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Recommendations Regarding Valuation of the Cultural Specialty Factors in the Managerial Communication within the Romanian Organizations

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Abstract: Within any organization, the communication plays an important role, practically helping at the progress of all the activities. This is the reason why, at a theoretical level, but also at a practical one, one assigns it a big importance. The problems issued because of an unsuccessful communication (due to status/role, cultural, comprehension differences, disturbances, distortions of messages, etc). They can negatively affect the organizational outcomes. Very important for the understanding of the objectives of the company, but at the same time of the individual and group duties and responsibilities, is the managerial communication. This one induces, in a cultural environment characterized by hierarchy, like the Romanian one, new characteristics that the manager has to keep in mind. To those characteristics, but also to the valuation possibility of the Romanian cultural specific in the managerial communication, is this present article make reference to, anchored on a qualitative analysis, from a critical-interpretative perspective of the synthesis-type data, obtained by the authors, after the analysis of the results of some personal cultural/cross-cultural studies and from other researches.

Keywords: culture; communication; management; cross cultural studies

1. Introduction

Any activity from an organization implies communication. Of the way it is held, depend the outcomes, quantified at a material-financial level, human one, social. In order for the employees to know and understand the objectives, the tasks, their purpose within the organization, etc., they have to be informed by the managers. And not only to be informed but to also communicate with them. Here is why we considerate as important a presentation of the role of the managerial communication, based on the consideration of the cultural specificity elements, as an aspect able to positively and valuating potency.

2. Romanian Culture Profile

There are various studies regarding the Romanian cultural specificity, but the most relevant, in our opinion, are those that appeal to an analysis mixed methodology, through which the ethical runway is enriched with the emical one. This is why, the try to shortly sketch a Romanian cultural profile, we will get to different sources that complete or clarify the aspects we consider to be interesting.

Even though the researches/the prevision of Geert Hofstede could enter the category of aspects often invoked, at least for specialists with cross-cultural concerns, one cannot ignore the fact they are, at least within the management, at the basis of the further developments, that have taken ideas about the content of cultural dimensions, but also about the research methodology. This is the reason for which,

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in the accentuation of some specific cultural features, considered to be important for our way, we will start with these data. We mention the fact that the studies of Geert Hofstede refer to values, meaning “what is desirable” in a certain culture.

By culture, we understand “that superorganic entity, with a slow evolution in normal conditions, acquired and transmitted specially on the basis of tacit learning, that provides a framework for existence and operation unitary for the members of the group, less or more performing, but that can be improved in cultural contact situations” (Onea, 2011, p. 24).

According to the prevision of Hofstede, we have the next scored and significations for Romania, regarding the cultural dimensions:

- **Power Distance Index**– PDI very high (90 compared with the average of 57) reflects a high level of inequality waited and accepted by Romanians, manifested by their need to have authoritative leaders, their need to execute step by step the dispositions of the hierarchic bosses, of centralized decisions. The authority of the bosses is inclusively cultivated by exterior symbols, and the relationships between the subordinates and superiors are emotionally charged.
- **Individualism** (IDV) of 30, compared with the average of 43, indicates a collectivist society. The realities that confirm the prevision are described by: the powerful relationship of dependence between the individual and the group (specially, the enlarged family), privileging the persons belonging to the group, the importance of personal relationships, etc.
- **Masculinity** (MAS) of 42, compared with the average (49) suggests a light inclination towards femininity. Starting from empirical observations, one can remark the progresses made in providing importance to the success and possession values (due to the appropriations, to the development of the enterprising spirit, to the high number of private firms, market competition, etc.), but also to feminine values (quality of life, self-help, etc.). Political life and leading functions remain of a dominant masculine sphere and one continues to think that some domestic tasks or related to the raising and education of children are better realized by women or they be remain in their care.
- **Uncertainty Avoidance** (UAI) is very high (90, compared with the media of 65). This shows the fact that the population has a high level of anxiety about the future, where may also come from the very big importance that Romanians give to the stability of their jobs, even with the “price” of a lower salary. Some researchers (Voicu, 2001) sustain the fact that the high value of the uncertainty avoidance index is responsible of the high level of intolerance towards the minorities (ethnic, sexual). This high level of anxiety brings to an emphasized stress that helps to express the moment impulses and the negative emotions without control. Very closed to the value of this dimension is the fact that Romanians have a continuous need of rules, procedures, dispositions from their hierarchic bosses and do not assume the responsibility for their facts (Nica, 2004, p. 60). The decentralization could have beneficial effects only if it is accompanied by clear and strict rules and procedures that should precisely orient their actions. In this manner, Romanians will take advantage of the “benefits of the power” (Luca, 2005). At the same time, this high level of incertitude creates problems in the implementation of new ideas. Even though one accepts the need of change, in the framework of the action, one can notice a certain lowness, delay or even cancellation.
- **Long-Term Orientation** (LTO) was not projected by Hofstede for Romania. It is estimated at a value of 50 (Nica, Iftimescu, 2004, p. 51), from Gallup Romania&Interact's study one can reveal a value of 41, which rather leads to the idea of a medium-term orientation. The implications are being noticed in the economic sphere, through a relatively low investment level, through the orientation towards a quick enrichment. At the same time, aspects of the short-term orientation are promoted, such as respect for tradition, the reciprocity of greetings and favors.

Regarding the individualism-collectivism dimension, we specify the fact that other studies indicate the fact that in the Romanian organizations, the institutional individualism is manifested (GLOBE study, House and others, 2004), but we have to keep in mind that by the content of the cultural dimension institutional collectivism, the authors make reference to other aspects (the level in which the institutional customs, on an organizational or social line, encourage and reward the collective

distribution of resources and the collective action), not at the dependence relation of the individual towards the group.

Related to the same aspect, that of the collectivism, we can also bring into discussion the Romanian gregarism invoked by Radulescu-Motru (1999). From this observation, in a study about the Romanian regional cultural profile, the solidarity-gregarism cultural dimension has been proposed, understanding by this one the measure in which a society encourages segregation (Onea, 2011). The orientation toward gregarism was obvious. The impact on the communication can be easily appreciated: communication of non-important data, their distortion, delays in providing the information in order to obtain a personal or a group advantage, superficial presentation, the role of the informal in the communication. Other cultural/cross-cultural studies use other criteria to make the cultural difference, but in this article we will emphasize the contributions brought by the anthropologist Edward Hall, for whom time, space and cultural context are important. The author considers that these dimensions, intimately related to each other, describe the cultural specificity. Furthermore, this specificity is being manifested by communication, because culture is communication and communication is culture (Hall, 1984, 1992).

Communication is at the basis of the manager's activities. It is intimately related to the context, and the differences regarding the communication style can be shortly described by its dominant characteristics (Prime, Usunier, 2004, pp, 308-309).

- Explicit communication (in a “poor context”) is characterized by attributes such as: precision, logic, analysis, focus on the purposes, and orientation toward realizing the objectives. The importance given to words, both in the written communication and the oral one, but also in the short-term perspective are specific factors.
- Implicit communication (specific to the “rich content”) room for the manifestation of the ambiguity, of the affectivity. The synthesis operations and the construction of long-term relationships are being emphasized. Significant is considered to be the orientation to respecting the protocol and the objectives. Oral communication and non-verbal manifestations gain importance.

From those presented below, we deduce the Romanian's preference for implicit communication, specific to a rich cultural context of the communication. But this is susceptible of interpretation, which represents a negative aspect within an organization. Therefore, the clear, explicit, but empathic communication is recommended.

3. The Managerial Specificity within Romanian Organizations

International Guides of Cross-cultural Management (Kwintessential.Co.uk) present Romania as a country dominated by a powerful bureaucracy, with an unclear framework and a slow judiciary system. Within an organization every person has a different role that he is ought to respect. The opinion according to which the supervisors are chosen because of their acquired experience and their strong knowledge in the domain is spread. Usually, in the decision-making process, persons that do not have leading positions are not consulted. The decisions are being formally communicated, vertically, from the top to the bottom. The dominant “organizational” models can be grouped into two categories, the pyramidal one, hierarchic, and the family type one. For the first one, power, authoritative rapports are characteristic. It is found in the big organizations, but also in the public system, influence by the political area. The management style is directive, the status of the leader results from an ostentatious “display”. This model is founded on specific cultural characteristics: big distance from the power, powerful control of the uncertainty and institutional individualism. The economic effectiveness and motivation depend on the public-private character, but other dimensions are also important.

The *family* model, generally specific for the BMI, present the next characteristics: the leader controls the key-positions in the organization, relationships are of a paternalist type, the rapports remain of an hierarchical type, but inside this hierarchy the leader is manifesting in a protective manner. The

adaptability to the environment is faster and change is easier to accept (Gauthey et Xardel, pp. 65; Onea, 2006).

There is the trend in Romania of respecting the schedules and the time limits, especially by managers that have lately entered the economical circle asked by the EU competences. Like in all South-Eastern Europe, there is a powerful hierarchic structure, waiting from the subordinates' part to follow the standard instructions without any kind of personal opinion, and most of the time an appropriate person is the one that manages to circumvent the system and the bureaucracy. Older persons specially, maybe because of the reminiscences of the communist period, do not recognize openly their mistakes, young employs being those who individually accept their responsibilities. In ex-communist countries there is a tradition of team-work, work-groups often meeting to discuss their ideas and create new plans. However these plans are rarely put into practice and they end up in results by those that have lived under the influence of two ideologies. The young generation desires to accept challenges and to take advantage of all the opportunities of the present.

Because of the influences brought from the west of the EU, but not only, the phenomena of *flexible specialization starts to enter in Romania too, where organization the work is new: "where strictly specialized workers, often with a brief training, being replaced with high qualification workers, that realizes holistic complex tasks, that use the physical and intellectual abilities at the same time, whose work is flexible, not rarely with an innovational content, varying in a light manner in function of the range of manufactured products."* (Nicolescu, 2006, p. 132)

The new managers are often getting together and share their ideas, but to become competitive in any domain *trainings* are asked to be implemented. A weak point for Romania is the slow rhythm the businesses are taking place because of the bureaucratic system, patience being the main attribute for foreign investors. Many decisions need a juridical notice, interprets being necessary to surpass the multicultural communication problems. Local banks are enjoying a strong reputation, especially and thank to their membership to important international financial concerns still established in crisis times. Shyly, things can take an ascending turn taking into account the fact that until 2013 Romania could receive from the EU a total sum of 32milliards of Euros – for agriculture, sanitary system, infrastructure, education (Bari, 2010).

4. Cultural Repertory of Communication

Communication is supported by various vectors (forms of manifestation). Their verbal formal (the language) is one of the main elements that characterize a culture. This has to be seen not only as an ensemble of sonorities and words, but also as a language-culture ensemble, meaning in a strong relation with the mental representations that sustain it (Yves Nicodeme, apud Bosche, 1993, p. 162). The non-verbal (or the "quiet language" for Hall), that sends 70% of the communicated message, is in itself coded, culturally determined. Without the language, there is not culture and without the culture there is no communication. The relationship between culture and the communication style has been studied within the field of cross-cultural communication. The situation of the cross-cultural communication is considered to be a particular case of the communication situation, where culture is activated at several levels (Prime, Usunier, 2004, p. 304):

- *Communication code* – in the case where the issuer and the receiver do not share the same communication codes (verbal and non-verbal), problems can appear concerning the coding-decoding of messages, starting with repertoires of different significance, out of phased;
- *Communication channel type* – the preference for using a certain verbal or non-verbal channel, written or oral, formal or informal in sending the messages depends on the culture;
- *The feedback* – the retrospective style is influences by culture by adjusting the receiver opposite to the issuer: perception of the emergency, the given importance according to issuer's status (for instance, in hierarchic cultures, the message received from the superior will be perceived as an order or as an important message that needs quick answer), etc;

- *Interpretation* – the distortion of the message, according with the self projections and perceptions regarding the situations, depends on the culture, because this one provides the individuals with predefined answers, unconsciously taken by what is transmitted at an informal level.

5. Recommendations Regarding the Valuation Of The Romanian Cultural Specific in the Managerial Communication

Communication-related problems within an organization, generally speaking, of the managerial one, in particular, present a big diversity, but in order to define the sphere of the debate we will only refer to the mentioned aspects in the previous paragraph as level of activation of the culture within a cross-cultural situation.

- *communication code* - recommended to prioritize the concrete, avoiding abstract terms;
- *communication channel type*: important aspects, related to the mission, plans, strategies, role, evaluation, etc on formal channels, with attendant documents; aspects related to the supervision, on informal, oral channels;
- *communication content*: offering of clear, precise instructions, structuring the tasks; establishing the priorities of solving the tasks; precisising the methods of work, of organization by a precise and firm formulation in rapport with the found, but paying attention to the form as well.
- *the feedback*: Romanians appreciate the offering of a positive feedback, within the work collective, but they manifest intolerance toward the critical attitude in public;
- *interpretation* – according to the tasks to realize: more freedom where the creativity has to be stimulated, rugosity and clarity in the daily tasks or that need the focusing the attention on some aspects.

Still referring to the communication, one cannot omit the distinction between the formal and the informal communication. The first type is specific to the official channels that send information, being specially used in transmitting norms and directives. In the case of Romanian companies, which are still in the process of changing their mentality, the below-described communication would be beneficial if it influenced the opinions and changed some attitudes according to the new demands of improvement of the world market still dominated by the economical recession. Romanian managers that use it have to do it with reluctance, because due to the lack of feedback, they can separate from the company's realities. It has to be completed by the informal communication that spontaneously starts from the employs toward the leadership. The informal communication is generally developing in the spontaneous way, can be modified anytime, and the managers and employs can be issuers and receivers at the same time. It can go at the same time with the formal communication, especially if the given information by this one is imperfect. The parallel development with the official one is necessary because there is the risk for it to become a rumor that can affect the ensemble fonctionment of the organization. One has to keep in mind that for a good fonctionment of one company, the negative effects of the informal communication must be countered by the information transmitted through the official channels. At the same time, its positive aspects must not be neglected, among which the one of offering an optimum feedback. All these cultural specificity elements have effects at the level of expectations of the employs regarding the managerial communication. Ensuring a good manager-employee communication is possible if one ensures an adaptation to these expectations, but a valuation of the cultural "given" as well.

6. Conclusions

Knowing the cultural specificity aspects from the region a manager develops his activity, may he be characterized by it or not, is an aspect that contributes to a good communication within the organization. The exercise of valuing the culture can after constituent, in the conditions of the extension of the business on the international market, in concurrential advantage. Of course, the role of the cultural specific must not be augmented in an artificial manner. There is an ensemble of factors

that determine the success on the market. For a more efficient raise of the economical performances, next to the valuation of the cultural specificity elements, the Romanian manager has to take into account other factors as well: the continuous integration of international markets, changes interfered in the strategies of the big multinationals, the differences between the capital markets and the different integration rhythm, from country to country, at the new global economy demands.

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