

Fear and trembling of cruise ship employees: Psychological effects of the COVID-19 pandemic

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Abstract

The current COVID-19 pandemic has evolved to unprecedented proportions. This research aimed to gain a deeper understanding of the psychological effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on cruise ship employees stuck at sea. Using an inductive qualitative approach, a synchronous online focus group was conducted with nine cruise ship employees who were stuck at sea during COVID-19 pandemic. The findings revealed that COVID-19 pandemic has managed to erase the feeling of joy from cruise ship employees who were stuck at sea while exposing weakness of cruise line companies such as poor human resource management leadership. Moreover, COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated that it is of paramount importance that cruise line companies create a comprehensive strategy in assisting their employees who are experiencing an anxiety disorder and depression. The managerial implications are outlined.

Author keywords

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)
Cruise ship
Psychological effects of the COVID-19 pandemic
Qualitative methods