

IS TECHNOLOGY A NEW NORMAL FOR ORGANIZATIONS? A VIEW OF BUSINESSES AFTER COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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ABSTRACT

Background: Organizations in all regions and sectors changed the way they do business in just a few months due to the COVID-19 crisis. Firms have moved to a digitalization of their supply chain, internal operations and customer interactions within just two years. Technology has thus been considered a temporary response to this global crisis where social gatherings and personal contact are considered a threat to human life. To meet the new demand of customers, it is highly important for corporates around India to adopt a new norm where businesses can be profitable. The only solution that has been seen successful is “Technology”. The current study is thus focused on answering the question, is technology a new normal for successful organizations? For this purpose, the focus has been given to software companies operating in India.

Methods: The methodology that has been adopted for this research is based on reviewing secondary studies related to the corporate sector in software companies of India. The secondary data has been collected and analyzed focusing on the adoption and acceptance of technology as a new norm for software companies, particularly in India. Both qualitative and quantitative studies have been a part of this study.

Findings: The study revealed that in order to remain competitive in the economic and new business environment after the COVID-19 crisis, software companies in India are moving more towards technology-based practices and strategies. Many studies have mentioned the strategic significance of technology and a critical component for a software business to remain cost-efficient. Some studies have also highlighted the fact that a virtual environment is more suitable for the current and coming era amid COVID-19.

Keywords: *Technology, COVID-19, New Normal Business Environment, Digitalization*

Introduction

In India, Information Technology (IT) is a vast sector that has recently developed in the past 2 decades comprising of consulting, outsourcing and software technology. According to the 2020 statistics, it has been seen that this sector accounted for 8% of the total GDP of India (Dev & Sengupta, 2020). This means that the overall IT sector has employed over 4.5 million people in India having the highest employee attrition rate. Despite witnessing that information technology services are in demand due to the changing digital ecosystem, yet a large number of IT experts leave companies frequently. This has remained the greatest concern for the Indian IT sector before the COVID-19 pandemic (India Today, 2021).

India is considered one of the largest IT services exporters in the contemporary global economy constituting about 79% of the Total Revenue of the industry. However, the domestic market is also significant, with robust revenue growth (Ghosh, Nundy & Mallick, 2020). Human life has been drastically disrupted due to the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic including the IT sector of India. According to The Economic Times (2020), many IT giants in India have seen a significant slowdown in growth during 2020 and 2021. Studies show that SMEs in India are widely affected due to the COVID-19 outbreak, mainly because of a lack of crisis management strategies, weak documentation mechanisms and a lack of flexible work strategies (Ghosh, Nundy & Mallick, 2020; Engidaw, 2020).

The study is important since it has highlighted the serious challenge in the contemporary practices of software and IT companies in India. The crisis has been generated to manage the workforce and to continue operating remotely in the time of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Study Significance

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Indian Information Technology Industry Outlook

India brand equity foundation (IBEF) recently presented a report on the outlook of Indian IT Industry, after getting affected greatly from COVID-19. Experts believe that the IT market in India continues to grow after recovering from blocked global sourcing. The pace of growth has become a little higher because, the loss was great and companies particularly software companies with foreign exports were at great loss (Alam et al., 2020). In 2019, before pandemic, India accounted for approximately 55% market share of worth 200 US dollars for sourcing is software services globally. Furthermore, IDC reported that the overall software market of India will grow 3.8% in 2020, seeing the enterprises relook and IT expenditure, amid COVID-19. Whereas; the market of software will grow at CAGR of 7.6% in the period of 2019-2024 (Satish et al., 2020).

Currently, the Indian industry has adopted more technology friendly approaches to manage its human, financial and technological resources, as a result of which it has achieved export revenue of 150 billion US dollars by the end of 2021. The pandemic has brought many opportunities for the Indian IT sector, for instance an intense need of 5G technology to provide high quality internet services and to run every kind of application from anywhere around the world. The demand to attain software that can manage remote interactions has increased. The business-to-business and business-to-consumer demands services that are remote friendly (Kansal, 2021).

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

Based on the given problem statement, the aim of the study is to view the use of technology as a new norm for business organizations in India. Following are the objectives set to be accomplished through this study:

1. To explore the challenges related to people management by software firms of India a new Normal after COVID-19 pandemic.
 - To identify the challenges related to Quick Communication.
 - To explore challenges related to Training & development of employee.
2. To determine the changes in business operations as a new normal after COVID-19 pandemic in Indian software companies.
 - To determine challenges of Business Linkages; such as B2B & B2C.
 - To Review before Covid-19, nature of Pre pandemic business operations.
 - To determine change in the nature of Post pandemic business operations.
 - To examine need of infrastructure for such changes in operations.
3. To identify technology is a new norm adopted by Indian software for increasing use of technology in post pandemic era.
 - Identifying Technology for remote working.
 - Recognizing Technology for customer use-awakening.

- Finding Field / Areas / Jobs – separation for use of technology & for use of manpower.

Methodology

The methodology that is adopted for this research includes reviewing the results of secondary data studies and researches done by health officials. The philosophy that has been adopted by researcher is pragmatism philosophy where outcomes are based on both reality and human belief to reach to a practical conclusion. The part of this methodology includes review of selected papers published during the period of 2019-2022 with respect to the Information Technology and software businesses in India. As per inclusion criteria, researcher specifically considered the secondary data from India in this research. The literature and the articles are only included that are based on COVID-19 pandemic. The sources of quantitative and qualitative data are from publications of articles interviews and surveys conducted earlier. The researcher adhered to the available data and information freely available and open to public. The confidential information and names of IT/software companies are not revealed in the study keeping in focus the ethical considerations.

DISCUSSION

Challenges to Indian IT Industry in People Management

Challenges in quick communication: The spread of pandemic Covid-19 has wreaked havoc on many facets of human existence, including the Indian IT sector. It has generated a never-before-seen challenge in the IT sector, particularly for people management working from home. In a new normal for Indian Software companies, employees are working remotely. Quick communication is done through using software like slack, Microsoft teams or Google hangouts (Goel, Sharma & Kashiramka, 2021). However, it is challenging at the same time as studies highlighted, people often do not respond to urgent messages.

They sometimes also face difficulty to get adjusted with the use of communication software. Hence, managers of IT software industry are facing issues with relevance to manage quick communication among employees. It has been identified that in times of uncertainty, people managers need to communicate more effectively. Executives in Software companies claimed that the owing to the wonders and abilities of technology, we have developed more confident towards a digital transformation of business and people management. As per their views, they are willing to invest more in technologies like cloud computing, AI, Block chain and IoT in order to recover from the loss amid COVID-19 (Goel, Sharma & Kashiramka, 2021).

Challenges of training & development of employees: Training and development of employees is an imperative part of Indian IT sector, particularly for new joiners, fresher and junior technology engineers. As per industry experts, they require comprehensive and intensive training on software development for attaining hands-on experience and domain-specific knowledge (Dhillon, 2020). However, in the new normal, training sessions have been shifted to online sessions, which is another big challenge in the view of IT industry experts. Virtual learning is not an ideal way to deliver technical training as per experts (Dhillon, 2020). New normal has made virtual training a way of delivering instructions to employees in Indian Software Companies that has become a new challenge to deal with.

Changes in business operations: Changes of Business Linkages; such as B2B & B2C. It has been identified that businesses are moving towards e-commerce; similarly, the Indian software companies are managing all its B2B and B2C trade by using digitalized mediums. The customers and partners are more focused to carry out businesses through e-commerce platforms using online channels for all financial transactions and mode of transportation through third-party logistics (Kansal, 2021).

Nature of Pre pandemic business operations: Before pandemic, the Indian software and Information technology industry was at peak. The software were mostly exported to foreign nations keeping in view the expertise in the field. Many businesses were successful across thenations, particularly in UK, US, Europe and Australia. The business operations and dealswere used to finalize by personally visiting the companies and checking the technology(Alam et al., 2020).

Nature of post pandemic business operations: In an interview, it has been discussed by the industry expert that “There is a significant decline in the overall software market because of the Covid-19 pandemic which is forcing enterprises to relook at their IT spends”. Many IT organizations throughout the world have shifted to work from home. Internationalization has slowed significantly (Dhillon, 2020). Over the last two decades, India's IT industry has been the country's most important driver of economic growth. It is critical in realizing the country'snumerous middle-class ambitions of achievement and ambitious vocations. However, owing to the Covid-19, participants in India's IT services would experience a major slowdown in growth this fiscal year. According to reports, top software exporters such as Tata Consultancy Services, Infosys, and HCL Technologies are being affected the most by decreased technology expenditure from customers in the US and Europe as a result of Covid-19lockdowns throughout the world, decreasing sales in the Indian IT industry (Dhillon, 2020).

Increasing use of technology in post pandemic era.

Need of infrastructure for such changes in operations: At this time, businesses are focusedon operational resiliency, return on investment (ROI), business continuity planning, anddeferring any non-critical initiatives for at least the next three to six months. However, there has been a rise in expenditure on remote work enablement and cloud adoption, implying that collaborative apps, application platforms, security software, system and service management software, and content workflow and management applications would be in high demand (Dadhe & Dubey, 2020). The pandemic crisis has brought a permanent change in the practices of IT businesses around the world. As per one survey, 55% IT experts affirmed that due to pandemic they had to make last moment modifications to their organizational plansand business strategy. Another survey showed that 60% IT experts affirmed “change in business approach through change management” and also “64% experts acknowledgingincreased process automation, that is shifting to more cloud-based business operations (Business Standard, 2021).

Technology for remote working: The findings of a study determined that COVID-19boosted the use of technology by both businesses and consumers around the world. This was due to local governments imposing restrictions on movement, remote working becoming the norm, and compliance requirements for local organizations (Alam et al., 2020). This fast technology adoption altered the way firms functioned. HR transformation is an excellent example, in which on boarding, training, and compensation were digitized to reflect worker realities during the pandemic. However, the results and outcomes have not been same for all companies. A study by Kansal (2021) revealed that employees in large organizations who were engaged in remote working for many days a week, had more positive view about remoteworking due to their experience. This was the reason they had better coping strategies and thus they had more technology acceptance. In comparison to other employees who were, less experienced felt demotivated and reluctant to the use of technology (Sathar et al., 2020).

Technology for customer-use awareness: In the new normal, the customers are beingmanaged through the technology by Indian software firms. Such as use of website Chabot, mobile applications to chat with company's

representative, online representative that is available 24/7 and also calling applications to remain connected with the customers. These companies are also utilizing the online platforms to make the customers aware with new products and services (Sathar et al., 2020).

Where to use technology & manpower: The IT firms in India have also observed change in terms of separating tasks for employees and technology. Many automated technology is used for managing customers with AI advance features while the technical areas where manpower is required is still being managed by employees even after the new normal amid COVID-19 (Business Standard, 2021).

Future prospects of IT industry.

On a positive note, the pandemic is expected to push more organizations worldwide to undergo digital transformations, which include shifting to digital technologies to manage many business functions, including business process and customer engagement. Many Indian

IT companies already offer these services. In the words of Pravin Rao COO at Infosys “We see long term opportunity as the focus on digital and core transformation gets accelerated.” There is no doubt that the world will drastically change with technology and innovation in the next 20 years. And as stakeholders in an IT companies its crucial to know which technologies to implement so your business can stay ahead of the competition and generate significant profits.

CONCLUSION

To figure out what business model the new normal requires, you need to ask basic questions about how you create and deliver value, who will partner with, and who your customers will be. As an example, let us look at how retail businesses should be adjusting to the demand shift to digital.

The main finding of the analysis points to Schumpeterian cleansing in which less productive firms are more likely to permanently shut down operations during COVID-19 crisis. Multivariate analysis confirms the results with the relationship between firm permanent exit and labor productivity being large, negative, and statistically significant after controlling for several firm characteristics as well as for the business environment.

Today, the debate appears to be centered on the significant demand challenges that enterprises will confront in the short to medium term, as well as what governments might do to alleviate the COVID-19 crisis. The current study was focused on the Information Technology sector in India with the special focus on the software companies. It has been observed that, considerable structural changes and new business models are unavoidable in the long run as the economy and society adjust to the paradigm shift. Companies and enterprises in India must comprehend these fundamental shifts in order to compete successfully once the current crisis has passed. The accepted narrative for IT industry contributing to the digital economy appears to be that there will be suffering in the near term, but enterprises will thrive in the long run with the acceleration of digital projects and adoption of cloud and automation services. After being severely impacted by COVID-19, analysts predict that the Indian IT industry will continue to expand as it recovers from banned global sourcing. The rate of growth has accelerated slightly since the loss was severe, and enterprises, particularly software firms with overseas exports, suffered greatly. However, there is a need to adopt to a new normal that is adoption of “Technology”.

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