

Health Organizations: Theory, Behavior, and Development

Edited by
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FOREWORD

During the last ten years in my work, I have had the privilege of visiting numerous healthcare organizations; some expansive healthcare organizations with unlimited resources, others, small community hospitals with limited resources; all have endured significant new demands and unexpected challenges.

The world has witnessed unprecedented events that have affected the foundation of health care. The September 11th terrorist attacks and multiple natural disasters, such as Hurricane Katrina, have impacted different healthcare organizations in ways that we never envisioned. With globalization and the push for universal care in many states, there has been a ripple effect throughout society.

Other new requirements have surfaced for healthcare organizations. Much is known about the impact of medical errors on the patient population. As an effort to develop a body of basic rules of engagement to improve the care provided to the patient population and to guarantee safety to the patients, the National Patient Safety Goals have been instituted to address some of the concern. Only the healthcare organizations with well-developed organization structures have succeeded with its implementation. Others, not so well organized, are still struggling with such tasks.

Finally, much is known about the limited human resources (ex. nurses shortage), the aging healthcare infrastructure, and the struggle organizations go through in an attempt to adjust to various regulations imposed by the agencies that govern the industry. Some organizational behaviorist has described misalignment between human resources and capital resources as the factors that have lead to a less than desirable outcome in health care. Those, with sound and sometimes adaptable organizational structures, who have integrated their human and capital resources by aligning all of their resources, have succeeded in the face of the various stressors we have seen.

Healthcare organization theory has often focused on extending the concepts of business organizations applied to the healthcare field. Much of the knowledge about healthcare organization theory has been an extrapolation of the concepts developed to explain how businesses organize. Until now, there has been no integrated view on healthcare organization theory.

This book comes as a much-needed initiative of Dr. James Allen Johnson and a group of scholars and experts in an attempt fill a void existent in health administration education. It provides an integrated view of Organization Theory; Organization Behavior; and Organization Development

making it one of the first books on the integration of these three critical interconnected domains.

Integrated knowledge and understanding is needed in health care in order to prepare organizations for an uncertain future. This compendium of knowledge will attract significant attention from the healthcare administration and public health academic communities with its potential to enhance the professional development and education of our future leaders.

*Lorenzo Gonzalez, MD
The Joint Commission*

P R E F A C E

This book was written to address a significant need in health administration education. While there are many textbooks available for courses in organizational behavior, there are few that address organization theory and even fewer that discuss organization development in any significant way. Many university professors and instructors prefer to have a text that addresses all three domains. Drawing upon the expertise and experience of colleagues in various disciplines from universities, government, and corporations, I have brought these three interconnected domains together in this book. It is comprised of three sections: Part I Organization Theory; Part II Organization Behavior; and Part III Organization Development; each containing key chapters that address foundations, research, and new directions. A summary of these themes follows:

Organization Theory: Health organizations are complex human systems that have evolved over time and continue to do so. There have been many theories drawing from the fields of psychology, sociology, economics, political science, anthropology, and, lately, physics in an attempt to explain the phenomenon of organization. Each of the theories has changed as social science and behavioral research offered new findings and perspectives on human behavior in groups and larger aggregates. The classical theories of organization were primarily mechanistic and relied heavily on the knowledge advanced in the industrial age. Modern organization theory takes more of a contingency approach and accounts for human dynamics. Today, emerging theories draw upon new insights from biology and physics where organizations are seen as systems interconnected with the larger environment. Postmodern theory and our increasing understanding of complexity take us even further.

Organization Behavior and Dynamics: By virtue of their distinct care mission, health organizations have unique behavioral qualities. This book examines power, influence, conflict, motivation, group dynamics, values, communication, and leadership in the context of care giving. Additionally, organization dysfunction and stakeholder dynamics is addressed. Health organizations are comprised of highly credentialed professionals who function under considerable scrutiny within many prescribed guidelines. The challenge of managing in this environment is great. The bases of any level of effectiveness come from the understanding of individual, group, and organization behavior.

Organization Change and Development: Lastly, health organizations are not static. The one constant seems to be change. Leaders and managers are tasked to facilitate and manage the change that is inevitable in modern organizations. This can be done in a systematic planned way utilizing approaches found in organization development and team building. This section of the book helps the student and practitioner put to use theories of organization and knowledge of organization behavior in ways that foster change in productive and sustainable ways resulting in better outcomes. Team development, board development, physician development, and organization development and learning are all addressed. Likewise, current challenges such as disaster preparedness, globalization, and sustainability are discussed.

As you read the book and engage in the discussions and exercises recommended in each chapter, it is important to remember the significant responsibility you have as a current or future healthcare manager and leader. You will have a responsibility to yourself, co-workers, the organization, and the individuals and communities you serve. Part of this responsibility can be met by committing to life-long learning and continuously seeking to better understand physical and social phenomena. This includes an understanding of organizations as human created systems. As our insightful colleague, Margaret Wheatley once said, “Rather than thinking of organization as an imposed structure, plan, design, or role, it is clear that in life, organization arises from the interactions and needs of individuals who have decided to come together.” It is in this coming together that purpose manifests and then demonstrates the great potential of health organizations in making the world a better place for all.

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Dr. James Allen Johnson, Jr. is a Professor in the Herbert and Grace Dow College of Health Professions at Central Michigan University. He is also a medical social scientist working in international health development. He has published 10 books and over 100 articles on a wide range of healthcare and management issues. His most recent book is *Managing Health Education and Promotion: Leadership for the 21st Century* published by Jones and Bartlett of Sudbury, MA. Dr. Johnson is the past Editor of the *Journal of Healthcare Management* published by the American College of Healthcare Executives and was Senior Editor for the *Journal of Management Practice*. He is the founding editor of the *Carolina Health Policy and Management Review* and has been a Special Issue Editor for the *Journal of Management Development*; the *Journal of Health and Human Services Administration*; the *Organizational Ethics Journal*; and the *Journal of Health Administration Education*. Additionally, he is the Senior Editor of the Praeger series, *Community Preparedness*, and Co-Editor of the *Handbook of Health Administration and Policy*. Dr. Johnson's work and travels have taken him to 21 different countries including work with the World Health Organization and organization development consultation with numerous hospitals, government agencies, and health organizations. He has chaired and served on many non-profit boards, most recently the National Diabetes Trust Foundation. Dr. Johnson was previously on the faculty of the Medical University of South Carolina where he served as Chair of the Department of Health Administration and Policy for many years and was the founding director of the Doctor of Health Administration Program. He has also lectured at Oxford University in England; Beijing University in China; the University of Colima in Mexico; the University of Dublin in Ireland; and is an Adjunct Professor at Auburn University Montgomery. His PhD is from Florida State University.

