

## A study of challenges and problems faced at the workplace to maintain balanced life: covid-19 pandemic

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**Abstract:** *Work-life balance is an ongoing challenge for all employees. Work-life balance is considered very significant for both business practice and family life. Work-life balance is a central issue disturbing wellbeing, as family and work are the most significant elements of everyone's life. Especially, it is a big challenge for working women to manage daily routine life at home and office. Meanwhile, the COVID-19 pandemic impacts have been seen on employees as well as workplaces across the world in all sectors. COVID-19 has been confirmed Global Pandemic and has severely affected the community, economic and geographical circumstances of almost all the countries of the world. It impacts economically and social psychology of an organization which is directly affected employees' performance as well as the organization. Therefore, the goal of this research is to investigate work-life balance during the COVID-19, as well as the problems and challenges that employers and employees face in the workplace. It is also focused to identify the issues and implications raised in front of an organization due to COVID-19 and discussing the problems and challenges faced by employees and organizations and how they overcome these challenges as a solution.*

**Keywords:** COVID-19; work-life balance; challenges; pandemic.

### 1. INTRODUCTION:

In the Past, severe pandemic diseases like cholera, Spain-flu, and Plague have been faced by the world. Many Scientists have researched them and found out when and how these diseases have been spread among communities. The main cause of most diseases found and vaccines have been made. Nowadays, Corona has been declared a Global Pandemic and COVID-19 pandemic has drastically affected every person's life overnight. It affected everyone for instance persons, cities, economies, countries, and continents and the lockdown has felt in every region and workplace. People faced a lot of unknown & unpredictable problems and challenges in their daily routine life. It was a very tough time for everyone to manage and make decisions in a very short span. In most organizations, managers have to take instant decisions about who will work from home and how to manage the work to achieve the organization's goals, how and where employees could be engaged in digital work culture and what are the goal sets, and how those can be communicated within the employees. Family life was also affected by COVID-19 especially for working women in the private and public sectors. Working women have to manage their professional life as well as their daily routine life.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also had an impact on the lives of many employees, forcing many who were already stressed due to health difficulties to work from home. Along with these health concerns, managers are aiming to lead the workforce remotely for the first time throughout the world. This rapid change caused by the COVID-19 worldwide worsened the issues of individuals' everyday routine lives and managing work from a distance, but the same subjects have remained largely ignored in management practice and HR policies of an organization over time.

The COVID-19 pandemic situation brought Challenges for any working employees especially for women employees because they have to spend more time handling work life and family life along with the responsibilities of child care, managing work at home as well as in the Office. Work-life balance leads an individual to live a healthy, fruitful, happy, and successful life. For those who want to live a high quality of life for them, work-life balance has become the most important concern (Soomro et al 2018). In the working environment, it is necessary to maintain the relationship between productivity, employee peace, and happiness as it leads to satisfaction (Joo and Lee, 2017, Abualoush et al; 2017). Therefore, in this COVID-19 Pandemic, policies & practices of work-life and planning

initiatives are required for an organization as a solution, to enhance the efficiency of an employee, achieve targets, maintain a healthy working spirit, happiness, motivation, and, flexible working hours.

## 2. OBJECTIVES OF THIS STUDY:

- ⇒ Implications of COVID-19 pandemic
- ⇒ Challenges and problems faced at the workplace due to COVID-19
- ⇒ Challenges and problems faced by employer & employee due to COVID-19
- ⇒ Work-Life Balance during COVID-19 pandemic
- ⇒ The need for Policies & practices initiatives for an organization for Work-Life balance

## 3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Kannan (2019) analysed the degree to focus on increasing employment growth. According to the prediction of the Harris Todaro model, the lockdown is made aware of considerable movement from rural to urban regions. This also shows rising in non-agricultural rural employment. Women's work participation rates have decreased as a result of higher education and employment opportunities. Women are moving into service and education-related fields. Because nearly 30 million jobs in pre-secondary and post-secondary education were lost in 2011, an equal number of positions were acquired.

There have been no new domestic cases of COVID-19 in South Korea until the end of April 2020. Hankyoreh (2020), analyzing the impact on the South Korean economy, finds that the comparison is fairly restricted, with the South Korean economy experiencing its worst period since 1997. (Financial crisis in Asia). According to IMF projections, South Korea's GDP would contract by just 1.2 percent, whereas most other nations will contract by 5 percent or more. Richard Baldwin., et al. (2020), analyzed the degree to focus on the COVID-19 impact on trade and seems to be away from it. The study has shown that COVID-19 affected the supply as well as market demand which directly impacted domestic and international trade in goods and services. It implies that the virus will be fiscally and medically infectious to humans. The study also finds that there is a risk of long-term damage to the trading system and business policy; the pandemic not to misunderstand as result for anti-globalism; global recession in 2008-09 was mostly affected the demand side of the market whereas the rise of COVID-19 negatively impacted both demand and supply.

S. Mahendra Dev et al. (2020), this research aimed to identify the impact on the Indian economy of the COVID-19 pandemic. The study helped to identify pre- and post-outbreak on the Indian economic situation across different sectors. It was emphasized that Measures such as a state-wide lockdown, limits on domestic and international trade and commerce, the shutdown of non-essential services, and restrictions on public and public transport activity would all have a negative and direct impact on the country's economic health.

Prasad et al. (2020), analyzed the degree to focus on the factors for instance organizational climate, vagueness role, and job satisfaction. Superior has to play an important role in maintaining the work-life balance as well as the mental and emotional health and happiness of the employee. The study proposed to continue the present form of remote working wherever possible.

## 4. COVID- 19 CRISIS:

### 4.1 On the economy

The influence of the COVID-19 pandemic on India 2020's economy has been primarily destructive. As per the Ministry of Statistics, India's growth in the fiscal year 2020 was 3.1 percent. The Indian government's Chief Economic Adviser explained that the reduction is due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which impacted the Indian economy. The following are India's rankings in several global indexes:

Table 1 India's ranking as per various (Global Indexes in 2019 and 2020).

Index	Index Published By	Rank In India		First Rank
		2020	2019	
Hunger Index Global 2020	Irish aid agency Concern in partnership with Welthungerhilfe	94th	102th	17 nations come under top rank with GHI scores including China, Belarus, Turkey, Cuba, Ukraine, and Kuwait
Human Index Capital 2020	World Bank	116th	115th	Singapore

Index of Economic Freedom in the world 2020	The Fraser Institute of Canada	105th	79th	Hong Kong
The Index of Global Innovation	the World Intellectual Property Organization Cornell University, INSEAD	48th	52nd	Switzerland
Preparedness Export Index 2020	Niti Aayog	-	-	Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Tamil Nadu
World Competitiveness Index	Management Development institute as well as Competitiveness world center	43rd	43rd	Singapore
Index of Nature 2020	Springer Nature	12th	-	United States of America
Index of Sustainability & Child Flourishing	Adolescent and 40 child experts in health around the world	77 <sup>th</sup> & 131	-	Norway
International IP Index 2020	US Chamber of Commerce	48th	36th	United States

It is evident from the above table that India's ranking as per various Global Indexes India has lost some of the places in the current year 2020 as compared to the last year. Although, there are few indexes where India has got the ranking position. Overall, we find that the COVID- 19 problem has had a significant influence on the country's economy.

#### 4.2 On work-life

COVID-19 pandemic worldwide problems have made many MNCs & domestic companies understand the importance and need for work-life balance. Also, they all understand that achieving balance is harder and difficult. From the last few months, the COVID-19 crisis showed several positives which are unexpected for everyone; that many companies come forward for their employees well- being as the topmost priority to provide benefits to their employees so that they can work in the flexible hours that help them to cope up with the situation in the better way. It also improved medical insurance, extra paid leave, or caregiver leave as well as flexible working arrangements, especially for working women. But at the same time, work-life balance becomes less achievable than before because working from home erased the timelines between the time that should be specified to work and the time that should be dedicated to personal life during this COVID-19 crisis.

#### 4.3 On global business

The pandemic has exposed the unexpected weaknesses and problems that come with global uncertainty. While it's difficult to know exactly how COVID-19 will affect the global economy. With the impact of COVID-19, there is widespread consensus between economists that the pandemic will have a significant impact on global commerce and business, as well as Growth in the economy. According to some estimates, global GDP would shrink by as much as 2.4 percent in 2020. To regulate and manage the COVID-19 crisis, several governments have pushed out substantial fiscal policies to their citizens and other countries for avoiding a sharp downturn of their economies. The government has increased monetary rewards to its populace while also ensuring that entrepreneurs have access to sufficient finances to keep their personnel employed during the pandemic emergency. According to Van Tulder, R., Verbeke, A., and Jankowska (2019), the idea of volatile, uncertain, composite, and unclear (VUCA) situations has been known for some time. The health and financial difficulties caused by COVID-19 have increased the concept's global importance.

#### 5. METHODS :

The study of COVID-19 is growing rapidly. The current study is based on secondary sources, and data was gathered from articles, journals, theses, university news, expert opinion, and websites, among other places.

**COVID-19 PANDEMIC: FACTORS AFFECTING WORKPLACE, IMPLICATIONS, PROBLEMS & CHALLENGES ON FUTURE RESEARCH AND ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN**



Figure 1 Factors affecting Workplace

**5.1 Covid-19: implications**

*Workplace Transformations:* Many employees have been required to adapt to compulsory and immediate changes i.e., work from home in the working environment of an organization due to COVID-19. Employers have grown more inclined to implement work-from-home practices in light of the pandemic. Distance work culture due to COVID-19, Employees are required to work from home for team projects, they navigate the direct and indirect disputes that might harm the project's performance as losses. The management of the company is faced with a new lot of challenges to control and encourage the progress of their team from a remote working culture than usual.

*Psychological and financial Impacts:* Unemployment cost is economic because of failure in status, social gatherings, and social structure. Organizations' direct and indirect expenditures influence laid-off workers as well. Along with doing important tasks, there is likely an increase in people coming to work even when they are sick. Stress also affects an employee's mental and physical health. Reduction in resources and increased demands for jobs leads to greater stress among employees. Whereas Work from home and social distance at workplaces lead to hinder social connections which directly or indirectly turn in economic among employees' health.

*Influencing Aspects:* COVID-19 impacted individuals of different age groups, racial groups, the status of the family, and cultural diversity in one or the other way. Individuals belonging to minorities face divergent well-being and financial crisis whereas those belonging to an older age group are facing a crisis on their retirement plans.

**5.2 Covid-19: problems & challenges in forecasting study**

*Workplace Transformations:* How will work-from-home regulations affect employee attitudes and actions toward their managers and co-workers? How will an employee's privacy and monitoring work that takes place outside of the office be protected? How will personal expression and communication in teams with either low or high levels of communication affect project outcomes? What elements will influence helpful and social behavior in teams, whether they are low or high, and how will these aspects affect outputs? How will managers modify their responsibilities in the face of shocks such as the present pandemic?

*Psychological and financial Impacts:* there are many problems faced by employers and employees due to COVID 19 for instance what is the effect of unemployment on financial condition as well as on mental health and how

can unemployment get better? How can an organization have the best pay and benefits to put off employees when they are ill? How can employers reduce the cost of the organization as well as individuals due to social inequality in the organization? Is it possible to make efficient use of available resources in the face of a significant crisis like COVID-19?

*Influencing Aspects:* How do organizations promote a sense of belonging among minority communities when the country's economy is uncertain and job losses are high? How will businesses respond to concerns raised by employees of a certain age group about the hazards linked with COVID-19?

### 5.3 Covid-19: Actions to be taken

**Workplace Transformations:** To maintain a balance between office work and personal life, Employees have to make themselves rituals that consent to transitions. Employers must adapt and motivate working routines to maintain trust between the employees. To manage the employees efficiently in the organization, the team must give attention to the smooth flow of communication between the members. Employers must give Opportunities to their employees to create informal communication so that they can connect emotionally with each other.

**Psychological and financial Impacts:** Searching for a job requires determination and flexibility and those who are searching job must get information as well as support from other people. Job searchers should prepare themselves for hard effort and a longer job search to contribute to reducing unemployment rates. Employers should not promote employees to work during their illness. Team leaders must present a role model of appropriate behavior and request sick employees not to attend work.

**Influencing Aspects:** Organisations need to create a healthy working environment where all employees, realize how they can contribute their best knowledge and effort to achieve the organization's goals. The greater value of leadership styles must be placed as alternatives to overcome the problems and challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## 6. CONCLUSION :

The COVID-19 Pandemic badly affects the economy and health sectors of each country. Almost all sectors are badly affected for instance Automobile Sector, Transport Sector, Tourism Sector, Aviation Industry, Education Sector, Healthcare Sector, agriculture Sector, Railway and small & large industries. Many problems and challenges have been faced by working employees in this COVID-19 pandemic and nobody ensures when the situation will improve & become better and all sectors world worlds will back to normal condition. All sectors of domestic and overseas are faced with many problems and are severely impacted due to sudden and unexpected situations worldwide. Therefore, it's important to acknowledge that we have already faced a crisis like this in history and a similar type of crisis may be faced again in the future. We need to be ready, rational, and even philanthropic in response to problems. In the disruption situation, the recoveries from the problem it's depended on how we act in a time of crisis which directly shows our long-term impact.

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