COMMUNICATION – A KEY ELEMENT IN THE IMPROVEMENT OF SOCIAL DYSFUNCTIONS IN ORGANIZATIONS

Dorina-Antoneta TĂNĂSESCU, Nicoleta-Valentina FLOREA, Irina-Antoaneta TĂNĂSESCU

"Valahia" University, Târgoviște,
dtanasescu2212@yahoo.fr, floreanicol@yahoo.com, a_irinaionescu@yahoo.co.uk

Abstract: People coordinate with one another, to achieve their objectives and survival, working in organizations. To obtain these things, they must cooperate, collaborate, and communicate efficiently. Not always, people understand each other, or cooperate. Many studies were made in order to improve communication between employees and minimize organizational conflicts. This article endeavors to show that through a better human communication, the managers and the employees will obtain a better conviviality, better understanding, better results and better performance. For this reason, objectives like minimizing work conflicts, fluctuation and absenteeism named social dysfunctions (DS) through a better communication process, become important for any organization in order to obtain performance.

Keywords: communication, work conflicts, absenteeism, personnel fluctuation, performance

1. Introduction

The human factor is acknowledged as one of the key factors of organizational success [1], and consequently the communication process acquires a strategic role in mitigating the social dysfunctions occurred among people. Objectives of a good work environment are to reduce tensions and frustrations, like: absenteeism, work accidents, strikes, or any form of conflicts [2]. Absenteeism affects team spirit and work implication [3]. Using a better communication, many problems are solved and many processes are improved, such as the social ones present in organizations: personnel fluctuations, work conflicts, or absenteeism. Employees are very important for organizations. Organizations need to communicate with their employees to cooperate, to improve sociability, to stimulate innovation and creativity, to strengthen employee morale and their identification with the organization and to ensure that employees know how to accomplish their own, specialized tasks [4].

2. The role of the communication process in mitigating work place problems

Good communication requires engagement, promotion, time and as much listening as speaking, and if it is done well it can positively improve the participants' experience [5]. Communication is important because it performs three vital functions: it unites people, it spreads knowledge and it leaves no room for assumptions and secrecy [6]. By communication, people develop continual personal relations to face the continually changing needs and it becomes efficient when the desired reaction or the desired answer is obtained from the person who received the message [7].

Communication is important for the self, for developing and maintaining personal, professional and cultural relations [8].

Organizational communication is the process by which organization members put together pertinent information regarding their organization and the changes that occur in it. Communication helps people to survive, giving them information about the difficulties of living together and how to overcome them. Communication offers employees tools for adapting their work conditions and organizational environment, helping employees and organizations to face the global society.

3. On work conflicts

Conflict supposes a disagreement or an incompatible behavior between the parties involved, perceived even by them. This definition illustrates a large array of conflicts experienced by people in organizations – incompatibility of goals, differences in the interpretation of the facts, disagreements in behavioral expectations and so on.

Rout E.L. and Omiko N. explain the relation between conflicts and performance, namely: the higher the intensity of the conflict, the lower the level of performance, the latter being affected by the first [9]. In the everyday life of a worker if there appear contingencies, these will influence his performance and his will to come to work [10]. These will influence each individual in different ways, by make him/her to be absent or to reduce his/her work implication [11].

Sources generating states of individual conflict:

- **Ambiguous legislation**. Many times, an unclear job description creates competition for resources and control. Reorganization may clarify the area covered by a certain position if a destructive conflict becomes a problem.

- **Competition for limited resources**. As used in the present case, resources include funds, personnel, formal authority, and valuable information.

- **Interrupted communication**. Communication is a complex process with many barriers, which often cause conflicts. The fight for a free communication will never end.

- **Time pressure**. Deadlines may generate destructive emotional reactions. When they impose a deadline, mangers need to also have in view the individual's capacity to adapt.

- **Unreasonable standards, rules or procedures**. In general, these triggers lead to a dysfunctional conflict between the manager and his subordinates.

- **Personality crises**. It is very hard to adapt the personality of the individual to the job. This is why the remedy used against serious personality crises is to separate the parties in conflict by entrusting to one or the other a new task.

- **Status differentiations**. As long as organizations continue to take the form of a hierarchy, this trigger is unavoidable. However, managers can diminish the conflict by demonstrating a sincere concern for the ideas, feelings or values of their subordinates.

4. Absenteeism and its impact on organizational performances

First of all, it is necessary to make a difference between absences and absenteeism [12]:

- absence means the time that an employee does not spend at the work place, with or without permission,

- absenteeism refers only to being absent without having the permission of the employer.

Absenteeism can be defined as:

- *a reason* - a very important one - of wasting work time [13],

- *a sign* determining the appearance of a problem or a possible risk in the organization [14],

- *a ratio* of the employees missing from the organization at a certain moment [15],

- *o problem* existing in organizations and referring to being absent without permission from the work place,

- *a process* of being absent without a reason from the work place,
- *a disturbance* of the production plan and work organization, to the extent to which it triggers regulating actions meant to alleviate the negative consequences;
- *a challenge* faced by the mangers in the organization [16],
- *a behavior* of the employees reflecting the interaction between the demands of the position and the control function, on the one hand, and the health condition and the family, on the other hand [17],
- *an evidence* of a socio-cultural behavior of provisional and limited refusal of work and decreased work involvement [18].

Types of absences
Absenteeism differs in dimensions depending on duration, significance and reasons.
The main types of absences are [19]:
- absences triggered by health conditions – maternal and postnatal leaves, medical leaves, accidents. Ilgen (1990) showed in a study that 60% of the absences are triggered by health conditions.
- absences triggered by family problems,
- absences triggered by personal needs: training leaves; different traditions, customs; conventional absences (legal leaves, delegations);
- absences triggered by a non-active presence (often, when a boss is absent, the personnel subordinated to him, though present, do not carry out their activities). The notion of "non-active present people" has been highlighted for the first time by the Japanese [20].
Absences can be divided into [21]:
- authorized or legitimate absences (valid absences) – they refer to the employees being absent for real reasons, independent of them: disease, accidents – and no disciplinary measures are to be applied from the perspective of work legislation or to the cases of employees with psychological or psychosomatic problems - whose diagnosis is hard to determine
- unauthorized or illegitimate absences

(invalid absences) – they refer to the employees being absent for reasons that depend on them, namely because of their desire of being absent using false motives (for instance of disease) and disciplinary measures can be taken if it is proven that they were absent for no valid reason.

Reasons of absenteeism
The factors acting on absenteeism are [22]:
1. Individual factors - age, experience, revenue, marital status, health condition, resistance to diseases, fatigue, work in shifts,
2. Organizational factors - satisfaction and motivation at work, work conditions, supervision, control, leadership style, stuffy policies, lesser involvement in the organizational activity,
3. Environmental factors - colds, viruses existing in the environment, atmospheric conditions, noise, stress, strong smells, strong light, excessive heat/cold,
4. Administrative factors - categories of personnel used in managing absences, aggregation level of the data on absenteeism – on days, weeks, work groups, shifts, organization, etc.

Measures implemented to diminish absenteeism
The manager, to face this real challenge present in organizations, can implement a managerial program meant to reduce absenteeism:
- providing good examples, developing consistent policies and rules, offering an adequate communication process: active listening, feedback, empathy and direct discussions with the employees on the organizational expectations,
- implementing a monitoring system for the time worked by each employee.
- communicating the absenteeism-related policy to all the employees [23],
- maintaining an efficient management system to obtain performance and remuneration,
- optimizing the structure of positions and the organizational structure,

- implementing an analysis of the state of occupational health,
- encouraging a participation of 100%, a presence by offering rewards and by establishing really and equitably policies of total presence of the employees at work, by developing efficient policies and programs for the payment of leisure time or of leaves not taken, by checking the employees' illnesses.
- applying disciplinary measures to the persons absent for the first time, namely verbal or written observations, and going up to suspensions or dismissals for the persons that are absent frequently [24],
- applying preventive actions of payment in money, in free time or in other benefits for the accomplishment of the tasks incumbent to people who were absent,
- combined approaches by rewarding for positive behaviors and applying measures undesirable behaviors,
- applying a "buffer" policy, setting a limit that, once disregarded by the employees, may entail disciplinary sanctions or even the loss of the job, implementing payment programs for tasks carried out from vacancies, for overtime, time worked during weekends or on feast days.

5. Personnel fluctuation
Within the human resources management, the organization needs to clarify its position in this domain. A high level of fluctuation is not always a costly dysfunction.
There can also be advantages [25]:
• it favors the permanent adaptation of the employee population in relation to the needs, from the perspective of the number of employees and also from the perspective of the qualification required;
• it limits the demand of salary mass through personnel ancientness;
• it assures a continuous flow of new employees able to constitute a new breath of air for the enterprise;
• it externalizes promotions: in the enterprises that can propose only unqualified jobs, departures are the only possibility of benefiting of the promotion that the enterprise cannot provide.

6. Propositions. Developing a model based on the analysis of social dysfunctions using an efficient organizational communication system
Starting from the reviewed literature analyzed below, we developed a model, necessary for any organization interested in finding the work problems, monitoring the social dysfunctions (SD), implementing a better communication and finding solutions in order to improve performance (Table 1).

Table 1: Implementation of a model for SD analysis and development of some improvement measures

Type of SD	Improvement measures
Work conflict	Implementing and applying new ideas,
	Innovation activities,
	Drafting development plans based on causes/effects relation,
	Improving communication processes,
	Improving cooperation and collaboration among individuals, between individuals and organization, and also between organizations,
	Implementing plans of efficient interaction (team work, job shifting),
Absenteeism	Applying a plan of improvement measures for absenteeism by a system controllable by the organization,
	Developing a plan based on the permanent adaptation of the employees in

	relation to the needs, in point of the number of the employees and of the qualification demanded, Assuring internal promotions , Assuring the entrance of a continual fresh flow from the outside
	Developing databases concerning the causes of these dysfunctions,
	Using indicators to measure the importance and seriousness of the phenomenon.
Personnel fluctuation	Developing surveys and questionnaires to find out the reasons of these dysfunctions, Developing plans based on employee motivation,
	Developing plans based on communication, trust and team work, Developing entrepreneurship.
Model developed by the authors	

This model may help managers and supervisors to overcome the work issues, to diminish their impact on employees' performance, to determine the cause/effects relation, and to increase performance through a better commitment, motivation and communication process- empathy, understanding, active listening or feedback. This model, also help employees to understand each other problems, to solve them quickly through a better communication process, to collaborate better through work team, to improve work spirit, and to perform.

6. Conclusions

Social dysfunctions such as: absenteeism, personnel fluctuations and work conflicts lead to lack of trust, lack of entrepreneurship, lack of team work and finally loss of employees, if they are not managed correctly, but also to loss of performances. Conflicts are unavoidable in the present society: work places are daily affected by criticism, sarcasm, unpleasant comments, rumors, negativism, triggering a suspicious atmosphere and distrust. The ability to efficiently manage conflicts represents a critical skill in organizations. Despite the fact that many managers avoid investing time and money in mitigating conflicts and improving work relations, this skill is important in obtaining added value. Without an efficient bottom-up communication system, no organization will be able to function for a longer period of time. It sets the tone of an efficient communication climate [26].

Organizational communication represents an area of major interest and is important in maintaining relations, lifting the morale, increasing productiveness and commitment. The relations among employees and those between managers and employees are very important within this type of communication, especially when they spend many hours a day together [27].

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