Re-designing Organizational Strategies to enhance Employee Engagement while working from home during the pandemic 'COVID-19'.

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Abstract

The briskly progressing threat from one place to another, the COVID-19 virus, generally stated as coronavirus, is affecting the industry and shareholder across the world. Hit by the Covid-19 slump followed by social distancing and a nationwide lockdown, Organizations are experiencing major impacts no matter how established they are. Many multinational industries have suspended their business operations in affected areas. Required social distancing have been appealed. Travel restrictions and work from home have been invoked. During this contagion, it is of utmost importance for the Organizations to re-look at how they manage and operate their business including re-visiting of their Organizational Strategies for survival. This research was conducted with an objective to analyze whether the re- designing of Organizational strategies will improve employee engagement during a worldwide crisis such as Covid-19. The online structured questionnaire, containing **7** questions related to demographic characteristics of the employees and 26 questions related to redesigning of the Workplace strategies, has been developed. The survey was carried out online and 185 responses were collected from various states of India. The data was analyzed using Microsoft Excel and the outcomes were depicted by using absolute figures and percentages of total participants. Thefindings revealed thatthe re- designing of Workplace strategies bydeveloping robust information technology for promoting healthy work-life balance, transparent communication, open door policy, ensuring financial security and well-being will improve employee engagement and work effectivenessduring COVID- 19 and other pandemic happenings. The research emphasizes the growing importance of information Technology to deal with the volatile environment. The research is unique.

1. Introduction

The global, novel virus, widely known as COVID-19, has traumatized the global inhabitants by its roots. The closest parallel is the widely well-known influenza pandemic, the Spanish flu (1918-1920). COVID-19 was testified and reported in Wuhan, China in December 2019. And in India it was came to noticed on 30th January 2020, in Kerala. While it did not look like it would worsen, but since then, the number of the cases has been rising aggressively. Now, interacting with others and breathing the air in an enclosed space, touching things without taking required precautions, put our life at risk. After a century, such kind of pandemic has caused chaos among the people. It has been taking toll not only on the health grounds but has also been affecting the domestic and international economy exponentially (Lorenz Weimann, 2020). Meanwhile, almost every country across the globe is trying to reduce the spread, by adopting the measures of quarantine and lockdown. To ensure that there's no further spread, the Government of India declared lockdown throughout the country on March 24, 2020. It began with 21 days, followed by 19, 14, and 14 and 8 days respectively, which also included closing of International, state and district borders. It is evident that organizations across the sectors has been badly affected by this pandemic and economic depression though, its impact on service sector vs. manufacturing sector is not very apparent yet. Work from home has become new way of working in most of the organization whereas certain establishments like manufacturing are forced to shut down their business operations completely. Due to trade and travel restrictions, many organizations have been either enforced to lay off their employees or cut their salaries.

In this era of globalization, the business environment poses a serious threat to disintegration of global supply chains and furthermore, resulting in noteworthy loss of revenue and affecting global economies adversely. Moreover, the worldwide economy as a whole has been negatively affected by this virus,

though the governments and the Firms around the world keep a close watch on the situation. Historically speaking, the pandemic is similar to Spanish Flu which occurred a hundred years from now, exploded across the globe (1918-1919), causing several millions deaths in months (Johnson and Mueller, 2002; Peter, 2004). While the 1918 outbreak was fatal, the industries were less vulnerable to epidemic. It is necessary to see differences from then and now, for instance, the flu did not destroy the U.S. economy the way coronavirus caused. The measures, adopted to prevent the spread of the virus today are stricter than the measures taken a hundred years ago (Noah Smith, 2020). But although the data from the era is patchy, the anecdotes in the St. Louis Fed report suggest that retail businesses did suffer immensely, just as now. Fear of the virus, was the biggest driver of lost revenue then as compared to today. The difference was also in the structure of economy. A century ago, less than half of all workers were employed in service industries; now, about 86% are working in the service sector. Neither medium of communication existed in 1918. Manufacturing and agriculture were less vulnerable to the epidemic than retail and other businesses that relied on lots of customer traffic. (Noah Smith, 2020). The impact of the world war first on economy was a related factor too. Therefore, the economy of 2020 is simply much more vulnerable to pandemics than the economy of 1918. These differences persevere due to the potentially increasing scale, severity and duration of epidemic events.

Due to lockdown throughout the country, organizations are struggling with an unprecedented calamity that is basically different from what they have ever experienced Relationship between employers and employees, between employees and their jobs, and between employees and each other at work matter, and in particular, the centrality of these three relationships influence employee's engagement and willingness to contribute to organizational goals and priorities (Levering, 1988).Though, after realizing the fact that work is not a place, organizations have taken steps to deal with this disaster. The pandemic has been leading towards

one of the major business transformations in years. *"Though, it's a health crisis but for most of the firms, it has brought an incredible opportunity to re- modernize HR and technology space"*, said, Chaitanya N Sreenivas, VP and HR Head- India, IBM. Hence, The current state of affairs allow managers at mid and seniors levels to display their leadership and decision-making skills in new ways to maintain employee's engagement and keep employee relations intact as the world moves through this challenge.It's important for business leaders to understand how to setup a successful remote work program. It requires deliberation, planning and investment in technology. The most robust organizations will not be those that simply have plans in place but those that have continuous sensing and ability to rapidly evaluate ongoing changes in the environment and develop responses based on simple principles. As Darwin noted, the most adaptive species are the fittest.

2. Literature Review

A preliminary assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on the global world of work states that the effects will be far-reaching, leaving millions of people working in unemployment, underemployment, and poverty, and beyond essential concerns about the health of workers and their families (International Labor Organization, 2020). The assessment appeals for immediate, large-scale and harmonized measures to protect the workers in the workplace, encourage the economy and employment, and to support jobs and incomes.

According to the findings of a survey titled 'HR resilience planning - COVID-19 impact and preparedness' conducted by a multidisciplinary professional services firm Ernst and Young, though the Coronavirus has been severely affected the organizations across sectors, 72% of the organizations articulated that even after six months, the effect of this pandemic will be felt.

And 70% of the organizations think that drop in organizational productivity is the only biggest concern due to continued remote working.

Willis Towers Watson examined the impact of COVID-19 on employee wellbeing, specifically in the UK. Based on input from seventy plus employers from companies across the UK, the findings reveals that job security and instability are affecting financial and emotional wellbeing of the employees. Distraction from work, anxiety and financial worries are stressing employees due to Covid-19. Emotional intelligence is the most critical skill for managers currently.

According to a recent study, 20% of remote workers feel that connecting and collaborating with colleagues is a challenge while working from dispersed locations. Further, 18% of respondents claim, they feel isolated while working remotely (Priti Singh, 2020).

A research on 'Pulse of HR' conducted by Josh Bersin, founder of Bersin, a leading provider of research-based membership programs in human resources (HR), talent and learning, by contacting more thanthirty companies over phone, shown that today, **personal financial security** is the first thing that comes to the minds of most of the employees (Atta Tarki, Paul Levy and Jeff Weiss, 2020). Though, they do care about their health, but even then they are more concerned about their jobs, the sustainability of the firms, and their ability to take care of their families. The younger ones are now upset for their careers. It has put an unprecedented strain on HR leaders to awaken to the fact that when employees are not being supported, are not feeling safe or emotionally secure, they simply cannot perform their work responsibilities. So now we may say that this is a business transformation masked as an epidemic (Josh Bersin, 2020).

Gallup has studied times of crisis like the Great Depression, World War II, upheavals and riots in the 1960s, 9/11 and the 2008 financial crash, and now the COVID-19 pandemicto learn what leaders can do. The analysis demonstrated that people look for a crisis management plan and want to know-how to subsidize the overall effort of the crisis. Furthermore, Gallup meta-analytics have realized that there are four universal needs that employees will expect from their employer;

Trust, Compassion, Stability and Hope. It is believed that the support employees get at crucial times from employer is recalled and remembered for lifetime (Jim Harter, 2020).

Mckinsey has surveyed more than 800 US based employees concerned to the impact of COVID-19 on work effectiveness. More than 80% of the respondents said that they are experiencing unprecedented level of distraction in their daily work-lives & homes. The survey found that by being readily available and keeping employees give meaning to a crisis, leaders can shield their business through building trust, collaborating and staying connected with their employees as well as can build employee resilience and social capital with their people (Jonathan Emmett et al 2020).

Taking the perspectives from the above discussions, this study identified and consolidated a number of factors; Work-life balance, Well-being, Compensation, Leadership, Communication, Social Support and Continuous learning culture that contributed towards employee engagement in general and are considered important to make the employees engage for the survival and sustainability of an organization during the pandemic. But working-from-home has its own set of unique challenges for both the employees and employers as m**ost of the firms are equipped and have equipped themselves to continue business by embracing the practice of work-from-home** to check the spread of COVID-19. It has raised a question how to keep employees engaged and productive even when they are away from their traditional work place. Hence, it is necessary for the firms, establishing epidemic- specific policies and procedures, ensure the safety of their employees, grant personal leave to minimize family disintegration and also develop the capabilities for employee communications by investing in IT because the epidemic is pushing establishments to re-visit their HR processes and business operations through a digital lens. *"In this hour of crisis, the HR function has to be a business partner in anticipating change, co-creating a range of scenarios and planning for the future,"*

said, Anurag Malik, People Advisory Services, Ernst and Young India. *"It is also the right time for the HR Heads to recalibrate their priorities, focus towards managing remote workforce, digitalize the HR function, and re-imagine workforce models."* It is of utmost important for the organizations to figure out new ways and taking support of technology to make significant changes in their employment strategies to engage their employees to get the work done effectively from home.

2.1 Employee Engagement

Employees will always be the lifeblood of an Organization. Kahn (1990, p. 694) introduced the concept of employee engagement, giving his now famous definition quoted in the introduction, namely, "the harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances". Kahn added that three psychological engagement conditions are necessary for an employee to be rightly engaged: meaningfulness (work elements), safety (social elements, including management style, process, and organizational norms) and availability (individual distractions).

2.1.1 Factors facilitating Employee Engagement

The notion of employee engagement and work life balance is the talk of the town in corporate world. It has become extremely difficult for the employees to draw a thin line between the personal and professional life in in this era of Technology and Social media. It is commonplace to check emails at all hours, take business calls at the dinner table and work on our laptops on weekends. Flexible Work schedules, Employer support for dependent care, family and personal leave play an important role to balance Work Life and improves the employee's productivity and performance as well (Wasay, 2013). Bhalerao (2013) was of similar opinion that organizational support in accomplishing Work Life Balance leads to higher work engagement, better commitment.

Wellbeing of the employees heightens employee engagement. Well-being takes into consideration all things that are vital to how we experience and think about our lives (Rath and Harter, 2010) and therefore, it highlights the importance of the well-being on engagement. According to the Towers Perrin Talent Report (2003), there is a psychological effect that occurs when employees sense that their establishment cares about their well-being. It leads them to work more competently and actually leads them to perform well.

Employees levels of engagement varies with respect to their perception of benefits received from a role. They are engaged at work to the extent they observe the amount of rewards and recognition from their performance (Kahn 1990; Saks 2006).Compensation motivates an employee to achieve more and hence focus more on work. An appropriate recognition and rewards are significant antecedents of employee engagement. (Maslach et al. 2001; Saks and Rotman, 2006; De Lacy 2009).

Leadership is a high-order, multi-dimensional construct encompassing self-awareness, balanced processing of information, relational transparency, and internal ethical standards (Walumbwa et al., 2008). Employee Engagement happens naturally when leaders are inspiring (Wallace and Trinka, 2009). Trusting the leader, supportive leader, and creating a defect-free environment are regarded as constituents of psychological safety, a state proposed by Kahn that leads to employee engagement (Xu and Thomas Cooper, 2010). Studies provide evidence for association between positive leader behaviors and follower attitude and behaviors linked with engagement, (Lee 2005; Griffin et al, 2010).

Another factor that heightens employee engagement is communication. It plays vital role in safeguarding the engagement of employees (Kahn 1992; Pugh and Dietz, 2008; MacLeod and Clarke, 2009; and Wiley et al, 2010). MacLeod and Clarke (2009), identified that poor communication acts as a barrier to engagement.

Social support in the organization is thought to be significant for enhancing employee's engagement. Supportive team and trusting interpersonal relationship motivate employee to perform well in the workplace (Kalra, 2015). Coworkers support acts as the emotional support for the employee like showing concern and providing instrumental assistance. Various meta-analytic studies provide evidence that social support from coworkers relates positively to engagement (Karatepe et al, 2010).

One of the factors contributing to employee engagement is by creating a company culture that encourages your employees to keep on learning and acquiring new knowledge all the time Learning is an engagement tool in its own right (Loon Hoe & McShane, 2010). And, if it's good, it'll boost performance. But modern and technology-driven learning can and should go a lot further.

3.Objectives of the Study

The objective of the study are:

) To gain insight into employee engagement during the pandemic.

) To comprehend how to enhance employee engagement while working from home during the pandemic.

4. Research Methodology

The study has been conducted through the primary and secondary data bases. The online structured questionnaire, containing seven (07) questions related to demographic characteristics of the employees and twenty six (26) questions related to redesigning of the Workplace strategies, concerned to Work-life balance, Well- being, Compensation, Leadership, Communication, Social support and Continuous learning culture has been developed. The employees are asked to

evaluate each statement on the five point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1). Many news articles, blogs and findings of the survey, done by big consultancy firms have also been considered for secondary data.

4.1 Sampling

The researcher has collected the primary data from the service sector employees particularly, those who are working from home and work remotely because of transport restrictions, via electronic mode using Google docs' forms. Both convenience and snowball sampling were used. It meant that the forms were circulated to the professional network of the researcher and again the forms have been distributed by the research participants among their network for study. A total of 185 responses were collected from various states of India and then analyzed.

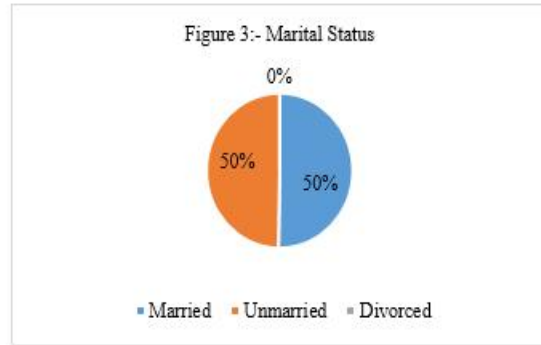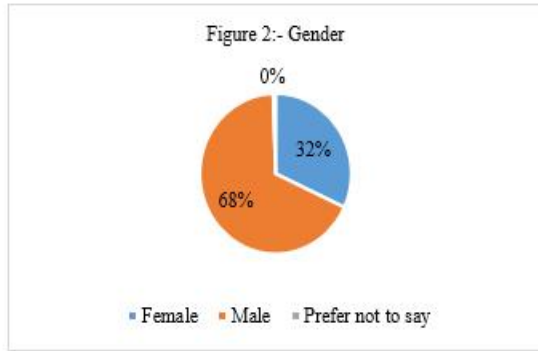# 5. Data Analysis and Interpretations of the outcomes

The primary data was analyzed using Microsoft Excel and the outcomes were depicted by using absolute figures and percentages of total participants. The excel spreadsheet was used to derive the tables, pie charts and the bar graphs for analysis.

5.1 Demographics

The questions related to demographic characteristics in the survey were asked to understand the socio-economic background of the participants. The figure no-1 to figure no-7 are related to this section.

Demographic Details of the participants (Fig no.1-7):-

Figure 1 - Respondents' Location (State)

Figure 2:- Gender

Figure 3:- Marital Status

Figure 4:- Educational Qualifications

Figure 5 :- Work Experience

Figure 6 :- Occupation

Figure:-7 Income (Monthly)
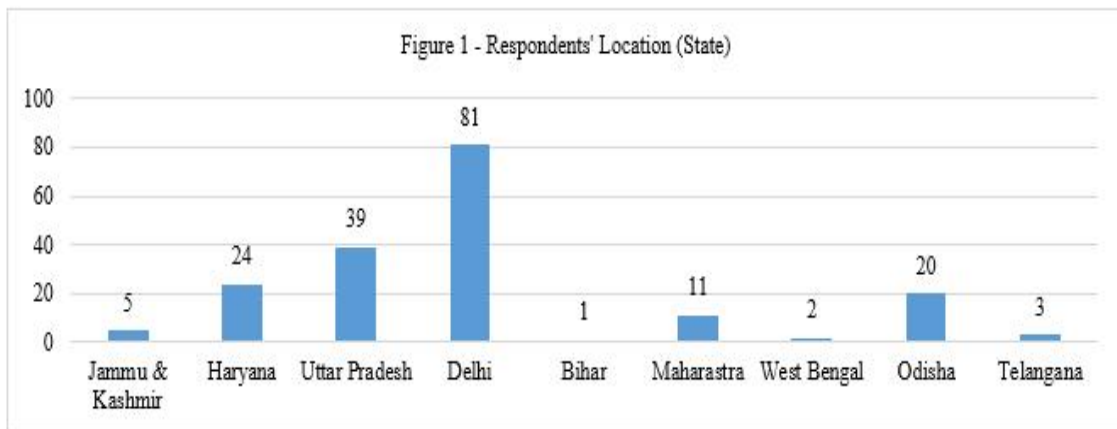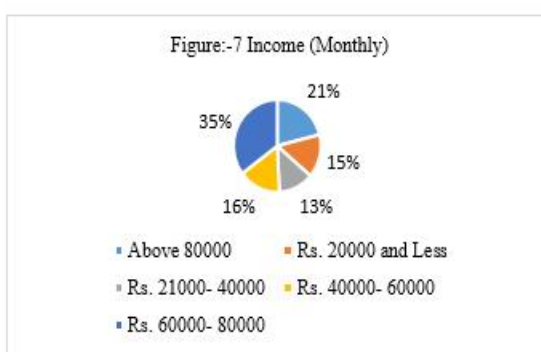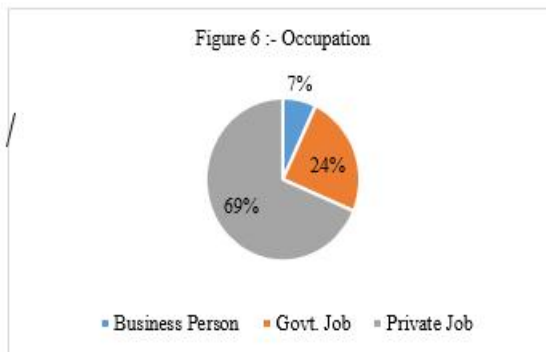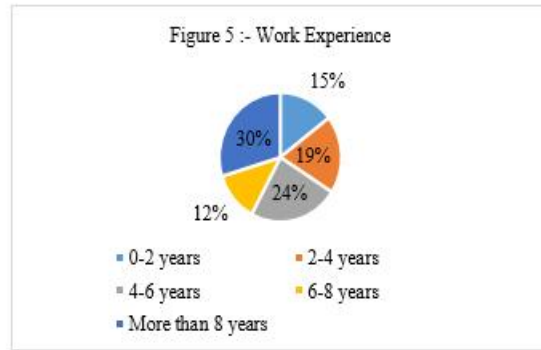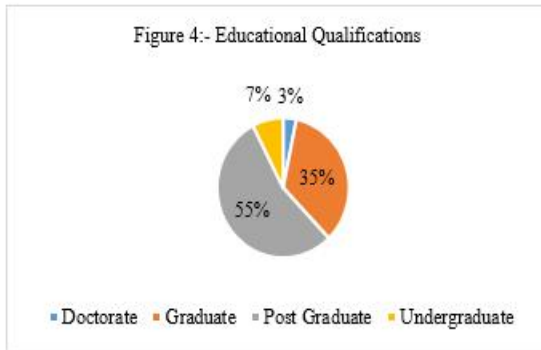
Source: Computing demographic details of respondents with Microsoft Excel

5.2 Demographic Descriptions of the participants

This is quite evident from figure no.-1 that around 44% of the participants belongs to the state of Delhi, followed by the state; Uttar Pradesh; 21%.It was found that the male proportion is higher than female in the survey. The total male participants in the sample are 68% (fig no. 2). It is evident from figure no. 3 that both the married and the unmarried respondents are equally participated in this survey. As for as educational qualification is concerned, majority of the participants are Post- graduate which constitutes 55% of the population and graduate were 35% of

the total participants in the survey (fig no.4). TheFigure no. 5 depicts that majority of the participants have more than 8 years of work experience that incorporates 30% of total participants, followed by the 24 % of the participants those having 4-6 years of work experience. In the survey, 69% of the total respondents have private jobs and 24% of total respondents are in government jobs (fig no.6). This is clear from figure no.-7 that majority of the participation that constitutes 35% of the total respondents having monthly income of 60,000-80,000, followed by the participants those monthly income are above 80000.

5.3 Response on Research Objectives

The analyses of the respondents' perceptions are done on a statement by statement basis and the employees are asked to evaluate each statement on the five point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1). To analyze percentage responses to the items (or statements) in the questionnaires, the options were grouped into three: (1) "strongly agree" and "agree" is "agreed", (2) "disagree" and "strongly

disagree" is "disagreed" and (3) "neutral" remains "neutral".

5.3.1 Response Data on Initiatives to redesign Organizational strategies

The below graphs show the responses of the employees regarding the redesigning of the organizational processes to enhance employee engagement. These responses of the employees against the each statement are discussed below:-

Fig no: 8(Statement-1)

1- The pandemic Covid-19 has transformed every employee into a remote employee.
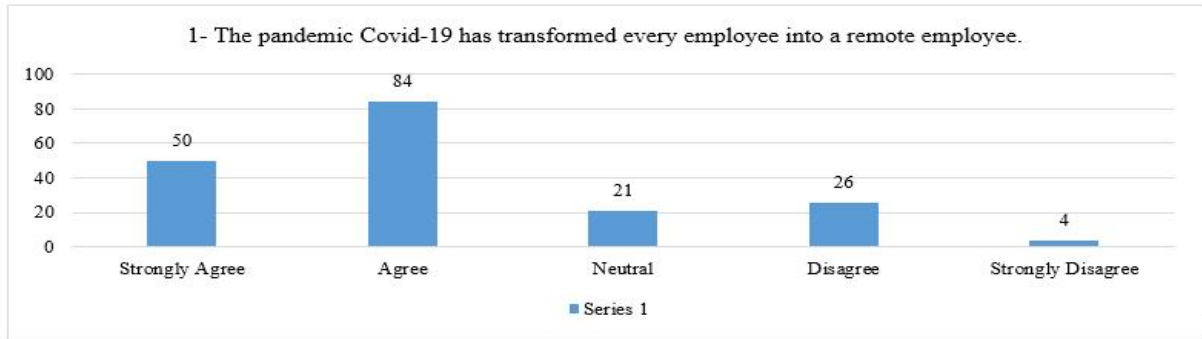
Source: - Computing responses with Microsoft Excel

In response to the statement no.1, (Fig no. 8) majority (72.0%) of the respondents agreed that this epidemic, Covid-19 has suddenly transform every employees into remote employees. Only 16.0% of the respondents showed disagreement

against this statement. The above graph depicts that Remote working has become a reality now and it enables a workforce to perform their job from anywhere in the world.
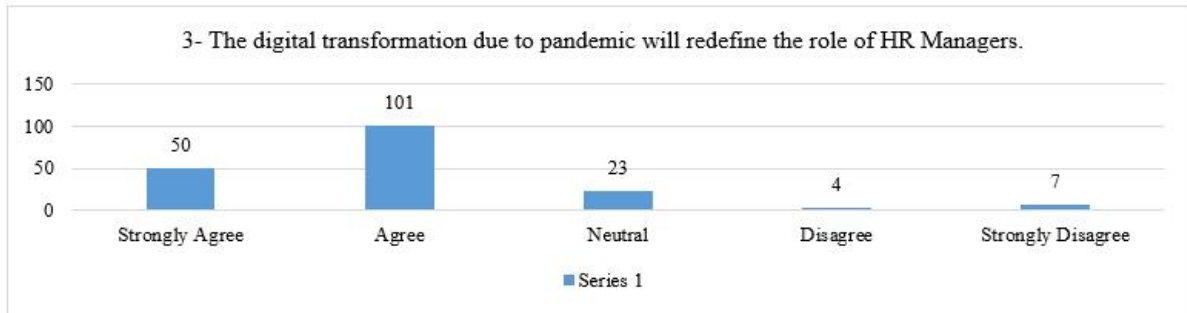
Fig no: 9 (Statement-2)

2- The traditional workplace has been replaced by Digitalized & Virtual workplace due to Covid-19.
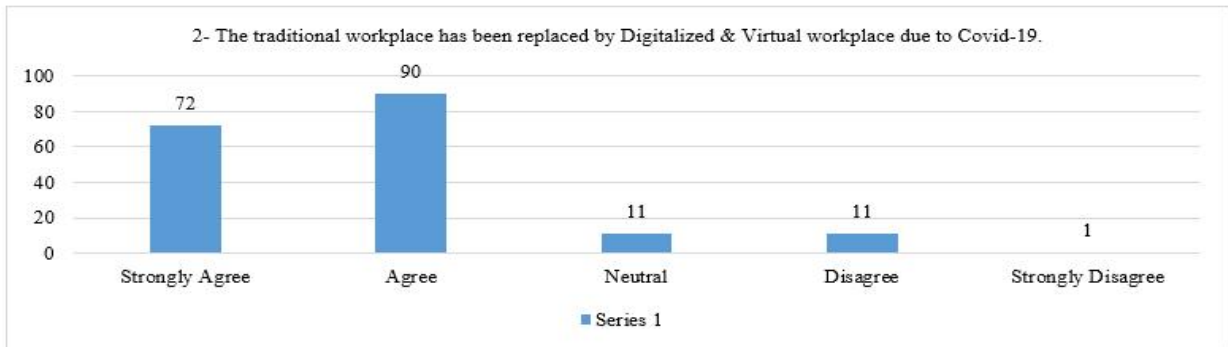
Source: - Computing responses with Microsoft Excel

It is evident from the above graph (Fig no. 9) that around 88.0% of the respondents are agreed that the era of digitalized and virtual workplace have come into existence.

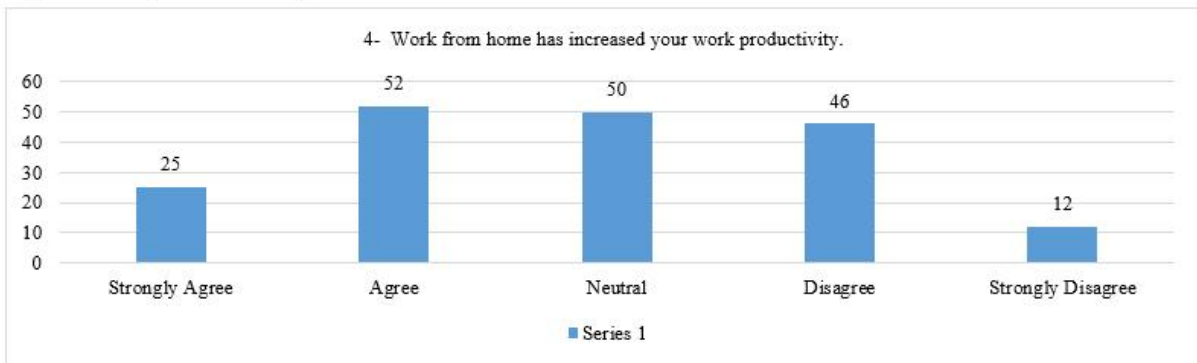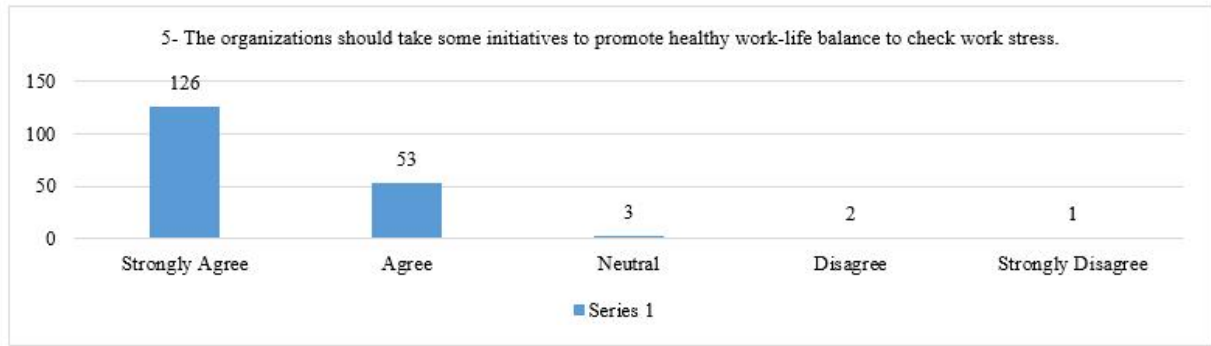**Fig no: 10 (Statement-3)**

Source: - Computing responses with Microsoft Excel

The collected responses to the statement no. 3, as depicted in the above graph (Fig no. 10) indicates that over 81.0% of the respondents agreed and believed that this digital business transformation will definitely redefine the role of HR managers.

Fig no: 11 (Statement-4)

Source: - Computing responses with Microsoft Excel

In response to the statement no.4 (Fig no. 11), around 42.0% of the respondents agreed and reported that their work productivity has been increased while working from. However, around 27.0% of the respondents are neutral against the statement. Whereas, approx. 31.0% of the total respondents reported that their work productivity has been affected. Getting very close responses against the above statement directs that the business leaders must take some required steps when their employees are working from home or work remotely.

Fig no: 12 (Statement-5)

5- The organizations should take some initiatives to promote healthy work-life balance to check work stress.
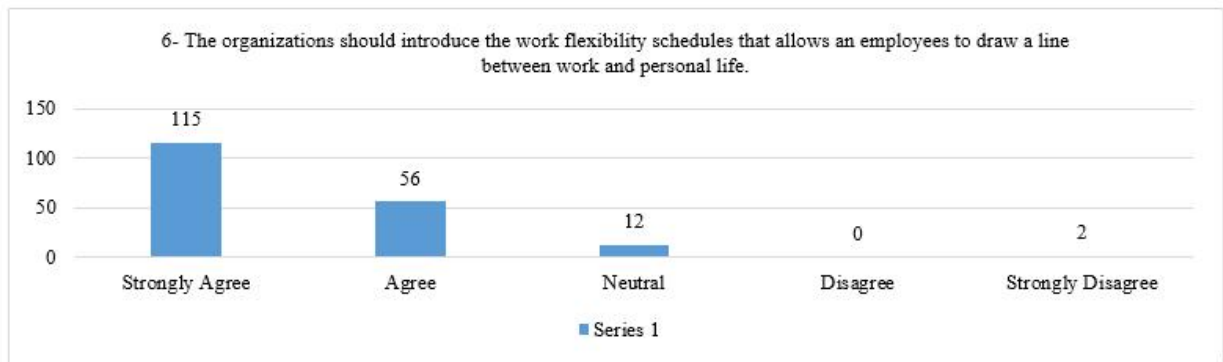
Source: - Computing responses with Microsoft Excel

The responses got, against the statement no. 5, depicted in the above graph (Fig no. 12), indicates that over 96.0% of the respondents agreed that the organizations must take some initiatives to promote healthy work-life balance to check work stress. It is quite evident from the responses that mental and physical health have a direct association with their work productivity. And promoting a healthy work-life balance also allows an employee to manage their personal life and issues outside of work, preventing additional stress.

Fig no: 13 (Statement-6)

6- The organizations should introduce the work flexibility schedules that allows an employees to draw a line between work and personal life.
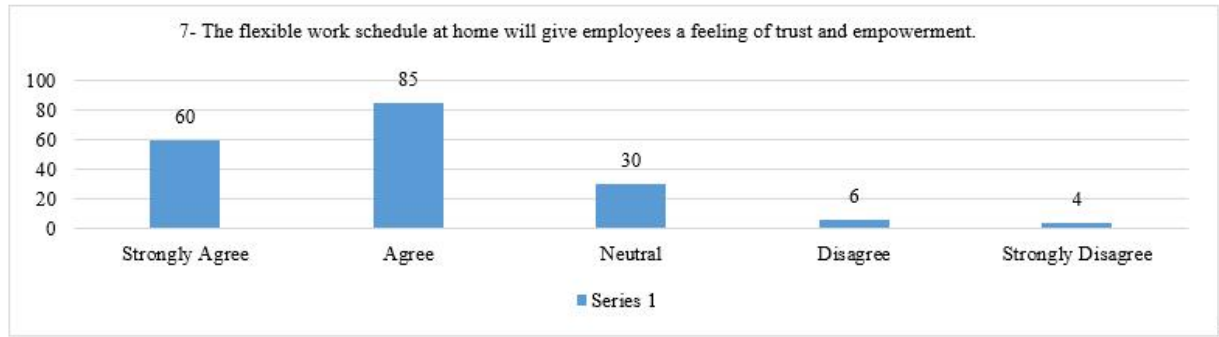
Source: - Computing responses with Microsoft Excel

Ninety two percentage of the employees agreed that the organizations should introduce the work flexibility schedules that allows an employees to draw a line between work and personal life. This indicates that employees are concentrated on their lives, not only their jobs. They do not want to settle one at the expense of the other and a role that allows them to have greater work-life balance and better personal well-being is "very important" to them (Fig no.13).

Fig no: 14 (Statement -7)

Source: - Computing responses with Microsoft Excel

In response to statement no. 7, (Fig no. 14) around, 78.0% of the respondents agreed that the flexible work schedule at home will give employees a feeling of trust and empowerment. This indicates that a flexible work schedule, autonomy, and trust are becoming more central to an employee's working lives to promote work holism.
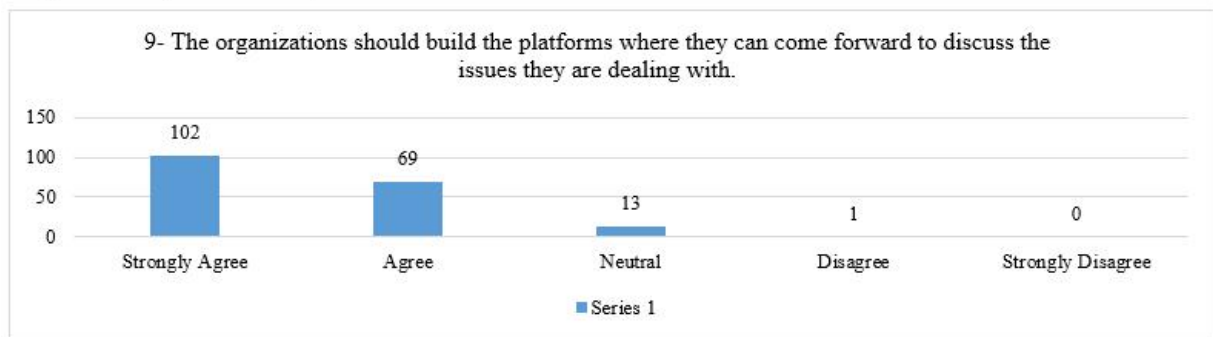
Fig no: 15 (Statement-8)
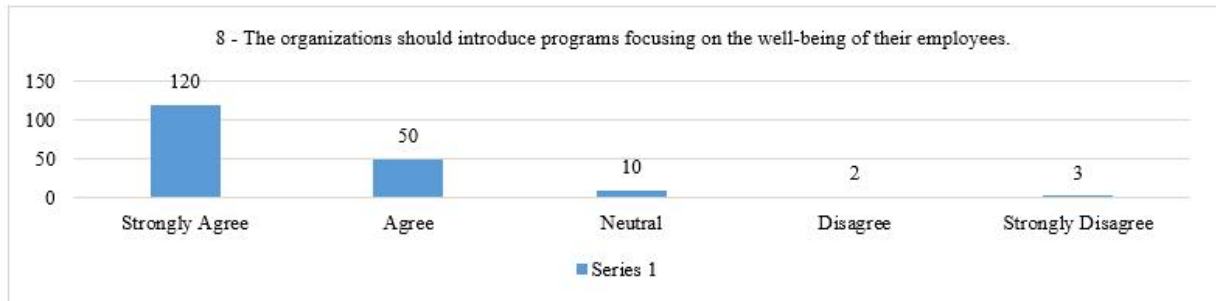
Source: - Computing responses with Microsoft Excel

Majority (92.0%) of the respondents agreed that the organizations should introduce programs focusing on the well-being of their employees. This indicates that well- being of the employees reduce absenteeism and improve their work productivity because due to epidemic, while working from home, employees are managing both their work as well as their personal life that may be affects their mental well-being and, in turn, the productivity (Fig no.15).

**Fig no: 16 (Statement-9)**

Source: - Computing responses with Microsoft Excel

A summary of the responses to statement 9 as contained in above graph (Fig no.16) indicates that over 92.0% of the respondents agreed that the organizations should build the platforms where they can come forward to discuss the issues they are dealing with. The responses directs that organization must be as empathetic as to understand the stress of employees, they are going through this time and ensure them that they always open to listen to them.
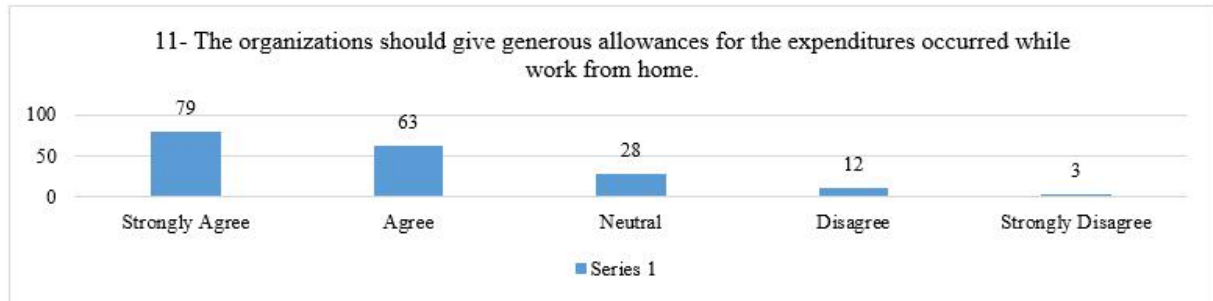
Fig no: 17 (Statement-10)
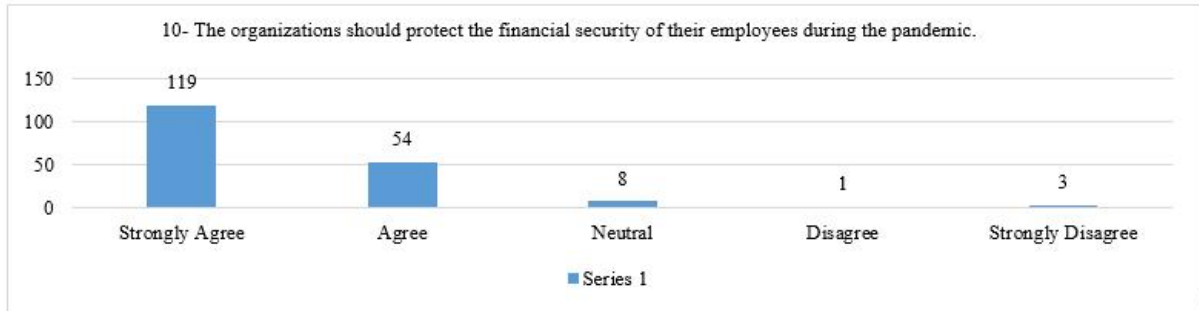
Source: - Computing responses with Microsoft Excel

It is quite evident from the graph (Fig no. 17) that around 94.0% of the employees agreed that the organizations should protect the financial security of their employees during the pandemic. This implies that **Individual financial security** is one of the major things that comes to the minds of most of the employees.

Fig no: 18 (Statement-11)

Source: - Computing responses with Microsoft Excel

Majority (76.0%) of the respondents agreed that the organization must give generous allowances for the expenditures occurred while working from home (Fig no. 18). This indicates that employees who usually come into an office and use their resources there to perform work might be using their own laptops, Internet, and figuring out office space in their homes. So, Organizations must think about the changes that would affect their current expense policy.
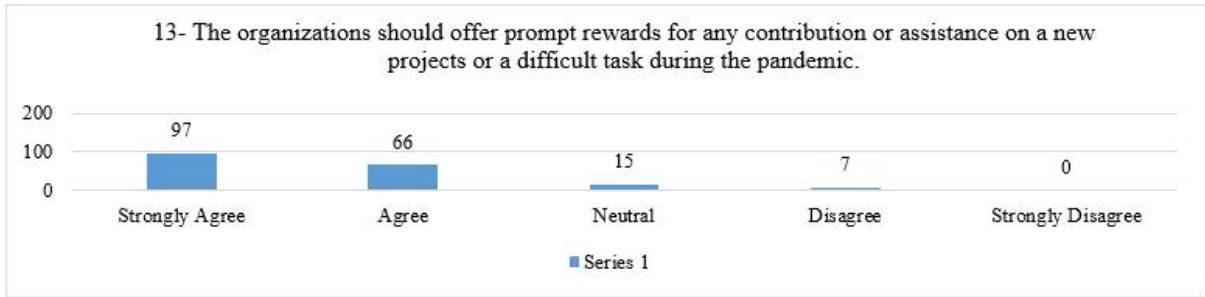
Fig no: 19 (Statement-12)
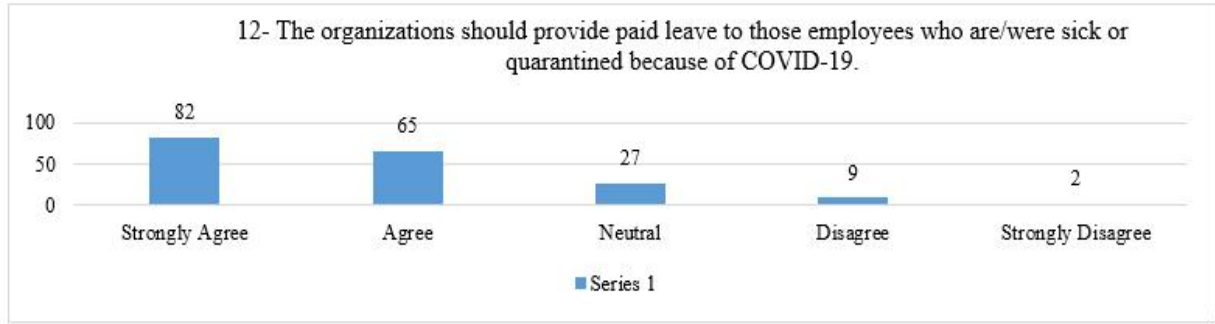
Source: - Computing responses with Microsoft Excel

It is quite evident from figure no. 19 that around 80.0% of the employees are agreed regarding the paid leave that must be offered by the firms to their employees those are sick or quarantined because of COVID-19.
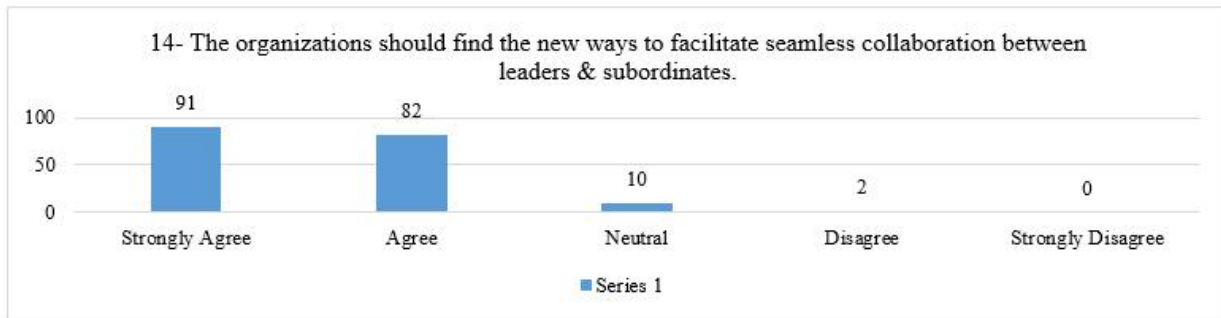
Fig no: 20 (Statement-13)

Source: - Computing responses with Microsoft Excel

The responses to statement 13 as contained in above graph (Fig no. 20) indicates that over 88.0% of the respondents agreed that the organizations should offer prompt rewards for any contribution or assistance on a new projects or a difficult task during the Pandemic.

Fig no: 21 (Statement-14)

Source: - Computing responses with Microsoft Excel

After surveyed, it was found that over 93.0% of the employees agreed that the organizations should find the new ways to facilitate seamless collaboration between leaders and subordinates (Fig no. 21). The responses indicate that due to epidemic, activities like face to face communication, team events or open discussions with senior leaders are no longer possible. This erodes the personal touch to some extent. As a social being, there is also the possibility of employees feeling isolated as they work alone in their homes away from the rest of the team.

Fig no: 22 (Statement-15)

15- The level of transparency and trust on the workforce has increased due to Covid-19.
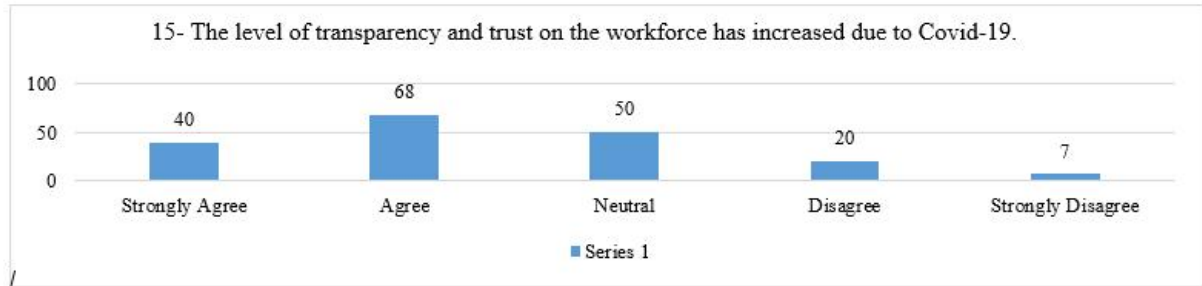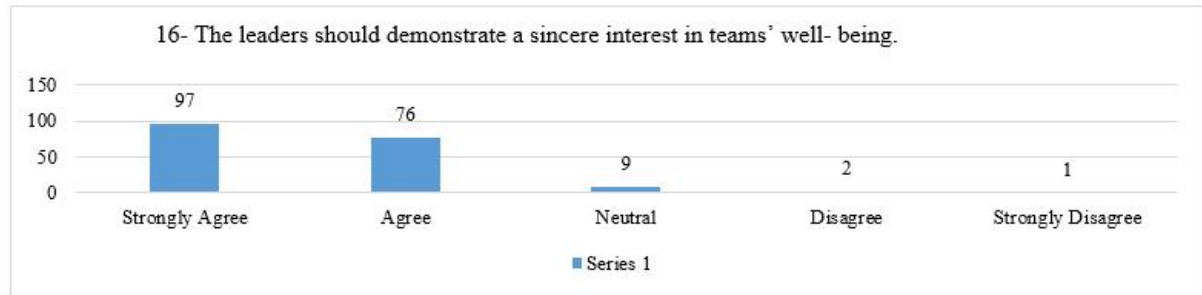
Source: - Computing responses with Microsoft Excel

Majority (59.0%) of the respondents agreed that this pandemic has increased the level of transparency and trust among the workforce and the leaders. However, around 27.0% of the respondents are neutral against the statement. And only 14.0% of the respondents are showing disagreement (Fig no. 22).

Fig no: 23 (Statement-16)

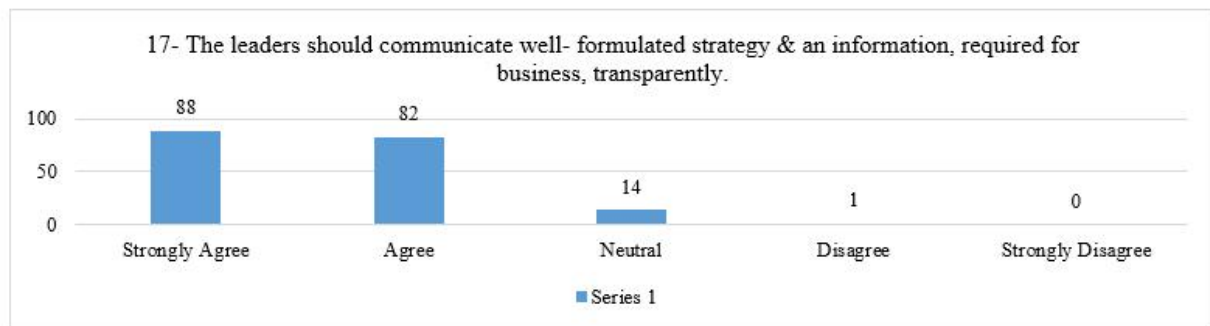16- The leaders should demonstrate a sincere interest in teams' well- being.

Source: - Computing responses with Microsoft Excel

A summary of the responses to the statement 16, as displayed in the above graph (Fig no. 23) indicates that over 93.0% of the respondents agreed that the leaders should demonstrate a sincere interest in teams' well- being. Prioritizing teams' health and well- beings during COVID-19 makes the employees feel that they are being cared for. This feeling of emotional support boost their morale and enhance their productivity.

Fig no: 24 (Statement-17)

17- The leaders should communicate well- formulated strategy & an information, required for business, transparently.
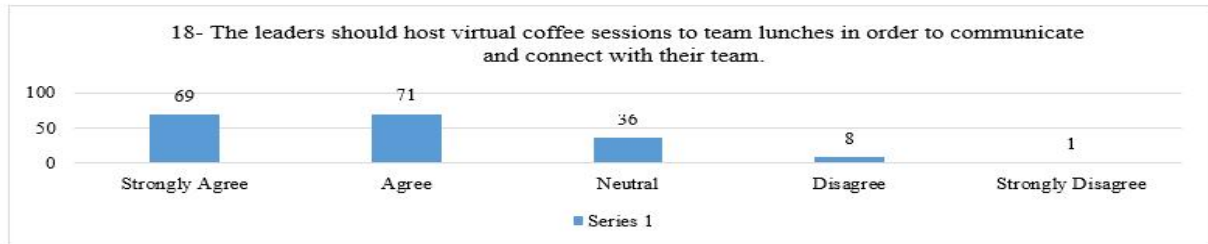
Source: - Computing responses with Microsoft Excel

It was found against the statement no. 17 (Fig no. 24) that around 92.0% of the employees agreed that the leaders should communicate well-formulated strategy and an information, required for performing the task, transparently. Communication becomes very important when teams are fragmented.

Fig no: 25 (Statement-18)

18- The leaders should host virtual coffee sessions to team lunches in order to communicate and connect with their team.

| Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
69	71	36	8	1

■ Series 1

Source: - Computing responses with Microsoft Excel

It is clearly evident from the data (Fig no. 25) that 76.0% of the employees agreed that the leaders should host virtual coffee sessions to team lunches in order to connect with their team. However, only 15% of the employees are neutral.

Fig no: 26 (Statement-19)
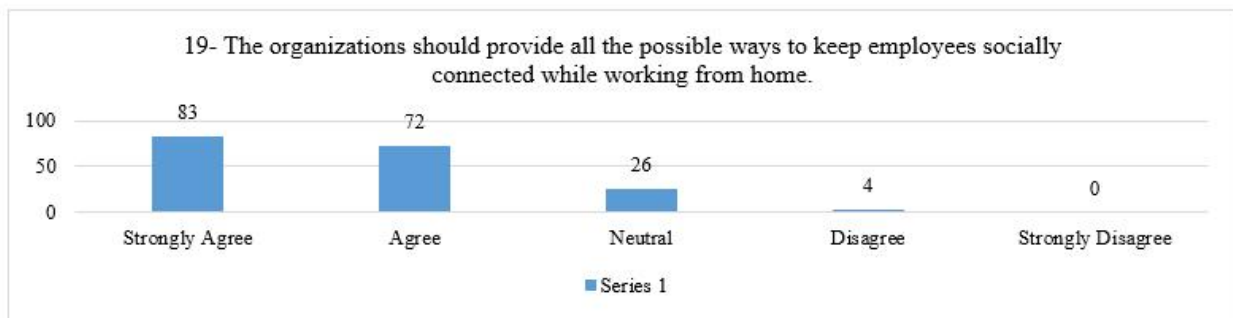
19- The organizations should provide all the possible ways to keep employees socially connected while working from home.

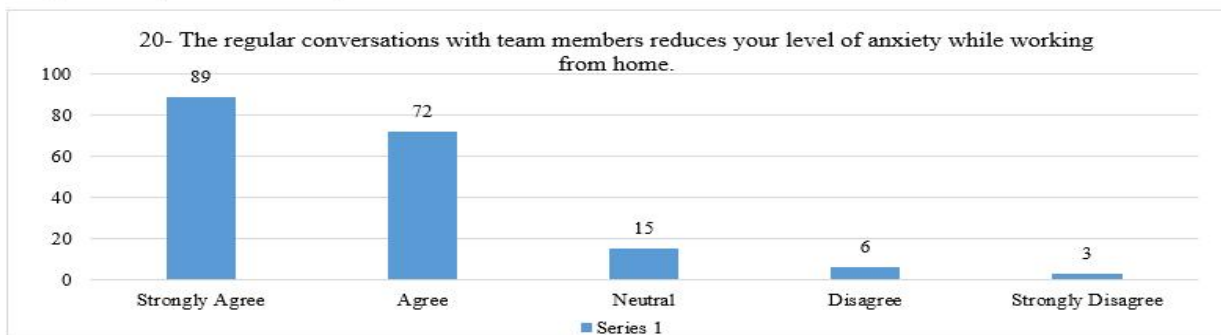| Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
83	72	26	4	0

■ Series 1

Source: - Computing responses with Microsoft Excel

It is quite evident from the above graph (Fig no. 26) that around 84.0% of the employees agreed that the organizations should provide all the possible ways to keep employees socially connected while working from home. Staying in touch virtually is the need of the hour.

Fig no: 27 (Statement-20)

20- The regular conversations with team members reduces your level of anxiety while working from home.

| Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
89	72	15	6	3

■ Series 1

Source: - Computing responses with Microsoft Excel

The above graph (Fig no. 27) depicts that 87.0 % of the employees agreed that the regular conversations with team members reduces their level of anxiety while working from home. This indicates that this type of conversations appears effective in checking potential isolation.
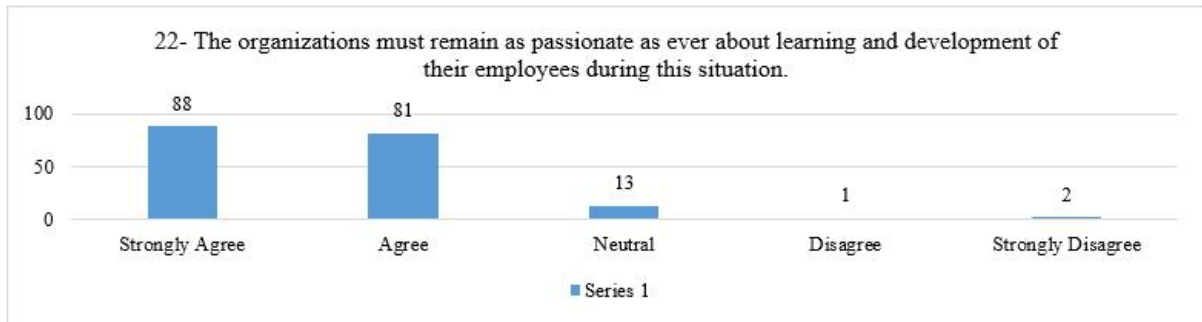
Fig no: 28 (Statement-21)
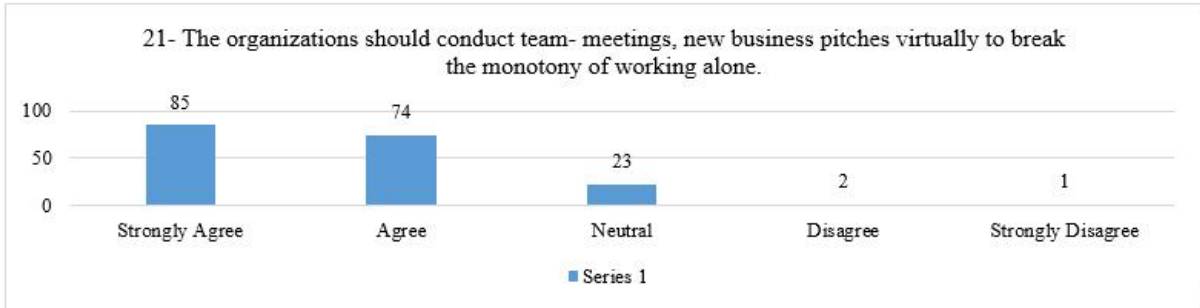
Source: - Computing responses with Microsoft Excel

Majority (86%) of the employees agreed to the statement 21 (Fig no. 28) that the organizations should conduct team- meetings, new business pitches virtually to break the monotony of working alone. This indicates that humans are social animal and robust communication among them will boost their work engagement.
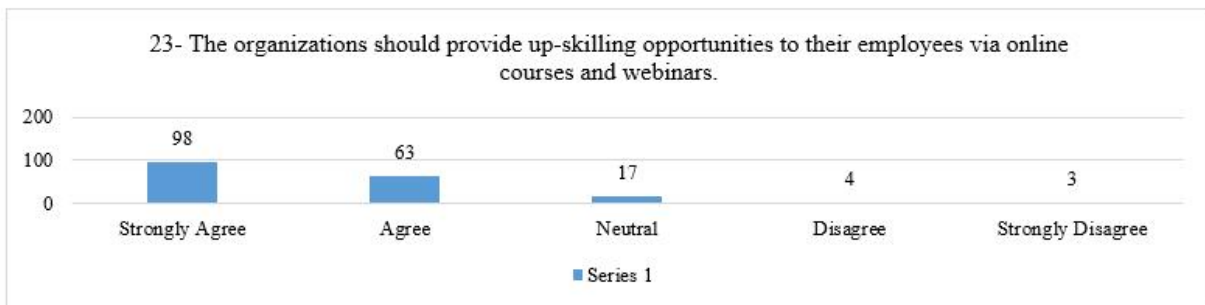
Fig no: 29 (Statement-22)

Source: - Computing responses with Microsoft Excel

It is quite evident from the above graph (Fig no. 29) that 91% of the employees agreed that the organizations must remain as passionate as ever about learning and development of their employees during this situation.
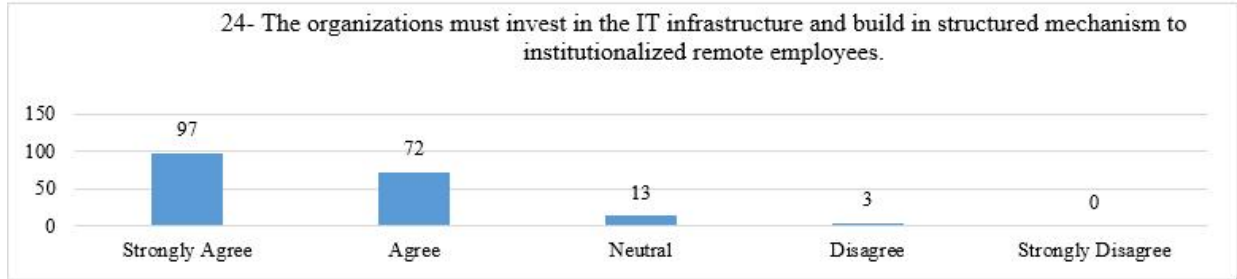
Fig no: 30 (Statement-23)

Source: - Computing responses with Microsoft Excel

The above graph (Fig no. 30) shows that 87% of the employees agreed that the organizations should provide up-skilling opportunities to their employees via online courses and webinars to keep them competitive.

Fig no: 31 (Statement-24)

Source: - Computing responses with Microsoft Excel

Over 91.0% of the respondents agreed that the organizations must invest in the IT infrastructure and build in structured mechanism to institutionalized remote employees (Fig no. 31).

This indicates that the advancement of IT infrastructure is bridging the gap between leaders and employees irrespective of any physical and geographical barriers.
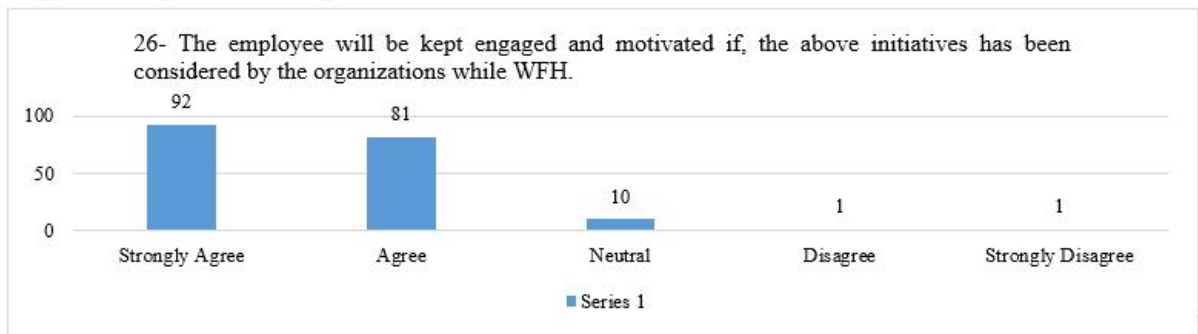
Fig no: 32 (Statement-25)
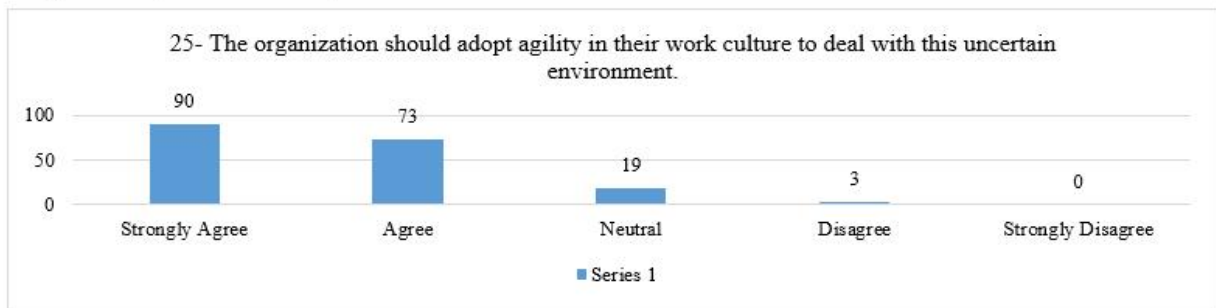
Source: - Computing responses with Microsoft Excel

It is clear from the data (Fig. no. 32) that 88% of the respondents agreed that the organization should adopt agility in their work culture to deal with the volatile and unpredictable environment.

Fig no: 33 (Statement-26)

Source: - Computing responses with Microsoft Excel

Majority (94%) of the employees agreed to the statement 26 (Fig no. 33) that the above initiatives has been considered by the organizations to keep their employee engaged and effective while working from home.

6. Discussions and Managerial Implications

The global outbreak of coronavirus has adversely impacted business models, supply chain networks, and jeopardized business continuity operations. Plans are usually designed to help firms respond to localized threats—like fires, bombs, riots, earthquakes, and hurricanes—that affect infrastructure. Once the event has occurred, it is over and, while the effects may linger, recovery can begin. However, a pandemic isn't an isolated incident. It is, by definition, an unfolding global event. Because of air travel, many countries and cities around the world could be infected almost simultaneously. In just a few months, individuals and businesses are compelled to grapple with the basic question of survival due to epidemicand most of the firms are adopting or have adopted work from home practices to maintain business continuity in the face of such a life-threatening crisis.This survey study intends to explore the ways of maximizing the effectiveness of the employees in their new work settings by investing in IT and throws lights on some of the key areas where firms must keep an eye to sustain.

To keep the workflows moving, the families of their employees must be acknowledged who also requires an additional attention apart from their work. Balanced employees feel more motivated and less stressed at work, thereby increasing business productivity and reducing the number of conflicts between leaders and subordinates (Shannon Byrne, 2018;Anna Bahney, 2020). Leaders need to make a digital social interaction. A virtual office for employees must be created to share personal as well as professional updates by Investing in the best video conferencing and collaboration tools. It also helps to alleviate their stress level and to prevent potential burnout and isolation. An organization should commit itself to create a space to transform the current Work from Home (WFH) scenarios into high engaging Learn from Home (LFH) scenarios. This can be made possible by conducting Consistent Knowledge Sharing session between inter/intra teams and industry expert sessions (Kaushik Chakraborty, 2020). The working style of a regular 9 to 5

worker has been affected and suddenly, they start working from home and this sudden transition can vastly hamper the internal communication of the organization. Robust communication with the help of technology is the key to check the effect of this pandemic.

7. Conclusion

While certain concerns may initially slow down progress, steady and positive communication from all parties will help maintain everyone's engagement and keep employee relations intact as the world moves through this challenge. Both employees and clients will witness for themselves how effective working from home can be by re-modernize the workplace strategies with the help of robust technology development. This could potentially lead to a major shift in the way work is conducted, with remote working and virtual meetings becoming the norm even after the spread of the virus has abated. Ann Francke, head of Chartered Management Institute, rightly said, *"This is unprecedented. It may change the workplace forever. Everyone will need to embrace a different sort of workplace behavior."*

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