

Business Organisations: With Reference to HR Practices

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Objective

This chapter deals with HR practices which are affected due to worldwide pandemic. Outbreak of Coronavirus which is originated from China has affected worldwide practices and so it's impact is clearly visible on Human Resource practices also. Most of the organizations are struggling to survive and so they are continuously rethinking, redesigning and evolving their practices. Compensation, layoff, recruitment, work culture, health and safety standards all are being affected due to this crises. In this chapter we will discuss the challenges, problems and alternative working ways in HR practices, the new normal post covid is also highlighted here based on the current situation.

Introduction

World is facing crisis where no country is escape from the impact of COVID- 19 pandemic. Outbreak of coronavirus has changed the landscape of all the practices in the world. Nations are concerned about employment issues. Its effect has reached out all the sectors and has made all the sectors rethink what could be the new normal for us. On one hand employers are reframing work strategies and policy for employee engagement and on the other hand employees are looking for mentalhealth, wellbeing and securities. Sound work place practice cannot be placed by one hand. Employer and employees have to commit for each other to cope up with this pandemic. It seems organisations are facing challenges such as taking work from remote area, managing virtual online working practices, technical training session requires to learn new skills. HR professionals have to work as a change agent. Provision of new policies of medical and leave for employees wellbeing are required to deal with this pandemic for improving healthy work practices.

In current scenario, organisations are ready to take COVID-19 pandemic as an opportunity and it's impact also covers some boundary of possibilities such as organisations are working without physical presence of manpower which leads flexible working hours as per employee suitability to work from home. Employees are getting chance to show their talent to learn without continuous supervision, local talents can be being given importance rather than global. And employee can experience cross domain in place of domain centred work.

To survive in the collapsing economy, we need to improve our working ways. Human Resource practices play a major role in the organizations. This pandemic has brought a lot of changes in designing workflows, reskilling the employees through virtual training, facilitating them to work from home, new safety rules and precautions, managing stress of employees and many more to stay relevant in their respective areas.

Affected Areas Which Will Impact the Employer-Employee Relations

One such HR practice is the **recruitment**. Although recruitments are not much but companies want to hire people who are technologically sound or have the ability to learn. Organisations opened up windows for aspirants who are willing to learn fast, apply new techniques for achievement of objectives and are ready adapt changes on the blink of eyes. Companies are taking skype interviews, conducting meetings through applications thus they want people to be techno friendly. It brings in light some unseen opportunities for those who had immense skill specifically in IT sector.

...the lost jobs are constituted 8% of total employed in the country. It has been a huge devastation for the employment sector.

Another dimension is **compensation practices**. As continuous cut in salary and wages. Organisations are facing issues in giving salaries and sustaining the current work force due to lockdown of all the business activities. Although our economy has faced financial crunches a number of times so they are little aware of what measures need to be taken but still it is a complex process of sustaining in the current market. What organisations are doing is they are having solidarity in it like board of directors are having fee reduction.

Communication Strategies of working organisation helped to foster connection with employee and employer relation and provide feedback to each other. Where sound application of technologies is one of the measure tactics towards dealing with the continuity of regular working practice. It is one of those challenging time where employees become unsure of their future and might become unproductive. Counselling and continuous feedback will improve employees morale and they might work in a better way. Thus we need to have better communication strategies. Crisis management needs to be done here in various ways to mention a few, companies can engage employees have proper communication with them about pay cuts, withholding the salary increments and freezing the salaries for the time being.

Another challenge faced by HR department is to take decision about **layoff**. Companies are either laying off the people or asking them to resign. Retail, hospitality, travel, aviation, automobile/manufacturing sector are laying off the employees to the maximum. Job creation and retaining employees is difficult in the current situation.

Whereas working organisation's HR professional are more focused on

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employees prospective through **social security schemes** of the organisation and Government giving importance to Social security's schemes as a result its more on demand such as pensions, national pension schemes, PPF etc. To provide effective measures under this government is providing relaxation of time limit, amending contribution schemes and making schemes flexible to deal with pandemic.

One more challenge is to maintain **health and safety measures** in the organisation. As it is a known fact that HR department needs to take care of employees health and safety. It also leads to provision of leaves and alteration of medical policy for better prospective of employer and employees of working organisation. They have to abide the rules and regulations proposed by the government hence it becomes mandatory for them to follow the provisions framed by the government.

On the other hand, **employer expectation** is more concerned with workforce utilization practice, continuous supervision and handling real time data towards reducing cost. Their aim is to enhance productivity effectively and efficiently towards coping up of current situation under the pandemic. Employers want their employees to be productive and technologically sound during this period also. The new normal enforces them to now look forward to the employees who are skilled and technologically sound.

Unemployment Rates

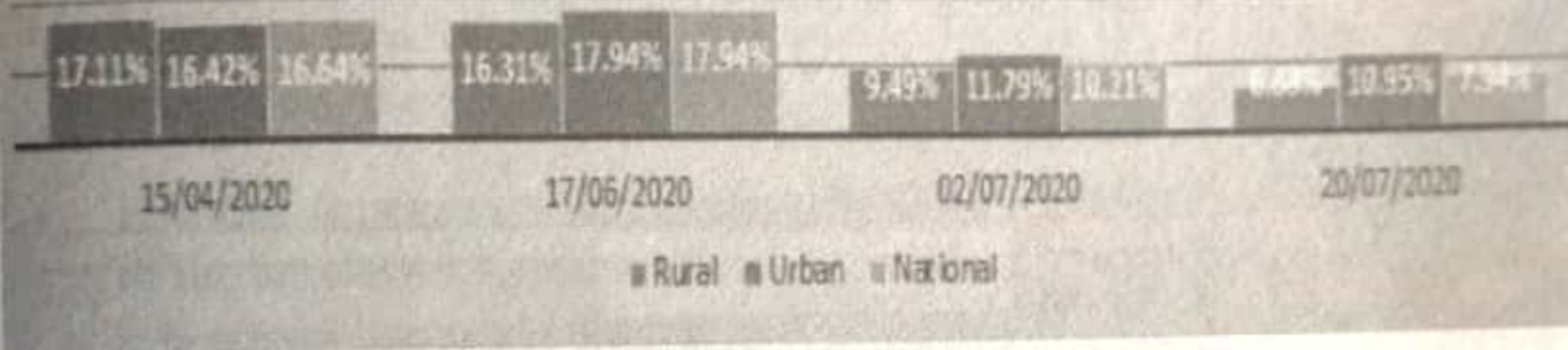


Fig 1.1

These issues have created havoc like situations for the organizations to function and survive. These HR practices and many others have created problems in Human Resource area. If these problems are not understood and resolved easily, these issues need to be addressed.

be techno savvy to give interviews through skype, zoom and many others

- Create engagement working remotely
- Transition to remote work
- Difficulty in mobility

- Communicate frequently and clearly
- Foster connection with employee
- Shortage of equipment
- Absence of network

- Difficulty in job creation
- Hard to retaining of employees
- Impacting compensation system

- Extra pension contribution
- flexibility in PPF Contribution
- Initiation of new covid securities schemes
- relaxation of time limit

- Managing mental health
- Protect the job of employee
- Provision of leaves
- Alteration in medical policy

- Organisation must focus first on people prospective rather than economic prospective. By this we mean rather than layoff and shutting down they must think about retaining the people and surviving in the business.
- Employer must provide some training programme on sound learning of ongoing technologies to employee. Areas where technology will be there will have chances to grow hence the employees need to upgrade themselves. Even fields like teaching is going virtual these days.
- Effective supervision and feedback must be taken on continuous basis of the employee. As most of the employees are remotely working hence it becomes important manage virtual teams and give them a continuous feedback.
- Employer and employee give first priority to sound health for better organisation productivity, they can run weekly health check-ups on their employees for getting their health status within their organisations that to free of costs. To ensure this maintaining social distance, proper sanitisation is must. Even the organisations which are running are following the standards to protect their employees health
- Organisation must reframe their manpower policies and strategies as per requirement on existing workplace practice under COVID-19 pandemic outbreak. Utilizing the workforce is essential but laying off can't be the best practice hence organizations need to pay attention to their manpower planning framework also, which must include techno friendly people in it.
- Government must introduce work policies for organisation which would ensure safety of employees jobs such that restricting the layoffs of employees and replacing it with reduced pay. Organizations and government will have to sit and decide together the standard operating procedures to further functioning. How far these policies are practical and easier to implement should be a topic to brainstorm.
- Ensure councillors availability at workplace to sustain healthy psychology of employees to prevent negative thinking and phobia due to depression caused by pandemic by consulting them.

Organizations in order to adapt with this new normal is adopting various strategies in most of the HR practices to work efficiently and productively. It is not easy to adapt so many changes and changing the working style rapidly but it is the time for transformation. We need to find alternatives to ensure our safety and productive working. It is possible through these technology and automation. Organizations and people need to upgrade themselves technologically. These coping up mechanisms with the positive attitude will generate better results of survival in the long term.

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- To reduce the fear of spread of virus organisations can introduce 50-50 attendance strategy in which they can call 50% employees on one day and other 50% on another day to reduce the rush in workplaces. Proper safety gear such as masks must be provided to employees. Even they are asked to work on alternate timings in order to avoid rush while coming to the office.
- To access the network, government must launch reduced data plans on its telecommunication services and must enforces certain laws on other private telecommunication brands to ensure cheap availability of networks for remote working.
- Ensure a specified timing for employees on work from home situation to prevent exploitation of employees as many organisations increased burden on their employees also it is a violation of 8 hr work timing. Even the employees are taking it hard on itself in order to save their jobs.
- As for manufacturing units ensuring hiring of local labours to provide the employment and livelihood should be given more importance. This will minimise the labour cost and the problem of labour (JOSHBERLIN, 2020) migration can be solved to an extent.

Conclusion

It has been few months since this deadly virus has shaken the functioning of the world and its after effects are yet to be seen. But it has broadened the capacity of humans imagination to be ready for every kind of situation, and be firm with tactics to handle them and not let the growth and development of world adversely affected.

The organizations are finding it difficult to survive in adverse situation. Survival of organizations are at stake. The organizations need to work on its HR practices. Human resources are the assets to the organisation as they can work efficiently and productively in the organization hence need to be paid attention to. HR practices like recruitment (it's difficult to recruit without meeting even the whole recruitment has nearly stopped); compensation (organisations need to pay employees even when they are at losses, even sustaining them without promotions and appraisal is difficult); health and safety (standard operating procedures and government norms are need to be implemented) and many other needs new strategies. These strategies might take time to be implemented and will incur cost too. These cost incurring practices are difficult to implement all of a sudden but will be beneficial in the long term.