Holistic Strategic Management Under the New Normal Concept

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Abstract— **Due to the outbreak of COVID-19, people's working lifestyles around the world are affected by lockdown and working from home. Most of the public and private sectors then need to deal with this crisis which causes impacts on humans in various dimensions and brings about new behaviors in a human society. Therefore, this academic article aims to study a new normal of strategic management by using a literature review from various sources such as academic articles, interviews and other relevant information, and then summarizing and synthesizing them into work management strategies, people management strategies as a guideline in management planning for both the public and private sectors' strategic management in the future.**

Keywords— **Strategic management, New Normal, Work Management Strategies, People Management Strategies, Organizational Strategies**

I. INTRODUCTION

The outbreak of Coronavirus Disease 2019–2020 is a worldwide pandemic. It is caused by a novel coronavirus that started in December 2019 and was first detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province of China. The World Health Organization declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern on 30 January 2020 and a pandemic on 11 March 2020. What are the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on social change? It was found that COVID-19 has led to changes in public health, society, human capital, economy, competitiveness of the country. We also see new behaviors happening during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is believed that these new behaviors may become the New Normal. Since the outbreak of Coronavirus Disease 2019 or COVID-19 in Thailand started in March 2020 until now, prevention and control measures to prevent the spread of the virus issued by the government have been intense. For example, there are campaigning urging everyone to stay home to stop the spread of infection for the nation. Social distancing, using face masks, 14-day quarantine for people travelling to Thailand, cities on lockdowns, closing shopping malls, restaurants, food shops, entertainment venues, etc. are carried out. These measures resulted in lots of unemployed persons. In addition, the government has encouraged all sectors to allow their people to work from home. Educational institutions, schools and universities are also asked to conduct online learning to avoid close contact with others. These lead to changing people's way of life and result in a new normal in society (Ketchen Jr & Craighead, 2020).

Many countries have intensely implemented prevention and control measures. The intensity of government's strict control measures for these diseases is also one factor that has negative impacts on lockdowns, leading to economic costs. For example, the government had to provide massive support to restore the economy and help people and businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic after the situation began to improve. Running businesses need a good crisis management plan to cope with the situation, therefore, it is necessary for businesses or entrepreneurs to analyse the situation, foresee the overall picture after a lockdown being lifted and then be able to deal with the situation properly. Strategies for reducing fixed costs are implemented to increase efficiency. For example, in Thailand, there is a negotiation to extend credit terms with additional online marketing partners (Abbo, Miller, Gazit, Savir, & Caspi, 2020) Additionally, every organization in Thailand, after passing the COVID-19 crisis, will be entering a new form called a "New Normal". Therefore, the organizational management will be changed from traditional ways to the New Normal in terms of work, money and people, especially nowadays there is a trend of digitalization and automation already evolved for a while. When the COVID-19 situation arises, this trend is speeding up to deal with changes, forcing us to look at 2 main areas of strategic management: 1) Individual's ability, that is how well people in an organization ready for digitalization, and ready to work from home, and 2) Organization capability such as organizational culture, that is how well an organization prepare for digitization, as well as more product development using data as a tool to reach customers and employees, etc. (Wirtz, Müller, & Weyerer, 2021).

II. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

To study holistic strategic management under the New Normal concept

III. RESEARCH SCOPE

Documentary research and data synthesis related to holistic strategic management under the New Normal concept.

IV. RESEARCH METHODS

The researcher used a qualitative research process with document research method; synthesizing information from documents by studying and analyzing information from documents or documentary research to review concepts, theories and related literature, including trends of holistic strategic management under the New Normal concept.
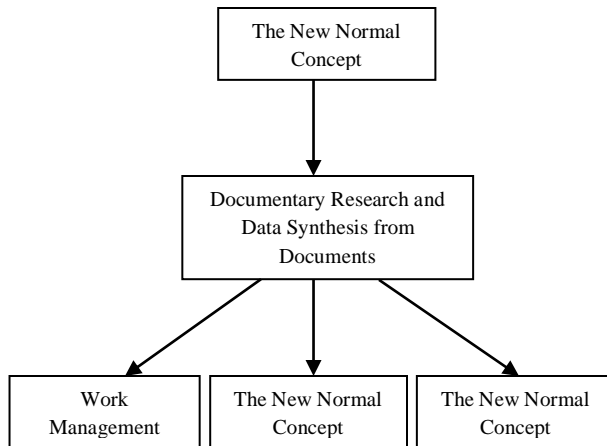
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Figure 1: Research Framework

V. RESEARCH RESULTS

Lifestyle has been changed in society during the Covid-19 Era. When Coronavirus Disease 2019 or COVID-19 happened, the government and/or various organizations that we are a member of or related to, have issued various measures to take care of society for safety. The research results are discussed and can be divided into the following topics:

5.1 Work Management Strategies

According to the impacts of Covid-19 outbreak, many organizations will find it difficult to survive. Therefore, it is necessary for these organizations to review and adjust the importance of stakeholders of an organization again. A stakeholder is not only a shareholder, but it is also a relationship between an organization and various ecosystems such as customers, employees, partners, communities, environment, society (ESG: Environment, Social, Governance), etc. To become a long-term successful and sustainable organization, an organization must create a balanced relationship for coexistence in all sectors. That is when a new look of organizational purpose comes in. New organizational purpose has to be open, broad, looking ahead, and seen from every aspect, not just focusing on profitability and shareholder value added, but it should also be communication to the society that an organization will exist to be part of something greater than itself, to do something meaningful, to create Stakeholder capitalism in a balanced way (Sancino, Garavaglia, Sicilia, & Braga, 2020) by using Data- driven Organization. Decision-making is based on a science-based practice on reasoning data instead of conventional decision-making with opinions or experiences of leaders or seniors. When data is the engine for future, what leaders have to do is to motivate everyone to have Data-Driven Mindset, including

creating an agile work environment for people to be ready for changes, emphasizing agility and flexibility, reducing work processes and paperwork, and being able to adapt quickly to changing situations. Working should be more focused on communication in a team. More opportunities should be given for employees to fully show their abilities and dare to think, dare to do, dare to be held accountable for what they do. When there are problems and mistakes at work, they must admit that and find a solution as soon as possible. This will be a lesson so that they are not going to make the same mistake again in the future. When an organization faces a threat, it must have resilience skills to manage, resist, and recover in a timely and effective manner (Dimitrios, Christos, Loannis, & Vasiliadis, 2020). Organizations need to prepare people by turning from waiting for problems to come first and then thinking of risk management to be encouraging people to take risks where people need to be calm and not panic. They must think that we must survive or if we fall, we must be resilient and ready to get back quickly. For example, in reviewing business models to create new growth, they should not think narrowly, not only think of improving existing business models, but also think broadly and be creative. Currently, there is a new concept called, 'Ecosystem Business Model', which means creating a new organizational ecosystem by building new partnerships to develop new products and services for customers. Tesla and State National, a leading insurance company, for instance, create Tesla's new insurance product with Data-Driven feature. Tesla recently announced that it will be entering in a full-fledged auto insurance industry. Bangchak announced that it is moving towards to become a manufacturer of Li-Ion batteries for electric vehicles. According to such events, they will create a crucial impact on consumer behaviour. For example, people will travel less and less. There will be more people working from home. Social distancing and purchasing products online, etc. will happen more and more. It is obvious that these changes will cause problems for the organizational growth. Organizations then need to review how the changes affect their business models. In creating new growth, organizations need to review their business models by asking these following questions. Who are we and what business are we in? What are impacts on organizations and how they adjust themselves during the Covid-19 pandemic? How much are we affected? Then, what we are going to do next, and how has target customers' behaviour changed? What are the key transitions between customer behavior and characteristics/features of products and services? What new work processes both online and offline approaches will be provided to customers that are valuable enough to meet changing customer behaviors and able to create a good experience, making customers decide to buy products and services that will lead to customer loyalty in the long run? Additionally, in generating income, organizations must create added value or add new differences for customers, or think of new opportunities to generate additional income and how to achieve long-term sustainable success. They have to know how to create added value with fairness, balance, and inclusion for all stakeholders. In the long run, organizations must have a

vision that must be part of building a quality society (Foss, 2020).

5.2 People Management Strategies

In the New Normal era, many people will lose their jobs and employment rate will decrease. However, we see an increasing work trend for people more open to changing jobs once the pandemic is over because people are getting used to flexible working styles with the freedom on how, where, and when to work. Some people even see how to make money by being your own boss that better suits younger generation's lifestyle. This problem will next become a challenge for human resource management (HR) because in addition to creating a unified organizational culture, they need to understand employee values in an organization at all levels to attract and retain talented people to stay with an organization." A survey from PwC finds that many employees are still working for their current employers because of economic reasons and need a steady pay check while waiting for the right opportunity to change jobs (shelter in jobs) after the COVID-19 crisis is over. In addition, a work-from-anywhere model can decrease engagement with colleagues and an organization, and some even feel disengaged, leading to changing job as organizations need to completely remodel working styles to prevent the spread of COVID-19 (Grant & Wunder, 2021). Organizations also have to pay a lot of money for working or living in the New Normal. Therefore, in terms of people management, the first thing that needs to be done is to communicate with everyone in an organization to make sure that they understand about working under the New Normal and consider it important. Employees should be reaffirmed that they can reach out to or connect with their co-workers and feel that they are part of a team. HR should create effective incentives for employees in the midst of a crisis as many companies lay off their employees and shut down their businesses. When employees are confident in an organization and are positively motivated to work, they tend to be more efficient than employees who are given negative motivation. If an organization uses negative motivation to keep employees working at their best during the Covid-19 crisis, the first thing that an organization will lose is a "talent" in an organization (Lovari, D'Ambrosi, & Bowen, 2020). As these people are more talented and skilled than ordinary employees, if HR uses negative motivation to keep them working, it will become unbearable for these talented people and they will eventually resign. Positive motivation does not just mean good compensation, rewards, and bonuses. The most positive and valuable motivation apart from money is to encourage constructive feedbacks, kindness and help for each other, and acceptance within a team to make employees feel that they are important as the key to their team, etc. Therefore, organizations should focus on output instead of work time. HR needs to review job positions and various departments of which any position in any department can work from home, and employees in which offices still need to work onsite. Most of the time these employees are often holding a position that requires to use tools or equipment at work such as in a factory. In addition,

HR should set up a clear method of measuring employee performance according to their job description, and also, it is necessary to find the right software to support employees' work; whether it is software for working from home or software used for work communication between employees. Measures of communication in each agency should be set up, that is who will be a contact person when there is an emergency. An organization must find out which position is a key position and which employee is a key person, and create a succession plan in the event that the key person is infected or unable to work, then who will be a substitute one for that position. An individual development plan (IDP) on preparing a successor for that job must be also made (Yawson, 2020). Moreover, HR should have a clear follow-up on the development results and change the forms of coordination within an organization by laying out clear guidelines for what rules will be, such as if employees have to travel to work abroad and then return to the country, if employees from abroad need to come for work in the country, if outsiders come to use their services in various departments, should there be a waiting area, or how screening procedures for outsiders entering the organization will be? This also includes maintaining cleanliness, disinfection and sterilization of public facilities such as canteens, restaurants, fitness rooms, meeting rooms, reception areas and workplace environment. The organizational chart and manpower must be revised by considering which agencies should have the same number of employees, which ones the number of employees can be reduced, which jobs can be outsourced? Job analysis in different positions should be made according to the current situation (Shin, Sharma, Nicolau, & Kang, 2021). In terms of improving the recruiting process, some organizations may have a system to support this already, but some do not. Thus, they might need to start thinking about the recruitment system, such as filling out an application form through a company's website, preliminary employment tests through a company's website, asking job applicants to submit a video clip introducing themselves and their resume through a company's website, and online interviews. Performance appraisal process should also be improved by obtaining a software to be used for this evaluation. Organizations should reduce or eliminate paper-based performance appraisals so that their supervisors can evaluate their subordinates' performance anywhere with a mobile app or at home by using their laptop. Finally, training management must be adjusted accordingly. For example, some trainings can be conducted online, but if it is a hands-on workshop or trainings that need to involve actual doing a particular thing, a number of employees attending should be limited with proper social-distancing seating arrangement. Wearing masks during trainings and cleaning training sites to reduce the spread of germs should be followed (Le & Phi, 2021).

5.3 Organizational Strategies

Culture for business survival is essential to create a way of thinking for people at work to be able to adjust themselves to this crisis. According to a PwC survey, 81% of the

organizations quickly adapted in the past 12 months believed that their organizational culture gives them competitive advantages, while 88% mentioned that their organizational culture has helped in driving change in an organization successfully over the Covid-19 pandemic for more than a year. This shows us that organizations with strong organizational culture are able to adapt to change more quickly, with simplifying work processes, and employees are ready to cooperate with an organization to adjust to change at work in accordance with the situation. Therefore, this type of organization has a competitive advantage even when facing a crisis. It can also generate and increase revenue continuously (Gerald, Obianuju, & Chukwononso, 2020), and create customer satisfaction and employee satisfaction. Today, it is found that most organizations in developing countries still have hierarchical structure, a company's chain of command. Decision making on any matter can take longer. There is also a feeling of being considerate of others according to seniority, meaning that lower-level employee's expressing opinions may be limited or not be considered as important enough. Organizations need to adjust their organizational culture to be more agile by simplifying and reducing work processes and building a culture of teamwork. Executives must be open-minded and willing to listen to employees' ideas and opinions at all levels, and also see and use past mistakes as lessons and opportunities to improve an organization. On the other hand, many executives recognize the importance of organizational culture. A recent survey from PwC (Global Culture Survey, 2021) found that 67% of the executives surveyed agreed that organizational culture is more important to performance than a strategy, especially amid the current COVID-19 era where the majority of employees are working from home. An organizational culture should be one of executives' concerns. Even though an organizational culture has not been destroyed by COVID-19, what is missing here is when employees have to work from home, not working at an organization, the process of creating and cultivating an organizational culture in the way it used to be will be useless. If we still remember, back to a pre-coronavirus era, organizations would foster and cultivate an organizational culture in order to have employees with desired workplace behavior through various activities and ceremonies, employee interaction, engagement and collaboration, as well as office design and dress code. When employees have to work from home, they meet and see other employees via a small screen and most of the time spent is talking about work. It is challenging for executives to foster and promote an organizational culture, especially with a new generation of employees who have just joined an organization. Additionally, in the future, when the COVID-19 situation is better and there is a policy to have employees work in a more hybrid manner (Trofimova, 2020), ways and guidelines for promoting and cultivating an organizational culture will have to be changed differently from the past. It can be seen that an organizational culture is more important and perhaps even more important to an organization's operations than its strategy. At the same time, it is being challenged by the COVID-19 situation and working from home. However, the main reason why it may not get as

much attention as the strategy is that it is intangible, an abstract. An organizational culture cannot be made into concrete like other strategies or plans. It is also viewed that defining desirable culture and values is more difficult and challenging than determining general plans (Castro & Zermeño, 2020). Besides, managing diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) is increasingly popular overseas because of their acceptance of gender, race, religion, culture, disability, differences in skills, experiences and opinions. This will provide a guide to management that drives new performance and innovation for an organization. DEI Management will become more important. The executives and board of directors must demonstrate their sincerity of being an organization leader who can make employees understand that their work will lead to organizational goals and enhance organizational values by emphasizing two-way communication and having supervisors at manager levels and above to give advice and be role models demonstrating behavior that truly creates inclusive culture (Mahdi & Nassar, 2021).

VI. DISCUSSION

According to the research results, they will be discussed under each following topic:

6.1 Work Management Strategies

During the Covid-19 outbreak, a strategy on new products and services with story, history, vision and uniqueness, meeting the needs of customers or consumers along with Service Mind, giving customers the best experience when buying products or using services as well as sharing and helping all sectors in society must be created. This will not only help businesses recover, but also help them build a strong brand image for businesses. As for implementing a new or completely revised purpose successfully, it is essential that an organization's leader or CEO first communicate the purpose to the people involved to deeply understand in order to create Sense of Purpose and Sense of Urgency, which will bring about a passion for pursuing new goals (Brammer, Branicki, & Linnenluecke, 2020). This type of communication should be in the form of storytelling. To create awareness from this type of communication must come from the heart. Examples of organizations that failed should be given in order to see how those organizations which are better than us make mistakes. This will be the driving force that drives everyone and organizations to fight for survival. Communication must create an atmosphere of awareness for a sense of urgency in an organization. As for organizational strategies in this new normal, organizations need to adapt to the use of new technology in product and service development. Operating businesses by building alliances or partnerships between an organization and stakeholders should be carried out. Decision making must be quick and flexible and ready to adapt to changing situations. Looking for new channels to do business, expanding or adding a variety of marketing channels, focusing on quality, making a difference, emphasis on safety during pandemic and planning to cope with current and future uncertainties should be made. Driving an

organization in the same direction during a crisis is one of the challenges. One thing that will keep everything in control is a clear division of work and decision-making power. It should be clear who can make a decision, and, best of all, there should be only one decision maker in that matter. In addition, a course of action to deal with each phase should be clear (Batra, ,2020) so that work can be done and problems can be solved without interruption. Team leader meetings should be held to follow up works and share solutions based on outcomes, and strategies for maintaining competitiveness should be carried out by reducing operating costs such as workforce reduction, branch reduction, appropriate working time reduction, reviewing marketing plans and new investment plans, promoting the use of technology and innovation to increase efficiency of management, work, production of goods and services. In addition, online sales channels such as Facebook, YouTube and Instagram, etc., should be used to communicate with and take care of customers in order to retain existing customers and to build new customer bases, etc. Changing ways of thinking, looking for new methods or new channels to produce goods and services that meet the needs of consumers most in order to increase sales and generate new income for an organization should be made. (Amankwah-Amoah, Khan, & Osabutey, 2021). To expand a business and support economy, an organization needs to have a focus strategy and a differentiation strategy. In the dimension of differentiation strategy, there will be strategies of service differentiation, image differentiation, people differentiation, product differentiation and channel differentiation. These strategies can be implemented to create a competitive advantage in understanding and reaching consumers who are turning to be more interested in business expansion, including various e-commerce businesses. It is a good opportunity to drive businesses that have not yet registered to register properly to create confidence for customers. Both the public and private sectors need to understand about choosing competitive positions and creating a competitive advantage by adopting 3 general competitive strategies: cost leadership, differentiation and market segmentation (or focus) to create a competitive advantage in the current environment (Albers & Rundshagen, 2020).

6.2 People Management Strategies

Regarding the dimensions of technological development, innovations, environmental changes in society, new lifestyles, including the latest outbreak of the coronavirus disease 2019, all of these have alerted many organizations and lead them to adjust their daily lives to cope with changes in this era. Many organizations have adjusted their management strategies. Facebook, for instance, communicate their purpose to society saying, "Facebook will be a medium for communication that has the most positive impact on earth by making Facebook a global community allowing everyone to have freedom, reduce inequality for any location, race, religion, language, to connect and to access information across the borderless world. It is a medium to build a world community where people can share ideas and information more, and also

becomes a channel creating opportunities for changes." This statement addresses challenges and positive drives caused by the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. The pandemic has resulted in a rapid change in human resource management in various dimensions. This information is also something that executives and HR managers can consider for development (George, Lakhani, & Puranam, 2020) during the outbreak of Covid-19. Administrative mechanism has been adjusted by reviewing current manpower (Lee & Trimi, 2021) and organizational structure for future that supports organizational management to be more efficiently and mobilize quickly in the near future. This also includes recruiting and retaining only high-potential employees. The results of this review needed on manpower may lead to organizational downsizing to be in accordance with changes in overall economies and businesses. Job titles and roles and responsibilities are adjusted to be in line with the digital era by eliminating routine tasks and introducing technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) for organizational efficiency and responding to rapid changes in business operations (Zattoni & Pugliese, 2021). Apart from this, ways of working in an organization must be changed to respond to rapidly changing customer needs, including using technology as a tool to help deliver products and services to meet customer expectations that is related to skills development and a shift in employee mindsets needed for this new era as well. A hybrid work model is another model that emphasizes success at work and it is suitable for post-COVID situation, working without fixed location and time which is different from the past. Employees can choose for themselves when and where they work; whether they work from home, work in an office, or a combination of them to deliver great work. Finally, digital technologies as tools for faster and more efficient communication such as virtual video calls via applications can be used. This concept will enable organizations to manage their office expenses more efficiently than before (Ratten, 2020).

6.3 Organizational Strategies

Organizational culture is something that needs to be adjusted in the new normal era. For example, with a decentralized approach, HR should be decentralized to create a "real-time database" to know exactly where the problem is. Performance appraisals emphasizes a task achievement rather than work process like in the past, and have a quarterly review rather than yearly by setting few indicators such as Objectives and Key Results (OKR), etc. In addition, the development of employees' skills through self-learning with microlearning that clearly describes learning guidelines for each topic in a short learning period of time (Hall, Joshi, Leal, & Ooi, 2020) should be promoted, as well as online learning. Employees will be able to choose when, where and how to work that suit them. Employee compensation and welfare models should be adjusted and promoted with an emphasis on work balance and employee well-being. This will result in designing more flexible welfare in accordance with this era and changing generations of workers (Coccia, 2021).

Besides, an agile organizational culture work should be created. This is an idea to streamline work process by simplifying or eliminating unnecessary work-related tasks and paperwork, focusing more on communication and greater collaboration in an organization to progress towards its goals in the midst of rapidly changing business competition. Moreover, happiness at work created in an organization is a cause-and-effect factor. It was found that happiness at work is an important employee motivation. If employees are happy at work, it can benefit both employees and an organization. Organizational support is considered to be an important part in creating happiness for employees. An organization should adopt guidelines for creating happiness at work as part of an organizational strategy because this strategy is considered a master plan that covers all business processes and determines an organization's long-term direction. It is also a guideline for using available resources to achieve organization goals, then creating competitive advantages and achieving sustainable success. A strategy of work happiness management in an organization should cover dimensions of happiness in mental, physical and social aspects that consist of an employee value proposition, building a work-life balance, and diversity management in working after post-COVID-19 (Auth, JokischPavel, & Dürk, 2019). Therefore, employee behaviour in an organization will support reforming organizational structure, process and culture to create continuous innovation and to become an excellent organization with better business model than competitors. Driving an organization with innovation is how to build a proprietary advantage over competitors (Jeshfaghani, 2020), and this is why it is necessary to implement a reform so that all parts of an organization are heading towards the same goals. An organization's value innovation potential is assessed on 3 elements. These include executives' behavior or managers' behavior; whether they have allocated time to determine a clear-and-easy to understand organizational direction. How much communication within an organization in respect of the reasons for an organization's direction and guidelines for future development of various business projects are done? Are there enough resources allocated for this? As for an organizational structure, whether there is any department authorized with mission on innovation development appointed and separated from management jobs? For example, Ping An, China's insurance giant, has appointed Chief Entrepreneur Officer position focusing on future business development to have the same powers as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) (Ratten, 2021). Nevertheless, an innovation department must work along with main departments in an organization, having an incentive system for driving innovation and engaging in trial and error. Finally, regarding an organizational culture, whether there are enough innovation tools to attract talented people to work with and develop employee skills, and whether there is a good process for assessing value innovation potential? (Zhongming, Linong, Wangqiang, & Wei, 2020).

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

According to this study, the researcher has made some recommendations as follows. The Covid-19 pandemic does not happen alone but along with major trends that have already happened behind the scenes which include technological change, aging society, urban society, conflicts between superpowers, and climate issues. In addition, social trends, infrastructure, consumer demands, and economic cycles are all important factors that always affect people's lives. Changes continue to influence people's lives. Technologies have driven economic and social change in recent years such as Automation & Robotics, Cloud computing, Artificial Intelligence, Blockchain, and Augmented Reality & Virtual Reality (Gigauri, 2020.).

As for work management strategies, an organization needs to review business potential by considering risk of business disruption in the future. In assessing the impact of the Covid-19 outbreak on business models, it is found that this crisis directly affects many aspects of businesses, and each of which also affects other parts of businesses, including Key Activities, Key Resources, and Customer Segments whose needs are changing. Overall, consumers will turn to focus on value. Traditional service channels are also affected as the crisis forces people to learn to use technologies (Jamil, Sanusi, Yaacob, Isa, & Tarjo, 2021).

As to people management strategies, it is necessary to build an ownership culture, which gives an opportunity to employees to be part of an organization and be known or widely recognized. The diversification strategies should be created as they will give the opportunity for people to take responsibility for various tasks from the organization. It is also open to differences and expertise in many fields to fulfil the potential of an organization in every aspect. Besides, it is vital to create growth as employees will be given the opportunity to grow their career by leaps and bounds because of giving priority to performance over seniority (Alanzi, 2021).

Regarding organizational strategies, learning and professional opportunities should be promoted but remain flexible under DNA to preserve organizational culture. Organizational culture represents an organization's values, knowledge, ideas, technologies, and values that an organization has accumulated as well as shared trust and beliefs of people in an organization. This is to maintain the relationships that drive community engagement both inside and outside an organization (McKee-Ryan, 2021).

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