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HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC STAFF IN STATE UNIVERSITIES DURING COVID-19 PERIOD*

COVID-19 DÖNEMİNDE DEVLET ÜNİVERSİTELERİNDE AKADEMİK PERSONELE YÖNELİK UYGULANAN İNSAN KAYNAKLARI STRATEJİLERİ

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ABSTRACT

After the first detection of Covid-19 in Turkey on March 11, 2020, when health concerns were high, services had to continue without interruption. This requirement made the effective use of HRM critical, and HR strategies suitable for the Covid-19 period had to be developed. Especially in higher education institutions, which are the places where these strategies are produced in the theoretical sense, it arouses curiosity that which strategies are applied to academic staff. In this context, the study aims to reveal the human resources strategies implemented by state universities for academic staff during the Covid-19 period. In the study, 12 personnel department heads working in universities are selected as a sample from URAP success lists through purposive sampling. Qualitative content analyzes are conducted on the data obtained by applying the sampling semi-structured interview technique. Data visualization is made with MAXQDA 2020. As a result of the study, it is determined that digital HRM and virtual meeting strategies are applied to academic staff during the Covid-19 period. It is determined that talent management practices, organizational agility, cyber security, online training, remote auditing, uncertainty tolerance, and flexibility strategies are implemented to a certain degree.

Keywords: Covid-19, Human Resources Management, Human Resources Strategies, Academic Staff.

JEL Classification Codes: M12, M54, O15.


ÖZ

Sağlık endişelerinin yüksek olduğu 11 Mart 2020'de Türkiye'de ilk Covid-19 tespitinin ardından hizmetler kesintisiz devam etmek zorunda kalmıştır. Bu gereklilik, İKY'nin etkin kullanımını kritik hale getirerek Covid-19 dönemine uygun İK stratejilerinin geliştirilmesini gerekli kılmıştır. Özellikle teorik anlamda bu stratejilerin üretildiği yerler olan yükseköğretim kurumlarında öğretim elemanlarına hangi stratejilerin uygulandığı merak uyandırmaktadır. Bu bağlamda çalışma, devlet üniversitelerinin Covid-19 döneminde akademik personel için uyguladığı insan kaynakları stratejilerini ortaya koymayı amaçlamaktadır. Araştırmada, amaçlı örnekleme ile URAP başarı listelerinden seçilen üniversitelerde görev yapan 12 personel daire başkanı örnekleme olarak belirlenmiştir. Örnekleme yarı yapılandırılmış mülakat tekniği uygulanarak elde edilen verilere nitel içerik analizleri yapılmıştır. Elde edilen bulguların MAXQDA 2020 ile veri görselleştirilmesi yapılmıştır. Çalışma sonucunda akademik personele Covid-19 döneminde dijital İKY ve sanal toplantı stratejilerinin uygulandığı tespit edilmiştir. Yetenek yönetimi uygulamaları, organizasyonel çeviklik, siber güvenlik, çevrimiçi eğitim, uzaktan denetim, belirsizlik toleransı ve esneklik stratejilerinin eksik de olsa uygulandığı tespit edilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Covid-19, İnsan Kaynakları Yönetimi, İnsan Kaynakları Stratejileri, Akademik Personel.

JEL Sınıflandırma Kodları: M12, M54, O15.

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GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

Amaç ve Kapsam:

Türkiye’de 11 Mart 2020’de ilk Covid-19 vaka tespitinin ardından tüm sektörlerde iş yapma şekilleri değişmiştir. Sağlıkla ilgili endişelerin üst düzeyde olduğu pandemi koşullarında hizmetlerin aksamadan devam etmesi gerekmiştir. Bu gereklilik, İKY’nin etkin ve verimli şekilde kullanımını kritik öneme taşıyarak döneme uygun İK stratejileri geliştirilmesini zorunlu kılmıştır. Özellikle bu stratejilerin teorik anlamda üretim yerleri olan yükseköğretim kurumlarında akademik personele yönelik hangi stratejilerin uygulandığı merak uyandırmaktadır. Bu kapsamda çalışmanın amacı; Covid-19 döneminde devlet üniversitelerinin akademik personele yönelik uyguladıkları insan kaynakları stratejilerini ortaya çıkarmaktır.

Yöntem:

Çalışma keşfedici bir nitelik taşıdığı için nitel yöntem tercih edilmiştir. Çalışmada olgu ile bağlam iç içe geçtiği için örnek olay deseni kullanılmıştır. Bu kapsamda tümevarımcı yaklaşımla kavramsal çerçeveden hareketle tema ve araştırma soruları belirlenip veri toplanmıştır. Katılımcıların bilgisini derinlemesine tespit için yarı-yapılandırılmış mülakat tekniğinden yararlanılmıştır. Araştırmanın evreni olan devlet üniversitelerinden örneklemi belirlemek için 2021-22 URAP Türkiye Devlet Üniversiteleri başarı sıralamasında farklı sıralarda olan üniversite uygulamalarını göstermek adına her onluk sıralamadan bir üniversite amaçlı örneklemeye seçilmiştir. Listede 120 üniversite olduğundan görüşülecek üniversite sayısı 12 olarak belirlenmiştir. Belirlenen üniversitelerde akademik personele yönelik İK stratejilerinin uygulanmasını sağlayan personel daire başkanları örneklem grubunu oluşturmaktadır. Böylece seçilen üniversitelerde çalışan 12 personel daire başkanı örneklemi oluşturmaktadır. Elde edilen verilere yönlendirilmiş nitel içerik analizi yapılmıştır. Elde edilen veriler MAXQDA 2020’nin kod alt-kod bölümler modeli kullanılarak görselleştirilmiştir.

Bulgular:

İKY uygulamalarının dijitalleşmesi anlamında *Dijital İKY* teması 6 kod ve 3 kategoriden oluşmaktadır. Katılımcıların tamamı işin dijitalleşmesinden ve internet kullanımı bağlamında kurumun dijitalleşmesinden bahsetmektedir. Katılımcıların tamamına yakınının direkt İKY’nin dijitalleşmesinden bahsettikleri de görülmektedir. Sürdürülebilir stratejik başarı yaratmak için kuruma değer katan yeteneklerin yönetimi anlamında *Yetenek Yönetimi* teması 5 kod ve 3 kategoriden oluşmaktadır. Katılımcıların tamamı yetenek geliştirmekten bahsederken yarısının bile akademik personele yönelik yetenek tanımı, kullanımı ve işe alımından bahsetmediği görülmektedir. Teorik olarak yetenek yönetimi uygulamalarının gelişim merkezi olan üniversitelerde akademik personele yönelik yetenek tanımı olmaması dikkat çekmektedir. Kurumun önceden öngörülemeyen değişimlere hızlı ve yerinde cevap verebilme yeteneği anlamında *Örgütsel Çeviklik* teması 16 kod ve 7 kategoriden oluşmaktadır. Burada sosyal soruna cevap verebilirlik yerine amaç değişimine cevap verebilirliğin; personel eğitiminden yeni teknolojiye olumlu tutumun ve insan teknoloji entegrasyonundansa kurum içi entegrasyonun önemsenmesi çalışanın psiko-sosyal durumundansa işin akışının önemsendiği izlenimi vermektedir. Siber ortamda kurumun varlığını korumak anlamında *Siber Güvenlik* teması 13 kod ve 3 kategoriden oluşmaktadır. Burada günlük kayıt, yetkilendirme, kullanıcı hesabı izleme, veri yedekleme gibi kontrollerden neredeyse tüm katılımcıların bahsettiği görülmektedir. Ancak web tarayıcı güvenliği, yazılım güvenliği, sızma testi gibi kritik önemde olup yetkinlik gerektiren kontrollerden çok az kurumun bahsettiği görülmektedir. Bu kapsamda kurumların yetkinlik gerektirmeyen kontrolleri daha çok tercih ettikleri söylenebilir. Eğitimin dijital ortamlarda verilmesi anlamında *Çevrimiçi Eğitim* teması 5 kod ve 3 kategoriden oluşmaktadır. Burada akademik personelin eğitim seviyesi düşünülünce onlara yönelik hazırlanan eğitimlerde eğitim talebinin ön planda olması beklenirken uygulamada akademik personelin fikrini almaktansa katılım listesinin oluşturulmasına daha çok önem verildiği görülmektedir. Ayrıca çevrimiçi eğitimlerin sürdürülmesinin sağlanması anlamında çevrimiçi eğitim uygulama metotları geliştirmenin göz ardı edildiği de görülmektedir. Bulgular gelişim yerine günü kurtarmaya odaklanıldığı izlenimi vermektedir. Toplantıların dijital ortamlarda yapılması anlamında *Sanal Toplantı* teması 11 kod ve 3 kategoriden oluşmaktadır. Burada sanal toplantıların planlanıp ilan edilip uygulandığı ifade edilmektedir. Sanal toplantılar için tüm katılımcıların Google Meet, tamamına yakınının Zoom arayüzünden yararlandıkları görülmektedir. Bunun yanında kısa toplantılar gibi sebeplerle WhatsApp gibi arayüzlerin de kullanıldığı görülmektedir. Veri havuzundaki bilgilerin değerlendirilerek izlemeye alınması anlamında *Uzaktan Denetim* teması 5 kod ve 2 kategoriden oluşmaktadır. Burada denetim sürecinin gerçekleştirildiği görülmektedir. Ancak denetim ekibinin yarısından çoğunda kurulmadığı görülmektedir. Uzaktan denetim normal denetimden fazla teknik bilgi ve yetkinlik gerektirmektedir. Bu noktada yine yetkinliğin göz ardı edilmesi meselesi karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Belirsizlik durumuna karşı bireyin sahip olduğu bakış açısı anlamında *Belirsizlik Toleransı* teması 5 kod ve 2 kategoriden oluşmaktadır. Burada tüm katılımcıların dönemin yarattığı karmaşık bilginin farkında olduğu anlaşılmaktadır. Burada eksik nokta tolerans için adım atılmamasıdır. Kurumun çevredeki değişimlere uygun zamanda doğru cevabı verebilmesi anlamında *Esneklik* teması 6 kod ve 4 kategoriden oluşmaktadır. Burada tüm katılımcıların fonksiyonel esneklikten bahsettikleri görülmektedir. Bunu çalışma süresi, saati bağlamında iş sayısal esneklik takip etmektedir. Burada dış sayısal esneklikten genelde bahsedilmediği görülmektedir. Bu kamu kurumu olmalarından kaynaklanabilir.

Sonuç ve Tartışma:

Covid-19 döneminde akademik personele dijital İKY ve sanal toplantı stratejilerinin uygulandığı tespit edilmiştir. Yetenek yönetim uygulamaları, örgütsel çeviklik, siber güvenlik, çevrimiçi eğitim, uzaktan denetim, belirsizlik toleransı ve esneklik stratejilerinin ise eksik olmakla beraber uygulandığı belirlenmiştir. Covid-19 döneminde akademik personele yönelik uygulanan İK stratejilerinin insan odaklı değil iş odaklı olduğu görülmektedir. Genel anlamda teknoloji gelişimi gibi konulara verilen önemin insan-teknoloji entegrasyonu gibi konulara verilmemesi çalışanın psiko-sosyal durumundansa işin akışının sağlanmasının temel alındığı izlenimi vermektedir. Ayrıca stratejilerin yetkinlik gerektiren uygulamalarındansa mevcut personelle halledilebilecek uygulamaların ön plana çıkarılarak gerçekleştirildiği görülmektedir. Elbette kamu kurumlarının hantal yapısı nedeniyle ve her şeyin yasal kuralları aracılığıyla yürütülmesi zorunluluğundan kaynaklanan yapısal sorunları olduğunu da söylemek gerekmektedir.

1. INTRODUCTION

Following the detection of the first Covid-19 case in Turkey on March 11, 2020, on the one hand, health concerns had risen to a high level; on the other hand, the services had to continue without interruption. This requirement has changed the way of doing business in all sectors. In this period, practices for conducting business without actually together come to the fore. While institutions are trying to adapt to these new ways of doing business, they have also struggled with uncertainty (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020, p. 185). Institutions are faced with many delays, such as how long this period will last, what should be done and how it should be done. New solutions had to be found for the difficulties that emerged within combating uncertainties. These solutions were significantly related to human resources.

This period created challenging conditions, especially for human resources management (HRM). HRM has been one of the critical areas to propose the necessary changes to adapt to the uncertain issues during this period, such as working from home (Madero Gómez et al., 2020, p. 416). During the pandemic period, while there were health concerns, on the other hand, the work had to continue without interruption. This requirement has made effective and efficient human resources (HR) critical. Because the adaptation of institutions to the changes that occurred in this period depends on giving strategic importance to HR (Koçak & Erdoğan, 2011, p. 278), institutions that provide strategic significance to human resources have had to develop HR strategies suitable for the Covid-19 period. While institutions are expanding their HR strategies, it arouses curiosity in terms of guiding which strategies are applied to academic staff in higher education institutions, which are the theoretical production places of these strategies.

The study aims to reveal the human resources strategies of state universities for academic staff during the Covid-19 period. Thus, in the period of Covid-19, the relationship between them has not been examined in the literature before. HR strategies for the academic staff of state universities will be determined, and a contribution will be made to the literature. In addition, HR strategies applied to academic staff will guide the private sector and contribute to implementation.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The world has been struggling with the Covid-19 (Guan et al., 2020, p. 1716) epidemic, which emerged in Wuhan in December 2019 and was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization in March 2020 for more than two years. In this struggle, restrictions appear as the main precaution. Due to the risk of contamination, the education sector was also affected by these restrictions during the pandemic period, as the places in the community are dangerous environments (Telli & Altun, 2021, p. 98). In all sectors, especially the education sector, the way of doing business has changed with restrictions that were not seen before during the Covid-19 period. The fact that the focus of change is humans shows that the area dominated by this change is HRM (Madero Gómez et al., 2020). In general, even institutions that "do not tamper with if it works" and are distant to change have changed their HR practices during the pandemic (Serifsoy & Teker, 2020, p. 165). HR strategies are of prime importance for these changes.

HR strategy is defined as the set of plans, programs, and tendencies to develop human resources that can meet the needs that will arise in the future, according to the organization's environment changes (Walker, 1992:59–62). Therefore, an effective HR strategy systematically coordinates all HR functions and ensures that these functions are implemented in a way that helps the achievement of business goals (Wang & Shyu, 2008: 94). With the understanding that HR, as a strategic resource that creates value, is decisive in business success, it has been accepted that businesses must have a clear and understandable HR strategy to be successful (Gomez-Mejia et al., 2001:20). The right human resources strategies are also essential as they encourage employees to produce the desired results. Unpredictable and sudden periods such as Covid-19 require the reproduction of HR strategies (Madero Gómez et al., 2020, p. 412).

It is especially emphasized that digitalization gains importance in human resources management practices in this period (Akbaş-Tuna & Çelen, 2020, p. 2742). Among the HR strategies applied in all sectors in the Covid-19 period, digital HRM, talent management practices, organizational agility, cyber security, online training, and virtual meetings are shown (Madero Gómez et al., 2020, p. 418). In addition, remote control (Atakan, 2021), uncertainty tolerance, and flexibility (Inuaesiet et al., 2021) are also mentioned. It is necessary to explain these concepts in order not to cause any conceptual confusion.

Digital HRM; refers to the socio-technical result of the digitizing of human resource management (Strohmeier, 2020:358). Transformation is as long as the potential of digital data is used for human resource management purposes. In short, digital HRM means digitizing human resource management practices by transferring them to digital media.

Talent Management Practices; is an activity that includes systematically identifying, attracting, developing, engaging, retaining, and using the talents that add value to the organization to create sustainable strategic success (Boudreau & Ramstad, 2005, p. 134). The aim is to develop a sense of belonging by making employees feel their value (Cappelli, 2000, p. 18). In short, the concept of talent management practices means the management of talents that add value to the institution to create sustainable strategic success.

Organizational Agility; is the capacity of the institution to respond quickly to changes (Ravichandran, 2018, p. 38). Basic features; include flexibility, responsiveness, the culture of change, speed, integration, low complexity, activating core competencies, quality, and customized products (Sherehiy et al., 2007). In short, the concept of organizational agility is used to mean the ability of the institution to respond quickly and appropriately to unforeseen changes.

Cyber Security; in the digital environment, it is the whole of policy, security concepts, risk management, activities, and technologies used to protect the institution's existence (Karacı et al., 2017, p. 2088). For this, it is necessary to carry out the checks in the checklists. The cyber security checklist consists of simple, administrative, and basic controls (Micro, 2016). Simple control; hardware, software, vulnerability assessment, authorization, configuration setting, and logging checks. Administrative controls; security awareness training, software security, event management, and penetration testing. Basic control; web browser security, email security, malware protection, control of network ports, data backup, data protection, secure access, wireless access, and monitoring of user accounts. In short, the concept of cyber security is used to protect the institution's existence in the cyber environment.

Online Training; is the delivery of training through technology (Cobo et al., 2021, p. 6). Restrictions at the national and international levels have caused a change in the standard business processes and required institutions to adapt their personnel training activities to the pandemic period (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020). As a result, the training that should be given or wanted to be given in institutions had to be implemented through technology. In short, the concept of online training is used to mean that training is presented in digital environments.

Virtual Meeting; is the transfer of meetings to digital environments. In this period, meetings are held online thanks to video conferencing platforms such as Google Meet. In a period when the work is done in the digital environment, it is done in digital environments by adapting of the meetings. It is stated here that the meetings are held digitally with the help of various applications and interfaces. In short, the virtual meeting is used to mean that meetings are held in digital environments.

Remote Audit; is the process in which the information in the data pool is evaluated and monitored, and the risks are assessed in order of priority and reported to the upper unit (Atakan, 2021, p. 30). It consists of planning, execution, and reporting and is carried out by the audit team. The audit team is critical here. Because it contains much more technical information than standard auditing, auditing also requires essential and competent information. In short, the remote audit is used to evaluate and monitor the information in the data pool.

Uncertainty Tolerance; is an individual's perspective against uncertainty (Furnham & Ribchester, 1995, p. 182). It is the level of tolerance of employees for uncertainty avoidance. Reasons for uncertainty in a better understanding of uncertainty tolerance; is foreign, complex, and inconsistent information (Stanley-Budner, 1962, p. 34). Individuals with low uncertainty tolerance are prone to stress and avoidance in uncertain situations (Furnham & Ribchester, 1995). Individuals with a high tolerance for uncertainty are more adaptable in cases involving uncertainty. In short, uncertainty tolerance is used in the sense of the individual's perspective against the uncertain situation.

Flexibility; is the ability of the institution to give the correct answer at the right time to the changes occurring in its environment. Flexibility consists of five components. These; are external numerical, internal numerical, functional, wage, and removal flexibility. External numerical flexibility; the institution is to adjust the number of employees according to change (Treu, 1992, p. 500). Internal numerical flexibility; employers is to change working hours, days, and durations. Functional flexibility; is to evaluate the employee in different duties in different

departments of the institution in the face of changes (Limoncuoğlu, 2010). Wage flexibility; is the institution's ability to change its wage policies and levels (Treu, 1992). Removal flexibility; is the fulfillment of the work done in the institution by employees from another workplace or employer (Tuncay, 1995). The application of these flexibility types together is expressed as flexibility. In short, the concept of flexibility means that the institution can answer correctly to the changes in the environment at the appropriate time.

In short, digital HRM, talent management practices, organizational agility, cyber security, online training, virtual meeting, remote auditing, uncertainty tolerance, and flexibility HR strategies, which are listed above, are widely applied in all sectors in the Covid-19 period. In this context, when the literature is examined the human resources management of Covid-19 (Akbaş-Tuna & Çelen, 2020; Kırpik, 2020); human resources management functions (Öge & Çetin, 2020); It is seen that the effects on human resources management on a sectoral basis such as aviation (Kurt, 2020), banking (Ünal & Başaran, 2021) are examined. However, no study has been found in the literature looking at the HR strategies applied to academic staff who produce HR strategies theoretically. In this direction, this study aims to reveal state universities' human resources strategies for academic staff during the Covid-19 period. The study methodology carried out for this purpose and the findings obtained are explained below.

3. METHOD

This study, “Which human resources strategies have been applied to academic staff at state universities during the Covid-19 period?” aims to answer the fundamental research question. Since the study was exploratory, qualitative research was conducted. The study used a case study design because the case and the context were intertwined. In this study context, themes and research questions were determined based on the conceptual framework with an inductive approach. The data were obtained with the determined theme and the research questions that would reach them.

The interview technique was used in the study, which is the best way to understand the individual's definition and construction of reality (Punch, 2016). In this context, a semi-structured interview was used to obtain in-depth participants' knowledge. The 15 questions used for the interview were developed based on the conceptual framework and evaluated by 1 Professor, an expert on the subject. The approval of Sakarya University Ethics Committee (Date and Number of Approved Documents: 02/06/2022-E-61923333-050.99-149452) that states the research and research questions is in compliance with the ethical rules was obtained.

The 2021-2022 URAP Turkish State Universities ranking was used to determine the sample from state universities, which are the universe of the research. To show the university applications in different ranks in the list, one university from each decimal order was selected with purposeful sampling. Since there are 120 universities on the list, the number of universities interviewed was determined as 12. The sample group consists of the heads of personnel departments, who have been doing this duty for many years in order to ensure the implementation of HR strategies for academic staff at the determined universities and to dominate the pre-and post-Covid-19 practices. Thus, the sample consists of 12 personnel department heads working in the selected universities.

The interviews lasted an average of 1.5 hours and transcribed 80 pages of audio recordings with the participants' permission. Qualitative content analysis was conducted on the obtained data. Using the code sub-code sections model of MAXQDA 2020, both data visualization and the findings obtained by the researcher as a result of the analysis were confirmed.

There are some limitations to the study. The most important of these is the time constraint. Much more time would have to be spent for the study to be done with a larger participant. However, this constraint was tried to be overcome by choosing a university from every tenth order during the success URAP ranking of the sample.

3.1. Sample of the Research

The participant characteristics of the sample determined for the research are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Participant Characteristics

Participant	Gender	Age	Length of Service as Head of Personnel Department
K1	Male	41	5
K2	Male	48	10
K3	Male	46	9
K4	Female	50	8
K5	Male	47	11
K6	Male	46	5
K7	Male	42	7
K8	Female	49	6
K9	Male	43	5
K10	Male	45	10
K11	Female	46	9
K12	Male	44	6

When Table 1 is examined, it is seen that most of the participants are male, and all participants are over forty. The gender factor is important as it increases the power to represent the universe since the heads of personnel departments are generally male. The age factor is important as it indicates their working life experience. Finally, it is seen that the participants have a service period of more than five years as the personnel department head. Service time is essential in terms of being able to master the strategies both before and after the Covid-19 period and to convey which one is new. Thus, when the table is examined, it is seen that the participants carry the criteria suitable for the sample selection reasons.

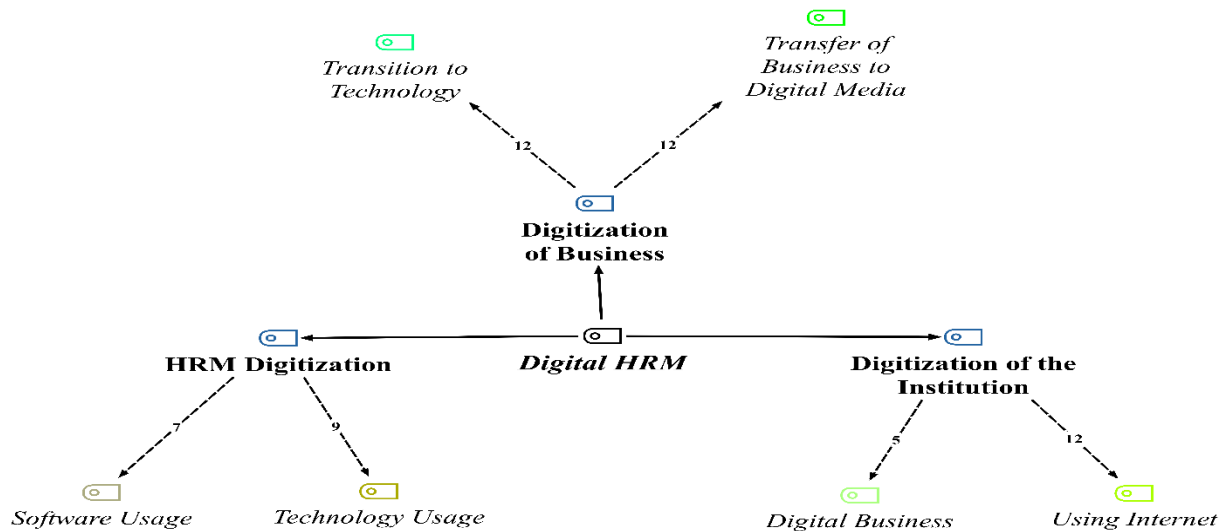
4. RESULTS

In the study determined nine themes based on the inductive approach and the conceptual framework. The numbers above the arrows in the models show the coded sections in terms of the total number of statements of the participants on the subject.

4.1. Findings on the Digital HRM Theme

In the digitalization of HRM practices, the Digital HRM theme consists of 6 codes and three categories. Figure 1 shows the code subcode sections pattern for the Digital HRM theme.

Figure 1. Digital HRM Code Sub-Code Sections Model



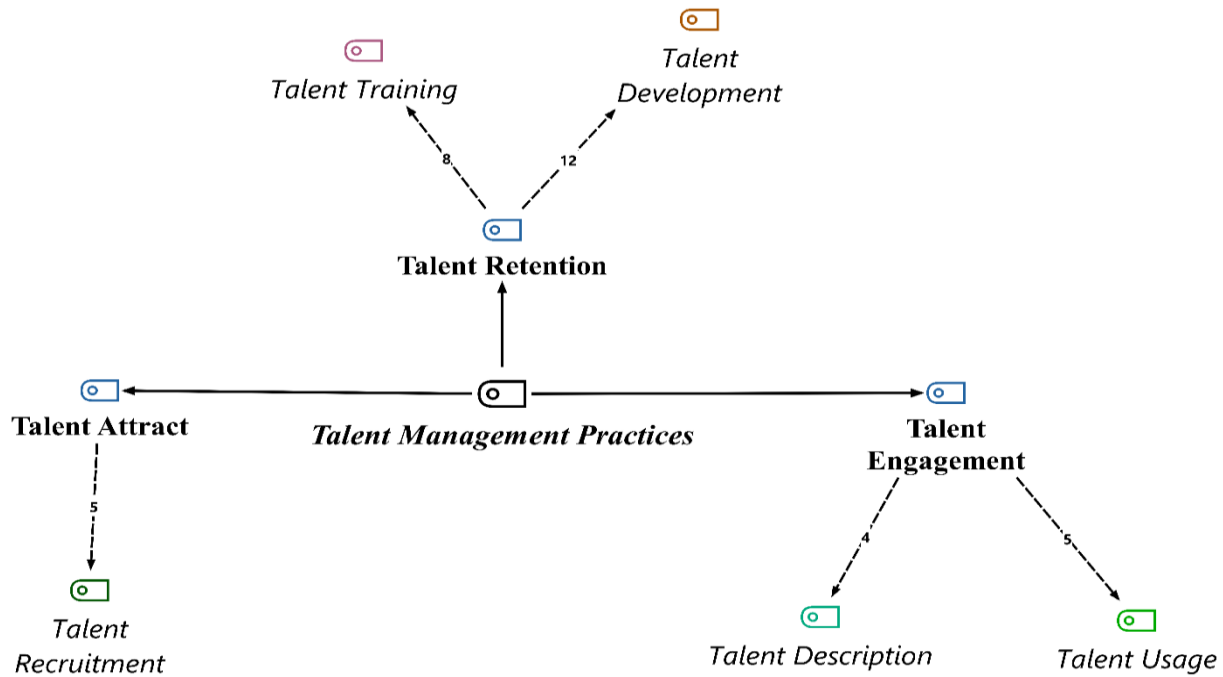
As seen in Figure 1, all the participants mention the digitalization of work. It is seen that while all of the participants mention internet use, even half of them do not mention the concept of digital business. It is also seen that nearly half of the participants directly mention the digitalization of human resources management practices.

It has been determined that the digitalization of the institution on behalf of digital HRM is provided in the context of internet use. The digitization of business is partly mentioned because the participants are from state universities. It is seen that the digitalization of human resources management is almost achieved. In this period, all work and transactions carried out in digital environments have also been reflected in human resources management practices. This situation is in line with the studies in the literature (Akbaş-Tuna & Çelen, 2020; Madero Gómez et al., 2020). Digital HRM has been mentioned for academic staff working in state universities. Based on the findings, it is seen that the Digital HRM strategy was applied to academic staff during the Covid-19 period.

4.2. Findings Related to Talent Management Practices Theme

The Talent Management Practices theme consists of 5 codes and three categories, in the sense of the management of talents that add value to the organization to create sustainable strategic success. Figure 2 shows the code sub-code sections model of the Talent Management Practices theme.

Figure 2. Talent Management Practices Code Sub-Code Sections Model



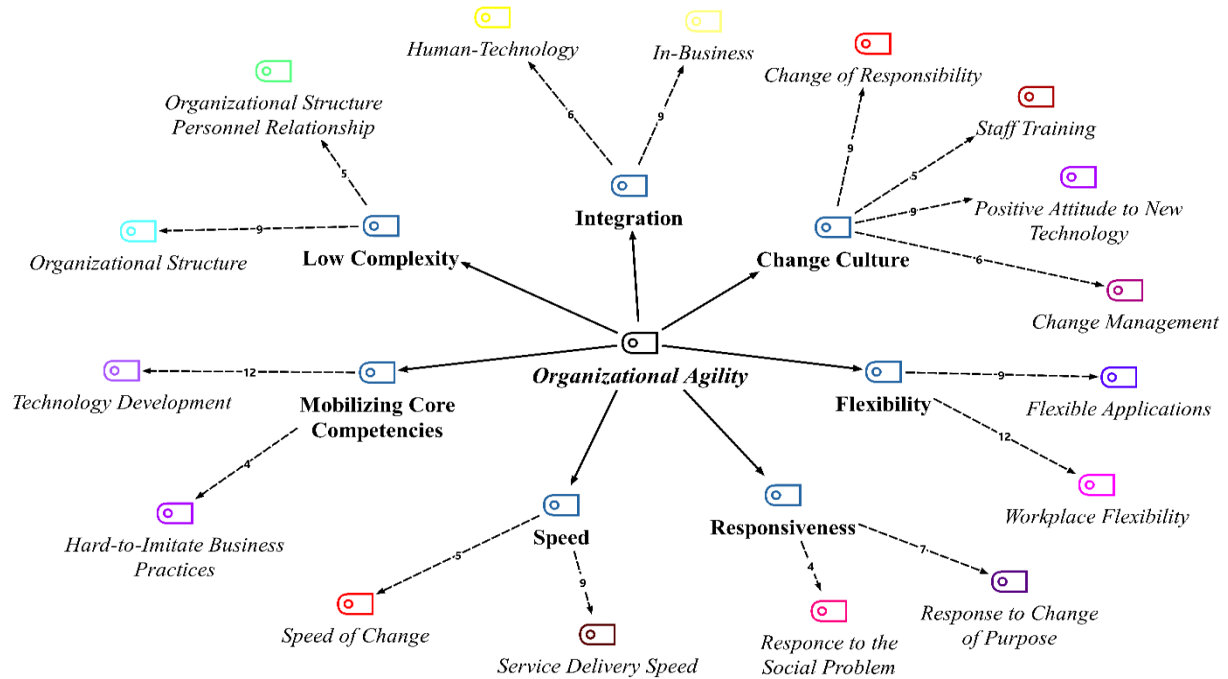
In Figure 2, it is seen that all of the participants mention developing skills. At the same time, it is seen that even half of the participants do not mention talent definition, talent use, and talent recruitment for academic staff. It should also be noted that more than half of the participants expressed talent training.

In the light of the findings, it is seen that talent retention is ensured on behalf of Talent Management Practices. This situation is in line with the studies in the literature (Madero Gómez et al., 2020). However, it is also seen that most participants did not develop any strategy in terms of talent participation and attraction. Notably, there is no definition of talent for academic staff in universities, which are theoretically the development centers of talent management applications. At this point, it is seen that the strategy of talent management practices is mentioned, but there is an application area that does not even include basic activities. The findings show that the Talent Management Practices strategy was applied to academic staff in the Covid-19 period, although it was incomplete.

4.3. Findings Related to Organizational Agility Theme

The organizational agility theme, in the sense of the ability of the institution to respond quickly and appropriately to unforeseen changes, consists of 16 codes and seven categories. Figure 3 shows the code sub-code sections model of the Organizational Agility theme.

Figure 3. Organizational Agility Code Sub-Code Sections Model



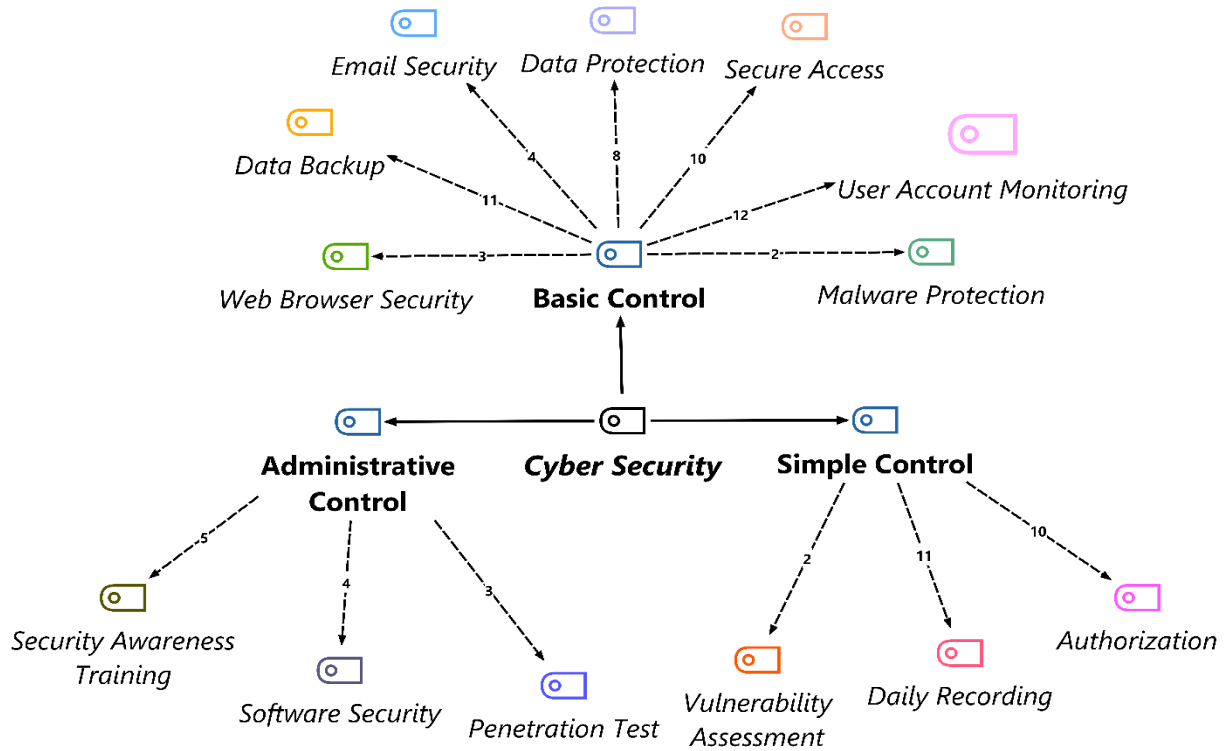
As seen in Figure 3, all participants talk about workplace flexibility and technology development. It is seen that the participants do not mention much about the speed of change, hard-to-imitate work practices, human technologies, structure-personnel relationship, social problem response, and personnel training concepts.

For Organizational Agility, it is seen that the answer to the change of purpose is considered important in the name of responsiveness. In contrast, the answer to the social problem is ignored. From this, the impression arises that in such a period, the flow of work is more important than the employee. While personnel training is ignored in the culture of change, it is seen that practices are done to develop a positive attitude towards new technology. While the development of positive attitudes can be facilitated with training, ignoring this suggests that it is due to the importance given to the work's rapid progress rather than the employee's psycho-social situation. In general, there is little mention of human-technology integration and low complexity in the organizational structure when talking about in-house integration. Still, little mention of the structure-personnel relationship supports our opinion. At the same time, the speed of change is mentioned very little when talking about the speed of service delivery, and when technology development is mentioned very little about business practices that are difficult to imitate, giving the impression that a quick response to change is more important. In addition, no findings were found regarding quality and customize included in the basic features. This may be because it is difficult to customize because the product is a service. As a result, it is seen that the organizational agility strategy for academic staff is mentioned in the Covid-19 period, but emphasis is placed on the parts where the work is emphasized rather than the features based on the psycho-social status of the employee. This situation is in line with the studies in the literature (Madero Gómez et al., 2020). In addition, it can be said that the strategies are more easily adapted than applications that require competence. The findings show that the Organizational Agility strategy was applied to academic staff in the Covid-19 period, although it was incomplete.

4.4. Findings on Cyber Security Theme

In order to protect the existence of the institution in the cyber environment, the Cyber Security theme consists of 13 codes and three categories. Figure 4 shows the code sub-code sections pattern for the Cyber Security theme.

Figure 4. Cyber Security Code Sub-Code Sections Model



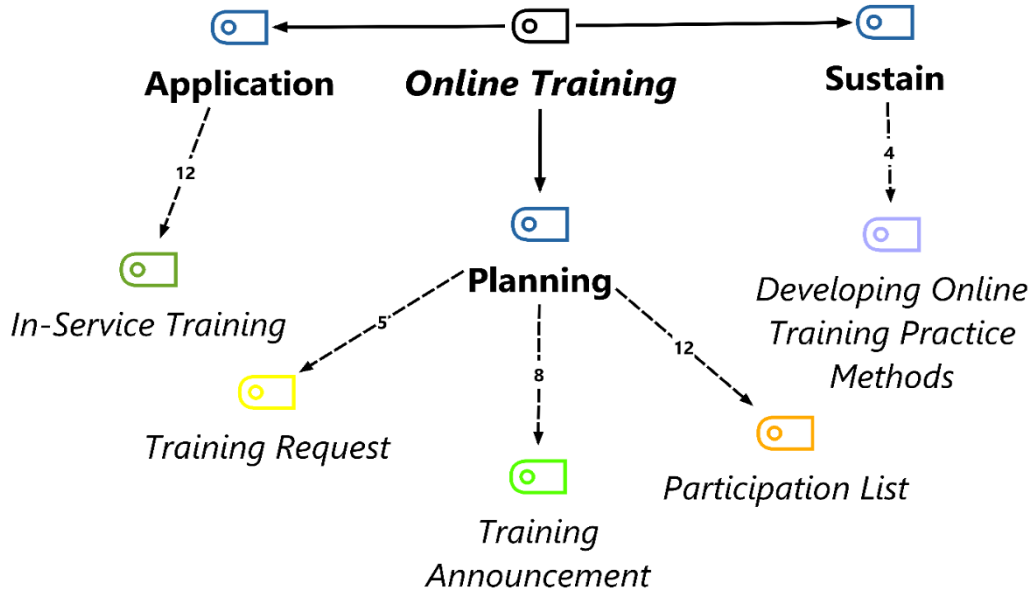
As seen in Figure 4, all participants mention about performing user account monitoring control. It has been determined that this is followed by data backup, logging, secure access, and authorization. However, basic controls such as malware protection, web browser security, simple controls such as vulnerability assessment, and administrative controls such as penetration testing are not mentioned much.

There is little mention of vulnerability assessment, while logging and authorization are mentioned in the name of simple controls for Cyber Security. Since it is necessary to have specific competencies to evaluate the vulnerability, one can say that the part that requires competency in simple controls is ignored. In addition, it is seen that there is little mention of administrative controls. Here, again, it is noteworthy that the process is competency-based. In basic control, applications such as user account monitoring, secure access, data backup, and data protection are mentioned.

In contrast, applications that require competence, such as e-mail security, are mentioned very little. In this context, the impression arises that institutions prefer controls that do not require competence. It is also seen that there is no mention of controls that need competence, such as software and hardware controls. This situation is in line with the studies in the literature (Madero Gómez et al., 2020). As a result, it has been determined that the cyber security strategy for academic staff was mentioned in the Covid-19 period. Still, the controls that require competence were ignored, or the necessary importance was not given to these controls. The findings show that the Cyber Security strategy was applied to academic staff during the Covid-19 period, although it was incomplete.

4.5. Findings Regarding Online Training Theme

In the sense of providing education in digital environments, the theme of Online Training consists of 5 codes and three categories. Figure 5 shows the code sub-code sections pattern for the Online Training theme.

Figure 5. Online Training Code Sub-Code Sections Model

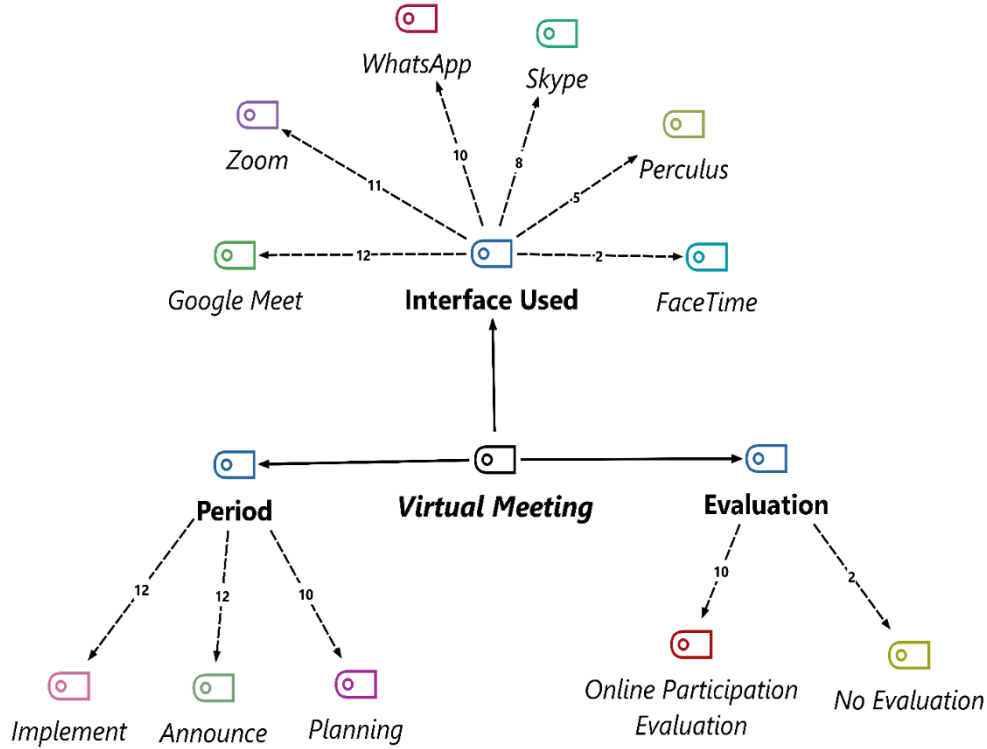
As seen in Figure 5, all participants stated that they prepared a participation list for the training given in the institution and applied in-service training. This statement is followed by making a training announcement and receiving a training request. However, there is little talk of developing online training application methods.

While talking about the participation list of all participants for planning for Online Training, it is seen that more than half of them make training announcements, and very few receive training requests. Considering the academic staff's education level, the demand for training is expected to be at the forefront of the training prepared for them. Still, in practice, it is seen that more importance is given to creating the participation list rather than asking the opinion of the academic staff. Online training is one of the points determined by all participants for academic staff. The main problem is the neglect of developing online training application methods to ensure the continuation of online training. This situation is parallel with not receiving training requests from academic staff and gives the impression that they focus on saving the day instead of developing. Ignoring the demand for training in the training to be given to people with a high level of training and able to identify their deficiencies, and the fact that very few participants attempt to develop online training application methods gives the impression that parts that will provide the fight against the disruptions brought by the period are applied rather than development. This situation is in line with the studies in the literature (Madero Gómez et al., 2020). As a result, the findings obtained from the participants give the impression that institutions focus on saving the day rather than development. The findings show that the Online Training strategy was applied to academic staff during the Covid-19 period, although it was incomplete.

4.6. Findings Regarding the Virtual Meeting Theme

The Virtual Meeting theme consists of 11 codes and three categories sense that meetings are held in digital environments. Figure 6 shows the code sub-code sections model for the Virtual Meeting theme.

Figure 6. Virtual Meeting Code Sub-Code Sections Model



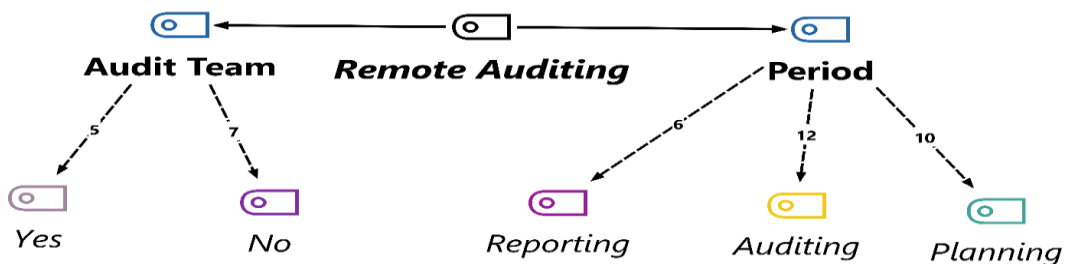
As seen in Figure 6, all participants state that they announce and implement virtual meetings. It is seen that almost all participants do pre-meeting planning and mention online participation evaluation. Again, it determined that all participants used the Google Meet interface, followed by Zoom, WhatsApp, and Skype.

On behalf of the Virtual Meeting, it is stated that the meeting is planned, announced, and implemented, except for two participants. It has been determined that the evaluation is provided in the context of online participation evaluation. It is seen that two participants stated that they made no assessment. Lack of evaluation gives the impression that the meetings are not given importance. For virtual meetings, it is seen that all participants benefit from Google Meet, and almost all of them use the Zoom interface. In addition, it is seen that WhatsApp, Skype, Perculus, and FaceTime interfaces are used respectively for short meetings. This situation is in line with the studies in the literature (Madero Gómez et al., 2020). Based on the findings, it is seen that the Virtual Meeting strategy was applied to academic staff during the Covid-19 period.

4.7. Findings on the Theme of Remote Auditing

Remote Auditing theme consists of 5 codes and two categories for evaluating and monitoring the information in the data allegories. Figure 7 shows the code sub-code sections pattern for the Remote Auditing theme.

Figure 7. Remote Auditing Code Sub-Code Sections Model



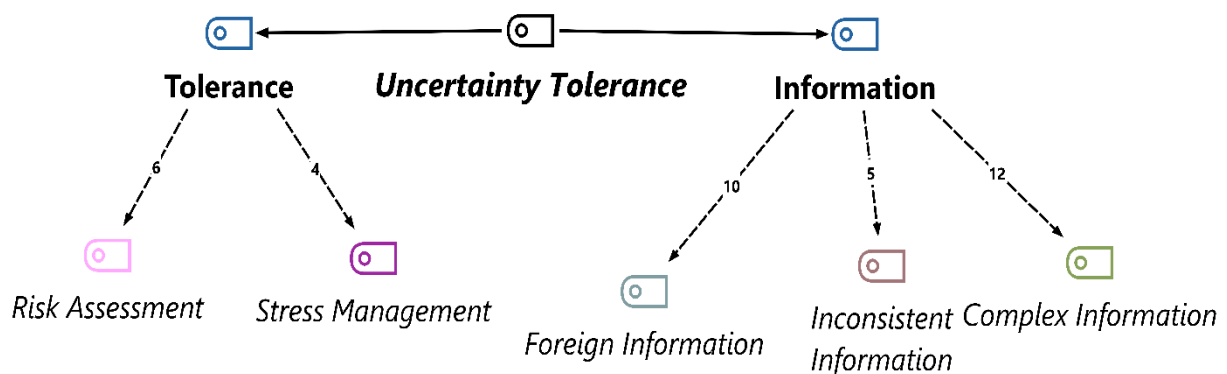
As seen in Figure 7, most participants mentioned that they carry out the planning and control themselves on behalf of remote auditing. In addition, it is seen that half of the participants mention reporting. It determined that the audit team stated that most participants did not.

It is seen that the majority of the process plans for Remote Auditing, but almost half of them do not report on the audit. In this context, the impression arises that remote auditing is carried out but lacking in reporting. It is noteworthy that almost all remote auditing institutions have not established an audit team. In general, it stated that the relevant persons conducted the department audit. However, remote auditing requires more technical knowledge and competence than standard auditing. Here again, comes the issue of ignoring competence. This situation is in line with the studies in the literature (Atakan,2021). The findings show that the Remote Auditing strategy was applied to academic staff during the Covid-19 period, although it was incomplete.

4.8. Findings on the Uncertainty Tolerance Theme

The theme of Uncertainty Tolerance, in the sense of the individual's perspective against uncertainty, consists of 5 codes and two categories. Figure 8 shows the code sub-code sections pattern for the Uncertainty Tolerance theme.

Figure 8. Uncertainty Tolerance Code Sub-Code Sections Model



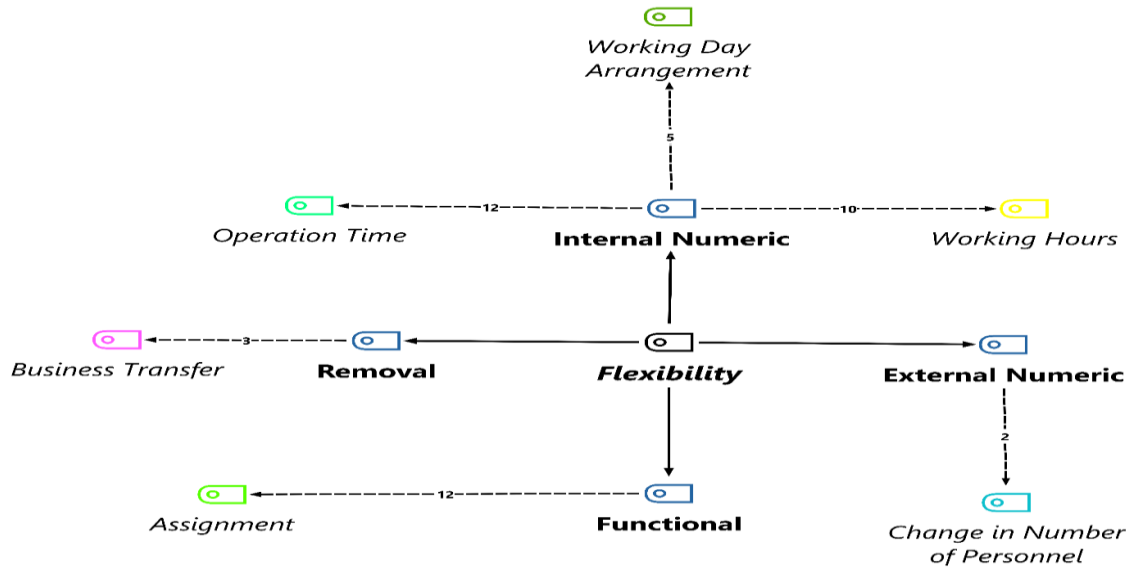
As seen in Figure 8, all participants mention complex knowledge followed by foreign knowledge. It determined that half of the participants mentioned risk identification in the name of uncertainty tolerance, and only a few of them expressed stress management.

It is seen that the information category is provided on behalf of Uncertainty Tolerance. It is understood from the statements that all the participants are aware of the complex information created during this period. This is followed by foreign information. Nearly half of the respondents mention uncertainty tolerance of inconsistent information. The missing point here is to take steps for tolerance. Only half of the participants mentioned risk identification, while four mentioned stress management. This situation is in line with the studies in the literature (Inuaesiet et al., 2021). The findings show that the Uncertainty Tolerance strategy was applied to academic staff during the Covid-19 period, although it was incomplete.

4.9. Findings on the Theme of Flexibility

The theme of Flexibility consists of 6 codes and four categories, in the sense that the institution can give the right answer to the changes in the environment at the appropriate time. Figure 9 shows the code sub-code sections pattern of the Flexibility theme.

Figure 9. Flexibility Code Sub-Code Sections Model



As seen in Figure 9, all participants mention assignments and working time. This is followed by working hours and work transfer. On the other hand, very few participants mentioned the change in wages and personnel numbers.

It is seen that the functional flexibility category is provided for flexibility. In this period, it is seen that most of the assignments are used for flexibility. This may be because the participants are from public institutions. It is determined that this is followed by internal numerical flexibility and removal flexibility. Here, it is seen that flexibility in working time and hours is mentioned. Considering the work done by academic staff, this is an expected result. External numerical flexibility seems to have almost no response in practice. This may be because the change in the number of personnel in public institutions could not be easily achieved, and the participants also worked in a public institution. Despite this, two participants stated that flexibility is provided in this regard through tools such as assignments. Here, the impression arises that the cumbersome structure of the public institution is an obstacle to flexibility. The findings show that the Flexibility strategy has been applied to academic staff during the Covid-19 period, although it is incomplete. This situation is in line with the studies in the literature (Inuaesiet et al., 2021). The result of the study is summarized in the word cloud in Figure 10.

Figure 10. Human Resources Strategies for Academic Staff Word Cloud



5. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

As a result of the study, it was determined that Digital HRM and Virtual Meeting strategies were applied to academic staff during the Covid-19 period. Talent management practices, organizational agility, cyber security, online training, remote auditing, flexibility strategies, and uncertainty tolerance are among the HR strategies commonly used in other sectors (Akbaş-Tuna & Çelen, 2020; Madero Gómez et al., 2020; Atakan, 2021; Inuaesiet et al., 2021). These strategies to academic staff are implemented, although incompletely.

As a result, it is seen that HR strategies applied to academic staff in state universities during the Covid-19 period are generally business-oriented, not people-oriented. It has been determined that even the parts of the strategy even that are human-oriented, which will ensure the workflow, are implemented, but the human-oriented parts are ignored. In general, the fact that the importance given to subjects such as technology development is not given to topics such as human-technology integration gives the impression that ensuring the flow of work is based on the psycho-social situation of the employee. In addition, it is seen that the strategies that can be handled with the existing personnel are carried out by emphasizing the applications that require competence. Basically, in the implementation of the strategy, it is seen that the parts that will provide the fight against the disruptions brought by the period are implemented rather than developed. Of course, it should be said that there are structural problems due to the cumbersome structure of public institutions and the necessity of conducting everything through legal rules.

The Study realized the aim of revealing the HR strategies of state universities for academic staff during the Covid-19 period. Thus, in the period of Covid-19, the relationship between them had not been examined in the literature before; HR strategies for the academic staff of state universities were determined and contributed to the literature. In addition, HR strategies applied to academic staff will guide the private sector and contribute to implementation. Finally, the Study draws attention to the human resources strategies used by academic staff in an unexpected situation such as Covid-19 that will affect all business and transactions.

DECLARATION OF THE AUTHOR

Declaration of Contribution Rate: The author contributes the study on her own.

Declaration of Support and Thanksgiving: No support is taken from any institution or organization.

Declaration of Conflict: There is no potential conflict of interest in the study.

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