
A Turquoise Innovative Organization During a Pandemic

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Abstract:

Purpose: The article outlines the consequences of Covid-19's impact on the development of remote work and the use of turquoise organizations' features.

Design/Methodology/Approach: The article uses induction and reduction methods. To ensure that the objective was achieved, this study adopted a qualitative The overall aim of the study was to diagnose the possibility of implementing teal management.

Findings: Research results indicate that organizations must adapt to changes resulting from functioning during a pandemic. Currently, flexibility in adapting to changes is essential, especially in the field of remote work.

Practical Implications: Given the current Covid-19 pandemic and what significant socio-economic implications, it seems advisable that the idea of turquoise management has inspired many managers.

Originality/Value: This study is a contribution to further research on the issue. The presented research results indicate the ability to use the features of turquoise management in remote work.

Keywords: Remote work, turquoise(teal) management, COVID-19.

JEL classification: M21, O39.

Paper Type: Research study.

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1. Introduction

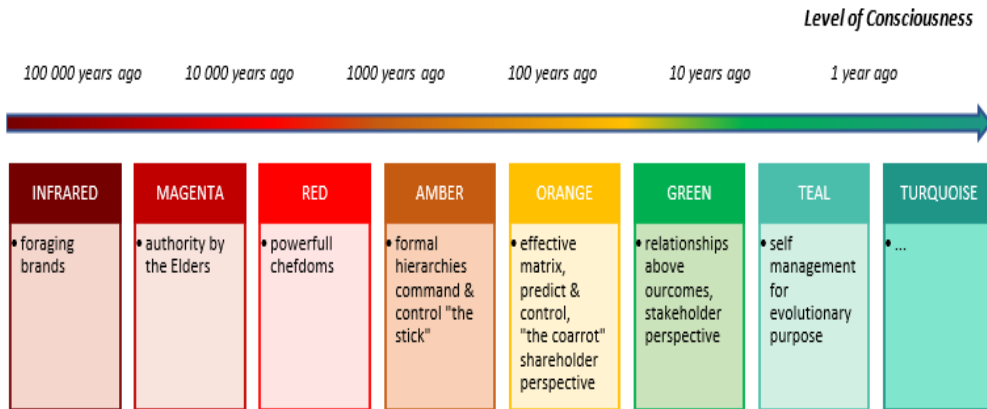
In the globalized world, pandemics are one of the most significant potential adverse risks. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact globally, affecting many aspects of health, commerce, education, and the global economy (Walsh and Ziora, 2020; Grima *et al.*, 2020). In 2021 the fight against COVID-19 is still ongoing, and we are currently experiencing another third wave infection. Lockdown has been introduced in many countries with negative impacts on health, well-being, business activity, and other aspects of everyday life. The current crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in many companies changing the way they operate (in the way they conduct business relationships). The structure and style of management have changed. The workplace was transformed into an online place, and each employee had to become independent, organize their work themselves, and often made their own decisions (Khan *et al.*, 2020).

Many elements have changed since the beginning of the pandemic. Daily life has changed when people keep their social distance, take down restrictions and blockades, and work more at home and connect daily through online services and videoconferencing platforms. Therefore, one of the inspirations for many managers has become the idea of turquoise management, which until now was only a utopia. Notably, the difficulty in predicting a future is caused by many factors of varying strength (Borowiecki *et al.*, 2021).

2. Literature Review

The concept of the turquoise organization appeared in the second half of the 20th century. Its precursor and the first to use this term were a Belgian politician and a partner in one of the most significant strategic consulting companies - Frederic Laloux. In 2014, based on the concept of the development spiral, he published the book *Reinventing organizations*, in which he presented the history of the development of organizations from the point of view of the development of human consciousness (Rutkowska Małgorzata, 2020), and he described the production organizations, multinational with thousands of employees, in which such a model works. He presented his idea of turquoise management in various management styles, from the most authoritarian to the democratic ones. The author uses colors to describe the evolution related to management and organization over the years. Laloux distinguishes five styles - each colour describes a different organization structure: red, amber, orange, green, and turquoise (Figure 1) (Rutkowska and Kamińska, 2020).

Figure 1. Frederic Laloux and the colors of the organization.



Source: Rutkowska and Kamińska, 2020.

Thus, the red organization (street gang) is characterized by a monopoly based on fear and absolute obedience. The boss is a dictator. The amber organization (churches and armies) is an organization with formalized hierarchy, values, codes, and goals. Decisions are made top-down. The following management style is an orange-coloured organization (corporations). This organization is characterized by a dynamic hierarchy and effectiveness, often regardless of costs and the environment. Employees gain more freedom in making decisions. Another style is a green organization (family or cooperatives). Organizations of this type are based on democratic decision-making rules. They are characterized by equality, freedom, and justice. The turquoise organization is the highest level of organizational development (Laloux, 2015). To implement the turquoise management model, you need the right competencies, people, and common evolution.

The turquoise management model is a model in which people function without a boss, are responsible and creative (Matłacz, 2019). There is no middle management level in turquoise organizations. In such organizations, a sense of freedom in action is essential; the development of team members organizes teamwork. The workers themselves engage in undertaken activities, which means that they show interest in a given topic, nothing is imposed on anyone. This approach opens up space for creativity and thus for the development of innovation. This is especially important in the pandemic era because this type of management stimulates employees to act independently. The following four are listed among the principles of turquoise management (Laloux, 2015):

1. You do what you can,
2. You do what needed,
3. You are responsible for it,
4. What you do you can change but keep 1, 2 and 3.

3. Data and Methods

The inductive method was used in the article, consisting of the formulation of reporting and scientific research generalizations based on the tested material. The descriptive method consisted of isolating and describing a specific phenomenon, which is turquoise management on the background of remote work. Then, the reduction approach was supplemented, allowing for the verification of the obtained generalizations. The test results are presented in tabular format and supplemented with graphic forms, i.e., drawings and charts.

4. Discussion and Result

4.1 Management Before and During the Pandemic

In the pre-pandemic era, when work was organized stationary, the human resources management process was based on four fundamental management pillars: planning, organizing, motivating, and controlling. The time of the pandemic has shown that while on the one hand, this process is the most appropriate, on the other hand, it is even impossible to use it traditionally because many of the employees work in the so-called home office. Importantly, employees who often decided to work online before it was forced to do work like this. There were many reasons for remote work, e.g., it was undertaken because of:

- willingness to work on a self-employed basis,
- problems in the parent company,
- for family or health reasons (own or family members).

Remote work was also an opportunity for women raising children, people with disabilities, people caring for a sick family member because such work can be started at any time without unnecessary preparation, without detriment to professional and personal duties, or adapting work to personal or family needs even before the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, such work is associated with reducing stress, and at the same time, translates into higher loyalty to the employer. Also, the costs of commuting to work are reduced, and the number of accidents on the way to/from work is reduced, and the possibility of providing services for several employees at the same time (Twardowska, 2016). Remote work, like any other, has numerous advantages and disadvantages (Table 1).

Table 1. *Advantages and disadvantages of remote work of employees from the point of view of managers*

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conscientiousness - which allows the implementation of assigned tasks within a specified time • availability - thanks to which it is possible to start a given project in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of full control, which may translate into a lower level of effectiveness • failure to develop a standard that may affect the longer

<p>the necessary time, as exemplified by the requirements of customers to call them at a specific time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accuracy - thanks to which the order can be properly performed • high efficiency - which allows to achieve better results than initially assumed • mitigating conflicts - during conversations with clients, this skill allows not only to objectively address the problem, but also to reassure the client, and thus build an appropriate image of the company 	<p>implementation of the set goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conducting private conversations at the employer's expense, which may increase the costs of employing such an employee • lack of willingness to work, which also reduces the employee potential • sluggishness, which may also reduce the level of effectiveness and the development of a standard
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Source: Karbownik, 2015.

In conclusion, the advantages of working in terms of distance include: reducing employment costs, no need to equip the workplace, co-financing for employment, having a qualified employee (regardless of his situation), motivating employees. The disadvantages, however, are mainly: the inability to control employees, a very high level of trust that should be bestowed on the employee, the choice of the wrong candidate, or a problem in solving technical problems (Karbownik, 2015).

Teleworking/home office is gaining more and more approval from economists, as they see several advantages in macroeconomic terms, such as:

- improving work efficiency, and thus increasing the efficiency of enterprises,
- creation of new jobs in every region of the world, in underdeveloped areas with high unemployment,
- increasing the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises in relation to large companies,
- development of ICT infrastructure in regions threatened with unemployment,
- equal access to training for teleworkers in all regions and equal opportunities for the disabled, pregnant women or people over 50, which may reduce the burden on the budget,
- probability of a lower outflow of people from poorly urbanized and rural areas to large cities,
- reducing the number of people traveling to work reduces the number of accidents, and resignation from traveling by car improves the condition of the environment (e.g. cleaner air),
- increasing the demand for ICT equipment and services.

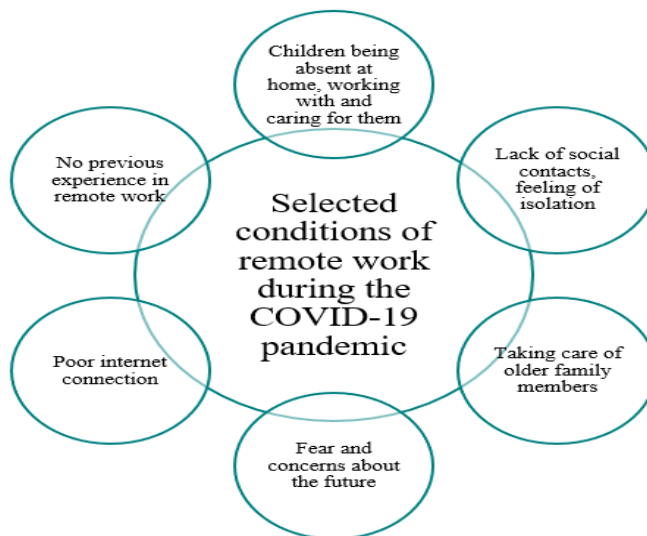
It is also worth noting that teleworking / home office also has positive environmental effects. In the era of progressive degradation of the natural environment, it may contribute to reducing its pollution. This is associated with

eliminating travel to the workplace and reducing exhaust emissions (Twardowska, 2016).

Currently, however, the perception of remote work has taken on a completely different meaning at a time when remote work has become a necessity. According to a report by the Future Business Institute, "forced remote work" has changed the perception of it (Figure 2). Employees point out that companies should (FBI, 2020):

- increase the amount of remote work, but not introduce full freedom
- introduce absolute freedom in the context of the way you work (anyone can work remotely, whenever they want)
- not to change any previous policy about the way you work.

Figure 2. Selected conditions of remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic



Source: (Dolot, 2020).

Remote work can therefore be one of the benefits for an employee, and apart from that, it can cause increasing frustration amongst the employees. The most significant difficulty was the lack of social contacts and social isolation among the respondents of the survey conducted by Future Business Institute. It can be considered that this is the aspect that can eliminate the feeling of volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA environment) to the greatest extent, so characteristic of the conditions in which the society was forced to function. In the event of a return to normal working conditions, an essential element in building a remote working model should be frequent communication between the employer and the employee, maintaining contacts not only to achieve professional goals and tasks but also to maintain social relations. During the COVID-19 pandemic, most people declared difficulties in remote work due to the need to care for a child/children.

On the other hand, negative consequences of remote work, such as lack of contact with colleagues, blurring the work-personal life boundary, and being constantly at work. In the pandemic, the respondents more often declared not to take breaks during work or work at weekends. If such a situation persists for a long time, it may lead to exhaustion, physical and mental exhaustion, professional burnout, and even psychosomatic and mental diseases (Dolot, 2020).

Currently, remote work should follow the idea of turquoise management, which follows the principle: "those who know decide, the rest trust them. In the turquoise organization, no one has to be supervised to work; no one has to be judged or forced to work with a stick and a carrot. Moreover, since there is no need to guard or chase, the managers turn into real leaders and mentors. There, no one gives orders to anyone, and the scope of tasks of each employee falls within four principles" (Blikle, 2018).

4.2 Turquoise Management as a Respond to the Negative Effects of Remote Work

In the turquoise organization, the hierarchy disappears completely; the activity is not focused on the positions of employees - their functions are the most important. Each person is responsible for their actions; each person is equally involved and decides for himself. The leader is a mentor here, and he places great trust in people. The turquoise management style is characterized by a holistic system of life in which the world is perceived as interactive and interconnected. The meaning of life is other people, and life itself is oriented towards integrity and living up to values. Turquoise thinking often sees the bigger picture and is ready to take a position against popular opinion. It aims to eliminate war, poverty, disease, hunger, and political oppression (Rutkowska, 2020).

It is worth noting that the European Union also emphasizes the advantages of turquoise management. On the Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe (EPALE), events are promoted to raise awareness of the benefits of turquoise management in the pandemic era. An *example* is the training entitled "Turquoise Organization - inspiration for leaders during a pandemic", conducted by A. Blikle, where considered were doubts related to the implementation of turquoise management elements ("EPALE," 2020). Organizations looking to transform into teal organizations have three options (Laloux, 2014):

- Creative chaos - it is the owner / boss / president who decides to change the management method. It eliminates management tools and staff functions (working time control, variable remuneration system). The basis of this approach is trust, faith in people and that they can cope with changes - by organizing work in such a way as to realize themselves and have a real impact on the development of the organization.
- Bottom-up redevelopment - differs in that change begins with inviting people to define a common future. It is the group that chooses the structure,

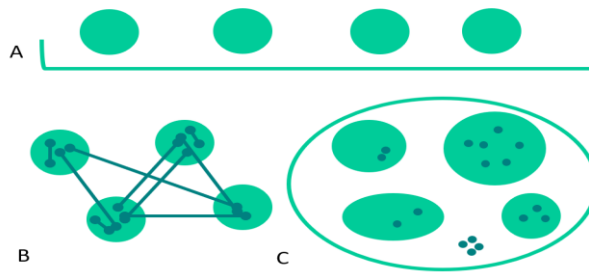
but it is important that the trust between the regular employees and the owner / boss / president is very high, so that changes are not sabotaged. Employees are looking for a role for themselves and analysing the benefits for the company.

- Ready template - it's nothing more than finding an organization that has changed over to the turquoise management and will benefit from someone else's experience. There are consultants and trainers who guide the organization through the entire process. The key here is to define the day of the shift. The structure that takes shape will not be perfect, but it will evolve over time.

Meanwhile, in the literature on the subject, three basic turquoise structures can be distinguished (Hopej and Hopej-Tomaszycka, 2018):

- "Parallel teams", characterized by far-reaching team autonomy (which can be of equal size to each other).
- A network of individual contracting, where a different team is responsible for each phase of the process, but nevertheless teams work together flexibly and create a web-like tissue.
- "Nested teams" that are highly autonomous in deciding their commitments and goals.

Figure 3. Ideological scheme of structural solution. A "Parallel teams", B individual contacting. C "Nested teams"



Source: Own work based on (Laloux, 2014).

What is more, each of the ways to switch to the turquoise style is good; each also suits different needs, so you should strictly refer to the selected organization. In the time of a pandemic, it seems that both the owner/boss/president and employees are willing to make such a change because remote work becomes more independent then.

5. Conclusion

Based on the above analysis, it should be concluded that:

- Nowadays, the traditional pyramid model of organization management is so outdated that companies should give it up.
- The attitude of employees to remote work has changed significantly during the Covid-19 pandemic - the compulsion to work remotely makes the staff want to return to their places (plants) of work.
- The introduction of turquoise management gives employees greater freedom on the one hand, and makes employees more motivated on the other hand.
- In the era of a pandemic, the turquoise management style is used more and more often, because at that time the future belongs to those organizations which, despite complex structures, will be able to include turquoise elements in their management model. On the one hand, this style indicates the creativity of employees and the level of awareness development of employees who are responsible for a given organization, identify with it and pursue their own goals, on the other. The turquoise management style aims at harmony between employees and the surrounding world.

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