

## THE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE – A MAJOR FACTOR IN MOTIVATION OF PRE-UNIVERSITY TEACHERS

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**Abstract:** *The article addresses the issue of teacher motivation through the elements of organizational culture. It explains the motivational power of organizational culture levels, it is argued dependence of the type of staff motivation organizational culture, the organizational culture is defined by optical ratio “culture: motivation”.*

**Key words:** *teacher motivation; organizational culture; human activity*

Any educational institution can become modern, only through the joint efforts of its members, efforts that are dependent on direct/ indirect their motivation level, the extent to which the staff feels responsible and consciously involved in achieving the objectives of the institution, being motivated internally or externally.

The staff motivation is an extremely complicated process. There are no universal recipes or patterns of motivation, this is a flexible, temporary process and greatly influenced by a number of subjective and objective factors. However, it can be synthesized a series of circumstances, regularities, strategies that would form the basis of a managerial approach to motivate the staff of an organization.

The research shows that the level of motivation and management effectiveness is dependent on the existence of internal organizational schemes of maintenance of this level and one of these mechanisms are organizational culture [1,3,10,11]. In fact, a majority of organizational processes are noticeably influenced by organizational culture.

The organizational culture is considered to be the invisible, intangible “driving force” behind all phenomena and things in every organization, it is the energy that may determine people to act or not, most elements of the organizational culture are intangible, unwritten, but with an extremely high power.

In order to understand how the organizational culture determines people to act, to be involved in achieving the organization's objectives is desirable to clarify what this concept means, what are the components and how they can motivate.

Although the concept of organizational culture has been analyzed in a number of works, is still not a universally recognized definition.

By Nicolescu O. and I. Verboncu, the organizational culture is consisted in all values, beliefs, aspirations, expectations and behaviors contoured over the years in each organization, that prevails within its framework and influences directly and indirectly the functionality and performance [6].

Ouchi W.G. Defines the organizational culture as a set of symbols, ceremonies and myths, those communicate to its members the basic beliefs and values of the organization.

From the definitions mentioned above, we can conclude that the organizational culture is nothing more than a set of values, customs, and traditions, ideas, shared by members of an organization.

Iosifescu Ș. argues that the organizational culture can be defined as a specific complex of values, leading beliefs, representations, understandings, ways of thinking, shared by members of an organization that determine the ways in which these would behave inside and outside of the

organization and are sent to new members as the fair.

The specialized literature highlights the idea that this complex of values, customs, traditions, ideas is divided into three levels [2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11 etc.].

Level 1, surface (of symbols) includes the physical elements that were constructed, modified, enriched by organization members ( the emblem, the spoken language, poster of honor, the dress code, architecture, space, specific organizational procedures, prominent personalities who have worked/taught in this institution, etc.)

Level 2 (attitudes, behaviors, organizational procedures, rituals, ceremonies) are elements that reflect the components, way of thinking and action of respective culture are the fundamental values that provides the identity and moral and psychological stability of all community members.

Level 3 represents the core values that validity has been confirmed a long time ago, they have been turned out viable in most situations that are led to an almost unconditional acceptance of those by the newcomers. The core values are those that generally are not subjected to discussions, debates, are considered to be from the beginning, the only ones that may normally exist. Where a value is strongly supported, behavior based on a different value of this will be considered as totally unacceptable, as something unthinkable. Namely, due to this force of persuasion, the fundamental values and behavior based on these are extremely difficult to change.

We will try to analyze the motivational power of these elements of organizational culture.

According to the research [1,5,10,12,13] the reasons are on the basis of human activity, determined by its energizing pulse, impulse, trends side.

The question appears: what the employee needs can be met via these elements of organizational culture? We will try to answer by appealing to the most popular theory of needs – that of Maslow A. [5]. We remind you that the author has set five groups of needs: 1. the physiological needs, 2. the needs for safety/security, 3. the group membership needs, 4. the needs of esteem and consideration, 5. the needs for self-fulfillment.

Putting the organizational culture levels against levels of human needs, we can deduce a relationship between them. Thus, by offering a suitable space for activity (level 1 of the organizational culture) can meet the needs of the first category. The physical elements of organizational culture transmit meaningful messages about what is important for the institution (cleanliness, order, etc.) and they may or may not cause the staff to follow.

Level 2 (attitudes, behaviors, organizational procedures, rituals, ceremonies) come to meet the need for safety/security. The organizational culture offers protection of its members, provides a feeling of stability and safety. Its role is all the more important, as the speed of changes is higher, especially in education system. The organizational culture has the power to provide the “psychological safety”[3], giving its members a familiar setting in that to express their own personality and opportunities in conditions of comfort and safety. At the same time, we believe that a stable, strong, lasting “psychological safety” can affect the long-term development of the organization.

It happens, that human nature tends to structure their lives, to create a known environment to have, so as to be able to successfully adapt behavior to environmental requirements when are familiar with the context, people enjoy a greater emotional stability and intellectual, should not stay, permanently tensed, waiting for the unpredictable, unknown elements dictate them a different behavior than the normal [6, 10, 12].

Therefore, they feel themselves comfortably in certain structures, with some people around them, with some procedures, that are not likely to present original situations that would require an additional consumption of resources, the human being accepts this stability even if the environment has a number of unpleasant traits, but they already know, have some specific defense mechanisms developed. Uncertainty, fear, occurs when there can appear new unknown

elements when the man is asked to change his activity without knowing the essence and in this case the majority prefer stability, routine.

A study conducted by researchers from Iasi (Romania) [4] identifies a number of defining elements of the organizational culture of secondary education institutions in Moldova. The researchers have called a “culture of routine” with the following characteristics:

- the uniformity presents both in the overall look of the schools and in the mentalities of interest groups. The decoration and “dressing” schools and classrooms are the classic, largely linked to the subjects and unattractive carried.

- The lack of initiative, indicated by the tendency to imitate ( the exchange of experience, mutual assistance at the lessons, is a form of the required continuous education), the constant expectation of “indications” and the fear of directors and teachers to assume the initiatives (“if someone comes from administration and says it's wrong”)

- The tenderer excessive focus on education and not the student.

- The feeling of uncertainty because of the rapid changes taking place in education system.

- The generation gap (mainly of teachers, who are close to retirement or very young with different patterns of thought and education)

- The feeling of ineffectiveness and/or uselessness school.

Can such an organizational culture motivate? Yes, motivates, people prefer uniformity instead of creativity, innovation not imitation, the strict focus on curriculum, not the student's educational needs, etc.

It is evident, that the organizational culture of schools in our country has points of contact. Maybe there are a lot because the organizational culture appears at the interface between individual and cultural elements prevailing nationwide. The individual cultural background looms the national culture, members of the national culture elements adapted to specific activities [4, 9, 11]. So, educational organization culture integrates the values, principles, patterns of thinking that are consistent with the values, principles, models of society thinking within the school organization activities. This allows each organization to develop its own cultural pattern and all it affects the vitality and functionality of the models that are different from those promoted in the respective society.

Returning to the relationship between levels of organizational and human needs, we continue the idea, that organizational culture provides the feeling of belonging to a specific community, thereby satisfying the needs of group membership (the need to be accepted as a partner, as a member of the group). In this case performing work in an institution with a strong culture will become a motivator for employees who perceive a need of belonging. They will say with pride: “I activate in school X” with that he is identified automatically, to activate in this school is for a teacher a motivator.

Level 3 of organizational culture offers the premises for meeting needs of 4 and 5 rank of the hierarchy. We believe that organizational culture are its own and consistently promotes values such as respect, human assessment, professionalism, the equity provides the proper motivation in order to meet the perceived needs of esteem, appreciation, seal-fulfillment, etc.

The organizational culture is a collective phenomenon, because it is eventually accepted (at least partially) by the people that live and work together in the same social average where a successful outcome was. Each member of an organization has an individual culture, consisting of systems of knowledge, values, symbols, attitudes and behaviors that define personality and makes decisions and actions in relation to other components of the community where he works.

G.Hofstede argues that organizational culture has a pattern, a collective mental programming that distinguishes the members of a particular social class of members of other groups or social categories. So, still are looking for his own identity man will be found in the cultural space that represents a human being or defines to some extent. Each of us has a set of core values and we will feel ourselves comfortably in a homogenous context with our set of

values where we can interact with people who have similar patterns.

At the same time, we learn to mold our own systems of values, attitudes and behaviors according to standards that are accepted by others around [1]. Namely, the organizational culture molds individual and group identity. Through the displayed values, through activities, the organizational culture puts pressure on a newcomer in its framework, causes changes in the way of perceptions, thought and in action areas. In order to be accepted the individual will tend to “redesign” certain personality traits, so as to fit better the group that wants to work.

So the organizational culture through its levels is a determinant major of the members’ behavior of some organization. In the organizations with a viable organizational culture, strong employees know what is expected from them and what types of decisions and action methods accepted. As a result, they focus rapidly their actions on achieving established objectives. And vice versa, weak cultures, in that there are no generally accepted behavioral decision patterns, the employees will not take responsibility. We believe that the motivational power of organizational culture depends on the type. Literature offers several classifications of organizational culture. One of these classification identifies 4 types of culture organizations:[9]:

1. The culture of power: control/power emanates from the center, prevails the power and personnel resources, this culture serves the leader. In this case the director, the authority has, may adopt a pattern of behavior or decisions that motivate/ affect any of its employees effectively. The leaders are real patterns for employees. In this regard, it is recommended that they should have a high capacity for empathy, can understand and to be understood. The important source of motivation and persuasion ability is represented by the own cultural basis, the system of beliefs, values, attitudes.

2. The culture of roles: classical structure, the bureaucratic nature, roles are more important than the people who occupy them, dominate the power positions and the power experts is tolerated, theirs culture serves the cause of the structure.

3. The task culture: the emphasis is on carrying out the activity, power experts prevails, but personal power and position of hierarchical group are more important, the unifying force is manifested in a high level of collaboration.

4. The person's culture: a lot of people, usually professionals working in the same room/rooms but following their separate role, power is not an important element because the members are experts, each in his field this type of culture promotes self-fulfillment, the potential development.

We believe that any school that does not have a pure type of organizational culture, but a mixed culture with the predominance of one of these types. As a rule, we find in each school a “cultural mix” and expanding the “culture of work” with elements of the other mentioned patterns.

We highlight the classification of types of organizational culture formulated by Demison D.R. [2], considering as a more relevant classification closer to the specific of education. The author identifies 4 types of the organizational culture: the group culture, the development culture, the rational culture and hierarchical culture.

–The group culture is concerned with especially human relations. This culture emphasizes the flexibility and internal organization.

In this culture, core values, respectively, the motivational factors are: ownership, trust, participation, commitment, cohesion. The major criterion of the effectiveness of this pattern is the development of human potential.

–The development culture emphasizes the flexibility and charge. The culture values the professional growth, performance, creativity. The key factors that motivate the development, stimulation, creativity.

–The rational culture highlights the performance, achievement. Organizations with a rational culture rely on well-defined objectives. The motivating factors are: competitiveness, the

success of those set. Criteria of effectiveness of this pattern are planning, productivity and efficiency.

–The hierarchical culture emphasizes the internal efficiency, uniformity, coordination and evaluation the focus is on a logic internal organization and stability. The purpose of the organization is focusing on proper execution and hierarchical culture within regulations. The motivating factors are security, order, rules and regulations. The efficacy criteria are the control, stability and efficiency.

Analyzing these patterns, we find that each of them has the tangential points and diametrically opposed points of view. The group culture that emphasizes control, the culture of development that is characterized by flexibility and focus on the external environment, is in opposition to the hierarchical culture that emphasizes control. At the same time, the group culture and development are focused on flexibility and cultural development and the rational is focused on external relations.

What kind of culture is characteristic of school organizations in our country? It is unlikely to find any institution with a pure pattern. But it seems that it does not need it because too much flexibility can create chaos, too much order and control can lead to rigidity, bureaucracy.

In our institutions may be found the paradoxical combinations of values. In this context, we appreciate the valuable idea told by Demison D.R. [2] that nowadays, organizations need a new kind of organizational culture, the culture of competing values, that are a cultural pattern with a combination of values from all other types. Namely this type will facilitate the individual and organizational change.

The motivation of teachers can be influenced by organizational climate that dominates in a certain period of time in the organization.

The recent studies explain the link between the organizational culture and organizational climate. Analyzing the relationship between these concepts, Demison D.R. [2] argues that the organizational climate can be regarded as a code, a logical structuring of behaviors and meanings, that successfully passed the test of time and serves as a guide for members of the organization to adapt and survive, while organizational climate is an area of much smaller extent, being partially a subjective reaction to the impact of Organizational culture of organization members and indicates how an individual shares the core values and beliefs.

According to Nicolescu O. and Verboncu I. organizational climate expresses the mood of the staff that tends to prevail in a certain period, reflecting both the organizational culture and recent developments of organization [6].

In conclusion, the organizational climate is a result of employees' perceptions who exert a major influence on their behavior, in a certain period of time, both an individual interpretation and the organization's collective culture.

The organizational climate is characterized in terms of psycho emotional skills (opinions, fears, positive or negative feelings of employees and a major influence on their behavior in a certain period of time.

The organizational climate variables are an excellent indicator of the mood of the employees in the form of suggestions or solutions for motivation of employees.

It is considered the climate is directly responsible for the "health" of the organization, so as school "health" is characterized by an open climate, participative and that promotes human potential and competitiveness based on competence, mobilizes the efforts of all the as providing a quality education.

Finally, through the optics of ratio, "the organizational culture: the staff motivation" we conclude that organizational culture is a system of values, beliefs, activity principle, norms, symbols specific to educational institutions that become the reference major determinant of behavior, the essential factor in teacher motivation / demotivation.

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