
Emergent Changes in Work Practices: Its Impact to the Virtual Leadership and Management of the Mindanao State University At Naawan Officials

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to evaluate emergent changes in work practices and determine its impact to the virtual leadership and management of the Mindanao State University at Naawan officials. The study was participated by 30 faculty members of the College of Education and Social Sciences (CESS). Both adapted and adopted questionnaires were used in order to answer the research problem of this study. Percentage was the only statistical tool used in order to analyse and interpret the result of the study. Results revealed that due to world' crisis caused by COVID-19, respondents were able to identify the emergent changes of work practices in the new normal environment such as: (a) work concentration, (b) chances of burn-out, (c) work-related stress, (d) work-life balance, (e) connectedness of colleagues, (f) work efficiency, (g) professional development, and (h) overall job satisfaction. Further, with these factors effects towards the virtual management and leadership of the officials were also identified, where these emergent changes have certainly and positively affected the organizational culture of the officials. This study is recommending the future researchers to conduct further validation of the instruments in the Philippine set-up and expand the broader spectrum of the research so that best results can be gathered for future action plan being able to work well in the offices in the new normal work environments.

INTRODUCTION

Emergent changes in work practices caused by COVID-19 abruptly upended normal work routines, it also caused an acceleration of trends that were already underway involving the migration of work to online or virtual environments. A key difference when considering research on practices such as Work From Home (WFH) prior to the pandemic, though, is that WFH was previously often responsive to employee preferences but COVID-19 forced many into Mandatory Work From Home (MWFH). A Gartner (2020) survey of 229 Human Resources (HR) departments showed that approximately one-half of the companies had more than 80% of their employees working from home during early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic – and estimated substantial long-term increases for remote work after the pandemic. The need for millions of workers to WFH in response to COVID-19 has accelerated recent remote work trends facilitated by the rise of connectivity and communication technologies (Allen, Cho, & Meier, 2014).

The role of leaders to determine organizational outcomes that have a broad impact on employees at all levels is especially clear in the crucible of a crisis and certainly vital in fundamental ways (Antonakis & Day, 2017). With the COVID-19 crisis requiring millions of employees across different hierarchical levels to work from home, it is encouraging to note

that leadership can also work well from a distance (Antonakis & Atwater, 2002). Prior research shows that successful leaders are those skilled to make the right decisions and provide reassurance through a balanced mix of optimism and realism regarding the future. In other words, effective leaders strive (in any time period) to project vision – a symbolic state of affairs with which the collective identifies (Antonakis et al., 2016). Additionally, research indicates that the absence of traditional physical cues of dominance and status in virtual settings (Antonakis & Atwater, 2002) can foster more participatory relationships.

Research on the effectiveness of leaders during and after the COVID-19 crisis should examine an array of activities, including the degree to which remote leaders are persuasive if they (a) clearly state their values that will guide institutional actions; (b) understand and openly discuss the travails and hopes of their organizations; (c) clearly communicate an ambitious vision of the direction that the unit will head toward; and, (d) demonstrate confidence that strategic goals can be achieved. These skills are referred to as charisma (Antonakis, et al., 2016; Grabo, Spisak, & Van Vugt, 2017) and require training and investment. Indeed, crises can bring about changes in leadership styles (Stoker, Garretsen, & Soudis, 2019); thus, firms can expect to be better prepared by ensuring they have adequately invested in professional development. In this respect, future research should estimate if and how organizational commitments to employees' professional development during the COVID-19 crisis pay later dividends.

Among the more specific leader-subordinate activities that will be important to consider in relation to COVID-19 is how assessment and appraisal systems will function. For example, without being able to directly monitor subordinates in the way that office settings allow, there may be a shift to results-focused assessment, which prior research shows to be generally effective (Pritchard et al., 2008). Over longer spans of time, though, working remotely may reduce the opportunities for subordinates to gain feedback from leaders and prior research suggests that a lack of learning opportunities is associated with lower organizational commitment and higher risk of turnover (Vandenberghe et al., 2019). In addition, future research should examine how trust can be built remotely with online interactions so that newcomers are not disadvantaged due to the lack of face-to-face interactions with their leaders (Dunbar, 2018).

Thus this study is given of great importance in order to determine the emergent changes in work practices and evaluate its impact to the virtual leadership and management of the Mindanao State University at Naawan officials.

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative research design using descriptive analysis which aimed to determine the emergent changes in work practices and evaluate its impact to the virtual leadership and management of the Mindanao State University at Naawan officials. Quantitatively, both adopted and adapted survey questionnaires were used in the study in order to address the research problems and were distributed to the thirty (30) faculty members of Mindanao State University at Naawan. Percentage distribution was mainly used in order to analyze the data.

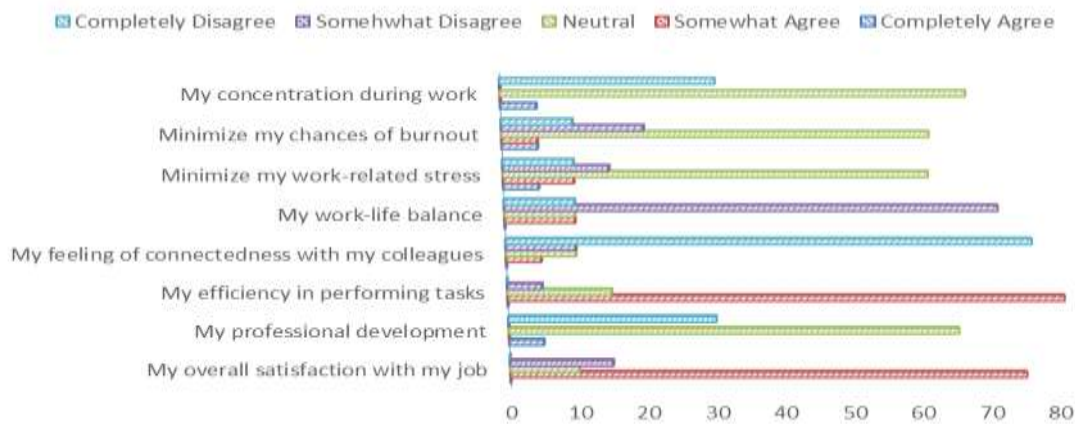


Figure 1. Percentage distribution on emergent changes in work practices among MSU-Naawan officials

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Emergent changes in work practices among MSU-Naawan officials

Figure 1 displays the percentage distribution in work practices among MSU-Naawan officials where it shows that majority of the responses from each item, it can be gleaned that their responses in terms of work concentration, chances of burnout, work-related stress, and professional development is neutral. This only means to conclude that somehow that the emergent changes in work practices during this pandemic have somehow affected them and the other way around. Due to these abrupt changed practices, some have said that they prefer to work face to face because they can interact well with their clients. The use of gadget made as well them stressed because of the radiation, many also have responded that with all these reasons especially the old-aged ones that they could not stay longer in their gadgets because facing their client over their gadgets stressed them out and some responded that due to low internet connectivity, they could not be able to carry out the content of their online conversations pertaining to meetings and instruction related matters.

Further, with regards to feeling connectedness to work with their colleagues, professional development, work-life balance, efficiency in work performance and overall satisfaction with jobs, the figure tells that despite the fact that the employees are working or transacting virtually many have responded that they still get somehow to connect with one another where they could still discuss matters over the net as to how to make things be placed into reality such as attending webinars in every fields, publishing of research works, and presenting online international conference.

Impacts of emergent changes in work practices to the virtual leadership and management among MSU-Naawan officials

Figure 2 shows the impacts of emergent changes in work practices to the virtual leadership and management among MSU-Naawan officials. As it can be seen the figure, the distribution

of responses reveal that these emergent changes in work practices have positively affected that virtual leadership and management of the officials for the reason that that online transactions provide short time span. This can be attributed to the claims of other faculty member that they have poor internet connections where they could not establish so much communication and interaction worth their colleagues during online discussions, then also many have claimed that they could not stay longer in the internet because this gives them so much stress due to radiation.

However, as to the virtual leadership of the officials, still they seldom get connected to their subordinates by just chatting all updates and instruction most of the time in the group chat but not as the same compared in face to face meeting and instruction where seldom online conference meeting is done.

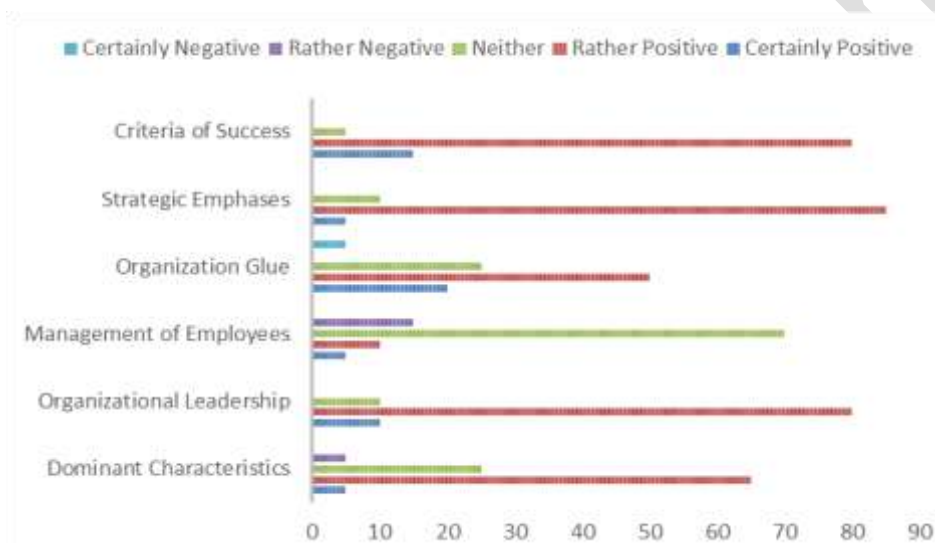


Figure 2. Percentage distribution on the impacts emergent changes in work practices to the virtual management and management among MSU-Naawan officials

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study concluded that somehow that the emergent changes in work practices during this pandemic have somehow affected them and the other way around. Due to these abrupt changed practices, some have said that they prefer to work face to face because they can interact well with their clients. Also, leaders seldom get connected to their subordinates by just chatting all updates and instruction most of the time in the group chat but not as the same compared in face to face meeting and instruction where seldom online conference meeting is done. Due to time constraint, this study limits participation of the respondents where this was only participated by thirty faculty members of the Mindanao State University at Naawan. This study is recommending the future researchers to conduct further validation of the instruments in the Philippine set-up and expand the broader spectrum of the research so that best results can be gathered for future action plan being able to work well in the offices in the new normal work environments.

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