



Developing Workplace Critical Thinking

(BMSW5101)

University of Wales Trinity Saint David

Assignment 1

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“How do Organizational beliefs, values and attitudes affect workplace behavior and how will workplace change for post COVID Mindset to build more resilient workforce in future?”

Executive Summary

The current COVID 19 pandemic has mainly enforced new social distancing norms and new behaviors within the workplace. This report has mainly summarized the importance of personal values, attitudes and beliefs within JD Sports. It has been analyzed that strong workplace values mainly drives huge job commitment, positivity and patience among staff members. Further, The report has described different management theories such as contingency approach, scientific management, human relations and Theory X & theory Y. It also illustrates certain strategies for JD Sports to deal with COVID 19 pandemic. Some of them are wellbeing programs, flexible working arrangements and clear communication protocols.

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Introduction

This report mainly provides detailed background about different management theories and its importance in JD Sports. It often demonstrates that how workplace beliefs, attitudes and values affect organizational success. The report has also provided suitable recommendations that how JD Sports can tackle COVID 19 issues. It also demonstrates that how organizations can adapt itself within new changing environment. The report has entirely focused upon core values and beliefs of JD Sports. It also illustrates different management theories such as human relation theory, scientific management etc and its impact upon business operations.

Company Overview

JD Sports is the leading sports fashion retailer in UK. John Wardle and David Makin has founded JD Sports in 1981 (JD Sports, 2021). The company mainly offers luxurious shoes, fitness gear, face masks and clothing accessories to customers. Apart from this, JD Sports also owns several fashion brands such as JD Gyms, Finish Line and Sports Zone. The company mainly owns 402 stores in UK and 64 stores in USA. JD Sports has mainly recruited 56,685 employees and generate huge turnover around 11 billion. The mission of JD Sports is to occupy dominant position in UK sports industry.



Source: (JD Sports, 2021)

Task Scenario

COVID 19 pandemic has mainly brought job insecurity and sense of fear among staff members. The current COVID 19 mindset has brought several challenges such as mental health issues, greater anxiety and frequent job cuts within business operations. Due to strict lockdown measures, the company was enforced to change their entire working schedules and office design to ensure employees safety. During COVID 19, JD Sports has faced several allegations due to poor health standards (Cerutti and Grodoski, 2020). According to Glasgow times, There were no click and collect service and sign boards for social distancing. Employees have claimed that management team is completely ignoring safety concerns within warehouse operations. Amid such allegations, JD Sports has suffered from huge financial loss around 2.72 billion. The profit margins have been decreased from 129.9 million to 41.5 million. During this pandemic, Firms are constantly experiencing several issues in terms of work/life balance, safety standards and lost sense of connectivity.

Values, Attitudes and Beliefs within JD Sports

Workplace Values are mainly concerned with respecting others, offering excellent customer service and showing greater accountability towards others. Values ultimately help organizations to work towards achieving different outcomes and set appropriate career priorities for staff members. Apart from this, Attitudes are mainly concerned with employee's feelings towards business tasks. On the other side, Beliefs is all about taking necessary risks, showing strongest commitment and loyalty towards day to day tasks (Cuganesen et al., 2018). Over the past few years, JD Sports has mainly created goal oriented and innovative culture for staff members. The company mainly emphasize upon the employee wellbeing and successful accomplishment of financial results. Apart from this, JD Sports aims to create collaborative and cohesive team at international level. The company often tried to create real voice for employees and potential clients. The company has mainly adopted fair recruitment strategies to attract inspirational leaders and tech visionaries to accomplish their long term objectives.

During COVID 19, JD Sports has mainly tried to create a culture of transparency and kindness for staff members. In such financial crisis, The company has mainly collaborated with top psychiatrists to offer better counseling services to staff members. During COVID 19, JD Sports has mainly paid much attention towards mental wellbeing, resilience training and skills workshops to display greater empathy towards staff members (De and Moore, 2020). In 2019, JD Sports has mainly established its own Global Academy to deliver proper training to staff

members. On the other side, Workplace Attitude has deep impact upon job satisfaction, code of conduct and working environment (Mussner et al., 2017). During this pandemic, The Company has mainly started its own multichannel graduate scheme to deliver greater emotional support to staff members. During this pandemic, JD Sports has mainly focused upon different communication methods such as audio conferencing, Skype and Microsoft teams to interact with staff members. The company also use different Go To Meeting, Zoom and Trello to interact with staff members.

The company has also established ethical code of conduct to promote greater transparency and accountability among staff members. During this pandemic, JD sports has also conducted different safety assessments to new supplier audits to create ethical and high performing culture for their staff members. The company has mainly established its own Factory Setup Form to review employees progress on regular basis (Cuganesen et al., 2018). The company often encourage their staff members to become more friendly and confident towards others. During this pandemic, JD Sports has mainly dispatched new ambulance and emergency helpline services to ensure employees safety. The company has mainly started its own mental health awareness week on their official website to promote positive well-being among staff members. The company also works with young charity partners and local communities to promote greater optimism and happiness among staff members. JD sports often use social media platforms to interact with staff members regarding mental health issues and social distancing guidelines.

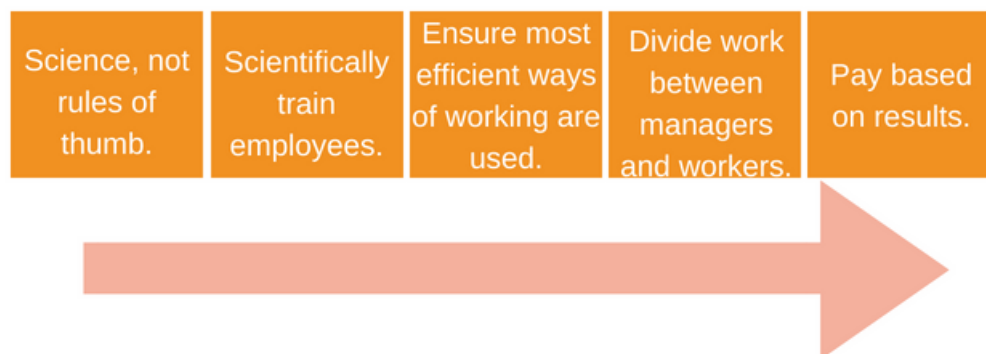
During COVID 19, The company has provided Mental Health First Aid Training to staff members. In fact, JD Sports has also conducted 108 behavioral training sessions to interact with staff members. The company has mainly taken several initiatives including Employee Facebook Pages, HR Advice Hub and Your Voice Program to increase employee engagement. Apart from this, JD Sports has established its own Our People Magazine to promote ethical values among staff members. This workplace behavior has positive impact upon employees perception and behavior (JD Sports, 2021). This mainly encourages staff members to resolve conflict and enhance business reputation. JD sports have started its own 16 week Management Development Program to prepare employees for future leadership roles.

From above analysis, it is stated that core values and beliefs are the central foundation of successful business. However, If organization is not complying with core values, then it has negative repercussions upon employees performance. These core values and beliefs ultimately helps JD Sports to stay connected with their long term goals and track employees performance on regular basis. On the other side, Negative workplace attitude mainly contribute towards intense gossip, racial discrimination and jealousy among staff members. As a result, Employees may become more violent and aggressive towards their senior supervisors.

Different Management Theories within JD Sports

Scientific Management: This theory mainly involves systematic application of scientific methods to increase business productivity. Fredrick Taylor has mainly established this theory to focus upon automation, equal division of labour and manage operational efficiency. JD sports often adopt this theory to optimize production activities and eliminate production costs. The company has mainly established its own WAN network and efficient IT system to promote greater flexibility and scalability among staff members (Hill and Van, 2018). The company mainly rely upon different scientific methods to optimize their warehouse procedures. Apart from this, JD Sports has mainly deployed Talend Technology to manage their production activities on regular basis. During COVID 19 pandemic, The company has mainly applied scientific management theory to promote better product standardization and eliminate repetitive tasks. This theory has ultimately helped JD sports to develop better incentive plan for staff members.

Taylor's Scientific Management

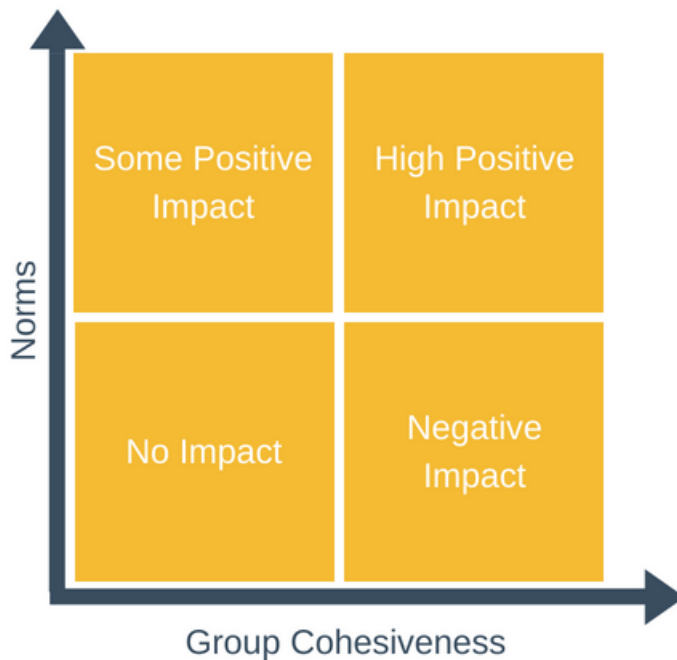


Source: (Hill and Van, 2018)

This theory ultimately helps JD sports to improve workplace layout and ensure proper maintenance of relevant equipments. Through scientific management, the company was able to pay much attention towards production scheduling, budgeting, resource allocation and implement different incentive schemes for staff members (Braverman, 2020). During this pandemic, JD sports has mainly established special bonus scheme for their staff members. The main advantage of scientific management is that firms can completely revolutionized their scheduling, accounting practices and interior layouts. Through scientific management, JD sports was able to handle industrial disputes and eliminate production delays (JD Sports, 2021). Thus, Scientific Management mainly helps JD sports to maintain better coordination with staff members. The major drawback of scientific management is that it does not pay much attention towards employee well-being.

Human Relation Theory: This theory is all about understanding employee's behavior and expectations. According to Elton Mayo, Employees are mainly motivated through strong teamwork, financial incentives and recognition. During this pandemic, JD sports has mainly applied Human Relations theory to introduce new online learning platform for staff members. This theory has helped JD Sports to create comfortable and ambient temperature for staff members. During COVID 19 recession, the company has mainly applied Human Relation theory to conduct better internal safety audits for staff members (Muldoon et al., 2020). In this way, JD Sports may able to create nurturing and career oriented environment for staff members. Thus, Human Relation Theory was quite useful for creating substantial value for staff members. This theory mainly helps JD sports to achieve greater competitiveness and higher employee retention. Through Human Relation theory, JD Sports was able to inculcate greater creativity, happiness and sense of accomplishment among staff members.

Mayo's Motivation Theory

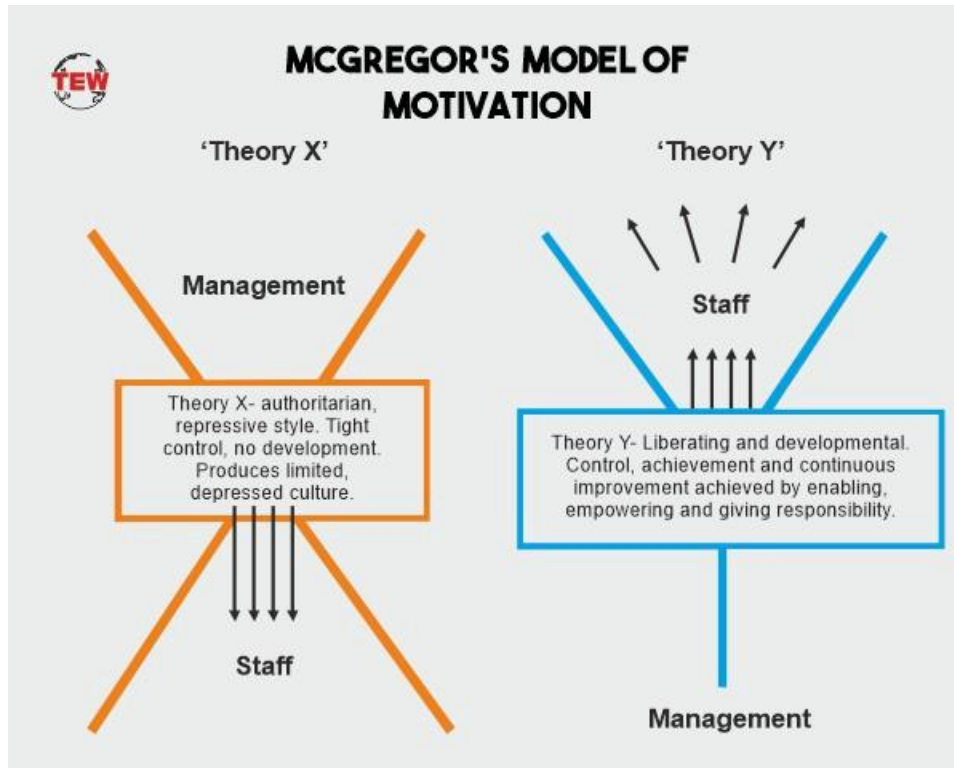


Source: (Muldoon et al., 2020)

In this way, Employees may able to share their innovative ideas regarding corporate success. This theory ultimately helped JD Sports to embrace greater compassion, flexibility and patience among staff members. This ultimately helps JD Sports to introduce new apprenticeship schemes for staff members. This theory helps JD sports to conduct better online wellbeing surveys for staff members. This theory mainly helps JD Sports to invest more upon employee development programs and recognition schemes to accomplish its long term objectives. In this way, JD Sports may able to create dedicated and inclusive learning experience for staff members (Muldoon, 2020). The main advantage of Human Relation Theory is that Firms can introduce new graduate and staff retention schemes to gain employee satisfaction. In this way, Employees are more willing to try different managerial roles and enhance business reputation. During COVID 19, Human Relation Theory was quite useful in promoting flexible working hours and create wider career advancement opportunities for staff members. This theory helps JD Sports to conduct honest group discussion with staff members regarding remote working policies and social distancing guidelines.

Overall, It is stated that Human Relation Theory ultimately promotes feeling of pride and cohesiveness among staff members. This theory mainly helps JD Sports to create high performing culture for staff members. Human Relation Theory is mainly associated with certain principles such as strong communication, greater authenticity and transparency among staff members. During this pandemic, JD Sports can apply Human Relation Theory to tackle multiple staffing issues and boost sales collections (Muldoon et al., 2020). The biggest drawback of Human Relation Theory is that it is quite theoretical and does not provide strategic roadmap regarding work. Many critics have stated that Human Relation Theory does not pay much attention towards business productivity.

Theory X and Theory Y: This theory mainly focuses upon different aspects of human behavior within the workplace. Theory X mainly states that employees do not like large responsibilities and often find difficult to accept change. On the other side, Theory Y mainly presents positive perspectives towards business operations. During this pandemic, JD Sports can use this theory to maintain greater control over employee's activity. In this way, JD Sports can concentrate upon decentralized approach, participative decision making process and create appropriate career development plan for staff members. During COVID 19, JD Sports can apply different Theory Y techniques to create better sick leave and compensation policies for their staff members. This mainly helps employees to become more accountable and sincere towards their job activities (Oluwakayode et al., 2017). Through this management theory, JD Sports may able to demonstrate certain core values such as innovation, respectfulness and creativity. The main advantage of Theory X and Theory Y is that it gives much emphasize upon external rewards, supervision and manage workflow systems. This theory ultimately help staff members to take up more responsibility and complete challenging tasks within a given time period. However, This theory is quite outdated and represented two different extremes which may affect employees productivity. Through this management theory, JD Sports can motivate their employees to become more ambitious and well organized at managing day to day tasks.



Source: (Oluwakayode et al., 2017)

During COVID 19, JD Sports can use this theory to reinforce mutual trust and job commitment among staff members. This theory is quite useful for creating virtual working environment for staff members. Using this theory, JD Sports can introduce its own video consultation services for staff members regarding day to day tasks (Tahir and Iraqi, 2018). Thus, Theory X and Theory Y is the most valuable management style for post COVID 19 success. According to Gartner HR practice Group, Around 80% companies use such theory to increase labor productivity. In this way, JD Sports can pay much attention towards contact tracing, temperature scanning and other training programs to enhance employee's performance. This theory may help JD Sports to introduce virtual training workshops for staff members.

Administrative Management Theory: It mainly involves clear division of labour, equal delegation and formal administrative structure. During COVID 19 pandemic, JD Sports can apply this theory to monitor balance sheets, profit margins and manufacturing procedures. This theory mainly helps JD Sports to promote greater self discipline, mutual collaboration and appropriate chain of command among staff members (Edwards, 2018). During COVID 19, JD Sports can use this theory to offer fair compensation packages to staff members. In this way, JD Sports can give appropriate freedom to staff members to carry out strategic plan. During COVID

19, The company can apply administrative principles to maintain proper stock of PPE equipments and monitor safety audits on regular basis.

This theory mainly helps JD Sports to create fair and balanced pay system for staff members. It may help JD Sports to introduce new safety training program for staff members. The main advantage of administrative management is that it firms can align employees performance with organizational goals. This theory mainly offers clear direction regarding day to day tasks and future career aspirations. However, Administrative Management often ignores informal structure and lacks scientific validity. This theory is broadly divided into five different elements which are as follows:

Planning: It is mainly regarded as important managerial function to create future plan for attaining business objectives. During COVID 19, JD Sports has also created strategic roadmap related to employee safety and resource allocation. For instance, The fashion retailer has conducted special health & safety meetings for staff members. The planning stage is quite essential to analyze the future developmental needs of employees. The company has mainly initiated flexible working policy to gain employee satisfaction. During this pandemic, JD Sports has also decided to establish online training programs for staff members.



Source: (Edwards, 2018)

Organizing: At this stage, Managers mainly develop suitable strategies to achieve weekly project milestones (Edwards, 2018). For instance, JD Sports often pays much attention towards raw materials, machinery and human resources to manage business operations. During this pandemic, JD Sports has mainly adopted flat structure to assign equal responsibilities among different functional departments.

Command: It is all about motivating employees to accomplish business goals. Here, The management team mainly requires strong interpersonal skills to increase employee motivation. For instance, JD Sports offers several benefits to staff members including Gym membership, Car allowance and Bike to work scheme (Peng and Kathuria, 2021). During this pandemic, The company has provided 15% discount to employees on the purchase of goods and services. In fact, JD has started its own 2 year personalized program to guide employees regarding different e-commerce platforms. The company has also established its own retail training academy to hire confident and bold young graduates.

Coordination: It is mainly concerned with scheduling business activities. This stage mainly requires huge support from different functional departments. For instance, JD Sports has introduced its online portal to interact with staff members regarding remote working policies and other safety guidelines. Here, Managers mainly requires strong communication skills to coordinate with staff members. During this pandemic, JD Sports has mainly conducts Bi-annual safety meetings to ensure employee safety.

Control: This stage is mainly concerned with evaluating employee's progress, monitoring quality standards. For instance, JD Sports mainly use 360 degree feedback and annual performance appraisal to monitor employee progress on regular basis (Edwards, 2018). During COVID 19, The company has mainly introduced New Supplier Code of Conduct to analyze improvement areas. JD Sports has mainly established Ethical Code of Practice to protect their staff members from unfair treatment.

Contingency Theory: This theory mainly demonstrates manager's capabilities of handling complex situation. This theory mainly helps JD Sports to become successful leader in global marketplace. Apart from this, Contingency Theory mainly focuses upon project timelines, situational factors and job responsibilities (Sunder and Prashar, 2020). During this pandemic, JD Sports can use contingency approach to build healthy and productive workforce. Through contingency Theory, JD Sports can encourage their staff members to perform creative tasks and become more specialized in different fields. This management style mainly encourages

staff members to become task oriented and confident. In this way, JD Sports may be able to pursue perfection in tracking employee progress and managing production activities on a regular basis (Alexander, 2017). During the COVID-19 pandemic, JD Sports can apply the Contingency approach to manage heavy workload and introduce new safety protocols for staff members.

This may help JD Sports to develop a contingency plan regarding PPE equipment, home working arrangements and employee vaccination. The main advantage of contingency theory is that employees can adapt themselves as per the changing business environment. During this pandemic, JD Sports can use the contingency approach to introduce a new leadership development program for staff members. This theory mainly helps businesses to modify their compensation policies as per employees' expectations (Sunder and Prashar, 2020). Through the Contingency Approach, JD Sports may be able to foster greater job commitment and happiness among staff members. Thus, the Contingency approach mainly helps JD Sports to pay much attention towards scheduling, workforce planning and goal attainment. The drawback of the contingency approach is that it is quite complex and often associated with inadequate literature.

From the above discussion, it is stated that the above management theories were quite useful for managing a diverse workforce. These management theories often give utmost importance to employees' safety, wellbeing and optimize working conditions. During this pandemic, JD Sports can apply these theories to build a highly talented and loyal workforce. These theories mainly help businesses to embrace greater accountability, self-actualization and higher team spirit among staff members. These theories mainly help JD Sports to serve itself as the best employer among subordinates. Management theories mainly inculcate greater kindness, tolerance and social equality among staff members.

Recommendations to tackle COVID 19 challenges

The current COVID 19 pandemic has made transformational changes in workplace attitudes and behaviors. In the last few decades, Organizations are constantly focusing upon employee wellness to increase business productivity. According to Gartner, 48% employees prefer to work in virtual environment. With the current pandemic, Owners are constantly shifting towards remote working practices to reshape employee's experience. Gartner has also showed that 16% employers are using different technologies to monitor employee progress. Some of them are virtual check in and out, controlling employees' emails and tracking working computers on regular basis. Modern Organization are focusing upon different employee monitoring tools to accomplish their goals (Peng and Kathuria, 2021). During COVID 19 recession, Around 32% organization are replacing full time employees to save money. Thus, JD Sports must offer better financial assistance to staff members including sick paid leave, child care provisions and adjusting working hours as per employee expectations. This may help JD Sports to build cohesive and innovative culture for staff members (Cerutti and Grodoski, 2020). Thus, Firms must shift towards new behaviors and norms to tackle COVID 19 issues. Some of them are described below:

Creating safe and hygienic environment: During this pandemic, Majority of employees are avoiding public surfaces including elevator buttons and doorknobs. Thus, JD Sports must implement new hygienic technology to ensure employee safety. The company must adopt one-way circulation strategies to create safer environment for staff members. Apart from this, JD Sports must use appropriate graphics and signals to inform employees regarding social distancing guidelines. On the other side, JD Sports must adopt new technologies such as IWMS systems and mobile communication to stay connected with staff members (Schwartz et al., 2020). JD Sports must introduce new Hygiene Hand EDC Door Opener to ensure employee safety. In this way, Organization can protect employees from dangerous equipments and tools. A better working environment mainly encourages employees to stay loyal towards business activities.

Developing Feeling of Togetherness: JD Sports must find innovative ways to stay connected with staff members during COVID 19. For instance, The fashion retailer can use Instagram to share relevant meals and holding online singing events for employees (Butterick and Chartwood, 2021). On the other side, JD Sports must use digital platforms to create sense of urgency among staff members regarding social distancing guidelines. In this way, JD Sports can

develop feeling of togetherness and strong team spirit among staff members. Apart from this, JD Sports can use Zoom, Google Meet and other video conferencing tools to interact with staff members. For instance, Organization can conduct online webinar to promote emotional and financial wellbeing of employees.

Mental Wellbeing programs: Psychological experts have stated that COVID 19 pandemic has adverse effect upon employee's health. Thus, JD Sports must develop efficient wellbeing strategies and surveys to reduce stress among staff members. For example, The fashion retailer must create separate "work free access" where employees can easily share their problems with others. Apart from this, JD Sports must introduce 1 hour break and coffee session for employees throughout stressful day. In this way, Employees may feel more valued and obliged towards supervisors (Cerutti and Grodoski, 2020). To tackle COVID 19 issues, Organization must maintain proper balance between private and communal space. For instance, JD Sports can introduce transparent phone booths to give extra private space to staff members. The company must create calm and private quiet rooms for frequent breaks and attending personal phone calls. This may help staff members to communicate effectively with senior supervisors. On the other side, JD Sports must establish new virtual meditation exercises to deliver greater emotional support to staff members.

Clear Communication Protocols: During COVID 19 recession, JD Sports must conduct live chat discussion to interact with staff members regarding personal safety. Thus, Strong Communication mainly reinforce job security and goodwill among staff members. In this way, Organization can make better decisions regarding future development needs. On the other side, JD Sports must incorporate clear communication protocols in their floor plan to convey right message among staff members (Butterick and Chartwood, 2021). Signage and graphic display is another effective way to deal with COVID 19 issues. The company must introduce new layouts to promote greater sense of accountability among staff members.

Conducting Virtual Cultural Initiative: Organization should make immense efforts to create better virtual environment for staff members. For instance, JD Sports can introduce new virtual coffee talks, book clubs or happy hours to increase employee engagement. In this way, Employees are willing to accomplish business objectives (Schwartz et al., 2020). On the other side, JD Sports can take advantage of digital collaboration tools such as Microsoft Teams and Google Meet to interact with staff members regarding new social distancing guidelines. They

must make regular video calls to staff members related to project work, deadlines and career plans. This may often develop greater sense of community among staff members.

Employee Recognition: In such financial crisis, Employees desire of being appreciated has been increased around 30%. According to Gartner, Recognition mainly serves as strong signals for staff members. Thus, JD Sports should focus upon low cost perks, public acknowledgment and thank you email to boost employee satisfaction. For instance, JD Sports can conduct simple pulse surveys to analyze potential areas of recognition. Managers can use Instagram Stories to share successful and inspirational stories of employees (Peng and Kathuria, 2021). JD Sports can introduce new virtual recognition event to appreciate employees for their contributions. On the other side, JD Sports must encourage staff members to innovate new things. Apart from this, JD Sports must collaborate with freelancers and educational universities to provide wider career opportunities to staff members.

From above discussion, It is stated that JD Sports must adopt following strategies to build resilient workforce in future time period. They must focus upon talent sharing partnerships to build strong employee base. The company should make certain modifications in their supply chain and working schedules to increase employee participation.

Conclusion

The report has concluded that workplace values and attitude has deep impact upon employees' performance. It has been indicated that strong core values mainly motivates staff members to perform well. The report has analyzed that JD Sports also conducts face to face training sessions and mental health awareness week campaign to boost employee confidence. It has mainly illustrated different management theories including scientific management, contingency and human relation theory. The report has suggested that firms can resolve COVID 19 issues through flexible working hours, employee recognition and ensuring all safety protocols.

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