

# Post-Pandemic Human Resource Management: Challenges and Opportunities

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## Abstract

Following the outbreak of COVID-19, digitization was elevated to a new degree of importance. Since the onset of the pandemic, human resource managers have faced a variety of difficulties and obstacles. Following a pandemic, human resource management may be confronted with new issues, as well as new patterns in the workplace as a result of the outbreak. These difficulties are discussed in further detail in the second portion of the study. The writers of this article look at the perspectives of business executives and experts from across the globe on the future of work in this article. They stress the significance of developing organizational culture, increasing people's competency, and fostering more sensitive individual integrity in order to effectively and efficiently handle post-pandemic transition after an outbreak. Thus, a systemic and procedural approach will need a new strategy to leadership, staff involvement, and the formation of the customer-centric attitude in the aftermath of a pandemic. People's physical and mental recovery in the post-pandemic era is all about trust, respect, solidarity and the most important human values, according to the authors.

Keywords: COVID-19 Pandemic, Post-pandemic Period, Challenges and Opportunities ,Human Resource Management

## 1. Introduction

In this section, we'll cover the basics: Corona virus (COVID-19) outbreaks are centered on humans and have a worldwide influence on public health. Despite the fact that the Ebola epidemic has mostly been a health tragedy, Pandemic has enormous socioeconomic and political effects. Many unprecedented steps have been taken by governments from the beginning of the epidemic to preserve human lives and restrict the spread of the virus in order to reduce the epidemic's catastrophic economic consequences. With regard to vaccine distribution, there has been a bright light at the end of the tunnel. Since Countries having restrictions on their borders have decreased significantly in the last several years. A corona virus outbreak and its effects on our lives are being examined in terms of how our lives have changed after the outbreak. Because of technological advancements and the widespread use of remote working, the future will seem radically different. People-management professionals will have a tough time getting used to the new reality. Covid-19 has hastened the shift to more technology usage in the digital age, necessitating the development of new forms of functioning and the establishment of new jobs. As a result of this new technology, there are a flood of possibilities as well as hazards. It was also a challenging responsibility for human resource managers to ensure that their office workers' health and well-being was not jeopardized while simultaneously offering aid and support to those who worked from home at the same time. A number of organizations are examining how their pre-epidemic processes and practices will function in the post-pandemic era as a consequence of the pandemic. When COVID is no longer necessary, organizations will need more time to adjust and grow (PWC, 2021). Working from home or in an office is going to be the norm in the future of work. As a result, a large portion of the workforce is concentrated in a few sectors and nations, the vast majority of the workforce may not be able to work remotely (McKinsey, 2020a).

## 2. Human resources management during the COVID-19 epidemic:

HR practices and processes have been affected by the Corona virus epidemic. Changes that are not well-managed might result in a loss of productivity. As an HR manager, you must be ready for everything that comes your way (Onwuegbuna, Nchuchuwe, and Adeyi, 2021). For companies affected by the COVID-19 epidemic, keeping company operations operating while also letting workers to work from home was a key source of worry (Collings et al, 2021). Organizations were able to do work electronically for the first time, frequently for the first time in their history, necessitating the re- skilling and retraining of people, which demanded a significant digital transformation. A few examples of how organizations have had to adapt their human resources practices to the

current environment are provided below (Collings et al, 2021). During the epidemic of the Corona virus, HR managers urged afflicted employees to be more resilient and productive. As a result of the pandemic, human resource managers have had to deal with a variety of issues, including the inability to arrange face-to-face meetings, remote employee assessment, alerting workers about the corona virus and its impacts, personal cleanliness, and psychological wellbeing (Onwuegbuna et al, 2021). Onwuegbuna and others. Human resource managers dealing with the Corona virus pandemic experienced a variety of difficulties (2021). It had thought unthinkable before the epidemic that people could work from home; - managing remote workers and balancing work and family obligations, since many organizations were unfamiliar with the concept of managing employees without on-site supervision prior to the pandemic. Following the epidemic, business owners were compelled to alter their work-life balance in order to survive. Due to the difficulty in determining the precise number of individuals working on-site, human resources managers must make educated guesses. COVID-19 has been discovered as a risk factor for corona virus spread, resulting in increased workplace health risks; - rapid policy changes to keep up with the constantly changing standards; - managing workers' communication when many of them work from home or in a remote location. When it comes to determining which communication strategies are most suited for each particular employee, human resource managers have battled. A collaborative effort between the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development of Europe (OECD) and the European Union (EU) on the SIGMA Program was launched to assist government entities dealing with a corona virus pandemic epidemic (2020). That we all learn by trial and error, gaining data and feedback, as well as adapting and altering as necessary, was emphasized in the study HR managers should educate their employees about the challenges they face and urge them to adapt and grow in the face of these uncertainties. If we are to make any progress in the face of the corona virus epidemic, we must have a constructive attitude toward it (SIGMA, 2020).

### 3. Managing Human Resources in the Post-COVID Era

With regard to how the pandemic is affecting companies, experts have stressed the need of worker adaptability and resilience in addition to the necessity for an acceleration of the transition to a new digital economy in light of the epidemic's effect (PWC, 2021). Digital and automation revolutions have been hastened as a result of the economic slump, resulting in widespread redeployment of workers across sectors (IMF, 2021). As businesses struggle to adjust to the post-pandemic climate, re-establishing organizational culture will be a primary responsibility for human resource departments. As a result, it is expected that the usage of hybrid working models, which mix remote and on-site labor, will expand in the future (PWC, 2021). Despite the fact that this is a beneficial development, there is a possibility that the transition will have a detrimental influence on the present culture of organization. Workers' social dynamics will be affected by less face-to-face interaction and a more scattered workforce (PWC, 2021). There are worries regarding how upper-level managers will control lower-level employees in the wake of this development. However, frequent check-ins that are exclusively for the sake of social interaction or emotional support may be a beneficial technique for developing a balanced framework that is suitable for both managing a remote workforce and sustaining ties, according to the authors. Leadership and management must keep an eye out for problems that impact their employees by encouraging open communication and creating direct lines of contact throughout the organization's different levels of management and administration. Incorporating and supporting policies that promote diversity, equality, and inclusion may aid in the strengthening of organizational culture and the development of characteristics such as unity, mutual respect, empathy, and a feeling of personal responsibility among employees (PWC, 2021). The majority of organizations are attempting to evaluate whether or not their existing operating techniques, in the past and will continue to serve them in the future (Deloitte, 2021). This new business climate is ideal for human resource management. Moreover, they must be at the forefront of defining how firms recruit and develop personnel, improve the experiences of employees, and move away from outdated operating paradigms. They must take the initiative and take the lead (Deloitte, 2021). Success in the future is dependent on the ability to learn from one's failures in the past. President of the European Central Bank, Christine Lagarde (2021), made her remarks where she said that a hybrid type of working is unavoidable. Tele working, working in an office, and working in a combination are all instances of how this might be accomplished. To find out what its staff felt about the present state of affairs, the European Central Bank (ECB) was conducting a poll among its own personnel. Moreover, according to Lagarde (2021), new talents were acquired as well as remote working connections were encountered during COVID-19, all without a major loss in production. It is necessary for individuals to get together

in person and talk to one another while looking one another in the eyes, monitoring body language, and assessing their feelings, according to her. When it comes to developing new ideas and innovations, brain-picking and brain-sharing are critical components of the creative process. The World Bank's Lagarde (2021) advised against over-eager excitement for tele working and doing everything remotely, since this might have a detrimental influence on the development of communities. Martucci and Biu have drawn attention to the patterns of workplace behaviour during a pandemic (2021). These are the most effective: Prior to the outbreak, several managers believed that workers who were absent from the office were not really working; however, the epidemic has proven them incorrect. The notion that workers who work from home are more productive is held to be true, provided that they are given the ability to choose their own work schedules. There was also a fall from 27 percent to 12 percent in the proportion of jobs that were classified as "uninteresting," according to the experts. - It is a disadvantage of remote working because you do not have the interpersonal relationships that come with working in an office setting. In order to accomplish this, human resource professionals are expected to devise novel methods of bringing people together- Until such time as there is no longer a discussion, the argument over location-based remuneration will continue indefinitely Workers' compensation and the question of whether or not their salaries should be reduced if they relocate to lower-cost places are discussed in the latter. It is also possible that current workers' salary may be maintained but the compensation of new employees from these locations who do the same tasks will be cut in order to represent the genuine cost of living. There will be more to come on this topic in the future. In spite of the fact that the coronavirus pandemic has already brought the globe closer together, it will only grow more so as the consequence of a more widely dispersed global workforce. It is expected that employers would place a high emphasis on the development and well-being of their employees. The fact that organisations will constantly strive for efficiency does not mean that it will suffice in the future. The epidemic has shown that the needs of each person must be considered in the perspective of the needs of the greater population as a whole. In this manner, it is possible that additional opportunities may arise in the future, with the goal of delivering greater freedom, responsibility, and trust to everyone involved. The year 2021 is a leap year. (Martucci and Biu) (Martucci and Biu) Indeed, according to McKinsey (2017), the influenza virus 19 (COVID-19) accelerated three significant employment-related trends that are likely to shift after the pandemic: The specifications are outlined in the next section: Remote working and virtual meetings are projected to continue in the aftermath of the pandemic, but at a lesser frequency than they were during the height of the outbreak. Jobs in delivery, transportation, and warehousing are expected to rise, and automation, artificial intelligence (AI), and digitalization will be implemented at a faster pace than previously anticipated. When McKinsey conducted an analysis of the impact of COVID-19 on the workforce, they discovered that the number of people working from home has grown dramatically, a trend that is expected to continue in the post-pandemic environment. It was our goal to examine 2,000 assignments from over 800 different professions spread throughout eight different countries: the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia. Some organizations have already announced plans to transfer to more flexible and smaller office locations in the near future (McKinsey, 2021). This involves lowering the number of departmental sites, instituting "hot-desking," and transitioning from individual work environments to collaborative ones, among other initiatives. As a result, office space will be decreased, and on a daily basis, fewer employees will be needed to perform their duties. An August 2020 survey by McKinsey (2021) found that a sample of 278 executives expected that office space will be reduced by 30 percent. As a result of reducing their variable and utility bills, several firms have realized that they have saved money. In July 2020, a worldwide study on artificial intelligence adoption was performed with the participation of more and other nations (McKinsey, 2020b). According to the poll, around one in every four firms had annual sales of less than \$1 billion, with the remaining companies divided between those with sales of \$1 billion to \$10 million and those with annual sales of more than \$10 million. According to the findings of a study, two-thirds of those who answered the question have already started investing in automation and artificial intelligence (McKinsey, 2021, McKinsey, 2020b). While digitization has progressed, automation technologies like as robots, tasks have progressed at a slower pace. President of the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond, Tom Barkin, discusses the future of employment and the labour force, as well as the hybrid model, which blends remote and office work, in this interview (2021) Companies may benefit from these recommendations. The first step is for organizations to clearly establish the value proposition of in-person working, effectively convey that value proposition to their employees, must be balanced, which means establishing a pleasant working environment in which individuals may develop their talents and advance in their careers is essential. It is a method of motivating people by instilling a feeling of

belonging, creativity, and development in them, and then translating this into the company's strategic goals and objectives. For starters, Barkin (2021) emphasizes the need of establishing clear criteria so that workers understand precisely how much time they must spend working in person and what their obligations are before starting their jobs. New employee induction and integration should be rethought since having fewer colleagues on site makes it more difficult to integrate new workers into the company's culture and way of doing business (Barkin, 2021). It is also necessary to implement management methods that are tailored to the needs of remote workers. Barkin (2021) adds one last argument, which is that not all projects can be completed in the same manner as others. Depending on their position, some managers may be required to be on-site, while others may be permitted to work from a remote location. Employers will need to spend more money on software and equipment, as well as on training, if they want to guarantee that their staff can take full advantage of remote working. Because of the high cost of connections and training, networks of people (Barkin, 2021). For businesses, this entails reorganizing their workforces and assessing which individuals and vocations are most suited for remote working. It will be more difficult to manage the new workplace since it will consist of a group of people who will work both online and in person (McKinsey, 2020b).

#### 4. Possibilities for Post-COVID Era Human Resource Management Enhancements:

The lessons learned during Covid-19 must be used in the post-pandemic phase resilience in the face of future crises. In order to recover from the pandemic, it is necessary to analyze, update, and enhance existing human resource management strategies and business continuity plans, successful human resource management procedures in post-pandemic contexts need changes in the work practices and behaviour of not just the organization's managers and workers, but also of all stakeholders in the system. Additionally, these transitions need the learning of new multi-disciplinary knowledge, skills, and concepts such as "risk-based" and "crisis-based" thinking, as well as the development of new organizational structures (Luburi, 2021a). Improved company culture, employee competency, and personal integrity are all essential for all of these transformations to be successful. As a result, effective and efficient post-pandemic change management requires time and work to stabilize and integrate into the system; it is also not simple. When dealing with crises and the aftermath of crises, it is critical to use a logical and process-oriented approach that combines ongoing assessment, improvement, and innovation. In order to successfully manage crises and the aftermath of crises (Luburi, 2021b). Because of the epidemic, people's lives were irreversibly altered – both in terms of their economic well-being and in terms of their mental health. As a result, human resource management is today more vital than it has ever been before. More frequent meetings between employees who balance the needs of organizations, individuals, and families are all important soft management variables. New technology should be seen as an opportunity, rather than a threat, to the preservation of existing jobs. A post-pandemic training program for managers will help them to develop their skills and abilities so that they may better lead the organization moving forward.

#### 5. Conclusion :

Despite the fact that we are in the middle of a digital revolution, the workplace's impact has expanded significantly the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Companies and individuals alike have been affected by the rise of working from home. Company executives have been attempting to come up with novel ways to ensure the survival of their organizations while also protecting the lives of their workforce members. We have no way of knowing what will happen when the pandemic has ended. A mix of working from home and in the office may be the wave of the future in the world of employment. However, not all occupations can be performed remotely, and those that can will need large investments in technology, infrastructure, and personnel training in order to be successful. Despite the fact that remote working has its advantages, it may put workers' safety at danger due to the absence of face-to-face communication. There will be several obstacles for human resource managers in coping with this shift and developing an ideal work paradigm that benefits both employees and their organizations at the same time. Although it is difficult to forecast the future, the COVID-19 epidemic has had an irreversible effect on, and is likely to continue to have an impact on, organizational working practices and culture in the future. It is critical to understand when to begin, what resources to utilize, and what processes and procedures to use in order to ensure that the changes are successful. This will ensure that everything runs

smoothly. Post-pandemic recovery encompasses more than just economic recovery; it also encompasses the physical and emotional rehabilitation of persons who live in the affected area.

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