

The Expanded Role of the Human Resource Department in Workplace Transition due to COVID-19 Post-Pandemic Situation

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Abstract

COVID-19 is a global health crisis that started in Wuhan, China and spread rapidly around the world. Since this pandemic has resulted in restrictions on movement and the temporary closure of workplace premises, organizations made provisions for implementing remote work. The objective of this conceptual study is to investigate, the HR department's expanded role in the workplace transition, concerning within the Sri Lankan context. The conceptualization was made upon, expanding the role of the HR department in the workplace by creating remote working policies to constructing return-to-work plans and implementing new safety protocols within organizations. A comprehensive literature review was used as the method for this study and recently (from 2019 – 2021) published 17 articles in Google Scholar, Emerald insights, Sage journals, and the website of the world health organization were selected after analyzing and organized data to achieve the aforementioned study objective. The study found that previously HR departments focused on a day in life tasks, administering benefits, and drive sustainable competitiveness. However, HR teams are now in support of their company's crisis management efforts. Based on the study it has identified, the HR department's expanded role in four areas of developing mental and physical well-being of employees, improving the efficiency of remote work, developing employee engagement through effective communication, and providing equal access to opportunities and resources. The practical implications contribute to human resource management practices to understanding the expanded role of the HR department in demonstrating employee care by feedback, timely and specific knowledge exchange, and collaborative methods of expression contribute to the positive result during a crisis or associated with workplace transition in the COVID-19 post-pandemic situation.

Keywords: COVID-19 post – pandemic, expanded role of the HR department, remote work, workplace transition