

## **Challenges Faced by Human Resource Professionals in Contemporary Sports Organizations in Light of the Impact of COVID 19 on Their Professional Practice**

COVID-19 pandemic has introduced multiple challenges to all spheres of human activity. The demand to adapt to new conditions resulted in radical alterations in the way organizations function. It means that human resource professionals also have to demonstrate high flexibility levels to overcome barriers emerging in their professional practice. Contemporary sport is also influenced by the pandemic, meaning that specialists have to use new approaches to support the development of the sphere and create the basis for future evolution. The following annotated bibliography presents sources outlining the scope of the challenge, change, and how new issues are managed by HR professionals at the moment.

Adikaram, A. S., Priyankara, H. P. R., & Naotunna, N. P. G. S. I. (2021). Navigating the crises of COVID-19: Human resource professionals battle against the pandemic. *South Asian Journal of Human Resources Management*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/23220937211018021>

The study focuses on examining HR professionals' experiences in managing the crisis triggered by the pandemic. The qualitative research conducted by the authors shows that the HR sphere has moved through the five central phases, such as anticipatory, crisis, adjustment, rebounding, and continuance. Depending on the stage, HR workers had to adapt to new conditions and employ new methods to ensure organizations could continue their functioning and evolve. Using these experiences, it is also possible to create a unified and valuable approach for managing similar challenges in the future.

The article is critical for establishing the theoretical framework of the planned investigation. It highlights the central phases of crisis, which is vital for understanding how HR specialists managed to overcome it and what methods were effective in helping

teams to recover. The qualitative research is another advantage of this article as it offers up-to-date data about the changes in management promoted by the pandemic. The high credibility of the paper, along with its relevance, justifies its inclusion in the list of sources needed to conduct the planned study.

Aguinis, H., & Burgi-Tian, J. (2021). Talent management challenges during COVID-19 and beyond: Performance management to the rescue. *BRQ Business Research Quarterly*, 24(3), 233–240. <https://doi.org/10.1177/23409444211009528>

The authors state that the COVID-19 pandemic preconditioned the emergence of multiple challenges in the HR sphere, including talent management activities. These include salary freezes, reductions, growing employee stress, burnout, and problematic recruitment practices. These problems became critical for organizations and demanded specific interventions to address them. The article offers the basic recommendations for aligning the work of the HR department and managing these aspects, such as measuring results, measuring performance, conducting interviews, implementing new management systems, and using specific scores. They might help to avoid critical deterioration in the sphere of talent management.

The source offers important information about the work of HR departments in terms of the pandemic and challenges they face in the sphere of talent management. For this reason, its inclusion in the project might guarantee a better vision of the current situation in sports organizations and how the proposed recommendations might help to resolve the critical problems existing today. For this reason, the paper is viewed as a relevant source necessary for discussion and conclusion about the issue of concern.

Centre for Sport and Human Rights. (2020). *An overview of the sport-related impacts of the COVID—19 pandemic on children*. UN. <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2020/07/An-Overview-of-the-Sport-Related-Impacts-of-the-COVID-19-Pandemic-on-Children.pdf>

The report discusses the impact of the pandemic on children engaged in organized sport, from elite athletes to school community teams globally. The document focuses on the fact that guaranteeing safety to all children, their protection, and provision with the opportunities to engage in sport is the central task today. It introduces additional responsibilities for HR specialists responsible for aligning cooperation between departments, effective use of available resources, and distribution. For this reason, there is a need for innovative methods to overcome challenges.

The document offers structured and credible information about the current state of the sports industry. Moreover, it discusses the child sector, which is vital to understand the scope of the challenge and how it can be managed at different levels. Recommendations provided by specialists are necessary to realize how the modern teams work and what strategies are available to HR specialists to attain the desired outcome. They can also ensure children are safe and can continue doing sports daily, which is fundamental for the continuous evolution of the sport.

Goncalves, S., dos Santos, J., Silva, I., Veloso, A., Brandao, C., & Moura, R. (2021). COVID-19 and people management: The view of human resource managers. *Administrative Sciences, 11*(3), 69. <https://doi.org/10.3390/admsci11030069>

The study focuses on describing the major alterations in human resource management practices, processes, and principles that emerged under the influence of the COVID-19

pandemic. The authors outline that the disease impacted the shift towards using teleworking, mediated means of communication, and increased the role of technology in the development of organizations. Moreover, the current crisis demonstrated that HR managers remain the essential pillars vital for preparing organizations and spheres for facing any problematic situation and guaranteeing its stable functioning. Moreover, the article outlines the future opportunities, emphasizing the growing role of technology and the digitalization of all sectors.

The results offered by the authors are vital for the improved understanding of the scope of challenges HR professionals face today and methods they can use to manage new hazards. The credibility of the information is guaranteed by the high quality of the source. It means that the research can be useful when discussing the problem of HR in sports organizations and predicting further changes. The information offered by the authors is essential for creating the theoretical framework for the discussion.

Mayer, M., & Cocco, A. R. (2021). Pandemic and sport: The challenges and implications of publicly financed sporting venues in an era of no fans. *Public Works Management & Policy*, 26(1), 26–33. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1087724X20969161>

Although sports leagues had to suspend their seasons due to the COVID-19 pandemic, teams, as sports organizations, had to support their stable work. It became a serious challenge regarding empty stadiums and decreased income. Under these conditions, all departments, including HR ones, faced a new problem of remaining effective in terms of significant shortages. The authors assume that to overcome the hysteria of the global pandemic, sports teams and HR departments focused on increasing effectiveness by employing new methods which might be less expensive compared to previous ones.

The central advantage of the paper is its focus on current examples in Texas and Nevada. It allows investigators to understand how teams and HR specialists work in terms of reduced income and perform their tasks. The inclusion of this source in the discussion will help to outline the economic difficulties and cogitate how they can be resolved by using technologies or additional governmental investment. For this reason, the selected source can be viewed as an essential work relevant to the issue under concern.

Santos-Ferreira, D., Tomás, R., & Dores, H. (2020). TEAM to defeat COVID-19: A management strategy plan to address return to play in sports medicine. *Orthopaedic Journal of Sports Medicine*, 8(9). <https://doi.org/10.1177/2325967120951453>

The selected study focuses on measures that can help athletes to return to play regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. The central advantage of the source is its focus on using reliable databases, such as PubMed and Google Scholar, to identify articles focusing on the same issue and formulate the main conclusions. Although athletes have a lower risk of a severe form of the disease, there is still a need for specific measures to assist them, and HR professionals acquire additional tasks. They presuppose the organization of the stable work of medical teams and their cooperation with the staff to ensure the problem is addressed correctly and positive results are achieved.

The inclusion of this article in the discussion is explained by its high credibility and systemic approach to structuring information available at the moment. The authors offer a summary of other research works devoted to the same issue to outline the scope of the problem and its relevance for the modern world. In such a way, it can be used while discussing the aspect to acquire an improved understanding of the question and what challenges HR professionals face today.

Schnitzer, M., Kronberger, K., Bazzanella, F., & Wenger, S. (2020). Analyzing project management methods in organizing sports events. *SAGE*

*Open*, 10(4). <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244020970940>

The study outlines the critical importance of effective project management (PM) methods in organizing sports events. The new challenges emerging because of the COVID-19 pandemic demand specific approaches to managing mega-events, such as Olympic Games or World Championships. It becomes an additional challenge for HR professionals responsible for adapting the work of their organizations to new demands of PM and ensuring athletes and visitors remain healthy. The article overviews specific methods employed by specialists in organizing such events regarding the pandemic and the need to avoid the spread of the virus.

The significance of the study comes from its focus on the practices used in sports organizations by its departments to manage the current crisis. The authors outline the changes in approaches and how PM depends on the aligned work of HR specialists. The credibility of findings is ensured by the nature of the source and the use of relevant data coming from trustful sources. For this reason, the article can help to discuss the selected issue and answer some of the posed questions.

Slabaugh, A. D., Belk, J. W., Jackson, J. C., Robins, R. J., McCarty, E. C., LeClere, L. E., &

Slabaugh, M. A. (2021). Managing the return to football during the COVID-19 pandemic: A survey of the head team physicians of the football bowl subdivision programs. *Orthopaedic Journal of Sports Medicine*, 9(1).

<https://doi.org/10.1177/2325967121992045>

The given cross-sectional study focuses on investigating how common COVID-19 issues in the sports industry, specifically in football, can be managed. The authors analyze the effectiveness of existing measures and their observation by organizations. The conclusion states that there is a need for additional clarity in operations and leadership for medical professionals, which can be achieved by the improved work of HR professionals. For this reason, they should be equipped with new methods and technologies to cooperate with various individuals and give direct recommendations for overcoming the current crisis. The source is vital for discussing the issue as it offers information collected from team physicians. It ensures the relevance of data and provides researchers with an opportunity to enhance the current understanding of the problem. They can see how it alters the work of organizations and HR departments, and what measures might be accepted to create the basis for future improvement. Considering these factors, it is recommended to include the paper in discussing the scope of challenges peculiar to the HR sector in the sports industry.

Zhong, Y., Li, Y., Ding, J., & Liao, Y. (2021). Risk management: Exploring emerging human resource issues during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Risk and Financial Management*, 14(5), 228. <https://doi.org/10.3390/jrfm14050228>

The given research article focuses on the issues global business faces because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The authors state that the outbreak of the disease forced all organizations to struggle against new risks and challenges. It resulted in the increased importance of HR departments because of their focus on capabilities in corporate governance and organizational resilience regarding crises. At the same time, the necessity

to confront a new threat contributed to the emergence of new practices and methods to organize the work of units and ensure people are safe.

The given source can be used to establish the theoretical framework for the research as it outlines the central aspects of the problem and emphasizes the scope of change in the HR sector. It can be viewed as a high-quality article offering valuable information required for the research. For this reason, it should be used in the study to discuss the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic on HR practices and outline how they changed to remain effective and work under high pressure.

United Nations. (2020). *The impact of COVID-19 on sport, physical activity and well-being and its effects on social development.*

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/2020/05/covid-19-sport/>

This United Nations report delves into the impacts COVID-19 has on sports and how it can recover. It states that the current value of the sphere is about \$756 billion annually, meaning that millions of jobs depend on the stable work of sports organizations.

However, the pandemic introduces the need to safeguard the athletes' and spectators' health, which increases the value of the HR sector. The majority of organizations show their solidarity in efforts to stop the spread, which is seen in the employment of new practices and strategies to resist the virus. At the same time, it demands additional resources and significant alterations in the way teams and clubs work.

In such a way, the report is a valuable source essential for the investigation of the problems HR managers have at the moment. It provides information about economic effects and how they can be managed by specialists regarding the need for protection and



increased safety demands. The quality of the source is also high as it uses reliable statistics available for the UN at the moment.

### **Conclusion**

Altogether, the articles included in the annotated bibliography evidence the significant scope of challenges HR professionals working in the sports sector face. The demand to protect athletes and other individuals results in the necessity to alter the work of organizations, which becomes an additional responsibility of the HR department. For this reason, specialists try to implement innovative tools, technologies, and new solutions to ensure the existing goals are achieved, and the level of threat is minimized. At the same time, there are still multiple problems that should be addressed to ensure the further evolution of the sphere and its stable work, fundamental for contemporary society.

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