

VIRTUAL EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IN SERVICE SECTOR: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

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ABSTRACT:

Purpose - The goal of this research is to have a better understanding of the effects COVID-19 has had on the workplace at this challenging time. The study provides a thorough examination of the concepts and methodology related with online employee involvement in light of the COVID-19 telecommuting policy. The key goals of the study are to identify the difficulties that businesses face and to provide potential solutions.

Design/methodology/approach – This study includes conducting formal and unstructured interviews with 54 employees who worked remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic. The snowball sampling approach was used to choose applicants for the interviews. The study's participants were from a variety of industries and professional levels, including education, information technology, finance, marketing, and project management, among others.

Findings - In response to the epidemic's significant socioeconomic impact, several businesses implemented cost-cutting measures such as reducing employee benefits, shrinking corporate operations, and laying off employees. Employees' workplace engagement levels decreased as a result of their fear of losing their jobs.

Research limitations/implications- The study was undertaken with the idea that the 54 people in the small sample may not accurately represent the entire community.

Practical implications - Managers and organizations should implement good management practices, encourage creativity, and establish adequate support systems for remote workers.

Originality/value – This study provides a unique look at the influence of COVID-19 on employees.

Keywords: Employee engagement, COVID-19, Work from home, remote working.

1. INTRODUCTION

According to IFEB, India has the fastest growing service industry and the highest worker productivity among nations. In fiscal year 2022, India's service sector remained the key driver of economic growth, accounting for 53% of total value added. India has a specific skill set that gives it a competitive advantage and sets it apart from all other nations in the world. Several government initiatives have the potential to turn India's services sector into a lucrative opportunity worth trillions of dollars. This option can lead to mutually beneficial growth for all nations involved. The non-financial services business has the greatest employment

rate of the three sectors that make up India's service economy, employing 128.4 million people in fiscal year 2021. In comparison, both of the remaining two groups employed ten million people each. The epidemic has caused a fundamental shift in the nature of distant work for people working in the service industry, which accounts for a sizable portion of the labor force. The introduction of remote work has had a significant impact on the workplace, disrupting the everyday routines of millions of people. Nations around the world have implemented a variety of measures, including strict lockdowns, to reduce the spread of Covid-19 by limiting gatherings and social activity. To reduce the growing number of COVID cases, impacted countries must suspend socioeconomic activities. (Guleria & Kaushik, 2020). Businesses were forced to take severe measures to comply with these preventative health rules, including establishing a policy that allows workers to work from home or remotely. Due to the lack of real office space, the only option for completing daily chores was to work remotely. Regardless of their job titles, a large number of people were required to work from a distance, leading in a global de facto trial of remote labor. The COVID-19 outbreak has drastically altered the customary state for workers worldwide. Despite workplace changes, the staff culture has transformed, and they continue to display unshakable dedication to their roles and goals.

Every reform has both positive and negative implications, and the introduction of the work-from-home policy was no different. According to studies, employees benefited significantly from working remotely. Working remotely can help you maintain a healthy work-life balance. Furthermore, it allows you to work from convenient locations with fewer time constraints. Employees who work remotely typically find it satisfying to save money on travel expenses by traveling shorter distances.

Nonetheless, remote work for employees has drawbacks, such as limited resources and workspace at home, insecure employment stability, and a loss of balance between their personal and professional lives. According to Duran and Sanchez (2021), workplace rules such as heavy workloads, extended work hours, fewer breaks, staff reductions, compensation decreases, and temporary unpaid leave can put employees under stress. Psychological safety, happiness, and resilience are positive psychology strategies that can help employees feel less anxious.

Employers have an important role in implementing such techniques in the virtual work environment (Kaushik and Guleria, 2020). Existing research (Nembhard et al., 2021) provides insights into how to effectively manage human resources in such environments. This strategy's methods include prioritizing individuals, emphasizing the importance of collaboration and efficient communication, implementing a direct and modest leadership style, providing training programs and incentives to engage employees, and ensuring the availability of teleworking technologies (Sulaiman et al., 2020).

Previous research reveals that employees struggled to focus on their daily responsibilities as a result of the previously discussed remote working issues (Chanana and Sangeeta, 2020). This highlights the relevance of virtual employee engagement initiatives.

2. EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

According to Burnet (2004), the psychological environment of a corporation is critical to obtaining great workplace performance. The psychological climate, which influences employees' commitment to their jobs and organizations, has become an invaluable asset for small and medium-sized businesses attempting to adapt to a changing business environment (Rasool, 2021 et al.).

This phenomenon's appeal stems from its shown association with work-related behavior, attitudes, intention, well-being, and personality. Schafelein (2013). According to Robinson et al. (2004), one of the most often used HR terms is employee engagement. Khan coined the term "employee engagement" in 1990 after researching identity theory. He drew a parallel between a well-organized, formal firm and a relaxing, easygoing summer camp. According to Khan's research, employees that are more adaptable and curious in the job had higher levels of engagement. Gallup, Inc., an American analytical and consulting business, has undertaken considerable research on the impact of employee attitudes on organizational success. As a result, they created the Q12 questionnaire survey on employee engagement, which was cited in Buckingham and

Coffman's 1999 book "First Break All the Rules".

Employee engagement refers to an employee's cognitive and affective commitment to their employer, as defined by several experts (Baumuk 2004; Richman 2006; Shaw, 2005). Khan, as cited on page 694 of 1990. It may also relate to "personal involvement," which is an employee's mental, emotional, and physical devotion to their profession. Maslach et al. (2001) recognized three types of engagement: efficacy, energy, and participation. Schaufeli et al. (2002, p. 74) defined engagement as "energy, devotion, and absorption," as well as positive and fulfilling work-related behavior. Schaufeli et al. (2002, p. 74), a well-known researcher, defined employee engagement more specifically. They defined it as an intentional mental state that is not limited to a single object, person, event, or action. The essay investigates the relationship between an individual and a business (Lucey, Baleman, and Hines 2005).

The definition of employee involvement is currently under dispute. According to Macey and Schneider (2008), employee participation has multiple interpretations but eventually leads to the same result: it is a positive trait that achieves an organizational goal. It also includes the application of energy, enthusiasm, and focused effort in both behavioral and psychological contexts.

According to Sarkar (2020), firms use family involvement during lockouts to engage employees' children.

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND REMOTE WORKING

Employees generally choose remote work because it allows them to balance professional and personal obligations, cut travel expenses, and shorten commute times. Nonetheless, remote work has a number of drawbacks, including poor information transfer, greater interference, lower work motivation, a lack of individual collaboration, data security problems, and difficulties monitoring and evaluating performance. The sources given include Golden and Gajendran (2019) and Vander Elst et al. (2017). The employer is clearly uneasy about these difficulties. Employee engagement has been greatly damaged by the COVID-19 pandemic and the transition to remote work. Employee job engagement may deteriorate due to limited possibilities for work involvement and conflicting work-life duties (Adisa, T., Ogbonnaya, C., & Adekoya, O. D. 2021). Employee competency and resilience, in addition to their degree of involvement, are crucial for maintaining a strong organization during pandemics. Kumar (2021) is the source.

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Only individuals are protected from being copied or cloned by other businesses. When used and efficiently managed, it is regarded as the most valuable asset. Employee involvement is a critical factor in determining sustainability. Human resource studies focuses on the scholarly investigation of employee engagement. Academics have offered several definitions of employee involvement. Jena et al. (2018) discovered that employees who actively participate in their work not only improve organizational performance, but also create great relationships with coworkers and maintain a positive attitude. Bakker et al. (2011) argue that organizational citizenship, work satisfaction, employee commitment, and the likelihood of attrition are all components of the complex concept of employee engagement. According to Sarah Cook (2008), individuals who have a positive attitude toward their business and display a dedication to supporting the firm in attaining its goals for the benefit of its stakeholders, customers, and colleagues are highly valued. Academics continue to debate the precise notion of employee involvement, with some proposing alternate interpretations. It is commonly acknowledged that increasing employee engagement is critical to improving worker performance and productivity. The development of remote work practices posed substantial hurdles for businesses in effectively engaging their employees during the COVID-19 epidemic. According to Andrew and Saudah (2012), employee engagement is often used as a method to impact staff members' intentions, behaviors, and attitudes in order to improve employee performance.

Several studies have examined the impact of the remote working policy, adopted in response to the COVID-19 epidemic, on worker productivity and performance. Robison (2009) did a study to investigate the efficacy

of leadership tactics during moments of instability and to identify the most effective methods for retaining staff motivation and engagement during times of upheaval. The author made suggestions to improve employee engagement. Previously highlighted activities included setting concrete expectations for employees' goals and deadlines, providing them with the tools and resources they need, giving them the required autonomy, recognizing their efforts, and facilitating their professional development. Kumar P. (2021) studies the V5 model, which focuses on five key components of employee engagement: virtue, vision, voice, variety, and value. The organization can be revitalized by rearranging and merging the components of the employee engagement model. This concept is extensively relevant to a wide range of organizations, including educational institutions, as explained in this article. To make the best decision in the context of COVID-19, Risley (2020) emphasizes the importance of evaluating employee engagement and performance, as well as improving performance. The author highlighted the concept of a growth mindset by encouraging education and intellectual development. The study found five major areas where dual motivation may be applied: status, certainty, autonomy, relatedness, and justice. Achieving a harmonic balance between work and personal life can be aided by sticking to a consistent schedule and making occasional remote work arrangements. Chanana and Sangeeta (2020) investigated the employee engagement activities carried out by several firms during the coronavirus pandemic. Regarding the poll, employers are continually looking for efficient ways to include their employees, despite the limitations given by the epidemic. Organizations use a variety of strategies, including webinars, virtual weekly meetings, virtual team gatherings, virtual gaming sessions, family engagement techniques, virtual competitions, virtual team-building activities, virtual learning, online courses, communication exercises, live sessions, and appreciation sessions.

This study looks at the importance of employee engagement in the context of organizations. This essay looks at the issues that businesses have in maintaining employee engagement amid the COVID-19 pandemic. It also offers other tips for increasing employee enthusiasm, devotion, and efficiency in remote work environments.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

During this difficult time, this study hopes to provide additional understanding into the effects of COVID-19 on the workplace. This study provides a complete grasp of online employee engagement approaches and theories as they apply to the remote work policy introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study's goal is to identify the challenges that companies face and provide answers.

For this study, formal and unstructured interviews were conducted with 54 employees who worked remotely throughout the COVID-19 epidemic. The interviews were picked using the snowball sampling technique. To ensure that the sample accurately represented the research population, we used a purposive sampling procedure that was compatible with our recruitment strategy (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). The study included both male and female volunteers from India who worked remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic. Semi-structured interviews allow participants to freely explain their experiences with the epidemic, covering both professional and personal aspects. The study's participants were from a variety of industries and professional levels, including education, technology, marketing, project management, finance, information technology, and education. In addition, each participant's domestic situation was distinct. The interview was conducted in a semi-structured approach between September and December 2021. Every interview was conducted in person, online, or over the phone. The interviewees were given a brief description of the session's goal, which was to provide them with an honest and unfettered environment in which to share their ideas. The key issue of the interviews was the potential detrimental impact of Covid-19 confinement protocols on participants' levels of involvement as a result of the mandated remote labor from home. The respondents were questioned on a range of topics, including their understanding of employee engagement, the effects of COVID-19 on their work, the activities their employer has done to engage them, and other similar issues (Adisa, T., Ogbonnaya, C., & Adekoya, O. D. 2021).

The data collected from each participant was thoroughly evaluated. To strengthen our conclusions, we looked at a wide range of scientific articles and blogs, as well as data from semi-structured interviews.

5. DISCUSSION

According to the conclusions of Kathryn Tyler's 2020 article on employee engagement during the COVID-19 epidemic, millions of people began working remotely. Given the current situation, evaluating employee feedback and gathering suggestions has become critical. Working remotely can be both convenient and cost-effective. Unfortunately, there are additional issues that could result in a large decrease in productivity when compared to a traditional office environment. When asked about the problems of remote work, an employee financial analyst noted a significant rise in the volume of correspondence received (e.g., emails, phone calls, online meetings, and training sessions). A moment of oncoming unconsciousness passed. It had a tremendous impact on my level of involvement and overall well-being... Because of the heavy workload, I often found it difficult to motivate myself to participate in my tasks.

Motivation serves as a motivation for people to continue working persistently toward their goals. Positive external sources of inspiration, such as motivating speeches from superiors and colleagues with similar aims or aspirations, boost productivity. However, remote work reduces employee job satisfaction and productivity. Family dynamics vary greatly, especially among married women who live with their young children. This exacerbates the difficulties connected with distant employment. An employee of an IT firm remarked that executing all job requirements became impractical because everyone was restricted to their homes. It became increasingly difficult for me to focus on my work tasks while also assisting the children with their remote education, managing household activities, and dealing with mounting home responsibilities. While I was totally engrossed in my laptop, a child would approach me and ask for advice about their lunch, assignments, or any other topic. The work proved to be quite tough due to the significant physical, psychological, and emotional strains it caused, which hampered my ability to concentrate and retain interest. The second lockdown was sparked by the presence of minors in educational institutions. The possibility for employed parents to support their families while telecommuting was a significant relief, yet they still had to balance professional and familial duties. Domestic tasks for women emphasize additional aspects of gender roles. Despite these difficult circumstances, women were disproportionately responsible for additional domestic chores such as daily planning, child care, housework, and providing extra care for the family. The efficacy of remote work for women has been significantly reduced, as females experience higher degrees of weariness than males. In contrast to 79% of male respondents, 37% of employed women who took part in a McKinsey poll reported a positive experience working remotely during an epidemic. It seems tough for a married mother with young children to work remotely. One key problem that employees experienced when working remotely was organizing and accessing critical resources. "The abrupt transition from a personal sphere to a professional environment was foreign to me, and I struggled to adjust," said an academic institution employee. I made a genuine attempt to turn a room in my home into a useful working atmosphere; unfortunately, my efforts were eventually futile. Furthermore, the continual disturbances caused by the youngsters limited my capacity to focus in an institutional setting. Because I was only allowed to use it as my home, it was impossible for me to transform it into a working setting. It impaired my ability to concentrate, contribute effectively, and get optimal results. Employee disengagement rose due to a lack of key remote work tools, such as computers, internet access, a suitable workspace, and other job-specific equipment. When it comes to seating and workstations for its employees, many companies prioritize ergonomics. These small efforts helped to alleviate concerns about physical distress, which could have led to unnecessary absences and decreased output. Remote workers may experience long-term physical distress as a result of poor working circumstances at home. Presenteeism refers to the circumstance in which employees are physically present at their workstations but do not actively participate in their tasks due to illness or medical issues. According to a Harvard Business Review study, such situations may result in a one-third

drop in individual performance. Presenteeism looks to be a far more expensive issue than absenteeism, as it reduces output. Presenteeism reveals how much an employee's medical condition affects their job performance when they are absent from work. One of our survey participants commented, "I devote a minimum of twelve to fourteen hours per day to online work." This form of virtual labor is not inherent in the human experience. The constant surveillance and scrutiny I faced had a negative impact on my motivation to exert significant effort. Online supervision, virtual training sessions, virtual meetings, and virtual collaborations are difficult concepts to grasp. My sensation of confinement within a metaphorical cocoon is interfering with my ability to commit to my professional commitments. As a result of ongoing surveillance, I must have my computer logged on at all times. That encounter reduced my level of engagement at work and left me demotivated. According to our research findings, the deployment of remote work has exacerbated presenteeism, which has negative effects for enterprises. When working remotely, workers are expected to devote more time to their work than they would in a regular office atmosphere. People with this ailment feel constantly observed, which drives them to use the internet despite their illness. As a result, their level of engagement and productivity in the workplace has decreased.

Although the concept of remote work is widely seen as advantageous, some people still struggle, particularly in maintaining a balanced and harmonious existence that includes both their professional and personal lives. Individuals all throughout the world have had to adapt to new work-related conditions, such as homeschooling, remote spouses, and daily routine disturbances. Regarding this specific case, one of our participants stated, "Although I was physically present at my place of residence during my remote work, I did not experience an authentic sense of being at home." Remote work represents a significant barrier to achieving a good work-life balance. Your manager's disregard for your work-life balance prevents you from fulfilling your family commitments. The organization routinely proclaims its commitment to work-life balance, implying that any failure to attain it is the responsibility of the person. Nonetheless, the organization's primary focus remains on financial performance; your profit margin is irrelevant to them. When an individual feels overloaded and weary, it impairs cognition and limits emotional connection, which has a negative impact on operational performance. Effective communication has arisen as a significant challenge in the setting of distant work. A number of survey respondents highlighted language barriers as the most significant challenge they face when working with an offshore development service provider. Despite the fact that some firms have adopted nearshoring, which involves delegating jobs to a neighboring country, language difficulties remain the most significant impediment to remote labor. Under such circumstances, a linguistic misalignment between the vendor and the client is plausible. Although there may be a lack of emotional understanding and communication in remote labor, these aspects remain crucial. However, they are equally important components of the workplace. Co-located businesses and teams benefit from direct communication, which allows them to get a thorough grasp of one another's attitudes, opinions, and perspectives. Vocal intonation, facial emotions, oratory prowess, and a variety of other tactics all help to improve communication. Working remotely with inadequate connectivity and small computer displays might make it difficult to read nonverbal communication.

FINDINGS

Employees working in non-remote places are more likely to get infectious diseases like COVID-19 due to their close contact with clients and colleagues. Employees' close physical proximity creates considerable financial obligations as an employment benefit during a pandemic, but the principal advantage of remote work in general is its ability to decrease respiratory health dangers. Many companies have a remote work policy in place to protect the well-being of their employees and their families. Each individual's remote work experience was distinct. The findings were based on the respondents' authentic experiences in the real-life scenario, and the data was assessed using a critical thinking method. Inadequate training and preparation can have a detrimental influence on the job performance and engagement of a high-performing individual.

Several important factors influence remote employment, including: The lack of face-to-face interaction has increased the difficulties of communicating. As staff members became increasingly misinformed and disengaged, team building exercises became critical. The presence of distracting notifications and a long email thread led to decreased productivity and focus. Building trust over email or virtual encounters proved to be difficult. Remote employees experience communication issues as a result of a lack of cooperation, brainstorming sessions, face-to-face interactions with coworkers, and openness. Employee engagement has decreased, and it is difficult to maintain a similar level of enthusiasm, resulting in poor throughput. Remote workers endure a lack of social connectivity. Isolation reduces a worker's sense of belonging and may lead to their exit from the firm. According to a Forbes article (Modi 2019), loneliness and isolation can have a variety of negative repercussions, including impaired decision-making and increased stress. Various disruptions may occur within the family and distract employees from their tasks at any time, resulting in a detrimental influence on productivity. The main concern usually noted in Buffer's 2019 study on remote work was the disruptions associated with working from home. Working remotely, as well as performing numerous responsibilities and domestic activities, all added to the diversion. Working from home has some drawbacks, with more than half of respondents reporting issues managing their personal and professional lives due to a lack of separation. An employee that has problems paying attention will inevitably get disengaged, resulting in inefficiencies. Another major finding from our research was their lack of willingness to implement a telecommuting policy. Half of the participants reported having more difficulties managing their work from home because they were unable to discriminate between their personal and professional lives. Some respondents found it difficult to implement the work-from-home policy due to a lack of appropriate training. Many employees reported experiencing "online presenteeism," which is described as a condition in which an employee is under pressure to be present at all times and respond to all work-related activities. Online presenteeism can be defined as working longer hours, completing assignments on time, attending virtual meetings, and replying to emails. Furthermore, because they worked from home, many participants felt compelled to remain online at all times in order to seem as if they were not working extra hours. The individuals involved reported an increase in their workload. Job instability was found to have a substantial influence on participants' low levels of work engagement. In response to the pandemic's severe socioeconomic consequences, several businesses implemented cost-cutting measures including as reducing employee benefits, curtailing company activities, and terminating employees. As a result, several employees have indicated increased concern about their future employment opportunities. Workers' job engagement levels declined due to their fear of losing their jobs. These changes increased the amount of effort people had to put into their occupations, resulting in reduced levels of engagement at work. The aforementioned discoveries and obstacles present considerable challenges to maintaining staff engagement and productivity. An organization should take immediate preventive action to assess employee engagement when they work remotely and provide timely resolutions to any concerns that arise.

SUGGESTIONS

Although it is critical to develop strict remote work rules and give preliminary training, it may not always be possible to attain the required level of preparedness in times of disaster or instability. According to Durán and Sánchez's 2021 article, managers should prioritize developing a remote working environment that allows employees to restore a harmonic balance between their professional and domestic commitments in the current conditions as a means of increasing employee engagement. The proposed model includes five critical categories on which firms must focus to bridge the gap in employee commitment and engagement while dealing with the pandemic's disruptive effects on the global economy. Conciliation, confidence, nurturing, communication, and payment are among the domains covered. To expedite remote work, it is required to provide the technological infrastructure for task coordination and cooperation, as well as to guarantee that these tools are properly implemented throughout the business.

According to Manjaree and Perera (2021), to increase productivity and assure timely completion of academic and non-academic duties in a remote work environment, the company should dedicate resources to technical improvements and establish a well-defined technological infrastructure. This will increase staff involvement. Provide tools and resources to help novices adjust to remote work. Provide information on ergonomic workstations and make them more accessible to ensure maximum productivity among employees. Provide staff with the necessary training to enable remote work, as well as instructions on how to use the appropriate technology. When employees work alone, it is difficult for them to embrace, acknowledge, and grasp new work equipment and technology. However, if they have prior training, the workflow becomes more efficient, and jobs are completed faster. Efficient communication systems can boost employee engagement in a remote office. The organization's management should encourage employees to use these communication platforms for official and informal work-related talks. To build a positive work environment, the business must emphasize the importance of cultivating interpersonal connections between managers and employees (Duran and Sanchez, 2021). Creating a suitable work environment helps people to be motivated by the perceived benefits of their jobs. (Amason et al., 1995; Beehr et al., 1992) proposed that developing interpersonal trust in the workplace can reduce occupational stress and increase psychological well-being among employees. Internal training has the potential to boost employee motivation, attitudes, and expectations. Employee engagement is positively connected with the belief that their health is safe. Fan and colleagues conducted the study in 2020. To increase employee engagement, firms can encourage their employees to create a positive home environment, stick to a disciplined schedule, and draw clear lines between work and personal life. To foster more effective and cooperative communication, it is critical to provide interesting virtual activities that increase productivity and lower absenteeism rates. Talukdar (2020) recommended five effective strategies for increasing employee engagement: creating a virtual community, boosting communication with remote teams, offering timely acknowledgment, maintaining flexibility, and coordinating team activities.

IMPLICATIONS

The predicted long-term effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, such as its impact on society, psychology, physical well-being, and technology, will undoubtedly provide helpful insights for employees as they negotiate significant changes in their workplace culture (Carnevale and Hatak, 2020). According to McMullen and Shepherd (2006), entrepreneurs usually endure difficult working conditions that include high degrees of uncertainty and accountability. The statement implies the requirement for quick and easy adaptation to new environments (Rauch et al., 2018). According to Baruch (2000), managers and businesses should experiment with new management practices, create unique career paths, and put in place adequate support structures for remote personnel. Managers should replace harsh surveillance with more supportive management practices, such as sharing information with subordinates and engaging with them in an encouraging tone. This is especially critical in the current circumstances (Madlock, 2013), as well as for building confidence within a remote team (Grant et al., 2013) and in other similar situations (Lautsch et al., 2009). Management and people should be aware of the problems associated with remote work. Given the COVID-19 pandemic, businesses must adopt innovative and resourceful strategies to effectively engage their workforce. This is required to keep an engaged, motivated, and satisfied staff (Chanana and Sangeeta, 2020). Kumar (2021) believes it is critical to maintain a skilled and engaged team. Address your employees' difficulties and anxieties at work. To increase productivity and reduce stress, it is critical to actively listen to and appreciate people's thoughts and recommendations. Increase the organization's visibility to showcase its advantages.

LIMITATIONS

Despite acknowledging the difficulties of remote working, the current study provides important insights into its impact on employee engagement during the COVID-19 epidemic. The study was undertaken under the

assumption that the 54 people in the small sample might not provide an accurate representative of the overall population. To improve the findings, future studies should use a large-scale quantitative technique and a larger sample size. Another potential weakness of the current study is its reliance on virtual platforms such as Skype, Microsoft Teams, and Zoom for interviewing. These platforms highlight concerns regarding potential biases between researchers and participants, ethical considerations in study design, and the lack of nonverbal cues, all of which can be avoided in face-to-face interviews. However, due to the current Covid-19 lockdown and social separation rules, interviews could not be conducted in person.

6. CONCLUSION

For the foreseeable future, organizations that favor traditional office environments will continue to have the option of remote or flexible working. Evidently, remote employment has become a permanent fixture. Although the potential of remote work becoming the new standard is being discussed, it is not yet certain. Employee engagement and success are influenced by social alliances, knowledge distribution, getting support from one's superior, effective communication, a shared mission and goal, and mutual comprehension. Employers must be aware of their employees' needs and requirements. To keep a motivated and high-performing team, businesses must cultivate a distinct and well-defined work culture. Employers should commit resources to fostering employee consideration behavior, which has the ability to reduce or, in some cases, increase employee engagement in the face of increased COVID-19 cases. Following significant consideration on remote work, it was established that both the organization and the employee required adequate training to adequately handle such conditions. Accepting this adjustment will be easier if you are prepared for it.

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