Editorial: The impact of COVID-19 on workplace practices: challenges, changes, and future directions

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Editorial on the Research Topic
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The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on workplace policies and practices, including changes in leadership styles, work-life balance, and workplace communication (Rahmani et al., 2021; Da et al., 2022). The pandemic has also highlighted inequalities among different groups of employees, including those from less advantaged backgrounds, women, and LGBTQ individuals. The digital gap has further exacerbated these inequalities, with teleworking being a challenge for employees with special needs (Bui et al., 2020). The pandemic has also required employees to set up and redefine their homes as workplaces. The challenges and arrangements required for returning to work after lockdown have also been difficult to accommodate for organizations and employees alike. Organizational communication and practices have been significantly affected by the pandemic, and organizations' construal of and approach to teleworking have radically changed.

Conducting research on the influence of COVID-19 on the workplace in the post-pandemic era holds immense significance as it can provide valuable insights into the changes and obstacles encountered by employees and organizations. This knowledge can facilitate the formulation of effective approaches to meet the requirements of employees, foster equilibrium between work and personal life, and enhance organizational productivity. Moreover, understanding the effects of COVID-19 on workplace practices in diverse national and cultural contexts can aid in creating more comprehensive and culturally-sensitive regulations and procedures (Saltiel, 2020). In essence, examining the impact of COVID-19 on the workplace is crucial to adjusting to the new normal and constructing workplaces that are more resilient and sustainable.

The studies presented in this Research Topic cover a wide range of themes related to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on employees and organizations. Overall, these studies collectively focus on the effects of the pandemic on work-life balance, employee wellbeing, job demands and resources, and organizational strategies. Other themes include the impact of the pandemic on job satisfaction and engagement, the role of attachment styles in workplace behaviors, and the influence of work environment on work-family conflict and turnover intentions. The studies also highlight the importance of organizational support,

TABLE 1 The strengths and limitations of the included studies in order of appearance in the editorial.

Study paper	Strengths	Limitations
Mun et al.	A comprehensive overview of current discussions on employees and organizations during the COVID-19 pandemic through a systematic literature review	Limited number of studies and cross-sectional nature of data
Vitória et al.	A comprehensive overview of research on the work-family interface during the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighting key themes and challenges faced by individuals in managing work and family responsibilities	Variations in methodological strength of the included papers, potential bias in thematic analysis, and limited study selection.
Yildiz et al.	Meta-analysis approach, offering valuable insights into the relationship between work engagement and job satisfaction among healthcare workers during the COVID-19 pandemic	Reliance on cross-sectional studies, lack of standardized measurement tools, potential language bias, and limited scope to healthcare workers
Ye et al.	Use of a moderated mediation analysis to examine the effects of insecure attachment style on workplace deviance, providing valuable insights into the underlying mechanisms and potential moderators in this relationship	Potential bias in self-reported data, the need for alternative theoretical frameworks and cultural contexts, and the need for further exploration of moderators and longitudinal data
Khawand and Zargar	Conceptual analysis of the relationship between job autonomy and work-life conflict, specifically focusing on teachers' wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic	Not addressing interrelationships among factors, focusing only on teachers, and not emphasizing the role of the Human Resource Management.
Zakhem et al.	Empirical research approach, which examines the relationship between autonomy, work-family conflict, informational support, and employee well-being in the context of small and medium-sized enterprises during a pandemic	Potential for analyzing additional factors, using longitudinal data, and conducting qualitative interviews for a deeper understanding of strategies and challenges faced by small and medium-sized enterprises during the pandemic
Abdou et al.	Investigating the impact of the hospitality work environment during the COVID-19 pandemic, considering the mediating role of work-family conflict, and providing insights into employees' turnover intentions in this context.	Limited generalizability, focusing only on work-family conflict, subjective data collection, potential for exploring additional variables, and the need to examine separate dimensions of work-family conflict.
Karatuna et al.	Valuable insights into the impact of job autonomy on work-life conflict and the wellbeing of teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic.	Small and skewed sample size and limiting generalizability

informational resources, and effective leadership in promoting employee wellbeing and reducing workplace deviant behaviors.

This Research Topic includes three systemic review papers. The major common themes in these systematic review papers are the impact of COVID-19 on work and organizations. They also include the challenges brought about by the pandemic, changes in work arrangements and settings, and the need for new strategies and tactics to manage work and personal life during the pandemic. Specifically, the paper by Mun et al. identifies five main themes related to COVID-19 and organizational issues, including work setting, perceptions of COVID-19, employee wellbeing, organizational strategies, and influences on career behaviors. Vitória et al. examine the impact of COVID-19 on the work-family interface, with a focus on work-family conflict, work-family enrichment, work-family balance, and boundary management. Yildiz et al. explore the relationship between work engagement and job satisfaction in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, and how the presence of COVID-19 as a moderator impacts this relationship. Other common themes across the three papers include the challenges brought about by the pandemic, changes in work arrangements and settings, and the need for new strategies and tactics to manage work and personal life during the pandemic.

The original studies in the Research Topic highlight the complex and multifaceted impact of COVID-19 on employees and organizations, with themes including work setting, employee wellbeing, job autonomy, work-family conflict, and academic work demands and resources. The studies suggest that organizations should prioritize employee wellbeing, provide support and resources, and consider new approaches to work, including remote work arrangements. Additionally, research on the impact of COVID-19 on employees and organizations can guide decision-making and inform future studies. Ye et al. investigate the relationship between insecure attachment styles and workplace deviant behavior among Chinese employees during the COVID-19 pandemic. Khawand and Zargar examine the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the performance and wellbeing of academic staff, particularly in the context of remote work. Zakhem et al. study the impact of job autonomy on reducing work-family conflict and enhancing employee performance and well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic. Abdou et al. look at the impact of the hospitality work environment on work-family conflict and turnover intentions during the COVID-19 pandemic in a sample of resorts in Egypt. Finally, Karatuna et al. examine the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on academics' job demands, resources, and perceived occupational wellbeing. Table 1 present an overview of the strengths and limitations of each included study paper.

While the studies presented in this Research Topic provide valuable insights into the impact of COVID-19 on workplace practices, it is important to note that the topic still warrants further investigation. As the pandemic continues to unfold and new challenges arise, ongoing research can offer a more comprehensive understanding of the long-term effects on employees and organizations. By exploring various aspects of the pandemic's impact, such as leadership styles, work-life balance, communication

methods, and inequalities among different groups of employees, future research can inform the development of effective approaches to meeting the changing needs of employees and enhancing organizational productivity. Additionally, investigating the impact of COVID-19 on workplace practices in different cultural settings can aid in creating more comprehensive and culturally conscious policies combating a global challenge. Furthermore, a longitudinal perspective to assess the long-term effects of the pandemic on workplace practices could be very informative. Additionally, conducting comparative analyses across industries, sectors, and regions would shed light on variations in responses and the effectiveness of different strategies employed. Incorporating qualitative research methods, such as interviews or focus groups, would provide insights directly from employees and a deeper understanding of their experiences. Exploring the strategies and approaches employed by organizations to adapt to the pandemic, as well as the challenges and successes associated with remote work dynamics, would contribute to a more comprehensive analysis. Moreover, placing a greater focus on the mental health and well-being of employees, considering intersectionality and equity, and highlighting innovative practices and lessons learned would offer valuable insights for organizations facing similar challenges. By incorporating these elements, the studies would provide a more comprehensive and informative assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on the workplace.

Author contributions

All authors listed have made a substantial, direct, and intellectual contribution to the work and approved it for publication.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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