

Technological and Pandemic Disturbance in Management: The Implications for Conflict from Human Resource Management Perspective in Organization

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Abstract: *The study examined the technological and pandemic disturbance in management and the implication for conflict from the human resource management perspective in organization. The Covid-19 pandemic took the world by storm as organizations have to adapt to the changes that came with it. Organizations must be innovative if they want to survive the pandemic era as it prompted the close down of many firms in the competitive business environment. Organizations had to device a means to navigate through the pandemic era through the use of technology by introducing remote working. This study went further to establish the implications for conflict which are working conditions, staffing and performance management in HRM perspective.*

Keywords: Working Conditions, staffing and Performance Management.

INTRODUCTION

It has long been practiced to resolve disputes by non-violent, non-violent means. The peaceful resolution of conflicts following the lines outlined by the institutions and ideals of the community is preferred in almost all African nations. Usually, people dislike violence. The community, not the individual, must be the disciplinary authority in the rare cases where it may be accepted, with the punishing occurring after due process. There is a rising trend of using peaceful dispute resolution in all civilized societies around the world. By using a variety of strategies as well as cooperating with and through the parties involved in the conflict, conflict management aims to lessen its negative and destructive potential. It covers all aspects of handling conflicts well at all stages, including proactive actions taken to avert conflict. It includes litigation, conflict containment, and conflict limitation. John Burton used the term "conflict prevention" (Burton, 1990) to denote the containment of conflict through actions taken to foster environments in which cooperative and valued relationships govern the behavior of conflict parties. The phrase "conflict management" may be an acknowledgement that although disputes are unavoidable, they are not always amenable to resolution. Practitioners can only control and manage them as a result. It is impossible to overstate how badly the present pandemic is affecting the world and how many institutions it has clogged up because most of them weren't ready for it. While the epidemic has put businesses' adaptability and toughness to the test, it also necessitates a closer examination of the underlying assumptions of the theoretical frameworks that direct managerial choices. The pandemic's forced shift to working from home (WFH) is possibly the biggest organizational design shock we've ever experienced. While global corporations and open source communities, among others, have telework as a feature, the epidemic practically required everyone to telework constantly, leading to a rush to adapt to remote collaboration and its technological infrastructure. While the data necessary to evaluate its efficacy has not yet been collected, it is known that many presumptions about what was practical in a distributed situation have already been proven false. Research into the specific tasks, people, and infrastructure configurations that enable businesses to operate in distributed forms is sure to gain momentum as data on this significant regime change accumulates. For human resource management (HRM) professionals and managers, this pandemic outbreak has undoubtedly created a challenging environment that is complex in which they must come up with creative solutions to keep up with their business operations and assist their staff in coping with the difficulties of this extraordinary circumstance (Wang et al, 2009).

However, the point of departure is how technological and pandemic disruption in management creates conflict in HRM perspective.

TECHNOLOGICAL AND PANDEMIC DISTURBANCE IN MANAGEMENT

The current epidemic of the new corona virus has caused significant changes all across the planet. Both businesses and customers immediately shifted to digital models in this situation.

The Covid-19 has accelerated digital transformation for businesses, and many employees worldwide now need the requisite technological abilities to carry out their tasks remotely (Sheppard, 2020). The use of digital technologies allows for virtual labor, task automation, and decision-making (Parry & Battista, 2019). The pandemic has highlighted the need for professionals to have both digital and collaboration abilities (Sheppard, 2020). Any issues that arise in the interconnected world motivate businesses of all sizes to react, change, and manage their workforce properly (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020). The Covid-19 pandemic has created extremely difficult conditions for managing HR recently. HR managers must assist their staff in adjusting to the quick changes in both the workplace and society (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020). Additionally, the result Covid-19 will have a big impact on employment and may shock several people's careers (Akkermans et al, 2020). HRM must now address the rising employee stress brought on by remote work at a time when work and family boundaries are blurred (Giurge & Bohns, 2020). Previous surveys predicted that as platform workforces and online worker trends grow, both businesses and employees will need to re-skill (World Economic Forum,

2018). Businesses should introduce and embrace platform-based technologies, and then create business models that take these developments into account (Sheppard, 2020). The surveys from past years confirmed that new technologies, such as digital platforms, artificial intelligence, robotics, augmented reality, and block chain, would alter the tasks performed by HR experts (Parry & Battista, 2019). Employees should gain new skills that improve their employability in order to adapt to the digital work environment (Sheppard, 2020). According to the study, Parry and Battista (2019) showed that human resource management should assist staff in utilizing cutting-edge technologies within the company. Employees need assistance from HR specialists in order to improve their digital abilities and make arrangements for their welfare because they cannot handle all the issues the recent pandemic crisis brought on by themselves (Parry & Battista, 2019). In this regard, leaders understand the value of developing abilities and lifetime learning, which is why they are organizing online training sessions (Narayandas, Hebbar, & Liangliang, 2020). According to a recent poll of Chinese businesses, they spend money increasing their competitiveness rather than saving it (Narayandas, Hebbar, & Liangliang, 2020). It is also significant that the key obstacles are thought to be client focus, employee wellbeing, and company continuity (Singer-Velush, Sherman, & Anderson, 2020). Additionally, as new technologies increase workforce flexibility and enable remote work, HR management must develop appropriate policies and performance systems to ensure that employees meet standards while also eradicating the detrimental effects of digital working, particularly with regard to social interactions (Parry & Battista, 2019). The extensive study of 11,011 workers across 869 teams in 9 European nations indicates that not all employees benefit from remote work. In particular, team performance decreases and knowledge exchange suffers when teammates work from home (Van der Lippe & Lippényi, 2019). The factors that affect individual performance, however, are job characteristics, job happiness, and dedication, whereas team performance suffers when members work from home for more than 8 hours per week (Van der Lippe & Lippényi, 2019). Agile teams, which have previously been shown to be productive with remote work, might become ineffective when working entirely remotely (Comella-Dorda, Garg, Tharej, & Vasquez-McCall, 2020). These results imply that the HR department should address these concerns and plan flexible work accordingly. While pressures at work interfere with personal life, affecting mental health, the opposite dynamics are also observed. According to studies, working from home blurs the lines between work and personal life, which leads to burnout by allowing personal stress to seep into the office (Peasley, Hochstein, Britton, Srivastava, & Stewart, 2020). Peasley and colleagues (2020) report that while working remotely offers numerous benefits, employees often face a mix of professional and personal obligations, which has negative effects on both managers' and employees' long-term welfare (Peasley, Hochstein, Britton, Srivastava, & Stewart, 2020). It is important to note that employee motivation and performance outcomes are influenced by their wellbeing. The pandemic has made the organization's employees' physical and mental wellbeing its top objectives (Spence, 2020). Companies should consider these distinctions while redefining the workplace because some employees will prefer to continue working remotely while others will be delighted to return to their offices (Spence, 2020). According to research based on Workplace Analytics at Microsoft, employees who work from home check in sooner and sign off later because they schedule time for personal matters in between (Singer-Velush, Sherman, & Anderson, 2020). Although online meetings are now only 30 minutes long, managers still had to assist staff in setting priorities and minimizing any potential drawbacks from having a shared workspace with their homes (Singer-Velush, Sherman, & Anderson, 2020). However, the number of jobs done on the weekends and at night grew, indicating a disruption in the balance between work and life (Singer-Velush, Sherman, & Anderson, 2020). Additionally, social isolation has a bad effect on workers. Therefore, HR professionals must continue to foster social engagement among distant workers. To combat isolation, small group meetings, networking, and online contacts should be set up because interpersonal ties at work are a source of inspiration (Singer-Velush, Sherman, & Anderson, 2020). Additionally, there is a trend toward continuing video meetings and virtual events, and many HR directors are rethinking positions, responsibilities, and work processes in an effort to retain flexibility and collaboration (Narayandas, Hebbar, & Liangliang, 2020). For instance, PwC believes that flexibility leads to a happier, healthier, and more productive workforce by encouraging people to work in a different way that is in line with their lives (Donovan, 2019). According to a poll of Chinese businesses, employees utilized audio apps more frequently than emails, making communication during the pandemic lockdown more intimate (Narayandas, Hebbar, & Liangliang, 2020). Managers have used digital data and online dashboards to measure workload and performance of human resources, such as the amount of sales, tickets closed, calls made, hours logged on, or clients served (Narayandas, Hebbar, & Liangliang, 2020). By improving employee skills, fostering an organizational culture that is digitalization-ready, and maintaining a work-life balance to maintain employee health, motivation, and efficiency, HRM should assist businesses in transforming their business processes into the digital realm.

Tendencies during the Covid-19 Crisis in Georgia

According to a Price Waterhouse Coopers (PwC) Georgia survey, the disruption of the supply chain and the decline in demand among Georgian businesses led to a decline in revenue (PwC Georgia, 2020). According to 53% of businesses, sales are down (GCCCI, 2020), and 63% of the organizations surveyed affirm that their incomes are down more than 50% from the same period last year (PwC Georgia, 2020). Due to these circumstances, almost 50% of Georgian businesses have cut employment, and 40% of businesses in the tourism sector have fired all of their employees due to redundancy (PwC Georgia, 2020). According to a poll by the Georgian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, 43% of the employers have cut salaries while 53% of the businesses surveyed want to keep their staff for the upcoming six months (GCCCI, 2020). It's interesting that from the perspective of Georgian businesses, the solution lies in government financial assistance as well as long-term/soft loans (GCCCI, 2020). In terms of implementing online working methods, 17% of surveyed businesses wish to do so but acknowledge that they lack the essential capabilities, while 7% of

them aim to do so soon (GCCCI, 2020). Surprisingly, in the past three months, Georgian businesses' interest in working online rose from 0.33% to 17%. (GCCCI, 2020). In a similar vein, human resource specialists discuss how firms should ensure employee welfare and work-life balance while allowing for remote work. Similarly, HR managers, who are at the forefront of development, organizational culture, as well as human resource policies established specifically for remote working, should concurrently pave the way for the digital shift and work-life balance.

THE IMPLICATION FOR CONFLICT FROM HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVE

According to Armstrong and Taylor (2020), Given that HRM is concerned with how employees are hired, developed and managed in organizations, the implications for the conflict stem from the technological and pandemic problems that enterprises are currently experiencing. COVID-19 has had a considerable impact on it, posing significant issues for HRM professionals and managers. Specifically, performance management, staffing, safety and health management, pay management, employee relations and training and Dev are considered to be strategic HRM factors. The implications for conflict are explored. This implies that any modification to one aspect of human resource management function have an impact on the other aspect (Mondy & Martocchio, 2016). According to Chapman et al (2018), Navo-Marco et al (2019), and Schuler (1992), it serves the organization's strategic needs by efficiently utilizing its people resources. Strategic quickness is necessary to guarantee the accomplishment of the company goals during a crisis (Liu, Lee & Lee, 2020). To organize the required mechanism, organizations must be capable of plan ahead, manage their resources, and use their own expertise and resources (Liu et al, 2020). The uniqueness and complicated nature of the epidemic in this situation pose a serious obstacle that could jeopardize the accomplishment of organizational objectives. Those companies' typical economic models are primarily taught to use information from the viewpoint of "normal times." It is difficult to make forecasts about what would happen during "abnormal periods." This may imply that generating forecasts about the company's operations, such as the planning and distributing resources, may be a challenging task. In actuality, COVID-19 has led to confusion. While many economists believe the effects of this epidemic won't be fully seen until 2021 (Akkermans, Richardson, & Kraimer, 2020). Even despite the recent invention of several vaccines, no one currently determines when the epidemic will die off or whether its affects on how people operate in firms will be short-term or long-term. Because of this, strategic planning and initial implementation may be an issue for HRM specialists and managers. Most businesses were unable to fully tell their staff regarding their managerial approach, intended responses to the epidemic, despite it aid to lessen employee stress to have clear workplace policies during difficult circumstances and enhance their confidence and motivation (Elsafty & Ragheb, 2020). According to Elsafty and Ragheb's (2020), study the accessibility to data and updates on the pandemic are strongly related to employee retention. It may be difficult for firm to gather this information because of the newness of the pandemic, especially when they are trying to survive this phase. Contrary to popular belief, overcoming obstacles strengthens organizational resilience, doing so is essential in the epidemic age (Ngoc, Luc, Thi, Nguyen & O'Mahon, 2021). In spite of the uncertainties created by the covid-19, firms must come up with creative methods for coping with the threat to their existence in the competitive business environment (Ngoc et al., 2021). The following implications for conflict from human resource management are performance management, working condition and staffing.

Working conditions

They encompass a wide range of subjects and issues, including as pay, working conditions (such as hours worked, work schedules and breaks,), and mental and physical pressure at work. Organizational working circumstances have significantly changed as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. In fact, most businesses have engage in remote working and mandated that their staff carry out their duties from home to maintain business continuity (Aitken, F., 2020a, 2020b, Gourinchas, 2020, Koirala, & Acharya, 2020). For instance, Twitter employees were granted the option to telework indefinitely, while Google confirmed that its staff will keep on teleworking at least through the summer of 2021. (Leonardi, 2020). Despite this, only a tiny portion of workers fall into the group of those employee that work from the convenient of their home (Gourinchas, 2020), mostly because manufacturing sectors are not ideal for remote work and not all employment positions may use it (Koirala & Acharya, 2020). There are two situations that could apply in this situation for businesses whose operations prevent them from adhering to these working conditions. In these situations, HRM practitioners are asked to determine which job tasks may be carried out remotely, in the physical workplace, and which occupations require layoffs as a result of the scenario the pandemic has caused. As a result, these abrupt and radical organizational changes pose serious difficulties for HRM professionals and managers.

The environment, job design, relationships with coworkers and management, and mental health were all factors in the experience of the workforce (Hamouche, 2020) and the person-environment fit as viewed by employees , may also be significantly impacted (Aitken, F., 2020a). The introduction of work roles for diverse employee groups has maintained employees' physical presence while being subject to stringent safety precautions (such as physical distance and via means of protection masks) (Akbarpour et al., 2020). In this situation, the main bottlenecks are ensuring that these safety precautions are followed and establishing work plans that consider the circumstances of the personnel. HRM professionals and managers have encountered many difficulties in remote working. First, to guarantee that workers who carry out their task from their home are equipped with the equipment required to do their jobs (Aitken, F. et al, 2020b, Hamouche, 2020). In reality, remote working necessitates the application of technology that will streamline interaction between staff and managers, like zoom app and other communication tools which most organization may not be capable to afford given that each organization's financial capacity differs from another (Prasad & Vaidya, 2020). Assuring efficient

communication, performance management oversight, supports and compensation adjustment for staff members working from their homes is the second goal (Aitken, F. et al, 2020). Additionally, HRM professionals must assist managers who are taking on their first remote team leadership role (Caligiuri, De Cieri, Minbaeva, Verbeke, & Zimmermann, 2020). Last but not least, HRM professionals must examine how isolation among employees may result from remote work because of the lack of interpersonal engagement, peer support, and one-on-one communication, all of these can result to stress that may be detrimental to workers' mental state (Prasad & Vaidya, 2020). Given that employees frequently utilize their emails when tele-working, this can also result in improving the amount of information they handle (Leonardi, 2020). Some scholars claim that employees who carry out work remotely now experience more technological stress connected to ICT use (Molino et al, 2020). Employees' psychological well-being may be harmed by this, especially workers who carry out their job isolation by using email as their primary method of communication. Numerous HRM professionals have put certain initiatives into place to assist their workers, like providing virtual sociability activities, like coffee breaks or virtual lunch (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020, Maurer, 2020). These procedures undoubtedly aid in providing employees with support throughout this difficult moment when staff are separated from one another and their place of employment (Hamouche, 2020).

Staffing

To accomplish organizational goals, the process of recruiting, choosing, and retaining competent people is referred to as staffing (Ployhart, 2006). Its dynamics in organizations have changed as a result of the pandemic, which had a effective impact on it (Campello et al, 2020). In most cases, COVID-19's effects on industry were unbalanced (Aitken, F. et al, 2020, Giupponi & Landais, 2020). As a result, the effects of COVID-19 on staffing vary depending on the organization. In this situation, firms that were having trouble making ends meet because of the pandemic have implemented down skilling by limiting the hiring of high-skill occupations more so than low-skill jobs in an attempt to save expenses and maintain their operations (Campello et al, 2020). They have stopped hiring, reduced hiring, or fired all of their staff (Campello et al, 2020, Giupponi and Landais, 2020). Indeed, the pandemic pave way to the unemployment of millions of individuals (Elsafty & Ragheb, 2020, Blustein et al, 2020). According to Cheng et al (2020) the rapid increase in employment activities following company reopening in various US states is primarily attributable to workers who had been on lockdown returning to their actual workplace. However, the chances of reemployment dramatically decrease for workers who had extended absences from their place of employment. Employers rarely choose to lay off workers, but in emergency situations like COVID-19, it may be unavoidable. Businesses that have grown throughout the covid-19 have encountered other problems with staffing. How can you hire individuals during a contagion fear? How do you choose personnel if you can't see them in person because of physical distance restrictions? During this circumstances, firms were forced to focus their strategies on virtual selection and recruiting techniques which could be a substantial problem for both HRM professionals and job candidates. Some people find it difficult to use ICT tools. Additionally, HRM professionals were not ready for this kind of unforeseen transformation. Additionally, employing virtual selection techniques may impair employers' and job candidates' abilities to evaluate the compatibility of individuals with their environments, which could harm employee retention and productivity (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020). Additionally, the transient nature of flexible job relationships presented a retention difficulty for workers. Most scholars, in the recent climate of this epidemic, employee retention may constitute another significant difficulty for firms (Elsafty & Ragheb, 2020, Ngoc et al., 2021). During this challenging times marked by abrupt and significant changes, workplace relationships may be harmed, perhaps resulting in a major drop in employee motivation and give opening for attrition. As stated by Ngoc Su et al (2021), it is difficult for businesses to retain and attract qualified workers in the epidemic period since many of these people are searching for employment prospects in industries which weren't adversely impacted by this epidemic. Similar to this, Przytua, Strzelec, and Krysiska-Kociaska (2020) emphasized the significance of raising employee engagement and sense of belonging, particularly among remote workers at this time and beyond, to maintain organizational success and avoid recruitment expenditures.

Performance management

Performance management is a continual process for recognizing, evaluating, and improving an individual's or workgroup's performance and coordinating it with an organization's strategic goals (Aguinis, 2019). According to Ismail and Gali (2017), Making sure that workers performance is in line with the goals of the organization is essential. Staff must continue to work in good order to keep the business afloat during COVID-19 crisis (Sembiring et al., 2020). However, as stated by Aguinis and Burgi-Tian (2020), it appears that the epidemic has also changed how corporations manage performance. Some authors claim that because of the uniqueness and complexity of this epidemic, most firms have curtailed or even stopped utilizing performance management as a result of the difficulties presented by COVID-19 that is monitoring employee performance and the disturbance to performance-based pay. In reality, given the changes in working conditions throughout this crisis, evaluating employee performance can be difficult. Most managers can be reluctant to adopt a remote working system in the firm because of their belief that the organization cannot achieve its goals efficiently as it will impact on the performance of workers negatively.

CONCLUSION

The technological and pandemic disturbance plays a pivotal role in the existence and shutdown of so many organizations as it pose a conflicting working environment in the organization which as a result of that led to loss of jobs and closed down of companies and industries across the globe. The implication of this conflict for HRM fashioned their functions as it connect to the welfare and working circumstances of the workers in the firm. It makes firms in the part of the HRM to develop strategy and make certain decisions for the survival of the firm. Human resource managers needs to think outside the box to keep the organization functioning and also find a way to increase organizational performance.

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