

Guest Editorial Preface

COVID-19: Impact on the Organisations

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COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the global economy in unimaginable ways. Business has been disrupted in unprecedented speed and gravity. The dimensions of business such as production, marketing, finance, and human resource had to handle the unforeseen circumstances. The environment of uncertainty was prevalent. The prime objective of this issue is to highlight the impact of COVID-19 on different dimensions related to organisations. Other objectives are to understand the direct and indirect effects of the COVID-19 on the organisations. How do organisations deal with Covid -19 effect to maintain efficiency and reduce pandemic effects? What is the impact on different sectors? What role does communication play? Will work from home have different job behaviour? The present issue tries to find some answers to these questions pertinent to the environment.

The paper “Business Continuity During Adversity and Strategies to Revive Certain Sectors,” by Singh and Jain, talks about the challenges every organisation small and big faced during pandemic . The majority of sectors have been severely disrupted to an extent that their survival is at stake. In light of this magnitude of happening it is critical to investigate the factors which can be damaging and need to be overcome. The paper set out a framework for the composing elements of a Business Continuity and indicated the interactions between these elements meant to ensure the foundations of an effective Business Continuity. It also provided empirical evidence on the critical functions that are vital for companies to maintain their essential business activities in case of a disruptive incident pandemic like COVID–19. From a theoretical perspective, the present study contributes to the literature by providing empirical evidence on the critical functions for ensuring business continuity and organization’s resilience. It not only validates the earlier scholastic contributions but also fills a significant void when it is carried out in this pandemic which has challenged the fundamental assumptions of the business models.

The next paper, “Exploring the Need of Social Change Leadership Concerning Health Communication and Health Disparities During the COVID-19 Pandemic,” by Springs, Burrell, Shufutinsky, Shipman, McCargo, and Jackson, throws light on the importance of health literacy as a critical aspect of risk management in contagious diseases and the need for accurate information for everyone regarding pandemic planning and risk (Paakkari & Okan, 2020). High levels of health literacy and compliance depend on reliable and readily available information on the nature of threats, disease transmission, risk safety protocols, and protective measures. The study seeks to shed light on the importance of health education and health communication, especially in the age of COVID-19. The study is qualitative in nature.

Due to the community spread fear of this COVID-19, many organizations have opted work from home to combat this stressful time (Shareena P and Shahid, 2020). With most of the firms encouraging work from home (remote working), a new kind of reality has emerged, which has led to new kind of opportunities and challenges for employees. The study on “Exploring the Unison of Socio-Technical Assemblage” by Sinha, Karma, Duggal, Sinha, Sujatha, and Mutsuddi tries to explore the nature of employee job behaviour in the backdrop of work from home or remote working and to study the impact of employee job behaviour on job satisfaction Literature on work from home (or remote working) indicates that it has its impact on job behaviour and job satisfaction, job performance and work-family conflict (Gajendran and Harrison, 2007; Golden, 2006). The study was conducted in IT sector. The study finds that work from home has impacted employee wellness and resulted in social disconnect affecting decision making. Though at the macro level organisational connection is not lost, which is a positive sign however at micro level *viz* within teams, the work from home has impacted many social factors of job behaviours.

Dereso, Meher, and Shobe in their paper, “COVID-19 Pandemic and Strategizing Higher Education Policies of Public Universities of Ethiopia,” investigate the impact of Covid-19 on higher education policies and their effect on students’ academic performance at public Universities in Ethiopia. The results demonstrate that Covid-19 has an enormous impact on the on education as the higher education institutions have implemented a deliberate emergent strategy by a potential shift from the face-to-face conventional education system to a digital learning platform. Since the academic staff and students are not prepared mentally for such unexpected management of change towards virtual learning, teachers’ lack of preparedness and students’ reluctance to learn in online platforms has ominously percolated into students’ academic performance. The Covid-19 pandemic has forced the higher educational institutions to implement new strategies by unlearning the ongoing conventional educational system and embracing technology-based digitalized education.

Maintaining good hygiene is an important aspect for prevention of COVID-19 and the use of face masks is essential in a country like India with dense population. In “Possible Opportunities in Face Mask Manufacturing During the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Study From India,” Mishra, Chauhan, Mishra, and Satapathy discuss challenges and opportunities for the local manufacturers of face masks used as protective equipment against Covid-19. The possible opportunities for “Make in India” of the face masks along with its safer use has been analyzed with the help of “Interpretive Structural Modelling (ISM)” approach followed by MICMAC analysis. The paper found that although, the manufacturing sector in India has scaled up to meet the existing demand for face masks as a preventive measure against COVID-19, but there is a huge scope for the local manufacturing units in the rural areas to engage actively in making and fulfilling the present demand of face masks in India.

Uncertainty and volatility caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has led to major disruptions in the global economy and created an unprecedented economic crisis. The pandemic has adversely affected global trade, caused disruptions in the foreign exchange market and resulted in turbulence of foreign exchange rates. World Trade Organization has projected that the world trade will decline by 13% to 32% in 2020. Sharma, Yadav, and Jha in their study “COVID-19 Outbreak and Currency Exchanges of Selected Countries: An Investor’s Perspective” have analyzed the impact of COVID outbreak on currency market. The study captures the impact of the outbreak on returns and volatility of returns based on spot rates of seven major currencies.

COVID-19 pandemic steered business disruptions in many ways, posed new challenges and reshaped the practices of the organisations drastically. As estimated by the International Labour Organisation, globally more than 430 million enterprises have been faced with the risk of disruption (ILO, 2020). It had an enormous impact on the people who lost their employment. Even the ones who continue to be employed are affected in terms of how they work, with whom they work and how much they earn. In this scenario the organisations were forced to redesign their processes and to look for alternative strategies (Seetharaman, 2020). COVID-19 has inflicted an enormous economic and social shock, which will reshape the perceptions of individuals and organisations about work

and various occupations (Kramer & Kramer, 2020). It will lead to shifts in the workplaces on both macro and micro levels. In this scenario the organisations are required to make strategies to provide support to their employees for technology-enabled work and to help them sail through the tumultuous time (Venkatesh, 2020).

Even after the pandemic is over, there may be permanent changes to workplaces as some organisations have planned for their employees to work-from home in the future (Conger, 2020). As the nations are gradually easing the restrictions and allowing the work force to go back to their workplaces, further impacts of the “new normal” will be seen. This special issue makes contribution to two major aspects of the future business environment. Firstly, it provides an understanding of how the organisations have responded to the pandemic situation for maintaining their business continuity. Secondly, it helps to comprehend the impact of the response on the different stakeholders of the organisations. It can help the organisations to adopt relevant practices. We hope the readers will find this collection of value.

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