

EMPLOYEES MOTIVATION DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC: A CASE STUDY IN IT INDUSTRY

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Abstract

The purpose of the present study is to determine the employees' motivation during Covid-19 pandemic. This study is conducted among the employees of IT sector in the Pune city. The objective of the study is to find the relationship between motivation of employees and Covid-19 conditions and also to study its impact. The research conducted through a convenient sampling method. A total of 152 respondents from IT industries have participated in this research survey. SPSS software version 28 is used to analysis and interprets the collected data. Cronbach's alpha, Pearson correlation, Regression analysis is used to analyze the data. The investigated result shows the positive significant relationship between motivation factors and Covid-19 condition and also it revealed the positive impact of Covid-19 on employees' motivation.

Keywords: motivation, challenges, covid-19, IT industry

1. Introduction

1.1 COVID-19:

The year 2020 started as usual but who knows an invisible, microscopic virus, the novel COVID-19 coronavirus can change the entire world's functioning making the history that humankind can never forget. At first, it was observed in the Wuhan region of China. In India, the primary case of COVID-19 was discovered in the state of Kerala on 30 January, 2020 (Freelance Statistician and Academic Consultant, Kerala. et al., 2020). But who knows India can witness the unfortunate situation from a single case to approximately 1.5 lakhs infections on 4 June, 2021(Desk, 2021). Businesses, organizations were closed, and the disruptions of social activities were seen at every single corner of the world (Freelance Statistician and Academic Consultant, Kerala. et al., 2020) It was despair to see thousands and thousands of individuals, mostly functioning in the daily wage segments who have neither savings, nor food to eat, struggling with poverty, starvation, and death (Dey& Roy, 2020). Pandemic not only affected the health of people but also it ruined the financial conditions. It had forced

the world to be locked and made them to perform their work from home. Now, every individual have their office at home and this is the new normal we are living into.

1.2 Work from Home

Due to the unfortunate situation that COVID-19 has caused the organizations were forced to alter the way they function, in general, the whole world had changed how they had been functioning. (Arora,n.d.). The Businesses, organizations can't be kept closed for a longer time so the work from home is the only possible way for the Businesses to continue their working. The work from the home process is associated with many disadvantages which include lack of communication, difficulty in work management, etc. which causes more stressful conditions for employees as well as the organizations. But it has many advantages also which include employees can spend more time with their families, the extra layer of safety as they are working from home, and for organizations fewer expenses for office maintenance, less electricity bill, etc.

1.3 Employee's Motivation

(Muogbo U .S., 2013) resulting from their research that motivation is the feeling of having a satisfaction level at a certain point. It is a very essential phenomenon for organizations in both private and public segments. Every single organization has to retain the employee's motivation towards their work so that it could help the organization to easily meet their standards(Hussain & Saeed, 2018). Due to the pandemic, lack of motivation and other stressful conditions causes the psychological suffering and mental stress of working on every individual. Fear, anxiety about this disease outburst has adversely affected the employee's motivation and give rise to negative sentiments and it will be challenging for organizations to maintain the employee's performance. (Assor et al., 2005). Organizations were double stressed on managing business functioning while keeping employees engaged, positive, and motivated towards their works. In organization, leaders can still motivate employees by providing different ways and by counting on the employee's creativity and adaptability in completing their job. It is every important during this pandemic situation to keep motivating the employees and this is not only affecting their physical health but it had impacted their mental health. So, motivating and engaging them is the priority of the organization.

1.4 IT Industry

Alike other economies the Indian economy too had its own share of challenges to deal with the contagious virus but the IT industry of India has many competitive advantages over several other countries as most of the work done is generally development or maintenance support services. India has been a frontrunner in the IT Services sector with Indian IT giants like TCS, Infosys, HCL, and Wipro creating their mark on the worldwide platforms. (Arora, n.d.).

Literature Review:

During the investigation on the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on motivation of employees of multinational companies (Seema et al., 2020) found that they were forced to do work from home. The cross sectional, observational study was used through snowball sampling technique. The result shows that

the respondents had positive outlook towards pandemic as it was helping nature and negative outlook that they think that this is affecting their appraisal system. This study concludes that self- motivation is the key to increase productivity besides management can also implement different techniques to motivate their employees.

While exploring the impact of motivation on work efficiency for employers and employees especially in pandemic situation (Tovmasyan & Minasyan, 2020) in their study revealed that how employees and employers evaluate motivation with respect to their work efficiency and what all factors of motivation are valued and also suggesting for managing the motivational policy in their workplaces. The study reveals that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation factors like salaries, rewards, healthy moral, flexible work schedule; organization's motivation policy etc. affects their work productivity and plays an essential role in the organization's success.

Also employees are discouraged which affects the continuity and survival of an organization and need to get motivated (Alfalih, 2021), found out in their study which was during covid-19. So, the author determines the drivers of employee's sustainable motivation and involved the employees of private enterprises in Saudi Arabia. The result confirmed that stress recognition was the greatest determinant followed by autonomy. The study conclude that the employees most important aspect during crisis is stability which is related to personal needs and collective factors and organization factors are less important.

The outbreak of covid-19 (Christian et al., 2020) focused on how to keep motivating employees in working amid dangerous conditions, especially. The Qualitative research was carried out using PRISMA method. The study was focused on work from home, work shifts, managerial support, sharing information and effective communication between employees through technology. The study reveals that employers need to pay attention on safety and security of their employees and companies must establish the policies to support the safety and security of employees. The Work from home and work shifts were recommended during this crisis situation.

The study on employee's motivation in MaSEs in Slovakia determines how to keep employees motivated during the pandemic situation (Hitka et al., 2021). The data was collected from four years using stratified sampling method. The finding shows that pandemic had not only influenced the level of motivation in employees but also their preferences had been changed over these four years. The most important motivation factors are basic salary, superior approach and job security. It author conclude that motivation of employees is the key factor of success of enterprise as it influence their performance and also Covid-19 had affected the motivation factors in various fields While examining the dimensions and differences in job satisfaction among 353 Indian IT employees with respect to age, gender, managerial/non-managerial roles during COVID-19 (Arora, n.d.) used descriptive method which was based on secondary and primary data which was collected through a Google Form and the simple random sampling technique was used to select the employees. Descriptive statistics, Mann Whitney, and Kruskal Wallis test were conducted to analyzed the data and found that there is a significant difference in job satisfaction among Indian IT Employees with respect to age, gender, managerial/non-managerial roles during COVID-19.

Analyzing the impact of Covid-19 (Rubeena, 2021) on all the aspects related to employees including unemployment, layoffs, salary deduction and more with emerging changes in work practices, social and economic impacts. And found out some advantages as well as disadvantages of work from home. The effects of Covid-19 was investigated (Freelance Statistician and Academic Consultant, Kerala. et al., 2020) during COVID-19 pandemic on the private sector employees and their attitude towards their job, the employer as well as government jobs through convenient sampling technique on private-sector employees in the Southern states of Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu. The study found that the participants had a positive outlook, thinking that their problems were smaller when compared to many migrants' workers who lost their jobs and lives. The private sector employees cope up with the situation in their unique ways.

Need of the Study:

Due to covid-19 pandemic, employees are working from home and this is the new normal which has been adapted by most of the companies due to which motivation of employees is affected. Also, pandemic have resulted in lockdown affecting all business globally. And employees were forced to work from home leading to challenges in productivity and motivation. So, to study the motivation of employees during covid-19 and its impacts on motivation of employees we have conducted this research.

Objectives of research:

1. To study the relationship between motivation & covid-19
2. To study the impact of covid-19 factors on motivation.

Hypothesis

Based on the discussion in literature review, this study proposed the following hypothesis:

Main Hypothesis

H01: There is no significant relationship between motivation and covid-19 conditions.

Secondary Hypothesis

H01a: There is no significant relationship between salary and covid-19 conditions. H01b: There is no significant relationship between fringe benefits and covid-19 conditions.

H01c: There is no significant relationship between covid-19 conditions and fair appraisal.

H01d: There is no significant relationship between Working hours and covid-19 conditions.

H01e: There is no significant relationship between Safety during Covid-19 and covid-19 conditions.

H01f: There is no significant relationship between Job security and covid-19 conditions.

H01g: There is no significant relationship between Communication and covid-19 conditions.

H01h: There is no significant relationship between Job performance and covid-19 conditions.

H01i: There is no significant relationship between covid-19 conditions and superior approach.

H01j: There is no significant relationship between Good working team and covid-19 conditions.

Method

This study demonstrates the impact of covid-19 pandemic on motivation of employees. Motivational factors are dependent variables and covid-19 factors are used as independent variables.

Respondents

The research was conducted with a convenience sampling of 152 respondents representing the employees of IT sector in Pune.

Measures

This research was conducted through a survey. Google form was used for data collection. Questionnaire was taken from Intrinsic Motivation Inventory (IMIfull.Pdf, n.d.) (Ryan & Deci). Each survey was distributed, researcher explained the direction for completing each survey and they also explained the respondents that their identity is kept confidential. The questions were designed to be answered in a 5-point likert scale. The first section collected information of demographic factors of respondents such as age, gender, education qualification, marital status, no. of children, experience. The second section comprises the data of motivation factors which includes: salary, working hours, job security, fringe benefits, fair appraisal, communication, superior approach, safety during covid-19, good working team, job performance. And the third section includes the factors of covid-19 which includes 4 items such as: affecting daily routines, challenges in engaging children, financial crisis, affecting health. These questions were answered in a 5-point likert scale labeled from 1- strongly disagree; 2- disagree; 3- neutral; 4- agree; 5- strongly agree.

Statistical Analysis

Statistical Analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences Software (SPSS) Version 28 for the purpose of examining and analyzing the research variables, therefore testing of hypothesis was done through different methods. Cronbach's Alpha, Correlation Coefficient was used to computer the reliability. Different method's we used for analysis were Mean and Standard Deviation to calculate central tendency. Linear regression, Pearson correlation were also used.

RESULTS

Reliability Test

The internal consistency of reliability was check with the Cronbach's α value laid between 0.83 to 0.93. So the factors were reliable.

Frequency

A total 50 questions were included in the questionnaire and we got 152 responses. Out of 152 responses the maximum responses we got is around 102 that is 67.1% from the age group of below 30, the maximum responses in gender we got from the male which is about 91 that is 59.9%. Graduate were the highest respondents (76) in educational qualification which is 50%. The maximum respondents have less than 5 years of experience (n=97, 63.8%). The 101 respondents are unmarried (66.4%). The majority of respondents (n=111, 73%) have no children.

Table 1

Variables		Frequency	Percentage
Age	Below 30	102	67.1
	31-40	25	16.4
	41-50	15	9.9
	Above 50	10	6.6
Gender	Male	91	59.9
	Female	61	40.1
Educational Qualification	under graduate	29	19.1
	Graduate	76	50
	post- graduate	41	27
	Other	6	3.9
Experience	below 5 years	97	63.8
	6-10 years	25	16.4
	11-20 years	26	17.1
	more than 20 years	4	2.6
Marital Status	Unmarried	101	66.4
	Married	47	30.9
	Divorce	4	2.6

Descriptive Statistics

In the below table descriptive statistics of motivation factors are calculated. In which the safety during covid shows the maximum mean(3.82) and standard deviation(1.01).

Table 2

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Salary	152	3.52	0.96
Fringe Benefits	152	3.60	0.99
Fair Appraisal	152	3.50	0.99
Working Hours	152	3.59	0.94
Safety during covid-19	152	3.82	1.01
Job security	152	3.43	0.94
Communication	152	3.45	0.91
Job performance	152	3.76	0.96
Superior approach	152	3.49	1.01
Good working team	152	3.69	0.99

Challenges	152	3.53	0.92
Valid N (list wise)	152		

CORRELATION

Table 3 depicts Pearson correlation analysis between different motivation factors and covid-19 factors. The result demonstrate that there is positive significant relationship between the variables of motivation (fair appraisal, fringe benefits, working hours,

salary, safety during covid-19, communication, job performance, job security, superior approach, and good working team) and Challenges with the coefficient of correlation 0.522, 0.557, 0.643 respectively as p-values were found to be significant for all the dimensions that is ($p < 0.01$).

Table 3: Pearson Correlation

Correlations												
	SL	FB	FA	WH	SDC	JS	Comm	JP	SA	GWT	Challenges	Motivation
Salary	1											
Fringe Benefits	.780**	1										
Fair Appraisal	.811**	.775**	1									
Working Hours	.723**	.765**	.858**	1								
Safety during covid-19	.501**	.609**	.675**	.711**	1							
Job security	.690**	.692**	.807**	.830**	.662**	1						
Communication	.679**	.578**	.785**	.758**	.598**	.859**	1					
Job performance	.560**	.611**	.621**	.715**	.658**	.672**	.681**	1				
Superior approach	.669**	.688**	.683**	.749**	.514**	.723**	.659**	.735**	1			
Good working team	.659**	.716**	.750**	.815**	.696**	.791**	.704**	.773**	.765**	1		
Challenges	.522**	.557**	.643**	.711**	.642**	.761**	.657**	.627**	.584**	.700**	1	
Motivation	.825*	.843*	.906*	.924*	.774*	.899*	.848**	.820*	.839*	.895*	.746**	1

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REGRESSION ANALYSIS

The table 4 depicts the regression model summary and overall statistics for the dependent variables motivation with independent variable. The scrutiny shows the relationship between the challenges of Covid-19 and motivation factors, the R2 = 0.557 with adjusted R2 (0.554) which clarify that nearly 55.4% variation in the dependent variable i.e. motivation. The table also shows that independent variable statistically significantly predicted the dependent variable motivation (p< 0.001).

Table 4: Model Summary

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.746	0.557	0.554	0.55553

Table 5: ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	58.199	1	58.199	188.584	<.001
Residual	46.292	150	0.309		
Total	104.491	151			

Table 6: Coefficients

	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	Std. Error	Beta		
	(Constant)	0.179		
Challenges	0.049	0.746	13.733	<0.01

DISCUSSION

This study has investigated the relationship between motivation and covid-19. This study consider the factors of motivation as dependent variables, which are fair appraisal salary, fringe benefits, working hours, safety during covid-19, job security, communication, job performance, superior approach, good working team and covid- 19 conditions as the independent variables. The result shows that there is a positive significant relationship between motivational factors and covid-19 conditions. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. We can say that there is a positive impact of covid-19 on motivation of employees.

In the study we have found that working hours and fair appraisal are highly motivating factors. Also, covid-19 conditions have extreme impact on job security and working hours.

The result of regression analysis shows the impact of covid-19 conditions on motivation level of employees. The dependent variables of motivation are highly impacted by the covid-19 conditions. The employees are finding difficulties in dealing with their daily routines, challenges in engaging children, financial crisis, affecting health. Also, it is observed that Covid-19 has changed the perception that salary and fringe benefits are the most motivated factors to the employees instead job security and working hours motivates the most.

CONCLUSION

The research has successfully identified the relationship between covid-19 and motivation and also it has found the positive impact of covid-19 conditions on employees' motivation. This brings into light the need of organization to motivates their employees' in order to retain them and encourage them so that amid pandemic they won't switched and be with employers for long duration. Organization should focus on safety and security of the employees as these factors can leads to motivate them or it can go against them.

SUGGESTION

Further study can be conducted using larger number of demographic area to get the much clearer picture of employees' motivation during pandemic. From this study we came to know the employees feelings during the work from home, what all problems they faced during this situations, Also, Covid-19 have impacted people's live but we can see the new normal coming its way. Many companies had started encouraging the work from home strategies during this pandemic. Organization has found its own way to deal with it. So, the major responsibility goes on the HR department to keep motivating the employees. They should engage their employees in various activities such as video meetings on weekends to maintain and increase the communication, various online games to keep them connected, motivational session so that they feel motivated.

LIMITATIONS

1. This study is limited to only IT industries located in the Pune city.
2. The employees of the IT sector had a demanding and hectic schedule was not able to devote much time in filling the questionnaire.
3. Biggest problem faced during data collection was unavailability of data.

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