SOCIAL DISTANCING AND ORGANISATIONAL LEARNING OF INSTITUTIONS IN THE POST-PANDEMIC CRISIS. A SOCIOLOGICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH

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Abstract. This paper focuses on social distancing and organisational learning of institutions in the post-pandemic crisis. The empirical material consists of in-depth interviews with cultural managers. Data analysis was framed within a qualitative grounded theory methodology as a dynamic, intuitive and creative process of inductive reasoning, thinking and theorizing. The data were subsequently assigned into categories of identified themes or topics compiled in the study. The coding process yielded over 160 concepts, of which 140 relevant ones were eventually used, creating a total of 6 categories: (1) privacy and security; (2) social distancing; (3) identity; (4) learning and support; (5) digitalization; (6) initiative and autonomy. The core category that emerged from these six categories is *security, social networks and organisational sustainability*. So as to analyse the chosen problems authors use a philosophical and sociological approach, that is based mainly on criticism of writing and the analytical and synthetic method. This study describes the phases of organisational learning and reveals turning points in understanding the future implications of events critical to the creation of new context-specific knowledge initiated during the COVID-19 pandemic. Inspired by research that has demonstrated the positive effects of focus on employees' well-being and cognitive performance in change management, the current research aims to explore the social background of structural changes. This reasoning is rooted in the analysis of several mediating concepts such as social distancing, experience, language, social interaction and perspective taking. The outcomes of the research are significant as they provide recommendations that target crucial issues of organisational changes and barriers during the crisis situation understood in terms of disaster management.

Keywords: social distancing; organisational learning; security; digitalization; sutainability; social networks

1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic outbreak is known worldwide, as its life-changing effects have a global reach. It required many societies and economies to enforce restrictions, aimed to contain the spread of the virus. In order to achieve these goals, a number of constraints maintaining social distancing were critical (Babapour et. al., 2022). The impact of the pandemic is difficult to describe and assess (Xu et. al., 2021). We still do not have full knowledge of the long-term consequences of the social and economic crisis. It has opened up new areas for studies (Rich et al., 2014). Research borders of scientific fields which have been formed over the years are promptly changing. The transformations induced are permanent and structural (Papava et al., 2021a; Papava

et al., 2021b; Nicola et al., 2020; Besenyő, Kármán, 2020; Humeniuk et al., 2021; Okunola, Fakunle, 2021; Periokaite, Dobrovolskiene, 2021).

In this paper, we propose to discuss a new analytical category for the study, which seems to be relatively undervalued in social research: social distancing and organisational learning in the conditions of the post-pandemic crisis. Organisational learning in the literature refers to descriptions of an organisation's ability to acquire knowledge and adapt to a changing environment (Marsick et. al., 2003; Raudeliūnienė et al., 2020). This process is based on the previous experiences, what organisations have learned from the past and how they have withdrawn with the previous crisis situations. As earlier research has shown, the impact of this crisis and the ability of organisations to cope with it vary considerably depending on their type, economic sector and approach to personnel management (Ataus, 2015). While some institutions are better prepared to face the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences by achieving a high level of organisational resilience, others are still struggling with problems resulting from the forced e-transformation of work (Bhaskara et. al., 2021). The systematic literature review directs attention to the positive and negative effects of remote working (Babapour et al., 2022; Bailey et al., 2021). The positives include increased flexibility, autonomy, job satisfaction and better work-life balance (Tzoraki, et al., 2021). On the other hand, many negative effects of remote working are apparent. These mainly include social and professional isolation, increased emotional exhaustion, and reduced supervision by managers, increased stress and cognitive overload (Bhaskara et al., 2021. The question is how those changes influence organisational learning?

There is certainly a lack of empirical, qualitative work dedicated to this issue. The conceptual framework for the analysis is based on the concepts used by the participants in the qualitative interviews, managers of cultural institutions who have been responsible for staff management continuously since the beginning of the pandemic. This perspective provides insights into organisational learning beyond quantitative research, broadening the analysis to include issues of security, well-being and supportive leadership. Although the action-oriented approach in management science often excludes experiences as a meaningful object of research, it is difficult in light of many empirical studies to overlook the social component from the analysis of organisational learning in the post-pandemic crisis conditions. We did not impose our theoretical assumptions during the study. Interview participants themselves evoked conceptual categories related to social distancing, security, employees' wellbeing, sustainability and creation of a supportive organisational culture. The study is of descriptive-explanatory nature. The research provides an opportunity to critically assess the potential of institutions to innovate in management and create new context-specific knowledge embedded in organisational cultures. The spring 2021 study also allows for relevant comparisons to be made in terms of approaches to the management of cultural institutions during the pandemic, capturing key milestones affecting the organisational learning process of the selected institutions and describing how the analysis of social interactions can reveal issues related to cultural learning. This approach provides an opportunity to explore the functions of language, communication, interpretation and adaptability, understood as philosophical and sociological thinking.

The paper is structured as follows: section 2 outlines the theoretical background of organisational learning, section 3 provides an overview of the methodology, while section 4 highlights the research findings. The discussion in Section 5 provides answers to the research question in the light of previous findings and theoretical background. Section 6 implies research limitations and directions of future studies. Finally, Section 7 brings the research conclusions.

2. Theoretic Background

Organisational learning is a recognised mainstream theme in social science research. The theory explains how knowledge is created, retained and shared within an organization (Popova-Nowak et. al., 2015; Nussbaum, 2008). It is supported by the statement that organisations evolve over time and gain experience on how knowledge could be created and implemented in shaping organisational competencies (Drejer, 2010). The process is perceived as the tool for coping with uncertain organisational problems as well as adapting in the times of unexpected changes. Learning in organisations has been of interest to the social sciences since the 1960s

(Drejer, 2000). Approaches to learning processes are interpreted differently by researchers of this phenomenon. The question of empirical verifiability of theoretically grounded concepts is also controversial. The literature is dominated by studies of a theoretical nature (Sims, 1983). Empirical studies most often involve quantitative research aimed at testing developed survey questionnaires (Sinkula et al., 1997). Based on the literature review, we analyse the most important approaches addressing this problem. As the first is recalled the assumption that organisational learning is conditioned by three elements (Sinkula et. al., 1997). 1. Shared vision and goals, which form the basis of organisational learning, guide the process and give it meaning; 2. Commitment to learning, which makes organisational learning effective; 3. Open-mindedness, which enables organisational participants to critically examine existing routines and beliefs, to "unlearn" old habits and practices in the process of change, and to modify their behavior.

Another approach (Goh et al., 1997) pays attention to five dimensions of organisational learning: 1.Clarity of purpose and mission, which is the degree of clarity with which employees perceive the organisation's vision and mission and understand how they can contribute to achieving it; 2.Leadership, i.e. the extent to which management supports employee learning and initiates behaviours that encourage a culture of experimentation and change; 3.Experimentation, i.e. the degree to which employees have freedom in the way they achieve their goals and take risks; 4.Transfer of knowledge, i.e. the extent to which management systems are used to enable learning from previous failures, learning from other people and organisations; 5.Teamwork and group problem solving, i.e. the extent to which teamwork is practised in the organisation in solving problems and creating innovations. It is worth mentioning the concept of V.J. Marsick and K.E. Watkins, who points to four dimensions of learning at the organisation level (Marsick et al., 2003): 1. Encourage collaboration and team learning, i.e. actions that support and reward collaboration and the use of different opinions in decision-making; 2. Use systems to capture and share learning; 3. Empower people - delegation and responsibility, involving employees in creating and implementing the organisation's vision, making decisions as close to implementation as possible; 4. Connect the organisation to its environment, i.e. create conditions in which employees can identify the effects of their work in connection with processes occurring in the organisation's environment. A similar proposal for analysing organisational learning (Gómez-Rey et al., 2021) distinguishes four dimensions of organisational learning capacity. In each of these stages, the manager's role as a guide in the change process is particularly important: 1. Managerial commitment to learning: managers should understand the importance of a culture that promotes organisational learning and supports its development; 2. A systems perspective: managerial thinking unites members of the organisation around a common identity and the achievement of goals; 3. Openness and experimentation: managers are open to new ideas, experimentation and controlled risk taking; 4. Knowledge transfer and integration: analysing and learning from mistakes and failures, using knowledge repositories, having open discussions about new ideas and initiatives.

It is important reffering another analytical perspective provided by David Kolb (McLeod, 2017). In his theory, the impetus for the development of new concepts is provided by new experiences and knowledge is created through the transformation of experience (Sims, 1993). Accordingly to the experiential learning theory, knowledge is not a given asset. It is a constantly recreated process which transforms the interrelated subjective and objective experience. The model includes the four phases: 1. Concrete experience- a new experience or situation is encountered, or a reinterpretation of existing experience; **2. Reflective observation of the new experience -** of particular importance are any inconsistencies between experience and understanding; **3. Abstract conceptualization** reflection gives rise to a new idea, or a modification of an existing abstract concept (the person has learned from their experience). **4. Active experimentation** - the learner applies their idea(s) to the world around them to see what happens.

Summarizing, organisational learning theory assumes that organisations learn at various levels (Popper, 2000), individual and group, organizational, inter-organisational. Learning requires knowledge. It is important to underline the distinction between the different types of knowledge in that context (Betlej, 2014). The explicit one is of factual and declarative nature. It is easily communicated because of being codifiable. The tacit knowledge is implicit, experimental, and procedural. It is highly contextual and acquired through experience. Tacit knowledge is embedded in concrete actions, activities, and social situations. Thus, it is difficult to articulate. A

new research perspective is provided by the pandemic (Chamakiotis et al., 2021). The few studies on organizational learning in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic attempt to answer the question about its impact on managerial practice (Brandão et al., 2021). There is a need to answer the questions about the process in cultural institutions perceived from the managerial perspective and to underline the importance of social perspective in researching the given process. Previous empirical studies have applied various theoretic frameworks to explore organisation learning phenomenon (Bailey, et al., 2021). In line with the social learning theory, it is stated that learning is a process embedded in social interactions and is based on observing people's behaviors to change their outcomes (Bailey et al., 2021). The social point of view is based on statements that organisations are socially constructed and negotiated. The knowledge is created through social interactions. During the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic most organisations have moved to remote and online formats of work and related activities (Gómez-Rey et al., 2021). Digital innovations have affected their development and organizational changes in many respects (Aleksejeva et. al., 2021; Androniceanu et al., 2021; Bedianashvili, 2021; Lavrinenko et al., 2022). It is therefore an important task to analyse the organisational learning of institutions in a post-pandemic crisis and to define the turning points of this process.

3. Research Method and Materials

3.1. Research Design

The primary data collection is based on a qualitative research method. It aims to provide rich descriptions of a selected phenomenon, such as the ways of perceiving organisational learning during the COVID-19 pandemic and the post-pandemic crisis, assessed from the managerial perspective. The researchers assume that the process of building a particular conception of social reality is closely related to the type of research conducted and the specificity of the analytical material collected (data are qualitative in nature). This approach identified as philosophical and sociological enables better understanding of the important social, economic, and cultural issues of interest, such as adaptability, collaboration, implementation of innovative technologies, social innovations and change management in the context of the post-pandemic crisis (Gondek, 2020; Gondek, 2021). The research analyses have been theoretically grounded, but the theory explains the different ways of interpreting organizational learning and helps identify possible contexts of analysis without structuring the research results (Gondek, 2021). The approach is based mainly on criticism of writing and the analytical and synthetic method, i.e., a constructive approach which goes beyond the paradigm of cause-and-effect thinking (Patton, 1990). The qualitative orientation of research seems to be the most appropriate for exploring the sensitive problems from the managerial point of view. The main research problems undertaken in the paper were defined by the following main questions: *How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted on organisational learning of institutions? How do managers describe the most important turning points in organisational learning? How can we predict the future implications of critical events for creation of a new and context-specific knowledge?* A grounded theory approach developed by (Strauss et al., 1998; Glaser et al., 1967) was used to investigate the sensitive issues of organizational learning in the chosen institutions. The data were collected through semi-structured in-depth, open-ended interviews.

3.2. Participants/Sampling

To select the participants, the researchers followed the purposive sampling strategy of maximum variation (Fusch et al., 2015), which was initiated by "identifying differential characteristics or criteria for constructing the sample" (Fusch et al., 2015). In this research, the identified important factor was professional experience: managerial seniority and/or managing a complex organisational structure, with many task teams throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, without major interruptions. The snowball sampling technique was applied to target the cultural managers. The sample consisted of 12 respondents. Participation was voluntary. There were no expectations for compensation. The participants were informed about the purpose of the study, the research data management procedure adopted by the researcher and about anonymity. The interviewees were also assured of their right to refuse to participate in or to withdraw from the study at any stage. They all have agreed to participate in the interviews. The participants are identified by codes in the study. The study protocol was

approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin. The second sampling method used in the study was theoretical sampling/data saturation (Fusch et al., 2015). The logic of this approach is based on the assumption that on the basis of the data that have been collected and analyzed hitherto, further data collection is unnecessary, as the implementation of additional interviews would not significantly contribute to solving the research problem.

3.3. Data Collection

The current study is based on the semi-structured in-depth interviews (IDI) which were conducted in Poland in 2021 and ranged from 0, 45 to 1, 5 h on average. It was preceded by a pilot study of 3 managers in February 2021 to validate the study protocol and research questions. The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. The transcription process took between 3 and 5 h for each interview and after the procedure authors analyzed the data. The interviews covered the same topics with a possibility of adding new issues important for the respondents or that emerged during the conversation. The accuracy of the transcription was checked again by the researchers at the end of the study. This procedure involved re-listening to the interviews and comparing the transcripts with the audio tapes of the interviews to correct any transcription errors. Transcriptions of the interviews were read several times, following the grounded theory method that allows for a reflexive understanding of the managers' experiences in exploring turning points and discoveries that could be indicative of organisational learning of institutions. The transcripted data was coded using an inductive approach to identify concepts/themes representing the managerial experiences in organizational learning of the institutions in the post-pandemic crisis. The second method to rigour in the determination of the analyzed concepts was ensured through checking twice every code. Reliability in coding was ensured by inter-coder analysis of the coded data. All coding was done by Author 1 and after the procedure the Author 2 checked and approved the developed code system. Krippendorff's alpha coefficient (α) was used to quantify the extent of agreement between the coders. The coefficient values could range from 0 to 1, where 0 is perfect disagreement, and 1 is perfect agreement. Krippendorff suggests requiring $\alpha \geq 0.8$. Where tentative conclusions are still acceptable, $\alpha \geq 0.667$ is the lowest conceivable limit" (Krippendorff, 2018). In the study Krippendorff's alpha coefficient (α) was found to be 0.87, and the agreement between the two sets of coding was interpreted by Authors as strong. Accordingly to the second data sampling method which was data saturation, during the current analysis of the interviews with the participants, by the ninth interview about 90% of all codes were identified. This fact is explained in the literature as data saturation, i.e., a situation in which the implementation of additional interviews would not significantly contribute to solving the research problem (Fusch et al., 2015). It is therefore assumed that the sample size was not a limitation of the research objectives.

3.4. Data Analysis

The gathered data were very subjective and rich. Thus, the analysis entailed reading a large amount of transcripts looking for similarities or differences, finding themes and developing categories. The transcriptions of the interviews were read several times. The collected data were evaluated using the chosen coding approach interpreted as conceptual abstraction involving the assignment of general concepts (codes) to individual incidents occurring in the data. Data analysis was framed within a qualitative grounded theory methodology as a dynamic, intuitive and creative process of inductive reasoning, thinking and theorizing (Silverman, 2000). The study is based on three kinds of coding procedures: open, axial, and selective coding to analyze the data collected through the interviews (Strauss et al., 1998; Glaser et al., 1967). Open coding was focused on the conceptualization and categorization of phenomena through an intensive analysis of the data. Axial coding was implemented to investigate the relationships between concepts and categories that have been developed in the open coding process. The last phase of selective coding was adopted in order to integrate the different categories that have been developed, elaborated, validated and mutually related during axial coding into one cohesive theory. To reach these goals, the researchers focused on the exploration of turning points of organizational learning of the institutions in a post-pandemic crisis.The process of data analyzing predominantly involved coding or categorizing the data and was the most important stage in the process. The researchers reduced the raw information, then identified meaningful patterns and hidden meanings from the data to build a logical chain

of evidence. The data were subsequently assigned into categories of identified themes or topics compiled in the study. The process of conducting interviews and the analysis of their transcripts were carried out in Polish language and translated to English.
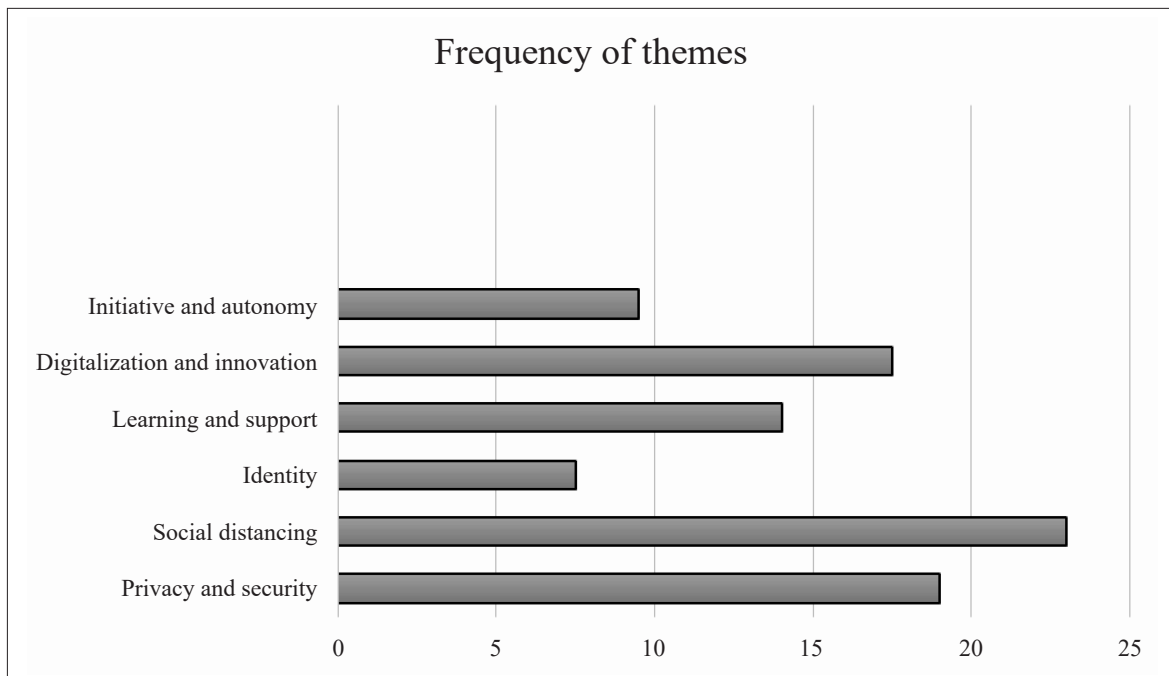
4. Results

In total, the coding process yielded over 160 concepts, of which 140 relevant concepts were eventually used, creating a total of 6 categories. The number of concepts in each category ranged from 11 to 23. These categories include: (1) privacy and security; (2) social distancing; (3) identity; (4) learning and support; (5) digitalization; (6) initiative and autonomy (see Table 1). The core category that emerged from these six categories is *security, social networks and organisational sustainability*. The categories that emerged are presented in the following section along with illustrative quotes of the interviewees.

Table 1. Themes and sub-themes representing how cultural managers describe
organizational learning of institutions in the post-pandemic crisis.

No.	Themes	Sub-Themes	Quote
1.	**Privacy and security**	Data safety	"*Even ensuring safe storage and making regular back-ups of organisational data was the problem at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic*" (Participant 1, male)
		Personal and social security	"*In the first period, we had to deal primarily with the challenges of personnel management. We were primarily focused on countering negative emotions, fears, anxieties and ensuring the safety of our own employees*" (Participant 2, female)
		Digital privacy	"*Many employees had problems with loosing control over personal information published on Internet, e.g. sharing their image posted by their managers*" (Participant 3, male)
2.	**Social distancing**	-	"*We know that all these activities on the Internet are necessary, but nevertheless we sense subconsciously that this is a prosthesis of what should be, that we have a need for this direct contact*" (Participant 4, female)
3.	**Identity**	Feeling of belonging	"*Remote work had many downsides as loosing feeling of belonging to the specific workplace* "(Participant 8, male)
		Common goals	"*It was crucial to understand we have the same goals, the same future*" (Participant 12, female)
4.	**Learning and support**	Training/ self-paced learning	"*At the beginning many employees had to self-taught to use electronic devices at work*" (Participant 5, male)
		Technical support	"*The ICT department had to redefine its functions in supporting human management processes*" (Participant 6, male)
		Social support	"*The most important competence to work during the post- pandemic crisis is empathy and flexibility*" (Participant 7, female)
5.	**Digitalization**	Access to resources	"*We strengthened all the online tools, including recording*" (Participant 9, male)
		Ease of Use	"*We can work remotely via many electronic devices without any extra training*" (Participant 10, female)
		Innovation	"*The pandemic has shortened by five years such a transfer of culture to the internet, even when it comes to conferences, meetings*" (Participant 11, male)
6.	**Initiative and autonomy**	Acceptance of new rules of the game	"*We should simply start working normally and develop ourselves as an institution...*" (Participant 12, male)
		Focus on tasks	"*As they say, we have started doing the usual things again, only under unusual conditions…*" (Participant 8, male)

The themes contributed to organizational learning model in the post-pandemic crisis as perceived by cultural manager in a different extent (See Figure 1).

Frequency of themes

Initiative and autonomy
Digitalization and innovation
Learning and support
Identity
Social distancing
Privacy and security

0   5   10   15   20   25

Figure 1. Distribution of the themes that contribute to organisational learning of institutions in the post-pandemic crisis.

4.1. Privacy and security

Participants of the interviews expressed the iporantance of privacy and security while introducing organizational changes durint the COVID-19 pandemic. The concepts of personal data protection, privacy, organizational security, social security have not been considered imperative by institutions before.

"*At the beginning of the pandemic these have become primary issues. The protection of personal data, whether in its physical or digital dimension, unequivocally has required organizations to reinforce protection measures. This effort that has been put to institutions in monitoring and controlling the flows of personal data was a very importatnt factor that determined the orientations of organizational learning through of all the stages*" (Participant 3, male)

"*Likewise, cultural institutions were not prepared for this challenge at the early beginnings of the pandemic, it soon became essential to guide employees and the audience of the cultural offers in the process of learning new digital security practices, ensuring safer and more effective interactions with all of the stakeholders*" (Participant 5, male)

The initial phase of the period of confinement and social isolation showed that social security is a key tool of organizational learning in the context of distaster management.

"*The social uncertainty that prevailed in Poland was also transferred to the institutions. In the first period, we had to deal primarily with the challenges of personnel management. We were primarily focused on countering negative emotions, fears, anxieties and ensuring the safety of our own employees*" (Participant 2, female)

The initial phase of the pandemic, brought managers to face the greatest number of problems with communication and knowledge exchange among employees.

"*Organizational dynamics has changed dramatically and has effected employees' low sense of security which has reflected on organizational interactions*" (Participant 10, female)

"*(..) then there was a lack of such constancy in taking new decisions, because the changeability of the situation and concern for employees is something that, believe me, keeps me up at night*" (Participant 4, female)

Importantly, the managers in their descriptions went beyond individual perspective and interpret the processes through the more general overview. Thus, is might be concluded that the starting point for social learning in

organizations came down to privacy security ensuring during the initial phase and to development of organizational culture to support the privacy and security in all of the contexts, form individual and social to organizational and environmental.

4.2. Social distancing

Social distancing was described differently accordingly to the phased of the pandemic. At the initial stage it was crucial for institutions to support employees in achiving organizational goals under the new conditions. It was also important to be successful in sustaining its daily acitivity and relations with the audience of cultural events.

"*What i remember as a very difficult was the efforts to maintain a high level of performance and good communications with our audience and artists which have cooperated with us a long before. It has took a lot of time to overcome the downsides of remote working and online events first performed in a very old-fashion form*" (Participant 5, male)

"*However, in the area of contact between the artist and the audience, we did not have such developed tools that we could say that the distance was then quickly shortened. This caused various perturbations on a mental, intellectual and artistic level*" (Participant 9, male)

Social distancing brought both benefits and risks for mental health and traditional work environments arrangements, which were asesseted diffently along with the time of the pandemic widespread.

"*All the time we were afraid that people will be afraid of close contact. Which, for many cultural institutions, would make it impossible to continue certain activities*" (Participant 7, female)

"*Using ICTs and various digital innovations, we learned together with our employees how to rebuild social ties at the organisational level, how to sustain our structure despite social distancing*" (Participant 2, female)

4.3. Identity

Social distancing revealed unexpected problems arising with loosing identity with the workplace. These were uncertainty, inability to refer to previous experiences, guidelines for managing similar crisis situations, as well as limited forecasting capabilities.

"*I remember how we were loosing our essential feeling of belonging to our workplaces. And the people needed to feel that they do still belong to the institution instead of any new circumstances, even when they cannot work in its walls*" (Participant 8, male)

"*We had to create alse our digital identity to fully benefit from innovations and new or rearranged sollutions*" (Participant 10, female)

"*It is so clear now that strong identity with the workplace implies better productivity and sense of security among employees. But, what I want to underline, it is not so easy in practice to develop such a strong identity in a crisis situation. It becomes moreasy when we got used to the pandemic and accepted it with all of its consequences*" (Participant 1, male)

"*Before the pandemic started, our employees had derived identity throuht their roles in organizational structures and formal or/and informal communities. Social interactions had mediated in development of identity. And at the beginning of the pandemic, we all had the feeling of crossing the different and unknown culture with no negotiated norms, values or behavioral schemes*" (Participant 6, male)

The online meetings, small talks was seen to support the "micro-moments" of community despite the distance. Strengthening the virtually-based teams has started to be dependent upon creating the feeling of being connected despite regulations on social distancing.The managers' assignments in cultural institutes, such as individuals meetings and supporting talks, coaching, training and providing help in crisis situations, entailed their worktime.

4.4. Learning and support

Learning and support has been revealed to be very relevant during the post-pandemic crisis in all of the instututions under study. Implications of social distancing influenced the work routines and virtual relationships.

"*Many employees have approached remote working for the first time and were disoriented. They have talked about enormous pressure and expectations to use tools (electronic) they have never worked with or to follow by new norms, work practices which were completely incomprehensible to them*" (Participant 2, female)

Managers also underlined the importence of another turning point, which was providing employees with the new technological infrastructure used during remote working. Moreover, the employees expected managers to provide them with technology-related support.

"*We have started to give the people time to experiment with new technologies and to share their experiences or expectations what should be changed for better woring*" (Participant 7, female)

"*We had to set up a clear line between the private life and remote working for supporting employees' wellbeing*" (Participant 11, male)

"*Of course, we have not been prepared for remote working at the initial phase of the pandemic but it has been changed very quicly as we starting to learn how to learn and support each other*" (Participant 12, male)

4.5. Digitalization and innovation

The idea of digitalization has brought about a whole new meaning. Managers underlined that the COVID-19 pandemic impacted digital transformation of the institutions. The assessment of these changes differ in case of the phase of the pandemic. The early stage brought low individual and social acceptance new technological-based soluttions by employees. The situation has been changing from negation because of embeddedness legacy systems or established corporate culture.

"*The problem was we to often have focused on the technological aspect of digitalization and neglect the human part in the digital initiatives*" (Participant 10, female)

"*We did not understand the people side of digital transformation. We were focued on tools instead of its users*" (Participant 9, male)

"*Yes, I should say, now my institutions is a technology-based learning organization. We have gone throught all of the stages of the transformation, from neglation to individual and group strategic learning*" (Participant 6, male)

"*We were successfule in integrating technology into organizational learning processes to grow and compete in the environment, but success came later, when we got used to work in a post-pandemic conditions*" (Participant 4, female)

"*The key lessons learned with respect to the digitalization include clear goal, learning and sharing knowledge, developing new knowledge and building a supportive organizational culture*" (Participant 2, female)

"*It was important to establish contacts with other cultural institutions of this kind, thanks to instant messaging we could get to know each other without having to meet in a stationary form*" (Participant 1, male)

"*We strengthened all the online tools, including recording. And we strengthened the publishing policy very strongly, new releases, new albums. On top of that we launched sales, because before it was very common, it was given away*" (Participant 11, male)

"*At the very beginning, we started to prepare videos for our audiences, placed online, on our website. We managed to introduce a new educational path for deaf and dumb people. We have developed a virtual tour of the museum (..)*" (Participant 9, male)

"*The pandemic shortened by five years such a transfer of culture to the internet, even when it comes to conferences, meetings. The Covid-19 pandemic also showed how backward we were. Knowing the tools and having the possibilities, we often put off doing certain things. I'm talking about the whole industry in general (..)*" (Participant 1, male)

The managers decribed digitalization as a tool of technological and social innovation in institutions.

4.6. Initiative and autonomy

Managers explained that supporting employees in a learning process implied better achieving of organizational goals. What is important, they described inndividual well-being as a crucial factor of overcoming early problems with organizational learning under the COVID-19 pandemic conditions.

"*After a few months we had better knowledge about the psychological and social impacts of remote working on informed decision-making and proactive interventions taken by our workers. They started to go with initiatives and I have them autonomy in decision-making. This was important for organizational learning*" (Participant 2, female)

"*I understood, as a manager, that new work conditions may enhance well-being of employees as well as their performance as active and autonomous participant of organizational change*" (Participant 4, female)

The interviews participant underlined the importance of the mediating inner mechanisms, namely motivation and the fulfilment of basic social needs, to provide structure for working under the new conditions.

"*If someone was not doing their job, they beard the usual consequences. The COVID-19 pandemic was no longer a prism for justifying everything*" (Participant 5, male)

"*The most important competence to work during the post- pandemic crisis is empathy and flexibility*" (Participant 7, female)

The core category that emerged from these six categories is *security, social networks and organizational sustainability*.

5. Discussion

Several concepts and practices related to knowledge management, organisational culture, continuous business improvement, fostering organisational collectivity and individual employee learning have received considerable attention in previous research (Bhaskara et al., 2021; Brandão et al, 2021 Nussbaum, 2008; Scheff, 1990). The development of specific models of organisational learning has also been the focus of attention in order to achieve sustainable organization patterns (Popper et al., 2000; Rich et al., 2014). The earlier studies have shown the importance of empirically capturing and reusing knowledge from previous case studies (Cooley, 1909; Goh et al., 1997). Issues of experiential learning and referring to institutions' previous experiences in implementing innovations were at the forefront of the analysis for a long time. However, these results did not answer the question of whether institutions engaged in accelerated digital transformation in a post-pandemic crisis environment are learning in a way that is adequate to the pace of change of their business environment.

Our findings propose a new analytical framework for analysing organisational learning in the context of the post-pandemic crisis. It goes beyond the life cycle model and familiar interpretive schemes. The organisational learning of institutions is a complex process linked to many factors. The economic and health context does not provide a definitive framework for analysis, but rather guides the research (Rich et al., 2014). The results suggest that individual and social learning, interaction, experience management, openness to social and technological innovation play an important role in disaster management. This is evident in the six categories under study in the interviews: 1) Privacy and security; 2) Social distancing; 3) Identity; 4) Learning and support; 5) Digitalisation and innovation; 6) Initiative and autonomy. These results despite many similarities differ from the previous studies on this topic. The organisational learning of institutions during a post-pandemic crisis is fundamentally different from the learning models known from the literature. It is a two-loop dynamic learning that accepts the assumption of limited strategic foresight and the need to explore new solutions.The operation of institutions in a post-pandemic crisis necessitates a reorientation of strategic thinking. The more uncertain the external environment was in the opinion of managers, the better the institutions were oriented towards implementing radical innovations and creativity in personnel management. It was evident that the disaster has affected all of the institutions and influenced their security and effectiveness on the early COVID-19 stages.

This study reveals the need to redefine the concept of organisational learning for institutions in times of crises caused by natural disasters. In the literature this situation is explained in reports on disaster planning and the role of information management at the global and local level (Xu, 2021; Schärrer et al., 2021). This is in line with reports on the state of knowledge management in cultural institutions in Poland (Report "Culture in the times of the COVID-19 pandemic",2021). What is new, the issue of social distancing was brought to the forefront of the analysis. The downsides of remote working were interpreted through the prism of social ties and the need to develop tools to support social networks constituted in pre-pandemic times. Furthermore, there is a need to incorporate aspects of safety, social networks and organisational sustainability into the organisational learning model to highlight the importance of employees' remote working experiences and managers' experiences in ensuring organisational well-being and sustainability. The study demonstrated the importance of creativity and radical innovation, which proved to be an implication of developing a culture of support and social safety to overcome the social distancing crisis.

Furthermore, the results confirm the positive impact of organisational learning on organizational resilience (Ruck et al., 2021; Roblek et al., 2021; Rembierz, 2021 a), Rembierz, 2021 b)). The organisational learning of the institution had a particularly strong positive impact on the adaptive capacity of organisational resilience. To build learning capacity, managers fostered an open system culture in their organisation aimed at providing security, developing social networks and organisational sustainability to withstand adversity. During the organisational crisis, managers took the opportunity to change the organisational structure to improve information flow, contextual knowledge creation and organisational learning through digital innovations that sustained social interactions. All of the institutions simultaneously faced the same stages of crisis albeit with different levels of digitalization. The faster institutions implemented digital innovations, the better they adapted to changes in their environment. The need to operate online and work remotely has forced many institutions to take an accelerated course in digital transformation. A key stage of organisational learning has been the inclusion of the institution's digitisation process as part of a long-term, strategic vision for development. Changing the model to the more conducive one to effective remote collaboration has also been crucial in the organisational learning process. The issue that has come to the forefront of the analysis is undoubtedly the employees' and organisational safety considered in the context of accelerated digital transformation. In none of the previous theoretical models of organisational learning has the issue of security been considered as an independent element of organizational change (Krechowicz et al., 2021).

Previous studies have supported organisational learning through the sharing of tacit and experiential knowledge (Krechowicz et al., 2021). Additionally, some research has been performed in the context of COVID-19 pandemic (Schärrer et al., 2021). On the other hand, learning by experiences from previous situations is often equivalent to single-loop learning (Tzoraki et al., 2021). This approach does not fit the institution's management in the times of disasters. Considering this problem, this study argues that organizational learning of institutions in a post-pandemic crisis is based on analyzing dynamic environmental changes and supporting social networks in organisations. The problems occur when the organizational knowledge developed through experience is not compatible with the transforming environment (Betlej, 2021). The subject literature review gave many diverging options on that matter (Ruck et al., 2021; Gómez-Rey et al., 2021; Krechowicz et al., 2021). Importantly, social and cultural factors have been shown to play an important role in the acceptance of change management, as highlighted in many studies (Vasilyeva et al., 2021; Rembierz, 2021 (b); Betlej, 2021; Nicola et al., 2021). Comparing these results only in an explanatory manner, it should be stressed that the findings framed the themes to be analyzed as the phases of organizational learning, and these are analyzed through social needs perspective (Betlej et al., 2021; Roblek et al., 2021; Tvaronavičienė et al., 2021; Wiltgen, 2021). The most important need is security understood within the context of new technologies implementation (Komorowski, 2021; Betlej, 2014; Betlej et al. 2021; Lavrinenko et al., 2022). The model of organisational learning under the post-pandemic crisis conditions is based on a bottom up perspective (Chamakiotis et al., 2021). Starting from describing and analyzing an individual's learning, to macro-structural entanglements of the phenomenon. This is not an exclusively cognitive problem. In summary, the most important turning points of organisational learning in the post-pandemic crisis were ensuring security in the digital shift, sustaining virtual social networks and supporting organisational sustainability.

6. Research Limitations and Directions for Future Research

The findings display some limitations due to the research method applied. A qualitative method does not provide data enabling a holistic and systemic approach to the problem. However, the chosen method seems to be the most suitable for studing social distancing and organisational learning problems in conditions of the post-pandemic crisis. A micro-level approach seems to be the most appropriate within that context, despite the difficulty to make general comparisons. In the future, we plan to conduct focus group studies among managers and employees of the chosen institutions to compare different organisational learning strategies in a post-pandemic crisis. As a next step, we also plan conducting a survey on a representative sample of institutions in Poland. Future research may be continued to investigate the influence of selected factors on the acceptance of new developments in the area of organisational learning.

7. Conclusions

In the context of social distancing and organizational learning of institutions in the post-pandemic crisis, we conducted twelve interviews with the initial objective to address three main issues. The first was, how the COVID-19 pandemic impacted on organisational learning of institutions. The second, was the managers' descriptions of the most important turning points in organisational learning. The third, were the possibilities of predicting the future implications of critical events for creation of a new and context-specific knowledge. In total, the coding process yielded over 160 concepts, of which 140 relevant ones were eventually used, creating a total of 6 categories. The number of concepts in each category ranged from 11 to 23. These categories include: (1) privacy and security; (2) social distancing; (3) identity; (4) learning and support; (5) digitalization; (6) initiative and autonomy. The core category that emerged from these six categories is *security, social networks and organisational sustainability*. It reflects the crucial turning points in organizational learning of institutions in the post-pandemic crisis. The results suggest that individual and social learning, interaction, experience management, openness to social and technological innovation play an important role in disaster management. Furthermore, the results confirmed the positive impact of organisational learning on organizational resilience. The faster institutions implemented digital innovations, the better they adapted to changes in their environment. Moreover, organisational learning of institutions in a post-pandemic crisis is based on dynamic environmental transformations and a radical reactive approach. It is a two-loop dynamic learning that accepts the assumption of limited strategic foresight and the need to explore new innovative solutions. The more uncertain the external environment was in the opinion of managers, the better the institutions were oriented towards implementing radical innovations and creativity in personnel management

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