

# **Retention Strategies in the Information Technology (IT) Industry after A Pandemic: A Qualitative Study**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This research analyzed retention strategies in the IT industry post-COVID-19, using qualitative interviews with 12 IT managers and supervisors. Four key themes critical to employee retention were discovered: (a) leadership, (b) communication, (c) well-being, and (d) organizational commitment. Leadership is crucial for navigating pandemic-related challenges and fostering a supportive work environment. Transparent communication is essential for strategy development and maintaining mental health. Well-being programs, like flexible work schedules and mental health services, are essential for boosting productivity and employee happiness. Organizational commitment increases morale and retention through career development and recognition initiatives. The study highlighted the importance of adaptive leadership, effective communication, holistic well-being initiatives, and a strong organizational commitment to retaining IT professionals during crises. The study also suggested that telecommuting positively impacts well-being by offering flexibility and improving work-life balance. Future research should explore the long-term effects of these strategies and the role of technology and leadership development in enhancing employee retention in other industries.

## Introduction/Background

As the world continues to grapple with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the IT industry faces unprecedented challenges in retaining its workforce. Steil et al. (2022) asserted that the COVID-19 pandemic has increased the importance of IT professionals in facilitating digital transformation due to social distancing measures and changes in work relationships. As a result of the COVID-19 outbreak, many IT employees were compelled to work remotely from their homes, either by official recommendation or order. As a result, working remotely and conducting virtual meetings with colleagues became the new normal (Espersson et al., 2023). According to Yang et al. (2023), the extended period of working from home negatively impacted women's well-being and work-life balance. The COVID-19 pandemic emphasized the need for effective IT retention strategies, considering remote work and the economic downturn.

Organizations need to focus on ensuring job satisfaction for employees. Employees unhappy with their work are likelier to leave their jobs, resulting in organizational retention problems. Donovan (2022) highlighted the factors determining the success of working from home, such as social and organizational support, technological needs, working environments, communication, and management styles. According to Gong et al. (2020), a link exists between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction. This link affects the psychological empowerment of work engagement. This study focused on the unique challenges faced by the IT industry in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Retaining IT professionals is crucial for organizations (Steil et al., 2022).

The researcher introduced the need to complete a study that will influence how the workforce will thrive in this post-COVID-19 era. The study is essential to assess how organizations manage retention strategies in the IT industry after the pandemic. Khan and La Torre (2021) mentioned that information and communication technologies have rapidly evolved, leading to the digital age of the 21st century. These technologies have facilitated the implementation and improvement of other technologies. Apart from losing an experienced and professional worker, the company may also lose credibility with stakeholders who have developed trust in the employee (Sai & Pinapati, 2023). The implications of this matter are profound for the reputation and success of the company. Therefore, companies need to have a plan to oversee key employees' departures. This study explored the reasons for IT employee turnover and aims to provide a way to address employee retention in the workplace effectively.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought about countless changes, especially in the information technology business sector. COVID-19, a respiratory disease first identified in Wuhan, China, in 2019, has rapidly spread worldwide, resulting in severe health issues and fatalities (Barik & Jain, 2023). Companies were forced to adapt to the new normal, which included remote work and other work arrangements that were not as common pre-pandemic. Chin (2022) mentioned that a considerable number of employees are currently struggling with physical and mental health issues due to the COVID-19 pandemic. One key aspect that has been dramatically affected by these changes is employee retention.

Organizations in the information technology industry have faced challenges in retaining their employees during these trying times. Rajabifard et al. (2021) reported that the COVID-19 pandemic triggered a severe global recession, confirmed by the World Bank and the IMF. Employee retention is crucial for long-term success (Lee et al., 2023). In the current COVID-19 pandemic, employability and job security have become significant employee concerns. As a result, employees are more inclined to work for organizations with high brand value, which can provide them with a sense of security for their future and help them cope with the economic situation in the country (Barik & Jain, 2023). According to Roop (2022), the Great Resignation has caused a significant reduction in the workforce for many businesses. Companies face significant challenges in finding suitable replacements for their vacant positions (Lee et al.).

According to Baranes and Brown (2023), during COVID-19, remote work technologies introduced new problem-solving methods that have become institutionalized. In today's customer-centric world, all sectors compete to increase productivity while ensuring they are their employees' preferred workplaces (Barik & Jain, 2023). Working from home has become increasingly popular, particularly in the IT and IT-enabled industries. The transition towards remote work is intended to keep employees engaged, facilitate communication with internal and external stakeholders, retain the best talent, and maintain low attrition rates (Prasad et al., 2020). Employee retention is critical for long-term success (Lee et al., 2023). As a result, companies may need to adopt new retention strategies to ensure that their employees remain engaged, motivated, and productive. In today's world, organizations face fierce competition due to technological advancement, globalization, and constant changes in the work environment (Durrah et al., 2024). By focusing on the experiences and perspectives of employees, a qualitative study can provide a more nuanced understanding of the factors that influence employee retention in the IT industry.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

After the pandemic, researchers began studying retention tactics in the IT industry by reading peer-reviewed articles to understand the literature. In December 2019, SARS-CoV-2 was discovered in Wuhan, China (Bragazzi et al., 2023). The World Health Organization (WHO) categorized COVID-19 on February 11, 2020 (Bragazzi et al.). The COVID-19 pandemic presented the IT sector with hitherto unseen difficulties, chief among them being staff retention. Embregts et al. (2021) identified potentially valuable insights from previous infection outbreaks, which encompassed three themes: emotional responses (i.e., fears and anxieties, stress, tension, confusion, and no supplementary challenges); ethical dilemmas (e.g., locking doors to prevent wandering service users from infecting others); and work attendance (i.e., refusal and exclusion of service users). Temel et al. (2023) outlined that in the 21st century, coronaviruses have led to epidemics worldwide. This literature review looked at the pandemic's effects on IT workers and the necessity of retention plans.

This qualitative pragmatic study explored techniques employed in the IT sector for retaining employees after the COVID-19 pandemic. The literature review introduced theoretical frameworks such as Blau's (1964) social exchange theory and Bakker and Demerouti's (2007) job demands-resources model (JD-R) to provide a foundation for understanding retention dynamics. Jing et al. (2023) noted that the JD-R model also emphasizes the involvement of two

distinct psychological mechanisms contributing to job stress and motivation. The first is the health impairment process, wherein high job demands can potentially result in burnout by depleting employees' cognitive and physical energy, consequently giving rise to health-related issues (Jing et al.). The second is the motivational process. Job resources function as intrinsic and extrinsic motivators to augment work engagement and facilitate exceptional performance, thereby fostering the commitment and achievement of work-related objectives (Jing et al.). The significance of the study is to address turnover challenges and ensure the long-term success of IT organizations. Sandhya and Sulphey (2019) noted that with the pressure of cost on one side and the need to reduce turnover on the other, organizations are looking beyond monetary measures to retain an engaged workforce. The research design involved semistructured interviews with IT professionals from diverse backgrounds and regions to gain insights into their experiences and perspectives on retention strategies. The research design aimed to provide an appropriate framework for the study (Sileyew, 2019). The study's findings may contribute to developing effective IT industry retention strategies after the pandemic.

### ***Post-pandemic Work Landscape***

The post-pandemic work landscape has significantly transformed traditional work and organizational structures, primarily by adopting hybrid work models that allow employees to split their time between remote and office settings (Chan et al., 2023). This shift, driven by COVID-19, is expected to remain in place (Carroll and Conboy, as cited in Chan et al.). Furthermore, digital transformation has played a vital role, enabling seamless communication and collaboration through digital platforms (van Heerden & Naicker, 2023). However, challenges remain concerning team members' technical competencies in remote settings (Morrison-Smith & Ruiz, 2020). Managers must also embrace data-driven decision-making due to the vast amounts of data generated by these digital tools (Porath, 2023). Cloud-based applications, video conferencing, and project management software have become essential for maintaining productivity in this new work environment.

### ***Employee Well-being and Burnout***

The shift to remote work during the pandemic has highlighted challenges in managing employee well-being. Ji et al. (2023) noted that the adverse effects of working from home became more pronounced, while Heiden et al. (2023) found no significant impact of telework mismatch on well-being or burnout. Organizations must implement telework policies carefully to avoid adverse outcomes for employees working remotely more than they prefer. Employee well-being extends beyond traditional benefits to mental, emotional, and physical health. Addressing well-being is crucial for ethical and strategic reasons since work-leisure ambiguity can lead to stress and reduced productivity (Stasiła-Sieradzka et al., 2023). Companies that prioritize employee well-being tend to see higher engagement and retention. Key satisfaction factors include job flexibility and workplace culture (Hoare & Vandenberghe, 2024). Prioritizing well-being initiatives can foster a positive work environment and enhance employee satisfaction.

### ***Career Development and Training Opportunities***

Career development significantly enhances employability and achieves career goals (Adnyani & Dewi, 2019; Niati et al., 2021). Duli (2019) noted that organizations lacking employee training limit career advancement opportunities. Afiyati (2018, as cited in Niati et al., 2021) stated that career development fosters increased responsibilities and recognition, boosting employee loyalty. Access to training enhances skills and positively correlates with retention (Duli, 2019), although disparities in access can create barriers for marginalized groups (Allmang et al., 2019). Research indicates that training influences employees' perceptions of being valued and leads to improved task performance, job satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behavior (Lee & Bruvold, 2003; Schmidt, 2007, as cited in Hassett, 2022). Effective career development initiatives can therefore enhance job satisfaction and motivation. Additionally, McCartney and Colon (2023) emphasized the importance of early and frequent implementation of career development programs, particularly in the tech industry, where talent retention is critical. Workshops and resources can provide valuable insights into employee growth. Li et al. (2024) outlined that continuous resources help postdoctoral researchers build resilience and achieve career advancement.

## **METHODS**

The study design included a qualitative pragmatic inquiry to address the following research question: What strategies do managers in the IT industry use to retain employees after the COVID-19 pandemic?

The target population consisted of office workers from any IT company, both remote and physical, located in North and South America, Europe, and Asia. Using a purposive sampling strategy, the sample for this study included 12 office workers of adult age and any experience level within the target population.

### ***Data Collection***

This study's primary data collection method included semistructured interviews conducted via a video calling system, Zoom, using a semistructured topic guide. The researcher accurately documented everything said during the interviews without altering or omitting any information. Semistructured interviews offered flexibility, allowing the researcher to adapt questions based on participant responses. This adaptability was crucial for capturing emerging themes and insights in a rapidly evolving IT landscape.

### ***Data Analysis***

A thematic analysis method was used, providing a structured and rigorous approach to analyzing qualitative data. By employing this method, the study aimed to derive clear and meaningful themes related to retention strategies, contributing to developing actionable insights. This research aimed to generate insights and develop a deep understanding of the retention strategies in the IT industry after the pandemic by gathering rich and detailed information about the participants' experiences, perspectives, and behaviors. The qualitative data analysis involved transcribing the recordings and coding the identified themes. The researcher calculated the

frequency of each theme and derived percentages to evaluate their prevalence within the data. This analysis aimed to address the research question regarding retention strategies used by IT managers during the pandemic. The four key themes identified were (a) leadership, (b) communication, (c) well-being, and (d) organizational commitment.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The primary research question that guided this study was: *What strategies do managers in the IT industry use to retain employees after the COVID-19 pandemic?*

### Theme 1: Leadership

Effective leadership was an important theme in this study for the retention of employees. Leadership can be described as an intentional process of influence that shapes relationships and activities within organizations (Daniëls et al., 2019). Influential leaders can adapt and overcome challenges to achieve results (Doody et al., 2024). Several participants noted the need for leaders to be effective. Participant AB emphasized the need for leaders to support employees' work-life balance, especially during the pandemic. Participant AD noted that mentorship is crucial for effective retention strategies. Participant CF stressed the importance of clear pathways for employee growth. Participant CO highlighted the role of empathy in fostering a supportive workplace. Participant DF mentioned developing action plans based on team feedback. Participant FF pointed out that fostering innovation is vital for growth and competitive advantage.

### *Flexibility*

The value of flexibility in the workplace emerged as a significant theme among participants. Ray et al. (2021) highlighted that flexibility allows employees to manage their time between work and personal activities to suit their needs. This flexibility represents a compromise between various stakeholders, especially employees and organizations, balancing differing interests (Bal & Izak, 2021). Participants emphasized the importance of this flexibility during the pandemic. For instance, Participant HN noted that retaining IT employees required flexibility, support, and clear communication. Participant TA pointed out that remote access was vital for maintaining team productivity. At the same time, Participant NN highlighted that leaders should focus on flexibility and set realistic goals to sustain team motivation. Furthermore, Participant TG mentioned that leadership training programs focusing on flexibility are essential for developing effective leaders. Lastly, Participant YL stressed that retaining top talent is crucial for the company's long-term success. Overall, the adaptation of workplace policies regarding flexibility is likely to impact employee well-being significantly (Ray et al., 2021). The participant's responses are displayed in Table 1.

**Table 1**

### *Emerging Theme-Leadership*

| Participant | Interview Questions | Total Count of References |
|-------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
|-------------|---------------------|---------------------------|

|       |               |     |
|-------|---------------|-----|
| YL    | 2,3,5,7       | 5   |
| TG    | 1,3,4,6,7     | 9   |
| TA    | 2,3,7         | 4   |
| NN    | 1,2,3,4,5,7   | 12  |
| RE    | 1,3,4,5,7     | 8   |
| HN    | 1,2,3,4,5,6   | 12  |
| FF    | 3,5,6,7       | 4   |
| DF    | 1,2,3,5,6,7   | 23  |
| CO    | 1,2,3,4,5,6   | 30  |
| CF    | 1,2,6,7       | 11  |
| AD    | 1,2,4,5,7     | 7   |
| AB    | 1,2,3,4,5,6,7 | 20  |
| Total |               | 145 |

## Theme 2: Communication

The interviews highlighted effective communication as a key theme in enhancing teamwork, employee performance, and retention. Participant AB noted that improved communication and collaboration led to increased efficiency in their team. Participant CO emphasized the importance of open dialogue for successfully reintegrating employees into the workplace. At the same time, Participant CF stated that maintaining frequent communication channels helped create a sense of community, making employees feel valued and informed. Moreover, transparent communication practices can reduce burnout and alleviate resource-conservation behaviors (Kim & Lee, 2021). Sun et al. (2023) claimed that a culture of transparent communication enhances workplace productivity and employees' psychological well-being. Participant YL added that empathy, support, and flexibility are crucial managerial strategies during challenging times, highlighting the significance of understanding individual employee circumstances.

### *Virtual Meetings*

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic significantly increased the use of virtual meetings, as face-to-face interactions became difficult. Participant TG noted the importance of maintaining clear communication between employees and management through emails, virtual meetings, and internal newsletters to keep everyone informed and engaged. As emphasized by Dimpleby and Burton (2020), more prominent organizations require more communication. Participant TA highlighted the critical role of virtual meetings in facilitating effective communication and collaboration within teams. Furthermore, Kalogiannidis (2020) pointed out that effective business communication is vital for enhancing the overall performance of businesses, as it ensures proper coordination between various stakeholders. The participant responses are in Table 2.

### **Table 2**

#### *Emerging Theme -Communication*

| Participant | Interview Questions | Total Count of References |
|-------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| YL          | 2,3,4,5             | 6                         |
| TG          | 2,3,5               | 6                         |
| TA          | 1                   | 1                         |
| NN          | 6                   | 1                         |
| RE          | 6                   | 1                         |
| HN          | 1                   | 1                         |
| FF          | 1                   | 1                         |
| DF          | 1                   | 1                         |
| CO          | 2,4,5               | 5                         |
| CF          | 1,5,7               | 3                         |
| AD          | 7                   | 1                         |
| AB          | 1,2,3,4,6,7         | 6                         |
| Total       |                     | 33                        |

### Theme 3: Well-Being

Several participants emphasized the importance of ensuring work well-being in employee retention. Participant CO highlighted meditation sessions as a beneficial way to reduce stress. Participant AB emphasized that a holistic and empathetic approach is essential for addressing retention challenges during the pandemic, focusing on employee well-being, communication, and growth opportunities. Compensation and benefits are also crucial for attracting and retaining talent, as noted by Participant DF. According to Cleary et al. (2020), effective workplace relationships are vital for job satisfaction and teamwork, with employee well-being playing a significant role. Suharman et al. (2023) stressed the importance of creating boundaries between personal and professional life and adopting healthy lifestyles to maintain well-being. Participant TA pointed out that competitive compensation packages and performance-based incentives recognize the contributions of senior staff. According to the World Health Organization (cited in De Oliveira et al., 2019), good mental health enables individuals to manage daily stress while maintaining productivity. Finally, Participant RE underlined the importance of offering mental health resources to enhance staff productivity and well-being.

#### *Burnout*

Preventing work burnout is important for employee retention. Burnout syndrome is a decrease in job performance and satisfaction due to prolonged exposure to work-related stress and adverse working conditions (de Oliveira et al., 2019). Participant AD advocated for a hybrid work model that blends in-office collaboration with remote flexibility to satisfy diverse employee preferences, emphasizing the need for ongoing adaptation of retention strategies based on employee feedback. The World Health Organization (as cited in de Oliveira et al., 2019) noted that while enhancing work environment quality is crucial for safeguarding employee health, many organizations prioritize spending on medical procedures over preventive measures. Participant CO discussed the implementation of flexible work arrangements, such as remote work options and flexible hours, to help employees balance their work and personal responsibilities. The primary indicator of burnout syndrome is the inability to cope with work-related stress (de Oliveira et al., 2019). Participant NN pointed out the importance of regular

check-ins for the timely resolution of team issues and effective communication. As Otto et al. (2021) noted, employers and employees can actively prevent burnout through their interactions. The participant's responses are in Table 3.

**Table 3**  
*Emerging Theme-Well-Being*

| Participant | Interview Questions | Total Count of References |
|-------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| YL          | 1                   | 1                         |
| TG          | 5                   | 1                         |
| TA          | 1,2                 | 2                         |
| NN          | 1                   | 1                         |
| RE          | 1,4                 | 2                         |
| HN          | 2                   | 1                         |
| FF          | 3                   | 1                         |
| DF          | 1,2,6               | 4                         |
| CO          | 2,3,4               | 3                         |
| CF          | 1,24                | 3                         |
| AD          | 1,37                | 3                         |
| AB          | 2,3,4               | 3                         |
| Total       |                     | 25                        |

#### Theme 4: Organizational Commitment

Several participants touted the value of organizational commitment in retention. Organizational commitment can be defined as aligning employee efforts with organizational objectives (Loan, 2020). Participant TG highlighted that remote work options can significantly enhance employee satisfaction and retention, while Participant CF stressed the necessity of unbiased hiring practices to promote equality and diversity. Moreover, Participant NN indicated that recognizing and appreciating employees is vital for boosting morale and productivity. Regarding career development, Suharman et al. (2023) noted that growth opportunities can enhance job performance. Participant AD advocates for mentorship and support programs for underrepresented groups to foster retention and advancement. Participant HN emphasized that such opportunities are crucial for increasing organizational commitment. Furthermore, Participant AB suggested that addressing the unique needs of IT employees can create a supportive and rewarding work environment. At the same time, Participant FF called for additional training to enhance skills and career growth. Participant DF also urged the importance of mental health resources and ensuring continuous career development despite challenges. Finally, Participant YL pointed out that better team cohesion is essential for overall performance and productivity. The participant responses are in Table 4.

**Table 4**  
*Emerging Theme- Organizational Commitment*

| Participant | Interview Questions | Total Count of References |
|-------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| YL          | 1                   | 1                         |
| TG          | 2                   | 1                         |
| TA          | 3                   | 1                         |

|       |     |    |
|-------|-----|----|
| NN    | 4,5 | 2  |
| RE    | 3   | 1  |
| HN    | 5,7 | 2  |
| FF    | 3   | 1  |
| DF    | 5   | 1  |
| CO    | 2   | 1  |
| CF    | 7   | 1  |
| AD    | 7   | 1  |
| AB    | 3   | 1  |
| Total |     | 14 |

## RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The COVID-19 pandemic triggered an unprecedented transformation in the information technology (IT) industry, reshaping traditional work arrangements and propelling digital transformation at an accelerated pace. IT professionals emerged as key players in enabling this transition, particularly in managing remote work infrastructure and digital services (Sheposh, 2024). With over half of the American workforce transitioning to remote environments, employee well-being and work-life balance became primary concerns, leading to significant retention challenges. Organizations were compelled to rethink how to maintain employee satisfaction, morale, and loyalty in the face of prolonged uncertainty. This context underscored the relevance of implementing robust employee retention strategies tailored to a distributed, digitally dependent workforce. Monica and Reddy (2020) noted that modern employees are likelier to remain with organizations offering value-aligned benefits and meaningful engagement.

This study employed a pragmatic qualitative inquiry approach to explore retention strategies in the post-pandemic IT sector. Twelve IT managers and supervisors from Facebook communities, including Cybersecurity Professionals, Women in Cybersecurity, and CSL, participated in semi-structured interviews. These sessions were conducted using Zoom. Zoom offers flexibility and ensures participant comfort while enabling rich, open-ended responses (Archibald et al., 2019). The inclusion criteria focused on individuals currently working in managerial roles within the IT field. Through in-depth interviews and thematic analysis, four overarching themes emerged: (a) leadership, (b) communication, (c) well-being, and (d) organizational commitment. These themes provided a comprehensive framework for understanding how IT managers navigated employee retention amid post-pandemic disruptions.

Leadership was identified as a fundamental theme influencing employee retention. Effective leaders exhibited empathy, flexibility, and innovation. Participants stressed the value of mentorship, career development, and adaptive leadership practices that responded to employees' evolving needs. Integrating flexible work arrangements, including staggered schedules and remote access, was a critical sub-theme. Barry et al. (2022) found that such flexibility protected public health and supported workforce continuity. Leaders who emphasized communication clarity, realistic goal-setting, and inclusive decision-making were more successful in maintaining employee engagement and retention.

Communication became the second central theme for sustaining trust, productivity, and emotional stability. Interviewees described open dialogue, empathetic listening, and transparent policies as key to fostering collaboration and preventing isolation. Participants frequently utilized virtual meetings, emails, and newsletters to maintain consistent contact. Hyland-Wood et al. (2021) emphasized that compassionate expression enhances communication credibility, aligning with participant feedback. Roos et al. (2020) highlighted virtual meetings as cost-effective tools for maintaining knowledge flow, especially during remote operations. Participants stressed that remote and hybrid models could only succeed with consistent, two-way communication, emphasizing empathy and inclusion.

The third theme, employee well-being, was pivotal to morale and performance. Participants described introducing wellness initiatives, such as meditation sessions, hybrid work models, and wellness check-ins, to address pandemic-induced stress. Work-life balance, access to mental health resources, and holistic support systems contributed to employee satisfaction and retention (Tuzovic & Kabadayi, 2021). Managers also reported tailoring strategies to address individual employee preferences and using feedback loops to refine interventions. These actions helped reduce burnout and created a mutual care and responsibility culture.

Organizational commitment, the fourth theme, involved cultivating loyalty through inclusive practices, recognition programs, career growth opportunities, and equity in hiring. Chegini et al. (2019) linked commitment to enhanced performance and reduced turnover. Participants emphasized building a strong organizational culture and addressing underrepresentation through mentorship programs and diversity initiatives. Leaders encouraged vacation use, training investments, and team building to foster long-term loyalty. Hyland-Wood et al. (2021) noted that communication must be accompanied by actionable change to impact retention.

This study highlighted the strategic role of leadership, communication, well-being, and organizational commitment in navigating post-pandemic employee retention in the IT sector. These themes align with contemporary literature and provide a framework for practical implementation. Organizations are advised to assess benefit structures, promote equity, invest in leadership training, and create robust feedback channels. Future research should explore retention strategies in the industries and evaluate leadership adaptability across organizational cultures concerning leadership development, self-awareness, emphasizing its function in cultivating effective leadership, principally via the application of diverse feedback regarding leader performance concerning actions and results (Liu et al., 2021). This research provided a comprehensive analysis of retention strategies in the IT industry after the COVID-19 pandemic. Leadership is about getting communities on board to help themselves wherever possible and making people face things that have to be faced, like social distancing and quarantine (Grint, 2020). According to Zerfass et al. (2020), communication can be essential for the development, adjustment, presentation, execution, implementation, and operationalization of strategies. Transparent communication mediates organizational culture and mental health (Sun et al., 2023). The insights gained from the participants' experiences underscore the importance of adaptive leadership, effective communication, holistic well-being initiatives, and solid organizational commitment to retaining IT professionals during crises. Grego-Planer (2019) defined organizational commitment as the degree to which a person identifies with and participates in a

specific organization. Trust is fundamental for advocating employee well-being (Sun et al., 2023).

The results of this study demonstrated the critical role that leadership plays in overcoming the obstacles that the pandemic presents. Creative and compassionate leaders create a positive work atmosphere. A test of leadership theory was presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, which ravaged the globe in late 2019 and early 2020 (Grint, 2020). Communication emerged as a crucial factor, emphasizing the need for transparency and regular updates to keep employees engaged and informed. Through this communication lens, interaction also plays a key role (Van Ruler, 2020). Well-being initiatives, including flexible work arrangements and mental health resources, were vital in maintaining employee satisfaction and productivity. The definition of well-being ranges from early notions of job characteristics and attributes of one's environment to psychological elements, including life satisfaction, pleasant or unpleasant affect, and quality of life (Roos & Borkoski, 2021). Organizational commitment, through career development opportunities and recognition programs, was identified as essential for boosting morale and retaining top talent. Job satisfaction is a primary factor behind organizational commitment (Chegini et al., 2019)

This research offered significant perspectives on changing employee retention within the IT sector. The identified themes and strategies provided a framework for organizations to enhance their retention efforts, especially in times of crisis. Leadership, communication, well-being, and organizational commitment are crucial in employee retention post-pandemic. IT employees embraced telecommuting post-pandemic. Telecommuting can positively affect employee well-being by providing greater flexibility, reducing the stress and time cost of commuting, increasing employee productivity, and allowing employees to balance their home and work lives better (Bilotta et al., 2021). Future research should build on these findings, exploring the long-term impact of the recommended strategies and further investigating the role of technology and leadership development in improving employee retention in other industries.

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