



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Management

RETHINKING COVID-19 OUTBREAK IMPACT

KEY WORDS: COVID-19, Pandemic, Lockdown, Stress Management, Spirituality, Economics, Human Resources Management.

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ABSTRACT

The world is going through a tough time and struggling with a pandemic COVID-19. An illness started from Wuhan city, now spread over almost all countries of the globe. Vaccination process is still going on and people will have to wait a long for complete eradication. Till then the only prevention is following social distancing, wearing mask, being in quarantine and isolation. World leaders are imposing lockdown in the countries with different intensity. In totality this is a challenging time, not just for the leaders, doctors, and police but for the normal people including private employees, daily wage earners and self employed individuals. Economic activities got a long halt. Every part of the population is getting affected. Emotions of stress, anxiety, anger, fear and frustration are obvious among people in this lockdown time. During this time Indian spirituality has been rebooted by many aspects. There is no doubt that India is the richest in its knowledge of Ayurveda, Ethos and Universe. Keeping this in mind existing literature of COVID-19 outbreak with special context to call for mental health and role of spiritual practices in mitigating the stress was searched with the help of different database. Published articles were represented in systematic form and summarize based on their methodologies and themes. So, this paper is trying to give a picture how with the help of Indian spiritual practices people can regain their faith and self-confidence since Indian Government is doing a lot with Ayurvedic preventions and connecting people with knowledge and peace by re telecasting great Indian tales like Ramayana, Mahabharata and Upanishad.

Objectives of the study: Following are the main objectives of this study-

- To investigate COVID-19 outbreak in India and its general impact on business and human.
- To study re conceptualization of business strategies during and after lockdown.
- To investigate need of mental health call in pandemic.
- To understand role of spirituality in stress management during COVID-19 outbreak.

1. INTRODUCTION

The world is facing one of its kind of turbulent times with pandemic covid-19. As discussed by (McKibbin & Fernando, 2020) global financial markets are strongly affected by the lockdown of all type of activities.

India too has come under the severe grip of it. During the lockdown period India has come to a standstill situation. People are inside their home for 21st March 2020. Here comes the role of Spirituality. The Government of India has started the telecast of epics Ramayana and Mahabharata. The purpose behind these is to reinforce the strong cultural values in the country. The family members need to be engaged in constructive activities. The Art of Living has started an online course free of cost for children aged 5-18. This is a good initiative. The various religious events like Dashamata, Gangaur, Mahaveer Jayanti, Chetichand and Ramdan have been celebrated individually although they are publicly celebrated.

In social media too the messages have taken a spiritual note. Everyone is concerned about their neighbor locality, city, district, state and above all for their country.

The community has become more united. The distribution of essential supplies reaching the needy has crossed the barrier of caste, creed and gender. Hence it is reflecting the greatest good for people. The Humane side is visible in every nook and corner of the country.

1.1 Background of the Study

We live in a global village where not just the virus is spreading all over but anxiety and stress are also touching everyone's life. We need to learn lessons from previous pandemic as well. Similarly, (Baldwin & Mauro, 2020) spotted light on previous history of pandemic and its impact on the world. Asian flu (1957-58), Avian flu (2009), SARS (2002-03), MERS (2012),

EBOLA (2018-19) are the fatal illness which directly or indirectly affected economics of world. The pandemic creates economic crisis as in this globalized world everything is interconnected via goods, services, human resources, capital, international banking, exchange rates, foreign direct investment etc.

Stress among the people has increased due to several reasons like a sudden pandemic attack, lockdowns, layoffs, work from home, flooded information on social media platforms etc.

1.2 Relevance and Scope of the Study

It is quite visible that COVID-19 has economical, physical, social and psychological impact. In India ICMR (Indian Council of Medical Research) and their medical team are doing their best inspecting physical health of people. Economical impact has been studied widely in different geographical area and much research has been going on. Socially people are getting affected as it is mandatory to have social distancing.

Psychological impact can vary as every individual has different capacity to cope with anxiety and stress. There is a need to study psychological impact with special context to human resources management and how spiritual practices can mitigate those negative effects.

It can provide hypotheses to test the relationship between stress management and role of Indian spiritual practices. Scholars can precede this study further to identify different sentiment levels during and after lockdown.

1.3 Research Gaps Identified

On the basis of systematic review of literature it was found that COVID-19 impact has been studied with the context of economics, business, social and physical health and following are the gaps that needed to be filled:

- There are little studies about mental health during pandemic and there is no study regarding spiritual practices as human resource management strategies in such global emergency situation.
- The available studies have been originated from only a few geographical areas and hence experience of other affected population is not reflected.
- There is no local study particularly in Rajasthan about sentiments of people during this pandemic.

2. Conceptual Framework

This part of study includes a methodology, search process, selection criteria and review process, systematic representation of literature review and results. Following is the framework of the current article:

- (a) Research Design: Exploratory Research
- (b) Research Question: To find out role of Indian spiritual practices in stress management during COVID-19 outbreak
- (c) Sources of Data and Information: Secondary Sources
- (d) Tools and Techniques: Literature Review
- (e) Type of Literature Review: Systematic Representation
- (f) Type of review technique: Methodological and thematic analysis
- (g) Analysis & evaluation: Qualitative

2.1 Methodology

To examine the role of Indian spiritual practices in stress management during this outbreak of COVID-19, we conducted a systematic review of literature to identify previous qualitative and quantitative studies. The potential contribution of this study is to map the field of role of spiritual practices with special reference to COVID-19 outbreak. This study synthesizes the state of knowledge and creates an agenda for further research by using Cooper's Taxonomy.

2.1.1 Search Process

This study is exploratory in nature and review based (secondary data sources) in which studies from SSRN (Social Science Research Network), Elsevier (Global Information Analytics Business), Harvard Business Review, The Lancet journal, Google Scholar and other internet sources have been cited. Relevant key words were used to identify research articles: COVID-19, Pandemic, Lockdown, Stress Management, Spirituality, Economics, and Human Resources Management. Studies published from month January-2020 to April-2020 were included for analysis.

2.1.2 Selection Criteria and Review Process

The current article is systematic representation of existing literature on COVID-19 outbreak in India, its general impact on business and human, re conceptualization of business strategy, mental health symptoms due to downing business and lockdown and role of spiritual practices.

The first stage was to identify articles from key words and from reference work. Second stage was to screen those articles which were duplicates, published in Chinese language and not in HR context. Now full text articles which were more in medical context like drugs, medicines, vaccination were removed deciding their eligibility. Finally, remaining articles were included for literature review and qualitative synthesis. We reviewed total 26 studies in this research paper.

2.2 Systematic Representation of Literature Review

The process of selecting 26 articles out of 51 went through a rigorous process. Figure 3.1 depicts a systematic representation of literature review that is compiled by researcher. First, 32 articles were identified from selected key words and 19 articles were identified from reference work. Total 51 studies were identified for this particular study. Second, 8 duplicate studies were removed in screening process. When we went through 43 studies from its abstract, 10 studies were excluded. Out of those 10 studies, 3 were

published in Chinese language (due to lack of knowledge about this language) and 7 were not in HR context. Third, 33 studies were found eligible for screening by full text and 7 studies were excluded as it was purely in medical context e.g. use of drugs, medicines and vaccination in laboratories. Finally, total 26 articles were included for review of literature and qualitative synthesis.

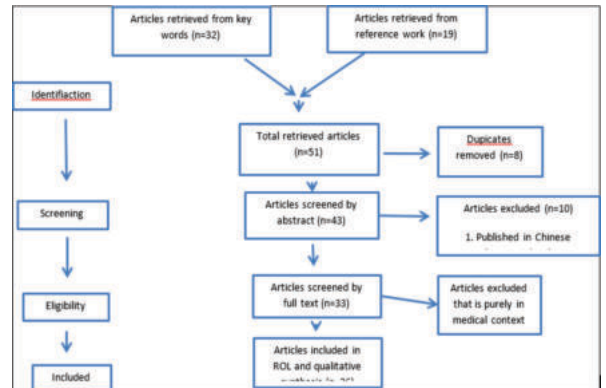


Figure 3.1 Systematic Representation of Literature Review

Source: Compiled by Researcher

2.3 Methodological and Thematic Analysis of Selected Articles

3.3.1 Methodological Analysis

The remaining 26 articles were used in this study. Out of these 26 articles we found only one article that is a longitudinal study. Majority of articles were predictive studies based on observations. Other articles were qualitative in nature. Articles included in current study also follow trends of empirical research and social media surveys.

For systematic representation of literature review studies have been categorized into five parts: (a) Studies Addressing COVID-19 outbreak in India (b) Literature Related to General Impact of COVID-19 on Business and Human (c) Studies on Re Conceptualization of Business Strategies (d) Literature Addressing COVID-19 and a Call for Mental Health (e) Studies on Role of Spiritual Practices in Stress Management.

As we have studied COVID-19 outbreak with special reference to India, majority of published articles which were used in this study is from India only (11 articles out of 26, 42.3%). Remaining majority of articles is from Chinese center and others from Malaysia, Spain, and London & USA.

3.3.2 Thematic Analysis

The studies show that people in India have faith in government policies but issues of daily wage are still in doubtful situation. People are inclined towards Indian traditional medicinal practices. Studies suggested learning of Indian government from international movements & importance of Indian medicinal systems.

Other studies show impact on economics and business. e.g. predictive graphical pattern in economic recession in global pandemic, impact on crypto currencies and crude oil prices & economic channels.

Emotions of stress, anxiety, anger, fear and frustration are obvious among people in this lockdown time. Mental health is often stigmatized. Working women, adolescent, daily wage earners, migrant workers and self employed population including salaried employees are most likely to be affected.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Studies Addressing COVID-19 Outbreak in India

There are 74,292 COVID-19 infected people in India till the date this section of the article was written (13th May, 2020)

according to WHO report. The studies show that people in India have faith in government policies but issues of daily wage are still in doubtful situation. People are inclined towards Indian traditional medicinal practices.

There are two qualitative studies in this sort; one suggested learning of Indian government from international movements. As discussed by (Krishnakumar & Rana, 2020) COVID-19 has become a huge challenge for India but due to government intellect and programs it can be ended soon. But the other side is very disturbing where daily wage earners can't afford this lockdown and social distancing.

Other qualitative study suggested importance of Indian medicinal systems encountering global health care needs. In the opinion of (Vellingiri, et al., 2020) Traditional Indian medicinal practices are attracting not just Indian people but many from the globe. Mainly it includes Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani and Yoga, Naturopathy and Homeopathy, which are successfully practiced for treating various fetal diseases.

The other two studies were empirical in nature. It is summarized as follows:

(Tomar & Gupta, 2020) utilized an exploration in which an information - driven anticipating strategy was utilized to appraise the prescient number of positive instances of COVID - 19 in India. The specialists likewise contemplated the impact of prudent steps like social detachment, isolate, utilization of cover, staying away from of get-togethers and lockdown has additionally been seen which shows that by these preventive measures, spread of the infection can be diminished fundamentally.

(Barkur, Vibha, & Kamath, 2020) used social media platforms to analysis (24,000 tweets) sentiments of Indian population after the announcement of lockdown. Overwhelmingly they concluded that majority of Indians are positively fighting against the COVID19 outbreak. Also, majority of Indians feel that whatever the government is taking steps (especially lockdown) against this pandemic war, will definitely help in flattening the curve.

Three out of four articles were originated from southern part of India. We were not able to retrieve studies from other affected part of India.

3.2 Literature Related to General Impact of COVID-19 on Business and Human

In this particular section six out of seven studies were predictive based on observations. There are two studies showing vulnerable groups not just on human side but for industries also. It is quite apparent that in this panic time, companies are suffering a lot from stopping activities of manufacturing, supply chains to keeping their employees safe and mentally healthy. Almost every part of the population is getting affected but if we talk about most vulnerable groups, this can be a topic of discussion.

In the opinion of (Borah, et al., 2020) there are five most vulnerable groups in India who is going to get most affected during this pandemic.

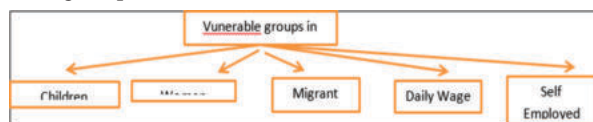


Figure 4.1 Vulnerable Groups during COVID-19 Outbreak in India

Apart from above stated groups salaried employees who are not directly affected by this crisis but they are going to have hardships.

(Nicola, et al., 2020) argued that most likely affected areas

are primary sectors which involve industries relate to extraction of raw materials e.g. agriculture, petroleum and oil, secondary sectors involved in production of finished goods e.g. manufacturing industry and tertiary sectors including service industries e.g. education, finance industry etc.

Other studies show impact on economics and business e.g. predictive graphical pattern in economic recession in global pandemic, impact on crypto currencies and crude oil prices & economic channels.

It is a crisis that has started rewriting the future of business and financial activities since it economic activities is now stagnant in temporarily period. (Ruiz Estrada, 2020) represented graphical sequences of economic recession due to any pandemic or sudden environmental crisis. Their investigation deciphers that how monetary downturn due to COVID-19 can harm five unique business sectors financial hotspots viz. East Asia (Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and Hong Kong), China, ASEAN(The Association of Southeast Asian Nations), United States and the European Union (EU).

Due to health issues it can be predicted that people will now switch to digital currencies. But apart from digital currencies crypto currencies like bit coin can play a significant role. Similar study done by (Jabotinsky, 2020) And suggested that this global crisis can make people to switch from traditional currencies to crypto currencies. Crypto currencies may be related to economic activity and, still there is a lack of sufficient regulation. It can be subjected to manipulations by investors, so that they cannot run away from the fate of traditional markets. The researchers analyzed data on the top 100 Crypto currencies in the market, it was found that the inflow of identified COVID-19 cases is significantly associated with the market cap and trade volume of Crypto currencies.

(Fernandes, 2020) spotted light on economic channels through which economic activity got affected. Due to lockdowns there is lesser consumption, halted manufacturing and production, damaged global supply chains, many companies are shutting down and layoffs. He also argued this global emergency is not similar to previous pandemics. Countries with service oriented economics will get more affected.(Yilmazkuday, 2020) explored relating impacts on the worldwide financial movement estimated by the Baltic Exchange Dry Index (BDI) by utilizing day by day passing information of COVID-19. The observational outcomes dependent on a basic vector auto relapse including raw petroleum costs propose that a week by week increment of 1; 000 in every day worldwide COVID-19 passing brings about 10% of a total decrease in BDI following multi week and 22% of a total decrease following three months.

The impacts of worldwide COVID-19 passing on COP are demonstrated to be immaterial, where the oil value plunge of March 2020 generally agrees with the relating OPEC contradiction. In the view of (Goodell, 2020) The COVID-19 emergency is educating speculators, strategy creators and general society everywhere that cataclysmic events can perpetrate financial harm on a formerly extraordinary scale. Not at all like occasions, for example, worldwide atomic war, which isn't survivable thus of no applicable expense, or occasions, for example, environmental change that are much more slow moving, or restricted calamities that make overflow and market responses, the COVID-19 pandemic is causing a direct worldwide damaging financial effect that is available in each territory of the globe.

The studies included in this particular section only involve a general impact of this pandemic on human and business. There could be deeper impact which causes stress and anxiety among people. For this purpose there is a need to rethink about building business strategies keeping in the mind it also can be psychologically exhausting.

3.3 Studies on Re Conceptualization of Business Strategies

All four studies in this particular section are qualitative in nature. There are no descriptive studies we found in this sort where we want to rethink about building new business strategies during and after lockdown. It is necessary to learn lessons from previous global emergencies as this pandemic is drastically going to change the way people work.

Three out of four studies were from Harvard Business School showing that other parts of globe still to work on re conceptualization of business strategies. These three studies are as follows:

(Naidoo, 2020) planned for enabling groups to all the more likely react to changing client and serious dangers. He proposed a seven key systems and approaches with establishes in military technique that are educated in driving Agile and methodology programs:

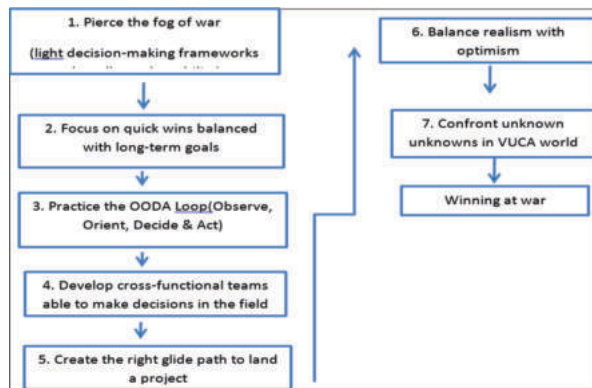


Figure 4.2 Agile Methodology to Combat COVID-19
Source: Harvard Business Review

According to (Gerdman, 2020) There is more work from home to reduce human contact and maintain hygiene, reduced travels, work in virtual teams, shift from static organizational structures to dynamic teams, to work in a remote world with Zoom, Slack or Skype. In the view of (Chohan, 2020) the corona virus outbreak of year 2019-20 has left everyone including not just governments but also the civil society with disruptions and damage that shall definitely heal but at differing intervals, dimensions and degrees around the globe. The further economic policies may be formulated on the basis of lessons drawn from the COVID-19 outbreak.

Another study proposes a model for re constructing business strategies with special context to economics and this study was originated from China.

India is still lacking in the research related to re conceptualization of business strategies after COVID-19 outbreak.

1.5 Literature Addressing COVID-19 and a Call for Mental Health

In this particular section out of 9 studies, four studies are predictive based on observations, three studies were in qualitative nature, one is online survey and other is longitudinal study.

The global emergency when increased layoffs and lockdowns are creating a medium for lower income for everyone as a part of global population. Apart from economics it directly affects the mental situation of a human being. The psychological, physical, economical and social impacts are quite visible and pervasive. The vulnerable groups as discussed earlier women, child, adolescent, daily wage earners, migrant workers and self employed population are likely to be more affected. But we can't deny the fact that the true warriors say Doctors, medical staff, police, bankers, sweepers and other

government officials are also getting mentally affected during this pandemic. India needs to focus on this side of pandemic. Since in the opinion of (Rajkumar, 2020) impact of this global pandemic is likely to be more on where mental health care infrastructures are less developed.

(Holmes, et al., 2020) There is an earnest requirement for exploration to address the impact of rehashed pandemic-related media utilization and to enhance wellbeing informing around COVID-19. Meeting people's high expectations will require mix across orders and areas, including industry and wellbeing and social consideration.

(Roy, Tripathy, Kar, Sharma, Verma, & Kaushal, 2020) conducted an online survey (semi structured questionnaire and non-probability snowball sampling) with 662 respondents from Indian population. In this examination, rest troubles, neurosis about getting COVID-19 disease and stress related to social media were accounted for in 12.5 %, 37.8 %, and 36.4 % members individually. The apparent mental human services need was found in more than 80 % of members. In the view of (Chatterjee, Malathesh, & Mukherjee, 2020) due to country wide lockdown there is likely to increase illness like Anxiety Disorder, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, Recurrent Depressive Disorder, chronic insomnia and even suicide. Quarantine can lead to feelings of fear, anxiety, and panic about worse possible outcome, boredom and loneliness and guilt about not being there for family.

(Wang, et al., 2020) led a longitudinal report on 1738 respondents from 190 Chinese urban areas. In their examination it was noticed that moderate-to-extreme pressure, tension and wretchedness were in 8.1%, 28.8% and 16.5%, individually.

(DePierro, Lowe, & Katz, 2020) recommended that Mental wellbeing observing, early ID of in danger people, and therapy independent of budgetary boundaries are fundamental for limiting constant misery.

In the opinion of (Senz, 2020) developing open spotlight on wellbeing estimates will drive significant changes over an assortment of enterprises, however particularly in movement and accommodation. There is also a need of behavioral economics as (Haushofer & E. Metcalf, 2020) emphasized on behavioral economics in this outbreak. The speed required to educate mediations on time-scales applicable to the momentum COVID-19 pandemic is testing, however ground-breaking conduct intercessions are regularly strikingly easy to convey, the exploration apparatuses required to suitably decipher their belongings are accessible, and the prizes of will be extensive.

A professor from Harvard Business School (Brooks, 2020) suggested three equations for a happy work life at home during lockdown:

- > EQUATION 1: SUBJECTIVE WELL BEING = GENES + CIRCUMSTANCES + HABITS
- > EQUATION 2: HABITS = FAITH + FAMILY + FRIENDS + WORK
- > EQUATION 3: SATISFACTION = WHAT YOU HAVE + WHAT YOU WANT

Figure 4.3 Equations for Happy Work life at Home

In this lockdown period when everyone is rushing to be more productive at home, it also creates a factor for stress. For working women to manage a household while doing office work at home may be very stressful. Also some self employed people who are going through a mental trauma losing their business and thinking about rejoining their office. Education services may be interrupted for a while but online education is the new future. So there are many factors which create psychological factors that leaders and managers must think about.

In the next section we have included role of spiritual practices to mitigate stress in this pandemic.

4.6 Studies on Role of Spiritual Practices in Stress Management during Pandemic

Social separating doesn't need to mean social disengaging, and we can even now discover approaches to interface with companions, family, and other people who motivate us or make us giggle with the boundless capability of the web. Indian spiritual gurus like Devdutt Patnaik, Sri Sri Ravishankar, Deepak Chopra and many more are guiding people on social media platforms and through newspapers.

Some studies show the significance of Indian medicinal system for a happy, healthy and peaceful life. As (Gupta, 2020) suggested to improve immunity with the help of Ayurveda like Panchkarma, herbs and by honoring nature. By doing Yoga and Meditation one can be panic free.

Yoga and meditation have been a source of attraction from India since ages. As it was stated by (Press Trust of India, 2020), that US medical schools are now recommending Indian spiritual practices Yoga, Meditation and controlling breathing to be free from anxiety of this pandemic. Also, Asana, Dhyan and Pranayama are helping so much in mitigating the negative mental health impacts.

If we go deeper to these practices, they are very narrative and descriptive to be understood. One needs to have knowledge of Vedas and Dharma.

(Sekhsaria, 2020) suggested following spiritual practices to cope up with anxiety and stress caused due to this global health emergency:

- Remembering the principles of Dharma satya (truth), ahimsa (non-harming), karuna (compassion), and aparigraha (non-greed).
- Soothing music (Bhajana), Art and Bhakti can reduce the stress.
- Bhakti Yoga, Janna Yoga, Raj Yoga, Karma Yoga may be helpful to get contentment and peace.

The Art of Living also suggested methods to build immunity like intakes of Giloy, Amla, Tulsi, turmeric, black pepper, panchgavya and lowering the sugar in food. Yoga and Pranayama also help in building immunity and lung strength.

The well known spiritual guru **Deepak Chopra** in a video suggested that this pandemic has global health so hard that all passengers including in first class, are literally in a same boat. People need a new way to be happy based on well being. Responses of COVID-19 outbreak can be seen physically (self isolation, social distancing and testing), mentally that is being experienced personally and spiritually.

4. Synthesis of the Study

This study is trying to depict a picture about role of Indian spiritual practices in mitigating stress created in this outbreak. For this purpose we conducted a systematic representation of literature review as the study is exploratory in nature. Total 51 articles were considered for the study out of those duplicates, articles which were not in HR context, purely in medical context were removed. At last total 26 articles were synthesized for the current study. A conceptual framework was constructed in which there is a methodology and results were added. This study is categorized into five parts: (a) Studies Addressing COVID-19 outbreak in India (b) Literature Related to General Impact of COVID-19 on Business and Human (c) Studies on Re Conceptualization of Business Strategies (d) Literature Addressing COVID-19 and a Call for Mental Health (e) Studies on Role of Spiritual Practices in Stress Management.

5. Managerial Implications and Conclusions

It is clear from the above literature review is that apart from economic and physical impact of COVID-19 outbreak, mental health is also being taken into consideration. The only limitation is that quality and quantity is very low in this particular area. Also, articles of mental health care are mostly in medical context like usage of drugs and practices on vaccination etc. There is a huge lacuna in management filed where studies like stress management during a pandemic must be done. So there is both a challenge and opportunity for managers, leaders and HR practitioners for making their employees mentally fit so that once they rejoin their office after the end of the pandemic a new and fresh energy can enter. The challenge is to address about mental health as it has always been stigmatized since ages and the opportunity is to implement cures in the form of standard spiritual practices.

There is also a need of studies from other affected population from different geographical areas for vulnerable groups. Children, women, daily wage earners and self employed people are getting mentally and physically affected but collegiate students, medical workforce, and old age people are not far away from these hitting waves of pandemic.

In this whole scenario role of Indian spiritual practices becomes significant as physical sickness can be converted into soul sickness. There is a need to do pilot studies and conducting workshops for well being of the employees.

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