

EXPLORING THE EXPECTATIONS OF HR PROFESSIONALS AMID THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN SRI LANKA

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted all businesses, creating a challenging environment for Human Resource (HR) professionals. Although the subject of HR professionals' expectations from their workplace has been thoroughly examined in other countries of the world, there is limited literature regarding the expectations of HR professionals concerning the COVID-19 pandemic in the Sri Lankan context. Therefore, the study aims to explore the expectations of HR professionals in Sri Lanka from their workplaces during the COVID-19 pandemic. The researchers applied the qualitative research approach and conducted sixteen (16) semi-structured interviews with HR professionals in Sri Lanka using the snowball sampling technique. The thematic analysis was applied to analyze the qualitative data gathered from semi-structured interviews. According to expert interviews, HR professionals in Sri Lanka expect to work in an on-premises and hybrid work culture. If the transformed work culture continues, they expect more for work-life balance practices, crisis management practices, financial incentives, career progress, and Work From Home (WFH) resources. The findings of this study will be beneficial for policymakers when implementing policies in the field of Human Resource Management (HRM). The study implies that, as a solution to current and future crises, organizations should develop crisis management practices and new policies for hybrid work models with the collaboration of HR professionals.

Keywords: COVID-19, Expectations of human resource professionals, Human resource management, Human resource practices