

"Above Suspicion": The Concepts of "Productivity Paranoia" in the Radiology Workplace: Issues and Resolutions

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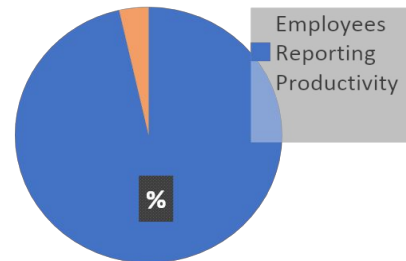
PURPOSE

Productivity paranoia is a term used to describe the uncertainty and doubt that employers and managers have about the productivity of their employees and the contrasting levels of productivity that employees report. A global survey conducted by Microsoft © in September 2022 surveying 20,000 people in corporate work across 11 countries revealed just how stark this disconnect is; 87% of employees reported being productive at work, while only 12% of leaders reported full confidence in their team's productivity (Figure 1)¹. This stark disconnect inevitably leads to high levels of workplace stress, which have lasting impacts on quality of the work produced, work environment, likelihood of employees to search for new jobs, and employee well-being².

METHODS/MATERIALS

In recent years, radiology has experienced a robust growth in imaging studies and demand, with the exception of the 2020 peak of the COVID-19 pandemic³. The COVID-19 pandemic also accelerated the field's work-from-home/hybrid work trajectory, creating the perfect setup for productivity paranoia, which, if left unchecked, will inevitably lead to a decline in the mental health, well-being, productivity and presence of staff. The exact leadership tendencies that contribute to productivity paranoia are also at work and accentuated in contributing to burnout (as outlined in Figure 2)⁴. The emphasis on productivity is further elucidated by a cross-sectional study surveying members of the Society of Chairmen of Academic Radiology Departments (SCARD) which found that academic radiology departments across the nation do not have a uniform, standardized way of assessing departmental performance and rely heavily on productivity as the key parameter⁵.

Employees



Leaders

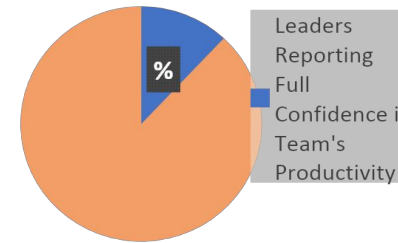


Fig 1 outlines the disconnect at the heart of productivity paranoia: how many employees report productivity and how few leaders have full confidence in this.

RESULTS

The tendencies of the corporate world are no different than that observed in radiology departments today. Instead of increasing scrutiny of productivity, radiology departments may benefit from developing more holistic ways of evaluating employee performance, taking into account those things that bring meaning and purpose into daily work, like teaching and communication with other providers.

CONCLUSION

The pandemic has ushered in new ways of working, which include hybrid and remote work models, no longer relegated to the realm of teleradiology. Lack of traditional on-site work may plunge leadership into paranoia about the productivity of its employees. By channeling that energy into more holistically assessing productivity and assessing the institutional culture, leaders will create a healthier work environment, more conducive to productivity.

REFERENCES

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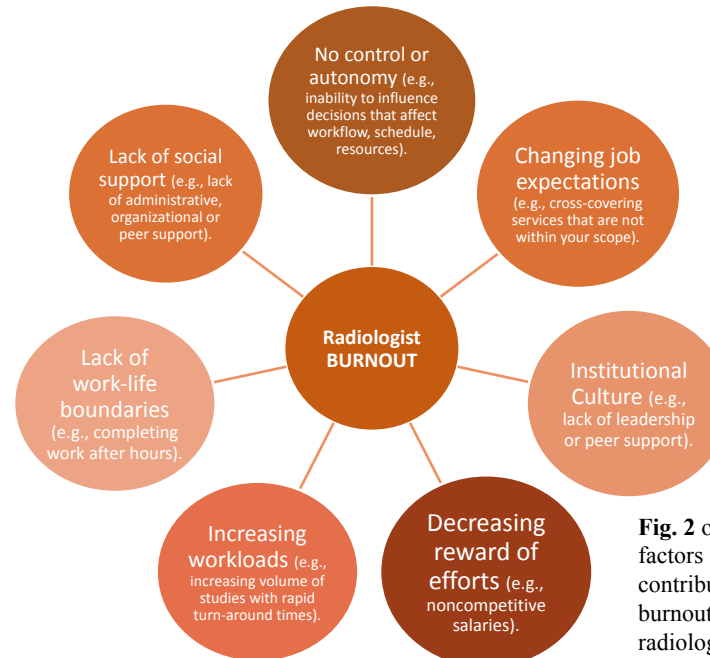


Fig. 2 outlines the factors contributing to burnout among radiologists.