

**GHANA INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISM  
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH**



**EXAMINING THE PERCEIVED EFFECTS OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON THE  
MANAGEMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES IN ORGANIZATIONS: THE CASE OF GCB  
BANK**

**LEO HARRY KYEREMATENG**

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BANK**

**BY  
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**THIS DISSERTATION IS SUBMITTED TO THE GHANA INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISM  
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF MA IN  
DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION.**

**OCTOBER 2021**

**DECLARATION**

**CANDIDATE’S DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my original research, and that no part of it has been presented for another (degree or diploma) in this institute or elsewhere. I am solely responsible for any shortcomings.

.....

.....

**LEO HARRY KYEREMATENG**

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**SUPERVISOR’S DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that the preparation of this dissertation was supervised by me in accordance with the guidelines of supervision of dissertation laid down by Ghana Institute of Journalism.

.....

.....

**DR. DANIEL ODOOM**

**DATE**

**(SUPERVISOR)**

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this study first to my beloved wife, Mrs. Rita Kuukua Kyeremateng. Again, I dedicate this research to my three boys; Obed, Jesse and David.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This work cannot be completed without the acknowledgement of some very important people who contributed immensely to the success and completion of the study. First, I would like to thank my supervisor Dr. Daniel Odoom, for his dedication, commitment, guidance and constructive criticisms throughout the research work. Also, to Ms. Marie-Antoinette Kafui Appiah and Mr. Francis Owusu, my Team members at work, who supported me by sitting in for me and carrying out my official duties in my absence whenever I had to concentrate on my academic work. Thank you very much and God bless you for such timely help.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The study mainly sought to investigate the perceived effect of Covid-19 on the management of human resources in organizations using GCB Bank Limited as a case study. Specifically, the study sought to: explore the perception of employees with respect to the Covid-19 pandemic and their work life; examine the perceived effect of the pandemic on Recruitment and Selection at GCB Bank Limited; determine the perceived effect of the pandemic on staff training and development in the organization; ascertain the perceived effect of the pandemic on employee motivation in the organization; examine the perceived effect of the pandemic on employee retention in the organization and to ascertain how the pandemic has affected communication in the organization. The theoretical grounding of this study was derived from the human capital theory, the contingency theory and the institutional theory. The study adopted a descriptive survey approach and was purely quantitative in nature. The population of the study comprised all employees of GCB Bank at the banks head office. Eight (80) employees were sampled out for the study using the convenience sampling method. A questionnaire was chosen as the data collection instrument. Statistical Product for Service Solutions (v.20.0) was used in the processing of primary data gathered. Frequencies, percentages and ANOVA were used data analysis. The study identified a positive relationship between the Covid-19 and recruitment and selection in the Organization. Also, a positive relationship between the Covid-19 and staff training and development. Similarly, the study found that a positive relationship between the Covid-19 and communication in the Organization. However, there was no significant relationship between Covid-19 and employee motivation and retention. The study recommended that HRM strategies need to move beyond the conventional models of human resources management by making modern information technology a vital partner to thrive and assure corporate sustainability.

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Background of the Study

The COVID-19 pandemic emerged in China in late 2019, and the initial impact for most organizations in the West and African Countries was experienced as a challenge to supply chains in early 2020. On 11 March 2020 the World Health Organization declared a global pandemic and the impact on workers and workplaces globally came into focus. These impacts were profound. By late March, 81% of all workers lived in countries with recommended or required workplace closures and at the end of June 2020, 93%, of the world's workers resided in countries with some type of workplace closure measure remaining in place (ILO, 2020). While the roll out of vaccines in early 2021 offers some optimism, the outlook for work and employment remains uncertain at the time of writing. However, the impact of the pandemic has been profound and the experience has been one of continuous change for nations, organizations and individual employees.

Organizations suddenly have to navigate the unprecedented and thereby find new solutions to challenges arising across many areas of their operations (Joel B. Carnevale, Isabella Hatak, 2020). No Business or Organization can claim a zero effect or impact of this pandemic on their operations. Effect on businesses could be positive or negative, depending on the type of Business that we wish to project. Example here will be a Business that deals with the production of face /nose masks. This Business will generally have a positive impact being recorded. On the contrary, Businesses like the Hotels and Tourism Industries have a different story to tell. For example, in Ghana, among the worst hit are hotels, restaurants, bars and airline businesses. “Hotel occupancy rates are down from 70% to under 30% and staff are being sent home (Deri M. Nuong, Iddrisu W. Abdul, Wireko-Gyeib Sampson, Zaaie Perpetual, Mohammed Faiz Afzal, 2020).

According to Rabha (2021), the Human Resources Department is the heart of an organization. He further went on to explain this assertion by saying that all primary employee-centric needs are taken care of by the Human Resources Department. He further mentioned that HR ensures that the workflow stays smooth and everyone stays updated with the organization's policies and requirements. What sets this crisis apart from previous global crises is that, fundamentally, the COVID-19 crisis is a human one. While the global economic recession of a decade ago was, fundamentally, a financial one, with the response led by Chief Finance Officers at the organizational level, the current crisis is at its core a human one, placing human resources (HR) leaders in the central role of enabling organizations to exit the crisis successfully (Caligiuri et al., 2020; Collings et al., 2021; Economist, 2020; Reimer & Bryant, 2020)

It can be argued that how the HR function responds to the challenges of the crisis and its role in mapping the exit route from the crisis are likely to shape the trajectory of the function for decades to come. The pandemic creates an unprecedented opportunity to elevate the status of the HR function in organizations where it has struggled to gain status and to reinforce the influence of the function in those where it already enjoys legitimacy (Collings, Nyberg, Wright & McMackin, 2021).

### **1.1 Problem Statement**

The impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic is unprecedented. At an organizational level, the crisis has been hugely disruptive, complex and fraught with ambiguity for leaders. The crisis is fundamentally a human one, making human resource (HR) leaders central in enabling organizations to manage through and ultimately exit the crisis successfully. The pandemic has affected the Management of Human Resources in organizations in many ways. Scholars including (Akkermans, Richardson & Kraimer, 2020; Campello, Kankanhalli & Muthukrishnan, 2020; Maurer, 2020; Ngoc Su et al., 2021; Spurk & Straub, 2020) have established that Covid-19 pandemic has affected Human Resource Management functions such as Recruitment and Selection, Training and

Development, Employee Welfare, Retention and Communications in many organizations. It is generally believed that the prevailing situation could impede organizations' abilities to meet their set goals if no strategic measures are employed to turn things around.

Even though a number of studies have been conducted on the impact of pandemic, on Human Resource Management worldwide, not much research has been undertaken to highlight the situation as pertains in Ghana. The paucity of knowledge in the context of Ghana imposes a heavy duty on researchers especially within the country to help in providing empirical literature to deepen global knowledge on the pandemic from the perspective of Ghana. It is against this background that this research sought to examine the perceived effects of the pandemic on Human Resource Management in organizations in Ghana using the GCB Bank Limited (Head Office) as a case in order to suggest measures for improvement.

## **1.2 General Objective of the Study**

The study mainly sought to examine the perceived effect of Covid-19 on the management of human resources in organizations using GCB Bank Limited as a case study.

### **1.2.1 Specific Objectives of the Study**

The study sought to:

1. Explore the perception of employees with respect to the Covid-19 pandemic and their work life.
2. Examine the perceived effect of the pandemic on Recruitment and Selection at GCB Bank Limited.
3. Determine the perceived effect of the pandemic on staff training and development in the organization.
4. Ascertain the perceived effect of the pandemic on employee motivation in the organization.
5. Examine the perceived effect of the pandemic on employee retention in the organization.

6. Determine how the pandemic has affected communication in the organization.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

The following questions were explored:

1. What are the perceptions of employees of GCB Bank on Covid-19 and their work life?
2. What is the perceived effect of the pandemic on recruitment and selection in the organization?
3. What is the perceived effect of the pandemic on staff training and development in the organization?
4. What is the perceived effect of the pandemic on employee motivation in the organization?
5. What is the perceived effect of the pandemic on employee retention in the organization?
6. How has the pandemic affected communication in the organization?

### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

The main objective of this study was to establish the effects of Covid-19 on the various functions of HR in Financial Institutions in Ghana, using GCB Bank Limited, the largest indigenous Bank with over One Hundred and Eighty Branches across the nation. Some of these functions are: Recruitment and Selection function, Training and Development and Employee Welfare functions. Covid-19 is a novel pandemic which has comparatively lesser number of researches and so this research will give opportunity to most businesses to be able to resolve human resource issues that confront organizations in the wake of pandemics such as Covid-19. Again and as we have all once heard: communication is the life-blood of every organization and so without it, organizations will generally perform abysmally. It is therefore important to find out the most effective communication tools and approaches to be adopted in organizations, in times of a pandemic outbreak like Covid-19.

### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

While most researches on Covid-19 have dwelt on the negative health challenges or problems related to Covid-19 pandemic, the impact of the pandemic on the functions of Human Resources has not been well propagated. The scope of the study was limited to using about Eighty (80) staff of GCB Bank Limited to complete questionnaires, which involved about sixty (60) questions to gather information about effects of the pandemic on the various functions of HR in GCB Bank Limited. On the average, the period of questioning by the use of the questionnaire as noted above were executed within a period of thirty (30) days.

### **1.6 Limitation of the Study**

Some limitations that I anticipate to encounter with this research are as follows: Lack of previous research studies on the topic. This is because Covid-19 is a novel pandemic and so if even there exists a number of research work on Covid-19 in general, the specific research topic that is being studied now relates to the HR Department, which is not one that has been researched into extensively. It was therefore difficult to get adequate study materials. Again, there exists limited time to research into this topic. This research should take a minimum of 6 months, however actual time that will be available to work within is 5 months. Another limitation may be access to data from the Bank. The Bank may seem reluctant to give out some details concerning their profitability status and other issues that may have been affected by Covid-19.

### **1.7 Organization of the Study**

The research comprises of five chapters. The chapter one will give introduction of the research with definitions and explanation of certain key words and concept. The chapter two will explain and analyze the relevant literature relating to the research. The chapter three will discuss the methodology, organizational framework, etc. The result of the interviews and questionnaires will be discussed in

chapter four whiles the chapter five summarizes and concludes the research with the necessary recommendations.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter conducts a thorough assessment of the pertinent literature in order to situate the investigation within an acceptable theoretical framework, conceptual issues and empirical review. It also provides a summary of the major issues reviewed in the chapter.

#### **2.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The study was undergirded by the Human Capital Theory, Contingency Theory and Institutional Theory.

##### ***Human Capital Theory***

The idea of human capital was suggested by Schultz (1961) and refined by the Nobel prize-winning economist Gary S. Becker in his key work on the economics of employer funded training (1962, 1964). Human capital theory proposes that education or training transmits relevant information and skills to employees which in turn enhance their productivity and earnings (Becker, 1964). Becker distinguishes between specific human capital and general human capital. Specific human capital encompasses knowledge obtained through education and training which is specific to a particular firm (firm-specific or context-specific abilities). General human capital (general skills), on the other hand, is information obtained via education and training which is beneficial across board (e.g., reading and writing).

Becker regards human capital as comparable to "physical means of production", e.g., factories and machines: one may invest in human capital (through education, training, medical treatment) and one's outputs rely partially on the rate of return on the human capital one possesses. Thus, human capital is a method of production, into which more investment generates additional output. A number of writers have challenged the human capital theory for being overly simple in its study of employee

productivity and have claimed that education alone cannot contribute to organisational productivity but must be supported by other elements. Levin and Kelley (1994) have pointed out that economists and other social scientists have overstated the payoffs from higher education and overlooked complementary inputs such as, training, contract conditions, and management practices which must exist for education to boost productivity.

According to Thurow (1975), productivity is primarily characteristic of occupations rather than of people; businesses utilize academic credentials to choose workers since more educated workers can be taught for certain tasks more rapidly and at a lesser cost than their less-educated colleagues. Spence (1973) further believes that education may simply be a market signal of the future productivity of a person as there is rarely any other method for companies to determine the productive qualities of a worker. Notwithstanding these critiques, “Becker’s human capital theory has remained robust and still remains the major theoretical construct that is utilized for analyzing human capital investment, both from the standpoint of the person and the firm” (Bassi & McMurrer, 2006).

### ***Contingency Theory***

Contingency theory is built on the idea of organisations as social systems, generated a more complete picture of behaviour of people at work based on interaction of a variety of elements, such as structure, tasks, technology and the environment. Contingency theorist views were founded on what was acceptable in specific circumstances; where the influence on individuals of one variable was contingent on its interaction with one or more others (Cole, 2004). In the contingent approach to management, various contexts and conditions demand different management techniques. Proponents think there is no one ideal approach to manage; the best way depends on the unique conditions (Rue & Byars, 2003). The contingency perspective indicates that a manager’s answers depend on recognizing important eventualities in an organisational environment. The contingency approach teaches us that what works in one situation could not work in another. When managers learn to

recognize significant patterns and features of their company, they may tailor solution to their characteristics (Draft, 2008).

### ***Institutional Theory***

Institutional theory addresses to the deeper and more durable components of social organization. It analyzes the mechanisms by which frameworks like schemas, rules, norms, and routines, get established as authoritative standards for social conduct. It inquires into how these elements are generated, distributed, adopted, and modified through place and time; and how they fall into decline and usage. Although the ostensible subject is stability and order in social life, students of institutions must attend not just to consensus and conformity but to conflict and change in social structures (Scott, 2004). Institutional theory regards organizations as social entities that seek approbation for their performance in a socially created context. As such, groups conform to obtain legitimacy and acceptability, which in turn allow survival (Jackson and Schuler, cited in by Scott, 2004).

According to Scott (2004), research performed on institutionalization indicates to both internal and external environmental impacts on the practices of organisations. These include internal constraints from codified structures and processes (Zucker, 1987). External influences come from the state (legislation and regulation), the professions (licensure and certification), and other industry organizations. Two widely held assumptions of this approach are that institutionalized activities are hard to change and that organizations operating in institutionalized contexts are compelled to replicate one another (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). Within this theoretical framework, context plays a significant role in explaining both resistance to change and the acceptance of new human resource management techniques. That is, human resource management methods are based in the organization's history and surroundings, the study of which provides helpful insight into present practices. Again, organizations may embrace human resource management methods merely because others have done so (Schuler and Jackson, 1995).

## **2.2 REVIEW OF CONCEPTS AND KEY ISSUES**

### **2.2.1 Ghana's Covid-19 Case**

Ghana's COVID-19 pandemic is part of the global coronavirus disease pandemic of 2019 (COVID-19), which is caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The first two cases in Ghana were confirmed on 12 March 2020, when two infected individuals arrived in Ghana from Norway and Turkey, respectively. The first two incidents in Ghana included a senior official at the Norwegian Embassy returning from Norway, and a staff member at the United Nations (UN) headquarters in Ghana returning from Turkey. This saw the first confirmed cases and the Ghanaian government's initial response. Joint meetings of key stakeholders were held, as well as training workshops on how to manage suspected cases of the new COVID-19. On March 15, 2020, the President of Ghana enacted measures prohibiting school activities, all social events, and imposing a temporary lockdown and limiting people's movements throughout Ghana's Greater Accra and Ashanti regions.

By the end of the month, 152 confirmed cases, five deaths, and 22 recovered patients had been reported, leaving 125 active cases heading into April. In March, Ghana's President Nana Akufo-Addo launched a series of state of the nation addresses on COVID-19 by announcing that the cedi equivalent of US\$100 million will be made available to enhance Ghana's coronavirus preparedness and response plan. To combat the spread of the virus, the Ghanaian government first outlawed all public gatherings, including conferences, seminars, funerals, festivals, political rallies, religious activities, and other similar events. Additionally, beaches, elementary schools, junior high schools, and colleges, both public and private, were all closed. Under social distancing rules, only BECE and WASSCE candidates were authorized to remain in school.

Travel to Ghana from nations with over 200 positive COVID-19 cases was strongly discouraged, with such passengers denied admission; however, this prohibition did not apply to Ghanaian nationals and

individuals with residency permits. Following that, all of the country's borders were closed for two weeks beginning at 12 a.m. on Sunday, 22 March 2020. Passport services were also suspended. On 30 March, 2020, Accra and Kumasi were placed on partial lockdown. Members of the Executive, Legislature, and Judiciary were exempt from the restrictions, as were certain services such as those engaged in the manufacturing, distribution, and marketing of food, beverages, medications, medicine, paper and plastic packaging, media, and telecommunications.

In Ghana, the economic shock induced by the COVID-19 outbreak resulted in income losses for over 770,000 individuals, decreases in work hours for over 700,000 employees, and layoffs for over 42,000 workers. SME's account for over 90% of all businesses in Ghana and generate more than 70% of the country's GDP. Ghana boasts the world's largest number of women-owned businesses, with women owning 46% of the country's businesses. Furthermore, Ghana has the highest rates of youth unemployment (12%) and underemployment (50%) in Sub-Saharan Africa. Ghana's government implemented a variety of efforts to address the COVID-19 epidemic as part of the Coronavirus Alleviation Program (CAP).

In collaboration with the National Board of Small Scale Industries, the government aided SMEs by granting loans with a one-year moratorium and a two-year return period. Additionally, the CAP distributed canned food packages and hot meals to roughly 400,000 families and individuals through a network of civil society organizations located in Accra, Kasa, Tema, and Kumasi. The Bank of Ghana partnered with local banks and telecommunications providers to make all digital payments under GH100 free, raise daily transaction limits, and expedite on-boarding to the Minimum Know Your Customer Account, which acts as a way of confirming customer identification.

### **2.2.2 Concept of Human Resource Management (HRM)**

Armstrong (2009) describes human resource management (HRM) as a purposeful and cohesive approach to managing an organization's most valuable assets, namely the people who work there and contribute both individually and collectively to the attainment of the organization's objectives. Additionally, human resource management techniques may be described as a collection of organizational actions aimed at managing a pool of human capital and ensuring that it is used to accomplish organizational goals (Wright & Boswell, 2012). Adopting specific bundles of human resource management strategies has the potential to boost organizational performance by establishing strong links or to hinder from performance when certain combinations of practices are accidentally included (Wagar & Rondeau, 2016).

There is a favourable correlation between human resource management techniques and business success, according to research. Thus, in order to boost company performance, management must create qualified and talented personnel capable of successfully doing their tasks (Klein, 2014). As Armstrong (2017) puts it, "for some managers, human resource management is merely a collection of initials or old wine in new bottles." It could indeed be nothing more or less than another term for personnel management, but as commonly perceived, it has the virtue of emphasizing the importance of treating people as critical resources whose management is the direct responsibility of top management as part of the enterprise's strategic planning processes.

### **2.2.3 Covid-19 and HRM**

COVID-19 is a historic health disaster that has shook the entire globe, throwing it into dread and insecurity. It has had a profound effect on economies, society, workers, and organizations (Gourinchas, 2020). This crisis began in the city of Wuhan (China), when an epidemic of severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) occurred in December 2019. The virus spread rapidly, pushing its status to worldwide pandemic on March 11, 2020, by the World Health

Organization (WHO, 2020b). Due to the fast transmission of the COVID-19 virus, nations have undertaken a number of non-pharmacological methods to slow its spread, including social distancing. Lockdown measures have been implemented; individuals have been quarantined; schools, universities, non-essential businesses, and non-governmental organizations have been temporarily closed; travel restrictions have been implemented; flights have been cancelled; and mass public gatherings and social events have been prohibited (Brodeur, Gray, Islam, & Bhuiyan, 2020).

In addition to these measures, the COVID-19 epidemic slowed global economic activity significantly, causing furloughs and layoffs, resulting in a rise in the unemployment rate in a number of nations (Brodeur et al., 2020). 'The current G7 unemployment rate varies significantly, ranging from 30 million in the United States to 1.76 million in Japan' (Kretchmer, 2020). According to Gourinchas (2020), COVID-19 has created a situation in which 50% or more of the workforce may be unable to work for an extended length of time.

Companies have begun reopening (Major & Machin, 2020), in the midst of this continuous epidemic, under unusual regulations and a new functioning (e.g., physical separation in the workplace), the end of which no one can foresee (Shaw, Main, Findley, Collie, Kristman, & Gross, 2020). As a result, this pandemic clearly created a complex and challenging environment for managers and human resource management (HRM) practitioners who needed to devise novel solutions to sustain their company's operations and assist their employees in coping with the unprecedented challenges of this situation. Indeed, most companies are woefully unprepared to cope with crises when they come (Wang, Hutchins, & Garavan, 2009). Thus, the scientific community must assist organizations by giving pertinent knowledge about this new epidemic.

## **2.2.4 COVID-19 and HRM Functions**

Human resource management (HRM) is "the study of how people are employed, managed, and developed in companies" (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020). COVID-19 has had a considerable influence on it, posing substantial problems for managers and human resource management practitioners. This section examines human resource management functions, specifically staffing, performance management, training and development, compensation management, safety and health management, and employee relations, as well as their relationship to strategic human resource management and working conditions. Each HRM function is described separately, although they are all interconnected. This implies that any change in one HRM function will have an effect on the other (Mondy & Martocchio, 2016).

### **2.2.4.1 Staffing**

Staffing is defined as the process of attracting, selecting, and keeping competent personnel to accomplish an organization's objectives (Ployhart, 2006). COVID-19 mostly impacted sectors in an asymmetrical manner (Aitken-Fox et al., 2020b). Certain sectors saw a severe decrease in business, prompting some to temporarily close their doors, but other industries thrived during this epidemic (Giupponi & Landais, 2020). As a result, the impact of COVID-19 on personnel varies by company. In this context, organizations that were experiencing financial difficulties as a result of the pandemic downsized by reducing recruitment of high-skill jobs more than low-skill jobs in order to cut costs and sustain the business; they froze or reduced all recruitment; or they laid off employees (Campello, Kankanhalli, & Muthukrishnan, 2020). Indeed, millions of individuals lost their jobs as a result of the COVID-19 epidemic (Blustein et al., 2020). Cheng et al. (2020) noted that employment activity rose upon firms' reopening in several US states, owing primarily to employees returning to their actual workplace following lockdowns. Nonetheless, the likelihood of reemployment is significantly lower for individuals who have been absent from their profession for an extended period of time.

While laying off staff is never an easy option for a business, it may be necessary during times of crisis like COVID-19. In this scenario, the primary issue for human resource management practitioners is to assist managers and employees throughout the process and to provide accurate information. However, it may not be simple in an unpredictable world. Indeed, no one knows when this epidemic will stop or if its effects on organizations will be transitory or lasting (Bartik et al., 2020).

On the contrary, companies that extended their operations during the epidemic encountered additional personnel problems (Spurk & Straub, 2020). Due to the uncertainty created by COVID-19, many of them have chosen for more flexible employment arrangements and subcontracted labour, such as temporary agency work, freelancers, etc. While these groups have expanded their recruiting efforts, they have come under pressure from a labour shortage (Akkermans, Richardson, & Kraimer, 2020).

In these conditions, many businesses were forced to reorient their operations toward virtual recruiting and selection procedures (Maurer, 2020), which may provide another important issue for human resource management practitioners and job seekers. Not everyone is comfortable using ICT tools. Additionally, human resource management practitioners were unprepared for this sort of sudden shift. Also, virtual selection methods may impair potential workers' and employers' capacity to judge fit between person and environment, which can have a detrimental effect on employee productivity and retention (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020). Again, the transitory nature of flexible work relationships created a retention issue.

Staff retention may be another significant issue for companies in the current pandemic scenario (Elsafty & Ragheb, 2020). Elsafty and Ragheb (2020) noted that during these difficult periods marked by abrupt and extreme changes, employment relationships may be strained, resulting in a probable dramatic drop in employee morale and an increase in turnover. Additionally, Ngoc Su et al. (2021) state that maintaining and attracting skilled employees is a difficulty for businesses in the COVID-19

period, owing to the fact that these individuals are frequently seeking employment possibilities in industries that were not adversely affected by the pandemic. In a similar vein, Przytua, Strzelec, and Krysiska-Kociaska (2020) emphasized the critical nature of increasing employee engagement and sense of belonging throughout this time and beyond to maintain organizational success and save recruiting expenses (Lund et al., 2021).

#### **2.2.4.2 Performance Management**

Performance management is defined as a constant process of identifying, assessing, and developing the performance of individuals and workgroups and ensuring that performance is aligned with the organization's strategic goals (Aguinis, 2019). It is critical to connect employees' performance with the company's strategic objectives (Ismail & Gali, 2017). To ensure the company's survival in the face of a catastrophe such as COVID-19, employees must continue to perform well (Sembiring, Fatihudin, Mochklas & Holisin, 2020). However, it appears as though the COVID-19 epidemic has changed organizational performance. Most businesses have reduced or even abandoned performance management as a consequence of the complexity and novelty of COVID-19's difficulties, such as evaluating employee performance and disrupting performance-based compensation (Aguinis & Burgi-Tian, 2020).

Indeed, assessing employees' performance during this crisis might be difficult, given the alterations to working circumstances. Additionally, there are several issues associated with the COVID-19 epidemic that might affect employees' performance. In this context, Prasad and Vaidya (2020) reported that workplace isolation, a lack of communication, family distractions, role overload, and occupational stress factors (role ambiguity, role conflict, career, and job-control), all of which have emerged as a result of COVID-19, are significant predictors of employees' performance, particularly among employees working from home. Additionally, employees' success when working remotely is

contingent upon managers' comprehension of how and what it takes to manage a remote team (Aitken-Fox et al., 2020b).

According to some authors, managers may be hesitant to accept remote work because they believe it will negatively affect employees' performance, which may result in the adoption of micromanagement, which employees may interpret as a lack of trust in them (Aitken-Fox et al., 2020b), resulting in tension between them and their supervisor. According to Aguinis and Burgi-Tian (2020), it is critical for companies to retain and enhance their performance management processes throughout this health crisis. They should convey pertinent information to their employees about the company's strategic direction, gather meaningful business data, and offer feedback to them, all of which will assist these businesses in retaining talent and avoiding legal action.

Ngoc Su et al. (2021) noted that regular performance appraisal encourages employee learning and sharing, which can assist businesses in regaining lost business. Taking into account the interdependence of human resource management activities, Sembiring et al. (2020) shown that remuneration may have a substantial influence on employees' performance in the COVID-19 era. As a result, the authors proposed that businesses should place a higher premium on employees' overall remuneration (financial and non-financial) and its ability to sustain and increase performance during times of crisis (Sembiring et al., 2020). In this scenario, the primary issue may be connected to the organization's financial capability during the continuing epidemic.

### **2. 2.4.3 Training and Career Development**

Training is critical at times of crisis, such as pandemics (Devyania, Jewanc, Bansal & Denge, 2020; Hamouche, 2020). It assists in the development of necessary skills for employees (Akkermans, Richardson & Kraimer, 2020); in raising knowledge of COVID-19, reducing the danger of viral propagation, and preventing mental health concerns (Quaedackers et al., 2020). Additionally, it aids

in the transfer of employees to remote work. Indeed, not all employees possess the necessary digital skills to deal with the changes brought about by the use of ICT, necessitating the need to train them in the use of ICT in order to facilitate their work and communication with their manager and peers while they are away from their place of employment (Greer & Payne, 2014).

In the views of Przytua, Strzelec, and Krysiska-Kociaska (2020), companies confront the problem of reskilling and upskilling their employees to meet the requirements of the new 'distance economy' environment. In this case, the primary challenge for human resource management practitioners may be related to developing a training program that is tailored to the new reality of the organization and its employees, as well as selecting the appropriate training methods, taking into account physical distancing measures and the need for employees to be operational quickly in order to sustain the company's business. This indicates that managers and human resource management practitioners must go beyond standard training approaches. In this situation, Devyania et al. (2020) advised modifying employees' training programs to guarantee a long-term transition to the new working habits.

Remote working's effectiveness is also contingent on managers' comprehension of virtual supervision of employees (Aitken-Fox et al., 2020b). HRM practitioners should play a strategic role in this context by assisting and teaching these managers on how to manage a virtual team, assisting them in overcoming these obstacles and adjusting to remote working problems in order to support their team members (Hamouche, 2020).

Apart from training, COVID-19 has created major obstacles for organizational career development. COVID-19, according to some authors, has resulted in a major career shock (Akkermans et al., 2020). According to Baert et al. (2020), an examination of the influence of COVID-19 on career outcomes and aspiration among a panel of 3,821 employees revealed that employees were fearful of losing their

jobs in the near future as a result of the COVID-19 issue. Additionally, several of them anticipated losing out on a promotion they would have earned had the crisis not occurred.

#### **2.2.4.4 Compensation Management**

Compensation management is the term used to describe the intrinsic and extrinsic benefits that workers receive for successfully doing their jobs. It covers both monetary (base pay/bonuses) and non-monetary (employee perks) incentives (Martocchio, 2017). Compensation can have an effect on an employee's motivation, performance, and retention (Safuan & Kurnia, 2021). Elsafty and Ragheb's (2020) study demonstrated that financial advantages such as bonuses during COVID-19 are strongly linked with employee retention.

In response to the COVID-19 epidemic, some nations have established government policies that give financial assistance to employees and organizations during this health crisis and urge them to adhere to stay-at-home directives (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020). For example, in the United States of America, the federal government enacted temporary paid sick leave, which provides private and public sector employees with two weeks of paid sick leave for isolation, COVID-19-related treatment, caring for a family member infected with COVID-19, and childcare resulting from school or day care closure (Andersen, Maclean, Pesko & Simon, 2020).

Short-term remuneration, often known as part-time work, has been used to help support the economy while safeguarding businesses and employees' employment. It is providing employees a temporary reduction in their working hours in order to assist companies facing a decline in demand in retaining their staff and avoiding layoffs (Giupponi & Landais, 2020). These measures have an effect on firms' compensation plans and practices. Additionally, they may contribute to the creation of a complicated and demanding environment for managers and human resource management practitioners. Paid sick leave, according to some writers, may result in an increase in employee absenteeism from work

(Maclean, Pichler & Ziebarth, 2020). However, it assists in preventing employees' presenteeism while they are ill (Schneider, 2020).

Additionally, these types of government policies, such as paid sick leave, aid in their implementation in industries where employees have never received such benefits (Maclean, Pichler & Ziebarth, 2020), implying that managers and human resource management practitioners must consider how to sustain them in order to avoid demotivating employees following the pandemic. Przytua, Strzelec, and Kociaska-Krysiska (2020) emphasized the significance of intrinsic motivation in retaining employees, such as enhancing individual autonomy.

Moreover, compensation management can be particularly difficult in environments with a high risk of contamination, such as hospitals. In this context, the level of remuneration provided to employees may be questioned to see if it is sufficient in light of the level of risk they face on a daily basis (Hecker, 2020). According to Hecker (2020), individuals used to choose professions depending on their risk tolerance in exchange for a larger reward for taking on greater risks. Generally, the employer's action is directed toward minimizing dangers in order to recruit workers for higher-risk jobs. As a result, if a work position entails a high amount of risk without enough remuneration, many individuals may opt to quit the business (Hecker, 2020).

#### **2. 2.4.5. Safety and Health Management**

Employers are accountable for their workers' safety while on the job. They must guarantee that the workplace is free of hazards that might cause them psychological or physical injury or even death. COVID-19 has introduced a new workplace hazard (Hecker, 2020), posing a substantial source of stress for employees (Shaw et al., 2020), as well as being a big issue for managers and human resource management practitioners (Hamouche, 2020). The effect on employee health varies according to the work environment and occupational function of the employee (Brooks, Dunn, Amlôt, Rubin, &

Greenberg, 2018). Two major problems may be recognized in this context: how to contain the spread of the virus and protect employees from infection, and how to raise employee knowledge of the critical nature of adhering to workplace preventive measures.

Although the WHO has published guidelines for businesses to ensure their employees' protection, regulating employees' conduct may be difficult, given that certain persons may disregard self-isolation directives (Gourinchas, 2020). The recent development of vaccines against COVID-19 has sparked hope throughout the world, but it has also created two new challenges for organizations, specifically the management of vaccination campaigns in the workplace and their capacity to sponsor and cover their costs (Rothstein, Parmet & Reiss, 2021), especially given their financial difficulties.

COVID-19 is a huge danger to persons' physical health, but it is also a substantial risk to their mental health (Chen, Ning, Yu, Huang, Li & Luo, 2020; Hamouche, 2020). It may be mentally taxing for employees who work from home, since they may feel isolated and divided between job and personal life (Prasad & Vaidya, 2020). Additionally, employees who are required to be physically present at work may return fearful of contracting the virus or transmitting it to their family, which may increase their level of stress and risk of mental health problems, particularly for employees who faced high psychological demands prior to the pandemic or who have a high-risk job (Tan et al., 2020). In this context, the primary issue for managers and human resource management practitioners is to identify risk factors and implement appropriate preventative measures in the workplace, especially for workers who work from home (Hamouche, 2020).

#### **2. 2.4.6 Employment Relationship**

Employment relationship is defined as the link between employees and employers through which individuals sell their labor (Budd & Bhawe, 2010). COVID-19 has posed significant labor legal problems for both employees and businesses (Sagan & Schüller, 2020). Both were unable to fulfil

their contractual commitments as a result of the lockdown and obligatory company shutdown (Biasi, 2020). Indeed, the difficulties posed by COVID-19 have altered the conventional relationship between employee and employer (Leighton & McKeown, 2020). Work-from-home policies have been introduced in a variety of nations and businesses (Spurk & Straub, 2020). As a result, the conventional borders of the workplace have vanished (Leighton & McKeown, 2020).

COVID-19 has positioned the government as a planner rather than a regulator in this context (Sachs, 2020), which presents a challenge for companies that must adapt government plans and regulations to their organizational environment while also considering the requirements of their employees (Sachs, 2020). In light of the pandemic's uniqueness, the majority of nations do not depend only on current rules. They modified numerous labor regulations in a short and expedient time (Sagan & Schüller, 2020), in order to benefit companies and safeguard employees (Alhambra, 2020). The primary problem was determining how to safeguard employees while assuring the economy's continued viability (Sachs, 2020). Several nations have enacted legislation structuring and temporarily prohibiting group layoffs in businesses (Biasi, 2020).

For instance, in Italy, a decree legislation prohibiting organizations from beginning a collective layoff procedure for a period of 60 days was enacted (Biasi, 2020). Additionally, different legal procedures and legislation have been enacted to assist employees during school lockdowns and closures, such as paid leave for employees to care for their children. The primary obstacle is that it is still uncertain when nations may proclaim the pandemic to be over (Spurk & Straub, 2020). This creates a significant difficulty in establishing the appropriate duration of protection for employees, which might jeopardize the relationship between businesses, employees, and their representatives (Biasi, 2020).

COVID-19 is a once-in-a-generation calamity that necessitated extreme actions. In some countries, such as France, remote working is voluntary and cannot be imposed by employers (Sachs, 2020);

however, as is the case in many other countries, the current economic climate has compelled employers to impose this mode of work on employees whose job functions can be performed from home (Sachs, 2020). The primary issue in this case is the likelihood of conflict between employers and employees who were not provided the option of working from home or who contracted COVID-19 on the job (Sachs, 2020). Indeed, Sagan and Schüller (2020) argue that in the absence of contractual agreements, it is conceivable to call into question the employers' compliance with labor regulations.

Currently, with the introduction of COVID-19 vaccinations, the primary employment relationship problem for companies is managing the vaccination campaign in terms of cost and application, while adhering to country rules (Rothstein, Parnet & Reiss, 2021). This development also calls into question the employer's right to impose it on its employees. According to et al. (2021), a strict, forceful approach may exacerbate the reluctance of those who are still on the fence regarding the vaccination. These writers advocated for organizations to educate employees on the advantages of vaccination and to assist it, such as by giving time off for vaccination purposes (Rothstein et al., 2021).

#### **2. 2.4.7 COVID-19 and Strategic Human Resource Management**

Strategic human resource management refers to the vertical link between human resource management functions and organizational strategy, as well as the horizontal consistency between human resource management functions (Wright & McMahan, 1992). Its primary objective is to maximize the effectiveness of human resources in order to meet the organization's strategic objectives (Navo-Marco, Solórzano-Garca, & Palencia-González, 2019). Strategic agility is necessary to guarantee the organization's goals are met during times of crisis (Liu, Lee & Lee, 2020). Organizations must be capable of planning and allocating their resources; coordinating the necessary mechanisms; and utilizing organizational resources and expertise effectively (Liu et al., 2020).

In this context, the uniqueness and complexity of the COVID-19 pose a substantial obstacle that may jeopardize the organization's ability to fulfil its objectives. According to Baert, Lippens, Moens, Sterkens, and Weytjens (2020), companies' conventional economic models are mostly taught to utilize data from a viewpoint of 'normal times.' As a result, making forecasts about 'abnormal times' is difficult. This may imply that generating forecasts about a business's operations, such as the planning and allocation of resources, is a difficult task. Indeed, COVID-19 has sown doubt. Some writers go so far as to anticipate an endemic of COVID-19 (Regmi & Lwin, 2020), while several economists believe the pandemic's effects will last until the end of 2021 (Akkermans et al, 2020).

At the moment, no one knows when this virus will be eradicated or whether its effects on organizational work patterns will be temporary or permanent (Bartik, Cullen, Glaeser, Luca, & Stanton, 2020), despite the recent discovery of several types of vaccinations (Yu et al., 2021). Thus, strategic planning and implementation can be hard for managers and human resource management practitioners. In this case, most organizations were unable to adequately inform their employees about their management strategy or intended responses to the pandemic (Elsafty & Ragheb, 2020), whereas having clear workplace guidelines during difficult times helps to alleviate employee stress and boosts motivation and confidence (Wong, Ho, Wong, Cheung, & Yeoh, 2020).

Elsafty and Ragheb's (2020) study found that access to information and updates on the pandemic are substantially correlated with employee retention. Nonetheless, it may be difficult to achieve if companies are unable to obtain this information, particularly if they are operating in a reactionary and survival mode as a result of the novelty of this pandemic. Although difficult, strengthening organizational resilience is critical to ensuring the organization's viability in the COVID-19 age (Ngoc Su et al., 2021). Indeed, despite the uncertainty created by this epidemic, businesses must adopt innovative strategies that will enable them to absorb and deal with disruptions that threaten their survival (Ngoc Su et al., 2021)

#### **2. 2.4.8 Working Conditions**

Working conditions are said to be the 'central tenet of paid work and employment relationships' (ILO, 2020). They 'address a vast variety of themes and concerns, ranging from working hours (hours worked, rest times, and work schedules) to compensation, as well as the physical and mental demands of the job.' (International Labour Organization, 2020). The COVID-19 crisis has had a significant impact on organizational working conditions. Indeed, in order to maintain company continuity, the majority of businesses have implemented remote working policies, forcing workers to work from home (Koirala & Acharya, 2020). For instance, Google declared that its employees would be able to work remotely until at least (Summer 2021), while Twitter staff will be able to work remotely eternally (Leonardi, 2020).

Despite the above, remote workers account for a tiny percentage of the total workforce, mostly because remote work is incompatible with manufacturing industries (Koirala & Acharya, 2020) and cannot be applied to all job positions (Bartik et al., 2020). In this context, there were two conceivable outcomes for businesses whose nature precludes them from adhering to these sorts of working standards. Either force their employees to be physically present while adhering to physical distancing measures (i.e., allowing a two-minute space between persons) and wearing personal protection equipment, or lay them off (Blustein, Duffy, Ferreira, Cohen-Scali, Cinamon & Allan, 2020).

Adams-Prassl, Boneva, Golin and Rauh (2020) discovered that employees unable to execute their job responsibilities from home are more likely to lose their employment. In these circumstances, human resource management practitioners are encouraged to identify employment jobs that may be completed remotely, those that can be performed in the physical workplace, and those that require layoffs as a result of the pandemic-induced scenario. As a result, managers and human resource management practitioners face substantial problems as a result of these unanticipated and dramatic organizational changes. Additionally, they may have a substantial impact on employees' mental health

(Hamouche, 2020), perceived person–environment fit, and employee experience relating to job design, workplace, and interactions with peers and supervisors (Aitken-Fox et al., 2020a).

Physical presence in workplaces has been maintained by the establishment of work schedules for various groups of employees (e.g., physical distance and wearing protective masks) (Akbarpour et al., 2020). The primary issue in this situation is to guarantee that these protective measures are adhered to and to create work schedules that take into account the employees' context. In terms of remote work, it appears as though managers and human resource professionals have encountered significant obstacles. To begin, to guarantee that workers who work from home have the tools essential to do their jobs (Aitken-Fox et al., 2020b). Indeed, remote working necessitates the availability of technological tools that facilitate communication between employees and managers, such as Zoom, Microsoft remote desktop, team viewer, and Microsoft team (Prasad & Vaidya, 2020), which not all organizations can afford, given that financial capacity varies significantly between organizations. Second, to guarantee effective communication, supervision, assistance, performance monitoring, and compensation adjustment for workers working from home (Aitken-Fox et al., 2020b).

Also, human resource management practitioners must assist managers who are managing remote teams for the first time (Caligiuri, De Cieri, Minbaeva, Verbeke, & Zimmermann, 2020). Finally, human resource managers must consider the possibility that remote work may result in employee isolation as a result of a lack of interaction between employees, a lack of peer advice, and a lack of one-on-one communication, all of which can be sources of stress and jeopardize employees' mental health (Prasad & Vaidya, 2020). Additionally, it might be mentally taxing for these individuals, given the possibility of family interruptions and the various tasks they must fulfill while working from home (Prasad & Vaidya, 2020).

Additionally, greater usage of information and communication technology (ICT) might create an enduring sense of urgency, raising prospective expectations for employees' continual availability (Molino et al., 2020). Working from home can also result in an increase in the volume of information handled by employees, given their frequent use of email (Leonardi, 2020). According to some writers, technostress is a result of the growing usage of ICT by distant personnel (Molino et al., 2020). This can be detrimental to employees' psychological health, particularly those who isolate themselves by communicating only via email.

Numerous human resource management practitioners have introduced activities to assist their workers, such as virtual socializing activities, such as virtual lunches or coffee breaks (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020). Without a doubt, these methods assist employees through this trying time when they are separated from one another and from their job (Hamouche, 2020). They also pose a significant challenge for organizations, as these practices are unfamiliar to employees and managers who have not been trained or psychologically prepared for such changes, which may result in an increase in their perceptions of person–environment misfit and dissatisfaction if they prefer the face-to-face interaction (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020). Additionally, virtual contacts may have an impact on the socialization process, which is critical for workers to gain tacit knowledge about the corporate culture and contribute to its growth (Asatiani, Hämäläinen, Penttinen, & Rossi, 2021).

#### **2. 2.4.6 HRM Opportunities from the Covid-19**

COVID-19 presented significant problems for managers and human resource management practitioners, but it also opened the door to prospects worth learning about and comprehending, which may assist companies in directing their future activities. Indeed, Demirkaya and Aydn (2006) assert that a crisis may present unanticipated possibilities for companies. This section will explore these prospects in relation to probable future paths in human resource management. COVID-19 has pushed organizations' ingenuity and innovation to the limit and sparked debates about the future of work

(Hite & McDonald, 2020). It has expedited the disruption of human resource management as well as the deployment of future scenarios (Hite & McDonald, 2020).

More so, it has compelled companies to reconsider their human resource management strategies and to move beyond old models of human resource management, by presenting modern information technology as a critical partner in ensuring their business's survival and longevity. In this situation, several nations have enacted new regulations to assist companies in navigating this abrupt and unanticipated shift. Germany, for example, has enacted new laws to allow video conferencing in two areas (Sagan & Schüller, 2020), therefore facilitating the deployment of remote working in businesses.

As a result, the standard that appears to be growing in workplaces at the present is the deployment of remote working. However, other writers argue that it is more prudent to confirm that all businesses that have implemented remote working will continue to do so beyond COVID-19 (Aitken-Fox et al., 2020b). They are probably evaluating the success of this work structure before making their decision, given that it is their first time implementing it. As a result, they are unaware of the potential impact on staff performance and productivity (Aitken-Fox et al., 2020b).

Despite its drawbacks, remote working enables people to work flexible hours, save time on commutes, increase job autonomy, and get expertise with new ICT (Prasad & Vaidya, 2020). Additionally, it enables businesses to optimize the usage and expense of their resources, such as office space. Indeed, in certain nations, such as Korea, business sectors perceive development potential in non-contact industries such as telecommunications, remote assistance solutions, and online education (Liu, Lee, & Lee, 2020).

Furthermore, COVID-19 enables businesses to foster employee autonomy, update their digital abilities, and extend their view on competency development. Additionally, this epidemic has positioned new technology as an organizational strategic partner. It has aided in the sustainability of enterprises and shortened the gap between employees and employers while maintaining employee safety. It has enabled the move from traditional face-to-face socializing methods to virtual ones, such as virtual meetings, lunches, and coffee breaks (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020). Additionally, it has aided in maintaining personnel levels inside businesses while adhering to physical separation standards.

Again, modern technology has aided in the administration of workplace safety and health. It aided in the implementation of the choice to keep workers at home and safeguard them from infection risk while they continue to work for the business. Additionally, it has aided healthcare professionals, such as psychologists, in continuing to assist the population via telehealth systems while adhering to physical distance requirements. In China, for example, mental health treatments were offered throughout the pandemic via a variety of channels, including hotlines, online consultations, online courses, and telemental health services (Gao et al., 2020).

In a similar vein, Liu, Lee and Lee (2020) advocated for the development of predictive models that incorporate risk factors and uncertainties into proactive scheduling and planning of supply, allowing decision makers to create a variety of dynamic scenarios that can be automated through the use of artificial intelligence. Additionally, the use of new technology enables data analytics that can assist human resource management practitioners in optimizing and improving human resource management functions and practices within organizations, such as workforce planning, recruitment, and talent management (AM, Affandi, Udobong & Sarwani, 2020), both during and after the pandemic. Identifying the opportunities created by COVID-19 can assist human resource management practitioners in developing effective human resource management interventions and future actions.

Nonetheless, it is critical to bear in mind that businesses around the world are still experiencing the widespread influence of this epidemic, which does not appear to be abating anytime soon. Without a doubt, organizational resilience must be strengthened. In this setting, organizations must be able to devise novel solutions in order to successfully absorb and confront disruptions that endanger their survival (Ngoc Su et al., 2021). HRM practitioners should collaborate with managers and employees to turn COVID-19's difficulties into possibilities, rethinking HRM functions and practices, including as remuneration and performance management, and adapting them to employees' changing working conditions as a result of the COVID-19 crisis.

Moreover, the crucial role of new information technology during the epidemic should compel managers and human resource management practitioners to investigate effective methods for integrating it into human resource management and adapting it to their organization's setting. Furthermore, they must ascertain particular training requirements, as not all personnel, even supervisors, possess the necessary technological capabilities. Employee engagement is critical to the success of this organizational reform. Additionally, maintaining contact with them should assist alleviate their tension and build their faith in the company (Hamouche, 2020). Additionally, employees should be able to work remotely with the freedom to select when and where to work (Przytua, Strzelec & Krysiska-Kociaska, 2020), without being restricted to their house as a workspace. Organizations, on the other hand, should enable workers to plan a flexible presence in the office in order to maintain a sense of connection to their job, by guaranteeing the presence of effective health and safety measures and enabling access to immunization. Given the blurring of personal and professional boundaries, managers should communicate and discuss the performance objectives of their businesses with their employees (Kaufman et al., 2020).

Managers, with the assistance of human resource professionals, should assess and realign the performance management system in order to match performance objectives with the changing

realities of companies and people. They should give constant feedback to employees in order to encourage learning and collaboration, as well as organizational flexibility and agility, as well as employee motivation and retention (Ngoc Su et al., 2021). Additionally, they should establish wellness programs aimed at safeguarding employees' mental health and offering solutions tailored to each employee's unique resource and social support requirements (Hamouche, 2020).

Moreover, establishing and sustaining a coherent culture that fosters employee relationships and interactions is necessary (Lund et al., 2021), in order to foster social support and collaboration among employees, particularly those who work remotely. Indeed, virtual contacts may have an effect on the process of socialization and the acquisition of tacit information about corporate culture (Asatiani et al., 2021). This prompted some authors to advocate for the creation and implementation of a digital organizational culture handbook that would be accessible to employees working remotely via the organization's intranet, in order to provide toolkits that support and vehicle symbolic aspects of the organizational culture, such as values (Asatiani et al., 2021).

### **2.3 Empirical Review**

McKinsey Global Institute report assessing the long-term impact of COVID-19 on labor demand, occupations, and workforce skills in eight countries (China, France, Germany, India, Japan, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States) indicates that remote work and virtual meetings will continue, albeit at a lower intensity than during COVID-19's peak (Lund et al., 2021).

COVID-19, according to Lund et al. (2021), has the potential to expedite the adoption of automation and artificial intelligence (AI) in areas that need a high degree of human contact, such as medical care and personal care (e.g., gyms and hair salons). Thus, it is critical for organizations to grasp ICT and make it available to all members in order to continue operating amid extreme situations. Several writers emphasized the critical nature of utilizing AI for human resource management during a health

crisis, recommending it as a useful tool for preventing interruptions in operations and management processes while guaranteeing physical separation and employee protection (Devyania et al., 2020).

According to Przytua, Strzelec and Kociaska-Krysiska (2020), businesses must establish fresh groundwork by redefining emerging trends in human resource management techniques. Indeed, after nearly a year of new functioning based mostly on remote labor, companies must reassess their surroundings, analyze the new trends in human resource management spawned by this unanticipated crisis, and determine their relevance. Given the unpredictability of the current situation and the high level of uncertainty surrounding its resolution, organizations should opt for a hybrid workplace model, which is adaptable enough to allow for rapid and efficient adaptation to changing requirements. Human resource management practitioners must adjust work roles and prioritize job redesign inside the company (Messenböck, Schuler & Shroff, 2020).

Lund et al. (2021) advised prioritizing required tasks and activities associated with a job rather than the whole job in order to enhance an organization's operational flexibility and agility. Employees should get the required organizational assistance to acquire the skills essential to survive and thrive during this epidemic, as well as the creation of career paths that allow for upward mobility and enhance their employability (Ngoc Su et al., 2021). These measures should have a favorable effect on staff motivation and retention, as well as on recruiting expenses (Lund et al., 2021).

Some writers go so far as to argue that businesses should reinvent themselves through the integration of entrepreneurial capabilities among their workers, in order to assist them in learning how to adapt to the uncertainty created by an unforeseen crisis and prosper in a dynamic environment (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020; Liu, Lee & Lee, 2020). Entrepreneurship may assist employees in exploring, evaluating, and capitalizing on opportunities that arise in a dynamic and unstable environment, given

that this field is founded on exploration, evaluation, and discovery, as well as the capacity to transform obstacles posed by an ambiguous context into opportunities (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020).

## **2.4 Chapter Summary**

This chapter reviewed literature pertaining to HRM and the Covid-19 pandemic. The topics discussed included; Ghana's Covid-19 Case, Concept of Human Resource Management (HRM), Covid-19 and HRM, COVID-19 and HRM Functions, HRM Opportunities from the Covid-19 and Review of Empirical Literature. The theoretical framework of the study involved the Contingency and Institutional Theories.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the methodological framework of the study. It specifically looks at issues such as the research paradigm, research design, study setting, study population and sampling procedure. Other issues in the chapter are research instrument, field data collection procedure, data processing and analysis, and ethical consideration.

#### **3.1 Research Paradigm**

Qualitative and quantitative are two words that are frequently used to define the primary research paradigms in business research. The distinction between qualitative and quantitative was defined by Denzin and Lincoln (2000) as follows: the term 'qualitative' implies a focus on the qualities of entities as well as processes and meanings that are not experimentally examined or measured (if at all) in terms of quantity, amount, intensity, or frequency. The socially constructed character of reality, the close link between the research and the subject of study, and the situational limitations that influence inquiry are all stressed by qualitative researchers. The value-laden character of enquiry is emphasized by such scholars (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). They're looking for solutions to questions about how social experiences are formed and given meaning. Quantitative studies, on the other hand, focus on the measurement and analysis of causal connections between variables rather than processes. Proponents of such studies say that their research is conducted in a value-free environment (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). This study used a quantitative research approach.

A quantitative research approach may take a large and representative sample from the population of interest, quantify the behavior and features of that sample, and seek to generalize about the community as a whole (Hyde, 2000). Quantitative research, in contrast to qualitative research, is

frequently linked with a logical approach. The most common type of analysis is statistical, and it entails assessing the findings after they have been applied theoretically.

### **3.2 Research Design**

Research design is a plan that promotes systematic management of data collection (Creswell, 2013). It dictates what is needed to answer your research questions. There are some three basic research designs that can be successfully matched to given problems and research objectives. These are, exploratory, descriptive and explanatory.

Exploratory research is usually unstructured, "informal" research that is conducted to learn more about the overall nature of the research topic. When a researcher doesn't know much about an issue and needs more knowledge, or wants fresh or more recent information, exploratory research is generally used. Exploratory research aids in the diagnosis of the problem's dimensions, ensuring that further study is focused. It aids in the determination of research priorities. Exploratory research is used for a variety of purposes, including gathering background information, defining terminology, clarifying issues and hypotheses, and determining study priorities (Guba, 1990).

Descriptive research is conducted to answer who, what, where, when, and how questions – but not why. Rather than explaining a topic, a descriptive survey focuses on watching, describing, and documenting elements of it as it unfolds naturally. The design gives a more realistic representation of what happened at a particular point in time (Guba, 1990).

Explanatory study seeks to understand why and how two or more components of a situation or event are connected. It's really a sort of research design that focuses on thoroughly describing components of a study (Guba, 1990).

Based on the explanations above, the study adopted the descriptive survey approach since it is the best fit for the study. Descriptive survey concentrates mainly at observing, describing and documenting features of a situation as it naturally occurs rather than interpreting them. The design gives a more realistic representation of occurrences at a point in time. The research is descriptive in nature since it seeks to determine what is in a moment in time and also includes obtaining data that explain occurrences and then organizes, tabulates, displays, and summarizes the data obtained.

### **3.3 Study Setting**

Having celebrated our 60th anniversary in 2013 and having launched a new image for our Bank in 2014 to help drive us forward for the next 60 years, we can say with total conviction and confidence that we are excited about our future. We have consistently grown and demonstrated our commitment to Ghana over the last six decades and we will continue to do so in the achievements we make and in the positive difference we bring to people's lives. In a world where nothing stands still, GCB now occupies an environment with more intense competition and higher consumer expectation than ever before. Internet and mobile connectivity have increased beyond measure bringing new knowledge and higher expectation of service. This has significantly changed the way banking business is done and how it is perceived by the public. In order to maintain our position as the leading bank in Ghana and to continue to grow, it is now more important than ever to refocus our position in the marketplace through a new, evolved brand, better communication and a tireless commitment to serve our customers better.

As part of the change, we have adopted an internal change programme that has been -firmly embedded in our business plans, our staff training, our branches and our services. This programme overhauled the Bank' score values and brand, resulting in a new evolved logo and a stronger on-the-street presence. Our dedication to higher standards will witness the introduction of new banking products and services. We are refurbishing our branch network to international standards, updating our systems

and technology and focusing on increased customer satisfaction right across our business channels. This is a long-term programme, but you will see progress over the coming months. Our goal as a Bank has always been to be the leading -financial services provider in Ghana through a commitment to superior service and best practice. Our commitment to our country and its heritage, values and future are demonstrated every day through the actions that we take as an organization. This has not, and will not, change. We are delighted to share with you our underlying business principles, fundamental values and brand systems. Through these assets, and with the commitment and support of our shareholders and partners, we are confident we will enjoy growth and prosperity for all our stakeholders and, of course our customers.

### **3.4 Study Population**

A population is made up of all the objects under examination in any subject of study. Population, according to Sekeran and Bougie (2010), refers to the complete group of individuals, events, or objects of interest that the researcher intends to examine. The target population for this research was the employees of the Head Office of GCB Bank Limited. In all, there were eighty employees at the office.

### **3.5 Sample**

A sample is made up of the objects that have been chosen in this way. A sample, according to Sekeran and Bougie (2010), is a subset of the population that shares the same characteristics as the full population. The population is represented by (N) and (n) represents the sample size. Sampling is the selection of a few units in the universe or a section of the population to represent the whole population and make conclusions for the entire population. The cost is lower, and data gathering is faster, which are two main advantages of sampling. There are a variety of sample methods to select from. Following the determination of the target population and sample frame, the following stage is to determine the appropriate sampling techniques for the research (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

### **3.6 Sample and Sampling Procedure**

Probability and non-probability sampling procedures are the two categories of sampling techniques. Non-probability sampling, in contrast to probability sampling, involves subjective input from the researchers and is fully decided by chance, whereas probability sampling incorporates a random selection process of who should be included (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The study used convenience sampling, which is a type of non-probability sampling. Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling method in which participants are chosen based on ease of access and closeness to the researcher. The most available respondents were chosen via convenience sampling. Indeed, the challenges associated with the pandemic including rotation of employees made it extremely difficult for the researchers to rely on random sampling method for the study. Thus, the researcher found it very practically appropriate to rely on convenience sampling method for data collection basing it on the accessibility, proximity and availability of respondents. Although convenience is a sampling method for qualitative research, it has been to be very useful also in quantitative studies. The researcher duly approached prospective respondents and informed them about the study. Those that agreed to be available and ready to provide the needed information respond were handed the questionnaire to fill out. Because the sample is known to the researcher, non-probability sampling is faster and more cost-effective than probability sampling in obtaining replies. Respondents react more rapidly than those chosen at random because they are highly motivated to engage.

### **3.7 Sources of Data**

Emery and Couper (2003) asserted that any information that has been gathered, observed, developed, or generated in order to validate original study results is considered research data. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2010), there are two main sources from which data can be collected. These are primary sources and secondary sources. The study made use of primary data only.

**Primary Data:** Primary data was obtained from employees through the administration of questionnaires during the field work. The questionnaire used in this study was the self-completion type. Self-completed questionnaires are the ones which are handed directly to the respondent who completes it and hands it back to the researcher (Ohaja, 2003).

### **3.8 Data Collection Instrument**

A questionnaire was chosen as the data collection instrument. According to Amedahe (2002), a questionnaire is a collection of questions or statements about the study's objectives, research questions to be verified and answered, and other pertinent information that respondents are required to respond to by writing, ticking, marking, or circling the appropriate response. Respondents were asked to check the right response to close-ended questions on the questionnaire. The surveys were broken down into parts to capture the key topics outlined in the study's objectives. The first portion looked at the demographics of the respondents, while the second through fifth sections focused on the study's goals. After receiving copies of the questionnaire, the respondents were given a comprehensive explanation of the questions. The goal was to assist respondents comprehend the significance of the study and express their own opinions on the questionnaire topics.

### **3.9 Field Data Collection Procedure**

The researcher took a letter from the university and sent to GCB Bank. The letter detailed the purpose of the study and relayed to management of the bank that the researcher was a student of the institution and that the research was purely for academic purposes. Upon receipt, management gave the researcher permission to carry out the study. The researcher was introduced to employees of the bank. A date was agreed upon for data collection specifically 27<sup>th</sup> September to 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2021. After receiving copies of the questionnaire, the respondents were given a comprehensive explanation of the questions in the questionnaire. The goal was to assist respondents comprehend the significance of the

study and express their own opinions. Some of the respondents felt reluctant in feeling out the questionnaire however other employees of the bank motivated them to do so.

### **3.10 Data Processing and Analysis**

The raw data obtained from a research is useless unless it is transformed into information for the purpose of decision making (Emery & Couper, 2003). The following steps were taken to analyze the data for the study. The data was edited to detect and correct, possible errors and omissions that are likely to occur, to ensure consistency across respondents. Statistical Product for Service Solutions (SPSS v.22) was used for processing the obtained data. Descriptive statistics in the form of frequencies and percentages were used for the descriptive analysis whilst for the inferential analysis ANOVA was relied upon. Tables, graphs and charts were used to present the results of the study for a good visual impression and clarity of information.

### **3.11 Ethical Consideration**

Research ethics establishes standards for the ethical conduct of research. Additionally, it trains and oversees researchers to guarantee a high ethical standard is maintained (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The significance of voluntary involvement, confidentiality, and protection of respondents from any potential damage resulting from participation in the study were all considered by the researchers. Before beginning the study, the researchers explained the study's aim to the participants. Participants were told by the researchers that they can stop participating at any moment if they felt uncomfortable. The researchers further promised the respondents that the information they provided would be kept private and that they would be protected from any potential damage resulting from the study because the findings would only be utilized for the purposes planned.

**CHAPTER FOUR**  
**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**4.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the results and discussion of the findings. The presentation is done in two parts. The first part is on the demographic data whilst the second considers the research objectives.

**4.1 Demographic Features of Respondents**

**4.1.1 Sex Distribution of Respondents**

Table 1 gives the gender composition of the respondents. The table provides the gender information which shows that 70% of the respondents were females whiles 30% of the respondents were males. Thus, the survey shows majority of the respondents were females.

**Table 1: Sex Distribution of Respondents**

Sex	Frequency	Percent
Female	56	70%
Male	24	30%
Total	80	100%

**Source: Field Survey, 2021**

**4.1.2 Age of Respondents**

Out of the total respondents (80), 41% said they were above 42 years whiles 26% said they were between the ages of 38-42 years. However, 21% said they were 33-37 years, whiles the minority (11%) said between the ages of 28-32 years. Thus, most of the respondents said above 42 years.

**Table 2: Age of Respondents**

Response	Frequency	Percent
28- 32	9	11%
33- 37	17	21%
38 – 42	21	26%
Above 42	33	41%
Total	80	100%

**Source: Field Survey, 2021**

### 4.1.3 Position at GCB

Table 3 reveals the position of the respondents at the bank. It shows that 46% representing the majority said they were junior staff while 35% representing 28 persons said they were senior staff. However, 19% representing the minority said they were management. Thus, most of the respondents said they were junior staff. Table 3 captures the findings.

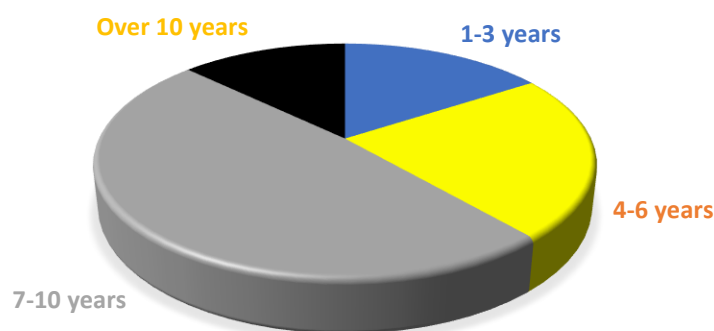
**Table 3: Position at GCB**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Junior Staff	37	46%
Senior Staff	28	35%
Management	15	19%
Total	80	100%

**Source: Field Survey, 2021**

### 4.1.4 Years of Experience at GCB

Figure 1 gives the number of years the respondents have been working at GCB. The survey showed that, 49% said they have been working at GCB for 7-10 years while 23% said they have been at the bank for 4-6 years. However, 16% representing 13 persons said they have been working at the bank for 1-3 years while the minority (13%) said they have been working at the bank for 10 years and above. Thus, most of the respondents have been working at GCB for 7-10 years.



**Figure 1: Years of Experience at GCB**

**Source: Field Survey, 2021**

## **4.2 Perception of Employees with Respect to Covid-19 and their Work Life**

The first research objective looked at the perception of employees with respect to Covid-19 and their work life. In addressing this objective, a number of issues were considered as presented below.

### **4.2.1 Impact of Covid-19 on Work**

The respondents were asked whether the emergence of covid-19 has impacted the way they work. The survey showed that, all (80 respondents) representing 100% said yes, Covid-19 has impacted the way they work now.

### **4.2.2 Resuming Work Fully**

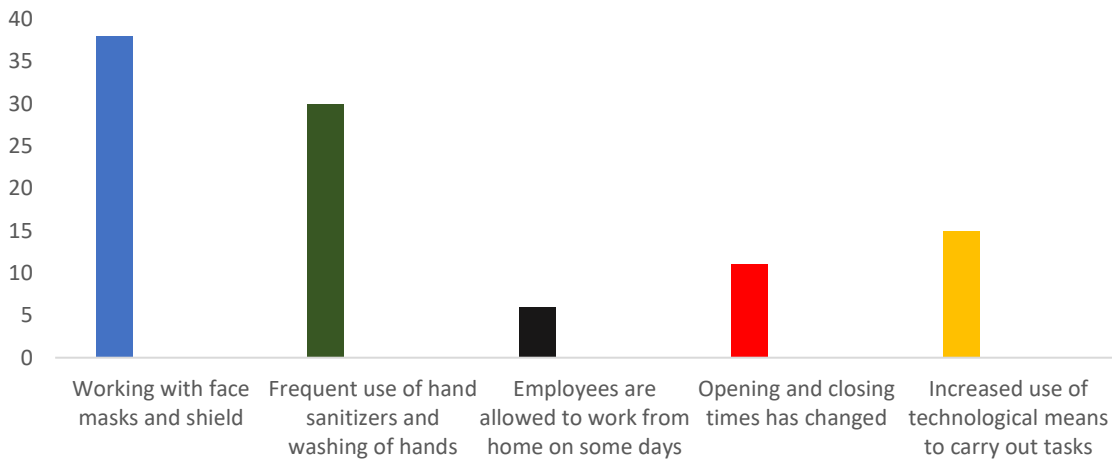
The question posed sought to know whether the respondents have resumed work fully. The survey showed that, all (80 respondents) representing 100% said yes, they have resumed work fully.

### **4.2.3 Changes to Work Due to Covid-19**

Respondents were further asked whether there were changes to the way they (the respondents) work in the face of the pandemic. The results are captured in Table 6. All eighty (80) respondents representing 100% said yes, there has been changes.

### **4.2.4 Nature of Changes**

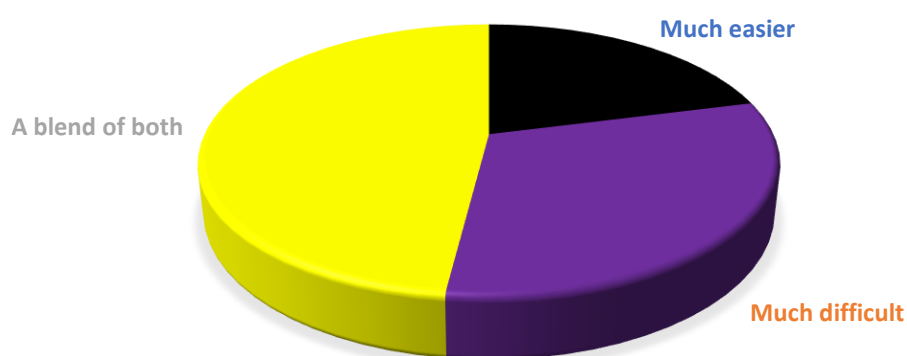
Out of the total respondents that asserted that there has been changes to the way they work, 38% of them said they now work with face masks and shield whilst 30% said they frequently use hand sanitizers and washing of hands. Also, 15% respondents stated there is an increase of technological means to carry out tasks whiles 11% said the opening and closing times at work has changed. However, only a few (6%) of them said the employees are allowed to work from home on some days. Thus, most of the respondents said they now work with face masks and shield.



**Figure 2: Nature of Changes**  
**Source: Field Survey, 2021**

#### 4.2.5 Emergence of Covid-19 Making Work Easier or Difficult

The respondents were asked whether the emergence of Covid-19 has made work much easier or difficult. The survey showed that almost half (48%) of the respondents admitted the pandemic had made work both easier and at the same time difficult but 31% said work is much difficult now. However, 21% of them said work is much easier now. Thus, most (79%) of the respondents said the emergence of covid-19 has made work sometimes easier and sometimes difficult.



**Figure 3: Emergence of Covid-19 Making Work Easier or Difficult**  
**Source: Field Survey, 2021**

### 4.3 Perceived Effect of Covid-19 on Recruitment and Selection

The second objective of the study focused on the perceived effect of Covid-19 on recruitment and selection. The regression analysis provides information on the relationship that exist between Covid-19 and recruitment and selection. Analysis on remote working is presented in the tables below. Table 4 presents the model summary of the variables involved in this study. The R value of 0.541 shows the regression coefficient of Covid-19 and recruitment and selection. The regression coefficient shows a high relation between Covid-19 and recruitment and selection. The  $R^2$  value of 0.339 showed the coefficient of determination between Covid-19 as well as recruitment and selection. The coefficient of determination showed that 53.9% variation in recruitment and selection is caused by Covid-19.

**Table 4: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
	.541 <sup>a</sup>	.539	.413	5.50219

a. Predictors: (Constant), Covid-19, recruitment and selection

Table 5 represents the analysis of variance. From the table, the sig. figure of 0.000 indicates that Covid-19 has significant effect on recruitment and selection.

**Table 5: ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	2192.035	3	1644.014	31.736	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	4435.576	63	49.134		
Total	6627.611	66			

a. Dependent Variable: Recruitment and selection

b. Predictors: (Constant), Covid-19

Table 6 represents the effect (B), relationship (Beta) and significance (Sig.) of Covid-19 and recruitment and selection. The B value of 0.394 showed that Covid-19 has a positive effect on recruitment and selection. This means that Covid-19 influences Covid-19 recruitment and selection. The beta value of 0.663 showed that there is a positive and strong correlation between Covid-19 and recruitment and selection.

**Table 6: Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized	t	Sig.
	Coefficients		Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	12.291	4.252		2.771	.006
Covid-19	.394	.093	.663	3.524	.137

a. Dependent Variable: Recruitment and selection Sig. <0.05

#### 4.4 Perceived Effect of Covid-19 on Staff Training and Development

The third research objective sought to examine the perceived effect of the pandemic on staff training and development. The regression analysis provides information on the relationship that exist between Covid-19 and training and development. Analysis on remote working is presented in the tables below. Table 7 presents the model summary of the variables involved in this study. The R value of 0.719 shows the regression coefficient of Covid-19 and training and development. The regression coefficient shows a high relation between Covid-19 and training and development. The R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.689 showed the coefficient of determination between Covid-19 as well as training and development. The coefficient of determination showed that 68.9% variation in training and development is caused by Covid-19.

**Table 7: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
	.719 <sup>a</sup>	.689	.369	8.78396

a. Predictors: (Constant), Covid-19, training and development

Table 7 represents the analysis of variance. From the table, the sig. figure of 0.000 indicate that Covid-19 has significant effect on training and development.

**Table 7: ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	1142.544	3	1644.014	31.736	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	3345.766	48	49.134		
Total	4488.31	51			

a. Dependent Variable: Training and development

b. Predictors: (Constant), Covid-19

Table 8 represents the effect (B), relationship (Beta) and significance (Sig.) of Covid-19 and training and development. The B value of 0.673 showed that Covid-19 has a positive effect on training and development. The beta value of 0.713 showed that there is a positive and strong correlation between Covid-19 and training and development. The significant value of 0.000 showed that Covid-19 is significant to training and development.

**Table 8: Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	10.917	4.665		3.717	.008
Covid-19	.673	.063	.713	2.247	.178

a. Dependent Variable: Training and development Sig. <0.05

#### 4.5 Perceived Effect of Covid-19 on Employee Motivation

The fourth objective of this study examined the perceived effect of the pandemic on employee motivation. From the model summary in Table 9, the value of variance  $R^2 = 0.012$ ,  $F(1, 127) = 1.579$ ,  $p\text{-value} > .05$ . This shows the prediction on the rate at which Covid-19 affects employee motivation cannot be done since its statically insignificant ( $p > .05$ ).

**Table 9: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					of R Square Change	F	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.111 <sup>a</sup>	.012	.005	1.02197	.012	1.579	1	127	.211

a. Predictors: (Constant), Covid-19

ANOVA shows whether the regression model was fit to determine the predictor than using the mean comparison. From the ANOVA Table 10, the regression model was not suitable for predicting the outcome variable since  $p > .05$ .

**Table 10: ANOVA Table**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1.649	1	1.649	1.579	.211 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	132.640	127	1.044		
	Total	134.290	128			

a. Dependent Variable: employee motivation\_1

b. Predictors: (Constant), Covid-19

Table 11 shows the regression weight coefficients model in this study was not significant. The analysis showed though the Covid-19 can influence employee motivation ( $\beta = .111$ ,  $t = 1.257$ ,  $p > .05$ ), it was statistically insignificant hence Covid-19 does not affect employee motivation.

**Table 11: Coefficient Table.**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		T	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error			Lower Bound	B
1	(Constant)	1.88238		7.900	.000	1.410	2.353
	Covid-19	.143114	.111	1.257	.211	-.082	.368

a. Dependent Variable: employee motivation\_1

#### 4.6 Perceived Effect of Covid-19 on Employee Retention

The fifth research objective assessed the perceived of COVID-19 on employee retention. From the model summary in Table 12, the value of variance  $R^2 = 0.034$ ,  $F(1, 141) = 1.671$ ,  $p$ -value  $> .05$ . This shows the prediction on the rate at which Covid-19 affects employee retention cannot be done since its statically insignificant ( $p > .05$ ).

**Table 12: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					of R Square	F	df1	df2	Sig.
1	.126 <sup>a</sup>	.034	.005	1.1374	.034	1.671	1	141	.149

a. Predictors: (Constant), Covid-19

ANOVA shows whether the regression model was fit to determine the predictor than using the mean comparison. From the ANOVA Table 13, the regression model was not suitable for predicting the outcome variable since  $p > .05$ .

**Table 13: ANOVA Table**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1.649	1	1.649	1.579	.211 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	132.640	127	1.044		
	Total	134.290	128			

a. Dependent Variable: employee retention\_1

b. Predictors: (Constant), Covid-19

Table 14 shows the regression weight coefficients model in this study was not significant. The analysis showed though the Covid-19 can influence employee retention ( $\beta = .149$ ,  $t = 1.387$ ,  $p > .05$ ), it was statistically insignificant hence Covid-19 did not have significant effect on employee retention.

**Table 14: Coefficient Table.**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients			T	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	B
1	(Constant)	1.431	.239		5.920	.000	1.630	2.693
	Covid-19	.120	.193	.149	1.387	.211	-.044	.331

a. Dependent Variable: employee retention\_1

#### 4.7 Perceived Effect of Covid-19 on Communication

The final research objective assessed the perceived effect of the pandemic on communication in the Organization. The regression analysis provides information on the relationship that exist between Covid-19 and communication. Analysis on communication is presented in the tables below. Table 15 presents the model summary of the variables involved in this study. The R value of 0.664 shows the regression coefficient of Covid-19 and communication. The regression coefficient shows a high relationship between Covid-19 and communication. The  $R^2$  value of 0.764 showed the coefficient of

determination between communication as well as Covid-19. The coefficient of determination showed that 76.4% variation in communication in the Organization is caused by Covid-19.

**Table 15: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
	.664 <sup>a</sup>	.764	.564	6.05798

a. Predictors: (Constant), Covid-19, communication

Table 16 represents the analysis of variance. From the table, the sig. figure of 0.000 indicate that Covid-19 is significant to communication.

**Table 16: ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	2192.035	3	1644.014	31.736	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	4435.576	63	49.134		
Total	6627.611	66			

a. Dependent Variable: Communication

b. Predictors: (Constant), Covid-19

Table 17 represents the effect (B), relationship (Beta) and significance (Sig.) of Covid-19 and communication. The B value of 0.547 showed that Covid-19 has an effect on communication. This means that Covid-19 improves organisational communication. The beta value of 0.639 showed that there is a positive and strong correlation between Covid-19 and communication.

**Table 17: Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	14.951	4.277		4.187	.007
Covid-19	.547	.093	.639	4.244	.134

a. Dependent Variable: Communication

Sig. <0.05

#### **4.8 Discussion of Findings**

The first objective sought to explore the perception of employees with respect to the Covid-19 pandemic and their work life. The respondents asserted that, the Covid-19 pandemic has made work sometimes easier and sometimes difficult. The study further revealed that, employees of GCB bank has noticed a change in their work life as a result of the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic. This was mainly seen in the wearing of face masks and shield, they frequent use of hand sanitizers and washing of hands, an increase of technological means to carry out tasks and a change in the opening and closing times at work.

According to Przytua, Strzelec, and Kociaska-Krysiska (2020), businesses must establish fresh groundwork by redefining emerging trends in human resource management techniques. Indeed, after nearly a year of new functioning based mostly on remote labor, companies must reassess their surroundings, analyze the new trends in human resource management spawned by this unanticipated crisis, and determine their relevance. Given the unpredictability of the current situation and the high level of uncertainty surrounding its resolution, organizations should opt for a hybrid workplace model, which is adaptable enough to allow for rapid and efficient adaptation to changing requirements. Human resource management practitioners must adjust work roles and prioritize job redesign inside the company (Messenböck, Schuler & Shroff, 2020). Businesses should reinvent themselves through the integration of entrepreneurial capabilities among their workers, in order to assist them in learning how to adapt to the uncertainty created by an unforeseen crisis and prosper in a dynamic environment (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020; Liu, Lee & Lee, 2020).

The second objective sought to examine the perceived effect of the pandemic on recruitment and selection at GCB Bank Limited. The study revealed that the Covid-19 has had a significant effect on the recruitment and selection processes at GCB. This finding contradicts that of Brodeur et al. (2020) who asserted that, the COVID-19 epidemic slowed global economic activity significantly, causing

furloughs and layoffs, resulting in a rise in the unemployment rate in a number of nations. 'The current G7 unemployment rate varies significantly, ranging from 30 million in the United States to 1.76 million in Japan' (Kretchmer, 2020). According to Gourinchas (2020), COVID-19 has created a situation in which 50% or more of the workforce may be unable to work for an extended length of time. Let us discuss this portion on phone.

The third objective sought to determine the perceived effect of the pandemic on staff training and development in the organization. The study revealed that the Covid-19 has positively affected the training and development processes in place at GCB. According to Przytua, Strzelec, and Krysiska-Kociaska (2020), companies confront the problem of reskilling and upskilling their employees to meet the requirements of the new 'distance economy' environment. In this case, the primary challenge for human resource management practitioners may be related to developing a training program that is tailored to the new reality of the organization and its employees, as well as selecting the appropriate training methods, taking into account physical distancing measures and the need for employees to be operational quickly in order to sustain the company's business. This indicates that managers and human resource management practitioners must go beyond standard training approaches. In this situation, Devyania et al. (2020) advised modifying employees' training programs to guarantee a long-term transition to the new working habits.

The fourth objective sought to ascertain the perceived effect of the pandemic on employee motivation in the organization. The study identified no significant relationship between Covid-19 and employee motivation. This result departs from that of Elsafty and Ragheb (2020) who noted that during these difficult periods marked by abrupt and extreme changes, employment relationships may be strained, resulting in a probable dramatic drop in employee morale and an increase in turnover.

The fifth objective sought to examine the perceived effect of the pandemic on employee retention in the organization. The study identified no significant relationship between Covid-19 and employee retention. This finding deviates from the revelation by Ngoc Su et al. (2021). The authors established that maintaining and attracting skilled employees is difficult for businesses in the COVID-19 period, owing to the fact that these individuals are frequently seeking employment possibilities in industries that were not adversely affected by the pandemic.

The sixth and last objective sought to ascertain how the pandemic has affected communication in the organization. The study revealed that the Covid-19 has had significant effect on communication processes at GCB. The effect was perceived to be positive though. The present finding agrees with Prasad and Vaidya (2020) who reported that the pandemic has had an effect on communication processes in many organizations. However, this study could not confirm the revelation by Prasad and Vaidya (2020) that workplace isolation, family distractions, role overload, and occupational stress factors have become a consequence of the pandemic. It is essentially clear from the results that the importance GCB Bank places on human resource has propelled them to institute measures to lessen the negative effects on the pandemic on its HRM. This revelation strengthens the practical relevance of the human capital theory which sees human beings as the most vital asset of organizations.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0. Introduction

After carefully analyzing the data in the previous chapter, the summary of the study, its conclusion and recommendations are made in this chapter.

#### 5.1. Summary of Findings

The study mainly sought to investigate the effect of Covid-19 on the management of human resources in organizations using GCB Bank Limited as a case study. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Explore the perception of employees with respect to the Covid-19 pandemic and their work life.
2. Examine the perceived effect of the pandemic on Recruitment and Selection at GCB Bank Limited.
3. Determine the perceived effect of the pandemic on staff training and development in the organization.
4. Ascertain the perceived effect of the pandemic on employee motivation in the organization.
5. Examine the perceived effect of the pandemic on employee retention in the organization.
6. Ascertain how the pandemic has affected communication in the organization.

The study adopted a descriptive survey approach and was purely quantitative in nature. The population of the study comprised all employees of GCB Bank at the banks head office. Eight (80) employees were sampled out for the study using convenience sampling method. A questionnaire was chosen as the data collection instrument. SPSS (v.20.0) was used in the processing of primary data gathered. Frequencies, percentages and ANOVA were used for data analysis. Below are some of the key findings of the study.

The first objective sought to explore the perception of employees with respect to the Covid-19 pandemic and their work life. The respondents asserted that, the Covid-19 pandemic has made work sometimes easier and sometimes difficult. The study further revealed that, employees of GCB bank has noticed a change in their work life as a result of the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic. This was mainly seen in the wearing of face masks and shield, they frequent use of hand sanitizers and washing of hands, an increase of technological means to carry out tasks and a change in the opening and closing times at work. The second objective sought to examine the effect of the pandemic on recruitment and selection at GCB Bank Limited. The study revealed that the Covid-19 has positively affected the recruitment and selection processes in place at GCB.

On the third objective which sought to determine the perceived effect of the pandemic on staff training and development in the organization, the study revealed that the Covid-19 has positively affected the training and development processes in place at GCB. With regard to the fourth objective which sought to ascertain the effect of the pandemic on employee motivation in the organization, the study observed no significant relationship between Covid-19 and employee motivation. Regarding the fifth objective which examined the effect of the pandemic on employee retention in the organization, it was established that no significant relationship existed between Covid-19 and employee retention. The sixth and last objective sought to ascertain how the pandemic has affected communication in the organization. The study revealed that the Covid-19 has positively affected the communication processes in place at GCB.

## **5.2. Conclusion**

The COVID-19 has greatly affected all firms, creating a complicated and demanding environment for managers and HRM practitioners who need to develop innovative ways to maintain the continuation of their enterprises and to assist their staff in coping with this unprecedented crisis. Studies on the impact of the pandemic on the HRM function is limited. This epidemic has evidently created a

complicated and demanding environment for managers and HRMs, who needed to come up with innovative ways to continue their business and help their workers meet the challenges of this unusual circumstance. This study reveals that Covid-19 has effect on the management of human resources in organizations in many ways. For example, there is a positive relationship between the Covid-19 and recruitment and selection. Also, there is a positive relationship between the Covid-19 and staff training and development. For example, there is a positive relationship between the Covid-19 and communication in organizations. However, no significant relationship manifests between Covid-19 and employee motivation and retention.

### **5.3. Recommendations**

The following recommendations was made for the study;

1. Management should ensure that HRM strategies of GCB Bank move beyond the conventional models of HRM by making modern information technology a vital partner to thrive and assure corporate sustainability.
2. Organizations must enhance their workers' autonomy, improve their digital skills and widen the viewpoint of developing their competences.
3. Organizations must take hold of ICT and make it available to all its members so that they may continue their business amid unusual situations.
4. Managemen should come up with innovative ways to enable employees continue their business in an atmosphere of safety and continued protection amidst the present challenges the pandemic offers.

### **5.4 Suggestions for Future Research**

1. Future research can focus on the HRM challenges organizations face in the face of the pandemic.
2. Future research using large sample size across selected organizations can be conducted.

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**APPENDIX**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE**  
**GHANA INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISM**

**THE EFFECT OF COVID-19 ON THE MANAGEMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES IN ORGANIZATIONS USING GCB BANK LIMITED AS A CASE STUDY**

This questionnaire is to investigate the perceived effect of Covid-19 on the management of human resources in organizations using GCB Bank Limited as a case study. It should take less than 10 minutes for you to complete this survey. Your participation is voluntary. You may refuse to participate in this study, skip questions, or end your participation at any time. Thank you for your cooperation.

**Section A: Demographic Data**

- i. What is your gender?  
 Male       Female
  
- ii. Age  
 23 - 27       28- 32       33- 37       38 – 42       Above 42
  
- iii. Position  
 Junior Staff       Senior Staff       Management
  
- iv. Number of years at GCB Bank?  
 1-3 years       4-6 years       7-9 years       above 10 years

**Section B: Perception of Employees with Respect to Covid-19 and their Work Life**

1. Has the emergence of Covid-19 impacted on the way you work?  
 Yes       No
  
2. Have you resumed work fully?  
 Yes       No
  
3. Are there changes to the way you work now?  
 Yes       No
  
4. If yes, what are some of the changes?  
 Working with face masks and shield  
 Frequent use of hand sanitizers and washing of hands  
 Employees are allowed to work from home on some days  
 Opening and closing times has changed  
 Increased use of technological means to carry out tasks  
 Others (please specify).....

5. In your opinion, has the emergence of Covid-19 made work much easier or difficult?  
 Much easier       Much difficult       A blend of both

**Section C: Perceived Effect of Covid-19 on Recruitment and Selection**

The following statements relate to the perceived effect of Covid-19 on Recruitment and Selection in organizations. Please, indicate (by ticking) to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements using the scale below:

1=Strongly disagree    2=Disagree    3=Neutral    4=Agree    5=Strongly agree

**statements**

No	Statements	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
6	Covid-19 has revealed the lapses in the banks recruitment process					
7	Covid-19 has revealed the lapses in the banks selection process					
8	Covid-19 has disrupted the banks recruitment process					
9	Covid-19 has disrupted the banks selection process					
10	The bank has recruited more people during this crisis					
11	The pandemic has improved the banks recruitment process					
12	The pandemic has improved the banks selection process					
13	Recruitment and selection processes has been halted for the next year					

**Section D: Perceived Effect of Covid-19 on Staff Training and Development**

The following statements relate to the perceived effect of Covid-19 on Staff Training and Development in organizations. Please, indicate (by ticking) to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements using the scale below:

1=Strongly disagree    2=Disagree    3=Neutral    4=Agree    5=Strongly agree

No	Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
14	The pandemic has negatively affected on the job staff training at the bank	1	2	3	4	5

15	The pandemic has negatively affected off the job staff training at the bank					
16	Due to Covid-19, all forms of staff training and development are done online	1	2	3	4	5
17	The pandemic has exposed the lapses in the training method used at the bank.					
18	Covid-19 has rendered most training and development programmes obsolete	1	2	3	4	5
19	The pandemic has led to poor attendance at training programmes					
20	The pandemic has led to the creation of equal training and development opportunities for employees	1	2	3	4	5
21	Training and development programmes at the bank have been reduced drastically	1	2	3	4	5

**Section E: Perceived Effect of Covid-19 on Employee Motivation**

The following statements relate to the perceived effect of Covid-19 on Employee Motivation in organizations. Please, indicate (by ticking) to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements using the scale below:

1=Strongly disagree    2=Disagree    3=Neutral    4=Agree    5=Strongly agree

**statements**

No	Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
22	Employees are motivated to help the bank go through this period of crisis	1	2	3	4	5
23	Financial incentives for employees have been reduced drastically due to the pandemic.					
24	Additional financial incentives for employees have been provided by the bank due to the pandemic.					
25	Non financial incentives for employees have been reduced drastically due to the pandemic.					
26	Additional non financial incentives for employees have					

	been provided by the bank due to the pandemic.					
27	The bank has reviewed its motivational packages to employees amidst the pandemic	1	2	3	4	5
28	The pandemic has led to increased employee participation in the bank's decision making process					
29	The pandemic has led to better engagement of employees					
30	All forms of motivational packages are tied to work targets	1	2	3	4	5
31	Covid-19 has demoralized most employees	1	2	3	4	5

### Section F: Perceived Effect of Covid-19 on Employee Retention

These statements relate to the perceived effect of Covid-19 on Employee Retention in organizations. Please, indicate (by ticking) to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements using the scale below:

1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree

No	Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
32	The pandemic rendered some employees redundant					
33	The bank has retained most of its employees after opening its offices	1	2	3	4	5
34	Many permanent employees were laid off due to the pandemic.	1	2	3	4	5
35	Many temporary staff were laid off	1	2	3	4	5
36	Some employees of the bank have resigned as a result of the pandemic	1	2	3	4	5
37	No employee of the bank has lost their job					
38	The pandemic exposes the lapses in the bank's retention strategies	1	2	3	4	5

**Section F: Perceived Effect of Covid-19 on Communication**

These statements relate to the perceived effect of Covid-19 on Communication in organizations. Please, indicate (by ticking) to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements using the scale below:

1=Very lowly agree    2=Lowly agree            3=Moderately agree    4=Strongly Agree    5=Very strongly agree

**Please indicate (by ticking) to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements**

No	Statements	Very Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Lowly Agree	Very Lowly Agree
39	The pandemic has negatively affected the mode of communication at the bank.					
40	Covid-19 has strengthened the mode of communication of the bank	1	2	3	4	5
41	The pandemic has exposed the weaknesses in communication channels of the bank	1	2	3	4	5
42	Covid-19 has shown the strengths in the banks communication methods	1	2	3	4	5
43	The pandemic has negatively affected the flow of information employees receive.					
44	The pandemic has negatively affected the quality of information employees receive.					
45	Employees of the bank could not get the information they needed during the pandemic.	1	2	3	4	5