

Exploring the Factors that Drive Organizational Resilience: Lessons from Healthcare

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Abstract

In the face of a disruptive event or prolonged period of stress, resilient performance is characterized by preventative measures, effective response, and the integration of lessons learned. In healthcare, resilience significantly affects patient safety. However, current guidelines for healthcare performance assessment, such as the Triple Aim, do not consider physician satisfaction and preventative measures against burnout. In addition, process improvement projects in healthcare often have a negative impact on resilience by over-standardizing processes. This research utilizes Resilience Engineering approaches to evaluate organizational resilience in one emergency department and two primary care case study examples. A qualitative method is applied to gain understanding of characteristics of resilient employees and learning behaviors that impact overall resilience. Frequency of single and double loop learning behaviors are observed and a resilient healthcare system is defined as one in which all organizational actors exhibit double loop learning behaviors. Results give insights into the relationship between individual and organizational resilience by adapting resilient systems attributes and capabilities to healthcare settings. A typology based on the dimensions of organizational and individual resilience is presented, providing a mode for healthcare managers and academic professionals to characterize resilience in specific organizations.

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