

IMPACT OF ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP ON ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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ABSTRACT

There are many organizational leaders focused on developing the contingency roles which are significant for identifying any skill gaps of the employees and accelerate the training of the employees to overcome any negative situation that can hinder the performance. One of the fundamental decisions taken by the organizational leaders is splitting the teams and dividing into shifts. As a result, it is also beneficial for the employees while they are working remotely in the pandemic, flexible work arrangements developed by the organizational leaders are effective for the employees to stay motivated during the COVID-19 crisis and focus on the organizational goals.

Keywords: *Organizational Performance, Leadership, COVID-19.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Values, culture, openness to change, and employee motivation are all determined by leaders. They influence institutional strategies' execution and efficacy. A direct cause and effect link exists between leadership and the performance of organizations [1]. During the COVID-19 epidemic, the

workers in the OECD countries experienced a multitude of pressures [2]. Many workers are concentrating on preventing the emotional distress brought on by the COVID-19 situation in order to preserve employment and wages [3]. The COVID-19 outbreak has exposed the workers to anxiety-related behaviors that have an influence on their ability to function at work. The majority of organizational executives looked at how the COVID-19 situation was affecting employees' motivation [4], [5]. It is important that the shared understanding goal of the performance management systems be connected to in order for the employees to function well.

The COVID-19 epidemic raised a number of pressures, which had an impact on the workers' mental health. The pandemic-related pressures have a detrimental effect on employees' motivation to work toward company goals [6], [7]. The COVID-19 epidemic puts a lot of employees at danger for panic and fear, which has a negative impact on their conduct [8]. The organizational leaders looked at how knowledge management must be implemented effectively for employee motivation to be sufficient to overcome the stressors that the employees have experienced [9], [10]. Therefore, the primary inquiry that will be addressed in this research is to explore the impact of organizational leadership and knowledge management on employee motivation and organizational performance.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Problems faced by the employees during COVID-19

There are various problems faced by the organizational employees during COVID-19 which affect the work performance and increase the stress. Those problems are as follows:

2.1.1. Occupational role

Due to the COVID-19, the working environment gets affected and it also impacts negatively on the occupational role. The mental health of the employees affected during this time. Most of the employees feel the insecurity of the jobs during this time which is considered as one of the factors or demotivation [11], [12]. The employees also faced the challenge of the restrictions of lockdown which hindered the routine activities [13], [14]. The employees also faced the challenge of getting the salary as many companies faced loss during this pandemic time [15], [16]. Therefore, the occupational role of the employees gets affected during the COVID-19 and it hinders the performance of the employees.

2.1.2. Mental health

The mental health of the employees gets affected by the crisis of COVID-19 as the employees are working from remote locations which affects the stability [17], [18]. There are various employees faced with the risk of psychological disorders like stress, anxiety and depression during this time. It also became vulnerable to the mental health of the employees [19]. The employees also faced the lack of technological skills and experienced the problem to cope up with the change management [20]–[22].

2.1.3. Occupational safety

It is important to note that one of the fundamental responsibilities of the employees is to protect the employees and ensure that the workplace is free from hazards. During COVID-19, the organizations remained closed and the employees faced the lack of a health plan to work adequately from the remote location [23], [24]. The organizational leaders also faced the challenge to educate properly by fostering knowledge management during this pandemic time.

2.1.4. Institutional factors

The employees have examined that there is an absence of the well-trained mental health professionals within the organizations and it has increased the risk of psychological distress during the time of COVID-19 [25]. Most of the organizational leaders failed to provide the necessary support to the employees which are significant to get motivated during this time and work accordingly to achieve the business objectives. Those institutional factors also affected the employees during the COVID-19 pandemic [26].

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1. Impact of COVID-19 on the organizations

The COVID-19 issue had a significant impact on the organizations, as a result of which the people involved struggled greatly and the organizations' performance suffered [27]. The majority of businesses have been compelled to operate in a nontraditional way by managing their workers from remote locations, which has hastened the adoption of change management [28]. The primary change is associated with the remote working of the employees which affects the technical and behavioral aspects of the employees [29], [30]. The high awareness of the need to change and reduction of resistance to understand the lockdown rules also forced the employees to adopt the behaviors, attitudes, beliefs and mindsets of the employees.

Another challenge created by the COVID-19 in the organizations is the lack of ability to utilize the technical equipment with the systems and tools to work productively from home [31]. During this time, the effective leadership of the organizational leaders focused on the enthusiasm of the employees that signifies that leadership has a clear goal to welcome the future. In the current era, the negative impact of the COVID-19 on the organizations influences the employees negatively regarding the feeling of job insecurity and it created many mental health problems [27], [32]. The majority of firms also struggled with performance by relying solely on output to gauge their efforts. The task for the organization's leaders was to implement a sound change management plan that would shield the staff from this disaster [33]. Therefore, it also impacted negatively on the decision making of the firms to sustain in the COVID-19 pandemic era [34]. It has been also found that the economic consequences of the cultural shift of remote working also impacted on the performance of the organizations as there is a lack of knowledge management during this time [35]. The lack of motivation among the employees also impacted the organizational productivity by which the organizations face many unanticipated circumstances [36], [37].

According to [38], in the era of COVID-19, it is necessary to focus more on the organizational leadership in the large, small or medium organizations to maintain the existence and performance of the employees by which the company can survive in the competitive market [39]. It is significant that the non-competing threats like COVID-19 can stop the performance of the organizations by affecting the employees and operation business. As opined by [40], it is necessary for the organizations to meet the requirements of effective leadership style by which the employees can be motivated during the COVID-19 crisis by enhancing the knowledge management [41]. Large MNCs in the global market focused on the effective leadership style by treating the employees with respect and dignity and listening to the concerns patiently and understanding the problems. The recognition and the needs are also necessary to be understood properly [42]. The organizational leaders tried to establish a crisis team to ensure the business continuity which is essential for the business to overcome the negative impact [43]–[45]. The leaders also focused on the future developments by which the negative impacts of the COVID-19 on the performance of the employees can be overcome [46]. The crisis response team developed by the organizational leaders are significant for safeguarding the employees from any kind of unanticipated situations which can hinder the performance [47], [48]. It is also helpful for ensuring the consistency among all of the functions with the organizations to improve the performance. The organizational leaders

also focused on improving the change management by which the employees can cope up with the situation [49].

As stated by [50], COVID-19 influenced the organizational leaders to focus more on the employee safety which is significant for reducing the health risks and maintaining the health status to work adequately [51]. The organizational leaders have tried to encourage the employees to monitor the health of the employees [48]. It is beneficial for the employees to get the necessary support from the leadership team and get motivated to work [52]. The positive support from the senior management of the organizations during the crisis of COVID-19 helped the employees to work from remote locations without any barrier. It helps to improve the organizational performance during the COVID-19 time [53], [54].

3.2. Impact of Covid-10 on Organizational Leadership

It has been examined that various companies forced employees to work beyond the shift times in the crisis situation [55]. The employees faced the problem that there are untimely working hours which affect the motivation and lead to negative performance in the work [56]. According to , there are many employees faced with the problem of the technical resources to work properly from a remote location [57], [58]. It also affected the performance of the employees due to the long-stretched working hours. Most of the employees reported that the key performance indicators implied in the organizations during the work from home are unclear and it affected the overall performance of the companies [59], [60]. The ability of the leaders to empower the employees signifies that the management always tried to allow the employees to perform at their best [61]. Effective performance of the employees and the effective communication skills are significant for improving the situation of the employees [62], [63]. It has been examined that the knowledge workers are also instructed to share the knowledge during the time while the organization is facing various challenges [64]. As opined by , the unfamiliar situation faced by the employees during the COVID-19 affected the level of motivation and also hindered the organizational performance [65]. Therefore, the leaders of the organizations focused on improving knowledge management.

According to [66], the organizational leaders implemented knowledge management to address the issue and protect the employees from the effects of COVID-19. The three-step process of knowledge acquisition, integration, and reconfiguration has been put into place by organizational leaders, and it is crucial for addressing the problems of COVID-19. According to [67], the use of

the relevant knowledge management model is efficient in educating the workforce about motivational tools and measuring performance across industries [68]. The organizational leaders also concentrated on creating and implementing training and educational initiatives to protect staff members against the dangers of COVID-19 [69]. It has been discovered that organizational leaders have concentrated on improving effectiveness and efficiency, which are essential for effectively responding to market changes. Controlling organizational knowledge helps ensure that the needs of the market are addressed to a sufficient degree. The organization's leaders have determined that ensuring employee safety is one of their top priorities. Regular knowledge access helps to connect with knowledge sharing, which enables employees to properly investigate the value of corporate knowledge [70], [71]. Therefore, the leaders adopted knowledge management to improve the performance of the employees by which the organizational objectives during COVID-19 crisis can be achieved. Thus, the knowledge management helped to influence the employees to stay motivated and gain the clear accountabilities by which the business can move forward [72]. The knowledge management is significant for the employees to work accordingly by which the negative impacts of COVID-19 can be overcome.

3.2.1. Evidence based decision making

Organizational leaders have been encouraged by COVID-19 to concentrate more on evidence-based decision making, which is essential for concentrating more on knowledge management. During the COVID-19, it is useful for the leaders to make the crucial choices that could have a favorable influence [73]. The executives of the business have determined that there is a connection between health and economy, thus it is essential to place greater emphasis on employee health in order to keep staff members motivated and boost organizational performance [74].

3.2.2. Clear communication

The majority of firms have adopted virtual work because of COVID-19, which helps organizational leaders improve their communication abilities. Through the virtual network, it is crucial for enhancing departmental communication [75]. Maintaining contact with the organizational leadership and performing the work effectively were both made easier. Maintaining contact with the staff is another excellent strategy used by organizational leaders to help the business achieve its objectives [39], [76]. As a result, it is yet another benefit brought about by COVID-19's influence on organizational leaders' leadership traits [77].

3.2.3. Global cooperation

The organizational leaders also looked at the need for international collaboration because maintaining the health of employees is a shared duty [78], [79]. The organizational leaders are primarily concerned with obtaining the required worldwide support so that they may create training initiatives. Due to COVID-19, the workplace quickly changed, and the change management process enabled the corporate community come together globally [80]. It is also beneficial for the employees to remain competitive in the crisis time [81], [82]. Thus, the training regarding the employee wellbeing and employee safety are beneficial for the employees to get motivated and perform significantly.

3.1. General Research Model

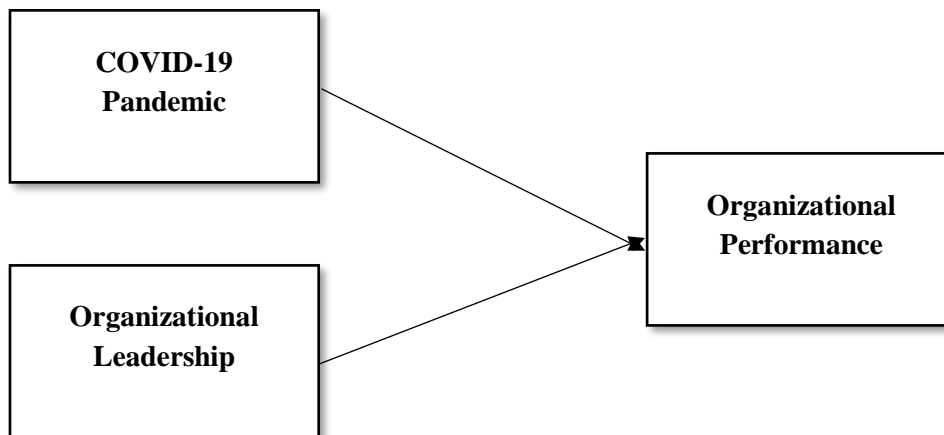


Figure 1: Conceptual Research Model

4. DISCUSSION

In order to overcome the hurdles, there are various recommendations for the organizational leaders by which the employee motivation can be effective to improve the performance. Those recommendations are as follows:

- Firstly, the organizational leaders are recommended to focus more on the team management behaviors by which the motivation can be improved. The inclusion of the

discussions and the execution strategies are significant for understanding the capability of the employees by which the employees can overcome the situation.

- Secondly, organizational leaders must focus more on the planning and preparation by which the brainstorming actions through the strategies can be examined. It is helpful for the team to make the decisions by which the employees can get motivated during any crisis.
- Thirdly, the organizational leaders must provide the necessary training to the employees by which they can get motivated in the crisis situation. It is also necessary for the organizations to provide the necessary resources to the employees to overcome the technological challenges faced by the employees.
- Finally, the organizational leaders must provide the necessary healthcare support facilities to the employees which are significant to ensure the wellbeing of the health. It can also motivate the employees to focus more on the performance and achieve the professional goals.

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, COVID-19 pandemic has changed the work procedure of the organizations. It has been found that most of the employees have faced issues in the work life balance after implementing the work from home strategy. It is significant that there are various stressors affecting the employees like anxiety, stress and depression. The organizational leaders played a pivotal role by implementing the knowledge management by which the employees get benefitted. The leadership programs in most of the organizations and the motivational aspects influenced the employees to focus more on the performance and meet the organizational goals.

In this study, various recommendations have been mentioned which are significant for the organizational leaders to adopt by which the limitations can be overcome. It is also necessary for the organizations to focus more on the employee benefits and safety through enhancing the knowledge management to overcome the situation. Providing the training and effective feedback to the employees can be helpful for improving the level of motivation by which the performance goals can be achieved within the organizations. Therefore, the study is significant for exploring the impacts of COVID-19 on the organizational leadership to manage employee motivation and performance by adopting knowledge management.

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