



NEWSLETTER HR SYMPOSIUM'20

29th August, 2020

RE-IMAGINING HUMAN RESOURCES: PANDEMIC
AND BEYOND



XAVIER SCHOOL OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

MEET OUR MODERATORS



Prof. Sadhna Dash

Prof Sadhna Dash is associated as Assistant Professor with XAHR, Xavier University, Bhubaneswar. An alumna of XIMB, she has spent 24 years in corporate HR working with SAIL, IDS, Microsoft, and Aris Global before moving on to pursue a career in academics. Her practitioner background of industry/corporate experience with large enterprises as well as start-ups includes building organizations ground-up, leading global India initiatives, designing and hosting L&D programs, crafting performance management systems aligned with strategic business initiatives, leading HCM projects, and business partnering. Her diverse experience is further strengthened by her academic passion to deliver impactful in-classroom experiences. Given her vast experience, her research initiative center on career management and career development and is currently engaged in live projects at some of the country's best management education institutions. She has co-authored two textbooks in the area of HRM published by McGraw Hill.



Prof. Mousumi Padhi

Prof. Mousumi Padhi serves as Associate Professor at XAHR, Xavier University, Bhubaneswar, with more than 13 years of Research, Academic and Consulting experience. Ms. Mousumi has been teaching HRM and OB courses in various B-schools since 2002. Apart from full-time experience at NIT Rourkela, IIM Ranchi, and other b-schools, she has also been a visiting faculty to IIM Lucknow. She has worked for as a Manager in a nationalized bank before joining academics.

As part of the Xavier University consulting practice, she has prepared a gender policy for an organization and worked on the Restructuring and Redesigning of a Govt. of Odisha department. As part of training activities, she has coordinated and facilitated training programs for various government departments and private organizations. She has also led Impact Assessment Projects, Skill mapping, and Skill Building Training Programs specifically targeted for working women.

Her doctoral research on Work-Family Interface has also received the best paper presentations in many doctoral conferences. Her research spans the areas of Work-Family, Diversity Management, Work Values, and Acculturation and has been published in National and International Journals. Her current research is focused on gender and different aspects of gender including the subaltern genders.



Dr. Arup Roy Chowdhury

Dr. Arup is associated as Assistant Professor with XAHR, Xavier University, Bhubaneswar. He is an experienced Talent Management Specialist and an Academician with a Ph.D. in HRM from XLRI – Xavier School of Management, Jamshedpur. He has more than one & a half decades of enriched work experience in different fields of Strategic

HRM, Industrial Relations, and more than 4 years of Academic experience. Dr. Arup has done extensive research in the area of Management Styles, Competency Mapping, HR Planning, Job Load Adequacy, and HR Audit.

He has demonstrated & proven experience of developing & implementing strategic and progressive HR Policies/Practices at Tata Steel like '5 Day Work Week'; 'Work From Home'; 'Satellite Office Operation' for Officers; 'Retainership Policy'; 'Position Class Fitment for Senior Management'; Mentoring Program; 'Dual Career Path' for specialists in Research & Development, Automation, Technology Group; Job Rotation & Career Mapping; Identification of Critical Positions, etc.

He is a practitioner of Talent Management, Managing Change, HR Systems, Processes & Practices, Strategic HR Planning, HR Automation, and Employee Engagement. Certified Psychometric Assessor (Thomas Profile, Belbin), Six Sigma Black Belt, TBEM (Tata Business Excellence Model) External Assessor, Lead Auditor ISO/IEC 27001 (ISMS: Information Security Management System), ISO 9001 Auditor, Certified Job Evaluator (Hay Group Methodology).

FEATURED SPEAKERS

PANEL 1:

Role of HR in Business Continuity - Planning and winning in Unprecedented Times



Ms. Uma Rao

VICE PRESIDENT, HR
ASHOK LEYLAND

Ms. Uma Rao is currently associated as the Vice President HR at Ashok Leyland. She is an HR Professional with a rich experience of more than two and a half decades in the entire gamut of HR. She has worked with leading organizations in IT, Manufacturing, Telecom and FMCG space in companies like Tata Consultancy Services, IBM, Mars International India, Idea Cellular and Hindustan Petroleum Corp Ltd.



Mr. Rajorshi Ganguli

PRESIDENT & GLOBAL HR HEAD
ALKEM LABS Ltd.

Mr Rajorshi Ganguli is currently associated as the President and Global HR Head at Alkem Laboratories Ltd. Rajorshi holds 25 years of versatile experience working as the HR of Sales & Marketing, Manufacturing and R&D domain of leading Pharmaceuticals, Oil & Energy and Engineering. He has his expertise over areas like Strategic HR, Change Management, Talent Management, Competency Modelling, Leadership Development, Training & Capability Building, Performance Management, Employee Engagement, Innovation Management and Business Partnering.



Mr. Sanjeev Bhatia

CEO
KNOWBILITY VENTURES

Mr Sanjeev Bhatia, an alum of the glorious IIM-Ahmedabad, is currently associated as the CEO of Knowbility Ventures Pvt. Ltd., a Consulting and Coaching firm. Sanjeev also works extensively as an Executive Coach in supporting leaders to find their unique calling in life, and to speak their truth from a place of purpose and power. Sanjeev is an experienced CEO with an experience of working as HR expert in Tata Steel, MNCs, business conglomerates and management consultancy. His international certification as a practitioner on Lumina Spark for Leadership Assessment, and 'Coach for Life, USA' stands a testimony for his expertise.

PANEL 2:

Post COVID Workplace - Redesigning Work for New Normal



Ms. Lipika Verma

DIRECTOR REWARDS, GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAIN
SCHNEIDER ELECTRIC

Mrs Lipika Verma is associated as the Director Rewards, Global Supply Chain, Global Human Resources of Schneider Electric in India, Australia, New Zealand, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. As dynamic charming professional, she takes care of Schneider Electric businesses, monitoring industry trends and developing and implementing Rewards processes. Prior to this, she was associated as the Vice President - Compensation & Benefits for GE Capital where she drove the Compensation philosophy across GE Capital through various insightful initiatives and C&B interventions.



Mr. Mridul Chandra

SR. DIRECTOR, HR
TATA COMMUNICATIONS TRANSFORMATION SERVICE LTD.

Mr Mridul Chandra is associated as the Senior Director, HR at Tata Communications Transformation Services Limited. Mridul is a seasoned human resources professional with 20+ years of diverse experience in senior & strategic roles across multiple industries. He has extensive hands-on and leadership experience in leading HR transformation projects, implementing talent management & organization development interventions and driving business change programs.



Mr. Luna Mohanty

SR. VICE PRESIDENT, HR
MAHINDRA & MAHINDRA LTD.

Mr. Luna Mohanty, an alum of XIMB, is currently associated as Sr. Vice President Human Resources at Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd., Farm Equipment Sector & Two Wheelers. He is an HR professional with a rich experience of more than two and half decades and has led key assignments of Executive compensation, Talent Management and HR IT systems at an organization-wide level in Mahindra and has executed roles in Corporate HR, Plant IR, Commercial, and Production Planning in Vardhman Group. He is currently pursuing ICF coaching and has underwent Executive programs at Harvard Business School, INSEAD (France), and Ross School of Business, Michigan.

PANEL 3:

Post COVID Workplace - Redesigning Work for New Normal



Dr. Madnesh Mishra

JOINT SECRETARY
DEPT. OF FINANCIAL SERVICES,
MINISTRY OF FINANCE, GOVT. OF INDIA

Dr. Madnesh Mishra is currently associated as the Joint Secretary, Dept. of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance, Government of India. Madnesh is a Doctorate in OB from XLRI & an officer of IRS. He works with various capacities in Income Tax Department and in the Ministry of Youth affairs and Sports as Executive Director of Sports Authority of India where he was the first CEO of its Dope Control Lab. He also serves as the Director on the Board of Union Bank of India, United India Insurance Co. Ltd., Member in the Board of PFRDA, India and Member in the Board of Governors of MDI, Gurgaon.



Dr. Sunil Singh

FOUNDER & CEO
MINDSTREAM CONSULTING

Dr. Sunil Singh is the Founder & CEO of Mindstream Consulting. He is a PhD from IIMB with 20+ years of experience in HR/IR with groups having businesses in diversified industries. Sunil has proven experience of leadership development, managing large scale transformational change, managing large and diversified workforce. As the CHRO, he has transformed CADILA PHARMACEUTICAL to a GPTW certified organization. He has authored books and multiple articles in Global and National Journals. He has done extensive research in the areas of National Culture, Leadership, Career Anchors, Socialization, Proactive Behaviour, Employee Engagement, Innovation and Loss of Embeddedness.



Mr. Amitabh Akhauri

MANAGING DIRECTOR
TENACIOUS SERVICES PVT. LTD.

Mr Amitabh Akhauri is currently associated as the MD, Tenacious Services Pvt Ltd., a complete HR solution provider for large, medium & small corporate enterprises. He is a HR/IR professional with 30+ years of diverse experience in senior & strategic roles across industries like Tata Steel and has an illustrious career serving as Sr. VP for Jaiprakash Associates Ltd., Sr. VP-HR for Jindal Stainless Ltd etc. He has extensive hands-on and leadership experience in HR transformation projects, talent management & organization development interventions and business change programs.

FACULTY NOTE ON RE-IMAGINING HUMAN RESOURCES: PANDEMIC AND BEYOND



Dr. Lalatendu Kesari Jena

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

XAHR

XAVIER UNIVERSITY, BHUBANESWAR

Half a year has passed, and we still wonder “what else could happen”? The COVID-19 pandemic has brought dramatic paradigm shifts at workplaces. While some organizations struggle to continue businesses, as usual, others are promptly adapting to the crises. It is either adapt to survive or else perish, as it has happened forever with evolution. Perhaps, it is again the time to develop changes, if we want to sustain whatever is left of the organizations.

The role of HR professionals has been to tackle the dynamic problems of any organization. We were taught to deal with solutions in the face of adversities, manage the workforce (employees and/or workers) and develop contingency strategies as and when necessary. However, the current scenarios are unprecedented and difficult. Scholars/researchers are investigating the “what”-nature/type of issue and the “how”- to effectively counter those challenges of performance and well-being.

It is well observed that workplace environments of organizations require revision, for now, and for the time after some stability of the COVID-19. We are all enduring “the neo-normal”, referring to fresh practices such as educating, shopping, working from home (WFH). The pandemic has become an accelerator for the greatest workplace transformations of our lifetime affecting communication, learning, shopping, and of course where we work. These transformational effects of COVID-19 render the countless unskilled, financially insecure, and unorganized workers susceptible and majorly vulnerable. As evidenced in the case of the migrant laborers all over the globe.

Simply put, reimagining HR during and beyond the pandemic will require foresight and preparedness. Then, how do we develop foresight and be prepared? We can upskill ourselves, learn and foster knowledge. Organizations must ramp up training and investment in remote working for two reasons, that are quality-development and security, both of which are known contributors to performance and well-being. Assuming that the rate of spread of COVID-19 will continue rising, it is safer to avoid physical gathering and meeting of people. Remote working (WFH) for the majority of employees is highly encouraged, disregarding the earlier norm of dedicated working spaces outside their homes (office spaces). To design this, support is needed to guide managers and employees to set up their physical and virtual workspaces, while also managing their time and well-being.

The most important thing to keep in mind is that everyone's experience of the pandemic and working conditions are different and keep changing from time to time. Therefore, it is essential to run online forums and virtual summits where employees, managers, and leaders can express their concerns, share their thoughts, opinions, and suggestions for successfully improving the present conditions. A few more fleeting tips for working remotely include being transparent, focusing on well-being, video-interactions, over-communication with remote workers, offering online training to remote workers, investing in technology, equipment, and virtual cooler opportunities.

The challenge in the neo-normal calls for creative approaches and noble values that the HR manager must develop to balance home and work-life: even survival.



PROCEEDINGS OF THE DAY

Xavier School of Human Resource Management and XIMAHR-The HR Association of XAHR pulled off the annual flagship event-HR Symposium'20, with added grandeur this time by going virtual. The theme for HR Symposium'20 was, "Reimagining Human Resources: Pandemic and Beyond" and was graced with nine HR industry stalwarts addressing the august gathering, sharing their views and thoughts with budding HR managers of tomorrow.

The theme was further divided into three subtopics, conducted over three-panel discussions to drive the key takeaways.

The morning began by invoking the blessings of the Supreme by the lighting of the lamp. Dr. Andrew Dutta, Dean-Xavier School of Human Resource Management in his welcome address spoke about the theme and conveyed his views



regarding the redefined role of HR in this pandemic. He staunchly believed that Human Resources will see a transformation and this change would require business leaders to rethink their leadership and spoke of how he considers

- Responding with agility
- Learning across border ecosystems and
- Harnessing digitization

as the key areas that will be harnessed by HR leaders. Dr. Dutta ended his welcoming remarks with a quote "Moving through parallel worlds to achieve dreams"

Following the dean's address, the Registrar Prof. Fr. E. A. Augustine S.J was invited to deliver the Keynote address.



The Registrar, Fr. Augustine beautifully highlighted the fact that the Pandemic is the time for HR to walk and talk and put people at the centre of all decision making. He also felt that HR must ensure employee well-being while embracing changes that are needed to survive the Pandemic

and be prepared to bounce back when the time is right.

Fr. Registrar threw light on the fact this once in a lifetime standstill has required companies to refocus on their core and for HR to reinvent themselves. He emphasized on the importance of employee mental well-being and quoted about Microsoft's new Employee Resource Group initiative and Starbucks's employee assistance initiative, an initiative to help employees grappling with the current situation in terms of mental health.

Father Registrar reiterated the fact that Xavier University believes in creating not just managers but Responsible Managers, "Managers with human face" and these discussions and symposiums and exchange of thoughts with industry stalwarts, would go a long way in impacting and shaping the minds of our budding managers not only in understanding and dealing with HR crises but dealing with it empathetically.

Fr. Augustine ended his message with a comfortingly tailored story - a conversation between God and a lad to drive home the point that each one of us here is to make a difference in the world.

Following the Keynote address, the ground for the panel discussion was set by Moderator – Prof. Sadhana Dash, Faculty-Xavier School of Human Resource Management. Prof. Sadhana contemplated on the fact that the future of HR will be visible in communication, focusing on employee well-being and becoming rational. She also stated about the changing work roles and digitization of workplaces in these unprecedented times.

The discussion agenda for **Panel 1** was "*Role of HR in Business Continuity: Planning and Winning in unprecedented times*".



Prof. Sadhna Dash



Ms. Uma Rao



Mr. Sanjeev Bhatia



Mr. Rajorshi Ganguli

Ms. Uma Rao, VP-HR, Ashok Leyland began with the quote "Every challenge comes with opportunities". According to her, COVID-19 is like a black swan which is characterized by a severe impact on businesses, but there is a hope that it will pass. She enlisted times when the world experienced the financial crisis of 2008 and incidents like 9/11 but highlighted the saying "The beauty of life is that it goes on".

She briefed about the immediate steps taken by Ashok Leyland to mitigate the crisis, such as Emergency Response Teams which were set up to assist people in dealing with such an unprecedented situation. She said that the primary responsibility of the HR team is to ensure the emotional safety and health of the employees. In Ashok Leyland, employees were encouraged to go home, and those in hostels were sent to Management Development Centre. She also focused on having a smooth transition from the physical world to the virtual world. She quoted the burning example of the introduction of BS6 norms where the organization had taken the opportunity to train and upskill the employees in a situation where the automobile sector had been affected severely.

Ms. Rao deliberated on the role of HR in building effective communication and trust among employees. This can be initiated by telling workers that their collaboration and support is needed. She highlighted the fact that while there have been incidents of firing employees and snipping variable pays, Ashok Leyland ensured that none of these steps were taken and employees were kept a priority.

On a concluding note, Ms. Rao stated that the recovering phase has now started and HR Leaders must make sure that the organization has the right people for critical roles because it is these crucial role holders that play an essential part in rejuvenating and leading the organization.

Mr. Sanjeev Bhatia, CEO, Knowbility Ventures shared his experience in the consulting field. Mr. Bhatia emphasized that the HR function should take the front seat, by involving intensely in employee relations. He strongly feels that HR leaders must be agile and the primary focus should be on the health and job security of workers. Mr. Bhatia emphasized two major factors to maintain business continuity: **Competency and Empathy.**

Mr. Bhatia cited steps taken to ensure the safety of employees, like setting up 24*7 helplines and tie-ups with hospitals. Additionally, testing facilities were provided to employees at home. He deliberated on the importance of virtual programs to initiate talent engagement. He visualized the role of technology in identifying talents and wonderfully worded it out. Mr. Bhatia spoke about how artificial intelligence in HR will play a crucial role in identifying the right talent in the right place at the right time. He envisaged the role that virtual reality would play in the training of blue-collar employees, that too very soon.

He concluded by driving the point that HR should think way beyond their role and focus on building trust and mindfulness among employees.

Mr. Rajorshi Ganguli, President & Global HR Head, Alkem Labs Ltd, focused on the VUCA world in unprecedented times, especially coming from the most relevant industry in the current time. Mr. Ganguli mentioned three challenges faced by the pharmaceutical industry:

First - hurdles in supply chain management. He stressed that HR leaders play a key role in encouraging people to serve the nation in these tough times. Several guidelines were introduced to ensure the safety of people.

Second - Mr. Ganguli pointed out the change induction process followed by the learning and development program which has now gained its momentum virtually.

The **third** challenge Mr. Ganguli deliberated was playing on the psychology of people. He highlighted the importance of mental health and how HR should play a major role in facilitating the mental well-being of their employees.

In the concluding note Mr. Ganguli diligently highlighted the fact that the focus has now shifted to getting the work done and not on the intricacies of time taken or how the work is done. Productivity, according to him, is the major deciding factor to measure employee efficiency.

The Q/A session saw a greater spike in the energy levels by insightful questions like "How much can Artificial Intelligence be trusted in terms of human resources?". The panel was quick in answering and emphasized that while AI cannot replace human touch, areas like talent management, learning & development have seen utilization of AI. Another set of questions were raised about the challenges faced by HR in the initial days of COVID-19. The panel came up with several challenges faced including the ones in the manufacturing companies, some like the workers not being tech-savvy, and driving into the virtual world required installing specific software. The task of sanitization of workplaces every day, getting CCTV cameras installed to track workers was another important challenge pointed out. Explaining the challenges, the panel emphasized that HR will now be playing the role of a catalyst which will bring about transformation in the new normal.

The discussion agenda for **Panel 2** was *"Post-COVID Workplace- Redesigning Work for the New Normal"*



Prof. Mousumi Padhi



Ms. Lipika Verma



Mr. Mridul Chandra



Mr. Luna Mohanty

The tone for the panel discussion was set by the Moderator Prof. Mousumi Padhi, Associate Professor, Human Resource Management. Prof. Mousumi advocated the need to adapt and build on to new changes in the time of the current Pandemic and emphasized aspects of digitalization, increased human sensitivity, and utmost hygiene at all times.

With this, she demarcated the objectives of the discussion in the lines of:

- Changes in the Workplace
- Individual Changes
- Organisation Changes

Ms. Lipika Verma, Director Rewards, Global Supply Chain, Global Human Resources, Schneider Electric spoke about the phenomenal shifts already happening in the workplace with organizations across the globe shifting to complete work from home structure. With these dynamic changes and continuing challenges, focus on the undermentioned key points according to her would lead organizations to long-term success:

Resilience - Both at an organization level as well as a personal front with an emphasis on market awareness with changing times, improved relations between top management and lower divisions, and skill enhancement of the workforce with a special focus on the happiness quotient and work-life balance of employees

Digital Adoption- Adoption of technology in every aspect of the business with proper training of the staff regarding the same

Communication - Enhanced communication from the employer's end to manage the physical, mental as well as social well-being of the employees.

Ms. Lipika Verma ended the discussion with the proposal of a hybrid model of work including a mix of work from a home model and physical presence to keep the social touch alive in organizations, post the Pandemic and reiterating the importance of a joint effort by everyone in overcoming the challenges of the current times going forward.

Mr. Luna Mohanty, Sr. Vice President Human Resources, Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd started the discussion with the question "How will COVID 19 change the world?"

He further added that the Pandemic is a good opportunity to incorporate changes to any organization that was intending to that for long while addressing the positive changes that took place in the workforce, employment contacts, and psychological contacts in the past century. Enhanced and improved ways of data collection, advancements in artificial intelligence, and development of small agile teams has helped Mahindra & Mahindra in this Pandemic and are expected to work for other organizations as well.

Mr. Luna also talked about the organizations imperative in terms of people management i.e. changing from organization performance management system to absolute hybrid PMS, to be able to support agile teams, work synchronously, reskilling, and upskilling and to figure out the data and IP rights. In terms of culture and engagement, it focusses on aligning to purpose, consistent communication, autonomy with accountability, transparency of data, real-time sensing and response, and trust-based policies. He concluded by emphasizing on the fact that they were already in this journey of change, COVID just made the needle faster.

Mr. Mridul Chandra, Senior Director, HR at Tata Communications Transformation Services Limited captured the audience by throwing light on the perspectives of the corporates in these uncertain times. He addressed the short-term vision and long-term vision. Tata has been in the sector for more than 150 years and has always adhered to its fundamental ideas and beliefs. Principles of caring, development, and leadership are the main fields of emphasis. At the time of COVID, they maintained smooth access, better uptime, health and welfare of workers, fulfilled the specifications of computers, enhanced incentives for their company as well as for the organizations they help. Mr. Mridul also talked regarding some of the main programs they launched, such as hospital care, life insurance policy, and even looked at accessing all services across multi-layer contact networks.

He added that their entire business continuity strategy underwent a sea change and that Tata was adapted to it as a resilient organization. They have managed the entire supply chain and even supported group companies. The next important thing he talked about was employee engagement based on many themes and creating a virtual engagement platform. Mindfulness and yoga sessions, along with various health initiatives, have been organized for flexible working hours. The key benefits were to support employees to manage work stress and work together at home. Tata's engagement scores moved by 10%.

He spoke on four main fields, first theme-based management that he thinks would be the future and requires creativity, next is the idea of the modern workplace that is more inclusive and not only centered on training and growth. Thirdly, the convergence of talent acquisition and digital development, and streamlined automated learning and safe records. According to him, the fourth aspect is sustainability which is the essential foundations of the development & communication market, both in B2B and B2C. They have been growing the outlay and impact on health and safety across the globe. Mr. Mridul concluded with the question, which aspects will not change following the Pandemic: Concept of learning, Working SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bound), and Acting with integrity.

The Q / A session saw a more engaging session in which the students were especially curious with queries such as: "We need people with new skills to look after the company in unprecedented times. Taking into account these considerations, what are the limitations on employee training and development?"

The panel believed that the training and advancement of white-collared workers were not problematic because they provide a wide variety of training opportunities. The issues are to improve blue-collared workers' skills by coping with problems at the shop floor, protection, and hygiene, etc. But cooperation with different start-ups for Virtual Reality and Apps for augmented Reality is being done. A variety of other questions were placed about recruiting blue-collared workers during the lock-down and psychological health concerns, which centered on drawing on local resources such as diplomas, ITIs, etc. The panelists talked about having developed various programs, including training on employee engagement, flexible scheduling, frequent informal discussions before the start of the meeting to learn more about employee's state of mind, to focus more on listening, to hold attention sessions, hobby clubs. To have the comfort and assurance that the organization is standing behind you and will support you throughout. The discussion ended with the key learning of putting the human back in HR, having care and compassion for the employees, being authentic, transparent, consistent, and rational in decision making, and not to forget the old saying "Action speaks louder than words."

The discussion agenda for **Panel 3** was on "*Leadership, Communication, and Management with Remote Teams- What to Learn and Unlearn in the New Normal*"



Dr. Arup Roy Chowdhury



Dr. Madnesh Mishra



Dr. Sunil Singh



Mr. Amitabh Akauri

The conversation was moderated by Dr. Arup Roy Chowdhury, Faculty – Xavier School of Human Resource Management. Prof. Arup resonated on the fact that was owing to the VUCA environment that is now, the foremost thing that an organization need is an agility and the ability and availability of a person to perform in an unanticipated environment, along with adaptability, innovativeness, collaboration, responsiveness, and execution. He mentioned that Senior Leadership is no more a standalone attribute for the journey towards agility and requires the involvement of all the players of the organization. Hence, the role that HR would play in an organization to promote agility would be clear and critical. Prof. Arup shares his insights on the two ways an HR can be at the forefront in the times of Pandemic to improve the legerity. Firstly, an HR professional today needs to anticipate and execute the actions faster. Secondly, the HR professional needs to innovate quickly in a new, improvised way and respond purposefully to the long term and short terms goals. He propounded that instead of a push strategy based on forecasted demand, the organization will have to fluidly enable the pull strategy in the real-time scenario, thereby creating an impact on organizational effectiveness.

Prof. Arup put forth questions like the change in the work, workforce, and workplace design that would help the organization and employees cope up with the changes post-pandemic. He also put forth the questions on changes in the roles of a CEO/CHRO in the present situation and how one can be effective in communication with the colleagues and employees to achieve similar competence.

Dr. Madnesh Mishra, Joint Secretary, Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance, Govt. of India, gave insights as to how pivotal it was for the government to adapt to the changing scenario, identify critical areas, and delivering on the same. He highlighted how necessary it was to keep all stakeholders such as citizens, banks, ministry, regulators, and insurance companies in the loop when taking future actions and delving into policy formulation. He mentioned the importance of anticipation of the needs of the public so the government could prepare and provide accordingly. Dr. Mishra shared his views on the ground reality which had changed into "low touch, no touch economy" wherein the citizens witnessed an increase of 360% in digital transactions and a 200% increase in card transaction.

Dr. Sunil Singh, Founder, and CEO, Mindstream Consulting, majorly spoke about how this Pandemic had been a blessing in disguise because it has fast-tracked the changes would otherwise have happened five or ten years later. He brought up examples of using video conferencing platforms like Microsoft Teams, Zoom, and Google Meet to inform us about the way technology has integrated more in the lives of any individual and the concept of Gig economy which is the newfound normal. Mr. Singh stressed upon the new-age talent that needs to be integrated into the heart and soul of the profession which is the capability to take decisions on the go since the rules and policies keep on changing from time to time and from place to place and when facing employees, meeting vendors or customers all the organization looks for are excellent decision-makers. He concluded his talk by mentioning that the core competencies required in the Pandemic and post-pandemic era would be sensing adaptability, resilience, and being connected to the ground where the stakeholders would need to think more about being present now than thinking about the future.

Mr. Amitabh Akauri, Managing Director, Tenacious Services Pvt Ltd captured the audience through his visual representation and comparison of the Pandemic to fog, where all industries have entered a fog situation where stakeholders are unable to see the future. He mentioned the scenario of budgets and revenues being curtailed and organizations going for pay cuts, no increments, and laying off the employees that were detrimental for the business. The other part that Mr. Akhauri focused on was the debate between the schools of thought where one school feels that punishing and fining people would help in increased efficiency, whereas the other thinks that people learn by themselves since they are the drivers of their own lives. He established that the tilt was towards not penalizing people but letting them know on their own, and this applies to organizations as well where institutions have to evolve within themselves to come out of the situation. When asked about the change in the workforce and workplace design, he mentioned about the magnanimity of the changes done varying from a change in working shifts, providing proper safety kits and introducing Hygiene Stewards, the new guidelines on personal hygiene and HR Policies and remodeling of the workplace density and infrastructure.

Mr. Akhauri concluded by saying that all businesses are learning among themselves and finding ways to fight the Pandemic since there is no fit-for-all situation right now.

All speakers were confident about one thing which was moving away from rigidity and maintaining agility in the organization, which could provide the best results.

The Q/A session turned out to be an even more enriching one with a few curious questions like, "In the WFH policy, where overwork is creeping in, how is the situation in alignment with minimum working hours mentioned under the Factories Act?" The panelists were quick to respond that one of the ways to overcome this is to have a mutual understanding of defining boundaries between work and home and letting the employees negotiate the work to be done for a particular duration of time.

The other intriguing question asked was, "How can we achieve the organizational goals effectively post the COVID Pandemic?" The panelists reverted by mentioning that efficiency can be achieved by having the right talent. Given the current situation, HR has an additional role of being the custodian of employee health both physical and mental, where logistics of ensuring safety might seem trivial on the surface but behind the scene, intricacies ensure that as a function HR is always evolving towards best practices for its employees. Mr. Madnesh concluded by giving an example of Tata Steel which introduced a new electronic punching in the system for its 26,000 employees so that contact is minimalized.

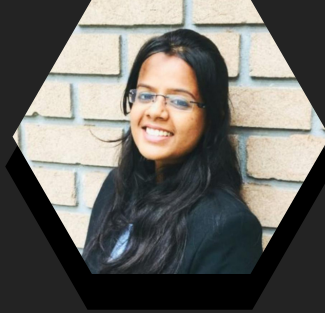
Lastly, the Vote of Thanks by Aishwarya Mishra, the Co-ordinator of XIMAHR-the HR Association of XAHR, on behalf of the entire organizing committee extending her gratitude to all the esteemed dignitaries, media partners, faculty, administration, alumni, staff, and to all the students of XAHR earmarked the end of the HR Symposium'20.

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All XIMAHR Core and Volunteers