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# The Importance of the Organizational Cultural Research and Its Factors, within the Management

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**Abstract:** The culture of a society reflects the well-developed interaction of the values that describes it, of the attitudes and behaviors showed by its members. Models of individual and group behaviors are permanently changing, having an impact at their turn on the culture of the society, which creates a continuing changing cycle. The necessity of researching on the **organizational culture** in management is given by the fact that this one has a powerful impact on the performances of the company and becomes more and more emphasized in the conditions of the dynamism of the external environment. The managers are ought to identify those **cultural elements** that stop the development and turn it into **values, behaviors, attitudes that give the most likely outcome to the new objectives and improving of the company**. Culture is a determination factor of the behavior, of the line of thought and feeling of the individual, which guides it in its actions, towards achieving the goals and objectives of the organization. Culture is seen as an orientation factor of the actions of the individual according to the goal of the organization and its own system of values. **Values,** common beliefs of the organizational culture are taken into consideration, formed under the influence of the managerial practices, but also of the socio-cultural environment, where the members of the organization have lived and have been formed. In this way, people come with a line of values that they report to those companies, aligning in this manner the actions not only with the purposes and objectives of the organization, but also with the personal professional ones.

**Key words**: organizational culture; value; behavior rule

## 1. Definition and Attributes of the Organizational Culture

For the management science, culture has became an important study object in the '80s. **Geert Hofstede, Thomas Peter and Richard Waterman, Terence Deal and Allan Kenedy**, are just a few of the authors that had pieces that have determined the next explosion about the research on organizational culture.

The concept of **organizational culture** is fundamental in order to explain some phenomena as creating an hierarchy of values that depends on the strategic guiding of the system, in establishing the pragmatic lines of the interhuman relations, interpreting the time and space, defining the international system or to determinate the attitude towards the internal or external organizational environment. Every organization no matter its activity domain or its size, has its own culture, attached to her history, in the modality of practicing the activities and in the managing practices.

The term of *organizational culture* is used by some as a synonym for *the culture of the organization*. The Explaining Dictionary of the Romanian Language, defines the term of "organizational" by a notion regarding the organization (working tasks, organigrama), from where one can conclude that, the organizational culture refers to a formal culture of the organization. From my perspective culture can be defined under her formal aspect but also under its informal one.

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From a **formal** point of vu this represents the totality of values, beliefs, behavior rules shared by the members of the organization. This functions according to the rules, politics and procedures within the organization.

From and **informal** perspective, culture can be understood as **the style or personality of one organization**. It is developing in a spontaneous way, it is dynamic and involves interactions that are not officially preformed. (Isac, 2006).

The mixt between formal-informal makes the delimitation organizational culture-culture of the organization not to have a sense anymore. In the anglo-saxone speciality literature, for instance, one also finds the term of "**corporate culture**", a holistic concept which associated to the consequences it can bring to the organization.

There are many definitions given to the culture, so that we will select a part of them, that presents an interest for the theoretical approach of the culture:

- **T.I. Peters** (Ionescu, 2008) – organizational culture responds to the satisfaction of some primarily human needs such as the necessity of *positive feed-back, the need of signification, control, the need to feel secure and stable, or ideological needs that design the purpose, the direction, the meaning of the organization and the action according to it.*
- **G.** Hofstede (1997), defines culture as being *"a mental collective programming, that makes the difference between the members of a group or a certain social category from the members of other groups or social categories".* He emphasizes the fact that the line of thought of the usual members of an organization will be influenced specially by adopted practices and not necessarily by the values of the founding members or of the managers.
- **F. Trompenaars** (in I. Popa and R. Filip, 1999, p. 22), director of the Center for International Business Studies from Holland, adept of the traditional **functionalistic epistemological current**, like Hofstede, sees in culture "the way that people solve their problems.
- **R.W. Griffin** (Nicolescu; Verboncu, 2006, p. 273) was defining organizational culture as being *"that cumulus of values being a part of the organization that helps its members to understand the purpose that it is imposing, the modality of action, and what it is considered to the important.*

Culture is a determination factor of the behavior, of the line of thought and feeling of the individual, which guides it in its actions, towards achieving the goals and objectives of the organization. Culture is seen as an orientation factor of the actions of the individual according to the goal of the organization and its own system of values. Values, common beliefs of the organizational culture are taken into consideration, formed under the influence of the managerial practices, but also of the socio-cultural environment, where the members of the organization have lived and have been formed. In this way, people come with a line of values that they report to those companies, aligning in this manner the actions not only with the purposes and objectives of the organization, but also with the personal professional ones.

No matter the way we would define organizational culture, there are some specific characteristics that can be considered as identification elements of the culture:

- From a **formal** point of vu this represents the totality of values, beliefs, behavior rules shared by the members of the organization;
- Culture involves the existence of an integrated model of human behavior;
- This behavior is organically integrated to a social system which is the organization;
- The model of behavior has a certain stability in time and is learned once with the socialization.

**Hofstede** made the difference between a small meaning of the culture ("**mind finesse**"), and a large meaning, according to the concept from the cultural anthropology ("**standards of thinking, feeling and action**"). The organizational culture, in his vision is, **holistic** (representing more then the sum of the component parts), **historically determined** (so that it reflects the evolution in the of the organization), **connected to anthropological nature elements** (symbols, rituals, etc), **socially**

**fundamental** (because it is created and kept by the group that founded the organization) and **hard to modify** (Hofstede, 1995.).

## 2. The Importance of Research in Organizational Culture in Management

**The necessity of researching on the organizational culture in management** is given by the fact that this one has a powerful impact on the performances of the company and becomes more and more emphasized in the conditions of the dynamism of the external environment. The managers are ought to identify those cultural elements that stop the development and turn it into values, behaviors, attitudes that give the most likely outcome to the new objectives and improving of the company.

**The interest towards culture** in the contemporary society can also be explained by the fact that the changes that have place involve new ways and methods of organization, a new values system, attitudes and human behaviors that are fully reflected in and through the organizational culture.

Of course, the changes in the systems of values is the essential condition for the success of the modernization, but can not be done at once, because it would involve fundamental changes at the level of the conscience of the individuals which would vanish their stabilization and would create confusion, stress, panic or incertitude. All these have to be put together somehow, first of all by a good managing of **the organizational culture changing**. In charge of the giving the new values, norms of behavior at an organizational level, in a manner that make the adaptation to the new easier and without stress.

Culture by its component elements plays an extremely important role on the knowledge by the staff, of the rules, norms, informal procedures which draw some lines in the technological line. The totality of the values, procedures and norms of behavior accepted in one organization, as a common base of action of the employs, arrives at a moment a dominant of the collective line of thought, that contributes to solve the adaptation problems of the organization and its members to the internal and external environment.

Nowadays, due to the **internalization** process of business and **globalization**, the relationships between institutions, states, regional organisms, firms, suppose the interaction and interconnection between some different cultures. In business relationships, for instance, the culture of the organization enters in contact with other cultures, so that the management activity is made in a environment with **cultural diversity**, where one has to take into consideration all important factors of each culture.

Organizational culture represents a life style at the firm level, **the way of being of an organization**, that provides us with information regarding the attitudes, the behaviors, the way of acting at an organizational level, the management style, the promoted values, the own climate, the managerial visions, etc. The organizational culture characterizes the way that activities are structured, the relationships between the members of the organization so as the relationships between its members and third parties. From the dressing style of the staff, to the way that conflicts are being managed, everything should be an unitary strategy.

Practically, the culture can be a key factor for the members of one organization, in achieving the personal and professional equilibrium. It helps the employs to get closed to a certain lines of values, to be aware of the purpose and objectives of the organization, to act according to the mission and vision of the organization. A well defined culture, a powerful culture, based in the realities of the new economical and social-cultural context is able to properly motivate the employs, guiding them towards performance and efficiency in their job, towards the correct appreciation of the value itself and touching the professional equilibrium, that has positive impact on the relationships between colleagues, but in the family as well.

### 3. Forms of Manifestation of the Organizational Culture in the Management

There are many approaches regarding the delimitation of the components of the organizational culture, ones being more general, that stop to the delimitation of cultural components, others more to the subject, that detail the inner aspects.

The knowledge and the analysis of the component factors of an organizational culture help us to know about that culture, in establishing the main orientations of values of the firm and the staff, in knowing about the behavior and mentalities of the employs, of the motivating systems, performance criteria, managing style, life style and the organizational level, etc. The analysis of these elements can offer important information about weaknesses and strong points of an organizational culture in the context of a cultural diagnose. Based on these factors, one can make the difference between organizational cultures, establishing the main ides from each of them, etc.

**Schein** (1985), **Hofstede** (1980), **Denison D.R.** (1990), **Hall E.T.** (1989), consider that **cultural space** conserves and hides the key and intimate functioning elements, rather then to show it. It is creating a cultural fundament of a **hidden culture** (unanimous accpected norms, common elements of the collective inner mind, beliefs) and a **surface one**, as a base of the manifestation of the culture (Huţu, 2007, p. 82).

Ones of those components **are visible**, others can be seen only at a closer analysis (values for instance). In this way, components as main ideas, symbols, myths and heroes, language, etc, are easily visible outside the organization, and other components, such as **values** or **staff socialization** are harder to be observed.

The most visible component of a mature culture is the **symbol** (the architecture of the building, they way the interior design is realized, the representative colors and the main idea of the company). Sometimes, one can observe the **values** ( invisible components) showed in the **main idea** of the organization: for instance, "Our client, our boss". A valid analysis of the main idea of a firm is enough to understand which is the type of desired people and which style is not received by that organization.

**Kotter** and **Heskett** (Huţu, 2007, p. 87) describe two cultural lever that influence each other, being in a permanent correlation: on one hand the **invisible level**, hard to change, that has **values shared by the members of the organization** and that want to shape the behavior norms which are given to the new employs and are relied to a system of recompenses or sanctions that function according to the system of values accepted by the members of the organization.

In a synthesis made by **A. Burciu** about the components of the organizational culture, he was including the next factors: **main ideas, symbols, artfacts** (furniture, cloths, instruments, etc), the **used language** within the company, myths and heroes from the past history or the recent one of the firm, periodical present rituals in the activity of the company, **values, the relation of the company with the environment** and **the staff socialization**, which derives from the formal/informal relationships (which are being constructed in time within the divers teams or work groups).

**Shein** (Schein, 1992), find the next elements that delimitate culture by the behavior:

The philosophy that is the base of the politics of the organization towards the employs and customers:

- Rules of behavior and language;
- Norms that develop within the work teams;
- Dominant values adopted by the organization about the products;
- Static rules in the organization for an efficient functioning;
- The climate present in the firm.

Knowing the basis elements of the culture, the members of the organization can orient their behavior, they can know the **rights** and **duties** they have within the organization, the style and way of internal communication, dressing style, they way the manager defines and operate his decisions, the level of internal formalism, the staff politic or the level of creativity of the organizational culture, etc.

### 3.1. The Role of Values in Guiding the Organizational Behavior

Among with beliefs and behavior norms, values ensure the basis in the perception by the staff of what is happening in the firm.

**The ideology of the philosophy** of the firm are frequently used by authors or those that practice the management in order to directly describe the values and beliefs at the organizational level. The ideology of an organization has references regarding the correctitude of some actions and connects, if one can express it this way, these actions and the conscience of the employs at the ethical social principles, or it pushes them to act in this way. **A strong ideology has a strong motivating role of the employs behavior.**

**Values, among with beliefs, have an determinant role in the lining of the leader's vision and the organizational one**. The founding members come from the beginning with a line of own values, which we will find later in the vision of defining of the mission and formulating its objectives.

**Rampersad** (Rampersad, 2005, pp.42-43) was appreciating about values, that they represent **critical factors of success**, being an integrating part of the **vision of the firm**, based on a line of values shared by the members of the organization and used to enforce the devotement and their total implication. He relies the values of the organizational culture with the mission and vision of the firm and the vision of the employs. The values determinate the way someone has to act to achieve the vision of the firm. They are like guiding principles of people of the work place.

**Fundamental values** in a company indicate how we treat each other, but expresses, at the same time, the way we see customers, employs, people that detain actions, providers and the community. When principles, norms and staff values resolve with those of the firm, they implications are good.

The fundamental values of an organization have to be always ethical, and each person has to act according to the principles and moral standards of the firm. Values in which the company believes are in a strong connection with the firm's conception regarding the business ethic.

Values, principles and standards are a part of the vision of the firm that indicates what the organization wants to obtain and what is essential for success. A well formulated vision guides the personal purposes and creativity, establishes a proper climate for the change en enforces the trust in the future of the organization, releasing in this manner the creative energy of people. The mission and the vision of the firm, next to the fundamental values help to establish the purpose of the organization.

T. Peters and R. Waterman (Peters; Waterman, 1992), have revealed in their paper In search of Excellence, connecting the managerial culture and the organizational one, a line of dominant beliefs and values, that have contributed to obtaining great results by the firms:

- The belief to be the best;
- The belief in quality – quality of the work, of the products, service superior;
- The belief in the importance of the details for the execution;
- The belief that the majority of the members of the organization have to be innovators, etc.

One can observe that the two have expressed the values through the beliefs. This may also be because, in essence, values, as Hofstede was saying, are some general beliefs that specify the general preferences and that influence the option regarding the means, the modalities and the finalities of actual actions.

Values, at an organizational level, are ought to be explained and achieved by the employs continuously. That is why they must be clearly defined, brought to a common subject, to be at the same time realistic, to stimulate motivation, etc.

Here is a selection of some organizational values promoted by managers, within the companies, made after a presentation of **H. Davidson** in The Commitet Enterprise (Davidson, 2001):

- ➢ Treating with respect and dignity every individual;
- ➢ Respecting the rights of every employee;

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> ➤ Accent on the quality;
> ➤ Keeping the work environment safe;
> ➤ Supporting creativity and innovation;
> ➤ Accent on the human resource;
> ➤ Relationships with customers based on honesty and ethics in business;
> ➤ Excellent through leadership and common participation, etc.

Psychologists that have researched the source of the value have resolved that values are generated by the will and also about the affectivity of people. **Hedonic theories** associate values with the lack of suffering, the volunteer ones consider value as being created by the will of the individual, and the **synthetic theories** plea for the contribution of the will and the affectivity.

### 3.2. The Concrete Reflection of the Values in Factors Regarding the Organizational Management

After a synthesis realized by **E. Radu**, one can find the values of the organizational culture reflected through some factors of the organizational management, in this manner (Radu, 2004.):

> ➤ **The mission and the image of the organization** – can reflect in a valuable manner the high quality, the high technology, the will of keeping a high standard of services and of the interhuman relationships at the organizational level, the power to innovate, etc.
> ➤ **Long-term work and the authority** – can reflect the importance one gives to the authority within the organization, which results from the application of some function or from the experience in that function;
> ➤ **The importance given to the divers functions and to the managing ones** – can provide us with clues regarding the importance of the divers leaders, bosses, departments, etc.
> ➤ **The manner people are being treated** – helps us to draw a line between the right behavior or favoritism, to evaluate the respect towards the individual rights, the attention given to people and their needs, securing their jobs, the way people are motivated, the way they are remunerated, the possibility of development, instruction, etc.
> ➤ **The role of the woman in the leadership and in other functions** – it is a factor from which one can deduce the acceptance of women in leadership, their rejection from some functions, the proper treatment and the respect towards leader women from that organization.
> ➤ **Selection criteria for leadership and surveillance functions** – indicates the priority given to some selection criteria: for instance the selection based on ethnic criteria, religious ones, nationality, long-term work, professional competence, the influence of non-official relationships and the "cycles".
> ➤ **From the way of programming the work and its discipline**, one can deduce is the organization is characterized by flexibility in establishing the program of work, the discipline freely consented in contrast with the imposed one, the leading style, punctuality.
> ➤ **The leading and administrating style** – can be a totalitarian one, a consultative one or participative one, fact from where one can deduce the flexibility and the level of adaptation of the general style and of the leaders.
> ➤ **Processes of decision-making** – helps us to find out who decides, who has to be consulted, how necessary if the individual or collective consensus in the decision-making.
> ➤ **Social contacts** - help us to establish what contacts are being realized during and after the schedule, special facilities at buffets or reserved clubs, barriers, inhibition ways.
> ➤ **The manner of approaching the conflicts** – shows the preference for unofficial or official modalities of avoiding the conflict, the implication of the superior leadership in solving the conflict, the will to avoid a conflict and arrive to a compromise.
> ➤ **Evaluation of the performance** – who realizes it, if it is public or confidential, the manner the results are being used.
> ➤ **The identification with the organization** – results from the objectives and politics of the organization, the integrity and loyalty and can provide us with information about the measure

in which the leadership and the staff are getting to the results, the team spirit, the measure in which it is or not pleasant to work within a certain unity.

### 3.3. Behavioral Norms at the Organizational Level

Norms are being reflected in the uses, beliefs, rituals and ceremonies of the organization, as its unwritten rules, but also as officially-written legislations. They define the aptitudes and behaviors asked inside and outside the company. They can have symbols through which some messages are being decrypted. Norms allow the manifestation of the consensus, the need to belong to a group or the need of security.

These norms have the purpose to guide the behavior in the organization, help the employs to deduce the behavior they have to adopt at a organizational level towards the colleagues and superiors, encourage a certain attitude towards work (by the knowledge of rights and obligations at the collective level), towards the customers, providers, etc.

- **Informal norms** are being orally sent, by the power of the example, with the help of stories about the heroes of the organization, about the results of the employs and of the firm, about solving some critical situations in the history of the organization. These can refer at relationships with leaders, high records, power, managerial transparency, the seen status, manner of communication, formalism level within the company, to be open towards innovation and change.
- **Formal norms** (official legislations) – functioning inner rules, scheduling book, the description of the function 0 represents that category of norms that guide the job behavior and refers to rights and duties of the employs, security of the work, relationships with customers, evaluating the performances, the sanctions system, the presence, the confidentiality, etc.

In the daily activity of an organization, these norms are not delimitated some by others, there is rather a continuous connection among them.

### 4. Conclusions

As one cam remark, the concept of **organizational culture** is fundamental in order to explain some phenomena as, creating a hierarchy of values from which depends the strategic guiding of the system, the configuration of the international system or the determination of the attitude towards the inside or outside organizational environment. Every organization, no matters its activity domain and its size, has its own culture, kept in her history, in the manner of practicing the activities and the leadership actions.

The knowledge and the analysis of the component factors of an organizational culture helps us to understand that organization, to establish the primarily valuable orientations of the firm and of the employs, to know the behavior and mentality of the staff, of the systems of motivation, performance criteria, leadership style, life style at the organizational level, etc. At the same time, analyzing these elements can provide important information about the weaknesses and strong aspects of an organizational culture in the context of a cultural diagnose.

Among the most important factor of an organizational culture, one counts the values, hard to observe elements, which next to the beliefs and behavior norms ensure the basis for the employs to perceive what it happening in the firm.

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