

Education and Human Resources in the COVID 19 Pandemic

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Abstract

The Covid-19 outbreak has deeply affected the entire world population, and therefore education. Education includes activities designed for the learner to acquire higher competence, knowledge and experience, based on the difference between the competence level of the student in the current situation and the competencies required to show the expected performance. The Covid-19 pandemic has seriously damaged formal education. Although methods such as online learning (e-learning), simulation and distance learning are frequently used, sufficient efficiency has not been achieved. The pandemic process has revealed the advantages of face-to-face education; significant decreases were observed in the learning level of students. There is a need to develop new methods that will increase the efficiency of distance education. Motivation of trainers is also an important issue. Education away from school has reduced teacher and student motivation. As a result, there is a new reality of education after the pandemic. The education management unit needs to examine the Covid-19 pandemic process very well and closely follow the changes and developments in education life and better design the effectiveness of schools in new pandemics.

Keywords: Covid 19, education, human resources, pandemic.

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INTRODUCTION

Societies that make up human resources are in constant change, like every living organism. This change has profoundly affected the entire world population, and therefore the world economy, in the Covid-19 epidemic. For this reason, the pandemic has created a global problem and has become an important issue that needs to be examined more comprehensively by scientific circles. Human resource development activities have also been one of the topics covered in this context. Management science, whose source is human, has to analyze and evaluate new situations that occur during the pandemic process. Researches to be conducted in this context will enable organizations to be restructured more effectively and to transform into a more effective structure for both the organization and the society in the field of management as well as in every field. Organizations; They are structures that are significantly affected by many economic, technological, political, socio-cultural environmental factors. However, it would not be wrong to say that with an epidemic such as the Covid-19 pandemic, it caught many businesses unprepared and left them helpless about what measures to take (Öge and Çetin, 2020).

The pandemic has brought along a process in which employees, as well as businesses, are heavily affected economically and psychologically. In order for employees and businesses to be less affected by this process, "Human Resources Management" units in businesses have important duties. The human factor, which is primarily affected by the process, is also one of the most valuable components for organizations to achieve their goals (Gürbüz, 2018).

Therefore, it is important that the human resources unit, the most valuable and strategic resource of the enterprises, is affected by the current situation as little as possible, and that the work-family relationship is more critical in changing conditions, which is one of the reasons why new job designs have become mandatory in terms of effective management after the pandemic (Cetin, 2020).

While addressing the transformations that the pandemic will require for human resources, Carnevale & Hatak (2020) emphasized the problems that may arise in person-organization harmony due to the decrease in interpersonal communication and the problems that may arise due to factors such as

segregation of family and work areas, closing of kindergartens, and compulsory remote working. The realization of job designs and definitions that can offer solutions to these problems will deeply affect the motivation of employees and their attitudes towards the organization. Although the reflection of work-family balance in job designs has already become an important trend in recent years, the importance of this issue has increased significantly in today's conditions. Naturally, they will reconsider their human resources structuring with the Covid-19 pandemic. It seems inevitable for businesses to follow some corporate strategies for entering new sectors or downsizing. Therefore, a new norm staff restructuring due to shrinkage, new sectors or new employee needs will arise depending on business opportunities. This situation; When evaluated in terms of the HR unit, for some institutions it will bring problems such as who will be fired due to downsizing, possible syndromes to be experienced by the remaining ones, and for some institutions, such as attracting and retaining talented employees who will support the new strategies of the enterprise depending on growth. In addition, with the effect of industry 4.0, businesses will aim to minimize the need for human resources by making more technological investments. With Covid-19, the rapid development and change in information and communication technologies, completely with robots, which businesses are currently more oriented towards in order not to stop production, brings digitalization in the "recruitment" process, which is one of the most valuable areas of human resources. It can be predicted that the Covid-19 outbreak will accelerate this process even more. In the post-pandemic period, it is expected that the use of digital recruitment tools in recruitment processes will become widespread, and the value of information management in recruitment processes, especially through data mining, will increase (Vnoučková, 2020).

Telephone interviews and video conferencing are among the recruitment methods that many institutions frequently apply in recent years. Businesses; They increasingly prefer digital technologies based recruitment for many reasons such as reducing costs, carrying out intensive recruitment, preventing discrimination in recruitment and saving time. Bartram (2000) stated that online methods will replace traditional methods in recruitment in a short time, and emphasized that this situation brings many issues such as security, privacy, equality of access, and identity control, and that the formation of international standards in this regard is important. Institutions need synergies to be produced by human resources and information processing functions to solve these issues for their own human resources processes.

Training includes activities designed for the employee to acquire higher competence, knowledge and experience, based on the difference between the competence level of the employee in the current

situation and the competencies required to show the expected performance (Gürbüz, 2018). Businesses; In order to gain competitive power and better performance of their employees, they continue their training as a requirement of today's conditions. Although the Covid-19 pandemic has had an effect on disrupting formal education, businesses have not slowed down in the training of their employees by using technological opportunities, on the contrary, they have effectively benefited from the contributions of technology to this process. New technologies; It not only reduced the cost of training given to employees, but also facilitated a faster and more effective meeting of training with employees. Methods such as online learning (e-learning), simulation and distance learning are the methods that are used more and more every day and that many institutions frequently use to support the training provided by other methods (Noe, 2009). Caligiuri *et al.*, (2020) emphasized that with the stress and uncertainty brought by the pandemic, employees will give more importance to their professional development and take the initiative for training opportunities that can improve their current competencies. For many employees, working remotely (from home) allows them to devote more time to their own development in terms of regaining the time they spend on the road between work and home. In addition, increasing uncertainty creates an additional motivation for individuals to develop their own resources and be better equipped in case of unemployment. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the careers of employees will be high, and it will also oblige people to produce new alternatives for the future. According to the report of McKinsey Global Institute (2016), one million jobs are expected to disappear in the USA by 2026 (Avcı, 2019). According to the report prepared by the World Economic Forum (WEF), it is predicted that more than half of the students currently studying in primary school will acquire jobs and professions that have not been named yet (Yurdakul, 2018).

With Covid-19, it is becoming more difficult for many businesses to continue their existence. Even well-established businesses will not be able to continue their existence if they cannot improve themselves against change and global competition and effectively manage crises such as the Covid-19 pandemic. This can eliminate the career expectations of people who have career goals in such businesses (Özden, 2005). It will be inevitable for businesses to both update their organizational structures and develop new business models in order to maintain their existence and gain competitive power after the Covid-19 pandemic. Some new competencies that institutions have not considered before will become necessary (Aşar, 2020). Accordingly, it is possible that the competencies expected from the employees will differ. Cho (2020) suggested that it is necessary to address micro and macro limits in understanding the impact of the pandemic on the career attitudes of employees.

Accordingly, the confusion experienced by employees in their work-family roles (micro-border) and the fact that the borders between countries that stand out for international employees and the fact that being a foreigner in another country has become more difficult with the pandemic (macro border) deeply affect the career behaviors of the employees. It is expected that the concept of remote work will lead to different results and perceptions in different cultural structures. Turkey's cultural structure with high framework, high collectivism and high uncertainty avoidance (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2005) deeply affects how the innovations brought by remote working are perceived and how advantages and disadvantages are shaped. High-frame cultures are cultures in which how it is said becomes important as much as what is said in communication, where the physical expression of emotions, the use of appropriate body language, face-to-face communication and personal distances are determinative on the effectiveness of communication (Nishimura, Nevgi & Tella, 2008). From this point of view, teleconference, virtual meeting etc. It becomes even more difficult for high-frame cultures to replace the communication that employees are accustomed to without face-to-face communication in the same environment. In Turkey, which shows very high characteristics in this dimension, the habits of the pandemic and the structure that forces the current working order may be more effective on the results. Online systems, remote working, the use of advanced technology, redefined responsibilities and ways of doing business can lead to higher stress and negative psychological consequences for individuals who are more attached to their work habits and comfort zone. It is important for leaders to consider the necessity of managing the mandatory changes brought by the pandemic by spreading over time and in harmony with these cultural characteristics.

It is observed that millions of workers in different labor markets around the world have been severely affected by the pandemic through job and income losses as a result of the spread of COVID-19. In the German state, the Home Office came into force during the Covid 19 pandemic process, with the necessity of having a legal basis for the practice of work. Generally, these regulations include provisions regarding the number of Home Office working days per week, occupational safety, data protection, incorporation of costs and liability.

In the Covid 19 pandemic; Although the employees show cooperation, it has become more and more important in practice whether the employer can put the employee to work in the Home Office within the scope of the management right, which was a theoretical question before. The removal of employees returning from risky areas and the inability to employ quarantined employees may cause problems for the employer due to the importance of the position of the employee in

question, although it does not create serious economic consequences due to compensation rights according to the German Law and the Infection Protection Law. For example, if a worker who has been quarantined for returning from a risky place is healthy and able to work, the employer will not have a legitimate interest in refusing his request, as long as it is possible to do the work from home. If continuing to work in the workplace poses a risk to the health of the employees, it may be necessary to switch some employees or all employees in the workplace to Home Office work. In this framework, employees showing signs of illness or returning from risky areas should not be employed in the workplace. It would be appropriate in terms of occupational health and safety to instruct these workers to carry out their work from home or mobile (Bozkurt Gümrükçüoğlu, 2020).

As a result, there is a new reality of business life after the pandemic. By examining the Covid-19 pandemic process very well and following the changes and developments in business life, the human resources unit will be able to maintain its existence and gain competitive advantage.

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