

THE IMPACT OF CULTURAL AND MOTIVATIONAL ENVIRONMENT WITHIN AN ORGANISATION UPON HUMAN RESOURCES

Lecturer Ph.D. Alunica MORARIU
"Stefan cel Mare" University of Suceava, Romania
alunica.morariu@gmail.com

Ec. Ph.D. Candidate R. Zvan SERGHIIU
"Al. I. Cuza" University of Iasi, Romania
sales@cotnari.ro

Associate Professor Ph.D. Carmen CHA OVSCHI
"Stefan cel Mare" University of Suceava, Romania
carmenc@seap.usv.ro

Abstract: *Organisational-motivational culture has a very strong influence on all employees and employers and, therefore, on the success of the organisation. Human capital is the main source which can be a tool for the rest of the resources in order to obtain quality and performance. The main objective of this paper is to underline the impact upon values, mission, motivation at an organisational level and human resources belonging to that entity.*

The bases of this paper were empirical research, statistic methods, dynamic and comparative, research using the theoretical and scientific support.

Key words: human resources, organisational-motivational culture, motivation, performance, quality.

JEL Classification: M14, O15

INTRODUCTION

The analysis of practical experience of human resources shows the fact that among others, an organisation's collective standards of thinking, attitudes, values, convictions, norms and habits play a paramount role in attracting and keeping the personnel.

All integrated system of social behaviour, way of thinking and feeling accumulated and transmitted through non - biological mechanisms from generation to generation within a society denotes the culture (1) of a collectivity, of a nation.

Eldridge and Crombie (1974), in their paper *The Sociology of Organisations*, present, that, in general, the culture of an organisation refers to the singular configuration of norms, values, convictions and ways of behaviour. It characterises the manner in which the groups and individuals combine in order to determine the fulfillment of certain tasks. (2)

Organisational culture got researchers' attention after the paper *In Search of Excellence* has been published. It has been elaborated by T. Peters and R. Waterman, who have demonstrated the correlation between the dimension of organisational culture and performances obtained by famous companies.

Organisational culture has a very strong influence upon all the employees and, therefore, upon the success of the organisation. Its effects are not directly quantifiable, but they create a framework of result influence.

In the Romanian society, most of the time, organisational culture is conceived or used just as an instrument of recruiting employees. It is a method which produces short-term results. It does not ensure the long-term stability within the organisation, focusing more on employing qualified people, and expecting performance from them. In this context, we can consider that only a solid culture can align with business strategies to ensure the completion of the tasks. Therefore, the utility of analysing organisational culture and the way in which this can influence and motivate personnel in their need to obtain organisational performances is highly emphasized.

ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE AND HUMAN RESOURCES IN THE ROMANIAN AND INTERNATIONAL COMPANIES

An organisation's culture is determined by its functioning. The cultural factor has a strong impact upon the management functions and upon managers' actions. The stronger a culture is, the easier it is for the employees to accept this organisation's values and trust them.

The culture is precisely the social link which generates the feeling of togetherness. Thus, it counteracts the processes of differentiating which are, to a certain extent, impossible to avoid in the organisational life. Organisational culture offers a great deal of significations which are the basis for communication and positive feedback. If functions cannot be accomplished, culture risks diminishing an organisation's efficiency and performance (3).

Organisational culture became a modern concept. It appeared for the first time in English literature in the 60s and became part of the common language with the help of Peters and Waterman's book *In Search of Excellence*.

Even though there is no standard definition of the concept, most of the experts show that an organisational culture has the following characteristics:

- holistic – a whole is more than the sum of its components;
- historically determined – it reflects the organisation's evolution
- socially fundamented – it is created and kept by a group of people;
- difficult to diversify;

Hofstede "sees" organisational culture as a "collective mental programming which differentiates the members of an organisation from the members of another organisation".

There are some specific fundamental components in defining organisational culture. This can be described using such terms as value, norms, subjective manifestation or artefacts (4).

Regarding the value hierarchy of organisational culture, Romanian firms (5) consider professionalism to be the most important, closely followed by the value of obtaining performance and by quality. The close connection between these values reflects the interdependence which exists between qualification level, experience, attitude, personnel behaviour at different hierarchy levels and obtained results. It establishes clear objectives and familiar to the whole team, according to defined quality standards.

In order to provide quality services, some organisations have implemented and applied the ISO 9001/2001 system. This establishes some requirements for a quality management system which is applied more and more. The quality of products, services and management represents a decisive factor for the activity within any organisation on the global market. Broadly, this system includes 8 principles:

- ⇒ client - oriented;
- ⇒ leadership style;
- ⇒ personnel involvement;
- ⇒ process management;
- ⇒ management systematic approach ;
- ⇒ sustained improvement;
- ⇒ fact based decision;
- ⇒ advantageous mutual relationships among suppliers.

As for the state and efficiency of the motivational system, it is the same for all Romanian firms. The conclusion is that the importance of motivation is well-known in order to obtain good performance and competition within the firm, efficient shaping of personnel's attitude and behaviour. These are necessary, periodical and stimulating.

Stanford University, Professor Richard Pascale's studies, show that an organisation which has a strong culture, would submit its employees to a laborious process of socialising. The new employees have to follow some steps (6) which are specific for human resources management related to strong cultures.

Gratification and promotion are, as well, essential instruments in consolidating the organisational culture. Therefore, we invoke the European Culture Survey, done during 1998 – 1999 by TMI among around 100 000 employees from Central and Western Europe, which is evidence for the effects which these two components of organisational culture can have (7). The employees from several economical sectors and with different position within the company have been invited to answer some direct questions asked by TMI operators. Alarmingly, these results got managers' attention:

- 1 out of 10 employees had been searching for a job without informing his/her boss;
- 4 out of 10 employees answered "no" to the question "Are you proud of being an employee of this company?";
- 8 out of 10 employees were indifferent to the company and did not feel responsible for its results;
- only 2 out of 10 employees were proud to work in that certain company, they were talking positively about the company, criticising only within it, in a constructive way and were ready to take initiative to improve its results.

On the organisations' nationality, we show that:

✓ the French have a higher degree of honour, they are proud of being part of a certain job section or organisation. They do not take criticism very well and interpret freely and personally their rights and professional duties.

✓ Germans, as far as they are concerned assign a certain negative connotation to the word "business", unlike Americans, for example. Within the enterprise, they emphasise loyalty and professional conscience, as well as a certain degree of obedience .

✓ Belgians do not feel comfortable with authority and settlement.

✓ Italians have the tendency to get attached to their company and to strongly develop the value of "work".

In all European countries we find a high degree of individualism unlike African and Asian countries (8). Individualism is accompanied, sometimes, for example, in Germany, by strong interpersonal distances. The meaning of 'private' is very developed. This can also happen in France and the UK, in the form accepting foreigners (if 88% of Germans speak one or more languages, in the UK, only 50% and in France 62%, unlike Belgium, Sweden and the Netherlands where the number of polyglots is impressive) (9).

A number of human resources experts analyse the cultural differences which can hardly produce or which cannot generate a homogenous practice in human resources management.

The studies of Geert Hofstede, with the help of the employees from IBM have highlighted the differences in practice and values (10). Therefore, on a national level, the cultural differences have more to do with practices and less to do with values.

A certain level of occupational culture has been observed. It is situated half way from nation and organisation. The same expert has discovered that a national culture determines differences in values and attitude towards labour, higher than the position within the organisation, profession, or sex.

Hofstede concludes that a number of differences regarding both the managers and the employees can be emphasized with the help of four dimensions:

1. individualism/collectivism;
2. distance from power (power intensity);
3. avoiding uncertainties (the degree to which people feel threatened by new situations);
4. masculine/ feminine.

Culture mainly reflects the attitude towards change. This attitude can be:

- *conservatory* – reluctant to change, determined "to do things as always";
- *opportunistic* – paying attention to every opportunity for change, without complying with the organisation's objectives and activity;
- *enterprising* – constantly developing new programmes and services;
- *expansionist* – determined to increase the number of beneficiaries, clients, members.

But, what change of organisational culture means, and the way of implementing it represents a subject of challenging analyses. Experts consider that recruiting, motivating, keeping and developing people means, precisely, creating an environment where people feel challenged and sustained. They are permitted to be creative, innovating, and are encouraged to develop strong work relations, therefore, *a constructive culture*. (11)

As for the organisation's is cultural-motivational environment, this can be defined through collective mental programming of the mission, values, norms and subjective manifestation related to direction (12), effort (13) and persistence (14) of the human component, to rationally achieve the organisation's objectives.

RELATION BETWEEN ORGANISATIONAL HUMAN - CULTURE CAPITAL, CONSTANT CHANGE HARMONISED WITH THE CLIENT'S EXPECTATIONS

According to the latest development of global economy, the only really useful constant is change. What was useful for efficiency and quality some time ago, proves to be useless and even inconvenient after a short while, because of the rapid changes in the business environment. (15)

Therefore, taking into account practitioners' suggestions, ideas which might answer the challenge to form a human capital in order to express and apply, a truly customer-oriented organisation policy, (16) we talk about:

1. communicating to "internal client" its own vision, on providing a product, exceptional service;

Internal clients are the company's employees, with whom it is important to analyse, define, standardise the value which the clients have for the results of the company. It is important to define using direct and comprehensible terms what it means to provide products, quality services. The organisation must ensure that employees have acquired these principles and values, creating an environment where people can feel encouraged to provide excellence in what they do.

2. The evaluation of their own organisation's culture

It is efficient to examine the organisational culture, if this is based on values such as: trust, quality, respect, integrity, team work. If these values are accepted and promoted within the company, the employees are dedicated to satisfying and meeting the customer's expectations.

3. Clients' messages analysis using its own employees

The dialogue between employees (especially the ones that have direct contact with clients) and the analysis of their opinion about clients: what are their expectations? What are the problems they are confronted with? What exactly creates discontent regarding the offered product and services? It will motivate and improve the quality of their work, underlining palpable details and solutions, with a real benefit for the company.

4. Recruiting personnel endowed with "quality for client"

A selection of the human capital taking into consideration performance standards and the employees' involvement in the process of recruitment and selection can clarify the potential employees who will fit with the existent team and company values. Certain skills can be acquired by the employees by training or at the work place, but skills and personality cannot be directly "assimilated" like this thus creating the need for a thorough selection according to preset standards and values.

5. Recognition and reward

Positive feed-back to employees and encouraging them in order to be additionally motivated to reach performance is highly effective. Involving innovation and finding new solutions to directly solve service duties, will have a positive attitude towards their own activity and organisation.

6. Performance according to set objectives and standards

Establishing high objectives and standards will motivate personnel to obtain high performances by imposing hard to get objectives. Personnel needs to become responsible with achieving set standards.

Therefore, during this era of globalisation, companies will be oriented towards the client and provide high – quality products and services, according to the organisational values. They will be one step ahead other companies in gaining competitive advantages.

THE ORGANISATION MOTIVATIONAL –CULTURAL IMPACT UPON HUMAN RESOURCES

Identifying the values of organisation culture, among people who compete for a job, determines managers, most of the times, to hire people who have these similar elements. Compatibility can be an important criterion when selecting. For example, a study of US Federal Trade Commission reveals the fact that for the selection decision it is more important to consider regional norms and values, school association, political links rather than graduating a university. In other organisations, hiring or promotion decision depend more on the way in which people fit organisational norms and less its objectives. (17)

The organisation functions under the direct or indirect impact of some factors related to the human capital motivation on which each collectivity performance depends. Result quality and also its continuity, development and adaptation to a competitive market, impose the correlation of individual competition with the group competition and development of qualities and skills for each of the team members.

Team culture refers to the collective effort, of all employees for the common good and promotes creativity and communication. On the other hand, power culture highlights the leader as being the first who formally exerts a rigorous control, while academy culture emphasizes personal development and attracting new individual talents in top domains. (18)

Therefore, if a person or a collectivity can change an organisation, the other way around is still true. It is normal, therefore, for any organisation, as a social organism, to build a set of function rules and norms to ensure its identity and success in the domain that it covers, to define the principles which can ensure maximum profit and visibility. That is why the company attempts to configure people according to this profile. One of the main functions of the recruiting service is to identify people who are willing to easily accede to already created norms. This process does not stop here. Continuously, since the very moment of their employment, the new comers are tested through a process of integration and influence that is meant to harmonise the individual purposes with the group norm. This is perfectly justifiable, because any lack of adaptation and major conflict states are eliminated from the start. An organisation can achieve its objectives mostly relying on its resources and values, motivational and cultural impact upon human component and quality.

Motivational and cultural impact upon human resources can have many forms:

I. According to the influence environment of the impact zone (19):

1. We are talking about an *intrinsic impact* when the expectation of the human component refers strictly to personal evaluation, individual needs, regarding the motivational and cultural components; elements which motivate people to have certain attitudes and to follow an individually defined direction;

2. The second form, an obvious one, is the one of *extrinsic impact*. It is characterised by the increase and decrease changes, positive or negative ones which are presented in the motivational and cultural environment and which are challenged by anyone or any situation coming from outside the individual status of the employee.

II. According to the organisation ideology, we can identify: (20)

1. *The power impact* – refers to the conflict zone between the motivational cultural support and the human resource oriented towards competition, domination and excessive control;

2. *The accomplishment impact* characterised by the relation between the motivational - cultural support and the responsibility assumed by the individual emphasizing action and enthusiasm;

3. *The task impact* – based on the organisation orientation and its values, its personnel, to obtain results and fulfilling the task. The emphasis is on the expert's power, knowledge and competences, related to the motivation lever;

4. *The role impact* – gets our attention by the applying of procedures, rules, legality, legitimacy and bureaucracy, by personnel work control over the motivational – cultural and personal sector.

INSTEAD OF CONCLUSION

Motivational – cultural norms, function norms, written (for example, The Internal Normative) or unwritten, appear only after accumulating commercial market experience, being its stakeholder. Norms can regulate behaviours such as client relations, relations between employees, relations between employees and employers, etc. Traditionally, the culture of an organisation is openly focused on the three major concepts: Values, Mission, Vision. Declared values subsume, also, an important part of an organisation's identity. Sometimes, these values are focused within the firm's logo: "We believe in quality", "Our client is our master"... It is enough to undergo a relevant analysis of a firm's logo to understand the people they want and the ones they don't. "The mission" covers the organisation's major objectives. It indicates increase and development efforts, the direction where employees' efforts need to focus once they are motivated and encouraged. Organisations also differ from one another through their inner motivational -cultural climate which was ensured and engraved. That is why, some organisations are wanted, and also because they are known they prefer quality, impartiality, education, a high standard of motivation for its employees, favouring personal development and contribution (so-called academy organisations). Many times we talk about excesses, though, because of the uniformed pressure which is too great. A lifestyle is created, respected outside the organisation, especially when referring to known and well known companies. Clearly, even though there are exceptions, under the constant influence of an environment, people change. Many times, the career, without the pressure of financial needs, becomes more important than family, friends or personal values. So, finally, the familiar conflict between career and personal life becomes for many a fact, diminishing the role of pecuniary motivation, family role and friends.

Within the organisation, the motivational-cultural impact upon human resources, regardless of its form, as well as the practises applied for integrating, keeping and motivating the personnel can be related to the Individualism – Collectivism dimension. (21)

The motivational – cultural dimension of the human component proves to be paramount. It has secondary level effects which are unsuspected during a first analysis, going as far as shaping some individual and group destinies, professional and organisational performances which are always, more or less, adapted to market demand.

NOTES:

(1) Pâni oar Georgeta, Pâni oar Ion-Ovidiu – *Managementul resurselor umane – Ghid practic*, edi ia a II-a, Editura Polirom, Ia i, 2005, p. 205

(2) Armstrong Michael – *Managementul resurselor umane – Manual de practic*, Editura Codecs, Bucure ti, 2003, p. 181

(3) *Ibidem*, p. 183

(4) *Ibidem*, p. 184

(5) Nicolescu Ovidiu (coord.) – *Managerii și managementul resurselor umane*, N. stase Marian – Cercetare empirică privind cultura organizațională în firmele din România, Editura Economică, București, 2004, pp. 454 și urm.

(6) With these stages, we start with a very close selection of the candidates, scanning for some experiences to induce accepting the organisational norms and values, training within organisation, which leads to being qualified for the main subject, gratifying and control system, precise finished for behaviour consolidation which proves to be essential for market success, acceding to values which ensure reconciliation with personal sacrifices, and finishes by assuming the consolidation and consistent role models.

(7) Chisu Viorica Ana (coord.) – *Manualul specialistului in resurse umane*, Casa de editura Irecson, Bucuresti, 2001, p. 410

- (8) Hofstede, Geert – *Cultural Consequences: International Differences in Work-related Values*, Sage, Beverly Hills, Calif, 1987
- (9) Emilian Radu, Tigu Gabriela, State Olimpia, Tuclea Claudia – *Managementul Resurselor Umane*, <http://www.biblioteca-digitala.ase.ro/>
- (10) Hofstede, Geert – *Managementul structurilor multiculturale*. Bucure ti, Editura Economic , 1996, p. 17
- (11) Cum s schimbi cultura organiza iei într-un an, *Revista Cariere*, nr. 134, p. 16
- (12) Towards what does a person try to align throughout his/her activity?
- (13) What is his/her activity intensity?
- (14) How long does he/she continue, insist to achieve and exceed the objectives?
- (15) Câmpeanu-Sonea Eugenia, Sonea Adrian – *Evolu ia culturii organiza ionale – probleme de competen i structur* , p. 71, www.managementmarketing.ropdfarticol24.pdf
- (16) http://www.sfin.ro/articol_10479/notiuni_despre_cultura_organizationala.html
- (17) Enache Ionel, *Planificarea i organizarea serviciilor de bibliotec* , Editura Uni versit ii din Bucure ti, 2004, <http://ebooks.unibuc.ro/StiinteCOM/planif/4.htm>
- (18) Tan u Adrian Dumitru, *Rolul culturii organiza ionale în promovarea inova iilor*, p 17, www.managementmarketing.ropdfarticol30.pdf
- (19) We refer to motivation forms, as well.
- (20) To study the clasification of organisational culture according to Harrison, R. – *Understanding your Organisation's Character*, *Harvard Business Review*, 5, pp. 119-128, (1972); Handy C. – *Understanding Organisations*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, (1981); Schein, E. H., *Organisation Culture and Leadership*, Jossey Bass, New York, (1985); Williams, A, Dobson, P, and Walters, M. – *Changing Culture: New Organisational approaches*, IPA, London (1989)
- (21) Individualism – collectivism dimension it is the most representative psycho – sociological one, with transcultural resources, capable to provide evaluation on national cultures of intercultural variations. This describes the direction of a person related to the others from his/her environment.

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9. Tanău Adrian Dumitru, *Rolul culturii organizaționale în promovarea inovațiilor*, www.managementmarketing.ro/pdf/articole30.pdf.
10. Revista *Cariere*, nr. 134, București, noiembrie 2008
11. http://www.sfin.ro/articol_10479/notiuni_despre_cultura_organizationala.html