

## **A STUDY ON WORKPLACE ADJUSTMENTS DURING COVID-19 WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SOCIAL DISTANCING IN INFORMATION SECTOR: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY**

**Ms. Siri R<sup>1</sup>, Mr. Sitaram Vikram Sujir<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Final Year MBA Student, PG Department of Commerce and Management Studies, Brindavan College, Bengaluru

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor, PG Department of Commerce and Management Studies, Brindavan College, Bengaluru

Email: <sup>1</sup>siriramnath@gmail.com, <sup>2</sup>sitaramsujir@gmail.com

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**Abstract**—The objective of this paper is to examine the effects of pandemic Covid-19 on workplaces specially focused on IT (Information Technology) companies located in Bengaluru, India using primary data collected from employees of different companies. Percentage analysis method used to interpret the primary data. The result suggests that the people who have option to work from home do not want to go to offices. The employees want to take companies to take all precautions so that they contain the spread of virus. This includes temperature check, wearing masks, following hand hygiene, using hand sanitizers etc. These findings will contribute to IT companies in making policy to control spread of Corona Virus to avoid people from becoming sick.

**Keywords**—COVID-19, Employer Relationship, Hand Hygiene, Social Distancing, Work from Home.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

The covid-19 is that the most harmful virus that is spreading within the whole world. Social distancing may be non-pharmaceutical infection prevention and control intervention implemented to avoid contact between those that are infected with a disease-causing pathogen and people who aren't, so on stop or hamper the speed and extent of disease transmission during a community. This evaluates results in decrease in spread, morbidity, and mortality thanks to the disease.

On March 12, the World Health Organization declared that the virus is now an epidemic. Because the World Health Organization (WHO) announced that social distancing is compulsory it should be minimum 4 feet. This is often the most change that each information technology sector that ought to adopt. During this situation, every employee is going to be thinking that the way to adjust within the workplace. While governments in some countries have allowed the reopening of offices-albeit with this condition. The social distancing is that the main tool and an efficient measure to regulate the covid-19.

This paper acts as a reference guide or as a source of information. It gives the idea or the knowledge of employees and their works in IT sectors during covid-19 pandemic. The main scope of the study was to put into aspect that how employees are maintaining social distancing in their workplace in IT sectors from the cause of covid-19 pandemic. Due to the current situation, employees should maintain 3-meter distance from each other as per the government rules. But the offices are not designed as per social distancing norms. So, the company should provide all kind facilities for maintaining social distancing or else the company should provide work from home facility to keep safe from not causing virus. And the company should make sure of not cutting their salaries of their employees in this situation and not removing from their jobs. The company should follow all kind of norms or rules and regulations given by the government. And the rules should not be violated such as social distancing, wearing masks in workplace etc. by the employees in IT sectors especially. And everyone should be safe and healthy.

### **AN OVERVIEW OF LITERATURE**

#### **Spanish Flu Symptoms:**

Spanish flu symptoms were the only similar pander which impacted the world 100 years back. The first wave of the 1918 pandemic occurred within the spring and was generally mild. The sick person, who experienced such typical flu symptoms

as chills, fever, and fatigue, usually recovered after several days, and therefore the number of deaths was low. However, a second highly contagious wave of influenza appeared with a vengeance within the fall of that very same year. Victims died within hours or days of developing symptoms, their skin turning blue and their lungs filling with fluid that caused them to suffocate. In only one year, 1918, the typical anticipation in America plummeted by a dozen years.

In November 1918, the FT noted that the Palladium theatre was handling the Spanish flu outbreak “very thoroughly — not only is ozone ventilation installed . . . but a sprig of the strongest germ killer is employed everywhere the theatre between each performance. The public seems to possess grasped this fact, for business has been excellent during the past week.” Today, the new Bond film has been delayed concerts are cancelled footballers play to empty stadiums. Some investors think the public will stay home, watch Netflix and stick with stationary cycling on their Peloton bikes. But this ignores attribute. Albeit the virus lingers, it will not keep us enclosed forever.

#### **Article by Monster:**

From the article by monster, this article says how companies are responding to covid-19, he mentioned that how the companies are balancing the employees’ health and safety and he mentioned that elders should avoid traveling.

#### **NEED FOR THE STUDY**

The current situation of COVID-19 requires all to maintain 3 meters distance from each other as given by WHO guidelines. But the challenge is to maintain them in office space, meetings, and other professional engagement. Because the offices are not designed as per the Social distancing norm. We also need to understand employees will behave after social distancing norm.

#### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- To anticipate the impact of covid-19 in the workplaces where social distancing is an essential requirement
- To know the how the people will work in large companies with high head count after the lockdown.
- To understand the employee and employer relationship before and after the lockdown.

#### **SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

This project act as a reference guide or as a source of information. It gives the idea or the knowledge of employees and their works in IT sectors during covid-19 pandemic. The main scope of the study was to put into aspect that how employees are maintaining social distancing in their workplace in IT sectors from the cause of covid-19 pandemic. Due to the current situation, employees should maintain 3-meter distance from each other as per the government rules. But the offices are not designed as per social distancing norms. So, the company should provide all kind facilities for maintaining social distancing or else the company should provide work from home facility to keep safe from not causing virus. And the company should make sure of not cutting their salaries of their employees in this situation and not removing from their jobs. The company should follow all kind of norms or rules and regulations given by the government. And the rules should not be violated such as social distancing, wearing masks in workplace etc. by the employees in IT sectors especially. And everyone should be safe and healthy.

#### **Sampling:**

It is the type of selecting a sample of respondents out of the available samples for the research, as there are various sampling designs available for the research, for this project I have chosen simple stratified random design for the selection of respondents from the available samples.

A sample is a representative part of the population working in IT industry. A sample of 106 respondents total will be randomly selected. The responses to various elements under each question were totalled for the purpose of various statistical testing.

#### **Tools for data collection:**

Data collection is gathering & evaluating data in an orderly manner to obtain perspectives that help you answer questions. Data collection tools from the root of various projects and market research works to gather data and extract insights validation purposes. The data collection tool employed varies significantly on the objective of data collection. There are multiple techniques for collecting data and each one comes with a set of merits and demerits.

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- Surveys.
- Interviews.

**Plan of Analysis:**

The analysis plan contains a description of the research question and what are the various steps in the analysis are going to be. The analysis plan is intended as a starting point for the analysis. It ensures that the analysis can be undertaken in a targeted manner. Tools used for data analysis and interpretation Statistical tools –statistical is imposing form of mathematics, it is the aggregate of facts affected to a marked extent by numerically expressed. Estimated according to reasonable standards accuracy collected in a systemic manner. These data are used to find out the potential impact of the company.

**DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

The data on social distancing in workplaces was collected from IT professionals. Data relating to various aspects of COVID-19 was collected through questionnaire. A sample of 106 participants was collected from primary respondents. The questionnaire was converted into Google forms and this link was shared among different professionals working in IT industry in Bengaluru, India.

The link created and data collected was downloaded in excel sheet and then percentage method was used for analysis. Sampling is the type of selecting a sample of respondents out of the available samples for the research, as there are various sampling designs available for the research, for this project I have chosen simple stratified random design for the selection of respondents from the available samples.

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**EMPIRICAL RESULTS**

**TABLE 1: AGE**

<i>Age</i>	<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
18-25	89	83.8%
25-35	8	7.6%
35-45	6	6%
Above 45	3	3%

**Interpretation:** In the above bar graph there are total 106 responses. The 18-25 years employees are 89 members, 25-35 years employees are 8 members, 35-45 years employees are 6 members and above 45 years are 3 members.

**TABLE 2: HOW COMFORTABLE DO YOU FEEL RETURNING TO WORK IN THE OFFICE?**

<i>Field</i>	<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Very Comfortable	30	28.6%
Somewhat Comfortable	35	33.3%
Neither Comfortable nor uncomfortable	25	22.9%
Somewhat uncomfortable	13	12.4%
Very uncomfortable	3	2.9%

**Interpretation:** The total responses are 106, in the result or in the above bar graph the very comfortable to go back to the job are 30 members or employees, 35 employees are somewhat comfortable to go back to the work, 25 employees are nether comfortable nor uncomfortable I think these people are confused to weather go to job or not, 13 employees are somewhat uncomfortable to go job, 3 employees not very uncomfortable to go to job.

**TABLE 3: WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING WILL MAKE YOU FEEL COMFORTABLE RETURNING TO WORK IN THE OFFICE?**

<i>Field</i>	<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Installing partitions on desk	6	71.7%
Staggering lunch times	7	6.6%
Wearing masks in the office	12	12.3%
Hand sanitizes stations	2	1.4%
Temperature checks near the office gate	4	3.8%
All the above	75	71.4%

**Interpretation:** The total responses are 106, in the bar graph, the 6 employees think that installing partitions on desk make them more comfortable, the 7 employees think that staggering lunch times is comfortable, wearing mask in the office is comfortable to 12 employees out of the 106, but it impossible to wear a mask by 7-8 hours in the office, only 2 employees think that hand sanitizes is comfortable, 4 members or employees think that temperature checks near the office gate is comfortable, 75 employees think that doing all these things make them more comfortable, here most of the people are more conscious about their health.

**TABLE 4: DO YOU FOLLOW HAND HYGIENE PRACTICES?**

<i>Field</i>	<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Yes always	79	74.3%
Frequently	23	21.9%
Not very well	4	3.8%

**Interpretation:** In 106 responses, the 79 employees are following hand hygiene practices like washing hands frequently or using sanitizes, 23 employees are following hand hygiene frequently, these people are somehow neglecting the hygiene practices, 4 employees are following hand hygiene not very well these 4 people are neglecting the hygiene practices.

**TABLE 5: ARE YOU AFRAID TO GO TO WORK BECAUSE OF COVID-19?**

<i>Field</i>	<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Yes	89	84%
No	17	16%

**Interpretation:** Because of the covid-19 many of the companies declared the lockdown, the companies provide work from home as the government declared 30 percent of the employees can work in the company, 89 employees are afraid to go to work, 17 employees are not afraid to go to work.

**TABLE 6: WHAT PRECAUTIONS SHOULD BE TAKEN AT WORK TO STOP SPREAD OF INFECTION?**

<i>Field</i>	<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Social Distancing	12	11.3%
Proper Hand Wash	2	2%
Sanitizing the Working area	3	2.7%
All the above	89	84%

**Interpretation:** The WHO gave all the above solutions to avoid covid-19 virus, 12 employees think that social distancing is the only precaution to avoid or stop spreading infection, 2 of them think that proper hand wash stop spreading virus, 3 of them are thinking that only sanitizing the working area to stop spreading virus, 89 employees told that all the 3 precautions should be followed.

**TABLE 7: DO YOU HAVE AN OPTION OF WORKING FROM HOME?**

<i>Field</i>	<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Yes	85	79.2%
No	21	20.8%

**Interpretation:** So many IT companies announced to their employees to work in their home, so 106 are the total responses and 85 employees have an option of work in for home, 21 employees cannot work from home because of the company or the network issues.

**TABLE 8: HAS YOUR ORGANIZATION TAKEN PRECAUTIONS TO STOP SPREADING THE VIRUS?**

<i>Field</i>	<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Yes	102	96.2%
No	4	3.8%

**Interpretation:** In the total 106 responses, 102 employees told that in their organization their higher authority have taken the precautions to avoid the virus, 4 employees told that in their organization have not taken the precaution to avoid the covid-19. Most of the companies are taken the precautions.

**TABLE 9: HAS THE HR SHARED ABOUT IMPACT OF BREAKING ANY RULES DESIGNED FOR CONTROLLING THE SPREAD OF VIRUS?**

<i>Field</i>	<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Yes, with complete knowledge	98	92.4%
No, information has been given	8	7.6%

**Interpretation:** If the company is working with the help of the 30% of the employees, it's the responsibility of head of the department or the HR to share about impact of breaking any rules designed for the spread of virus, in the 106 employees, 98 employees got the instruction that how to follow the rules, and remaining 8 employees dint get any of the response from the HR.

## **FINDINGS**

This paper examined the effects of COVID-19 on workplace adjustments controlling spread of pandemic continuously. We know how the employees prefer to finish the work from home that was given. Employees given a choice would like to stay home and work. In every company, they are taking precautions to avoid covid-19 like maintain social distancing, checking temperature in the gate while entering to the company, sanitizing the workplace. In every company the HR has taken the responsibility to explain about the government rules to the employees. All companies are trying best to create a safe and hygienic place of work. From this study we got to know that the companies are allowing only 30% of the employees or the staff. In the company everyone or every employee were wearing the mask while working.

## **SUGGESTIONS**

As I mentioned about ministry of manpower (MOM) in Singapore has not allowed 3 companies to run the company because they allowed 200 companies to start or to open the company with the some rules and regulation that every company should follow but these 3 companies didn't follow the rules that had kept by the government so they were not allowed to open the company. So ever should maintain the rules that had kept by the government.

I think the government should had not given the permission to the small information technology sector company because in single building there will be more than six companies so if they had given the permission means there are more chances of spreading the virus, because they can't maintain the social distancing because there will be single parking to all of them and there will be only two to three left so that they can't maintain the social distancing.

Every employee should take care of them self and company should be the responsible for the health and safety of the employee. And every company should sanitize the work place every day and should provide some safety precautions to employees. Before entering to the company, the HR should collect all the employee's health report or covid-19 test report.

On March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020 the covid-19 cases were only 30 and now 226770 cases if we maintained the proper social distance it would not been increased to this level.

## **CONCLUSION**

According to paper the cases of covid-19 are going to increase more in future so it's better to maintain the social distancing, sanitizing the workplace and checking the employee temperature. The government had given the permission to company to start the operations again but only with the help of 30% employees. On 30<sup>th</sup> of March 2020 the covid-19 cases were only 30 and now it is crossed a huge number if we do not maintain the social distance and take precautionary measure it will be increasing more in future. From this lockdown every citizen is suffering but in the IT sector the employees are facing different issues like extra work, termination with severance pay.

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