Organizational Dynamics

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Assignment #3 – Essay

1. Write a 5-page essay responding to a significant problem you have identified in an organization you are knowledgeable about. Demonstrate how an understanding of group dynamics can help you solve this problem.

2. Paper Outline

a. Begin with an introductory paragraph that has a succinct thesis statement.

b. Address the topic of the paper with critical thought.

c. End with a conclusion that reaffirms your thesis.

d. Use a minimum of eleven scholarly research sources (two books and the remaining scholarly peer-reviewed journal articles).

Group dynamics is integral to social interaction and cooperative environments, such as the workforce, teams, and organizations. This includes the group dynamics within the healthcare system of clinical staff, support staff, and other healthcare industries. What may be different between healthcare organizations and other organizations is the connection to the patient that the group has. The focus is dualist, where a healthcare group is interested in performing well as a group, but also each individual and the group as a whole has an interest in caring for the patient’s healthcare needs.

Group Dynamics refers to “…a system of behaviors and psychological processes occurring within a social group (intragroup dynamics), or between social groups (intergroup dynamics). The study of group dynamics can be useful in understanding decision-making behavior, tracking the spread of diseases in society, creating effective therapy techniques, and following the emergence and popularity of new ideas and technologies.” (Freud & Strachey, 2024, p. 12). The 19th and 20th-century Sociologist Georg Simmel examined group dynamics based on the number of people within groups “The present studies begin by examining forms of social life, combinations, and interactions among individuals. But they do so in one respect only; the bearing which the mere number of sociated individuals has upon these forms of social life. It will immediately be conceded based on everyday experiences that a group upon reaching a certain size must develop forms and organs which serve its maintenance and promotion, but which a smaller group does not need.” (Simmel/Wolff, 1950, p. 87) Simmel addressed the group dynamic by size where smaller groups such as dyads are more intimate compared to larger groups, in the healthcare setting there are various group dynamics, many within larger groups, but also in smaller groups such as a medical provider and nurse teams. These group settings can and do very much change throughout the day, where healthcare staff may work with providers, office staff, and other healthcare staff throughout the day, thus changing the dynamics of the group interaction on an ongoing basis.

We are socialized into interacting within groups from our earliest ages from our family, peer groups, church groups, sports teams, and school groups, we have learned to be part of small and large groups. We have learned to engage and interact with the different groups in different ways based on the size of the group and the group dynamics. Much of our social interaction and human behavior is formed and takes place in group settings (Weiss & Copelton, 2020), so we have been developed to be an active part of the group dynamics, contributing, and receiving from the social interaction. As we develop through life, we come to know how to engage in the game of group interaction, so when we get into the workforce, we should be able to engrain ourselves into work group dynamics. There is concern that in today’s workforce, the younger generation lacks incorporation of being a passive and active member of the group dynamics. This has impacted the healthcare industry as well. However, due to the nature of the dynamics of healthcare, the employees who cannot be productive members of groups do not last by their own choice or by the organization’s choice. This may be due to the different dynamics of healthcare compared to different organizations, where the changes in the next generation may drastically change the organizations, but in healthcare, it has additional consequences, because the group not only functions unto itself but serves the patient, which is above the concerns and goals of the group.

Healthcare has changed throughout the decades, and thus pressures on healthcare staff from technology and in particular the loss of control of patient care as a provider describes it “Somewhere along the way, health insurance companies decided to practice medicine and control the clinical decision-making process to mitigate their risk somehow.” (Badia, 2020, p. 247) Healthcare providers and staff are in healthcare because they have a sense of calling to help people with their healthcare needs, each member of the group has this desire. However, when barriers are placed in the way of patient care, as in the health insurance companies with their business model of collecting more premiums than they are paying out for insurance. What this does creates a convoluted logic that the healthcare facilities and patients have to work through to get the care and services the patient seeks and needs. This creates a frustrating dynamic for patients, healthcare providers and staff, which impacts the group dynamics when each member of the group seeks to provide the best possible care to the patient but outside barriers such as health insurance companies hinder that care they are trying to provide. Another area of barriers and frustration for healthcare groups is “Healthcare information technology (HIT) is radically transforming the healthcare systems…While there is much promise associated with HIT, the accelerated pace at which it is being adopted can pose a technological burden on care providers, who are reporting elevated levels of stress associated with it.” (Califf et al., 2020, p. 809) Healthcare Information Technology has many great benefits but often is seen as burdensome due to the complexity of electronic health records systems. This also creates problems within the groups, the key thing that would help the individual within the group is for the group to provide an environment of shared knowledge of technology and other knowledge-based sharing, this will allow the group to function as an organic unit to bring in the knowledge, technology, and understanding to coordinate the patient care.

Organizations have an interest in ensuring good working group dynamics within their organization because successful groups help generate successful organizations. Organizations need to create an environment that supports successful groups, such as encouraging group teambuilding activities and supporting open working relationships between groups. Organizations should have a forward-thinking environment to account for technology advancement and social changes (Loureiro et al., 2023), “Organizational changes are also needed to account for evolving societal norms and values, some of which have yielded higher expectations for access to health care, improved patient experience and increased patient involvement in care decision making” (Nilsen et al., 2020, p. 2) This ensures that the organization could support the groups, leaders, and people within their organization. In healthcare organizations, it is important to adapt to change and support flexible group dynamics to ensure that the people within the groups can function well in the ever-changing environment, “Employees who do not understand why a change is pursued will be reluctant to comply with the management’s requirement for the change. The healthcare professionals in our study argued that the changes must benefit patients to have value. This is consistent with research that shows that health care professionals’ role identity is largely defined by patients and patients’ needs.” (Nilsen et al., 2020, p. 6) This also applies to the spatial features of the organization “To think spatially is to be alive to how an organizational form or body is always being placed somewhere, or seeking a place, whereby power becomes intimate to its realization and identity.” (Beyes & Holt, 2020, p. 2), where the spatial environment supports creative group dynamics for the group’s success.

The workforce environment is a primary space for group development and interaction to support the individual with others, so the minds and actions of the individual could be multiplied by the group dynamics. This not only includes the intellectual and productivity benefits of the individuals bring to the group, but also the “fit” to the group. This is also a major factor in group dynamics, how well the group interacts, and how organic it could be. This is particularly important to healthcare work groups, where they can function in a unified way to support the patient’s health. Many different groups work together to ensure the best possible healthcare for enhancing the health of the patient, not only the medical staff group, to leadership, quality groups, billing, and finance groups. These healthcare groups need to perform well within themselves and with the other groups inside and outside the healthcare organization. Groups are integral to social interaction and cooperative environments, such as the workforce, teams, and organizations. The group dynamics change within itself by the individuals of the group, but also the group dynamics changes the individuals, as one of the front runners social psychology of group dynamics informs us, it is easier to change a group than it is to change the individual, (Levi & Askay, 2020). This is because we are a social being and need socialization by social groups to become the individuals we are.

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