

## HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT INNOVATION FOR INCREASING PRODUCTIVITY DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: A NARRATIVE REVIEW

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### ABSTRACT

This paper is a narrative review. It aims to describe the innovation of human resources management to increase productivity during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is a narrative literature review. The literature was selected from Science Direct, and Google Scholar. The keywords were COVID-19, human resources, innovative, management, productivity. After screening by the title, abstract, and full text, there were 20 eligible articles. The innovative human resources management needs adaptation, resilience, and continuous curiosity to increase productivity and solve problems. Employee engagement in the global network will increase productivity during the COVID-19 pandemic. This paper has limited data because it is not a meta-analysis. This paper is useful for giving information about how to determine an innovative strategy for human resources management to increase productivity during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Keywords:** COVID-19, human resources, innovative, management, productivity.

### ABSTRAK

*Tinjauan pustaka ini merupakan narrative review. Tulisan ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan inovasi manajemen sumber daya manusia untuk meningkatkan produktivitas pada saat pandemi COVID-19. Referensi dipilih dari Science Direct, dan Google Scholar. Kata kunci yang digunakan adalah COVID-19, human resources, innovative, management, productivity. Setelah dilakukan skrining berdasarkan judul, abstrak, dan teks lengkap, didapatkan sebanyak 20 artikel yang memenuhi syarat. Manajemen inovatif sumber daya manusia memerlukan adaptasi, ketekunan, dan rasa ingin tahu yang berkesinambungan untuk meningkatkan produktivitas dan memecahkan masalah. Melibatkan karyawan dalam memperluas jaringan kerja secara global akan meningkatkan produktivitas selama selama pandemi COVID-19. Tinjauan pustaka ini memiliki keterbatasan karena bukan merupakan meta-analisis. Tulisan ini berguna untuk memberikan informasi mengenai bagaimana menentukan strategi manajemen sumber daya manusia inovatif untuk meningkatkan produktivitas selama pandemi COVID-19.*

**Kata Kunci:** COVID-19, sumber daya manusia, inovatif, manajemen, produktivitas.

## BACKGROUND

COVID-19 has changed all people's life. Human resources management needs to be innovated during the COVID-19 pandemic period (Bedford et al., 2020). Reducing international mobility causes travel bans. This condition affects business management and revenue (Chinazzi et al., 2020; Fabeil et al., 2020; Sohrabi et al., 2020). Therefore, managers should change the strategy in developing human resources management to increase productivity. Innovation should be made continuously during the COVID-19 pandemic. Dismiss an employee is not an easy task. Managers must decide and arrange the employees' workflow. The key is communication (Cooke et al., 2020).

There was a study about the role of innovation as a social mechanism. This study included 707 innovation projects for the basic needs of consumers and businesses. The innovation strategies comprise technology and social innovations. A structural model of innovation can help policymakers and stake holders to handle the crises. There are needs for understanding, affection, creation, and participation (Dahlke et al., 2021). Technological innovation also increases the satisfaction, reduce burnout, and improve the performance of the staff (Prasetyaningtyas et al., 2021)

The welfare of the employee is related to the success of the companies. This situation depends on the human resource management. Innovative and critical management should be maintained. Alketbi et al. studied the theory of Crisis management. Using Structural Equation Models-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) analysis. The result showed that leadership, training, and organizational strategy give great impact for the crisis management during the COVID-19 pandemic. This study took place in Dubai. It was concluded that organizational culture was the main point in human resource management (Alketbi et al., 2022).

The survey of 500 board members revealed that less than 25% of the board members and chief executive officers were ready to face unexpected large risks. There are concerns about employee selection, support, and training during the COVID-19 pandemic. Leadership and virtual collaboration can resolve distance-related problems. Physical distancing must not be a psychological distancing. Online support and meeting can be done online (Caligiuri et al., 2020).

A study which was done by Kutieshat & Farmanesh in 2022 found that the New Human Resource Management Practices (NHRM) showed great impacts on innovation performance. This practice could mediate the organizational innovation. It also created innovative work behavior during the COVID-19 pandemic. The quantitative statistical tools were used in the study. The participants of the study were 450 employees in the Ministry of Education in Amman-Jordan. The online survey was delivered to assess the significant positive relationship linking NHRM practices and innovation performance. Innovation in organizational and work behavior increased the performance of the staff and managerial implementation. Innovation is needed in all sectors, including the educational sector. During the unpredictable period of the COVID-19 pandemic, the technological practices and organizational strategies

are needed to reach the optimal response time of crisis (Kutieshat & Farmanesh, 2022).

Based on the research by Abdullah et al. in 2021, it was revealed that the service innovation is needed in human resource management during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is essential to enhance the loyalty of the employee using intrinsic reward. The research was held in the private hospitals in Pakistan during the COVID-19 pandemic. There are 250 nurses who participated in the study. The nurses had been seriously impacted by high demand work and family conflict. Therefore, social and psychological rewards were given to alleviate the burden. This study was a causal research design (Abdullah et al., 2021). Keeping the nurses staff happy is important to make them loyal to their work and organization. The result of the study can be used in education, banking, etc. (Abdullah et al., 2021).

Telework, virtual office, or virtual workforce are familiar terms in human resources management during the COVID-19 pandemic. Skills to integrate, adapt, and provide direction are essential for increasing productivity (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020). However, not all staff are familiar with working from home situations. The managers also cannot control and support the staff as usual. Therefore, human resources management needs innovation to maintain and increase productivity during the COVID-19 pandemic. This paper aims to describe the human resources management innovation for increasing productivity during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This is a narrative literature review. The literature was selected from PubMed, Science Direct, and Google Scholar. The keywords were COVID-19, human resources, innovation, productivity, management. Inclusion criteria are peer-reviewed journals, research, and reviews. Exclusion criteria are opinion and letter to the editor paper. There were 7 papers from PubMed, 561 papers from Science Direct, and 93 papers from Google Scholar at the beginning. The articles from Google Scholar were so many at the beginning, therefore, it was screened by using the word "human resource" must be in the title. The articles from Science direct were also screened in the same way and there were 2 articles at the end from Science Direct. Finally, there were 7 articles from PubMed, 2 articles from Science Direct, and 93 articles from Google Scholar. They were selected based on content by one author. To ascertain the quality of the selection, the process was done twice.

The study selection began with the removal of duplicate records. The irrelevant studies were excluded by screening the titles and abstracts. Firstly, the title and abstract must contain at least COVID-19 keywords with one of the other keywords such as human resources, innovation, productivity, or management. After that, if the free full text is available in English or Indonesian, then the reading and selection will be continued. Otherwise, it will be removed. Full-text screening steps are reading the abstract and conclusion and examining the type of the text. Case reports and letters to the editor were excluded. Finally, there were 13 pieces of literature.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results revealed that there are 20 eligible articles. From 20 articles, most of them encourage adaptation and using online or virtual video conferences to maintain the collaboration and engagement between managers and staff. The successful strategy of human resource management will increase productivity.

Human resource management is an essential thing in managing the crisis during the COVID-19 pandemic. This strategy is very important to increase productivity, satisfaction, motivation, welfare, health, and adaptation of the employees. A virtual office also needs good working conditions besides its' flexibility (Azizi et al., 2021).

Human resources management is very crucial for the staff and the company. Further more, the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the routine of working and careers. Those changes can trigger behaviors and motivation. Finally, the career goals and employment status will be affected, especially the employee turnover. Turnover is essential from a longer-term perspective. Former employees could be rehired by the same company, therefore human resource management is essential which is including job satisfaction, career sustainability, health, and well-being. The COVID-19 pandemic could affect the health and well-being of the employees. On the other side, employees need to infer the organizational motivation and implement the best performance (Akkermans et al., 2021).

Bad human resource management can cause lower commitment and higher employee turnover. Reorganization can induce insecure feelings. On the other side, unexpected promotion can impact the individual's perceptions which attribute to productivity. The attributions influence the outcome for both company and employees. Therefore, human resource management should be focused on supporting the employees in handling unexpected challenges and opportunities. Human resources management should create career growth opportunities and interventions. Management should be focused on the skills needed for the projects (Akkermans et al., 2021).

Important steps and decisions should be taken by the human resource manager. The employees must be kept healthy, safe, and productive. The existing productivity must be maintained while working from home. It is a new challenge while maintaining the working from home rhythm (Caligiuri et al., 2020).

There are selections of staff regularly to put the right man in the right place. Potential development and current achievement are essential determinants in determining the right staff. Resilience and curiosity are critical characteristics to handle insecurity, and instability in job conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020).

The employee might seek alternative workplaces such as coworking spaces, cafes, or libraries before the COVID-19 pandemic. However, this cannot be done when the pandemic began. The employees have to stay at home. Therefore, they cannot unplug from working demands due to the limited border between work and private life. School closure forced the parents to have multitasking jobs while working at home. Meanwhile, the singles and childless

workers faced loneliness when they worked from home all the time (Chawla et al., 2020).

Collaboration can be switched into a virtual sphere. Rewards and promotions should be maintained to increase employee engagement. A more introverted employee usually is more comfortable sharing ideas in a virtual setting. International business is prone to global threats and issues. Multinational enterprise managers should be open-minded to encounter stress during the COVID-19 pandemic (Caligiuri et al., 2020).

The important characteristics for human resource development are agility, resilience, and curiosity. Resilience is essential to counteract stressful condition. Natural curiosity is important to thrive in an uncertain situation like the COVID-19 pandemic. The selection of employees should be determined based on those positive characteristics (Cooke et al., 2020).

Stimulation can be given online. Motivational video links are also important. Webinars about mindfulness and virtual counseling can enhance endurance and reduce stress (Caligiuri et al., 2020).

Flexible work arrangements are suitable for working from home. It has an outside standard business hour. Negotiation between work and family time should be done by taking a regular break to reduce working pressure (Donthu & Gustafsson, 2020).

Green human resources management can create efficient resource management. It is a socially responsible workplace. It facilitated behaviors consistent with innovative human resources management (Jabbour & Renwick, 2020).

Afrianty et al. in 2022 examined the determinant factors that affected the lecturers' productivity during the COVID-19 pandemic. The research concluded that there are some great organizational factors to be taken into account such as IT training, management support, digital infrastructure, and individual factors. The digital capability of the employees determines their productivity (Afrianty et al., 2022).

Meanwhile, Pass and Ridgway in 2022 found that HRD department should ensure the employees and managers have the abilities to cooperate with the organization and teams. Experiences have valuable lessons for anticipating the changes in the future. The employees' view about the organization purpose and their skills determine the resilience. Flexibility and autonomy should be maintained for keeping the accountability of the employees (Pass & Ridgway, 2022). In the systematic literature review, Jotab et al., 2022 found the importance of learning and stimulating the teams as well as making the priority list of the tasks. An innovation in environment has a role as mediator to help the staff in facing obstacles and competitive markets (Jotab et al., 2022).

The human resources management innovation for increasing productivity during the COVID-19 pandemic can be implemented by increasing productivity during the COVID-19 pandemic can be implemented. Virtual office or working from home is not an obstacle. Training and team building can be done online. Managers of the human resource department must learn how to motivate and boost the confidence of the team. The activities are similar to previous habits before the COVID-19 pandemic, but they are switched into

virtual. Since there is no clear border between family and work time, the staff should take a break regularly to reduce tension in a workday.

## CONCLUSIONS

Innovative Human Resources Management during the COVID-19 pandemic needs multidisciplinary collaboration. Multilevel with plural conditions must be taken into consideration. The COVID-19 pandemic is an opportunity to make a difference in managerial leadership. It is a challenge for doing better and better in every activity. Resilience, employee engagement, adaptation, and making adjustments are important characteristics.

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