



IMPACT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL STABILITY ON MANAGERS' ACTIVITIES

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ABSTRACT

The latest research performed in European countries shows that the psychosocial risks and the job related stress will become more and more important in the years to come due to their increasing spread. These trends will have even greater influence on healthcare managers' activities due to the specific nature of their jobs, which, in turn, increases the needs of efficient leadership. The purpose of the questionnaire held is to study the impact of healthcare managers' psychological stability on the activities they perform in the course of their jobs. The analysis made shows that an individual's performance depends on their motivation, abilities and organizational conditions and skills. What is also found out is that people with different types of behavioral control work in healthcare operative management. People with different types of psychological stability will be needed for the different management levels.

Key words: leader, psychological stability, management, motivation.

INTRODUCTION

The latest research performed in European countries shows that the psychosocial risks and the job related stress will become more and more important in the years to come due to their increasing spread [1]. The reasons for that are related to the increase in the volume and intensity of workflow and the more frequent hazards and emergencies due to human error, natural disasters or any combination of those. [2]. These trends increase the number of challenges that management faces in all spheres of man's activities and call for even deeper research and application of various management methods and approaches. [3, 4]

A crucial issue in management is related to the role played by managers in the workflow as studied in the characteristic features theory. This theory is based on the following fundamental question: "Can one find a group of certain number of characteristics to differentiate between an efficient and an inefficient manager so that the results can be used for the selection and recruitment of managers?". Unlike the characteristic features theory, behavioral approaches are focused not on managers' qualities but on what they actually do in the course of their jobs as managers. The different behavioral management theories develop various models, but each model emphasizes on two major di-

mensions of style: task orientation and staff orientation. [5].

Organizational behavior analyses the concept of a personality's integrity in the organization and dynamics of individual and group behavior. Therefore, organizational behavior models are subject to constant changes, they are dynamic and they comply with the requirements of time and the needs of an organization.[6] Modern management differentiates between "Staff management" and "Human Resource Management". "Staff management" covers only the number of people currently employed by the healthcare facility. HR development covers all former, current and future employees of an organization.

According to a study carried out by Michigan University the HR specialists' skills become increasingly important in a number of public spheres. According to this study HR-managers have to be at the same time active and trustworthy, improve their performance, etc., "HR activities are not related to talent management or to the organization only, but to both at the same time." Another fundamental HR function is supporting managers in recruiting new employees by preparing analyses of the available staff and their efficiency. HR ensures the recruitment of the best employees to occupy responsible positions. [7] The new generation of healthcare managers should be ethical pragmatists. Key components of their characteristics should be impartiality, rationality, conscientiousness, associative and integrated thinking [8].

HR management in healthcare facilities comprises of activities performed by a hospital's management and healthcare managers are responsible for:

- organizing and specifying tasks, assigning the relevant responsibilities and obligations to certain employees that are to take and perform them. Also sharing strategy opinions with the staff trying to get their support and trust;
- managing the day-to-day activities performed in a healthcare institution. Controlling the employees and reporting their output;
- selecting, recruiting, training and assessing the motivation of staff, etc.

An individual's motivation is always related to one's needs, frame of mind and abilities to satisfy those needs. Motivation is a process that affects the choice of behavior, the purpose, goals and attitude to rewards received for certain performance. [9]

Managers' internal and external motivation manifests itself in their managing styles. [10] A number of studies show that, regardless of how professionally designed any managerial strategies and technologies are, their implementation depends mainly on the role played by people. Resistance to change is a common problem in healthcare management. It can take different forms such as lack of cooperation, clearly expressed opposition, etc. [11] Management can be executed in several management styles: liberal, democratic, authoritarian, and democratic liberal [12]. Increased performance is also a result of the increased managers' responsibilities to their jobs and for that purpose their personal behavior should include:

- getting to know the people they work with;
- becoming acquainted with strategies;
- realistic approach;
- setting goals and priorities;
- always thoroughly completing tasks and assignments;
- developing people's skills by encouraging them;
- the ability to place the appropriate people at the appropriate positions;
- creating the conditions and prerequisites for a complete utilization of people's strong points in the course of working, etc.

One of the methods of revealing an individual's abilities is a leader's psychological stability test. HR experts can give advice on how to employ the best employees so that they can achieve a company's goals and how to develop strategies for increasing employees' performance and efficiency. This can be the driving force behind each employee's successful career. [13, 14]

The purpose of this research is to study the impact of healthcare managers' psychological stability on their performance.

METHODS

The psychological stability of medical specialists working at managerial positions in healthcare institutions is studied by means of a questionnaire. The study was conducted in 2016 across healthcare facilities in the towns of Plovdiv and Kurdzhali. The methods used in the research include random selection of 49 medical specialists (39 female, 10 male) occupying managerial positions in the healthcare system. The questionnaire was made of closed questions and the interviewees' answers were summarized according to a two-step scale. The average rating for males was 15.80 %, and for females – 16.70%. According to the accepted interpretation, the higher the rating, the stronger an individual's stability.

To study an individual's psychodynamic characteristics affecting one's organizational skills, the questions asked can be grouped into questions related to activities within and beyond one's scope of work. The hypothesis considered is that certain activities beyond one's scope of work can contribute to understanding one's behavior at the workplace and one's attitude to the working process. So, by taking into consideration activities, habits, etc. within and beyond one's scope of work, some aspects of an indi-

vidual's psychological type can be explored more deeply.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

During the analysis similar questions are treated as sets of questions. This approach aims at better understanding the psychological factors motivating one's behavior.

In a manager's job, organization (good order) and attention to details are very important in view of the numerous financial, documentary and other information flows that have to be monitored and controlled. To explore this important aspect, several questions were asked and their answers together describe the interviewees' psychological types. One of those questions was related to the order of things (space, objects, etc.). This task is satisfying for 75.51% of the managers interviewed being manifested to an equal level in both males and females. Additional information was obtained from the answers to the question related to attitudes towards collecting – an activity that takes patience, perseverance and engagement lasting for long periods of time. Collecting things is an occupation that is greatly satisfying for 71.43% of the interviewees, their answers not being affected by gender (males - 70%; females – 71.8%). One could expect to get similar answers to a question related to handling details, taking into account the fact that collectors pay great attention to the details of their objects of interest. So, in this regard the answers to this question could be defined as surprising. It was found that handling items that have numerous and fine details is described as satisfying for only 42.86% of the interviewees and there is a significant difference between genders. Such an occupation is much more pleasant for males (80%), while in females the percentage is only 33.3%. One could draw the conclusion that the amounts and interest in what is subject to arrangement and handling are probably factors affecting choice and gender also has a significant influence on the interviewees.

Another group of questions can also be differentiated, their answers being aimed at studying an individual's psychological stability in view of the dynamics of managers' routine daily activities related to communicating with different people and solving various issues. Only 24.49% of the respondents describe themselves as "slowly acting", which shows that a significant part of the working managers have the opposite opinion about themselves and there is a great difference in self-judgment expressed by the two genders. The majority of females (82%) define themselves as fast acting, while 50% of males describe themselves as fast and the other 50% - as slow. It has to be noted that the self-assessment of one's performance has not been explored with regard to the quality of performance since this research only covers the psychological aspects of a personality. Only 32.65% of the respondents share the opinion that they do not feel at ease when doing various tasks, while the self-assessment of the majority (65.35%) is that they cope well with various assignments. Regardless of the way they feel, the majority of interviewees (77.55%) do need to exert great efforts when doing several things at the same time. However, this does not apply to conversations. It was found that almost every other interviewee easily divides his or her attention between two conversations held simultaneously

(46.94%), manifested similarly by males (60%) and females (51.3%). The skills required for communicating with new, unfamiliar people are of extreme importance for managers. Each fifth interviewee (79.59%) easily gets used to and fits in a new team and with new people. Similar is the percentage of managers (73.47%) who easily get used to somebody else's pace and way of work, if they need to join efforts in some task. The aforesaid explains the overall approach to life of that psychological type of individuals – they easily get used to new daily routines, occupations, pastimes, etc. (67.35% of the interviewees). This group of questions can be used to draw a conclusion that even individuals that have adaptive minds and love the dynamics in their jobs do need some efforts to cope with their routine activities, which can be explained with the need of attention to details and the organization of the working process explored with the previous group of questions.

Another set of questions reveals a different type of psychological stability manifested in certain routine situations or under conditions that can be interpreted as unfavorable (stress). The psychological conformity of well-established habits is preferred to frequent changes by 73.47% of the interviewees. This is also confirmed by the similar percentage of respondents who answered they that become cautious and indecisive when they have to change their already made plans (67.35%), and this self-assessment is not gender dependent. Almost half of the respondents (57.14%) say that they would be yield in a dispute when they find themselves not understanding it. It could be anticipated that in such situations, when they feel hesitant and uncertain in their jobs, those respondents would like to turn to somebody else's advice and support.

The results from the questionnaire show that there are several psychological types. According to the dynamics of the psychological type, this questionnaire differentiates between adaptive individuals, moderately adaptive ones and people with well-established and firm habits. It could be said that although anyone can be referred to a single prevailing psychological type, in some circumstances, depending on one's temporary psychological stability, one can react in a way that is different from one's usual behavior.

The answers given reveal that individuals of differ-

ent psychological types are described with a different degree of demonstration of initiative, resolution and confidence. Managers of different psychological types in certain situations can confront each other due to the differences in their ideas regarding the quality of life at the workplace, etc. As an example, one can compare flexibility to the well-established routines and the need of security:

- “I easily get used to new working conditions”, expressed by 87.76% of the respondents and compared to “To perform well, I need the environment that I am used to work in” (55.10%).

- “I do not like to correct what I have already done” given by 40.82% and compared to “Often, after I have completed some task, I still keep on thinking about it”, valid for 65.30% of the respondents.

CONCLUSIONS

- Differences are found in the different individuals' attitudes towards taking manager's responsibilities.
- People with different types of behavioral control work in healthcare operative management.
- People with different types of psychological stability are required for the different management levels.
- Personal qualities affect (are reflected in) one's style of working.

It is important to specify and use appropriate motivation factors aimed at increasing the efficiency of medical specialists and especially of managers working at all levels in the healthcare system hierarchy. Possible options are: regular psychological stability test, additional training and various forms of personnel development. A successful healthcare manager can occupy the position of a health service manager.

The research conducted shows that psychological stability has an impact on the managers' jobs and this impact is manifested in their attitudes to changes in their job obligations, opportunities for more responsibility, autonomy, etc. What is needed is the formation of leaders in the field of healthcare. By researching successful healthcare managers' psychological stability we can try to find an approach for assessing such qualities in applicants for managerial positions.

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