment of collective care. As one participant said, *"I once mentioned feeling overwhelmed in a meeting, and two team members immediately offered to help. That support really stuck with me."*

Open Dialogue Norms were a common characteristic of teams where members felt safe to voice opinions and disagreements. Participants described environments where they could speak freely without fear of embarrassment or retaliation. Tolerance for dissent and questions was perceived as a norm in high-psychological-safety teams. One participant observed, *"Even when I completely disagree with the project approach, I know I can speak up without consequences."*

Accountability Culture was mentioned as a sign of mutual respect rather than control. Teams where members openly acknowledged mistakes and shared ownership of outcomes were seen as psychologically safe. A participant noted, *"We don't throw each other under the bus. If something goes wrong, we figure it out together."*

Informal Communication Channels served as social glue in remote settings. Participants valued virtual spaces where they could interact casually, share humor, or discuss non-work matters. These channels were often cited as helping reduce emotional distance. One interviewee explained, *"We have a separate chat just for jokes and fun updates. It's like our digital watercooler—it keeps things human."*

Organizational Structures and Processes

Onboarding and Integration Processes were described as crucial first steps in creating psychological safety. Participants recalled experiences where structured onboarding, early mentoring, and introduction to team norms made them feel welcomed and oriented. One participant recounted, *"On my first day, they paired me with a buddy and scheduled check-ins every week. It really helped me feel included."*

Communication Infrastructure also shaped the safety climate. Teams that used unified platforms and had clear communication protocols were seen as more transparent and reliable. Participants emphasized that predictable systems reduced stress and misunderstandings. A respondent said, *"We know which tool to use for what. No one is left out of the loop because of scattered info."*

Psychological Safety Training was reported as a rare but powerful enabler. A few organizations had offered workshops or simulations focused on empathy, trust, and communication. Those who participated in such sessions reported increased awareness and openness in team dynamics. One participant noted, *"Our training showed us how to respond with empathy, not defensiveness. It really changed our interactions."*

Feedback Collection Systems institutionalized the practice of listening. Regular anonymous surveys, open-ended reflection forms, and team retrospectives were cited as signs that the organization valued employee voice. A participant remarked, *"Every quarter we fill out a psychological safety survey—and the leadership actually acts on it. That's when you know they care."*

Equity in Access to Resources was seen as a basic but sometimes overlooked factor. Participants shared that unequal access to digital tools, training, or information could undermine psychological safety. Conversely, when organizations ensured everyone had what they needed, it signaled respect and inclusion. As one interviewee emphasized, *"When the company sent me the same tech setup as the rest of the team, I felt I was on equal footing—even working from home."*

Discussion and Conclusion

The findings of this qualitative study identified three main organizational dimensions that contribute to psychological safety in remote teams: leadership and managerial practices, team culture and interpersonal norms, and organizational structures and processes. These findings provide insight into how organizational design, behavior, and digital infrastructure collectively shape the psychosocial experiences of remote team members.

The first and most prominent theme—leadership and managerial practices—underscores the central role of management in establishing and sustaining psychological safety in remote contexts. Participants described transparent communication, supportive leadership, role clarity, constructive feedback, and modeling vulnerability as key contributors to a psychologically safe environment. These findings are strongly aligned with existing scholarship that emphasizes leadership as a foundation for employee engagement and interpersonal trust in digital settings. For instance, Kristensen and Andersen [9] argue that C-suite leadership in digital government must transition from control-based to relational models that foster collaboration and openness. Similarly, Luciano et al. [1] emphasize the importance of collaborative governance in overcoming barriers to digital transformation, particularly through empathetic leadership and trust-building practices.

Participants also highlighted the importance of leaders recognizing and appreciating individual contributions and resolving conflicts proactively. These relational behaviors support Capurro et al.'s [4] finding that effective digital governance depends not only on structures and platforms but also on the ability of leaders to humanize organizational interaction. In remote teams, where emotional cues are reduced, the leader's role in actively reinforcing inclusion and appreciation becomes even more vital. Modeling vulnerability—such as sharing personal challenges or admitting uncertainty—was also seen as a catalyst for openness among team members. This supports the notion that leadership authenticity, particularly in digital environments, fosters psychological security and reduces fear of judgment [7].

The second theme—team culture and interpersonal norms—highlighted informal yet powerful mechanisms that shape how team members experience psychological safety. Subthemes such as trust-building norms, inclusiveness, peer support, open dialogue, and informal communication channels revealed the importance of everyday interactions in shaping team climate. These findings align with Lan's [6] work on digital grassroots governance, which emphasizes that empowerment and openness must be embedded not only in formal systems but also in daily relational practices. The creation of inclusive and trusting cultures, even through casual digital exchanges, appears essential for fostering psychological safety.

Open dialogue norms and peer accountability emerged as particularly important. When team members were encouraged to voice dissent or share divergent views without fear of retaliation, they felt safer and more engaged. This resonates with Zhang et al.'s [21] argument that digital government systems must prioritize participatory communication to maintain institutional trust. Similarly, Qi and Tian-zhen [17] note that feedback mechanisms in digital governance contexts strengthen social cohesion and responsiveness, a dynamic mirrored in team interactions that allow for constructive disagreement and collaborative problem-solving. Informal communication—through team chats, humor, or virtual rituals—also played a critical role in reinforcing team cohesion, supporting Hou et al.'s [14] findings on the importance of local communication ecosystems in rural digital governance.

The third theme—organizational structures and processes—illustrated how broader institutional and technical elements influence psychological safety. Participants described onboarding and integration practices, communication infrastructures, training programs, feedback systems, and equitable access to resources as key contributors to a psychologically secure environment. These findings are consistent with Lachana et al.'s [11] analysis of digital governance architecture, which shows that structural and procedural clarity enhances confidence and reduces ambiguity for stakeholders. Similarly, Albab and Agustina [13] demonstrate that even administrative tools, when designed thoughtfully, can promote clarity and consistency, which are essential for fostering trust in digital interactions.

The significance of structured onboarding and continuous psychological safety training supports Kristensen and Andersen's [9] claim that digital leadership should focus on capacity-building and cultural alignment. By embedding trustbuilding exercises and empathy-based communication into training modules, organizations can cultivate psychological safety as a core value. Moreover, equitable access to information and digital tools was identified by participants as a determinant of perceived inclusion. This directly echoes the work of Huang [15], who emphasizes that inclusive access to digital resources is essential for psychological and operational engagement, particularly in contexts of environmental or geographical disadvantage.

Feedback systems were another process-level factor influencing psychological safety. When participants felt their input was sought and acted upon—through anonymous surveys, retrospectives, or open-ended review sessions—they reported greater trust in the organization. These results align with the findings of Niu [18], who highlights the role of feedback loops in sustaining governance credibility and responsiveness in digital economies. Moreover, Nasef et al. [19] argue that institutional reform through digital governance succeeds when employee voice mechanisms are embedded in routine practices, a view reinforced by our participants' emphasis on continuous, two-way communication.

Collectively, these results reinforce the idea that psychological safety in remote teams is not an accidental outcome of digitalization but the result of intentional governance and relational design. Effective remote teams operate within a system that combines leadership authenticity, cultural inclusiveness, and organizational equity. The research affirms Wang et al.'s [10] findings that digital governance contributes positively to environmental and social performance only when trust and transparency are operationalized through daily managerial practices. In contrast, as Wang [3] warns, digital formalism—where compliance is emphasized over connection—can lead to disengagement and fear, undermining psychological safety in practice.

Finally, this study situates its findings within broader debates on the sociotechnical systems of digital governance. As Keller et al. [2] argue, governance in digitally networked systems must balance automation with adaptability and control with care. In remote teams, this balance is experienced personally: workers must feel that the systems governing them are fair, accessible, and emotionally attuned. Lin et al. [8] further support this view by illustrating how governance mechanisms in dual-equity enterprises are mediated by social trust, which applies equally to team-level dynamics in digital organizations. Our findings affirm that cultivating psychological safety in remote work is fundamentally about designing systems that support human needs within digital boundaries.

While this study offers significant insight into organizational factors contributing to psychological safety in remote teams, it is not without limitations. First, the sample size, while appropriate for qualitative inquiry, was limited to 19 participants, all of whom were based in Tehran. This geographic concentration may limit the generalizability of the findings to other cultural or organizational contexts. Second, data were collected through self-reported interviews, which are susceptible to social desirability bias and retrospective framing. Third, the study focused exclusively on employee perspectives and did not incorporate the views of team leaders, HR personnel, or organizational designers, whose perspectives may offer a more comprehensive understanding of governance structures. Additionally, while NVivo software supported systematic coding, researcher bias in theme development and interpretation remains a potential limitation inherent in qualitative analysis.

Future research should expand on this study by exploring psychological safety in remote teams across diverse national and cultural settings, particularly in contexts with varying degrees of digital infrastructure maturity. Comparative studies between co-located, hybrid, and fully remote teams could further isolate the unique challenges and strategies relevant to each mode of work. Mixed-method studies combining interviews with organizational data or behavioral analytics may yield more robust insights into how psychological safety manifests over time. It would also be valuable to explore the role of specific technologies—such as Al-based communication tools or digital monitoring systems—and their effects on

interpersonal trust and autonomy in remote teams. Lastly, research that includes the perspectives of team leaders, organizational consultants, and technology developers would provide a more systemic understanding of the structures that shape psychological safety in virtual work environments.

To foster psychological safety in remote teams, organizations should prioritize human-centered leadership practices that emphasize transparency, empathy, and active support. Structured onboarding programs should introduce new team members not only to tasks but also to cultural norms and expectations around communication and feedback. Digital infrastructure must be designed for inclusivity, ensuring all employees have equal access to tools, resources, and decisionmaking channels. Informal communication channels and social rituals should be deliberately maintained to promote connection and belonging. Leaders should be trained to recognize and respond to early signs of disengagement, ensuring that psychological safety is continuously nurtured through authentic, two-way interaction.

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Authors' Contributions

All authors equally contributed to this study.

Declaration of Interest

The authors of this article declared no conflict of interest.

Ethical Considerations

The study protocol adhered to the principles outlined in the Helsinki Declaration, which provides guidelines for ethical research involving human participants. Written consent was obtained from all participants in the study.

Transparency of Data

In accordance with the principles of transparency and open research, we declare that all data and materials used in this study are available upon request.

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