Chapter 1
Mental Health and Employee Performance:
A COVID–19–Based View

Muhammad Waseem Bari

https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2329-3857
Government College University, Faisalabad, Pakistan

Qurrahtulain Khan
University of Kotli, Pakistan

ABSTRACT

The objective of this descriptive study is to highlight the issues related to the mental health of employees during COVID-19. This chapter reviews the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on mental health of employees, and different diseases (such as anxiety, insomnia, and depression) impact employees' behavior and performance. Post-review of the latest articles, blogs, term papers, reports of the World Health Organization, and newspapers confirms the impact of COVID-19 on the physical and mental health of the employees and performance of the organizations negatively. Specifically, this study has discussed the different psychological problems like anxiety, depression, insomnia, social isolation with employees working in Pakistan. This study also highlights the measures took by the Pakistani government against COVID-19 and their results.

INTRODUCTION

Human history has faced several ups and downs in the shape of different pandemics, epidemics, and world wars. For instance, Prehistoric epidemic: Circa (3000 B.C)., Flu pandemic (1889-1890), Spanish Flu (1918-1920), Asian Flu (1957-1958), AIDS pandemic and epidemic (1981-present day) Swine Flu pandemic (2009-2010), West African Ebola epidemic (2014-2016)(Jarus, 2020), world war I (1914-1918), world war II (1939-1945), and COVID-19 (2019-present). Coronavirus disease of 2019 (COVID-19) began spreading at the end of 2019 and was seen toward the beginning of January 2020. It began spread-

ing in China (Wuhan) in mid-to-late January. Upwards of 184 out of 195 nations have been affected by COVID-19. Comprehending the helpful test is the key need through legitimate preventive measures to stop its spread, just as a corrective measure to build up an antibody. The effect of this general wellbeing crisis has influenced nations and networks as far as financial, socio-mental issues, and universal relations. United States of America, Brazil, Italy, and India are the most affected nations by COVID-19 respectively. Millions of people are affected by COVID-19 across the world.

The COVID-19 is not the only global challenge that the world is facing these days. Infodemic based on pandemic (COVID-19) is another serious challenge for the world. Each flare-up is joined with a sort of big wave of data and information, however, this data can be based on deception, gossipy tidbits, rumors, and so on. Misinformation not only impacts negatively on the human body but also the mental health of the people. The management at WHO's Health Emergencies Program is also worried and understands the impact of infodemic on human health and their professional performance.

Business organizations are facing the challenges of pandemic (COVID-19) and may also start to face the glitches of infodemic in 2020. Due to COVID-19 based infodemic, business organizations are facing serious consequences from the perspective of financial matters, employees' psychological and physical health, employee performance, and organization s' performance. Social media such as Facebook, WhatsApp, etc. played a very aggressive role in the growth of this infodemic. Social media has no check and balances on the reliability of the content and data. The misinformation/wrong information regarding health issues of the employees, organizations' market share and financial matters, future firing and hiring policies of the organizations, international operations of the companies are the main causes to disturb the organizations during this pandemic. The COVID-19 based infodemic has also disturbed the psychological contract between the employer and the employees. The impact of pandemic (COVID-19) may be decreased in 2021, however, the impact of relevant infodemic will continue on organizations several years in the future.

From the beginning of the COVID 19 pandemic, misinformation, rumors, and conspiracies have surfaced which has undermined the trust in health care organizations or even the government. Work-life has been profoundly impacted by the pandemic in terms of economic/social life disruption, loss of livelihoods, and impaired wellbeing. Although the World Health Organization (WHO) has developed the guidelines of workplace measures of employees during COVID 19, the wellbeing and mental health of the employees will greatly determine the safety measures implementation and sustainability.

As COVID 19 has been declared to be long lasting by the World Health Organization, the adaptation to the changes in lifestyle will have to be understood from a long-term perspective. From an organizational point of view, this is a period of an opportunity to redesign workplace environments in a manner that they are equally adaptable to the current demands and enhance the wellbeing of its employees. Employees being the greatest assets in current challenging times, their needs must be taken care of to build an effective and sustainable work environment.

There has been a massive growth in the number of COVID 19 cases all across the globe. For most of the employees, work from home or flexible work hours has been the new norm since lockdown. Except for the essential services providers (such as medical doctors, nurses, and emergency staff) who do not have an option to work from home, all of the employers had to undertake sudden precautionary measures in terms of safety and social distancing. According to a survey, 90% of employers believe that work from home and other adaptive measures were necessary during this time and have rather more advantages such as employees becoming more self-reliant and robust. Several governing bodies across the world have issued guidelines for employees in terms of prevention for COVID 19. Some of the safety measures

Related Content

Trust Development in Peer-to-Peer Environments
Yan Wang (2010). *Trust Modeling and Management in Digital Environments: From Social Concept to System Development (pp. 202-223).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/trust-development-peer-peer-environments/40782

Trust Over the Net: The Case of Israeli Youth
Oren Golan (2010). *International Journal of Dependable and Trustworthy Information Systems (pp. 70-85).*
www.irma-international.org/article/trust-over-net/46939

First Experiment on Modeling Safety LifeCycle Process in Railway Systems
Brahim Hamid, Yulin (Huaxi) Zhang, Jacob Geiseland David Gonzalez (2011). *International Journal of Dependable and Trustworthy Information Systems (pp. 17-39).*
www.irma-international.org/article/first-experiment-modeling-safety-lifecycle/65520

Semantic Matchmaking and Decision Support System for Dependable Supplier Selection in the Extended Enterprise Supply Chain
A. F. Salam (2011). *International Journal of Dependable and Trustworthy Information Systems (pp. 50-80).*
www.irma-international.org/article/semantic-matchmaking-decision-support-system/53130

The Savory Deviant Delight: A Study of Trust & Normative Order in an Online World
David Boyns (2010). *Trust and Technology in a Ubiquitous Modern Environment: Theoretical and Methodological Perspectives (pp. 71-90).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/savory-deviant-delight/42901