

## Navigating the Post-Pandemic Landscape: Challenges and Strategies of a Beverage Company

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### ABSTRACT

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This study explores Coca-Cola's adaptive responses to challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, with a focus on how targeted training programs can enhance resilience and drive innovation in areas such as supply chain management, marketing strategies, and employee adaptation. Using a mixed-method approach, the research gathered quantitative and qualitative data through Google Forms surveys and focus groups with Coca-Cola employees in Malaysia. Results highlight that supply chain disruptions and shifting consumer demands were significant obstacles, while an increased focus on employee well-being and digital transformation provided notable opportunities. Findings reveal that Coca-Cola's "well-being-first" approach and approachable leadership style positively impacted employee morale and communication. Training programs, while effective, have room for improvement in areas like digital marketing and sustainability. The study concludes that targeted training in digital literacy, supply chain management, and wellness can strengthen Coca-Cola's adaptability in a post-pandemic environment, enhancing both workforce resilience and organizational competitiveness.

**Keywords:** COVID-19; Employee Well-Being; Professional Training; Resilience; Supply Chain Management

## INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic, which began in 2020, posed unprecedented challenges to global businesses across industries, requiring companies to swiftly adapt and demonstrate resilience in response to economic turmoil and evolving consumer behaviors (Edeh et al., 2021; Liew et al., 2022). Coca-Cola, an iconic multinational beverage corporation, experienced significant impacts, as the pandemic disrupted its supply chains, distribution networks, and overall consumer demand. In response, Coca-Cola implemented a series of strategic measures aimed at ensuring continuity, resilience, and sustainability in an environment marked by uncertainty.

Research on the crisis responses of multinational corporations highlights strategies that facilitated their survival and adaptation during the pandemic. For instance, according to Panwar et al.'s (2022) study, multinational corporations leveraged various approaches to manage pandemic-driven challenges, such as enhancing supply chain resilience and accelerating digital transformation. However, while these studies examine high-level strategic responses, they often overlook the internal struggles faced by employees and the effects of the pandemic on workplace environments.

Similarly, Mukunde's (2022) research on supply chain resilience emphasizes Coca-Cola's strategic response to supply chain disruptions, focusing on risk management lessons derived from five past years (2017-2021). Despite the valuable insights offered in this research, it does not address how Coca-Cola managed to sustain its workforce and adapt its internal processes to ensure survival in the competitive market landscape during COVID-19.

This research aims to bridge these gaps by investigating Coca-Cola's struggle and survival strategies, particularly from an employee-focused perspective. The study will examine how professional training and support mechanisms for employees contributed to Coca-Cola's resilience and adaptability during and after the pandemic. Specifically, it will explore key areas within Coca-Cola's operations—such as supply chain management, marketing strategies, and employee adaptation—to assess how targeted training programs can strengthen resilience, foster innovation, and support sustainable growth in the face of ongoing global uncertainties. Through this approach, the study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of Coca-Cola's survival strategies, emphasizing the often-overlooked role of employee experiences and development in sustaining a corporation's competitive edge amidst crisis.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Employee Well-Being

A healthy and supportive work environment is essential for an organization's success, as it positively influences employee well-being, job satisfaction, and overall productivity. Research has shown that businesses with a strong focus on employee health and happiness are more likely to achieve organizational success, as satisfied employees tend to be more committed and motivated to perform at higher levels (Wright, 2008). Job satisfaction, which is directly linked to the overall health and well-being of employees, forms the cornerstone of a productive and sustainable organization. Employees who feel healthy and satisfied in their roles contribute to a harmonious work culture that, in turn, strengthens the organization's competitive edge (Radu, 2023).

Traditional employment contracts focused on job stability have increasingly given way to modern agreements that emphasize skill development and career progression as a way to enhance employee employability (Akkermans et al., 2024). This shift is beneficial

not only to employees, who gain valuable skills but also to employers, who benefit from having a more skilled and adaptable workforce. While some companies may worry that providing skill development opportunities could lead employees to leave for better opportunities, research suggests that employees offered such opportunities often remain with their current employer. Feeling valued and appreciated by their organization fosters affective commitment, resulting in higher retention rates and stronger employee loyalty (Ruzain, 2024).

Managers play a crucial role in shaping a positive work environment that promotes employee well-being (Al, 2023). By prioritizing employee welfare through policies that support work-life balance, mental health, and personal development, managers help create a setting where employees feel valued and supported. This approach not only enhances individual job satisfaction and performance but also boosts the organization's overall productivity and reputation as a desirable workplace. Effective management strategies that focus on employee well-being can transform the workplace into a supportive environment that fosters motivation and loyalty, ultimately benefiting both employees and the organization (Mohamad & Abiddin, 2024).

When employees work in a supportive environment that prioritizes their well-being, they are more engaged, satisfied, and productive. Companies that create a culture of well-being, including benefits such as flexible work options, mental health support, and physical wellness programs, experience better retention rates and enhanced performance across the organization (Bakker & Oerlemans, 2011; Vermeeren et al., 2014). Such organizations attract talented individuals who value an employer's commitment to its workforce, leading to a stronger, more resilient workforce. Consequently, fostering a positive work culture and investing in employee well-being not only supports the immediate needs of the workforce but also establishes a long-term competitive advantage for the organization (Kowalski & Loretto, 2017).

In conclusion, prioritizing employee well-being is essential for creating a sustainable and successful organization. Companies that integrate supportive policies, reward systems, and opportunities for personal and professional growth foster a positive relationship between employees and the organization. This leads to increased job satisfaction, reduced turnover, and improved overall performance, demonstrating the critical role of employee well-being in achieving organizational goals.

### **Supply Chain Resilience**

Supply chain resilience refers to a company's capacity to maintain the stability of its supply chain while mitigating financial impacts during disruptions (Tukamuhabwa et al., 2015). A robust supply chain strategy provides companies with contingency plans that allow them to respond swiftly and effectively to unexpected market trends, natural disasters, or other unforeseen events. By building a resilient supply chain, companies gain a competitive advantage, positioning themselves to continue operations despite challenges (Pu et al., 2023). However, establishing a resilient supply chain requires an experienced management team and a focus on transparency across supply chain operations.

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the critical importance of supply chain resilience, as disruptions affected nearly every industry worldwide. This crisis underscored that, in today's complex business environment, a company's capability to manage supply chain disruptions is as essential as maintaining low costs, high quality, or quick delivery times (Carvalho et al., 2011). Businesses learned that resilience is not solely a reactive measure but an ongoing strategic priority that involves preparing for potential disruptions before they occur. Moreover, the pandemic demonstrated that traditional

methods of managing supply chains are insufficient in highly volatile environments, emphasizing the need for innovative strategies that enable managers to proactively address disruptions. This includes fostering social networks and seeking strategic guidance to navigate future disruptions effectively (Nikookar & Yanadori, 2022).

Kleindorfer and Saad (2005) contribute significantly to this field by developing a conceptual framework that highlights the essential role of risk assessment and risk mitigation in managing supply chain disruptions. This framework emphasizes the interrelationship between identifying potential risks and implementing strategies to reduce their impact. Risk assessment involves evaluating possible threats, analyzing their probability, and estimating their potential effects on the organization (Zio, 2018). By thoroughly assessing risks, companies can pinpoint vulnerabilities within their supply chains, allowing them to take proactive measures. Risk mitigation, in turn, encompasses the strategies and actions an organization can employ to minimize the adverse effects of disruptions. Kleindorfer and Saad's (2005) framework underscores the necessity of a cohesive approach, where risk assessment and mitigation are integrated into a unified, strategic plan for managing disruption risks.

This integrated approach to risk management is especially beneficial in the face of unexpected events. Organizations with a strong risk management framework are better equipped to absorb the impacts of disruptions, enabling faster recovery and reducing the likelihood of operational setbacks. For instance, when a supply chain disturbance occurs, companies that have pre-established risk management plans can respond more efficiently, minimizing service interruptions and preserving customer trust. Kleindorfer and Saad's (2005) study further suggests that strategic planning for risk management not only reduces the probability of disruptions but also enhances the resilience of supply chains by building robust contingency plans.

Ultimately, the implementation of structured risk assessment and mitigation techniques helps organizations create a more stable and resilient supply chain. Such preparedness enables businesses to maintain consistent service levels during crises, providing them with a competitive advantage. In the long run, a well-resilient supply chain contributes to an organization's overall stability, minimizes downtime, and ensures that it remains adaptable in the face of unforeseen challenges, thereby safeguarding its long-term growth and sustainability.

### **Leadership Styles and Communication**

Effective leadership is crucial for managing crises, as it fosters a sense of stability and confidence among employees, helping to guide the organization through turbulent times. Leaders who communicate clearly and consistently play a key role in ensuring that operations remain on course during a crisis (Basalamah et al., 2022). In these situations, the leadership team's philosophy and the organization's culture profoundly impact how the crisis unfolds—from chaotic and reactive responses to controlled and strategic resolutions. This initial response is instrumental in determining whether the organization can recover successfully and how well it can anticipate and mitigate future challenges (Bowers et al., 2017).

Research highlights three fundamental leadership principles that are essential for effective crisis management. First, organizations should practice transparency by openly communicating the challenges they face, the potential impact, and possible outcomes. This openness helps build trust among employees and stakeholders, creating a shared understanding of the situation. Second, organizations should avoid focusing on mere public relations or appearances. Instead, they should develop a concrete plan to address the root causes of the crisis, ensuring a strategic, long-term

approach to resolution. Third, it is important for organizations to consider their unique culture when crafting a response. By acknowledging cultural weaknesses and implementing targeted strategies to reduce risk, leaders can better align their response with the organization's values and operational strengths.

[Bowers et al. \(2017\)](#) emphasize the importance of these principles in selecting the right leaders to manage crises. The article advocates for using a crisis response leadership model, which serves as a framework to help organizations choose leaders equipped to handle high-stakes situations. This model emphasizes that effective crisis leaders are those who not only understand the strategic principles of transparency, root-cause focus, and cultural awareness but also apply them to enhance the organization's resilience and ability to navigate complex challenges.

Furthermore, this model underscores the importance of adaptability in leadership style, as different crises may require varying approaches. Leaders who are adaptable can adjust their communication and management strategies to fit the evolving demands of the situation, making it possible to maintain continuity in operations while addressing the immediate crisis ([D'Auria & Smet, 2020](#)). By fostering a proactive crisis response culture and promoting leaders skilled in adaptive communication, organizations can bolster their capacity to manage crises effectively, ensuring both short-term recovery and long-term stability.

In conclusion, effective leadership and clear communication are the cornerstones of successful crisis management. By integrating transparency, strategic planning, and cultural alignment into their crisis response, leaders can guide their organizations through difficult times with a sense of purpose and resilience. Selecting leaders who understand and apply these principles allows organizations to not only weather the crisis but emerge stronger and more prepared for future challenges.

### **Professional Training**

In today's dynamic and complex organizational environment, professional training and development play a critical role in fostering organizational flexibility and innovation ([Husain et al., 2024](#)). Effective training programs enable employees to acquire not only essential knowledge and skills but also the professional virtues needed to address future challenges. As organizations strive to remain competitive and responsive to rapid changes, professional training becomes a pivotal strategy for building resilience and adaptability among the workforce. [Ahsan \(2024\)](#) highlights the importance of adaptive learning environments in cultivating an innovative and resilient workforce. Adaptive learning, which emphasizes tailoring educational content to the specific needs of employees, ensures that employees are equipped to handle evolving market demands and can contribute to organizational growth.

A notable example of a company leveraging professional training is Coca-Cola, which has demonstrated a sustained commitment to human capital development. Coca-Cola invests in continuous training programs aimed at empowering employees with advanced skills and updated knowledge, ultimately strengthening the company's ability to respond to market forces and industry trends. This investment not only enhances employees' individual competencies but also aligns with Coca-Cola's broader goal of fostering a highly adaptive and innovative organizational culture. By providing opportunities for skill enhancement, Coca-Cola helps ensure that its workforce remains capable of driving strategic initiatives, which in turn bolsters the company's market competitiveness and innovative capacity.



Moreover, Coca-Cola's approach to training reflects a proactive stance on human capital development, aiming to build a workforce that can seamlessly adapt to technological advancements and shifting consumer preferences. This commitment to training also underscores the company's understanding that employee development is integral to organizational success. Through professional training, employees feel valued and motivated, fostering a culture of continuous learning and growth (Mustafa & Lleshi, 2024). This culture contributes to employee retention, as employees are more likely to remain with an organization that invests in their professional development. This ongoing investment not only benefits the employees but also has far-reaching impacts on the company's operational efficiency and market responsiveness.

In conclusion, professional training is an invaluable tool for organizations seeking to maintain a competitive edge in fast-evolving markets. By fostering an adaptive learning environment and prioritizing employee skill development, companies like Coca-Cola illustrate how strategic training initiatives can enhance organizational resilience, innovation, and competitiveness. This holistic approach to professional development helps companies meet emerging challenges while ensuring that employees are prepared to contribute effectively to organizational goals, thus supporting long-term success.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This paper aims to assess the ways that Coca-Cola had to meet some of the issues that arose following COVID-19, specifically with regard to the themes of training interventions, new developments, and changes in communication. It assesses the effects it subsequently has on the well-being of employees and examines the success of such measures in its efforts to remain competitive.

### **Research Design**

The research employed a quantitative approach to assess the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Coca-Cola's operations and market presence, as well as qualitative methods using Google Forms surveys to capture the company's adaptive strategies. Primary data were gathered through Google Forms surveys and focus groups with Coca-Cola employees. The study also utilized existing literature, reports, and company documents related to Coca-Cola's post-pandemic adaptations and strategic responses as secondary data.

### **Sampling Method**

The sampling method in this research specifically targeted Coca-Cola employees in Malaysia. Purposive sampling, a common approach within non-probability sampling, was applied to select respondents who would provide valuable insights relevant to the study. This approach focused on identifying specific areas of Coca-Cola's operations—such as supply chain management, marketing strategies, and workforce dynamics—where structured training interventions could enhance the company's resilience and foster innovation amid pandemic challenges. The sample was thus restricted to Coca-Cola employees, who were directly involved in these initiatives, with surveys administered to gather targeted insights from this group. By concentrating solely on employees within the organization, this method aimed to minimize external influences and enhance the internal validity of the study, ensuring a focused exploration of the group under analysis.

### **Measures**

The Google Form questionnaires were structured into seven sections: demographics, the impact of COVID-19 on Coca-Cola, professional training adaptations, leadership and communication, challenges and opportunities, and future outlook.

In the demographics section, the respondents' age, gender, annual income, and level of education were gathered.

For the independent variables, a combination of single-statement items and a 5-item Likert scale was used across sections focusing on the impact of COVID-19 on Coca-Cola, adaptations in professional training, leadership and communication practices, challenges and opportunities encountered, and the company's future outlook.

The 5-item scale assessed several aspects: the extent to which the COVID-19 pandemic affected Coca-Cola's operations, the effectiveness of current training programs in preparing for supply chain disruptions, the adaptability of training programs to new marketing strategies addressing post-pandemic consumer behavior, and how these programs have helped employees understand and adapt to changing consumer behaviors during the pandemic.

Single-statement items were employed to identify specific areas where COVID-19 had the most negative impact, its effects on daily work routines, the progress of professional training adjustments to support Coca-Cola's innovation and commercial strategies in response to evolving consumer behaviors and market demands post-pandemic, the effectiveness of a 'well-being-first' approach in supporting employee wellness, and the pandemic's broader effects on Coca-Cola's training and development initiatives. Additionally, these items explored the main challenges Coca-Cola encountered and the opportunities that emerged during the pandemic.

## RESULTS

The struggles and the survival of Coca-Cola after the COVID-19 pandemic were surveyed online using Google Forms to find out the level of struggle among employees of Coca-Cola's company.

**Table 1.** Summary of Respondent's Demography (N = 50)

Demographic Variable		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age	20 - 30	8	16
	31 - 40	12	24
	41 - 50	24	48
	51 - 60	4	8
	Above 61	2	4
Gender	Male	34	68
	Female	16	32
Level of Education	Secondary school	2	4
	Pre-university	4	8
	Bachelor's degree	33	66
	Master's degree	7	14
	PhD	4	8
Annual Income	Below 15,000	6	12
	15,001 - 30,000	18	36
	30,001 - 45,000	11	22
	Above 45 001	15	30

Table 1 provides a demographic breakdown of the study's respondents, detailing their age, gender, education level, and annual income. In terms of age distribution, the largest group falls within the 41-50 age range, representing 48% of the sample. This is followed by respondents aged 31-40, who make up 24% of the sample, while those aged 20-30

account for 16%. Smaller groups include those aged 51-60 at 8% and those above 61 at 4%.

The gender distribution shows a higher proportion of male respondents, comprising 68% of the sample, compared to 32% of female respondents. Regarding educational background, a majority of the respondents hold a bachelor's degree, representing 66% of the total. Those with a master's degree constitute 14%, while PhD holders and respondents with a pre-university level of education make up 8% each. A small portion, 4%, have completed secondary school as their highest level of education.

In terms of annual income, the largest group of respondents falls within the income range of 15,001-30,000, making up 36% of the sample. This is followed by 30% of respondents earning above 45,001 and 22% within the 30,001-45,000 range. A smaller percentage, 12%, reported earning below 15,000.

**Table 2.** Impact of COVID-19 on Coca-Cola's Operations

Questions and Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
On a scale from 1 to 5, how has the COVID-19 pandemic affected Coca-Cola's operations?		
1	2	4
2	2	4
3	5	10
4	11	22
5	30	60
Which of the following areas did COVID-19 negatively impact the most? (Select all that apply)		
Restaurant and bar sales	15	30
Retail sales	18	36
Supply chain and distribution	31	62
Marketing and advertising	25	50
Employee morale and well-being	20	40
How has COVID-19 affected your work routine at Coca-Cola?		
Increased workload	26	52
Decreased workload	21	42
No change	3	6

Table 2 illustrates the impact of COVID-19 on Coca-Cola's operations and employee work routines. In terms of operational disruption, respondents were asked to rate the pandemic's effect on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 representing minimal impact and 5 representing a substantial impact. A majority, 60%, rated the impact as a 5, indicating that the pandemic had a significant effect on Coca-Cola's operations. A smaller group, 22%, rated the impact as 4, while 10% gave it a 3. Only 4% each rated the impact as either a 1 or a 2, suggesting that for most, the pandemic led to considerable operational challenges.

The table further identifies specific areas within Coca-Cola's operations that were most negatively affected. The highest impact was felt in supply chain and distribution, with 62% of respondents indicating this area faced the most disruption. Employee morale and well-being also experienced substantial challenges, as noted by 40% of respondents, showing that the pandemic not only affected Coca-Cola's logistical aspects but also took a toll on its workforce. Retail sales were negatively impacted according to 36% of respondents, while restaurant and bar sales followed closely, cited by 30%. Marketing and advertising, though less affected compared to other areas, were still reported as an



issue by 25% of respondents, illustrating that the pandemic affected nearly every facet of Coca-Cola's operations.

In terms of employee work routines, COVID-19 led to an increase in workload for more than half of the respondents (52%), while 42% reported a decrease in workload. A small percentage, 6%, experienced no change in their workload. This variance likely reflects different roles within the company, where some areas required increased efforts to address pandemic-related challenges, while others may have seen reduced demands. Overall, the data highlights how the COVID-19 pandemic brought about significant operational difficulties and had varied effects on employee workload, underscoring the extensive impact on Coca-Cola's business and workforce.

**Table 3.** Analysis of Professional Training Adaptations

Questions and Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
On a scale from 1 to 5, how effective do you feel the current training programs are in preparing you for supply chain disruptions?		
1	2	4
2	1	2
3	5	10
4	10	20
5	32	64
On a scale from 1 to 5, how well do you believe the current training programs have equipped you to adapt marketing strategies to the new consumer behavior post-pandemic?		
1	2	4
2	6	12
3	6	12
4	9	18
5	27	54
Do you feel the current training programs have provided you with the necessary skills to adapt to the evolving market landscape?		
Yes	46	92
No	4	8
On a scale from 1 to 5, how well do you believe the training programs have helped you understand and adapt to changing consumer behaviors during the pandemic?		
1	2	4
2	3	6
3	5	10
4	12	24
5	28	56
How should professional training changes progress to aid Coca-Cola's innovation and commercial plans in light of shifting consumer behaviors and market demands after COVID-19?		
Focus on digital skills and e-commerce strategies	11	22
Enhance understanding of consumer needs and preferences	9	18
Develop skills in sustainability and environmental impact	20	40
Increase training in product development and innovation	10	20
How could the company better adapt professional training to meet your needs?		
More frequent training sessions	24	48
More variety in training topics	36	72

More opportunities for practical application	22	44
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Table 3 provides an analysis of how Coca-Cola's professional training programs have adapted to meet new challenges, particularly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. When employees were asked about the effectiveness of current training programs in preparing them for supply chain disruptions, a significant majority, 64%, rated the effectiveness at a 5 on a scale of 1 to 5. This suggests that the training programs have been largely successful in equipping employees to handle supply chain challenges. Fewer respondents rated the effectiveness lower, with 10% choosing a rating of 4, 12% rating it a 3, and small minorities of 4% each giving it a 1 or 2.

In terms of adapting marketing strategies to align with the post-pandemic shift in consumer behavior, the training programs also received high ratings. Over half of the respondents (54%) rated the effectiveness at a 5, while 18% rated it a 4, showing strong confidence in the training's support for evolving marketing needs. Meanwhile, 12% rated it a 3, and a small percentage, 4% each, rated it as 1 or 2. Additionally, an overwhelming 92% of respondents agreed that the training programs have provided them with the necessary skills to adapt to the evolving market landscape, reflecting general satisfaction with the training's relevance and applicability in a changing environment.

Respondents were also asked about how well the training programs helped them understand and adapt to changing consumer behaviors specifically during the pandemic. Here, 56% rated this support at a 5, indicating that the programs were quite effective in this regard. Following this, 24% rated it a 4, and smaller groups rated it lower, with 10% rating it a 3, 6% a 2, and 4% a 1. These ratings suggest that the training programs have been relatively successful in addressing the new consumer dynamics brought about by the pandemic.

The table also addresses suggestions for how Coca-Cola's professional training could evolve to support innovation and meet market demands in a post-COVID-19 world. Among respondents, 22% suggested that the training should focus more on digital skills and e-commerce strategies, reflecting the growing importance of online business. Another 18% called for an enhanced understanding of consumer needs and preferences, while 20% indicated a need for skills development in sustainability and environmental impact, showing an interest in aligning training with broader social and environmental goals. Additionally, 20% of respondents believed that more training in product development and innovation would be beneficial, pointing to a desire for skills that support Coca-Cola's ability to adapt and innovate.

Finally, respondents offered input on how the company could better meet their professional training needs. Almost three-quarters (72%) wanted more variety in training topics, indicating a desire for broader, more diverse skill-building opportunities. Practical application was also a priority, with 44% of respondents requesting more opportunities for hands-on experience. Moreover, 48% expressed a need for more frequent training sessions, suggesting that increased engagement could help employees stay better prepared for ongoing challenges. Overall, the data shows that while Coca-Cola's training programs are seen as effective, there is also a strong interest in continued enhancements, particularly in digital, environmental, and practical skill areas.

**Table 4.** Analysis of Leadership and Communication

Questions and Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
How has the approachable leadership style impacted communication within Coca-Cola?		
Significantly improved	27	54

Improved	16	32
No change	5	10
Deteriorated	2	4
How effective has the 'well-being-first' approach been in supporting employee well-being?		
Very effective	24	48
Effective	18	36
Neutral	6	12
Not effective	2	4
How has the pandemic affected the training and development programs at Coca-Cola?		
Increased the effectiveness of online training	33	66
Decrease the effectiveness of in-person training	14	28
No significant impact	3	6

Table 4 provides insights into Coca-Cola's leadership and communication approaches, particularly focusing on how the company's leadership style and employee support strategies have influenced internal dynamics during the COVID-19 pandemic. The first question assesses how Coca-Cola's approachable leadership style has impacted communication within the company. Over half of the respondents (54%) indicated that this style has "significantly improved" communication, while another 32% reported that it has "improved" communication. A smaller percentage, 10%, observed no change, and only 4% felt that communication had deteriorated. These responses suggest that the approachable leadership style has had a generally positive effect on internal communication, likely fostering a more open and collaborative work environment.

The table also examines the effectiveness of Coca-Cola's "well-being-first" approach in supporting employee well-being. Nearly half of the respondents (48%) rated the approach as "very effective," and 36% rated it as "effective." This indicates that the majority of employees feel the company's focus on well-being has been beneficial. Meanwhile, 12% held a neutral view, and only a small percentage, 4%, found it "not effective." Overall, these responses highlight the success of Coca-Cola's emphasis on employee well-being, suggesting that the "well-being-first" strategy has been a meaningful component of the company's pandemic response.

Finally, the table addresses how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted Coca-Cola's training and development programs. The pandemic appears to have increased the effectiveness of online training, with 66% of respondents indicating that online training has become more effective. However, in-person training has suffered, as 28% of respondents noted a decrease in its effectiveness, possibly due to restrictions on physical gatherings and health concerns. A small minority, 6%, reported no significant impact on training and development programs. This shift reflects the broader organizational adaptation to remote learning and highlights the challenges faced in maintaining the quality of in-person training under pandemic conditions. Overall, the table suggests that Coca-Cola has largely succeeded in adapting its leadership, employee support, and training strategies to the challenges posed by COVID-19, though in-person training remains an area of concern.

**Table 5.** Challenges and Opportunities

Questions and Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
What are the main challenges Coca-Cola faced during the pandemic?		
Supply chain disruptions	19	38
Market demand changes	22	44
Employee well-being	9	18
What opportunities did Coca-Cola identify during the pandemic?		

Innovation in marketing	36	72
Enhanced customer engagement	27	54
New product development	15	30
What training programs do you think Coca-Cola should implement to bolster resilience and foster innovation?		
Digital marketing training	23	46
Supply chain management training	21	42
Employee wellness and mental health training	6	12

Table 5 presents an analysis of the challenges and opportunities that Coca-Cola encountered during the pandemic, along with potential training programs recommended to help the company build resilience and foster innovation. The table is divided into three sections: challenges, opportunities, and training recommendations, with each section displaying responses, frequencies, and percentages.

In the first section, the main challenges Coca-Cola faced during the pandemic are outlined. The most significant issue, according to the data, was market demand changes, which affected 44% of respondents. This was followed by supply chain disruptions, cited by 38% of participants, indicating the impact of logistical issues on Coca-Cola's operations. Employee well-being was also identified as a challenge, though by a smaller proportion of respondents (18%), highlighting concerns for workforce morale and health during the crisis.

The second section describes the opportunities Coca-Cola identified amidst these challenges. Innovation in marketing emerged as the most frequently noted opportunity, with 72% of respondents seeing it as a key area of focus. Enhanced customer engagement was identified by 54% of participants, suggesting that Coca-Cola saw value in strengthening connections with its customers despite the difficult environment. Additionally, new product development was seen as an opportunity by 30% of respondents, hinting at Coca-Cola's potential interest in diversifying or adapting its product offerings to better meet changing consumer needs.

The final section presents responses to the question of which training programs Coca-Cola should implement to strengthen resilience and promote innovation. Digital marketing training was the most frequently recommended program, chosen by 46% of respondents, aligning with the identified opportunity in marketing innovation. This suggests a perceived need for Coca-Cola to enhance its digital capabilities to adapt to shifts in consumer behavior. Supply chain management training was also recommended by 42% of respondents, likely reflecting the importance of addressing disruptions in the supply chain to maintain business continuity. Lastly, employee wellness and mental health training was suggested by 12% of participants, indicating a recognition of the importance of supporting employee well-being as part of the company's resilience strategy.

**Table 6.** Future Outlook

Questions and Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
How do you believe professional training will influence Coca-Cola's future operations and market presence?		
Positively	36	72
Neutral	11	22
Negatively	3	6
How can Coca-Cola better support employee adaptation and resilience in the face of future challenges?		

Providing training programs on digital literacy and remote work skills	27	54
Offering professional development opportunities in areas like sustainability and ethical leadership	30	60
Implementing wellness programs to support mental health and work-life balance	16	32
Encouraging a culture of continuous learning and innovation	9	18

Table 6 examines perspectives on Coca-Cola's future outlook regarding professional training and employee support in facing future challenges. The table is structured around two main questions: the impact of professional training on Coca-Cola's future operations and market presence, and methods for enhancing employee adaptation and resilience.

The first question addresses respondents' beliefs about how professional training will influence Coca-Cola's future operations and market presence. A significant majority, representing 72% of respondents, felt that professional training would positively impact Coca-Cola's future, suggesting optimism about the role of training in enhancing the company's competitiveness and operational success. A smaller group, comprising 22% of respondents, held a neutral view, implying a perception that training might have a limited effect or that its influence is uncertain. Only 6% believed that professional training would have a negative effect, indicating minimal skepticism toward the potential benefits of training programs.

The second question explores ways in which Coca-Cola can better support its employees in adapting to and overcoming future challenges. The most frequently suggested method, recommended by 60% of respondents, is offering professional development opportunities, specifically in areas like sustainability and ethical leadership. This response reflects an awareness of the growing importance of sustainability and ethics in modern business practices, suggesting that Coca-Cola could strengthen its workforce by aligning employee development with these values. Another recommendation, endorsed by 54% of respondents, is to provide training on digital literacy and remote work skills, highlighting the importance of technological adaptability and remote capabilities as critical competencies for future success. Additionally, 32% of respondents recommended implementing wellness programs to support employees' mental health and work-life balance, emphasizing the need to address employee well-being as part of the company's resilience strategy. Lastly, 18% suggested that Coca-Cola should encourage a culture of continuous learning and innovation, indicating a belief that fostering a proactive, learning-oriented environment could better equip employees to handle future changes.

In summary, the table reflects an optimistic view of the impact of professional training on Coca-Cola's future operations, with most respondents expecting a positive effect. The table also outlines multiple approaches for Coca-Cola to enhance employee resilience, including professional development in sustainability and ethics, digital literacy and remote work training, wellness programs, and a culture of continuous learning. These strategies collectively aim to equip employees with the skills and support needed to navigate evolving business challenges.

## DISCUSSION

### Navigating Supply Chain Disruptions

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted Coca-Cola's operations, with supply chain and distribution being the hardest hit areas. As indicated in Table 2, 62% of



respondents identified supply chain and distribution as the areas most affected by the pandemic. This aligns with broader trends observed across industries, where global supply systems face unprecedented strain. Coca-Cola's response included quickly adjusting its risk management procedures and enhancing supply chain transparency to better manage these disruptions. This approach echoes the recommendations of [Carvalho et al. \(2011\)](#), who emphasize the importance of flexible and robust supply chains capable of withstanding unexpected disruptions.

One of the key strategies Coca-Cola implemented was a digital transformation of its supply chain operations. Through this adaptation, the company improved its tracking and management capabilities, which allowed for more accurate forecasting of supply chain bottlenecks and a more agile response to emerging challenges. This digital shift not only enhanced operational efficiency but also positioned Coca-Cola to manage disruptions more proactively. Such adaptability underscores Coca-Cola's commitment to resilience, demonstrating that swift adjustments in strategy can play a crucial role in maintaining stability and continuity in the face of unforeseen challenges.

### **Workplace Well-Being and Flexibility**

Employee well-being emerged as a critical factor for Coca-Cola during the pandemic, as the company's "well-being-first" approach aimed to support morale and productivity in a challenging time. [Table 4](#) reflects the effectiveness of this strategy, with 48% of respondents rating it as "very effective" and 36% as "effective" in supporting employee well-being. This suggests that Coca-Cola's emphasis on mental and emotional health care resonated well with employees, aligning with the findings of [Bakker and Oerlemans \(2011\)](#), who argue that organizational support for subjective well-being positively influences employee performance. By prioritizing health and providing flexible work arrangements, Coca-Cola was able to sustain high levels of engagement, which likely contributed to maintaining productivity despite the disruptions caused by COVID-19.

Coca-Cola's commitment to employee support extended beyond well-being to include a strong focus on professional development. As shown in [Table 3](#), employees generally viewed the training programs as effective, with 92% stating that they provided the necessary skills to adapt to the evolving market. However, there were still calls for improvements, particularly in areas like digital skills, e-commerce, and sustainability, which are crucial for navigating post-pandemic challenges. This feedback suggests that while current programs are effective, there is room to expand offerings to foster creativity, business acumen, and innovation. By continuously developing its workforce, Coca-Cola is building a team that can effectively tackle future market demands and drive the company forward.

### **Leadership and Communication**

Coca-Cola's approach to communication and leadership during the pandemic played a pivotal role in managing the crisis effectively. [Table 4](#) illustrates the positive impact of Coca-Cola's shift to a more approachable leadership style, with 54% of respondents reporting that it "significantly improved" communication within the company, and an additional 32% noting that it "improved" communication. This shift likely contributed to a sense of stability and reassurance among employees, aligning with the crisis leadership framework proposed by [Bowers et al. \(2017\)](#), which emphasizes the importance of transparency and empathy during uncertain times. By fostering open and supportive communication, Coca-Cola was able to alleviate some of the stress and anxiety brought on by the pandemic, thereby maintaining a more resilient workforce.

Coca-Cola's leadership also prioritized strategic planning and cultural sensitivity to ensure that all levels of the organization remained aligned with the company's objectives

and values. This focus helped the business operate smoothly amidst the disruptions, enabling it to adapt to evolving challenges. Effective and clear communication from leaders is crucial in times of crisis, as it sustains organizational stability and keeps employees focused on shared goals. The pandemic not only tested Coca-Cola's crisis management capabilities but also presented the company with opportunities for growth and improvement.

One of the key areas of opportunity was digital transformation, which Coca-Cola accelerated across its operations. This shift not only enhanced operational efficiency but also created new avenues for customer engagement and market interaction, helping Coca-Cola strengthen its presence in a rapidly changing environment. Furthermore, the company's emphasis on sustainability and risk management in its supply chain has positioned Coca-Cola as a more resilient and forward-looking organization. By addressing supply chain disruptions through digital innovation and robust risk management strategies, Coca-Cola demonstrated its adaptability and commitment to sustainable growth.

The pandemic also underscored the importance of professional training programs, which Coca-Cola adapted to focus on innovation, marketing strategy, and emerging digital skills. According to [Table 3](#), 56% of respondents rated the training programs highly effective in helping them understand and adapt to shifting consumer behaviors. These enhancements in training have equipped Coca-Cola's workforce to meet post-pandemic market demands with greater agility, reinforcing the company's competitive edge in a challenging landscape. The focus on continuous professional development highlights Coca-Cola's proactive approach to employee growth, ensuring that its team is well-prepared to navigate future challenges.

In summary, Coca-Cola's calculated responses to the COVID-19 pandemic emphasize the value of adaptability, resilience, and strong leadership. The company's ability to address supply chain challenges, prioritize employee well-being, and adapt its leadership style was essential in overcoming the pandemic's obstacles. These experiences offer valuable lessons for other organizations facing similar disruptions. Future research could explore the long-term impact of these strategies on employee satisfaction and organizational performance, as well as examine how digital transformation contributes to supply chain resilience in a post-pandemic world.

### **Challenges and Opportunities**

The challenges, opportunities, and suggestions for Coca-Cola in the post-COVID-19 era highlight the shifting landscape and priorities of the business as it recovers and adapts. Based on the results from [Table 5](#), Coca-Cola faced several significant challenges during the pandemic, including supply chain disruptions, changes in market demand, and concerns over employee well-being. Supply chain disruptions affected the company's ability to maintain a steady flow of products, which likely impacted sales and profitability. The shifts in market demand required Coca-Cola to adapt to changing consumer behaviors and preferences, which could have been influenced by economic uncertainty and health concerns. Additionally, employee well-being became a critical challenge as the pandemic placed increased stress on the workforce, necessitating greater attention to mental health and work-life balance.

Despite these challenges, Coca-Cola also identified various opportunities that could enhance its resilience and future growth. Innovation in marketing emerged as a key opportunity, reflecting the need to engage customers in new ways and maintain brand relevance in a rapidly changing market. Enhancing customer engagement was another important area, suggesting that Coca-Cola sees value in building stronger, more

personalized connections with its consumers. The pandemic also prompted Coca-Cola to explore new product development, likely as a means of diversifying its portfolio and meeting emerging consumer demands. These opportunities highlight Coca-Cola's proactive approach to turning challenges into growth possibilities, positioning the company to better withstand future disruptions.

To bolster resilience and foster innovation, Coca-Cola can implement targeted training programs, as suggested in [Table 5](#). Digital marketing training was one of the top recommendations, aligning with the opportunity to innovate in marketing and connect with customers through digital channels. Training in supply chain management was also emphasized, reflecting the need for greater agility and preparedness in navigating future supply chain disruptions. Additionally, employee wellness and mental health training was recommended, underscoring the importance of supporting employees' well-being as a foundational element of a resilient workforce.

Looking forward, as indicated in [Table 6](#), there is strong support for the belief that professional training will have a positive impact on Coca-Cola's future operations and market presence. Investing in training for digital literacy, remote work skills, and areas like sustainability and ethical leadership can help Coca-Cola prepare its workforce for the demands of a post-pandemic world. Wellness programs that support mental health and work-life balance, along with a culture of continuous learning, will further strengthen employees' ability to adapt to challenges and thrive. Together, these strategies form a holistic approach to recovery and growth, equipping Coca-Cola to not only address immediate challenges but also capitalize on emerging opportunities. Through these efforts, Coca-Cola can enhance its resilience, foster innovation, and support a healthier, more adaptable workforce for the future.

## **CONCLUSION**

The objective of this study is to identify specific areas within Coca-Cola's operations—such as supply chain management, marketing strategies, and employee adaptation—where targeted training programs can strengthen resilience and encourage innovation in response to the evolving market landscape shaped by the COVID-19 pandemic. By analyzing the impact of the pandemic on Coca-Cola's operations, this research seeks to understand how well the company's existing training programs support employees in navigating the challenges presented by rapid changes in consumer behavior, supply chain disruptions, and the need for increased attention to employee well-being.

The study's findings underscore several critical areas where Coca-Cola encountered both challenges and opportunities. [Table 2](#) highlights the pandemic's significant impact on Coca-Cola's supply chain and distribution, a common challenge faced by global companies during COVID-19. Additionally, employee morale and well-being emerged as areas heavily impacted by the crisis, emphasizing the need for organizational support in maintaining a healthy, productive workforce. In response to these challenges, Coca-Cola introduced a "well-being-first" approach, as illustrated in [Table 4](#), which proved effective in supporting employees' mental and emotional health. This approach, coupled with a shift to a more approachable leadership style, helped enhance communication and fostered a sense of stability within the workforce during uncertain times.

The study further reveals that Coca-Cola's adaptation efforts went beyond crisis management to proactively explore opportunities for growth and transformation. [Table 3](#) highlights that Coca-Cola's professional training programs, though effective, could benefit from further development in areas like digital marketing, supply chain agility, and sustainability. These areas align with the post-pandemic opportunities identified in [Table](#)

5, which include innovation in marketing and new product development. By enhancing training to focus on these aspects, Coca-Cola positions itself to respond effectively to changing market demands and to strengthen its connections with consumers in a more digitalized, competitive landscape.

The implications of these findings suggest that Coca-Cola's resilience and future success depend on a balanced approach to operational stability and employee support. Investing in targeted training programs can prepare employees to manage disruptions and adapt to shifting consumer preferences. As indicated in Table 6, there is strong support for the notion that professional training in digital literacy, remote work capabilities, and sustainability can enhance Coca-Cola's ability to thrive in the post-pandemic era. Emphasizing employee wellness and mental health, alongside continuous learning, will help Coca-Cola foster a resilient workforce capable of navigating future challenges.

To maximize these benefits, Coca-Cola should consider implementing more comprehensive training programs in digital marketing and supply chain management, as well as wellness initiatives that support work-life balance and mental health. By prioritizing these areas, Coca-Cola can build a workforce that is both adaptable and innovative, better equipped to meet future demands. Additionally, focusing on ethical leadership and sustainability in training programs can help Coca-Cola align its operations with evolving consumer expectations for socially responsible and environmentally friendly practices. These recommendations support a holistic approach to recovery and growth, allowing Coca-Cola to convert challenges into opportunities and emerge stronger in a rapidly changing market. Through these strategies, Coca-Cola is not only enhancing its resilience but also creating a healthier, more agile organization poised to succeed in the future.

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#### **DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS**

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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