

# Leadership Approaches for Post-Covid Recovery: A Systematic Literature Review

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## ABSTRACT

Due to the prevailing Covid-19 pandemic, performing day-to-day activities as well as work have become a most imperative challenge. It results in reduced workers' competencies at all levels and posed unpredicted issues for managers in all organizations. Correspondingly, there is a dearth of research on the overview of how to resolve this issue. This article is intended to explore leadership approaches that help to adapt them in fluctuating scenarios that exist due to the Covid-19. Accordingly, a systematic literature review of articles and research works published in various standard databases including Scopus, Web of Science, and other reports have been analyzed. A lot of studies have been focused on frontline work by converging on specific factors such as work engagement, and employee performance which are employee-oriented. Consequently, there is a lack of research on organization-oriented leadership approaches to be adapted for post-pandemic recovery. Thus, this paper helps the managers to recover from the problems and issues instigated by the pandemic. It is identified that a supportive workplace, open communication, individual and organizational cooperation, and a healthy working atmosphere could be extremely helpful in adapting and transforming organizations in the present situation. Finally, this research work also recommends future directions to organizations in implementing various leadership tactics for post-covid recovery.

**Keywords:** Covid-19, leadership approaches, pandemic recovery, systematic literature review.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 crisis has led to a lot of concerns about the way humans used to live and organize themselves. Specifically, the global lockdown in early 2020 created an extreme financial crisis which is never been seen in history (Wodak *et al.*, 2021; Porkodi *et al.*, 2021). The lives of human beings, administrators, and human resources management practices have altered swiftly and vividly, while there are indeterminate effects of the crisis in the elongated run. It creates a huge impact on environmental, social, and economic factors (Mofijur *et al.*, 2021). The economic impact triggered by the pandemic is very miserable since the GDP has been shrunk by 9.5% in 2020 due to a higher risk of unemployment and disruption of companies globally (Rossouw *et al.*, 2020). The social impact created by the Covid-19 pandemic hugely affects the livelihood of poor and homeless people though the environmental impact seems to be optimistic in the case of a short-term reduction in pollution and CO<sub>2</sub> emission due to the mere opening of factories and transport services (Severo *et al.*, 2021). In connection with the above crisis, several strategies have been developed in the cities to recover from the Covid pandemic in a long term and increase the resilience to future crises. These strategies include inclusive recovery, green recovery, and smart recovery which are presented in Fig. 1.

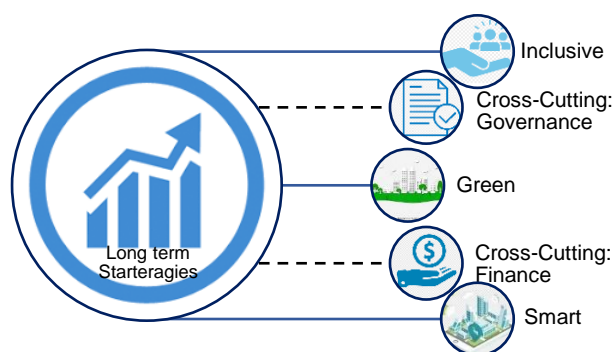


Fig. 1. Long-term recovery strategies for post-covid.  
(Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2020).

Inclusive recovery focuses on addressing the structural and social inequality that exists in the cities. The green recovery insists on creating a green economy that encourages to invest in green measures which helps in increasing the economic growth, and energy efficiency and enlightening the quality of a sustainable environment. Smart recovery is the most significant as it applies digitalization and enables to use all sorts of services from home, including online education and allows work from home through satisfactory internet facilities. The sections inclusive recovery and green recovery are linked by the governance whereas the green and smart recovery are linked by the finance sector.

However, in numerous fields, management studies are observing headlong to recognize the effects of a crisis in businesses. The literature proposed diverse variations in the way businesses functioned or operated (Ritter and Pedersen, 2020; Chesbrough, 2020; Verbeke, 2020; He and Harris, 2020; Brammer and Clark, 2020; Beech and Anseel, 2020; Sheth, 2020). The functions of leaders are one of the significant factors of running an organization and thus it requires more hypothetical consideration in permeating the above transformations. Obviously, there is a necessity for advancing the roles of leadership by considering the inevitability of work that includes social relations, organizations, and workers' health (Dejours and Deranty, 2010).

It can be seen that there is a diverse consequence of the coronavirus pandemic on organizations and leaders. Various discussions on the enduring changes after the epidemic, such as the growing incidence of mental health problems, employee turnover, and digitalization of work were made by researchers. Some of the additional issues also came up in discussions while examining the leadership in various domains including personal protective equipment, infection control measures, work morals and conscience, and work environment transformation due to new normal circumstances.

However, in general, the most significant requirement to be a good leader is to make the right decision at right time with the unique capability of integrating the hardware, software, and human resource usage in a better way with appropriate proportions. However, the view of the leadership can get changed in the most difficult situation. Various reports state that few deeds have a positive influence on the leaders to follow in the pandemic and recovery process such as effective and reliable communication, empathy demonstration, decision making in an uncertain situation, flexibility towards the workers, self-effacement, exhibiting optimism and team network organization (Brownlee, 2020).

Thus, the following are the research questions framed to carry out the review study on the leadership approaches for post-pandemic recovery.

- 1) How can leaders deal with the phase of recovery from Covid-19?
- 2) How to adapt business leadership in a post-pandemic world?
- 3) How leaders can support their organizations during the Covid-19 crisis and recovery?

With the above research question, this paper investigates the leadership approaches to be modified in the post-pandemic world. It aids managers to analyze and resolve the issues caused by the Covid-19. It helps the researchers to proceed with the research work by adapting various leadership approaches to critical situations by suggesting future directions. Thus, the objectives of this synthetic study are to:

- Explore the ways leaders can adopt to get through the recovery phase after Covid-19.
- Support organizations to adapt business leadership while standing ahead of the competition.

The organization of the paper is as follows. Section 2 presents the background study including the challenges of leadership post-covid and future leadership challenges and

the works related to the review study. The review methodology employed for the review with the research gap and review questions and systematic development of review is presented in section III. Section IV explains the findings and analysis of the review objectives. Section V discusses the results and finally, the conclusion and suggestions for future work are briefed in section VI.

## II. BACKGROUND AND RELATED WORKS

This section presents the background of the study and the challenges faced by the leaders post-covid and the existing works, reports, and discussions available in the literature related to the systematic review.

### A. Study Background

The blowout of Covid-19 was publicized as a pandemic in the month of March 2020 by the World Health Organization (World Health Organization, 2020). The pandemic situation had led to global chaos in the daily lives of the people directly or indirectly all over the world. It has troubled all the sectors and continuously threatened the economy of the country and controlled the same to a recession. When compared with the recession of the world economy in 2008, the downturn due to pandemics is supposed to be worse (Nicola *et al.*, 2020; Sohrobi *et al.*, 2020). In such severe economic crises or pandemic situations, leadership takes the central stage, and the responsibility of leaders is amplified to gear the changes in progress. As a result, the Covid-19 continuously enforces a difficulty for several promising leadership approaches. This pandemic has had a seismic effect on economic groups, commerce, and administration systems including business schools and businesses. Thus, the leaders in various fields faced severe challenges of the Corona outbreak such as leaders in healthcare handling magnanimous devotion of time and energy, leaders in government administration handling the people and situation at perplexed state, leaders at corporate adopts to economic constraints and motivates workers and even the people doing small business manages to proceed with the supply chain and so on (D'Auria and Smet, 2020).

According to George Randle, head, and VP of Forcepoint, an important talent acquisition firm, team members and leaders who experienced problems in communication are now confronted and lost to perform even simple responsibilities which can be resolved in 20 minutes by holding a personal meeting. Based on the experience of Sandra Duff, SVP (Operations and Activation), Jackman Reinvents, employees are becoming more inaccessible and detached from their coworkers than ever before. In general, persistent discussions in the cafeteria, lunchroom or office lounge will always bring innovative plans, concepts, and partnerships. Unexpectedly, during the days of pandemic existence, access has been restricted to those unpremeditated instants and it is not likely to attach with the teams indeed. Thus, operating a business post-covid would entail changing not just the management tactics, yet changing the mindset of employees and the collective team of organizations. The leaders must incorporate the innovations in creating new markets that change the way of producing goods, establishing the communication methods to build and maintain the

relationship, adapt to a flexible working environment and enhance the opportunities and attitudes towards their job (Whitwell, 2021).

### B. Challenges for Leadership Post-Covid

Most companies and organizations have started with their regular works and projects after the coronavirus outbreak. Several leaders and management are working hard for encouraging the office employees to return after the Covid-19 pandemic by developing and implementing various plans and policies. However, in most critical situations, many organizations also lead the way to work remotely and allow leaders to make discussions with the members of the office. Generally, an extensive analysis of the crisis created by the pandemic helps to break the beliefs and bring innovations. Amplification of human values will also help to converge the focus of the intended goals in achieving sustainability and economic growth (Dirani *et al.*, 2020). Globalization is another significant factor that can be used for post-covid recovery which is quite simple in recent days through technologies (Aven and Zio, 2021).

The ability or art of leadership takes on various challenges tailed by working environment transformations, work engagement of employees, and performance of the organizations (Porkodi and Ghosal, 2015). Accordingly, leadership is about providing invaluable endorsements, right from leading the employees and organizations by encouraging and persuading them and effectively exploiting the resources. Thus, the foremost and key role of leaders is to lead the first leaders who made their direct declarations. Covid-19 is creating many uncertainties in the working environment in later times i.e., leaders are establishing their individual crews and solving countless difficulties. Team leaders have numerous tasks and duties, and they encounter many challenges even after achieving success given several welfare schemes such as making workplace variations, enlightening team competence, and building an office atmosphere (DeRue and Ashford, 2010).

The second role of leadership is enhancing the skills desirable to lead the way magnificently. Leadership is alienated into two categories in which one is rigid operational skills and the other is the skills to succeed with sensitive individuals. Habitually, it is valued by the proficiencies of the employees and occasionally on many enhancements in their performance, however, the workers are not disturbed in certain situations. The ability of leadership is about being the leader of a group of employees includes many challenges in forming the team by hiring skilled workers and resolving the issues raised by them instantly. Leaders carry out some significant responsibilities that include supervising qualified personnel and creating required alterations in their mission (Lord and Hall, 2005).

The third role of leadership is to collect and assimilate team priorities within the business enterprise. The approach and outlook of leaders of the company post-pandemic are found to be imperative. They are intended to guarantee that the workers of the organization work effectively which specifies that the numerous leaders are making enormous efforts to assimilate their actions since the labour of the personnel has transformed considerably in the past 12 months more precisely after the Covid-19 pandemic (Govindarajan and

Gupta, 2001). The crucial role of leadership is to face many risks and challenges in integrating the work made by the different workers and the work process of the same workers within the business enterprise and reporting to them about the performance of the employees in an optimistic way.

### C. Challenges for Future Leadership Post-Covid Have Irreparably Changed

There has been a radical transformation in the attitude of the leaders post-covid that creates a change in various activities involving supervision, control, and interpersonal associations. Nevertheless, in the aftershock of the Covid pandemic, neither did the leaders transform the duties and tasks of their personnel, nor did the organizations motivate the workers to perform their duties with full confidence. Leadership must deliver welfare schemes for their employees that include a contribution with work-life balancing, assigning leadership abilities to the organization, treating personnel with respect and esteem as well as motivating, encouraging, and paying them better according to their work. However, future leaders have to face the new threats that are not faced by the past and present leaders in the upcoming decades. This will include adapting to the new normal and technology focusing on long-term success with more emphasis on human values. The illustration of the problems and challenges that would be faced by the employers and leaders in the coming years is presented in Fig. 2.

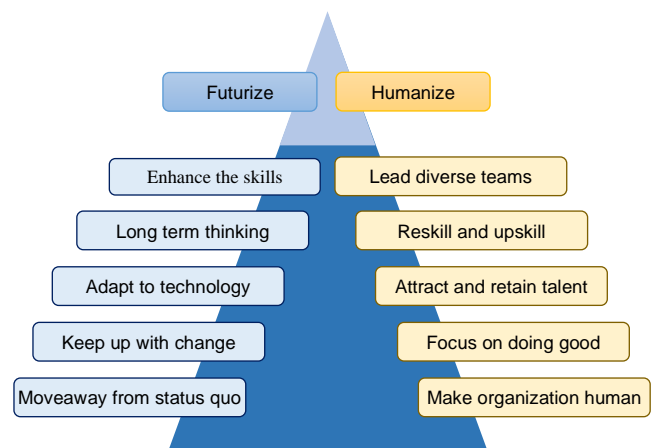


Fig. 2. Challenges of future leaders. (Morgan, 2020).

### D. Related Works

In reality, both organizations and employees are encountering new challenges due to the prevailing pandemic of Covid-19. Most managers, team leaders, and employees have been imposed to do their intended work remotely, for the first time in history. Working remotely for the employees differs from managing the team remotely. Also, for a manager, supervising and administering a team is completely different from doing the same in the office environment as it is inclined by various factors. In a remote environment, most leaders or managers have adopted the use of digital technologies in order to guide their coworkers virtually and effectively, thanks to the advancement in technology.

There exists plenty of novel ideas and methods to be followed by the managers in accomplishing their work remotely in a more operative manner (Newman and Ford, 2021). Predominantly, the managers can advance the work

engagement of the employee and the performance of the team by developing a specific culture in doing the work and taking imperative actions to support and guide their employees in the workplace (Al Mamari *et al.*, 2019). However, if the team members and employees are distributed remotely, it creates a huge challenge to guide the team. Accordingly, new means of communication patterns, as well as novel leadership strategies, are to be designed.

The experts in this field are running a debate on the position of strategic human resource management from a business perception of the economic recovery phase in a post-pandemic world. This discussion and the argument are also very significant for the business and the administrations as it assists in attaining sustainability and profit in a long run. However, for the business to be successful, the benefits achieved must not only be specific to the underlying organization but also the workers, customers, stakeholders as well as society. In order to prove the statements of the debate, the business experts searched and collected information and the particulars at various stages from various reliable sources using keyword search. The information collected is in the form of explanations, articles publications from journals and magazines, blogs, and some online sources reinforced by supreme human resource governance (Ichsan *et al.*, 2020). Based on the collected data, a literature survey was carried out by identifying the research challenges, framing research questions, analyzing the case studies to accumulate intended information, and synthesizing and appraising the information. The study concludes that determining the organization's goal, studying the employees, their abilities and requirements, approximating the employee needed, and determining the human resource governance strategy will help to recover from pandemic disruption.

The world health organization, an agency dedicated to global public wellbeing, avowed SARS-CoV-2 as a global emergency and pandemic on March 11, 2020. According to a public report, it is known that around 7,00,000 individuals were deceased and around 20 million individuals have been diseased. This global pandemic of public health has dropped numerous issues globally for both public and business leaders and caused a desperate menace not only for the people's health but also for the global economy. The characteristics of leadership were investigated by reviewing the published analysis and the reports of standing conclusions were compartmentalized through which some suggestions were articulated as per the evidence on de-escalation of precincts (Nicola *et al.*, 2020).

Most of the firms around the world that provide service to their customers have been unanimously affected by the corona outbreak and so they must be very cautious and attentive about the unpredicted economic crises. An innovative theoretical framework about approaches was developed to construct a robust service sector (Huang and Jahromi, 2021). The framework consists of five significant strategies and each strategy includes various internal sub-strategies that provide strength to the business to endure growth as well in the pandemic period and the post-pandemic world. Some of the strategies used in the framework are market-oriented innovation, identification of strategy, alteration of business, improvement in supply chain management and so on. However, these strategies always

depend on several other factors. Moreover, some of the vital resources such as humans, finance, technology, and society were also analyzed while implementing the strategies to enhance robustness. This framework helps the researchers and leaders to boost companies' flexibility and recommendations and help the business to survive during and post-pandemic era.

Nevertheless, the advancement of holistic leadership as a practice and development approach is also vital for the organization (Bleich and Bowles, 2021). There is four holistic leadership orientation that can be defined as moral orientated and self-awareness, interactive networking and volume, multidimensional and context-bound policymaking and other orientation. It is an insight of complexity essential to process the particulars with others' eyes. The model expresses its practical usage with existing skills for administrators and executives.

The difficulty and impulsiveness experienced in the past years make the government attempt in enhancing economic progression and offer social welfare globally (Mirčetić *et al.*, 2021). Unexpectedly, the emergency and the pandemic outbreak have persuaded the macro environment to transform them into more unstipulated and uncertain. Thus, a study was made with theoretical and practical implications that bid an indication of feasible economic and curative measures based on the illustrations of virtuous practice which can be used as a deliberated model for the coronavirus outbreak or equivalent exciting situations.

Leadership can either work closely or from far and wide. Leadership has a great influence via social community, which is an imperative outreach in the recent situation (Tur *et al.*, 2020), or via individuality in a more direct way (Antonakis, 2021). Thus, leaders, particularly political leaders, play a perilous part in organizing the exertions of individuals who habitually have cloistered interests to perform based on their requirements, but who are supposed to benefit from the exertions of others contributing to the society's good. To deal with this unprecedented challenge, the importance of leadership, particularly charismatic leadership, which is well suited to solving problems in situations of ambiguity and crisis was discussed (Antonakis, 2021). To study the leadership using robust and causally identified designs that can inform policy was also exhorted for the researchers.

Leaders can be compared to the lighthouse since as the lighthouse guides and warn the ships in the sea, the leaders direct the world from the aftershocks of Covid-19 (Sundar *et al.*, 2021). A frontrunner's achievement under predicaments is principally reliant on their capability to process information, act on it, and stimulate others inside and outside of their organizations. Thus, at the time of such emergencies, it is essential to make verdicts based on their restricted reasoning and deficient information concerning high risks. In the meantime, leaders must be attentive to their individual behavioural preconceptions which may distress this development. Social structures, particularly the Actor-System-Dynamics (ASD) theory turn as an underpinning for active and pioneering leadership. To perform efficiently, the leader must be vigilant of these preconceptions and their effects.



competence in an unusual economy (IACP, 2022). Many modern managers have gone through the global recession of 2008 and the financial crisis after that. A lot of them agonized existential crises that came up through unexpected innovative and fast-moving competitors or technological complications over the years. CEOs could, at least, make fine decisions as per the market activities and finances. But coronavirus came up with dissimilar challenges. The situation was utterly different during the epidemic outbreak.

Senior-level pronouncements are habitually made in companies based on the information which includes uncertainty. This element of menace is crumpled in this circumstance. Leaders must perform more than ever which produces the dilemma of high risks. Waiting even a few days could produce health hazards to the business and reduce options. On the other hand, working too swiftly could lead an organization down the erroneous track. CEOs and other leaders don't face only premeditated challenges. They are indistinguishably associated with their team, and the human bonds the organization has built with the clientele, personnel, and other participants. Leaders should also be in connection with every actor of the company and deliberate them in an empathetic, optimistic, and considerate way along with constructing eminent strategic conclusions (Ferry, 2020).

In a pandemic situation, the managers must identify and appreciate the human values of the events and process the emotions effectively which helps to understand the feelings or thoughts of their subordinates (Vercueil and Nicolaidis, 2021). Once the leaders can relate the situation to themselves, the process of judging others will get eliminated (Davidson *et al.*, 2003). Good authentic leadership quality has four main components as foundations that include self-awareness to understand others, morals, balanced positioning, and transparency with the subordinates (Northouse, 2019). However, the case will not be the same in a virtual environment since the leaders may not operate face to face. In such situations, the effective use of technology will allow the leaders to be accessible, reliable, and available to their team members at any time (Bradt, 2015). Also, reliable, consistent, and trustworthy communication and listening to the employees are the key components in a virtual environment that reduces awkwardness (Ko *et al.*, 2018; Hehman *et al.*, 2017).

Developing trust and sustaining transparency helps the leaders to overcome the challenges during a crisis and is essential for improving the performance of the organization in one way or another (Hannah *et al.*, 2009). On the other hand, the behaviour of leaders in the virtual environment highly influences the effectiveness of individual performance through motivation, emotion, and cognition (Liao, 2017)). Apart from these, the leaders in the current situation face various complexities in terms of dynamics involving time and space, social involving assorted stakeholders and generative that includes finding a new solution for existing problems in which old solutions are not effective in the current situation (Hahn *et al.*, 2015).

An interview with 78 executives shows that collaboration, trust and learning are the three elements together that can help the organization recover from Covid-19. They also state that collaboration can be enhanced by organizing distinct

employee interests with joint interests (Sayyadi and Provitera, 2021). This is suitable for leaders in any organization including business, hospitality (Elkhwesky *et al.*, 2022) or education (Burić *et al.*, 2021). Thus, an organization must focus on three key components of skills and abilities for post-covid recovery. The first is leading through the uncertainty that creates awareness of the happenings to guide others, the second, to promote the trust that generates the emotional link to attach with and involve with subordinates and the third is the reskilling that helps to build the business in the future by forward-thinking (Clark, 2020). The challenge and main responsibility of the leaders are to make the workers, customers, and stakeholders feel safe by eliminating the stress during the crisis and optimizing the operations (Shukla *et al.*, 2022). Consequently, participative leadership is responsible for creating a non-threatening work environment in which employees are allowed to share their ideas in making decisions that improve the employee's creativity and psychological safety (Chen *et al.*, 2020).

There are no standard policies or procedures defined for being an effective and robust leader that suits all situations. Yet, the only thing the leaders can be consistent in all situations is to focus on their vision and core values. Thus, the leaders must develop immense courage while taking significant decisions in any controversial situation (Kalina, 2020). However, the case changes for female leaders since gender plays a major role and the reaction of subordinates always differs (Sobral *et al.*, 2020). Transformational leadership has a substantial relationship between commitment and performance that can be achieved by employee engagement (Park *et al.*, 2021). More specifically in the private sector, employee engagement is highly correlated with transformational leadership and service orientation (Popli and Rizvi, 2015).

Although leaders play a vital role in engaging employees and stakeholders in the virtual environment through establishing trust, transparency, and motivation (Mutha and Srivastava, 2021; Mehta *et al.*, 2020), the factors such as organizational learning, employee resilience, and psychological empowerment also influence the work or employee engagement (Blaique *et al.*, 2022). More specifically, interpersonal leadership along with goal-orientated deep acting emotive work skills affect employee job engagement (Aslam *et al.*, 2021). However, it can also be improved positively using artificial intelligence through social media (Wijayati *et al.*, 2022) and by following mindfulness techniques to improve employee morale and organisational performance in the 'new normal' (Pattnaik and Jena, 2020).

Often work satisfaction directly affect the performance of the firm positively, it is also directly associated with employee morale and turnover retention. Thus, work satisfaction and engagement are the predictors of employee retention which are influenced by factors such as recognition of workers and their working environment, the relation between the leaders and colleagues as well as leadership perceptions (Robertson, 2021; Mariappanadar, 2018). Transformational leadership and employer branding highly facilitate the job engagement of the employee and their attachment to their job (Sahu *et al.*, 2017). Thus, the main role

of responsible leadership is to enhance job satisfaction and employee engagement (Dong and Zhong, 2022).

As a post-covid recovery action or to recover from a global crisis, an organization can transform itself to ensure its survival through establishing engagement with customers, employees, and resource effectively (Salunkhe *et al.*, 2021). While studying the influence of informational and relational communication in the crisis instigated by the Covid-19 pandemic, the outcomes illustrate that the informational communication helps the employees to cooperate with the significant decisions whereas relational communication influence achieving commitment from the employees which are most essential in gaining support from the employer during uncomfortable situations (Einwiller *et al.*, 2021). However, leadership must respond to challenges and stress faced by subordinates such as job insecurity, health risk, work overload, and low salary pandemic situation (Oruh *et al.*, 2021).

A few other factors that must be focused on by the leaders and the organization to achieve profit during a crisis are digital supply chains and communications, benevolent partnerships, and innovations in storage and transportation (Park, 2021). In general, dynamic balancing is the key to solving problems, risks and challenges occurred during a crisis that includes three main elements such as global collaboration, long-term goals, and optimistic emotions and it helps in making better and quality decisions (Osland, 2020). The prime characteristics of the leaders in a period of crisis are being courageous, curious, and clear in all aspects. It is shown in Fig. 5.

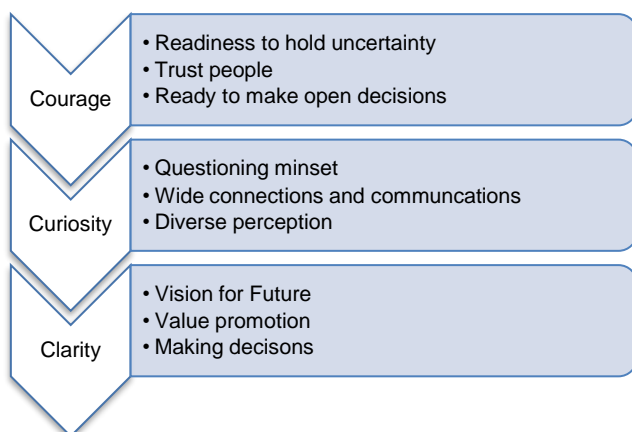


Fig. 5. Key characteristics of leaders. (Bradbury, 2020).

## V. ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS

### A. Leadership Strategy for Covid-19 Recovery Phase

Managers usually need to do a lot of psychological work during the repossession phase of Covid-19 and they typically don't have relief during this period. A leader requires to be attentive to what their team is going through, and what is going on, on the front line, and familiarize their strategy accordingly (Wedell-Wedellsborg, 2020). First of all, recovery is itself a higher challenge and it is not the end of the crisis. Even when Covid-19 is gone, there is no liberation. It has left the aftermath which can be tougher and longer than the chaos of the first response. It is imperative to lead an organization with these consequences into consideration and

confront the team and managers themselves with this harsh reality (Newman and Ford, 2021).

Recovery is not something like getting into old customs, and behaviours and going back to work as normal. There is a need to reset the priorities, adjust plans, and redirect resources. It is part of recovery leadership (Azevedo *et al.*, 2021). Do leaders need to question on their own why did this crisis occur? What did they acquire from this disaster? What to do if something like this occurs in the future again? And how do they recover quicker if it occurs next time? (IMD News, 2020).

Secondly, it is time to reorganize the team. Sometimes, informal hierarchy is required as priorities change when new relationships are developed and new leaders arise (Khurana *et al.*, 2021). The formal structure may continue to be the same, but the informal structure is interrupted and wants to be redefined and manipulated. The phase of recovery is thought of as an inflection point for how the team cooperates, not as a U-turn to old routines (Fenwick *et al.*, 2021). The way to keep a team going ahead can be better described with this example.

A CEO of an organization that had suffered a lot in crises due to lockdown called his leadership team to explain what they had learned during the lockdown, emergency, and early recovery. The CEO asked the final question to have the employees ever had this experience before and finished the session. The team had an overwhelming response as no. The crisis had been an expensive issue from both personal and business points of view, but the benefits overshadowed the cost. A member concluded the paradox by saying that there had been a setback considering the numbers, but they have moved ahead traditionally to the unforeseen future and this change has attained momentum for them that could never have been possible without the epidemic.

An answer to the question of why the crisis had happened can be better seen optimistically. Many unnoticed potentials and hidden talents have been exposed during the crisis. The crisis surfaced a common reset of the responsibilities and obligations of managers as per new business needs and specific qualities that members have presented in the leader's session (Osland *et al.*, 2020). It is obvious that every leader or team may not be influenced by this conclusion. But a targeted search for optimistic results of the crisis and investigation of how their work and associations transformed with one another can help all teams. Taking time for such interrogation could propel the way forward and be therapeutic to the team.

Finally, managers have to regenerate with consideration to every detail because it is even harder than shutting a business down (Kaushik and Guleria, 2020). Coming back is tougher as it requires finely-grained decisions and choices because the reviving problems are not essentially based on abstract issues, major strategic decisions, or severe interference. It is related to a radical change of scenario in practical and daily lives for leaders. It is like cleaning up the room after fighting a lengthy battle. Leaders need to be clear above every aspect. They need to make promises vibrant and keep up with their online incidence. They can make a primary objective and prioritize the work to accomplish the goal.

Crisis management is comparable to a double-edged sword (Fredberg and Pregmark, 2021). The reaction patterns and

skills that can support better performance in emergency circumstances may not be beneficial when returning to a new normal. In addition, leaders cannot experience the regular instinct to lean back, withdraw, and assume that the team will reset on its own when the waves start going down. Determined reorientation, visibility, and attention to detail need to be continued. Leaders have to change their methods as the crisis moves ahead. Leaders need to compete with fires and move to the frontline in emergency conditions (Oruh *et al.*, 2021). Leaders have to comprehend the emotional setback and step back into the stage of regression. They need to preserve a new balance in the recovery stage between rethinking the future and leading a soft recovery to normal while holding the burden

### B. Adaptation of Business Leadership in a Post-Pandemic World

Running a business successful in a post-pandemic period involves a lot of transformation not only in the way management was operating, but also in the attitude of a cooperative team. There are several means to adapt business leadership and rethink approaches in a post-pandemic world (Fallon, 2020) which are discussed below.

#### 1) Emotional Intelligence

Many of the leaders have deliberated the significance of Emotional Intelligence (EQ) before the epidemic for team administration. Meanwhile, workers are encountering various challenges in, living, working, and running families daily, EQ has been more significant for contemporary leaders (Alotaibi *et al.*, 2020). It is time for business leaders to recognize such issues and improve flexibility and empathy. For instance, if a worker has to log out due to some personal reasons, managers have to be helpful in common work times if they have previously completed their assignments. Proprietors must have flexible agendas to get more excellent work done since they are already working hard to save their careers during the downsizing season (Howe *et al.*, 2021). Leaders can also share their own expeditions and fight during the pandemic and workout EQ.

#### 2) Developing Trust and Communication

Due to the separation of teams, the interaction between them has been highly reduced. Thus, it is time for leaders to establish a policy and to provide importance to direct and indirect communications. Leaders should be always or frequently in connection with their team members. However, with remote communication, it is an additional level of challenge and thus, it is more important to develop the trust with the members of the team (Wilson *et al.*, 2020). Leaders must use their precious time to make direct communication, continuous hands-on sessions, individual outreach, and emphasis on straight reporting.

#### 3) Including People in Making Vital Decisions

Workers should understand that they are important to the company and must trust that the management is including them in making imperative major decisions that embrace their work schedules in the future (Lombardi *et al.*, 2021).

#### 4) Providing the Reason for the Team to Perform Well

Leaders must set bigger objectives through which the remote workers must get appropriate motivation from leaders

as well as from themselves and be well-organized to succeed. Managers and their subordinates must be clear about their work priorities since their progress of work is more important for all the entities such as the organization, department as well as team members (D'Auria and Smet, 2020).

#### 5) Empathizing and Understanding

Leaders must commiserate with their subordinates to support the company in such difficult times. They should pay attention to the concerns of workers when they support their subordinates (Kerrissey *et al.*, 2020). Empathy is important for remote working environments as the future is indeterminate. Leaders should distinguish how promptly things can create variation in the working environment and they must practice empathy regardless of knowing their inner worries (D'Auria and Smet, 2020).

#### 6) Futuristic Vision

Remote work may not end completely. But ambiguity and alteration are still obvious in the post-pandemic world. Leaders must be prepared to adapt to such uncertainties (Kniffin *et al.*, 2021). They should know about these variations to have happened.

### C. Leaders Support to Organizations During the Covid - 19 Crisis and Recovery

Based on the collection of McKinsey's expertise, five characteristics help leaders and their organizations overcome the pandemic and recover soon (D'Auria and De Smet, 2020):

#### 1) Establishing a Network of Teams

To overcome the challenges created by the pandemic, the regular team of workers of the companies is empowered to establish their objectives and choose their individual decisions. The assembly of these teams changes in diverse programs after businesses form teams and enforce jobs. Numerous variations arise in these teams after the Covid-19 pandemic and the suggestions of the companies also experience many variations (Burch *et al.*, 2020).

#### 2) Displaying Deliberate Calm and Bounded Optimism

Covid-19 epidemiological emergencies are worldwide impossible. Dealing with the terrible ambiguity that can arise when the Covid-19 pandemic seems to be insurmountable on a global scale is a foremost challenge for firms and political leadership (Fenwick *et al.*, 2020). Such an emergency has formed anxiety and distress among managers and the general public because of their ambiguity about the significance of the interruption it is causing at the national and personal levels (Jakovljevic *et al.*, 2020). The early twentieth century saw the outburst of various viruses such as plague and influenza, as well as a financial outburst in 2019 instigated by an epidemic of coronavirus.

#### 3) Making Decisions amid Uncertainty

There is a vast challenge amongst the leaders in making virtuous decisions after the Covid-19 pandemic (Beilstein *et al.*, 2020). Leaders are responsible for making a wide range of decisions like accustoming the deeds of the employees and the situation which must be handled with care.

#### 4) Demonstrating Empathy

Uttering empathy is another major challenge that leaders encounter while considering the feelings of their workforces and ensuring that their needs are satisfied (Dirani *et al.*,



2020). Various issues arise among workers after the Covid-19 pandemic due to changes in working culture and environment apart from their personal health and family issues. So, it is imperative to recognize the moods and emotions of their workers to work and express empathy towards them.

##### 5) Communicating efficiently

Covid-19 has highly influenced the threats related to health and communication which are essential for each individual. Proper planning and drafting of the policies and procedures help to handle the risks that distress actions during transmittable illnesses. Communication is a substantial factor, especially after the Covid-19 pandemic since the variation in communication has been identified among the workers as well as between the workers and the leaders and with the organizations which are also recognized to be in touch with the leadership organizations (Ball, 2020).

## VI. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Managing a team of workers and accomplishing the intended work remotely is not that simple. Leaders have to encounter the risk arising when losing a sense of cohesion and feeling of unity among the team members when they transform from common office space to distributed unidentical locations. The situation even gets worse when there exists a communication gap naturally between the team members and the leaders. In such a case, completing the simple and easy tasks that could only take a short meeting of 20 minutes becomes even more challenging. Workers are becoming more isolated and sometimes inaccessible from their colleagues than earlier. Normally, seamless and random informal meetings in the cafeteria or lobby would develop novel ideas and plans which is not at all possible to access such unplanned moments and so the members of the team and the leaders miss the organic connections abruptly.

Under normal circumstances, it is simple and effective to stay calm since there exist only predictable challenges and risks. However, on the other hand, while experiencing a crisis or emergency due to a pandemic, the challenges and the risks to be faced would be unpredictable and so the uncertainty in the leaders' thoughts and plan of action would be at various levels. But then again, the leaders still ought to continue to be calm, even the anxiety during a crisis is natural. Habitually, emotions are the poorest rival for humankind. Leaders must practice controlling emotions and avoid losing them in intense circumstances. Always it will be effective to prepare for the worst-case situations and emotions while planning for the meetings since they could avoid surprises. Leaders must move on, stay calm, include some breaks and try not to be triggered in shocking circumstances. The leaders must also exercise emotional intelligence when they feel perilous, hassled, or negative state. Sturdy leaders will not lose their control in pressurized situations, control their own emotions and even help their subordinates to be rational in rough and risky situations. Thus, in general, the leaders must incorporate four main components such as listening, measuring, talking and engaging which are necessary to manage the crisis effectively. This is depicted in Fig. 6.

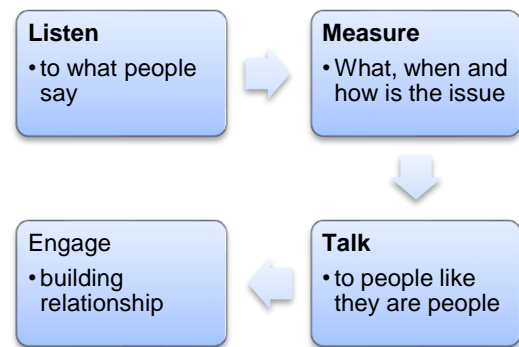


Fig. 6. Components of crisis management.

## VII. CONCLUSION

An ideal leader turns against uncertainty and distressful situations and even sets an example for their subordinates and coworkers to lead their way with desire, commitment, and perseverance. They make quick and effective decisions even if the situation is uncertain which is definitely not so simple and convenient. Leaders must work through their discomfort points and make decisions that are right for their enterprise and keep moving forward even though the victory is not certain. Leaders need to hold the course when things are not clear, persevere, and hold steady. Most leaders have a strong concern for their subordinates but empathy and understanding are the primary qualities of a CEO. There are several critical situations that the leaders must face and make decisions that are right for the company's success in the long run and ensure a positive and stable work environment.

### A. Future Directions and Suggestions

Leaders always have to modify or transform their styles during the period of crisis progression and after the crisis as a part of the recovery process. Eventually, leaders should move ahead and be combative against the difficulties in emergency circumstances. They would have to understand their teams' emotions, identify as well as rectify their needs and difficulties and step back in regression. Finally, leaders should discover a new balance between keeping the pressure up to reconsider and renew approaches as well as policies and guiding a smooth recovery to a new normal.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Authors declare that they do not have any conflict of interest.

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