



A STUDY ON THE COVID WELFARE MEASURES UNDERTAKEN BY THE SOFTWARE COMPANIES DURING THE PANDEMIC TIME.

Subin Saji - II MBA – PG Scholar, School of Management, Hindustan Institute of Technology & Science

S. Veena – Research Guide - Asst. Prof. (SG), School of Management, Hindustan Institute of Technology & Science

ABSTRACT

Due to their awareness of the obligations and dangers associated with the Covid-19, the majority of businesses are reluctant to reopen their locations and resume their old working practices. WFH is an excellent technique to complement any organization's operations even if it might not be a replacement for the conventional style of working. Since WFH eliminates the need for travel to the workplace, it may increase productivity and be more time-efficient. WFH requires a few components in order to be successful.

Covid welfare initiatives boost organizational efficiency and foster wholesome relationships, which helps to keep the peace. Housing programs, medical perks, and facilities for education and entertainment for the families of employees all contribute to increasing their standards of living.

The main goal of this research is to evaluate the efficacy of Covid welfare initiatives implemented by the software businesses during the epidemic. Understanding the WFH facilities offered by the organizations, evaluating the nature of the work and working conditions while working from home, comprehending the direct financial & healthcare benefits offered by the organizations, and comprehending the mental stress management measures implemented by the organizations are secondary objectives.

In the research, convenience sampling was employed. 100 employees from various firms in Chennai have been surveyed using multiple-choice questions. Numerous statistical methods, such as Karl Pearson's Correlation, the Chi-Square test, and the One-Way ANOVA test, have been used to analyse the obtained data. Several new discoveries obtained from this research have contributed to the development of a few proposals for the enhancement of Covid's welfare measure operations throughout the pandemic period.

KEYWORDS: *Post Covid, Welfare Measures, Software Industry, Employee Welfare*

INTRODUCTION

The World Health Organisation (WHO) proclaimed COVID-19 a pandemic in March 2020, and soon after that numerous nations throughout the world announced lockdowns, stringent social segregation, respiratory hygiene, and handwashing regimens to stop the disease's rapid and widespread spread.

While many businesses that provided vital services still required daily travel to their locations, most other businesses allowed all workers to work remotely. As a result, a wide range of professionals—from those in the IT industry to writers and filmmakers—moved from set workstations to the comfort of their own homes.

The offices that can still run well without the actual presence of their personnel after nine months make the decision to do so. It was inevitable that such a significant and protracted change would have a significant effect on all the involved professions worldwide.

Some of the significant health problems brought on by working from home are highlighted in recent research that was published in the Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine.

An analysis of home-based employment Researchers at the University of South California undertook a study to better understand how social, behavioural, and physical aspects affected office workers' wellbeing during the early COVID-19 work from home (WFH) phase. A questionnaire developed by the researchers was used between April and June 2020.

After that, they used techniques including chi-square testing, multinomial logistic regression, and linear regression to identify the variables that were linked to the participants' general state of physical and mental wellbeing. The same methods were also employed to find the physical and mental health conditions that were novel and had only surfaced during this WFH period.

Anything done for an employee's comfort and betterment that is supplied in addition to their pay is referred to as welfare.

In order to keep employees on board for a longer period of time, welfare assists to maintain their motivation and morale. The Covid welfare initiatives don't have to be merely financial; they can take any shape or form. Covid welfare comprises keeping an eye on working circumstances, fostering industrial harmony through the development of a health infrastructure, industrial relations, and insurance for employees' and their families' health, accident, and unemployment protection.

The term "labour welfare" refers to all of an employer's efforts to offer their staff additional benefits and services in addition to pay and benefits.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The following objective have been framed to understand the Covid welfare measures undertaken among the IT Employees. The major objective is:

To study the effectiveness of Covid welfare measures undertaken by the software companies during pandemic time.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study's research methodology is descriptive. Data are gathered directly from those who are directly involved in the topic under discussion.

The primary and secondary data are used in the research. 100 workers from various IT organisations in Chennai were surveyed to get the primary data.

Convenience sampling with non-probability sampling is the sample strategy used for the investigation. The respondents were chosen for this study because of their accessibility and closeness to the researcher.

The data was analysed and interpreted using a variety of analytical techniques, including Regression Analysis & Confirmatory Factor Analysis.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Sunshine Alcantara, John Paul Flaminiano March 10, 2022 The study found that wfh arrangements during the COVID-19 pandemic has reshaped the social relations of individuals and reorganized human resource management under the so-called "next normal." Results from this research reveal the challenges and merits of teleworking to employees and discuss policy options that strengthen workforce protection to support increased productivity, work-life balance, and mental well-being.

Aleksandra Webb, Ronald McQuaid, Sigrid Rand, 12 November 2020, this study found that there are reasonable short-term and long-term inference of the pandemic for non-formal employment and

the non-formal economy. This occurs against the unresolved tensions arising from informal workers' need for more job security and employers' striving for continued work flexibility while transferring costs to government and workers. The COVID-19 pandemic might change current trends and implement new solutions to better protect basic work security while helping organisations to remain competitive. Government laws supporting job safety, income security and fairness for informal employees are particularly important.

Shima Amini, Sofia Johan and Abdulkadir Mohamed, November 6, 2022 found that business firms remain listed longer when employee welfare is good, and companies are located in a better social capital region. They also found that labour welfare positively appreciates the impact of social capital on the extending likelihood of remaining quoted. Their results are good to endogeneity, impacts of financial crises and COVID-19, and various model specifications.

Salman Nasution, Siti Mujiatun, Mutiah Khaira, 2022, These researchers found that income had a positive but not significant effect on labour welfare. Health services had a positive effect on welfare, while social services had a positive as well as significant effect on income. This research proved that the leadership of UMSU was very interested to maintain the economy and labour immunity during the Covid 19 period.

Ramamoorthy, Thooyamani, et al. (2017), in his study on effectiveness of welfare measures and employee morale in TV Sundar amiyengar & sons Ltd, Madurai, found the worker satisfaction about the facilities provided by the firm and to assess the impact of welfare measures on employee morale.

Arul Edison Anthony Raj & Sheeba Julius May 28, 2017, these researchers found that the employee welfare measure especially health insurance, housing facility, hygienic toilet facility, transport facility, rest and lunch room facility, compensation on death and recreational facilities creates a positive impact on worker's commitment, while the other factors create a negative approach on employee's commitment.

Balaji (2013) found the influence of rewards & welfare on job satisfaction & productivity of both public & private sector employees in measure Industrial cities of Tamil Nādu. The working nature was fair in terms of office accommodation & furniture, working material, health & safety facilities but on the other side he recommended salary increment, allowances, bonus, fringe benefit and compensation on regular and specific time to keep their moral high & make them productive.

Bhagat (2012) found that cleanliness is the huge issue in Nashik MIDC. She said that cleanliness should be better, clean & sufficient latrines & urinals at the work place to improve indirect motivation to workers.

Bhati p. (2013) found in her research work that the various provisions provided to the employees under factories Act 1948 are shows positive relation with the worker's satisfaction. Company should know the need of employees in term of various non-financial motivational tools.

Hangarki (2014) found the relationship between worker's satisfaction level & welfare measures in chosen national bank in Hyderabad Karnataka region. It is clear that welfare aided employment by bank are not equally satisfactory to all workers. Most of the workers are not satisfied with the clarity and transparency in communication, training & development, lunch rooms & rest rooms, health check-up camp etc. He suggested some measures but separate lunch room & rest rooms are most significant in those amenities because workers are very inconvenient to have their lunch in front of the customer.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTEPRETATION

REGRESSION:

Regression is a method which explains the relationship between the dependent variable and independent variable.

The study tries to understand the relationship between the experience and Activities undertaken to improve the covid welfare measure, Y - Experience

- a. X₁ - My HR manager contacted frequently to ensure if there is any stress during work
- b. X₂ - My company organized stress buster events (online sessions) to break from daily work tasks
- c. X₃ - My company added extra leisure time to reduce stress in employees and spend more time with family
- d. X₄ - My company changed the delivery model to accommodate more time for employees to work leniently

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.439 ^a	.193	.159	.684

Anova

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	10.598	4	2.650	5.670	.000 ^b
	Residual	44.392	95	.467		
	Total	54.990	99			

a. Dependent Variable: Experience

Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.873	.148		26.097	.000
	(17) My HR manager contacted frequently to ensure if there is any stress during work.	-.573	.180	-.672	-3.184	.002
	(18) My company organized stress buster events (online sessions) to break from daily work tasks.	.356	.178	.463	1.997	.049

(19) My company added extra leisure time to reduce stress in employees and spend more time with family.	-0.381	.170	-0.614	-2.232	.028
(20) My company changed the delivery model to accommodate more time for employees to work leniently.	.352	.157	.567	2.240	.027

a. Dependent Variable: Experience

The following results have been obtained:

a. X_1 being HR manager contacted frequently to ensure if there is any stress during work is negative, implying HR managers non-responsiveness or indifference towards reducing the stress among the employees.

b. X_2 being company organized stress buster events (online sessions) is positive, implying companies' responsiveness towards reducing the stress among the employees by organizing various welfare activities.

c. X_3 being company added extra leisure time to reduce stress in employees and spend more time with family work is negative, implying companies' non-responsiveness or indifference towards reducing the stress among the employees.

d. X_4 being company changed the delivery model to accommodate more time for employees to work leniently is positive, implying companies' responsiveness towards the comfortability of employees.

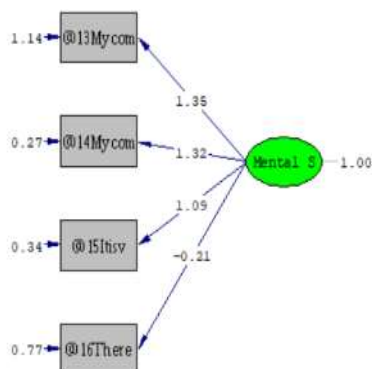
Significance value < 0.05 , hence, the model is fit. $Y = (-0.573) X_1 + 0.356 X_2 + (-0.381) X_3 + 0.352 X_4$

CONFIRMATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS

Confirmatory Factor Analysis has been done to test the relationship between the observed variables and the underlying construct. It has been done to understand the researcher's knowledge of theory, empirical research or both, postulating the relationship between the priori and the tests.

1. CFA has been conducted to understand the link between the theory and the tests for the following items and thus, attempting to prove that the following measures have an impact on stress management.

1.	My company followed the same working hours while WFH
2.	My company changed the work hours to accommodate more tasks.
3.	There is a clear change in work style/nature during WFH
4.	It is very stressful due to the new work culture



Chi-square = 9.49, Df =2, P- value = 0.00870, RMSEA =0.059, CFI = 0.97

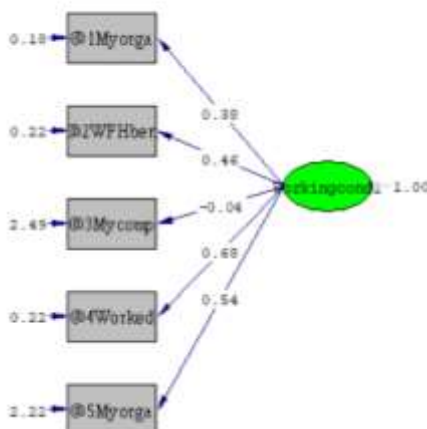
The RMSEA ranges from 0.5 to 0.8, with smaller values demonstrating better model fit. The value above shows that the model is fit.

The GFI and AGFI range between 0 and 1, with a value of over .9 generally indicating acceptable model fit. The SEM shows the value to be 0.97 for GFI and 0.84 for AGFI.

Values for both the NFI and NNFI should range between 0 and 1, with a cut off of .95 or greater indicating a good model fit. The model shows the value to be 0.96 for NFI and 0.91 for NNFI.

2. CFA has been conducted to understand the link between the theory and the tests for the following items and thus, attempting to prove that the following measures have enhanced the working conditions.

1	My organization provided facilities for setting up the home workspace during the pandemic time
2	WFH benefits were provided through monetary reimbursements.
3	My company provided many healthcare benefits
4	Worked more hours than usual during WFH
5	My organization-initiated programs to address the stress faced by you



Chi-square =8.32, Df =5, P- value =0.13940, RMSEA =0.067, CFI = 0.98

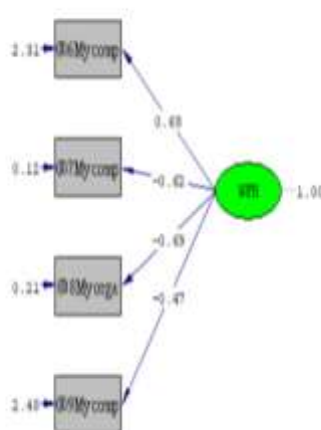
The RMSEA ranges from 0.5 to 0.8, with smaller values indicating better model fit. The value above shows that the model is fit.

The GFI and AGFI range between 0 and 1, with a value of over .9 generally demonstrating acceptable model fit. The SEM shows the value to be 0.98 for GFI and 0.93 for AGFI.

Values for both the NFI and NNFI should range between 0 and 1, with a cut off of .95 or greater indicating a good model fit. The model shows the value to be 0.95 for NFI and 0.95 for NNFI.

3. CFA has been conducted to understand the link between the theory and the tests for the following items and thus, attempting to prove that the following measures have enhanced the WFH facilities.

1.	My company provides a WFH facility even before COVID started.
2.	My company started the WFH facility after COVID
3.	My organization provided facilities for setting up the home workspace during the pandemic time
4.	My company provided extra allowances for WFH



Chi-square =13.50, Df =2, P- value =0.00117, RMSEA =0.097, CFI = 0.91

The RMSEA ranges from 0.5 to 0.8, with smaller values indicating better model fit. The value above shows that the model is fit.

The GFI and AGFI range between 0 and 1, with a value of over .9 generally indicating acceptable model fit. The SEM shows the value to be 0.96 for GFI and 0.78 for AGFI.

Values for both the NFI and NNFI should range between 0 and 1, with a cut off of .95 or greater indicating a good model fit. The model shows the value to be 0.90 for NFI and 0.74 for NNFI.

CONCLUSION

Before COVID-19 broke out, several businesses and organizations were already using WFH, giving their employees flexibility. Businesses have started planning ways to make life easier for their employees during this epidemic. Early on, the goal was to make working from home more convenient, but as the months passed, the attention moved to COVID's psychological and physical effects, as employees and their loved ones struggled to cope with it in the midst of the nation's failing healthcare system.

Many MNC employees were quite concerned that the likelihood of needing to take time off work at different times to care for themselves or their extended family might exhaust their leave or perhaps

result in unpaid days. Companies have developed strategies for supporting COVID-positive personnel during periods like these, as many of them are frequently placed in home isolation. These can include assistance plans that include medical treatment, consulting services, and other qualified aid.

This study was conducted to evaluate the efficacy of Covid welfare initiatives implemented by the software businesses during the pandemic. Responses from workers of several Chennai-based organizations have been gathered and analyzed for this purpose. A few worthwhile recommendations have been made for the enhancement of the Covid welfare measure actions throughout the pandemic period based on the research's findings.

References:

- Alcantara, S., & Flaminiano, J. P. (2022). Gender, Telework, and Worker Welfare during the COVID-19 Pandemic. *AIM RSN PCC Discussion Paper, 1*.
- Amini, S., Johan, S., Pour, E. K., & Mohamed, A. (2022). Employee welfare, social capital, and IPO firm survival. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 10422587221120821.
- Bhati, P. P., & Ashokkumar, M. (2013). Provision of welfare under factories act & its impact on employee satisfaction. *Journal of Business Management & Social Science Research*, 2(2), 57-69.
- Bhagat, S., & Patil, G. B. (2012). EMPLOYEE WELFARE MEASURES IN MEDIUM SCALE INDUSTRY: A STUDY WITH REFERENCE TO STATUTORY WELFARE MEASURES IN NASHIK MIDC.
- DeWayne P. Frazier, 2009, *Job Satisfaction of International Educators*, Volume-xxii, Boca Raton Publishers, Florida (USA), pp-2.
- Edison Anthony Raj, A., & Julius, S. (2017). Analysis of Labour Welfare Measures and its Impact on Employee's Commitment. *International Journal of Advanced Scientific Research & Development (IJASRD)*, 4(05).
- Hangarki, S. B. (2014). Welfare Amenities and Social Security Measures in Nationalized Banks of Hyderabad Karnataka Region. *Asian Journal of Management*, 5(3), 359-361.
- Nasution, S., Mujjatun, S., & Khaira, M. (2022). The Influence of Income, Health Services and Social Services on Employee Welfare at Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara in the Covid-19 Pandemic Situation. *At-tijarah: Jurnal Ilmu Manajemen dan Bisnis Islam*, 8(1), 115-126.
- Nilufar Ahsan, Zaini Abdullah, David Yong Gun Fie, Syed Shah Alam, *European Journal of Social Sciences*, Malaysia.
- Webb, A., McQuaid, R., & Rand, S. (2020). Employment in the informal economy: implications of the COVID-19 pandemic. *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, 40(9/10), 1005-1019.