

## Chapter 20

# Restarting Manufacturing Industries Post Covid-19: A Mind Map-Based Empirical Investigation of the Associated Challenges in Business Continuity

**Sanjiv Narula**

*BML Munjal University, India*

**Anil Kumar**

*London Metropolitan University, UK*

**Harish Puppala**

*BML Munjal University, India*

**Maheshwar Dwivedy**

*School of Engineering and Technology, BML  
Munjal University, India*

**Surya Prakash**

*School of Engineering and Technology, BML  
Munjal University, India*

**Rajinder Singh**

*Efeso Consulting, India*

**Vishal Talwar**

*School of Management, BML Munjal University, India*

### ABSTRACT

*This research aims to identify the critical challenges associated with restarting manufacturing organizations post-coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The authors conducted an expert-based survey among various industry leaders of manufacturing organizations to capture a holistic view of business continuity plans and the associated challenges. The selected individuals are responsible for making business continuity policies and plans at their respective organizations. They were asked to reflect on their experience of the present-day challenges in managing business continuity in their organizations. Expert interviews were reflective and provided candid inputs. Consequently, the keywords of the experts' feedback were synthesized by using the mind map qualitative approach, which helps in the visualization of the critical challenges at an abstract level. Further, the interrelation between them and the significance of each critical challenge is evaluated using fuzzy theory with the decision-making trial and evaluation laboratory (DEMATEL) technique. The findings of these evaluations will help to assess the existing policies/practices and to strengthen business continuity plans post-COVID-19. This study is a pioneering work that will help organizations to prepare action plans for kick-starting their broken-down economic engines.*

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Most nations of the world today face the calamity caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. It has necessitated instant and coordinated response from society. Leaders all over the world are confronting twin apprehensions: how severely has the COVID-19 outbreak battered the economy and what actions should be undertaken to prepare for the possible challenges. Considering the global footprint of COVID-19, the World Health Organization (WHO) acknowledged it as a pandemic. This disease, which started in China, has spread across the world, causing countries to close their borders. Country administrations are imposing national quarantines on their people in different forms, which has created worldwide economic chaos (Kruger et al., 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic is taking a substantial toll on the worldwide economy (Gong et al., 2020; Ivanov, 2020; Nicola et al., 2020). The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has projected the global growth to drop considerably in the year 2020, calling it the worst year since the Great Depression (Ayittey et al., 2020; Gormsen and Koijen, 2020; Mendoza, 2020). Millions of people and their livelihoods are affected and jobs have been (Ayittey et al., 2020; Kartseva and Kuznetsova, 2020; Nicola et al., 2020).

Today, the entire world is struggling to control the pandemic (Ivanov, 2020; Nseobot et al., 2020; Sohrabi et al., 2020). The administrations have been taking series of speedy, all-inclusive, and effective preventive measures to contain the spread of this pandemic. Unfortunately, despite measures taken, the pandemic has gripped entire nations, creating unprecedented pressure on medical services (Galanakis, 2020; Rowan & Laffey, 2020). Besides, lockdowns in developing countries are even more catastrophic for socio-economic wellbeing since there is neither considerable assistance for small industries nor are there job loss welfare measures (Nseobot et al., 2020). With the surge in COVID-19 infections, towns are under lockdown, industries are shut down, and tourism and travel are frozen (Nicola et al., 2020). It is also expected that workforce layoffs will escalate. The situation is more critical in developing countries, which are also fighting with the issues of the shortage of resources (Khan and Ghauri, 2020). Globally, various nations are facing a massive drop in GDP. Going forward, governments are thinking intensely about policies to partially lift lockdowns, which can help to restart economies while minimizing threat to human lives (Bénassy et al., 2020; Gilbert et al., 2020). Likewise, industries will need to figure out in what manner they should resume their set-ups while prioritize the safety of their workforce and dealing with the repercussions of lockdown and its immediate, near-term and long-term implications (Ivanov, 2020; Hudecheck et al., 2020). Thus, while the effect of COVID-19 on the international economy is at a nascent stage, there is a rising consciousness in business communities that organizations need to be equipped to deal with this pandemic in their backyards (Fadel et al., 2020; Koonin, 2020; Kruger et al., 2020).

Although the majority of nations and industries are still very much in the disaster-controlling phase of COVID-19, certain companies are planning to explore the policies that will help in restarting their businesses. While prioritizing the health and safety of the workforce and business continuity, they are reviewing the strategies to overcome the potential challenges. This involves considering what course corrections they must make by considering technical advances, changing consumer and worker behavior, the necessity for organizational swiftness and resilience, and the expanded role of leaders. Indeed, corporations should be assimilated into the administrative health contingency plan established by numerous nations, International Labour Organization, and WHO. Similar to earlier health crises, the COVID-19 outbreak has raised questions about preparation and emergency responses in a number of countries. In this catastrophe, what part can businesses play is a nerve-wracking question?

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