EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING AND ADAPTABILITY IN THE COVID-19 ERA

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ABSTRACT

Unexpected events, such as external crises, create heightened uncertainty among employees and pose immediate dangers to the organization's performance and existence. Today's enterprises must remain vigilant and flexible to these events. With the current COVID-19 epidemic, however, businesses have been forced to negotiate the unprecedented and, as a result, discover new answers to difficulties that have arisen in a variety of sectors of their operations. In this article, we'll look at some of these issues, with a particular focus on the implications of COVID-19 for human resource management (HRM) as companies help their employees cope with and adjust to their new work environment. In addition, we suggest many study directions for the future and argue for an integrated research agenda to address the issues raised.

Keywords: Human Resource Management, Employee Adjustment, Well-being, Crisis, COVID-19.

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has created a particularly difficult environment for human resource management (HRM), with managers being forced to immediately delve into the "*unknown unknowns*" in order to assist their employees in adapting to and coping with drastic changes in the work and social environment. Employees who formerly spent all or most of their time working within their company's physical limits, for example, must now swiftly adapt to remote work settings (Ferraro et al., 2015). Due to the impossibility to seek alternate workspaces (e.g., cafés, libraries, coworking spaces) outside of the home due to shelter in place orders and the closure of non-essential enterprises, even individuals who may be well suited to remote working settings are suddenly facing their own unique obstacles This has likely further limited the segmentation between work and private spheres leading to greater difficulties in *"unplugging"* from work demands (Abma & Martinez, 2006).

Simultaneously, the present COVID-19 grand challenge provides an ideal opportunity for management scholars to organise research efforts and turn them into meaningful insights to assist firms in addressing one of history's greatest challenges (Baron, 2010). It also provides scholars with the exciting chance to explore across disciplines for direction and inspiration in order to manage the specific HRM difficulties that businesses confront today in an integrative manner. Even if there are potential remedies, this global issue necessitates coordinated and integrated (research) effort. To that aim, the goal of this brief paper is to examine the problems and opportunities that COVID-19 provides to HRM practise, as well as the accompanying research avenues (Dweck, 2008).

As firms modify their HR processes in the face of COVID-19, it will be vital to understand how these unprecedented developments are influencing employees' perceptions of P-E fit and how to rectify possible misfit. For example, as organizations transition to virtual forms of recruitment, selection, and training in place of face-to-face interactions, it will become

increasingly important to understand how these practices will impact the future fabric of an organization's values and culture, as these new practices may attract and retain individuals in ways that traditional face-to-face approaches may not. To this aim, more research is needed to determine how COVID-19 affects employees' capacity to navigate the job search process (Kehoe & Collins, 2017).

CONCLUSION

Though the long-term consequences of COVID-19 are unknown at this time, there is little reason to expect that its impact on organizational life will be brief. Not only are the impacts of the present pandemic far from ended, but the risk of future health catastrophes of this magnitude is nearly certain, as health experts have warned. As a result, we must be forward-thinking, assuming that the major problem we are currently confronted is not a solitary, atypical event, but rather a "*new reality*" that presents fresh opportunities to which organizational researchers and practitioners alike will need and wish to pay attention. To that end, the current discussion takes a step forward by addressing some of COVID-19's implications for employee adjustment and well-being.

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