

Chapter 2

The Culture of Quality and the Organizational Behavior of Knowledge Organizations in the COVID Context



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Abstract The SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, which is currently present in every country, has had a significant and unique effect on organizations all over the world. The abrupt move to remote work and virtual communication, among other things, has upset the old concepts of organizational behavior, organizational culture, quality culture, and management with all that encompasses it. This study intends to examine how the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic affects several aspects of organizational life and, implicitly, people's decision-making, with a special emphasis on the meritocracy system in the company. These broad changes, to which the study's authors refer, also resulted in a shift in organizational culture that put more of an emphasis on adaptability and flexibility. The overall message of the study is that the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic has brought attention to the value of meritocracy in the workplace since it may help identify and advance high-performing workers even in

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the face of challenges. This study emphasizes the nature and function of universities in contemporary society as knowledge-based institutions, as well as the effects of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic on universities as a whole and on those who work there as professors and more esteemed mentors. The researchers encourage and make recommendations for specific qualitative indicators that might be used in a setting resembling a university to enhance communication management with all conceivable connections to university administration. The evidence we provide shows that universities play a crucial role in society by facilitating access to knowledge, encouraging critical but also constructive thinking, and aiding in the intellectual growth of individuals. Universities and other organizations are facing tough problems because of the pandemic, including the need to transition to “distance” learning and keep up with emerging digital technology. To ensure the continuation of learning and to support both students and professors, it is stressed the significance of excellent communication management in universities and the need for clear and effective communication techniques. Managing a university-type organization can require effective and efficient communication to be successful. In this well-documented study, several qualitative indicators are put forth that can be used to enhance communication management in a setting resembling a university, to balance the quality culture, and to implement the proper paradigm for meritocracy. These signs include increasing transparency, open and effective employee participation, and the emergence of an open and honest communication culture. In a different vein, the study suggests a new paradigm, namely, the open presentation and operationalization of certain potential benefits that may arise from the successful use of these indicators, as well as the approaches to evaluating their efficacy and efficiency.

2.1 Introduction

This study investigates how businesses responded to the problems provided by the SARS-CoV-2 epidemic and how they behaved within those systems. In the study, many facets of the substantial adjustments in organizational behavior brought about by the pandemic are addressed, including remote work and virtual communication, a situation in which businesses have needed to be more adaptive and agile to survive and grow (Jackson & Workman, 2021). The study also looks at the pandemic’s effects on workers’ well-being (Konrad & Turnley, 2022) and stresses the value of crisis management and emergency preparation (Barker & Mattiacci, 2021). Worldwide organizations have been significantly impacted by the SARS-CoV-2 epidemic (Hitt & Ireland, 2020). Traditional organizational behavior has been greatly challenged by remote labor and virtual communication, and businesses have had to change to survive and flourish. Organizational culture has undergone major changes as a result of the epidemic, including increased adaptation and flexibility (Jackson & Workman, 2021).

The article also looks at how the epidemic has affected employee morale and how crucial good communication is to be preserving a corporate culture. The article

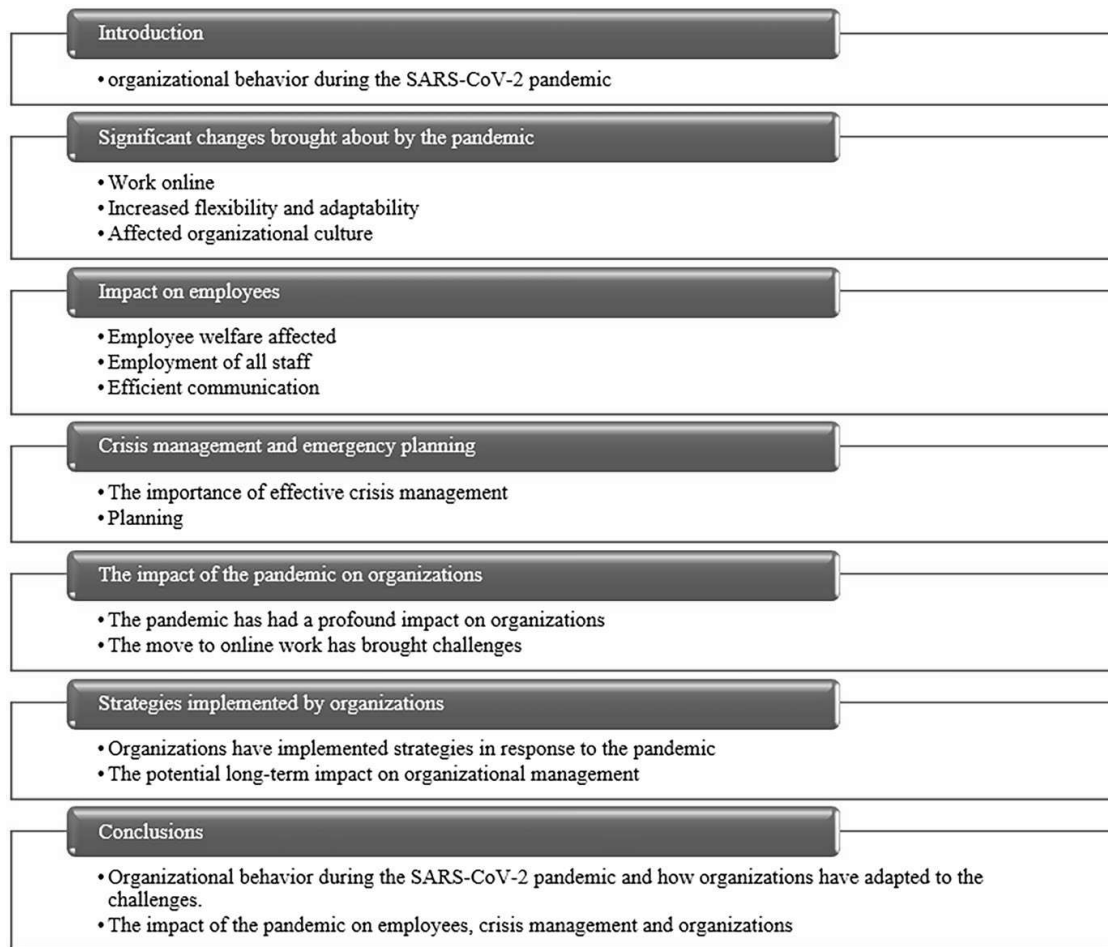


Fig. 2.1 Structure of the paper. (*Source:* Made by the authors)

will address the tactics companies have developed in reaction to the epidemic as well as any possible long-term repercussions these strategies may have on organizational management. The effects of the pandemic are already being felt on organizational management (Fig. 2.1).

The SARS-CoV-2 epidemic, also known as COVID-19, has had a significant effect on businesses and their management strategies. Organizations are facing new issues because of the abrupt move to online work, the recession, and the requirement for rapid decisions. One of the difficulties that companies will face during the pandemic is keeping meritocracy in place. People are chosen and promoted in a meritocracy system based on their skills and accomplishments (Chen & Huang, 2020).

These issues also arise in a university setting. The university itself serves as a crucial institution in contemporary society by facilitating access to information and encouraging intellectual growth. The SARS-CoV-2 epidemic has, however, had a considerable influence on universities, posing a challenge to conventional approaches to teaching and learning and necessitating that they adjust to new technology. In this essay, the pandemic's effects on universities are discussed along with the purpose and function of universities in contemporary society as knowledge-based institutions.

Running a business akin to a university requires effective communication. We propose several qualitative indicators that may be used to enhance communication management in an institution of higher learning. Improved employee involvement, more transparency, and the emergence of an open communication culture are some of these signs. It also looks at how to measure these indicators' efficacy as well as any possible advantages of using them.

2.2 Covid-19 Pandemic's Effect on Organizational Culture, Behavior, and Management

Researchers and practitioners alike have been interested in the subject of organizational behavior in relation to the COVID-19 epidemic. This is in line with research by Chen, Yang, and Wang (2021b), who discovered that organizations were more likely to survive and even prosper if they were able to swiftly adjust to changes brought on by the epidemic.

Another viewpoint is that the epidemic has made the value of occupational well-being and mental health more apparent. Employees who reported high levels of stress and burnout during the pandemic were more likely to have unfavorable views regarding their employment, according to research by Li et al. (2020). Because of this, businesses should put their employees' well-being first to retain productivity and engagement.

The use of online work and digital technology has risen because of the epidemic, according to a third viewpoint. According to research by Zeng et al. (2021), businesses that had adopted digital technology before the pandemic were better prepared to handle the move to online employment. To be competitive in the post-pandemic environment, businesses need to invest in digital technology (Fig. 2.2).

Because of this, both managers and employees now need to be more adaptable and flexible. The pandemic also brought to light the need of efficient communication in preserving organizational cohesiveness and productivity (Jackson & Workman, 2021), necessitating a greater degree of flexibility and adaptability on the part of companies (Hitt & Ireland, 2020).

Employee happiness was significantly impacted by the epidemic as well (Konrad & Turnley, 2022). Employees have faced challenges because of the abrupt change to online employment, particularly in terms of their mental and emotional health. The epidemic has also underlined how crucial it is to offer tools and assistance to workers so they can preserve their well-being. Effective crisis management and emergency preparation are critical, as the epidemic has shown (Barker & Mattiacci, 2021).

The pandemic has had a profound effect on organizational culture as well. It has altered the way businesses operate and brought about numerous changes. It has also

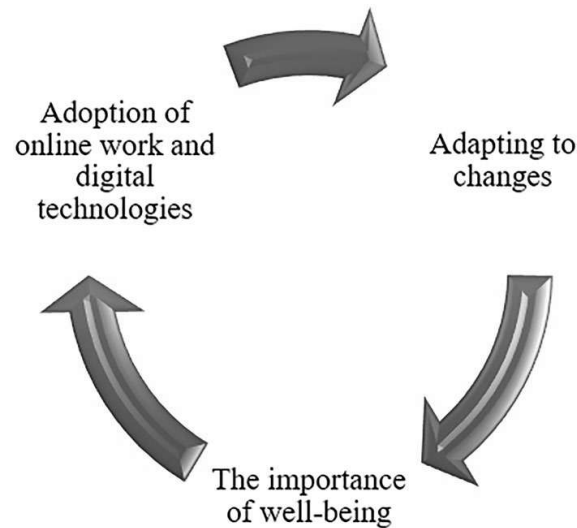


Fig. 2.2 Organizational behavior in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. (Source: Made by the authors)

brought attention to the significance of certain facets of organizational culture, including adaptability, resilience, flexibility, and employee well-being.

According to studies, businesses with a strong culture of flexibility and adaptation respond to crises better and are more likely to be resilient in the face of ambiguous and swiftly changing conditions. The negative impacts of the epidemic on employees can be lessened by an organizational culture that places a high priority on employee support and well-being. The epidemic has also hastened the use of digital technology and online labor, which has increased the value of culture in the digital age. Organizations must foster a culture that values and promotes the use of digital technologies if they want to compete in the post-pandemic world.

According to research by Chen et al. (2021a), the pandemic caused alterations in corporate culture, such as a stronger emphasis on teamwork and adaptation as well as a move toward virtual communication. The study, which was published in the *Journal of Business Research*, showed how the pandemic has changed organizational behavior, resulting in things like higher workplace stress and worse job satisfaction (Fig. 2.3).

The epidemic significantly disrupted organizational operations, which prompted adjustments to management methods (Kirschner, 2020a, b). According to research by Gao et al. (2021), which was published in the *Journal of Management and Strategy*, the pandemic had a substantial effect on organizational management, changing decision-making procedures, and bringing management crises to the forefront of attention. This leads to the conclusion that in order for enterprises to survive the epidemic, they have to become nimbler and more flexible (Fig. 2.4).

According to research by Chen et al. (2020), which was published in the *Journal of Business Research*, the pandemic underlined the value of strong leadership in times of crisis. The study suggests that leaders are essential to helping firms effectively address the problems faced by the epidemic. However, the pandemic's impact on the economy has reduced many organizations' income, causing them to make



Fig. 2.3 Influences of the COVID-19 pandemic on organizational culture. (Source: Made by the authors)

challenging choices like layoffs and compensation reductions (Chen, 2020a, b). Nonetheless, some businesses have turned to creative solutions, such as adopting new business models or creating brand-new goods and services (Zheng et al., 2020).

Organizational management is likely to be affected for some time by the epidemic and the responses taken. For instance, the persistent presence of online labor in organizational operations may influence management techniques (Kirschner, 2020a, b). Moreover, the corporate landscape may alter permanently because of the economic crisis, with some businesses battling to survive and others rising as new leaders (Chen, 2020a, b).

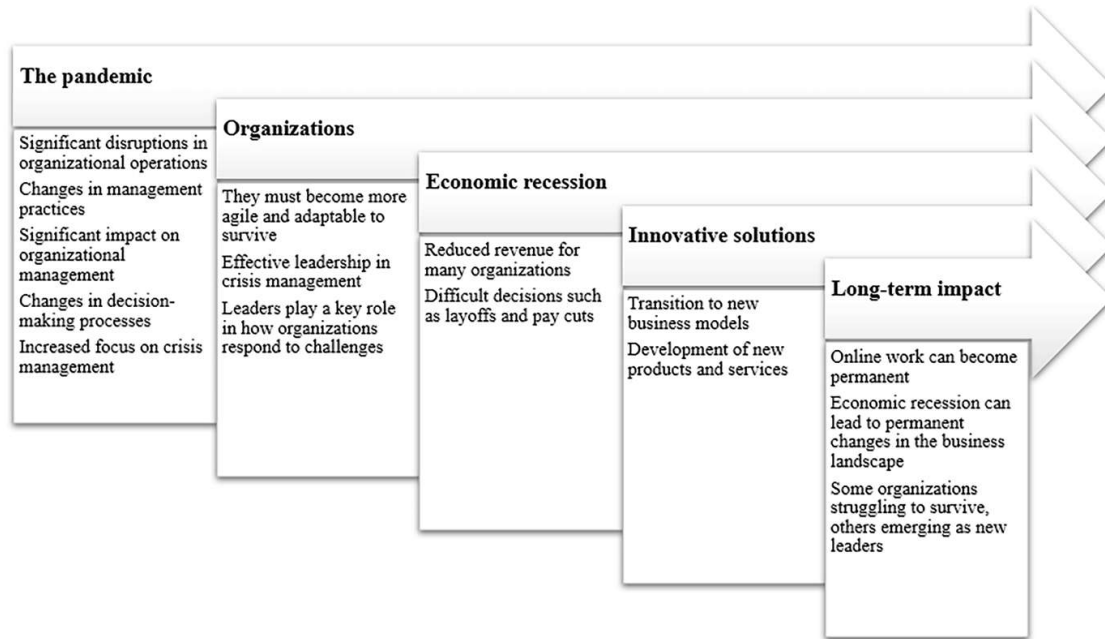


Fig. 2.4 The repercussions of the pandemic on the economic environment. (Source: Made by the authors)

2.3 The Covid-19 Pandemic's Impact on Organizational Meritocracy

Organizations that can recognize and reward great performers are more likely to be successful in the face of adversity. Meritocracy enables firms to guarantee that the greatest individuals are placed in the appropriate roles and have the resources and assistance they require to succeed.

Meritocracy is the idea that people should advance in their careers based on their knowledge, abilities, and performance rather than on things like seniority or personal ties. The COVID-19 epidemic, however, has significantly altered organizations, causing modifications to the way meritocracy is applied. The epidemic and the responses taken will probably have a long-term effect on the meritocracy inside the company.

According to a study by Park et al. (2021) that was published in the Journal of Business Research, the pandemic caused a decline in meritocracy in organizations because businesses were forced to make quick decisions and implement cost-cutting measures, which made mandates more important than performance. Further lowering meritocracy in the workplace, it was discovered that working online during the pandemic made it more challenging for supervisors to evaluate employee performance.

Another research by Chen et al. (2021a) indicated that the pandemic caused changes in organizational culture, including a stronger emphasis on teamwork and adaptation as well as a move toward virtual communication. This study was published in the Journal of Management and Strategy. The epidemic has altered

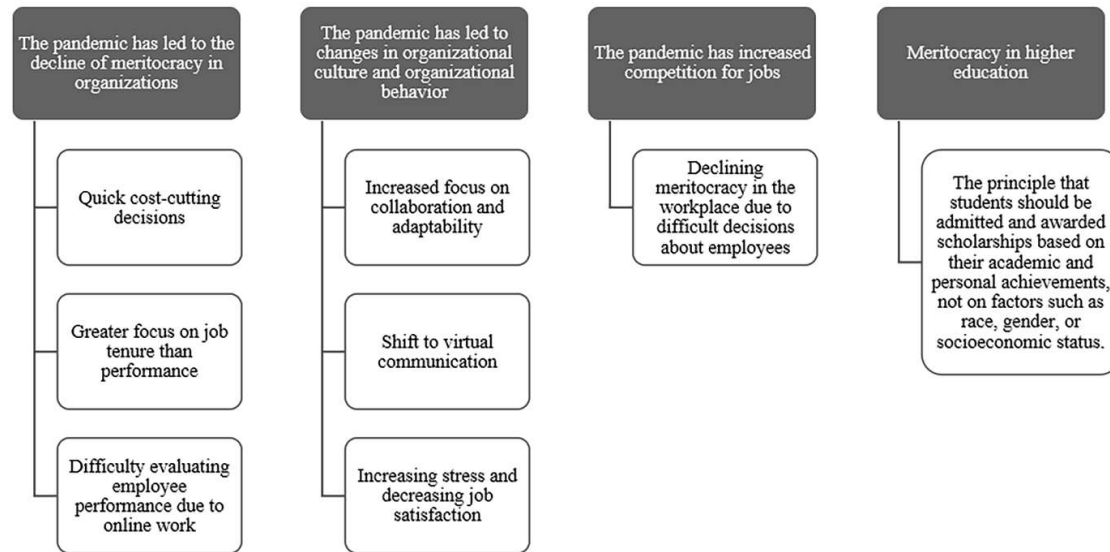


Fig. 2.5 The effect of the pandemic on meritocracy in organizations. (Source: Made by the authors)

organizational behavior, including increased workplace stress and lower job satisfaction, which may have an impact on workplace meritocracy, according to the study (Fig. 2.5).

The pandemic has increased competition for jobs, according to a study by Gao, Liu, and Wang that was published in the *Journal of Business Research* in 2021. This is because businesses have been compelled to downsize because of the uncertain economic climate. Because businesses have had to make difficult judgments about who to keep and who to fire because of the increasing competition, meritocracy in the workplace has decreased.

Meritocracy in higher education refers to the idea that admission decisions and scholarship awards should be made on the basis on an applicant's academic and personal accomplishments rather than their race, gender, or socioeconomic standing (Bowen & Bok, 1998).

In universities, policies like admissions standards that prioritize academic achievement and test results as well as financial aid guidelines that grant scholarships based on merit are frequently used to foster meritocracy (Chung & Espenshade, 2015). Students who have excelled academically, exhibited leadership potential, and established a history of community involvement are given merit-based scholarships (Fig. 2.6).

Although students from more fortunate backgrounds may have greater possibilities to obtain excellent academic performance and test scores, there are worries that higher education elitism may worsen already-existing inequities.

Some academics contend that higher education meritocracy can maintain privilege by neglecting to consider structural disparities that may limit students' possibilities, such as limited access to high-quality instruction, resources, and support (Feldman & Newfield, 2019).

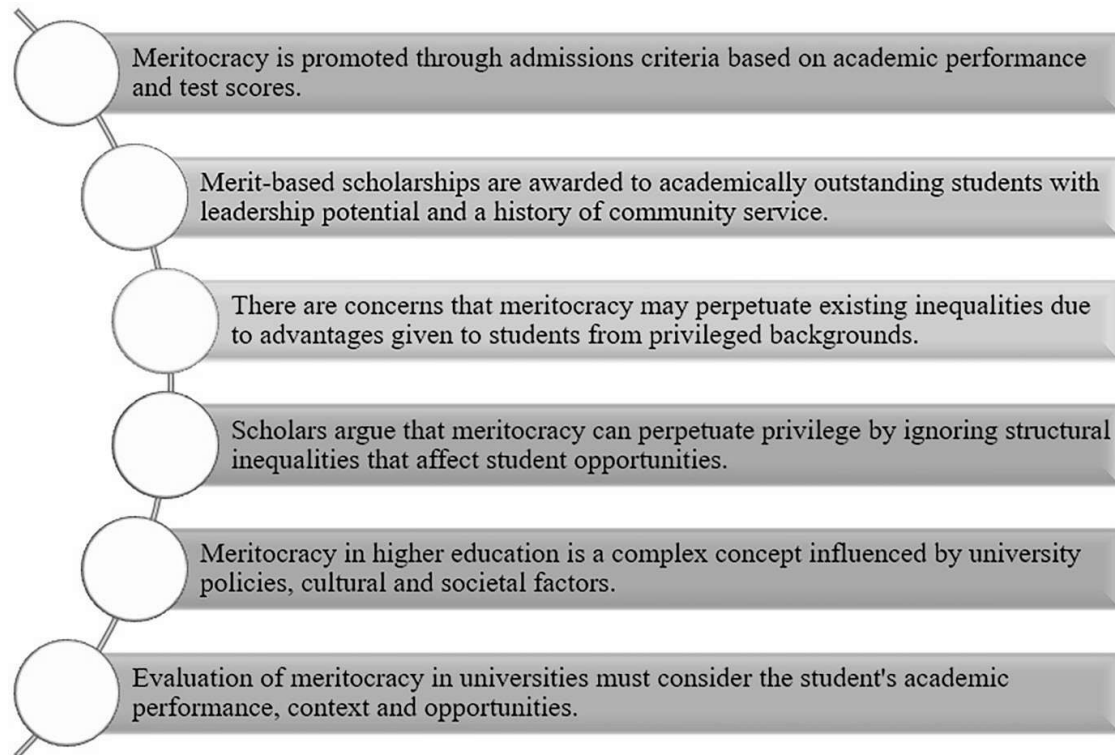


Fig. 2.6 The effect of the pandemic on meritocracy in universities. (*Source:* Made by the authors)

The notion of meritocracy in higher education is complicated and varied, and it can be impacted by a number of different things, including institutional regulations and socioeconomic, cultural, and cultural elements. As a result, it is critical to evaluate the meritocracy at universities by considering not just academic achievement but also the student's environment and chances.

2.4 Covid-19 Pandemic's Effect on University in Modern Society

Universities are knowledge-based institutions where knowledge is created, shared, and applied. High levels of expertise and a concentration on research, teaching, and service define them. Universities are similarly intricate organizations that need excellent management and communication techniques to maintain learning continuity and support for both students and faculty.

By facilitating access to information and encouraging intellectual growth, universities play a crucial role in society. Universities play a significant role in developing future generations of leaders and professionals and are significant engines of innovation and economic growth (Fig. 2.7).

The pandemic has seriously disrupted university operations, which has changed how universities perform their function as knowledge-based organizations in

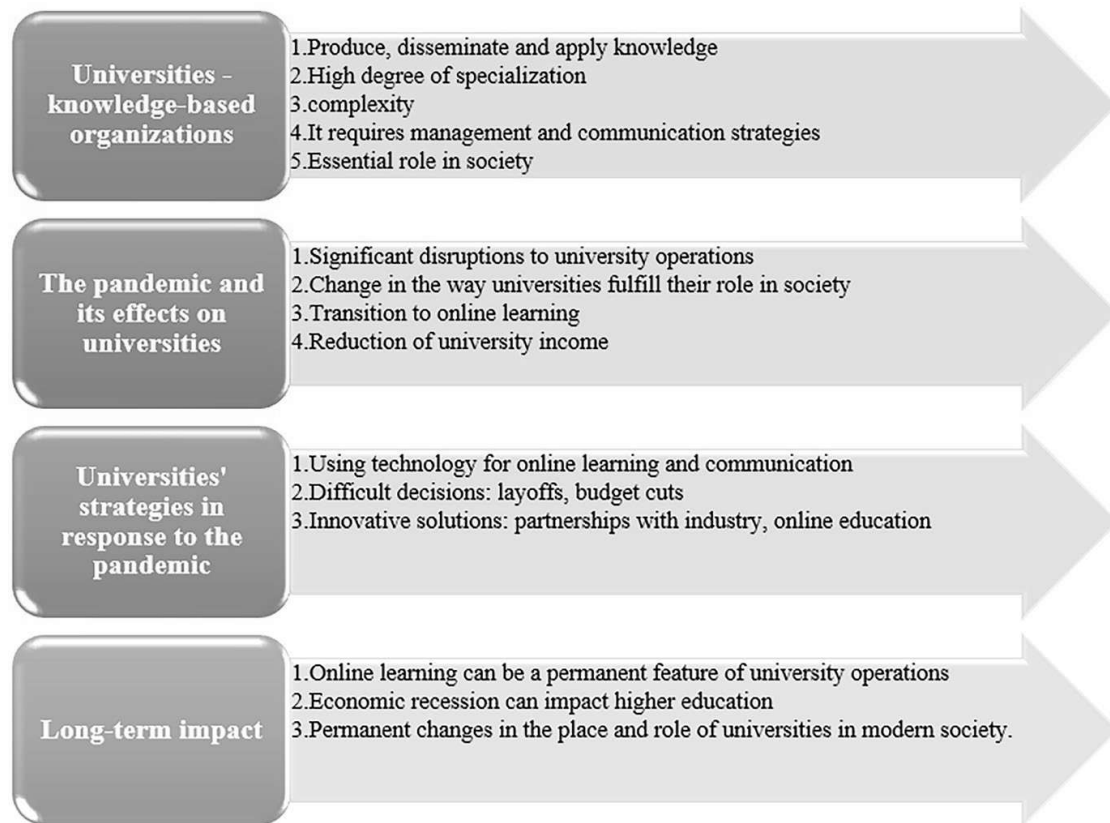


Fig. 2.7 The impact of the covid-19 pandemic on the university in modern society. (Source: Made by the authors)

society (Brown, 2020). For instance, the transition to online learning has caused difficulties for universities in ensuring that all students have access to education and preserving the standard of education (Smith, 2020a, b). However, the economic crisis brought on by the pandemic has decreased income for many colleges, requiring them to make challenging choices like budget cuts and layoffs (Jones, 2020).

Universities have adopted several tactics to retain their position and function in society in response to these difficulties. To support online study and communication, several colleges have resorted to technology (Smith, 2020a, b). Colleges have also had to make challenging choices, such as budget cuts, and layoffs, to stay financially viable (Jones, 2020). Several colleges have also resorted to cutting-edge techniques including industrial collaborations and hybrid education (Williams, 2020). The epidemic and the measures taken in response may have long-term effects on the positioning and function of universities in contemporary society. For instance, the incorporation of online learning into university operations may transform how universities function in society (Smith, 2020a, b).

A lasting shift in the higher education landscape may also result from the economic slump, with some institutions battling to survive while others rising as new leaders (Jones, 2020). In addition, the economic slowdown brought on by the epidemic has resulted in decreased financing for research and development, which might restrict institutions' capacity to produce and distribute new information (Johnson, 2020).

2.5 The Impact of Efficient and Effective Communication on a University-Type Organization's Functioning

Each organization, particularly one of the university kinds, must have effective and efficient communication in order to operate smoothly. Implementing a centralized communication platform for academics, staff, and students is an illustration of successful and efficient communication. This platform may be used for a number of things, such as providing information about events and services, arranging meetings, and making significant notifications.

Messaging that is concise and consistent is a crucial component of effective communication. This means that crucial information, such as updates or announcements, should be sent promptly and in a way that the target audience can readily comprehend. For instance, more specific information can be put on the internal website or LMS, while university-wide notifications can be delivered by email or text message. This can guarantee that everyone is informed of significant events and can take the necessary action (Fig. 2.8).

The usage of a learning management system (LMS), such as Blackboard, Knowledge Base, or Canvas, is a specific illustration of a centralized communication platform. Students may keep informed and on top of their work with the aid of these systems, which enable teachers to publish announcements, assignments, and grades in one convenient spot. Moreover, LMSs frequently have built-in communication facilities like email and discussion boards, which may be used to encourage dialogues between students and professors or among students. This might improve classroom cooperation and build a feeling of community. Another illustration is the usage of an intranet or internal website where personnel may locate crucial data and assets and stay informed about university activities and events. By doing so, you may improve staff participation and engagement and make sure everyone is aware of the most recent advancements at the university.

Also, regular interaction between various departments, such as that between the academic and IT departments, may guarantee that everyone is on the same page and that any problems or concerns are dealt with as soon as they arise. The practice of

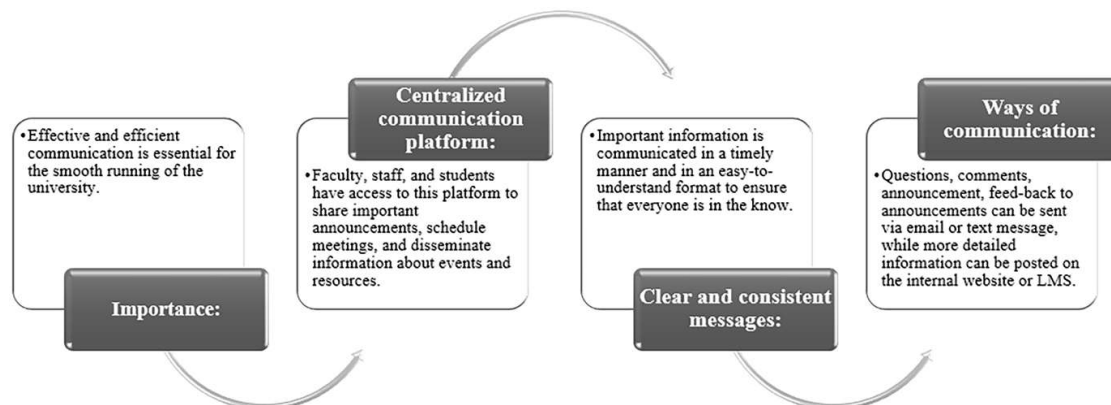


Fig. 2.8 Effective and efficient communication in the university. (Source: Made by the authors)

attentive listening and responsiveness is another crucial component of good communication. As a result, university personnel must be readily available to respond to inquiries and concerns. For instance, staff workers should answer emails or phone calls in a timely manner, and teachers should be accessible to meet with students during class or by appointment. The university and its stakeholders may benefit from a partnership that is based on trust and mutual respect.

Also necessary for effective communication are a high level of openness and inclusivity. This implies that, if feasible, the institution should include stakeholders in the decision-making process as well as be transparent and honest about its activities and choices. The institution may, for instance, provide open forums or gatherings where academics, staff, and students can voice their opinions and ask questions. This may guarantee that everyone feels appreciated and heard and that the institution responds to the requirements of its stakeholders (Fig. 2.9).

To eliminate duplication of effort and save employee burden, effective communication is also crucial. Implementing a clear and consistent communication strategy throughout the company is one method to do this. The channels that should be used for different sorts of information, such as updates, announcements, and emergencies, should be specified in this protocol.

The protocol should also outline who oversees transmitting specific sorts of information, as well as when and how frequently that communication should occur. By doing so, you can make sure that everyone is informed and that your resources are being used efficiently. Finally, it is critical to remember that technology may significantly enhance the efficacy and efficiency of communication in a university-type business. Key components of good communication in a university context include clear and consistent message, active listening and responsiveness, transparency and inclusion, effective communication procedures, and the use of technology. In conclusion, excellent communication is essential for a university-type organization to succeed. Universities may contribute to ensuring that everyone is informed and involved and that the organization functions well by developing centralized communication systems, fostering cooperation, and frequent contact between various departments.

2.6 Qualitative Indicators for Communication Management Improvement in Universities

Universities must manage their communications well if they are to be successful, and there are certain qualitative measures that may be used to enhance communication at these institutions. They include using technology effectively, communicating clearly and consistently, being transparent and open, and evaluating the efficacy of communication initiatives via feedback and assessment tools. Also, a top focus should be given to safeguarding the mental and emotional well of both instructors and children. Universities are intricate organizations that rely largely on good

Active listening and responsiveness

Availability of university staff
Meetings with students and teachers
Answer questions and concerns
Building trust and a positive relationship

Transparency and inclusion

Openness and sincerity in decisions and actions
Involving stakeholders in the decision-making process
Open meetings and forums
Everyone feels heard and appreciated

Clear and consistent communication protocol

Specifying appropriate channels for different types of information
Responsibility for communication
Frequency and time of communication
Everyone is up to date with the latest developments

Use of technology

Improving communication efficiency and effectiveness
Centralized communication platforms

Conclusion

Effective and efficient communication is the key to success
Key elements: active listening, transparency, communication protocol, technology.

Fig. 2.9 The influence of efficient and effective communication on the functioning of a university-type organization. (Source: Made by the authors)

communication to ensure information flow, activity coordination, and organizational goals are met.

A university-type company can adopt several qualitative indicators to enhance communication management. According to Fig. 2.10, they comprise the following:

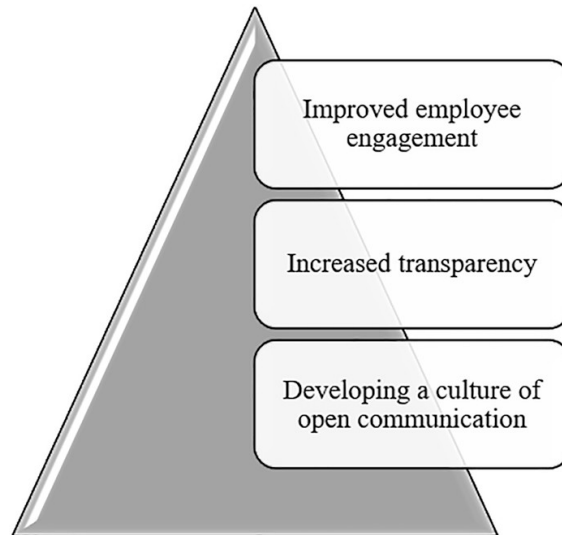


Fig. 2.10 Qualitative indicators that can be implemented to improve communication management in a university-type organization. (*Source:* Made by the authors)

- **Increased Employee Engagement:** In every firm, effective communication management depends on improved employee engagement. Universities should develop a collaborative atmosphere, open communication, and chances for feedback to increase employee engagement (Kirschner, 2020a, b).
- **Improved Transparency:** Effective communication depends on transparency. By regularly updating students on significant topics, fostering an atmosphere of openness, and promoting information exchange, universities may increase transparency (Chen, 2020a, b).
- **Developing an Open Communication Culture:** Effective communication management requires the development of an open communication culture. Universities may encourage an environment of open communication by promoting the sharing of ideas, offering venues for criticism, and cultivating a culture of trust (Zheng, 2020).

A university-type organization may get various advantages by implementing these indicators. Figure 2.11 illustrates some of these advantages.

To guarantee that communication management is enhanced in a university-type company, it is critical to assess the efficacy of these qualitative indicators.

According to Fig. 2.12, there are several ways to assess efficacy

- **Interviews and surveys:** They may use interviews and surveys to get the opinions of the staff on how the company handles communications.
- **Focus groups:** Focus groups can be used to get in-depth input on facets of communication management, such as employee engagement and transparency.
- **Communication pattern analysis:** Universities can assess organizational communication patterns, including frequency and efficacy, to identify opportunities for development.
- **Benchmarking:** Universities might evaluate their communication management procedures against those of other businesses to pinpoint opportunities for development.

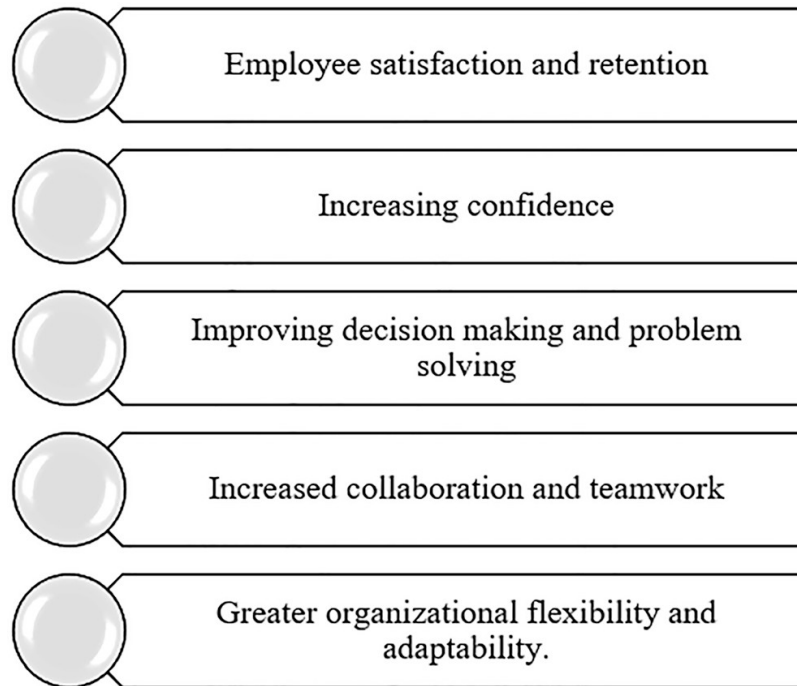


Fig. 2.11 Benefits of implementing qualitative indicators in a university-type organization. (Source: Made by the authors)

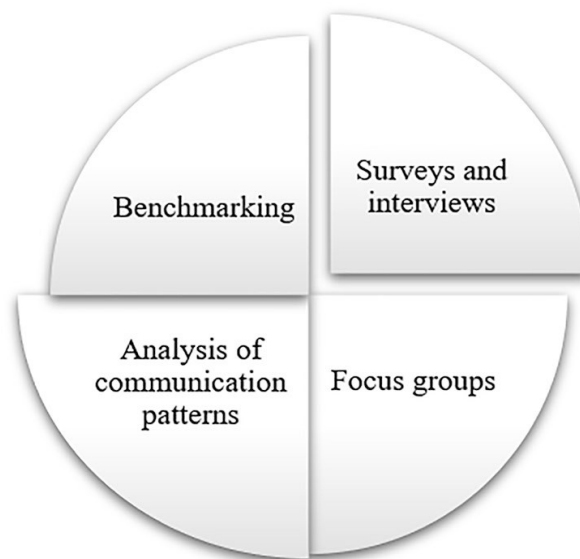


Fig. 2.12 Effectiveness measurement methods. (Source: Made by the authors)

2.7 Conclusions

Organizational behavior, culture, and management have all been significantly impacted by the SARS-CoV-2 epidemic. Even during hardship, organizations that are able to recognize and reward high-performing people are more likely to prosper. The SARS-CoV-2 epidemic had a significant effect on corporate behavior as well. Organizational behavior has been faced with numerous difficulties because of the

abrupt move to online work and virtual communication, and businesses have had to change in order to survive and grow. The epidemic has also brought attention to the need of good and clear communication, employee well-being, crisis management, and emergency preparation.

Organizations have been pushed to reevaluate and even reinvent their cultures to preserve productivity and cohesiveness as the emphasis on flexibility and adaptation has increased. The epidemic also made clear how crucial good communication is to preserve a solid company culture and workforce engagement.

It is also feasible that these changes will have a long-term effect on organizational management since firms have had to modify their management techniques to survive. Also, to maintain fairness and equity, corporations have had to modify their management procedures. These modifications have a long-term effect on the meritocracy inside the firm. University, which is the most intricate institution in contemporary society, facilitates access to knowledge while encouraging intellectual growth and critical thinking. Universities are facing tough problems because of the SARS-CoV-2 epidemic, including the move to online learning and the requirement to adopt new technology.

To promote learning continuity and support for both students and teachers, it is important to note the significance of good communication management in higher education settings. Universities may enhance their communication management by putting qualitative indicators into place, such as clear and consistent communication strategies, efficient technology usage, transparency, openness, and the use of feedback and assessment procedures.

Universities and their position and function in contemporary society face substantial difficulties because of the SARS-CoV-2 epidemic. Universities have had to modify the way they do business to guarantee access to education and preserve the quality of that education, and these changes are likely to have an ongoing effect on how universities are seen in contemporary society.

For a university-type company to operate well, efficient communication management is seen to be essential. There are several possible advantages for the business from implementing qualitative indicators including better employee engagement, increased transparency, and the creation of an open communication culture. To guarantee that communication management is enhanced, it is important to assess the efficacy of these indicators.

A direction for further research would involve examining the long-term consequences of the SARS-CoV-2 outbreak on organizational behavior, culture, and management and how companies might adapt to these changes in the future.

Other research directions are looking at how the meritocracy system affects organizations in times of adversity and how it might be applied to find and promote top performers. It could also investigate the impact of the SARS-CoV-2 epidemic on employee well-being and mental health and how companies could help staff members in difficult situations. It could examine how technology could be used to improve continuity of learning and support for students and instructors and how it affects communication management in universities and other companies.

A final proposed research direction would be to examine how management techniques within firms could use transparency and a culture of open communication to promote employee engagement and maintain a strong corporate culture.

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