

## **Rethinking Human Resource Management in the Post-Covid Era**

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**Abstract:** *“The New Era of HR”, aims to assess the changes Covid-19 brought about at the HRM level, especially as organizations begin to opt for remote-work. While it focuses on understanding the impact of Covid-19 on HRM Processes, it also offers a projection as to how such changes will continue to impact and alter HR processes in the post-Covid period. The research pivots on three axes. These include Employee Retention, Performance Management, and Human Resource Development. The study uses primary and secondary data, capturing both employee and organizational perspective on the topic. This ensures reliability, validity, and objectivity. Analysis is carried out using Herzberg’s Theory of Motivation, Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, and a survey targeting 200 employees designed to understand employees’ perspective. For primary data-collection, the above-mentioned survey, allows for an understanding of the changes employees perceive at the levels of employee retention, performance management, and development. Findings show that Human Resource Management strategies have not been adapted to new working styles and needs, especially at the level of the three axes. This research therefore allows for two important interconnected outcomes. First, it highlights obstacles faced while trying to address the mis-alignment between new needs and previously implemented processes and strategies no longer fitting the new status-quo. Finally, it offers grounds for drafting recommendations that help organizations overcome/minimize obstacles created by the pandemic, eventually leading to the creation of revised successful strategies that can remedy mis-alignments between expected outcomes and actual outcomes.*

**Keywords:** *Post-Covid, Human Resource Management, Human Resource Development*

### **1. Introduction**

As the new epidemic started to invade the world at the end of 2019, little did people know the level of impact it would cause. COVID-19, stemming from Wuhan in China, seemed far away from the rest of the world and impossible to spread. However, by the beginning of 2020, the reality of the situation started to appear. China, a country that is known for its 24/7 business clock was totally shut down. Streets all over the country were empty, and businesses as well as organizations found themselves obliged to think of other alternatives to keep the economy going. What was thought would be a simple passing-by flu was here to stay, which rendered organizations’ primary strategy of pressing pause on business processes not possible for the long-run.

Eventually, as the pandemic continued to spread from China all around the world, organizations started opting for remote-work, or work-from-home. Considering that the business world had already been ensuring for years to integrate AI and innovative technology into their workplace, virtual platforms were already in place and ready to use once the pandemic proved that it was here to stay.

Some surveys have even shown that once this new working environment had been incorporated, employees started preferring it over the traditional work-environment because it gave them more time away from the office and flexibility (Baert et al., 2020). However, what organizations have failed to take into consideration was the rapidity of the change and the impact this sudden change and workstyle change would have on all their previously implemented processes and strategies, especially at the level of Human Resource Management.

A study conducted has shown that the majority of employees strongly believe that remote-work was now here to stay (Baert et al., 2020), but the issue lies in the fact that Human Resource Management strategies have not been adapted to the new working style, especially at the Employee Retention, Human Resource Development, and Performance Management level. Other than the latter, this sudden shift in workplace dynamics, which has left organizations obliged to opt for the work-from-home concept, leaves employees overwhelmed with the shrinking boundaries between their work and personal life (Bhumika, 2020). In the pre-Covid period, even though boundaries between work and personal life were already starting to partially slim down, the Covid period has caused these boundaries to disappear in the case of most employees, directly impacting the performance of employees along with many HR Processes (Benito-Osorio, Munoz-Aguado & Villar, 2014). It is important to mention that boundaries between one role and another can sometimes be crossed, especially when one role is directly related to the other (Guest, 2002, p 259). Some roles are interrelated, making their boundaries thinner, while other roles are not, therefore having a negative impact on one of the two roles (Guest, 2002, p 259).

This research therefore aims to conduct an assessment of the impact this shattering of boundaries within the Work-life balance has had on the lives of employees and HR processes as well (Benito-Osorio, Munoz-Aguado & Villar, 2014).

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Work-life Balance Concept**

According to Karakose, Kocabas, & Yesilyurt (2014), the concept of work-life balance can be seen from many perspectives and can therefore be explained in different ways depending on the perspective. The concept, explained by these authors, is not limited only to the two components of work and family. The authors go on to explain that work-life balance is more about creating a balance between the roles related to a job, family, personal life, while maintaining and accomplishing the demands presented by each of the roles to the extent that will make the individual feel satisfied and happy. Therefore, the authors Karakose, Kocabas, & Yesilyurt present work-life balance from a more holistic perspective rather than a more focused perspective (Karakose, Kocabas, & Yesilyurt, 2014). The authors also mention that it is vital to ensure the existence of the individual's control, flexibility, sociability and individuality when it comes to work-life balance.

### **2.2 Life-Span Life-Space Theory**

The Life-Span Life-Space Theory, created by Donald Super, demonstrates how personal roles and professional roles intertwine with each other throughout a person's life-time. The Theory divides a person's lifetime into life-space & life-span (Stankiewicz, et al., 2014). The Life-space, includes six main roles that we as human beings assume throughout certain periods of time in our lives. It is important to mention that many more roles can be added to a person's life-space depending on the person (Stankiewicz, et al., 2014). The life-span is how long each role lasts in the person's life. While some

roles start and end before another role begins, other roles intertwine with each other, forcing a person to assume more than one role in his/her life.

Due to the many changes that occur in a person's life and the many roles a person assumes and undertakes throughout his/her life-span as a human being, work-life balance has become an important factor that leads to reduced tension and stress in a person's life. Overall, work-life balance concept revolves around trying to find a balance between the personal roles and the professional roles an individual undertakes throughout his/her life-time (Benito-Osorio, Munoz-Aguado & Villar, 2014). As mentioned before, people, throughout their life-times, grow into many different roles, some of which are obligatory while others are chosen intentionally by the individual him/herself. All human beings are born into the roles of children, but not all human beings experience the role of a mother. The purpose of this differentiation is to explain that while some people only have two roles to deal with, for instance, other people may have three to four roles to deal with at once. Now, the concept of work-life balance has become more significant, due to the sudden change CoViD-19 has caused in both the personal and professional life of most people, and the life span life space theory helps us understand just how much more there is to ensuring that balance remains, especially with the so many roles a person can be experiencing in his life.

### **2.3 Border Theory**

The border theory, according to Konig & Caner, revolves around maintaining the line between work and non-work (Konig & Caner, 2014). Clark supports this by explaining that the border theory mainly revolves around the maintenance of the balance between work and family borders (Clark, 2000 & Glaveli, 2015). The authors explain that this line can be blurred or even crossed sometimes due to certain events that tend to happen in one domain or human role but affect the other role. While the crossing of these borders may lead to negative impacts on work-life balance, it is not always the case. Sometimes, the blurring of boundaries between one role and another can enrich and stimulate the experience. This is only so when the roles of which these borders have been crossed are interrelated or support one another.

### **3. Employees' Perspective of Work-life Balance**

Karakose, Kocabas, & Yesilyurt also take into consideration the employees' perspective of work-life balance. The latter's definition revolves mostly around the balance of responsibilities between work-life and personal life (Karakose, Kocabas & Yesilyurt, 2014).

#### **3.1 The Balance in Work-life Balance & the Role of HR/Organization**

Many studies, according to Karakose, Kocabas & Yesilyurt (2014), have proven that good work-life balance has a direct positive correlation with success, happiness and productivity. This explains why it is important for organizations to support employees and offer them a culture that encourages the achievement of such a balance. By bringing up this point, the authors have also brought forward another interesting and important fact about work-life balance, which is that this balance cannot be achieved unless both the Organization (HR) and the employees both work towards this goal. The authors also define the balance aspect within the work-life balance concept as *equilibrium*. They explain that equilibrium can only be achieved when the expectations and demands related to either one of the three components (work, family, individual) do not force the person to give up part, or all of the time required for the other components.

### **3.2 Necessary Conditions to Maintaining Work-life Balance**

Time is thought to be an important and pivotal factor of the nature of the outcome of work-life balance (Karakose, Kocabas & Yesilyurt, 2014). This is so because each of the three components require a certain amount of time to meet its demands and requirements. Stankiewicz., Bortnowska and Łychmus (2014) also support Karakose and authors' claims. This also means that each of the three components don't necessarily have an equal allotted amount of time. Quite the contrary, Karakose and authors explain that each component of the Work-life Balance has a different time-requirement than the other (Karakose, Kocabas & Yesilyurt, 2014). On the other hand, according to Lambert, Kass, Piotrowski & Vodonovich, the border theory plays a major role in maintaining a successful and happy work-life balance. The border theory mainly revolves around the maintenance of the balance between work and family borders (Clark, 2000 & Glaveli, 2015). So this theory explains that boundaries/borders can be blended only when permeability and flexibility exists between the two roles (Lambert, Kass, Piotrowski & Vodonovich, 2006).

## **4. Research Design and Methodology**

The method that should be used for each research differs from one type of research to another. Yin explains that the method of choice depends mostly on the type of research question. Furthermore, Yin mentions that when a research question is exploratory, concentrates on answering the questions 'Why' or 'How', and requires an in-depth description, then the case study approach will be the best fit. On the other hand, Yin goes on to explain that when the research question is explanatory, revolves around answering the question 'What', then any of the five research methods can be used (Yin, 2003).

### **4.1 Research Questions**

Primary Question: What impact has the change induced by CoViD-19 had on the work-life balance of employees and on HR processes?

Sub-Research Questions:

- What is the difference in work-life balance pre-Covid and during Covid?
- How has the shrinking of boundaries between the roles in an employee's life affected employee performance, engagement, and motivation?
- How has Covid-19 affected HR processes within organizations?

Taking into consideration the drafted primary question above, the research proves to be of the explanatory type. For this research, a mixed method approach will be used, combining between both the Quantitative & Qualitative Research Method. Primary and secondary data will be used to answer the research question. Primary data will be collected using a survey, while secondary data will be gathered using peer-reviewed articles. An assessment of work-life balance prior to and during corona will be done in order to come up with the impact of CoViD-19 on the life of employees. Employees from different organizational levels and units will be surveyed in order to also obtain answers in relation to the impact of CoViD-19 on HR processes.

The use of surveys can be explained by the lack of enough information in relation to the topic online. The CoViD-19 topic is very recent which explains the minimal information available. Therefore, it would be necessary to create my own database of information using these interviews. Other than the surveys, secondary resources will be used to support the results of the interviews, therefore ensuring the reliability and validity components of the research.

## 4.2 Sampling and Survey Analysis Procedure

To analyze the Data, the theoretical concepts discussed in the literature review were used. The survey was divided into analyzing the two components in the work-life balance theory in a remote-work setting and targeted mainly employees who have worked from home during the pandemic. The first component being work, was analyzed using HR processes which are measurable, such as shift in performance, training/development, and recruitment. The purpose was to understand what changes have occurred related to work. The second component of work-life balance, which is the personal life aspect, was measured using family time, stress, leisure activities, etc.

To analyze the Data, and furthermore understand the results of the survey, the theoretical concepts discussed in the literature review, which include boundary theory and Life-Span Life Space Theory were used.

## 5. Results and findings

### 5.1 Primary Data

The survey conducted in order to gather primary data about work-life balance during COVID-19 was answered by almost 200 employees from different parts of the world, each giving a perspective on their own experience with work-life balance. Of these 200 people, it was surprising to see that the majority of the responses were from the female gender. Hinting that this could possibly be a topic that has affected women more than men.

As previously mentioned, taking into consideration the two main components of Work-life Balance, the results of the survey will be divided and analyzed based on them. The two components include the Personal Life Aspect of employees and the Work Aspect.

#### 5.1.1 Personal-life Component

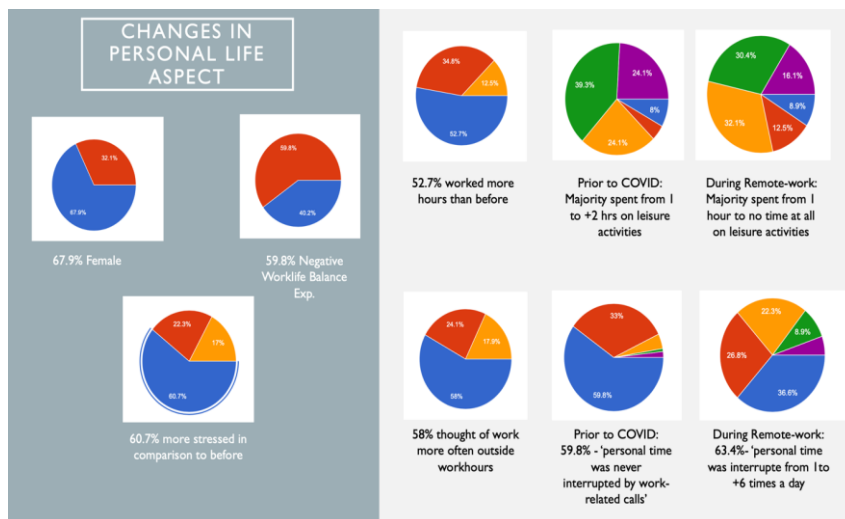


Figure 1: Image showing the survey results retrieved from Presentation of Survey Results

*Work-life Balance experience:* As can be seen in the second Chart, 59.8% have agreed to have a negative work-life balance experience while working-remotely. However, we cannot ignore that a large % of employees, more than expected, have declared to have had a positive experience and have enjoyed working from home. This is an interesting result but can be explained using the Life-Span Life Space Theory. It is possible that the number of roles an employee already has in his/her life can change the nature of experience. (a father who rarely saw his children before, vs a single man who previously used to finish work early and meet his friends but now has to work overtime).

#### *Leisure Activities/Personal Time/ Thinking of Work Outside Work Hours:*

When it comes to Leisure Activities & Personal Time & Thinking of Work Outside Workhours, data analysis has shown that in all three components, boundaries between the personal aspect of the employees' life and the professional aspect have been breached. Statistics have shown that time spent on leisure activities has decreased from +2 hours (prior to remote work) to 1hour or less with remote work. Personal time has also been interrupted more often during remote work. Prior to Covid-19, when employees worked from their offices and had fixed hours, 59.8% of employees agreed that personal time was never interrupted by work related calls. On the other hand, during remote-work, 63.6% of employees have declared that their personal time was interrupted up to 6 times per day by work related matters. Finally, at the psychological level, 58% of employees thought of work outside work hours more often than before. Therefore proving another breach of the boundary theory, which can cause an imbalance in work-life balance.

As previously mentioned, Karakose and authors mention that it is vital to ensure the existence of the individual's control, flexibility, sociability and individuality when it comes to work-life balance (Karakose, Kocabas, & Yesilyurt, 2014), but according to the results we can see that organizations have not ensured the maintenance of any of these criteria when using the remote-work method.

#### **5.1.2 Work Aspect Component**

When analyzing the work aspect of the employees' lives, data has shown a major gap which could have triggered the negative experience employees have had with working from home. This gap can be a source of much frustration and burnout. Majority employees say their roles have changed in terms of expectations, tasks & intensity, however, 45.5% of employees mention that no alterations have been made to fit the new expectations. This gap demonstrates that employees' work has intensified, creating a breach in the boundaries of the work-life balance. To make it worse, organizations have failed to acknowledge these changes, therefore allowing these changes in the professional setting to impact the balance of employees' personal life.

#### **5.2 Secondary Data**

Secondary Data has been collected by referring to peer reviewed articles of the field. While not much research has previously been done on the topic, it is important to consider the available research in order to support the survey results and to better assess existing gaps related to this topic.

#### **5.2.1 Employee Retention**

Prior to talking about the impact the changes brought by COVID-19 have had on Employee Retention, it is important to first understand its impact on employee recruitment, as recruitment and retention are interlinked and dependent on each other. It is very interesting to notice that while COVID-19 technological disruptions have promising outcomes at the recruiting level, the same cannot be said for retention. Primarily, prior to retaining, organizations focus on getting the right talent that would help the organization reach its desired objectives and goals. Many researches, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, had already been discussing the positive additions artificial intelligence (AI) and innovative technologies brought to recruitment processes and outcomes. For instance, Lee (2018) supports this claim by explaining how traditional recruitment methods have more than often resulted in creating mismatches between the candidate's capabilities/competencies and the job provided. Lee also goes on to explain that AI has helped reduce mismatches to 0 in comparison to the 30% when traditional recruitment methods were used. It is clear here, based on Lee, that the shift towards usage of AI which is now a status quo brought about by the pandemic, will have a positive impact on

recruitment if used appropriately, especially taking into consideration that many organizations have already adopted such technologies prior to the pandemic disruption. However, the same cannot be said for employee retention. Strategies to retain employees will experience a big change all together. The environmental change in the workspace/work environment of employees automatically means that the basis on which previous retention strategies were formed and the criteria on which they were based to be marked as successful or not will also change. Kumar & Sandhya (2011) stress upon the fact that successful retention strategies are highly dependent on motivation and the needs of employees. In this case, with the pandemic, both the work environment and the personal environment of employees have shifted during this pandemic, creating a new unstudied territory. This also means that employees' motivation factors and hierarchy of needs will have experienced a slight shift as well. Consequently, priorities have now been shuffled around, therefore rendering organizations' previously assigned Employee Retention Strategies null and unapplicable, considering that they are no longer based on the same employee needs.

### **5.2.2 Herzberg's Theory of Motivation**

To furthermore understand the depth of the issue, the situation will be assessed using Herzberg's two-dimensional paradigm that divides factors affecting people's attitudes about work into two components. These two components include hygiene factors and motivating factors. The first component, hygiene, includes factors such as interpersonal relations, working conditions, and company policy (Gawel, 1997). Now, when taking into consideration that organizations have shifted towards remote-work, which has come as a big and rapid transition from the status quo, it can be realized all hygiene factors have experienced a change. The nature of interpersonal relations are surely undergoing alterations with social distancing, working conditions have changed from in-the-office set timings to flex-time virtual work, and most company policies are no longer applicable considering that they require employees to be within the company. When it comes to motivation factors, Herzberg defines achievement, recognition, responsibility, advancement, and the work itself as strong determinants of employee satisfaction within the job (Gawel, 1997). However, with the shift of work environment caused by COVID-19, these factors that can be focused on to motivate employees have also shuffled around and changed. Therefore, with the change in the nature of the hygiene and motivating factors that were previously used to draft retention strategies, a misalignment would happen, rendering these strategies no longer applicable and successful. To retain employees, the elements of hygiene and motivation need to be put into the remote-work context to understand what has changed in the way employees are motivated and to also understand the new needs and priorities of employees.

### **5.2.3 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs**

When it comes to the needs of employees, the pandemic has also created a situation where certain needs have become more prioritized than others. Such is the case of safety. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs defines psychological needs as the building block of employee satisfaction, however, once again, with the pandemic, safety has become a priority (Gawel, 1997). This shift in priorities of needs is but one example of other needs that have surely experienced a reshuffling due to the change in work context as well as the intertwining of people's roles. Borders and boundaries (Lambert et al., 2006) between one role and another in a person's life have been demolished, considering that personal space (at home) has now been interfered by remote-work, therefore creating a reshuffling in priorities based on the new context. In this case, with the reshuffling of employee's needs, the criteria on which retention strategies were once based are no longer applicable.

#### **5.2.4 Performance Management**

Concerning Performance Management, the shift from workplace and defined work hours to remote-work and flex-time has also created a shift in performance expectations as well as techniques to measure performance, therefore changing the dynamics of Performance Management. To furthermore explain, the results of a study will be used.

Referring back to the primary data results of the conducted survey, the majority (70%) of employees who have participated expressed that their roles have changed when it comes to expectations, their tasks & the work intensity (70%). However, what is surprising and contradictory is that despite this change in expectations, organizations have not yet adjusted & aligned the criteria used to measure performance with the new expectations. The study has proven that organizations have not yet adjusted to the fast pace of the changing environment caused by the pandemic. The statistics from survey results have shown that 45.5% of the employees were still being assessed based on the same criteria and expectations as before and that performance appraisals have been conducted less often. This can be very threatening to the overall perception employees have about the Performance Management process. Clearly, employees are not being assessed on fair terms, rendering the performance management system unreliable. This situation can lead to frustration, burnout, and negative performance. Once again, as was the case with employee retention, performance criteria have undergone a great change, which organizations still fail to take into consideration. The issue of employees being assessed based on outdated job descriptions will not only create burnout and frustration, but will also impact validity of any employee development plans created.

#### **5.2.5 Human Resource Development**

As is known, development plans are highly reliable on the assessment of performance & competency gaps. To design a development plan that is effective and successful, it is crucial that the components the plan focuses on are aligned with the needed criteria necessary to close the existing gaps. This process is usually referred to as a Needs Analysis (Hartel, 2007). Now, with precise and successful performance management, strong and reliable development plans can be devised. However, taking into consideration that performance management is currently being done based on outdated job descriptions and expectations, the development plans drafted will not be successful and will not be targeting the right gaps. The issue here lies in the fact that expected performance has also shifted and changed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the changes it has brought on the work-life of organizations and employees. Expected performance has not only shifted, but it has still not been analyzed properly or fully in order to start using it as a benchmark for assessing performance & competencies to eventually determine the gap. Taking the latter into consideration, creating an HR Development Program will require primarily assessing the impact the pandemic has had on work-life and lifestyle in order to build new parameters and criteria.

Other than the above-described issue, the survey results have also shown that methods used for development have shifted from face-to-face to virtual. With the change of development methods from traditional to AI related methods, organizations now need to focus on primarily mastering the new technologies and secondly utilizing them to their best in order to maximize benefit. The way content is transferred changes depending on the method used (Hoyle, 2017), therefore training and development programs need to be re-visited from the new perspective.



## **6. Implications and Recommendations**

COVID-19 has shuffled around the status quo, leaving the community with a new unstudied and unprecedented work & life environment. The roots of employee retention, human resource development and performance management have been changed therefore requiring organizations to rethink their previous strategies. Most importantly, as previously mentioned, the criteria on which all these strategies are built upon, such as employee's needs and motivation factors, have changed. Previously, the needs and motivating factors differed from person to person, but the common aspect with the majority of employees was that they worked from the office. Therefore, most Strategies were built from that context. The difference now, during COVID-19 and post-COVID is that one of the common contexts on which strategies were built upon has also now changed, forcing organizations to now focus not only on differences in the needs & motivations from employee to employee, but the differences that the shift of work context will create in these already different needs & motivations. The once dependent variable, which was work-from-office has now become an independent variable itself.

Other than the shuffling of the status quo and the organizations' failure to consider the changes brought about with the pandemic, another realization is to what extent strategies during the pandemic period are temporary. The environment is so unsure and unstable to the extent that strategies cannot be devised in a long-term perspective. With the current situation being extremely variable, organizations need to focus more on adopting temporary strategies (Seetharaman, 2020) while keeping in mind that certain temporary strategies can become long-term depending on the extent to which the post-pandemic period will change.

When it comes to the survey, a set of issues can be summarized from the findings. These issues seem to be the root causes of the negative experience of employees with work-life balance during remote-work. Primarily, the shift of work environment from workplace/defined work hours to remote-work/flex-time has caused a great shift in the dynamics of Performance Management. To add to that, expectations and job roles have changed (Wang, B. et al., 2020), but organizations keep assessing their employees' performance based on performance measurement criteria which are irrelevant to the current context. Other than that, taking into consideration that employees are no longer in the same room as their supervisors, behavioral & observational performance measurement criteria no longer become applicable (Banks, 1982). Here, it can be observed that there is a possible shift more towards assessments based on target reach, task completion, and tech savviness. Finally, communication rules, techniques, methods, and platforms have changed from direct communication to virtual communication, creating a whole new set of obstacles (Minh Hao Nguyen et al., 2020). Chidambaram & Jones discuss the benefits that technology brings about to teams and how it supports and creates additional communication opportunities (Chidambaram & Jones, 1993), however, this is only the case when the medium used for this communication session is completely mastered and understood by those using it. This is supported by survey results which have shown that 47.3% of respondents have had a negative experience with communication in relation to their teammates, eventually impacting performance as well. In order to overcome such issues, it is highly recommended to focus mainly on understanding the employee perspective (Lan, 2007), in order to understand the issues they are facing with the new communication mediums.

Due to the lack of employee perspective, organizations seem to ignore the fact that job roles have changed. Performance Management Systems need to be restructured in a way that takes into consideration the changes that have happened at the level of performance expectations (Sudnickas, 2019). Other than that, it is important that organizations conduct an assessment of their employees' various life roles other than their role as an employee (Panisoara & Serban, 2013). By understanding

the different roles their employees maintain, the organization can create a better integrated strategy that ensures the balance between work and personal life is maintained. Lee and Sirgy mention that it is very important for organizations to understand the whole-life perspective of its employees (Lee & Sirgy, 2018). This study will also ensure that the organization adapts to the new changes that have happened when it comes to employee motivation. The pandemic has brought about a new status quo in which priorities have changed for everyone. By focusing on what has changed at the motivational level, organizations can better understand what to focus on in order to maintain that balance that employees require between work and personal life (Conrad et al., 2015).

As previously mentioned, while explaining the work-life balance concept, studies have proven that good work-life balance has a direct positive correlation with success, happiness and productivity (Happy employees have a good work & life balance, 2008). This explains why it is important for organizations to support employees and offer them a culture that encourages the achievement of such a balance.

Unfortunately, based on the findings of the survey conducted analyzing employees' experience with work-life balance during CoViD-19 & remote-work, it shows that organizations have not yet taken the initiative of ensuring a healthy work-life balance. It is true that the status-quo has changed, and that the pandemic has shuffled around the cards (Axelrod, 2020), making the current work environment an unexplored context, however, if organizations wish to get back on track and ensure that they remain competitive in this disrupted new market, they have primarily taken into consideration their employees' insight on the new work environment and ensure that organizational support is offered accordingly (Arora & Suri, 2020).

Finally, the research has shown that the key towards rethinking HRM during the current pandemic is to focus on conducting continuous studies on the shifts and changes that are occurring at both the employees' level and organizational level, in order to find ways to adapt to the fast-changing environment without even more damages. The root-solution is focusing on understanding how the needs, motivation factors, and priorities of employees have changed since these are all pre-requisites of strategic and successful employee retention, human resource development and performance management.

## **7. Limitations**

Primarily, despite the topic's importance and its level of urgency, the fact that it is still a recent one has made finding related information very hard to find. While some scholarly articles indirectly linked to the impact of the pandemic have been found, more specific research relating COVID-19 and work-life balance was very rare. While some research does exist concerning CoViD-19 and the 'remote-work' experience, there is no research linking the concept of work-life balance with CoViD-19.

To add to the above-mentioned limitation, the very few existing research linking COVID-19 and remote work lacks focus on the employees' perspective. Both employee perspective and organization perspective is necessary to create effective and efficient HR Strategies (Alagaraja & Shuck., 2015).

Another limitation this research has encountered is related to the cultural differences and the demographics of the respondents to the survey. The research needs to furthermore be expanded into researching possible trends and differences in respondents' experiences with work-life balance depending on their gender, age, or even origins and culture. Based on the Life-Span/Life-Space Theory, each person can have a different number and type of roles when compared to another. The article on 'Gender and Management' explains that the many roles a woman has to undertake while working may create that differentiating element in work-life balance and work experience, in comparison to a man

(Erbschloe, 2019). Here, we come to understand that given the distinguished differences between, for instance, the set of roles a male undertakes as opposed to the set of roles a woman undertakes in her lifetime (Erbschloe, 2019), the way they have dealt with remote-work and the obstacles they may have faced may vary immensely.

Finally, touching upon the same topic, it is important to mention that while the responses of the survey were answered by both male and female, the majority of the responses came from the female gender. While this seems to not be of much importance at first, upon understanding the dynamics of the Life-Span/Life-Space Theory and the Border Theory, the magnitude of the impact this large demographic difference might have had on the overall results of the survey becomes apparent. Therefore, due to this large unexpected skew of responses towards the female gender, it can be argued that the results found from the survey represent to a large extent the female experience with work-life balance during COVID-19 times. This can also be the reason behind the result of the survey being a majority vote on the negative work-life balance experience during the pandemic. Shockley conducted a study that supports the above discussed and the results of the survey conducted in this research. Shockley found out that women who have experienced remote-work have had the lowest well-being and performance (Shockley et al., 2020).

## 8. Conclusion

To conclude, in order for organizations to survive the pandemic and remain at a competitive advantage, it is crucial that they focus on rapidity and agility in keeping up with the changing environment (Seetharaman, 2020). Organizations need to quickly develop the needed capabilities necessary to survive the pandemic. Most importantly, HRM processes need to be rethought and redesigned based on continuous studies of the changes currently happening. Projecting towards the future, it seems that organizations & workplaces will be relying more on the remote-work method for the post-corona phase (Robuck, 2020). So, in order for organizations to be better prepared for this upcoming phase, future HR Strategies should focus on remedying factors which have triggered the negative employee work-life balance experience. Focus should be shifted towards Strategies that take into consideration employee Work-Life Balance, Boundaries, and the different roles each employee has in his/her life (Lee & Sirgy, 2018). By doing so, the issues highlighted in the findings of the survey can be minimized and even avoided, since they were triggered by the organizations' failure to consider work-life balance, boundaries, and the many roles employees assume in their lives.

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