
Employees' mental wellbeing, organizational outcome and innovative practices during covid-19

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Abstract: This study is conducted to analyze mental wellbeing of employees' and its organizational outcome during COVID-19. Due to this global pandemic, the Nation's economy has declined and hence many organizations decided to cut down the cost by lowering the salary package and to terminate few employees. Organization shifted to remote working but this caused a negative impact on employees' mental health. Employees are stressed due to workload, lack of communication, work life balance, insecurity of job, anxiety and other reasons during COVID-19. The dependent factor called organizational outcome is influenced by the factors namely employee wellbeing, virtual communication, organizational support and social media. The researcher circulated questionnaires among Information technology (IT) industry employees. The sample size of the study is 90. Various analytical tools such as frequency analysis, mean analysis, T- Test, ANOVA and Regression for comparing the dependent and independent factor have been analyzed using SPSS software in order to analyze the primary data. From the results, It is inferred that the organisation's support is the most influencing factor. Providing mental wellbeing training and programs, implementing new policies which help in bringing positive impact on employees and their performance which results in effective organization outcome.

Keywords: Employees' mental wellbeing, organizational support, organizational outcome, innovation

INTRODUCTION

The World Health Organization (WHO) announced COVID-19 as pandemic which means a worldwide disease on March 11, 2020. Many countries' governments implemented various safety measures to prevent the spread of coronavirus. Business organization, institutions, and other public gathering places have been completely closed as per government rules. Thus economic status has been declined. Due to nations' economic decline and no income, many organizations in the name of restructuring in many aspects, have decided to terminate some employees as well as lowering the salary (Prochazka et al., 2020). In order to keep their employees engaged, most of the countries are adapting to teleworking but this results in a negative impact on employees' mental health since they have to work for more hours using gadgets in isolated conditions (Hamouche, 2020). The remote working condition causes negative impact on employees mental health due to lack of communication, inconvenience of situation, lack of flexibility to work from home, poor network issue, work life balance, job insecurity, social distancing, self-isolation, anxiety, over thinking that tend to reflect in their job performance (Kabir, 2020). Recently many employees were in fear of losing their jobs in this economic crisis. There are so many factors that impact employees' mental wellbeing such as employee wellbeing, virtual communication, organizational support and social media. The organizational outcome purely depends on the individual's performance in an organization. In some organizations they have implemented new policies and strategies and programs like financial security programs, wellness programs that help mental wellbeing of employees (Cooke et al., 2020). Employer's play a major role in this transition by helping the employees for arranging the work environment setup to avoid the probability of distractions, sprains and pain which may affect their performance. Times jobs survey titled 'employee wellbeing amid covid-19', the survey highlights that 59% HR managers said that they had arranged a crisis management team to address employees' mental wellbeing issues effectively ("employee wellbeing in COVID-19," n.d.). 35% of HR managers claimed to have implemented policies such as one-on-one counseling, staff mentoring, virtual mindfulness workshops, etc to help employees. To ensure employees high productivity Telecom Company, Tata Teleservices, has implemented various initiatives to improve employee safety and enable them to work from home ("Tata Teleservices' new initiatives for employee well being during covid-19," 2020). The Company has come up with an Employee Assistance Program, SABAL, in partnership with 1to1help, an online counseling platform, to keep a check on its employees' health and well-

being, and ensure their safety during this critical time. The inter-agency standing committee (IASC), an organization implemented plan to strengthening humanitarian assistance, with guidelines for employers and individuals in leadership positions in order to promote an ease environment that encourages employees to express if their mental wellbeing is affected and they ensure a good quality communication and accurate information updates in order to mitigate uncertainty and increase the sense of control. Organizations should believe that employees are the asset of organization to be taken care of to meet organization's goals. The study focuses on mental wellbeing of employees and its organizational outcome during COVID-19 along with the suggestions to overcome the issues.

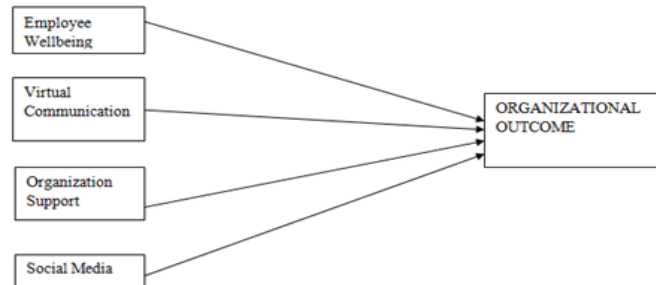


Fig.1: Conceptual model of the study

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

(Reynolds, 1997) describes the impact and output of organizational strategies and plans. It focused on various best measures to prevent the stress level of employees, practically in day to day work life by implementing clear strategies and plans which helps employees to be free from stress.(Bai et al., 2004) describes the stress reaction among health care workers during the SARS outbreak which is infectious disease like coronavirus. (Virtanen et al., 2007) describes the job strain and psychological distress which influence sickness absence among employees. The lack or ineffective outcome of organizations causes an increase in mental stress, depression in employees. (Durand et al., 2014) analyzed the best work related absence management and return to work practices for employees with common emotional disorders. Results indicate that implementing policy of health promotion and job retention reduces absenteeism gradually and improves the organizational outcome.(Gärling et al., 2016) describes that the employees are mentally stressed due to time pressure, which does not lead to achieving the goal and stress related symptoms by conducting a survey.(Milligan-Saville et al., 2017) describes emotional illness is one of the most common reasons of employee absenteeism so that it affects the organizational outcome as well as employee's health mentally and physically.(Babore et al., 2020) highlights that psychological programs for healthcare workers could help them to improve their positive attitude style to face highly stressful events or even possible future epidemics.(Choudhari, 2020) focused on mental health challenges of migrant workers in India and they have suggested that the need for approaching the medical health professionals, general medical practitioners and company strategies makers treat the psychological effects among migrants.(Cooke et al., 2020) describes human resources management and its practice in Asia in the past, present and future and suggests the few future themes of HRM research and practice on what has to be done in the present which reflects in near future also.(Carnevale and Hatak, 2020) discussed few challenges occurred due to the COVID-19 and implementation of few plans for human resources management to help the employee's workforce and discussed on how to adapt to new environment.(Fullana et al., 2020) reported that 65% of people reported depressive symptoms. Findings of the article are that by avoiding reading news and maintaining the healthy diet or other relaxing activities which is mentioned above may help the individuals from stress.(Hamouche, 2020) identified organizational and individual factors to reduce the impact of COVID-19 on the employees' mental issues.(Tan et al., 2020) highlighted that the health care workers exposed to COVID-19 (coronavirus) could be mentally stressed due to anxiety, depression especially women staff in Wuhan.(Prochazka et al., 2020) describes the work related consequences of COVID-19 pandemic faced by employees. Results indicate that organization support, social support and personal job crafting, self efficacy will help the employees to cope with this pandemic situation and in lockdown condition. (Prasad et al., 2020) describes the remote working employees of IT and e-commerce industry employees during the pandemic COVID-19(coronavirus). Factors such as Communication, job satisfaction, organization policies or strategies, organization climate and psychological factors affect the psychological well being of the employees during this pandemic situation COVID-19 corona virus.(Qiu et al., 2020) indicated that as days passed by stress level will be reduced as spread of coronavirus reduces and control measures introduced by the Chinese government like medical support from all over the country, effective measures to prevent the people or public from the spread of virus, COVID-19.(Shafi et al., 2020) describe that the most affected sector is MSME who are concerned about their economic loss, fall down in demand, reduced rate of sales and profit and supply chain management. Findings indicate that around 94.57% of enterprises were

reported that they are affected during this pandemic. (Suter et al., 2020) indicates that the social support might be the most important reason to retain in the job even though the job is stressful and unpleasant. (Tan et al., 2020) clearly describes the psychological effects and psychoneuroimmune prevention measures for the employees' well being during this pandemic covid19. This article concludes stating that there is a need for government and organization to be aware about the factors that cause stress, anxiety, depression and to take prevention measures when they return to work after a long gap in this pandemic situation. (Zhou et al., 2020). Telehealth is the service that provides psychological treatment and support through telecommunication that includes messages, e-mails, video conferences or any other online app which maintains the social distancing and also prevents public employees from exposure to the virus COVID-19. (Zhang et al., 2020) describes that the people in good health condition in the most affected region have less life satisfaction that may be because of their mental stress, frustrated due to lockdown. Our research idea is based on the rich knowledge acquired by our peer teams across the university. (A.C.Gomathi, S.R.Xavier Rajarathinam, A.Mohammed Sadiqc, Rajeshkumar, 2020; Danda et al., 2009; Danda and Ravi, 2011; Dua et al., 2019; Ezhilarasan et al., 2019; Krishnan and Chary, 2015; Manivannan, I., Ranganathan, S., Gopalakannan, S. et al., 2018; Narayanan et al., 2012, 2009; Neelakantan et al., 2013, 2011; Neelakantan and Sharma, 2015; Panchal et al., 2019; Prasanna et al., 2011; Priya S et al., 2009; Rajeshkumar et al., 2019; Ramadurai et al., 2019; Ramakrishnan et al., 2019; Ramesh et al., 2016; Venugopalan et al., 2014)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND ANALYSIS

The study focused on the mental health of employees during covid-19 and its impact on organizational outcome by analyzing various factors such as employee wellbeing, virtual communication, organizational support, social media [3]. The researcher completely designed the questionnaire based on the five point Liker scale. 1–strongly disagree, 2- disagree, 3 – neutral, 4 – agree, 5 – strongly agree and were circulated to the target population. Sampling size is 90 and the targeted population is employees from IT companies.

FREQUENCY ANALYSIS

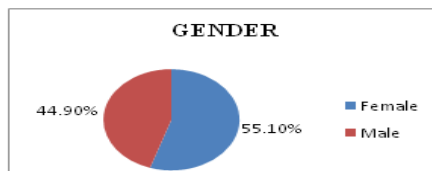


Fig.1: The chart describes the gender of the sample of the respondents. Majority of the respondents were female 55.1%

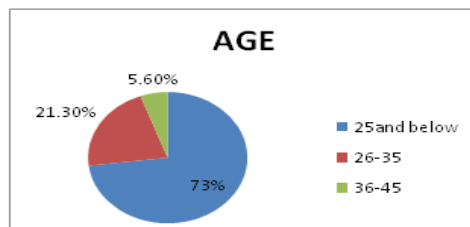


Fig.2: The chart describes that majority of the respondents were from 25 and above age group (73%).

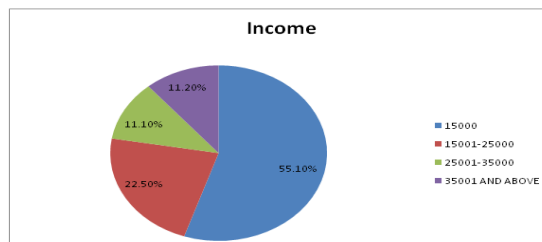


Fig.3: It is inferred that majority of the respondents' monthly income is around 15000k (55.1%)

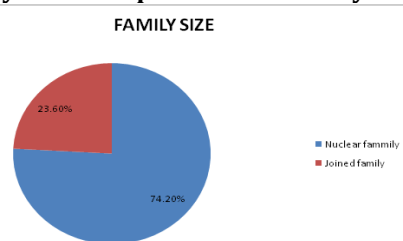


Fig.4:The chart describes that the majority of respondents are form nuclear family(74.2%) and joined family (23.6%)

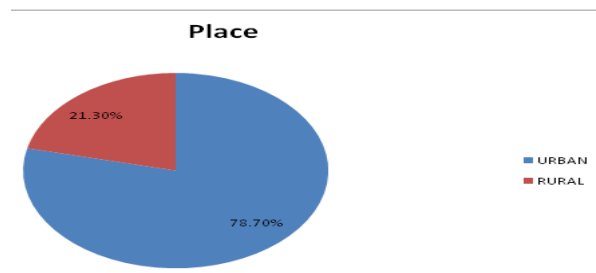


Fig.5: The chart describes that majority of the respondents are from urban place (78.7%)

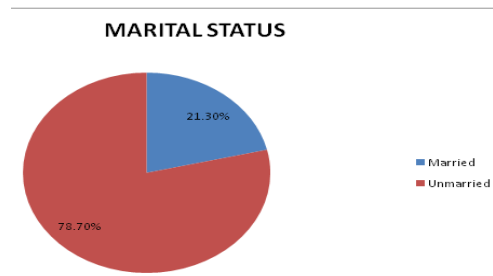


Fig.6: The chart describes that the majority of the respondents are married (21.3%)and unmarried are (78.7%).

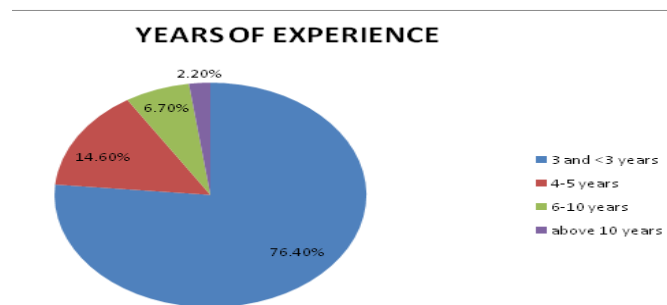


Fig.7: It is inferred that the majority of the respondents are from 3 and <3 years of work experience (76.4%).

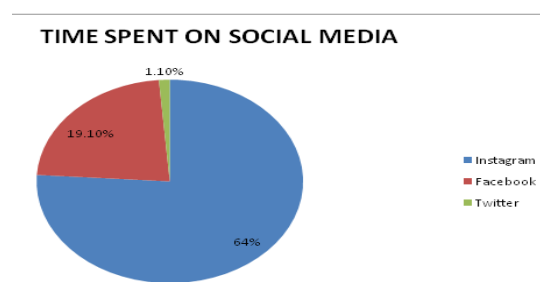


Fig.8: It is inferred that the majority of the respondents are spending most of their time on Instagram (64%) and followed by Facebook (19.1%).

Table 1: Mean Analysis

Employee wellbeing	Mean	Rank
I am valued at my workplace.	3.71	1
I feel more stress during the pandemic.	3.54	3
I feel sad or lonely during the pandemic.	3.27	4
I feel mental health affects personal relationships.	3.60	2
I feel negative towards my work during this pandemic.	2.93	5
Virtual communication	Mean	Rank
Tele working helps you stay in contact with your colleagues and supervisors.	3.92	1

Long exposure to electronic gadgets leads to mental and physical illness.	3.76	2
There is comparatively less communication with higher officials during this pandemic.	3.52	3
There is high job insecurity due to lack of communication during pandemic.	3.49	4
Organizational support	Mean	Rank
Mental health training will reduce the emotional distress.	3.72	1
Manager checks regularly about how I am doing apart from work during a pandemic.	3.24	5
Company aids you beyond the mere salary package.	2.82	7
Organization is concerned about their employees' mental wellbeing.	3.42	4
Mental health programs by the organization will reduce the emotional issues of employees.	3.71	2
I have given enough holidays or day off at my company.	3.45	3
I feel that I get enough break time during working hours.	3.22	6
Social media	Mean	Rank
High usage Social media increases employees' mental stress.	3.73	3
Information on social media is not always true.	3.88	1
I feel social media distracts me from work.	3.15	4
Reducing time online will improve mental wellbeing.	3.82	2
I always prefer to post about mental wellbeing on social media to get support from friends.	2.96	6
I have used the internet to seek help for mental health issues.	3.13	5
Organizational outcome	Mean	Rank
Employees' mental health will affect the work performance and organizational outcome.	4.01	2
Employee job performance affects organization outcome.	3.87	4
Job satisfaction level goes down when you get only half of your income due to economic decline at my organization.	3.96	3
Improper rewards /recognition will reflect in an employee's performance.	3.96	3
Good work environment creates positivity which reflects in the outcome.	4.10	1

INTERPRETATION OF MEAN ANALYSIS

From the above analysis the highest rank (4.10) inferred that a good working environment creates positivity which reflects in their outcome. It also indicates that the most of the information is not always true, reducing the time online will improve mental wellbeing and company does not help beyond the salary package which should be considered. Tele working really helps employees to stay in contact with their supervisors and so they don't feel job insecurity due to lack of communication during pandemic. The most of the employees are valued at the workplace and indicate that the mental health of employees affects their personal relationships.

Table 2: Independent sample T-test

Gender	T-Value	Significance
Employee wellbeing	2.681	0.009
Virtual communication	1.225	0.224
Organizational support	0.367	0.714
Social media	0.349	0.728
Organizational outcome	1.675	0.098
Place	T-Value	Significance
Employee Wellbeing	2.161	.033
Virtual Communication	.809	.421
Organizational Support	1.153	.252
Organizational Outcome	1.117	.267
Social media	.363	.718
Family size	T-Value	Significance
Employee Wellbeing	.419	.676
Virtual Communication	.675	.501
Organizational Support	.462	.645
Organizational Outcome	.718	.475
Social media	1.287	.202

There is a significant difference of gender with respect to factors of employee wellbeing. The other factors namely Virtual communication, Organizational support, Social media, Organizational outcome has significance value of (0.224), (0.714), (0.728), (0.098) respectively which is greater than 0.05 hence, it accepts null hypothesis and there is no significance difference between gender and these factors.

Table 3: ANOVA analysis

Age	F- value	Significance
Employee wellbeing	1.488	.232
Virtual communication	.313	.732
Organizational support	2.699	.073
Organizational outcome	3.094	.050
Social Media	2.541	.085
Monthly income	F- value	Significance
Employee wellbeing	.920	.435
Virtual communication	.642	.590
Organizational support	2.043	.114
Organizational outcome	2.88	.041
Social Media	3.694	.015
Years of experience	F- value	Significance
Employee wellbeing	1.877	.140
Virtual communication	.523	.668
Organizational support	2.005	.119
Organizational outcome	.513	.675
Social Media	.428	.733
Social media in which employees more	F- value	Significance
Employee wellbeing	.338	.714
Virtual communication	.921	.403
Organizational support	.921	.403
Organizational outcome	1.983	.145
Social Media	1.102	.338

There is no significant difference in time spent on Age, social media and years of experience with respect to factors of employee wellbeing, virtual communication, organizational support, social media and organizational outcome. It accepts the null hypothesis. To be noted there is a significant difference between monthly income with respect to factors of social media and organizational outcome.

Table 4: Regression analysis

Coefficients		Dependent variable: organizational outcome				
Model		Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	T-Value	Significance
		B	Std.Error	Beta		
1	(constant)	1.726	.480		3.600	.001
	Employee wellbeing	.115	.122	.105	.948	.346
	Virtual communication	.248	.135	.240	1.836	.070
	Social media	.189	.261	.151	.986	.169
	Organizational support	.283	.112	.296	2.518	.014

From the table the regression model predicts the dependent variable significantly well. Here the significance value 0.000 which is less than 0.05(i.e., it is a good fit for the data) indicates regression analysis with b and beta value for the independent and dependent variables which are assumed. From the analysis it is found that organization support (0.296) is having positive linear relation relationship with association organizational outcome compared to other three independent variables namely, employee wellbeing, virtual communication and social media.

DISCUSSIONS

The organization's support is the most influencing factor for employee's mental wellbeing. To improve the mental wellbeing of employees during this pandemic, the organizations should take corrective action like mental wellbeing training and program, implementing new policies which are helpful for employees. Organizations can also conduct cultural programs, fun activities, wellness activities and leadership camps that help employees to feel relaxed. The managers have to encourage the employee's creativity in his/her performance and to facilitate the clear communication between the employee and superiors to convey the current company policies and mental treatment options, and to host regular check-in with employees. It helps the employee's mental health and

improves their work performance. Thus the organization will not be affected by the employee's mental health during this pandemic.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The research was done in the middle of covid-19 pandemic in order to study the employees' current mental health and its impact on organizational outcome. Results suggested that the organizational support is the most important factor that affects mental wellbeing of employees which reflects in their performance and its organizational outcome. Further research can be conducted, after implementation of wellness programs policies to the employees. The researchers can do research post pandemic to study the comparison of before and after interventions and other implications. This helps researchers to identify the effectiveness of new strategic planning and also helps to improve the programs and policies. This results in great performance and high productivity that reflect in organizational outcomes.

CONCLUSION

Working from home for so long is a very stressful job in presence of home /family disturbance during lockdown. These cause psychological issues such as depression and anxiety among employees. In such challenging situations, organizations as well as managers, ethically or morally should ensure that employees feel connected, supported. It is the organizational responsibility that they should care for employees' well being mentally and physically. From the research found that the organization support is the most that influences the organizational outcome. By applying all the suggested activities mentioned above in any organization will completely improve the employees' wellbeing and their job performance which ultimately helps to achieve the organizational goals.

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