


Chapter 16

Competency Framework for Managing Manpower Post–Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

Since the initial days of 2020, an array of radical transformations in every domain of business have been seen. This led to the efficient and effective management of manpower to welcome a novel normal era post-pandemic. It requires an updated set of competencies post-COVID-19. The objective of the study is to identify the upcoming challenges and changes to manage manpower post-pandemic, explore the strategic modifications in the competency framework and HR policy, and recognize the changes in the leadership style post-pandemic. The exploratory study uses a systematic review technique to analyze qualitatively the secondary data extracted from the different directory of journals. The study summarizes the findings under two different areas. The first deals with the challenges of the post-pandemic era which include maintenance of business continuity, management of remote work, mental health and emotional stability, employee engagement, etc. Along with these, changes in the roles, activities, skills, competencies, policies, and leadership style occur in the organizations.

INTRODUCTION

The prevailing catastrophe of the COVID-19 pandemic is anomalous. In context of the economic activities, government started to lift the lock down in different phases with certain exemptions at the end of each lockdown. Places such as schools, universities, malls, movie theaters had to be closed. Transport and travel services on some important routes are partially in function based on the transmission level of

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the corona-virus (Prasad et al., 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic, which occurred during late 2019 without any prior intimation shuffled the globe unexpectedly. Over the night, organizations were compelled to re-design their structure and process to continue the work with new arrangements. Individuals were intimated to work from home wherever possible. This transforms their personal space into a combination of personal and professional settings (Zhang & Varma, 2020). However, this was not applicable to all categories of work and required individuals to attend their workplaces even though the probability of infection through virus geared up at an alarming rate. This is contemplated as a critical scenario that stumbles the political, economic, social, technological, environmental, and legal norms of the organizations. It is paradoxical to predict the reframed look of the organization post-pandemic. But, the new face of the organizations depends upon the modified framework of strategies and competencies developed for the manpower. This modification takes place concerning the challenges of the pandemic and the changes in the return of it in the organizational environment. The aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic affects numerous resources associated with an organization which leads to different transformations in them. Human resources are the most dynamic and versatile resource of an organization. They serve as the motivational factor that keeps the organization's progress wheels in rotation and acts as an engross asset. Adegbile (2020) mentioned that due to the strength of the workforce behind completion of a work they are known as the manpower of an organization. Hence, the effectual management of manpower in every organization is the key to accomplish success in terms of productivity and profitability. This is because of the enigma associated with manpower which states that when 'push comes to shove', these assets are impacted the most which demands a more resilient manpower framework. At the individual level, manpower demands more dynamism and adaptability to unpredicted circumstances. The pre-pandemic techniques of performance are transformed into instant response and feedback. The manpower is less driven by monetary motivators and opens to new forms of rewards and compensations. The stability of a guaranteed income in return to the standard hard work is no more guaranteed further. Rather, a new system based on customized benefits for creative and innovative ideas makes a crucial place in the organization. Hence, manpower is in the precarious state to implement the requisite changes at the individual level to face the complexities of the challenges.

Considering the organizational level, the human resource management department plans to invest in infrastructure and distribute resources to deal with such unforeseen conditions. It requires organizations to support and co-operate manpower to overcome these limitations and fear. This encourages them to attain a new set of skills and competencies to exist in the modified structure of the organization. This leads to long-term challenges and changes for local, national, and global manpower management. To continue in this run, the capability to attract and retain new talent remains critical. Washika (2020) states the inception of a new concept, the Virtual Labor Market, to exist in context post-Covid19. The modified norms of the organization involve a lower level of centralization and a higher degree of flexibility. This creates increased competition for skills and competencies, higher flexibility in work, and more investment in manpower management.

The mentioned impacts of COVID-19 in the post-pandemic era in the organizations revolve around three different views of manpower management. The first view solicits manpower management to play a crucial role in change catalyst to help manpower develop a new framework of competencies and skill set. This enhances the capability and capacity of manpower to work in the modified organizational environment post-pandemic to accomplish a competitive advantage even in the strenuous situation (Bissola & Imperatori, 2020). The second view necessitates the need to tailor traditional manpower management activities. This promotes a cause and effect relationship between the organization and the manpower in

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