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Содержание

THE ROLE OF CORPORATE CULTURE AND ITS CRISIS AFTER COVID-19 IN HEALTHCARE ORGANIZATIONS

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Аннотация. Корпоративтік мәдениет құрылымы COVID-19 кезінде айтарлықтай өзгерістер мен дағдарысқа ұшырады. Кез келген ұйымның немесе корпорацияның негізі ретінде басқару жұмысы мен мәдениеті үздіксіз инновация және жаңартуды талап етеді. Бұл мақала денсаулық сақтаудағы корпоративтік мәдениеттің маңыздылығын талдайды және оның жоғары өнімділік пен қауіпсіз жұмыс ортасын қалай қамтамасыз ететінін көрсетуге тырысады. Мақаланың мақсаты — COVID-19-дан кейінгі корпоративтік мәдениет дағдарысын және оның кәсіпорынның тиімділігін арттыру үшін өсіп келе жатқан маңыздылығын зерттеу. Жүргізілген сауалнама мен зерттеулерде пайдаланылған материалдардың арқасында мақалада корпоративтік мәдениеттің негізгі детерминанттары мен маңызды сәттері анықталады. Бұл саладағы корпоративтік мәдениет дағдарысы мен детерминанттарын, осы дағдарысты жеңу жолдарын тұжырымдау керек.

Түйін сөздер: корпоративтік мәдениет, COVID-19, денсаулық сақтау жүйесі, корпоративтік мәдениет элементтері.

Аннотация. Структура корпоративной культуры претерпела значительные изменения и кризис во время COVID-19. В качестве основы любой организации или корпорации управленческая работа и культура нуждаются в постоянной инновации и обновлении. В этой статье анализируется роль корпоративной культуры в здравоохранении и делается попытка указать, каким образом она обеспечивает высокую производительность и безопасную рабочую среду. Цель статьи - исследовать сложившийся кризис корпоративной культуры после COVID-19 и его растущее значение для повышения эффективности функционирования предприятия. Благодаря проведенному интервью и материалам, использованным в исследованиях, в работе выявлены важные моменты в определении основных детерминант корпоративной культуры. Исследованы новые детерминанты этого кризиса и пути его преодоления.

Ключевые слова: корпоративная культура, COVID-19, система здравоохранения, элементы корпоративной культуры.

Annotation. The structure of corporate culture went through significant change and crisis during COVID-19. As the base of any organization or corporate, managerial work and culture need constant innovation and update. This article analyses the significance of corporate culture in

healthcare and tries to point out how it reaches high productivity and a safe working environment. The paper aims to investigate the current crisis of corporate culture after COVID-19 and its growing importance for improving the efficiency of the enterprise. Through conducted interviews and materials used in the research, the work will find out the important points in defining the basic determinants of the corporate culture. New determinants of the crisis and the ways of overcoming them are to be analyzed.

Keywords: corporate culture, COVID-19, healthcare system, elements of corporate culture.

Introduction

COVID-19 (or the world pandemic) has reshaped the world and the overall structure of industries. One of them is healthcare and medicine which were the objects of the direct impact of the virus. Healthcare courageously battled to save not only millions of lives but the systematic functioning of the medical work and its employees. The flow of enormous work that medical employees had to do was dealt with through clever distribution of salary, financial bonuses, and an effective corporate culture. The latter was a key force in increasing productivity and managing hard tasks. According to Gorlova and Reshetnikova, corporate culture faced its heyday during COVID-19 [1]. Comparing the results of interactions, great communication between employees, and job productivity between 2019 and 2020, there's an almost 88% increase [1]. Despite this, the research that discusses the healthcare corporate culture after the big waves of the pandemic do not mention the certain decrease in the work and functioning of the healthcare corporate culture. Hospitals and medical departments are facing a corporate crisis that needs careful analysis. Post-COVID-19 corporate culture needs more attention and thorough examination. Therefore, the article aims to investigate the impact of crisis consequences on the enterprise culture and its main determinants. The corporate crisis in healthcare is currently a significant topic due to the fast-moving pace of technological investments and online services.

Literature review

The article of Drayton and Kuster "Healthy organizations post Covid-19 need a sense of coherence" emphasizes the fact that corporate culture is a foundation and base for the long-term functioning of the corporation, which leads to a logical chain of corporate culture is the key to the high productivity of any organization [2]. The same idea is found in the work of Ermolaev "The Vector of Managing the Organizational Culture of the Internal Affairs Bodies: Mental States and the "Picture of the World" of Employees in the Dynamics of Social Fears of the COVID-19 Pandemic" [3]. Despite this, Ermolaev emphasizes the division of the outward look on corporate culture "before" and "after" COVID-19. According to him, it is not surprising to estimate how the world pandemic changed the structure of organizations. Therefore, the current corporate cultures in different fields are going through a *crisis*.

Professors of Nursing at Columbia University Donald Boyd and Margaret Meenan in their article "CRNA Engagement During the COVID-19 Crisis: Optimization of Resource Management, Organizational Climate, and Contributions to Care" write about the importance of managerial work and resource management [4]. Even though they point out the influence and

change of the corporate culture, there seems to be not enough credit to highlight its importance in the current time. The authors conclude the corporate culture's crisis after the huge wave of COVID-19 but do not discuss how healthcare corporate culture needs more work and is very crucial in the current time.

According to Alonazi, it is very necessary to build common ground and a learning base of the corporate culture in the medical field [5]. The COVID-19 case proved to be a turning point where organizations could test their work from different areas. The corporate culture that combines multiple layers of medical workers needed structure, a well-connected system, and more attention (even more than the other vectors of corporate or organizational management) [6].

The research of Kudryavtseva has an interview-based analysis of corporate culture [7]. The mentioned author states that the hospitals of the first rank (the ones that used to put huge importance and the maintenance of corporate culture) were able to keep up with their work at the peak of the world pandemic. The third-rank hospital struggled to maintain work due to the lack of attention to the corporate culture before and during COVID-19. The second group of organizations, where employees and top managers had a diverse vision and identified the determinants of corporate culture in different ways, were not able to have an optimized workflow during the pandemic. Six out of eight organizations in the second-rank hospitals were closed. This article argues that the hospitals able to modify their corporate culture "survived" the pandemic.

Kudryavtseva also points out the new determinants of corporate culture: agility collaboration, diversion, completion, honesty, respect, and productivity [7]. The change in corporate culture is evolving and affecting the change of goals of any corporates or business [8]. The idea of opening a corporation, organization, or business is being transformed from "just earning more money" into helping the community [9]. Through the latter, corporate culture is also redefining its worth. Therefore, it is questionable to assume that the determinants of the corporate culture stayed to be the same even after the peak of COVID-19.

During the pandemic, organizations let their employees work remotely. However, this was not the case for healthcare workers [10]. From this, there can be a logical conclusion — healthcare employees did not distance themselves and were able to keep the corporate relationship and culture [11]. Despite this, after the peak of COVID-19 workers were finally "set free" and enjoyed the new ability to work with the stated schedule without overworking [12]. This created a space for post-COVID distancing which is a problem for the functioning of the corporate culture.

Combining the stated above, it can be concluded that corporate culture needs more discussion (especially after the world pandemic that took place in the past 2 years) and is of high importance for corporate life. To assume that the corporate culture is losing its significance is to not admit that it is changing the *vector*, but not losing its status quo.

Methodology

For this research a qualitative research method was applied, the interviews consisted of two sequential parts: first – with semi-structured questions, and second – with structured questions.

Interviewees were asked questions separately to get full and unbiased answers. Through comparative analysis of their answers, valuable results were gained. The interviews lasted from 30 minutes to one hour.

The interviewees were chosen from three medical centers in Aktobe, two of which were public hospitals, and one was private. There were 11 interviewees of different medical backgrounds from Aktobe, Kazakhstan: three nurses (females; at the ages of 29, 35, and 37), three therapists (females; at the ages of 37, 42, and 43), two surgeons (males, at the ages of 45 and 48), a head of the hospital (male, at the age of 44), a cardiologist (female, at the ages of 35) and a neurologist (female, at the age of 48). Based on the requests of the medical workers, their names stay anonymous in the article.

Findings

Firstly, based on the research method of Donald Boyd and Margaret Meenan, interviewees were asked about the frequency of the work-time meeting during the COVID-19. 70% (8 people) of the respondents said that they used to have 4 meetings in a week, other 30% had meetings more than 4 times a week. However, 80% of the interviewees felt the sudden and sharp shift in the team meetings after the peak of the pandemic in 2022.

> *To be honest, it seems as if we didn't have COVID-19 at all, since now we can chat and meet anytime, we want to. Despite this, the team meetings we used to have in the morning 3-4 times a week are not the same now. We have two team meetings twice a week. I also feel the shift in the quality of the meetings. Not only some problems are not solved during one meeting, but we also have them online very frequently. I do not feel a connection with my colleagues and do not feel responsible for my work (female therapist, 42).*

Donald Boyd and Margaret Meenan have also mentioned the decline in the frequency of team meetings. Despite this, they do not define this shift as a problem or as the point which is crucial for the improvement of the atmosphere in a medical team. Based on the interview conducted for this article, medical workers in contrast feel the need to have more offline meetings rather than seeing others only remotely.

Secondly, the interviewees rate their communication with colleagues outside of work very poorly.

> *I honestly feel a gap when I talk with my colleagues after work. I think we didn't see this gap during COVID-19, since everybody was so busy and worried about the situation. However, now when that things are stable, I realized I do not share my personal life with colleagues so much. We do not visit each other's working space that much. For example, my close colleague knew about the wedding of my son only a week after its annunciation (female nurse, 29).*

> *I now only talk with the colleagues I work in the same room with. The other teammates who are on the same floor are the ones with whom I communicate the*

least. I remember when we used to know everyone on our floor. Now I do not even know the names of some workers. I do not care that much (female cardiologist,35).

I feel as if each to their own. Teamwork is a problem now. We need to be able to adapt to the new working environment (surgeon, 45).

Collaboration, respect, and communication can be considered the new determinants of the corporate culture after COVID-19 [13]. Respondents' answers show that there is a low level of personal contact and respect toward each other. This is a crucial problem of the corporate culture. Medical workers in one hospital feel the huge distance.

Thirdly, interviewees shared their ideas on the improvement of the situation and agreed on the existing problem of the corporate culture.

Corporate culture is important anywhere. We work with people, so I think we need to be able to work with our colleagues too. There is a need for more offline communication time. It will contribute to the improvement of teamwork (head of the hospital, 44).

I do not feel support from the managers of our department. I think altruistic behavior and the ability to manage human resources is a must-have. We need more consideration from the side of the managers and head department (female nurse, 35).

I think it is important to network. Combining both online and offline methods of communication is important. Too bad to overuse the online features of work and chat nowadays (neurologist, 48).

I feel a lot of pressure due to the atmosphere in our group. We need to have free frequent sessions with psychologists (female nurse, 29).

Nurmuhametov [14] also states that the altruistic behavior of managers in organizations and the sincere ability to care for each other between colleagues are important for the corporate culture. Networking together with the management of human resources are the new determinants of a successful corporate culture.

Table 1. The responses of interviewees to the structured questions

Questions	Answers		
How many times a week did you have a meeting with colleagues during the peak of COVID-19?	4 times a week (8 respondents)	5 times a week (1 respondent) 3 times a week (1 respondent)	Everyday (1 respondent)
How many times a week did you have meetings in	Once a week (6 respondents)	Only on special and urgent occasions (3	

2022?	Twice a month (2 respondents)	respondents)	
Do you talk with your colleagues outside of the working environment?	Rarely, only about work (7 respondents)	Only with the colleagues with whom they share a working room (4 respondents)	
Do you celebrate national events at work or after work?	Do not celebrate (7 respondents)	Only at work (2 respondents)	Celebrate after work (2 respondents)
Do you think corporate culture is important (Yes/No)	Yes (9 respondents)	There are other important determinants (2 respondents)	
Do you think the work provides enough motivation for you to work hard?	Work because of responsibility; it does not excite due to the lack of connection within the working team (7 respondents)	Work due to pressure: financial situation (2 respondents)	Bonuses make the interviewee work harder (2 respondents)
Do you think you have a distance from your colleagues now than you did in 2020/2021? (You do not talk a lot)	Yes (7 respondents)	No (2 respondents)	In close relationship with their colleagues for 10 years now (2 respondents)
Do you know and talk to all your colleagues that work with you on the same floor?	No (10)	Yes (1)	

The results show that the amount of team meetings decreased by approximately 75% in a duration of 12 months in 2022, considering the middle estimates were meeting 4 times a week during 2021. Compared to 2021, interviewees feel that they distanced themselves from colleagues, 63% of the interviewees only talk about work without having after-work conversations. Interviewees do not have the same level of network time during or after work. Lack of motivation is one of the outcomes of the weak connection between the members of a medical group. 63% of the respondents feel distanced from their colleagues. This is a crucial and significant number of the main determinant of the corporate culture that influences it.

Conclusion and discussion

The analysis of the research and the conducted qualitative method showcase the existing crisis of the healthcare corporate culture after the peak of COVID-19. There is a significant decrease in the determinants of corporate culture in 2022 compared to 2020-2021: the lack of communication, lack of respect towards linear head managers, weak organization and ties between medical personnel, over usage of online socialization are defined as the causes of the crisis. Therefore, one of the main new determinants of corporate culture after the peak of COVID-19 are networking skills (caring for teammates), altruism (what can a worker do to

improve the working environment), and agility (being able to adapt to the new systems of corporate culture).

The crisis of corporate culture needs new vectors of resolution. With the suggestion provided by healthcare employees, there needs to be conducted team meetings and a new way of corporate culture, where linear managers should provide space and time for offline communication: organizing offline meetings and celebrating significant dates with teammates. Moreover, the provision of employees with psychological assistance can also help to improve their networking skills, since COVID-19 created a community that was negatively affected by the lack of a network. The latter can be useful to determine the impact of psychology sessions for further studies on corporate culture's crisis. Although this article has similarities with the literature that was reviewed in terms of the significant factors and determinants of the enterprise, the paper discovers new problems and current crisis of the healthcare corporate culture after COVID-19, that were not present in any other scientific research. Therefore, this article can be used to observe further studies of corporate culture through the lenses of the existing crisis, which surely cannot be denied.

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