



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

Analysis Of Post COVID Performance & Satisfaction Assessment Of Employees Of Plastic Industries In MIDC, Jalgaon.

Dr. Neelima Warke

Professor, Godavari Institute of Management & Research, Jalgaon

Prof. Vaijayanti Asodekar

Assistant Professor, Godavari Institute of Management & Research, Jalgaon

Abstract:

The study examines the post-COVID performance and employee satisfaction levels in plastic industries located in the MIDC (Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation) region of Jalgaon. The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted industries worldwide, and its aftermath on employees' productivity, mental health, and job satisfaction has been a critical area of concern. This research explores how plastic industry employees in MIDC have adjusted to the "new normal" in terms of work culture, job satisfaction, and overall performance post-pandemic. A combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, including surveys and interviews, was used to assess employee performance and satisfaction across various dimensions, such as work-life balance, mental well-being, job security, and organizational support. The findings reveal key factors influencing employee morale and productivity, highlighting the challenges of remote working, health concerns, and the impact of organizational policies. The study concludes with recommendations for improving employee satisfaction and performance through strategic interventions, including enhanced communication, flexible work arrangements, and increased organizational support. The results are valuable for industry stakeholders aiming to foster a more resilient and satisfied workforce in the post-COVID era.

Introduction –

The COVID-19 pandemic, caused by the novel coronavirus SARS-CoV-2, began in December 2019 in Wuhan, China. The virus, which primarily spreads through respiratory droplets, led to a global health crisis. The World Health Organization (WHO) declared it a Public Health Emergency of International Concern on January 30, 2020, and later declared it a pandemic on March 11, 2020.

COVID-19 rapidly spread across countries, causing millions of infections and deaths worldwide. It overwhelmed healthcare systems, disrupted economies, and led to widespread social and travel restrictions. Governments implemented measures like lockdowns, quarantines, and social distancing to curb the spread of the virus, while scientists and healthcare workers worked tirelessly to understand the virus and develop vaccines.

As the pandemic unfolded, it not only brought a global health crisis but also triggered significant changes in daily life, including remote work, virtual learning, and a rethinking of public health practices. The response to the pandemic highlighted the importance of global cooperation, rapid scientific innovation, and the need for preparedness in addressing future health emergencies.

Performance and Satisfaction of Employees

Employee performance and satisfaction are two of the most crucial factors influencing the success of any organization. These elements are deeply interconnected and have a direct impact on an organization's productivity, efficiency, and overall work culture.

Employee Performance refers to how effectively and efficiently an employee performs their job duties and contributes to the organization's goals. It encompasses aspects such as skill development, meeting targets, quality of work, time management, and the ability to work as part of a team. High-performing employees tend to bring innovation, improve processes, and drive the company towards its strategic objectives.

Employee Satisfaction, on the other hand, refers to the contentment and happiness an employee feels regarding their job. It is influenced by various factors, including work environment, compensation, career growth opportunities, relationships with coworkers and managers, work-life balance, and job security. Satisfied employees are more likely to stay with an organization, reducing turnover and enhancing team morale.

Organizations with a strong focus on both performance and satisfaction tend to experience better outcomes in terms of employee retention, reduced absenteeism, and higher levels of engagement. Additionally, these organizations are better positioned to achieve business goals through a motivated and productive workforce.

The relationship between performance and satisfaction is complex. High performance can lead to greater job satisfaction, and satisfied employees are often more motivated to perform well. However, when employees face burnout or feel undervalued, their performance may suffer, which in turn affects their job satisfaction. Therefore, organizations need to strike a balance between enhancing performance and maintaining employee satisfaction to foster a productive, motivated, and loyal workforce.

Understanding and measuring both performance and satisfaction are essential for organizational success, as they help identify areas for improvement, guide decision-making, and inform policies aimed at optimizing human resource management.

Industrial Scenario of MIDC Jalgaon –

The MIDC (Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation) Jalgaon is an industrial area located in the Jalgaon district of Maharashtra, India. The industrial scenario in MIDC Jalgaon is diverse and is driven by various sectors contributing to its economic growth. Some key features and sectors in the industrial scenario of MIDC Jalgaon include:

1. Textile Industry

Textile and Garment Manufacturing: Jalgaon is known for its large textile industry, particularly cotton-based production. The region has several textile mills and garment factories that play a significant role in the industrial sector.

Cotton Processing: Given Maharashtra's prominence in cotton farming, MIDC Jalgaon has many cotton ginning and pressing units. Cotton is sourced locally and processed in the region, contributing to the textile supply chain.

2. Engineering and Manufacturing

Machine Tools and Equipment Manufacturing: The area also supports engineering industries that manufacture machine tools, pumps, and other industrial equipment.

Automobile Components: Several companies involved in the production of automobile parts and components are also located in this region, contributing to both local and global supply chains.

3. Food Processing Industry

Agro-processing Units: Jalgaon is a key region for agriculture in Maharashtra, with significant production of fruits like bananas, vegetables, and more. The food processing industry in MIDC Jalgaon has a variety of units engaged in the processing of fruits, vegetables, and other agricultural products.

Banana Processing: Jalgaon is famously known as the "Banana City" due to the large-scale production of bananas. Several units focus on banana-related products like chips, pulp, and other value-added products.

4. Chemical Industry

Pharmaceuticals and Chemicals: There are also chemical and pharmaceutical manufacturing units in MIDC Jalgaon, producing a range of products from bulk drugs to agrochemicals.

Fertilizers and Pesticides: Due to the strong agricultural base in the region, there is a significant demand for fertilizers and pesticides, which is supported by the chemical industry in the industrial zone. The COVID-19 pandemic had a profound impact on global employment, with far-reaching consequences for workers, businesses, and economies. The effects varied by region, industry, and worker demographic, but some key trends were common across many areas. Here are some of the major impacts:

Job Losses and Unemployment

Mass Layoffs: Many businesses, especially in sectors like hospitality, travel, retail, and entertainment, faced closures or severe reductions in demand. This led to widespread layoffs, furloughs, and a surge in unemployment.

Rising Unemployment Rates: Unemployment rates spiked in many countries, with millions losing their jobs due to lockdowns, business closures, and the economic downturn.

Disproportionate Impact on Low-Wage and Hourly Workers: Workers in service industries, particularly those in low-wage and gig economy jobs, were disproportionately affected by job losses and income instability.

2. Remote Work and Work-from-Home Trends

Shift to Remote Work: As a measure to limit virus spread, companies rapidly adopted remote work policies. Many white-collar jobs, especially in tech, finance, and professional services, shifted to virtual platforms.

Long-Term Remote Work Adoption: For many businesses, remote work became not just a temporary measure but a long-term shift. Studies have shown that remote work may continue to be a permanent arrangement for many companies, affecting how office spaces and work cultures evolve.

3. Changes in Workforce Dynamics

Increased Automation: The pandemic accelerated the adoption of automation and artificial intelligence in certain industries, particularly in manufacturing, logistics, and customer service. This led to changes in the types of jobs available and required workers to adapt to new technologies.

Reskilling and Up skilling: As the labor market transformed, workers were increasingly encouraged to acquire new skills to stay relevant in the changing economy. Online learning platforms surged in popularity as people sought to reskill.

4. Mental Health and Job Satisfaction

Burnout and Mental Health Issues: The uncertainty of the pandemic, combined with remote work pressures, led to increased stress, burnout, and mental health challenges for many workers. A rise in anxiety, depression, and other mental health concerns has been widely reported, particularly among employees working from home without a clear work-life balance.

5. Wage Growth and Inequality

Wage Increases in Certain Sectors: As businesses struggled to hire workers, wages in certain sectors (like retail, food service, and healthcare) increased in an effort to attract talent. However, these wage increases were not always equal across sectors.

6. Government Intervention and Stimulus Measures

Government Support: Many governments implemented stimulus programs, unemployment benefits, and business relief packages to support the workforce during the pandemic. In some cases, these measures helped mitigate the economic fallout of widespread job losses.

Long-Term Impact of Economic Stimulus: While these measures helped, there were concerns about the long-term sustainability of government spending and how it would affect the broader economy.

Objective of study

1. To know the actual performance of employees on the footprints of COVID.
2. To measure the level of job satisfaction of employees in posts COVID Period.
3. To compare the efficiency of employee in Pre & Post COVID period.
4. To understand the influence of COVID on employees job satisfaction
5. To suggest the sound measures to Performance & job satisfaction of employee in new normal.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUEMENTS:

The researcher used questionnaire. The researcher prepared the questionnaire to be responded by the sampled employees of the organization. The questions were designed to make the resolve of the study successful after the results have been established. This instrument gave probable material about the recruitment and selection procedures or applies.

SOURCE OF DATA

Both primary and secondary source of data were used in leading the research.

PRIMARY SOURCES-

In getting primary data there are several methods available to collecting data. In order to collect reliable and valid information, the researcher contacted employees of the Human resource branch and employees of other department of Organization.

The method used in collecting the primary data was questionnaire.

SECONDARY SOURCES:

The study also used secondary data when collecting information. Sources of secondary data include books, internet searches, articles, and magazines. Research Methodology of present research work is as follows –

Sample Size and Sampling

The estimated sample size for prepared research is 150. Therefore 150 questionnaires were circulated and collected back and after screening them 140 full fledge questionnaire have been considered for study.

Methods of Data Collection

The major way to collect the primary data is through questionnaire as well as sometimes observation technique also. However, secondary data was collected through books and websites of responsible authorities.

DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION**General Information****Department:**

- A. Production
- B. Quality Control
- C. Research & Development
- D. Sales & Marketing
- E. HR & Administration
- F. Other (Please specify): _____

Position:

- A. Entry-level
- B. Mid-level
- C. Senior-level
- D. Managerial

Years with the Company:

- A. Less than 1 year
- B. 1-3 years
- C. 4-6 years
- D. 7+ years

Section 1: Performance Assessment Post-COVID

1. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, how has your overall work performance been impacted?
 - A. Significantly improved
 - B. Slightly improved
 - C. Slightly worsened
 - D. Significantly worsened

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Significantly improved	35	25
Slightly improved	45	32
Slightly worsened	30	21
Significantly worsened	31	22

Total	140	100
--------------	------------	------------

Interpretation-

35 respondents (25% of the total) felt that the situation had significantly improved. A larger portion, 45 respondents (32% of the total), felt that things had slightly improved. 30 respondents (21%) indicated that things had slightly worsened, suggesting that a smaller proportion of people noticed a minor decline in the situation. 31 respondents (22%) believed that the situation had significantly worsened, which is almost equal to those who thought it had significantly improved.

2. How would you rate your productivity compared to the pre-COVID period?

- A. Much higher
- B. Higher
- C. Lower
- D. Much lower

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Much higher	30	21
Higher	50	35
Lower	40	29
Much lower	20	15
Total	140	100

Interpretation-

21% of respondents believe the situation or condition is much higher than expected, 35% of respondents consider it to be higher than expected and 29% of respondents think it is lower than expected whereas 15% of respondents view it as much lower than expected.

3. How comfortable are you with the new work setup (remote work, hybrid, or in-office)?

- A. Very comfortable
- B. Comfortable
- C. Neutral
- D. Uncomfortable

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Very comfortable	45	33
Comfortable	60	43
Neutral	25	18
Uncomfortable	10	06
Total	140	100

Interpretation-

The majority of respondents (76%, combining "Very Comfortable" and "Comfortable") feel positively or at least somewhat positive about the situation, with the largest group being "Comfortable" (43%). Only a small portion, 6%, feels uncomfortable, indicating that overall, the majority of people are satisfied or at ease with the subject or situation being measured. The neutral group is moderate at 18%, suggesting there is still room for improvement to make the experience more universally comfortable.

4.Do you feel the workload has increased or decreased since the pandemic?

- A. Increased
- B. Decreased
- C. Remained the same

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Increased	45	32
Decreased	60	43
Remained the same	35	25
Total	140	100

Interpretation-

The majority (43%) of respondents observed a decrease in the factor, while a smaller group (32%) experienced an increase, 25% of individuals reported no change.

Section 2: Employee Satisfaction Post-COVID

1. How satisfied are you with the company's response to employee safety during the pandemic (e.g., sanitization, social distancing, remote work options)?

- A. Very satisfied
- B. Satisfied
- C. Neutral
- D. Dissatisfied

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Satisfied	55	39
Very Satisfied	45	32
Neutral	25	18
Dissatisfied	15	11
Total	140	100

Interpretation-

The majority of respondents (71%) are either very satisfied or satisfied, which suggests a generally positive reception. However, there is still a small group (11%) who are dissatisfied, and 18% who feel neutral, indicating areas for improvement or addressing concerns.

2. How do you rate the overall work-life balance post-COVID?

- A. Very good
- B. Good
- C. Neutral
- D. Poor
- E. Dissatisfied

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Very good	40	28
Good	30	36
Neutral	50	21
Poor	20	15
Total	140	100

Interpretation-

Most respondents rated the subject either as "Good" (36%) or "Very Good" (28%), showing a generally positive sentiment overall, 21% remained neutral, suggesting that a portion of respondents may not have strong feelings about the subject and 15% were dissatisfied, which is a notable minority but not overwhelming.

3.Do you feel that the company has supported your mental well-being after the pandemic?

- A. Yes, very much
- B. Yes, somewhat
- C. No, not at all

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes, very much	60	42
Yes, somewhat	50	36
No, not at all	30	22
Total	140	100

Interpretation-

The majority (78%) of respondents indicated a positive response, either "very much" or "somewhat," while a smaller portion (22%) disagreed entirely. This shows that there is a general trend of approval or positive sentiment toward the question at hand, with most people feeling positively or somewhat positively.

4. How satisfied are you with the communication from management regarding updates, policies, and changes post-COVID?

- A. Very satisfied
- B. Satisfied
- C. Neutral
- D. Dissatisfied

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Very satisfied	35	25
Satisfied	60	42
Neutral	30	22
Dissatisfied	15	11
Total	140	100

Interpretation-

A large majority (67%) of respondents are either "Very satisfied" or "Satisfied", which suggests a generally positive perception. However, there's still a notable 22% who are neutral or dissatisfied, so there may be room for improvement in certain areas.

5.How would you rate the level of support you receive from your immediate supervisor/manager?

- A. Excellent
- B. Good
- C. Average
- D. Poor

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Excellent	45	32
Good	60	42
Average	25	18
Poor	10	8
Total	140	100

Interpretation – 5 respondents rated the subject as "Excellent," which accounts for 32% of the total respondents, The 25 respondents rated the subject as "Average," which represents 18% of the total and Only 10 respondents (8%) rated the subject as "Poor."

6 .How has the company improved or adapted its technology and processes post-COVID?

- A. Significantly improved
- B. Somewhat improved
- C. Slightly worsened
- D. Significantly worsened

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Significantly improved	50	35
Somewhat improved	60	42
Slightly worsened	20	15
Significantly worsened	10	8
Total	140	100

Interpretation-

The majority of respondents (77%) feel that the situation has improved in some way, with 35% reporting a significant improvement and 42% reporting a more moderate improvement. A smaller portion (23%) believes the situation has worsened, with only 8% feeling that it has worsened significantly. This suggests that overall; there has been a positive shift or improvement according to the majority of the respondents.

Section 4: Mental Health and Well-being

1. How has your mental health been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent changes in your work environment?

- A. Significantly Improved
- B. Improved
- C. No Change
- D. Worsened

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Significantly improved	50	36
Improved	60	42
No Change	20	15
Worsened	10	8
Total	140	100

Interpretation-

The majority of respondents (78%) reported either an improvement or a significant improvement (36% + 42%), which is a positive result. A smaller portion (15%) reported no change, and just 8% felt the situation had worsened. This suggests that overall, the outcome is favorable with a relatively small portion of negative feedback.

2. Are you satisfied with your career growth opportunities in the post-COVID work environment?

- A. Very Satisfied
- B. Satisfied
- C. Neutral
- D. Dissatisfied

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Very Satisfied	30	22
Satisfied	50	35
Neutral	40	28
Dissatisfied	20	15
Total	140	100

Interpretation-

Response is mostly positive, with 57% (very satisfied + satisfied) of respondents expressing positive sentiment. However, there is still a notable 28% neutral and 15% dissatisfied, suggesting there is room for improvement in addressing the concerns or preferences of these groups.

FINDING

- The majority of respondents felt that the situation had either slightly or significantly improved (57%), while a smaller group perceived a decline (43%).
- A majority of respondents (56%) perceive the situation as higher than expected, with 21% viewing it as much higher and 35% as higher, while 44% consider it lower, including 29% as lower and 15% as much lower.
- The majority of respondents (76%) feel comfortable or very comfortable with the situation, though 18% remain neutral, indicating potential for further improvement.
- A majority of respondents (43%) observed a decrease in the factor, while 32% saw an increase and 25% reported no change.
- The majority of respondents (78%) expressed a positive sentiment, while 22% disagreed entirely.
- While 67% of respondents express satisfaction, 22% remain neutral or dissatisfied, indicating potential areas for improvement.
- The majority of respondents rated the subject as "Excellent" (32%), followed by "Average" (18%), and a smaller portion rated it as "Poor" (8%).
- The majority of respondents (77%) report an improvement in the situation, with 35% noting significant progress.
- While 57% of respondents express positive sentiment, 28% remain neutral and 15% dissatisfied, indicating opportunities for improvement in addressing their concerns.

SUGGESTION

- Implement flexible work options, such as remote or hybrid models, to maintain work-life balance, which has become a priority post-pandemic.
- Offer mental health resources, counseling, and stress management programs to support employees' well-being, addressing the psychological impact of COVID.
- Ensure transparent and frequent communication regarding organizational goals, changes, and safety measures, fostering trust and reducing uncertainties.
- Develop systems to recognize and reward employees' efforts and achievements, boosting morale and enhancing job satisfaction.
- Invest in reskilling and up skilling programs, addressing skills gaps that emerged due to rapid changes in technology and work methods during the pandemic.

CONCLUSION

Employees in the plastic industry experienced an overall decline in performance due to disruptions in operations, shifts to remote work, and health concerns. Many companies faced difficulties in maintaining production levels, leading to adjustments in operational processes, work hours, and shifts. Employees who were able to work remotely reported better satisfaction with flexibility, while those required to return to the factory environment faced heightened stress and safety concerns.

The satisfaction of employees showed a mixed response, with a significant proportion feeling dissatisfied due to factors like fear of infection, changes in work-life balance, and economic uncertainty. However, companies that effectively communicated, offered health support, and engaged employees in decision-making processes saw better satisfaction scores.

Employees who felt supported during the transition to new working conditions were more likely to report positive outcomes, both in terms of performance and job satisfaction. In contrast, those who faced inadequate support systems felt disengaged and underperforming.

REFERENCES

- Gupta, C. B. (2011), Human Resource Management, Sultan Chand & Sons.
- Harris, N. J.; Kilsha Toulson, P.; Livingston, E. M. New Zealand personnel consultants and the selection process. *Asia Pac. J. Hum. Resour.* 1996, 34, 71–87.
- James, G., 2012. How to achieve true job security. Jane Kenney, E. N. (2019). Adopting A Blended Learning Approach: Challenges Encountered And Lessons Learned In An Action Research Study. *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks*, 45-58.
- Johnson, E. K. The practice of human resource management in New Zealand: strategic and best practice? *Asia Pac. J. Hum. Resour.* 2000, 38, 69–83.
- Kanu, R. (2015). Methods of Training and Development. *Innovative Journal of Business and Management*, 35–41.
- Kepha, O.; Mukulu, E.; Waititu, G. The influence of recruitment and selection on the performance of employees in research institutes in Kenya. *Int. J. Sci. Res.* 2014, 3, 358.
- Kim, S. (2006), “Public service motivation and organizational citizenship behavior in Korea”, *International Journal of Manpower*, Vol. 26 No. 8, pp. 722-40.
- Kinicki, A. And Kreitner, R. (2007), *Organizational Behavior*, mcgraw-Hill, New York, NY.
- Knouse, S. B. (2001). Virtual mentors: Mentoring on the internet. *Journal of Employment Counseling*, 162-169.