RESEARCH ARTICLE

Sustaining Employee Commitment By Utilising Hr Practices In 2021: Post Covid Scenario

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Abstract

The last two years has been avalanche of change in HR practices. The global pandemic has altered the reality of Hr practices and redefined the work areas completely. This article will present how the transformation has been made and further how HR will emerge in the future. Organizations around the world has scrambled to react and handle the sudden pandemic effect because of which a sudden transformation was of immediate need. The emergence demanded for digital transformation strategies which are suppose to be of people centric. Understanding the prevailing scenario and peoples mindset, digital transformation was inevitable for all organizations.Considering the shifts in the industry, it is very important to keep in pace the rapid development.This paper makes an attempt to study how HR practices were been designed to sustain the commitment levels of employees in various organizations from IT sector.

1.INTRODUCTION

The outbreak of Covid -19 has largely hit a organizations around the world and made them to change the shifts of working patterns. This was only possible with the changing HR practices that were been planned immediately. The risks that was faced by various organizations was at unprecedented level. Further the effect it has on HR Practices will be for a long run. Hr Practices had to change in many aspects to maintain the commitment level of employees and also to improve organizational productivity. Certain notable changes are been discussed below:

1.Virtual workspace:

Though the concept was not new, but this practice is practiced tremendously in every sector including the educational sector where it was quite unpopular in country like India. The pandemic has pushed every work place to operate virtually. Every organization has to shift completely to work from home due to the urgency of sudden lockdowns imposed by various Government around the world. Many organizations have developed separate software's to support the current situations and to take the business ahead. Through this new way of working many companies have realised new of working is also beneficial in certain ways. This change in opinions in the organizations may also change in the nature of working in the coming future. It may affect the working relationships and networks which may become suppressed and limited. This may become a problem if it is not properly addressed by the managers at the right time.[1]Managers working on the working environment will also understand the principles of virtual environment is not much different but need to be closely monitored. Embracing the changes organizations should not become victim of it.[2]

2.Hybrid work environment:
Certain companies where work has to go on compulsorily with their physical presence has developed this system where employees go to physical office but not regularly. This poses a biggest challenge to HR now. All the employees do not meet regularly. They have the opportunity to meet periodically which may effect the learning process and their collaboration as well. This is also a threat to work on projects of innovation also. Managers need to understand power dynamics to get benefitted from hybrid working environment. If not been understanding concept of such dynamics can damage reletionships. [3] A good organization structural settings for hybrid work solutions with standards have proved to be successful. Such settings would provide solutions to the emergence situations to be controlled. [4]

3.Virtual Team Space:
HR needs to continuously work to create a culture of growth and resilience. This pandemic made HR to develop alternative channel to make people to come together share ideas and take projects ahead. So developing a culture of virtual teams was a must for HR. Various softwares were been developed to support such new culture. Building global teams and internet related capabilities are now options of all companies regardless of the size and location. Companies need to look into the

features of these teams in turbulent years. [5] A new creation with work standards that will facilitate communication, work transparency etc is to be developed in companies to create work transparency. [6]

4.Human Machine Interface Skills: Working virtually has become inevitable, but yet certain levels and kinds have people found the new working to be difficult because of skill inadequacy. HR had to play a vital role to bring back such employees towards the virtual space and pull out the output from them. An Interface provides a good medium for employees with machines robustly and naturally.[7]

5.Mental stress: the quick spread of Corona virus developed stress among people a lot. Studies found that woman, younger age people or people experiencing poor/fair general health and families with someone effected with covid were facing psychological stress.[8] Further a extensive area of research was identified where employee of private universities and other lecture community were been stressed because of various technological applications such as Whatsapp and Zoom Meetings.[9]

6.Redesigning the HR-Strategic Focus: Combining HR Management processes with effective hr technology will be productive but the challenge lies in to manage this technology and maximise benefits for the HR executives.[10] HR plays a central role during Covid to drive operational and strategic success. During pandemic, work context influences employee behaviours and actions. Further tensions between strategic and operational roles are also been identified to control the overall situations.[11]

7.Role of communication: For Any Organization communication plays a very important role to handle crisis. It helps to take formal and informal actions and also in distribution of information and socialization of organizational policies as well. Communication helps the organizational members to get motivated and also sustain performance too.[12] Understanding psychological conditions is very important during this pandemic and Communication plays a vital role to make it done. If this is ignored, gaps may be generated which adds more difficulties to present scenario.[13]

8.Flexi workhours: Flexibility has a greater impact on managers in general and Hr Managers in specific.this FWH will have greater impact on the organizational performance if they are properly implemented. Various factors such as employee happiness, organizational stress, employee productivity etc have a greater impact.[14] Flexi work hours will have significant cost savings in the future which will be face resistance as well . However, cost savings on less rental space, stress issues and boosts employees productivity. [15]

1.2 AIM
The aim of this study is to understand how the best HR practices will contribute to sustain the employees commitment levels in the organizations.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY
1. To understand about the effect of virtual workspace on the productivity of organizations.
2. To evaluate the role of communication in filling the gaps due to virtual work space.
3. To analyse role of HR practices to sustain employee commitment through the virtual workspace during covid pandemic.

1.4 FOCUS OF THE STUDY
The study tries to understand how various companies HR Practices are been trying to sustain the employee commitment on the virtual workspace. Due to covid -19 pandemic all the companies employees have been working from home because of the government imposed lockdowns due to the quick spread of virus.

1.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY
The study was conducted with the limited sample considering a limited region. There are chances that employees may not give a fair opinion and could have misinterpreted also.

2 REVIEW OF LETERATURE
Work from home is flexible option rather than forcible mandate. Workfrom home was not supposed to be as a better option for majority of the employees in Hong Kong with the current policies it was not supposed to be interesting for many of the though they would like to work from remote areas.[16] Covid-19 has created a global shock to everyone including to HR Managers who had a greater responsibility to make a difference. Research on International business specifically on International Human Resource Management has been the biggest challenge. Managing the distance and rethinking on boundaries have been the main focus of this IB research.[17]

After this Pandemic also the crisis may continue. Issues related to work from home can be considered to be important as many managers have experienced increase in productivity and also lead to lower costs. In countries like Australia where covid was well managed has been planning a four day week of working to increase productivity and employees commitment [18] Service firms such as Telecom industry also regularly pursue directions that facilitate to stand firmly in the competition. Managers in every industry should meticulously work in executing and improving their HR practices such as appraisal process working environment etc to sustain commitment of employees. [19] It is recommended that all the HR practices around the world should progress to HR 4.0 so as to improve the business and see there is supportive environment for HR 4.0. [20] With respect to age, demographic difference, years of experiences, position of employee except gender significant difference were been notable regarding the engagement of employees in Indian Telecom Sector.[21] In the present scenario, planning for employee engagement strategies using technology helps the companies in growth and development. Practices such as Online appreciation, webinars, brainstorming sessions etc will be contribute a lot in improving the commitment levels. [22] Job satisfaction is considered to be very important in increasing the commitment level of employees. Normative commitment is found to be more influential when compared to continuous commitment level.Satisfaction of an employee towards the job has strong connection with the different

levels of commitment they show towards productivity. [23]

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was a exploratory or causal research where it tests the effect of cause and effect relationship between independent and dependant variables. The dependent variable is the employee commitment and the independent variables are thehr practices that are considered for the study

3.1 DATA COLLECTION

The study utilised both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data was collected using a questionnaire and distributing it among the respondents. Further secondary data was collected from journals, magazines, internet sources, business magazines etc. This study was conducted considering respondents from various companies in IT sector in the city of Hyderabad.

3.2 ANALYSIS TOOLS

The SPSS software was used to analyse the data. Further Cronbach alpha was used to test the reliability and the consistency of the questionnaire used for the study

3.3 SAMPLING

Convenient Sampling method was chosen which is non probability where the respondents are considered based on the ease of access. A sample of 150 was taken where the respondents were from different companies belonging to the IT sector. A questionnaire was constructed and using Google form it was forwarded to various respondents.

3.4 HYPOTHESIS

Hypothesis was drawn and tested to prove if HR practices have significant impact on Employee commitment.
H0:Hr Practices have significant impact on Employee Commitment
H1: Hr practices do not have significant impact on Employee commitment

3.5 RESEARCH MODEL:
Independent variables used in this study are Flexi work hours, consistent communication, wellness initiatives, Remote work strategies, Caring culture, learning and development and Motivation and the dependent variable is employee commitment .

4 ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION
4.1 ANALYSIS OF RESPONDENTS CHARACTERISTICS

This section depicts the analysis of the respondents from whom data was collected. After ensuring the reliability 130 questionnaires were considered out of which 78 were males and remaining 52 were females.

Further the following table 2 presents about R square value which states that the research model is a good fit for the research data undertaken.Independent variables used in this study are Flexi work hours, consistent communication, wellness initiatives, Remote work strategies, Caring culture, learning and development and Motivation and the dependent variable is employee commitment.

The following Table 3presents about ANOVA test output where it is observed that sig value is 0.021 which is less than standard value that proves that independent variables such as Flexi work hours, consistent communication, wellness initiatives, Remote work strategies, Caring culture, learning and development and Motivation chosen for this model are helpful to determine the dependent variable employee commitment.

Table 4 presents about the Regression test output which explains the effect of various independent variable on the dependant variable. Further the relationship between the dependant and independent variables is also explained. It can also be observed that beta values for independent variables that are considered are positive. The beta values for role of communication (0.611), remote work strategies(0.567), learning and Development (0.451), wellness initiatives(0.432) and caring culture(0.311). This states that the considered independent variables are positively impacted to sustain the employee commitment and further improve their performance. So with the analysis being performed the hypothesis H0 stating that Hr Practices have significant impact on Employee Commitment is accepted.
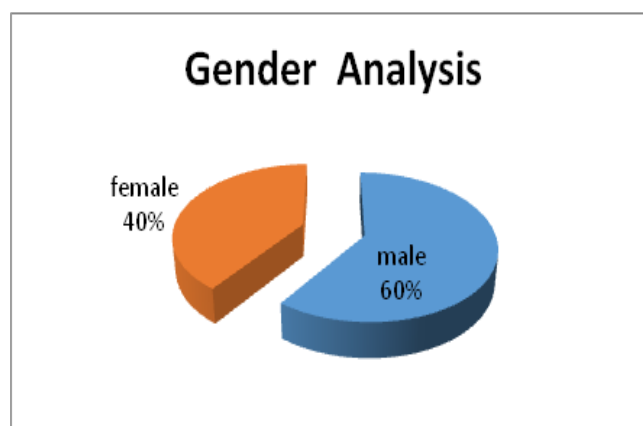
Source:Primary data   Figure 1

Figure 1 presents the gender analysis showing majority of the respondents who constitute 60% are male and the remaining 40% are female.
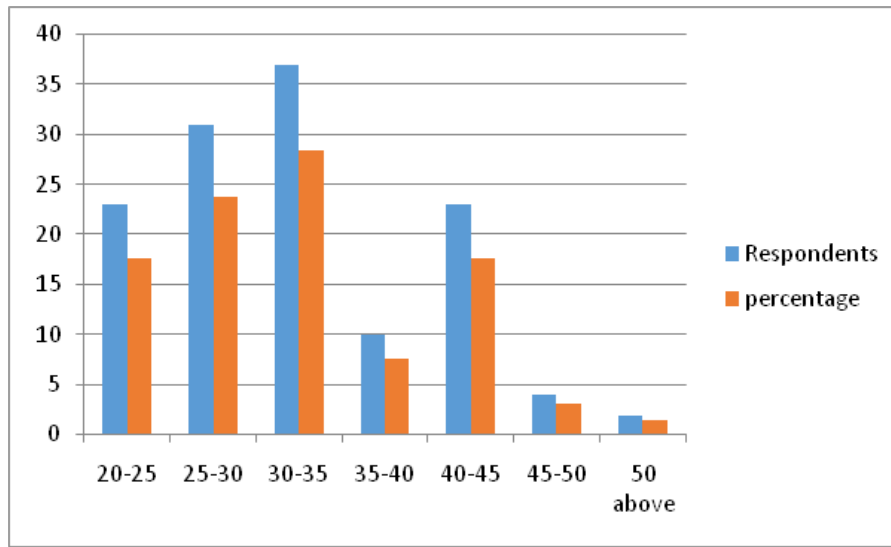
Source: primary data figure 2: Age analysis

Table 1 Cronbach's alpha Reliability Test

Cronbach's alpha	0.873
Number of items	12

Source :Primary data

Table 2 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	AdjustedR Square	Std error of estimate
1	0.510	0.632	0.666	2.46

Table 3   Anova Test Output

Model	Sum Of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Regression	30.151	5	5.210	2.490	0.021
Residual	106.025	42	2.132		
Total	132.115	48			

Table 4

Variables	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardised coefficients	t	sig
	B	Std error	Beta		
Remote work strategies	0.212	0.105	0.567	0.215	0.015
Role of					
communication	0.315	0.301	0.611	2.37	0.017
Wellness initiatives	0.313	0.056	0.432	2.04	0.013
Caring culture	0.213	0.087	0.311	0.46	0.012
Learning and development	0.333	0.658	0.451	0.5	0.031

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that significant HR Practices has a great impact on increasing the commitment levels of employees during the pandemic period. Hr practices need to be handled with extra care making certain changes considering the pandemic situations . As employees are working virtually, communication should play an important role so that no gaps are to be identified in the working processes. Taking care of the employees and their families who got affected by Corona virus is also very essential. Organising some online wellness programs for the welfare of employees also motivates them and helps in to sustain commitment towards their work. Further conducting some webinars, workshops etc also paves path for their development as well. From the analysis of this study, it is concluded that the different HR practices considered in the organizations during the Covid 19 pandemic has a positive impact on sustaining the performance of employees.

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