

PARTICULARITIES OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION ESTABLISHMENTS IN ROMANIA

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Abstract

The university is a small nation which has its own beliefs and values. The culture, image and the personality of each and every higher education establishment are created in the first place by the people that compose the establishment. The study of the culture of an higher education establishment is essential because an organization can't be ruled without knowing its values. The university is a center of research and innovation which forms the professional competences according to the national and European market demands of labor by taking over and applying the evolved knowledge as a source of inventions, innovations and development in the technological and socioeconomically plan, provider of specialized services for the community. The culture of the organization exerts a very powerful influence on everyone which compose it: teachers and non-teachers, beneficiaries teachings thus meaning the whole academic community. Its effects are not directly quantifiable, but they create a frame which allows to mend the obtained results, the efficiency of the activity and of the academic demarches as well as its effective evolution. In order to succeed and resist in the future, in the context of European integration, of the rank of the higher education institutions, they will be needed to utilize direct methods, strategies and structures adapted to the labor market, but also some indirect methods which can have behavior influences, especially in enhancing or if it's the case, systematic transformation of the culture of the organization. To successfully transform a university in Romania with bureaucratic accents, mostly protected and isolated, inside a flexible institution, frequent able and opened if time is needed, trust and perseverance, but also of an adequate legislation that can answer to the needs of the contemporary society in the context of allegiance to the European space. Surely a change program won't solve the situation without being accompanied by changes at the structural levels.

Key words: culture of organization, future, history, university, values.

INTRODUCTION

The culture, image and personality of everyone single one of the higher education establishments are created by the people that compose it in the first place.

In this domain there is a great diversity in describing the elements which compose the culture of the organization in this type of institution [1].

The notion of "the culture of the organization" tends to be included more often in the study of organizations and to become a new variable of the contemporary management.

In order to succeed and resist in the future, in the context of European integration, of higher education establishments hierarchy, these will have to utilize direct methods, strategies and adapted structures to the labor market and also indirect methods, which can influence the behavior, especially placing it in systemic value of the organization's culture [2].

In Romania, the study over the organization's culture is at its beginning.

The results are characteristic to the prolonged state of transition which left her finger prints on mentalities, values and attitudes.

With all these, they are important through their prism of alignment to the theories in international literature and through the fact that cultural profiles were drawn based on the real situation of the Romanian organizations, profiles to which we can associate the corresponding types of management [3].

The defining and evolution of the concept of organizational culture.

The development of the concept of organizational culture was favored also by the major reconsideration of the part which the human resources has it in the evolution of the organization [4].

Starting from the definitions found in the specialized literature, the term of culture could be defined as a system of social behaviors of

the way of thinking and feeling learned and transmitted through other mechanisms other than those biological, generation after generation, integration and those from within a society.

The term of “culture” comes from anthropology. It was used to represent it in a larger sense, the physical and spiritual elements that a human collectivity passed from a generation to another [5].

The word “culture” has among others, three acceptations of interest in the addressed theme: “developing some faculties of the spirit through appropriate intellectual exercises, respectively the aggregate of all the knowledge’s accumulated which allow the development of the critic spirit and judgment. The aggregate of the intellectual aspects of a civilization [6].

“The ensemble of the phenomenas acquired of the behavior in the human societies.”

In the American Heritage Dictionary, “culture” is being defined as “the totality of beliefs, values, behaviors of the institutions and other results of human thought and work that are passed down socially inside a collectivity [7].”

Ovidiu Nicolescu, defines culture as: “the organizational cultures reside in the aggregate of values, beliefs, expectations and behaviors contoured in time individually in each organization which predominates within itself and which conditions directly and indirectly it’s functionality and performances [8].”

Le Petit Larousse defines the enterprise culture as the ensemble of structural traditions and savoir-faire which assures an implicit behavioral code and the internal cohesion of the enterprise.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The notion of culture allows reaffirmation in a new perspective that can be usefully resourced considering the informal role towards the formal, the human towards the structure, of the behavior and experience towards rationality and methods.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In time four types of cultural phenomena’s appeared in rapport with the organizations, in general: the influence of the national culture

and of the local one accomplished with the help of the members of the organization.

a)The influence of the professional community (by social standing, relationships, way of thinking).

b)The culture of the group that’s inside the organization (preoccupations, socio-professional categories, way of thinking which determines the apparition of subcultures).

c)The culture of the organization characterized through the ensemble of behaviors and elements that give some internal coherence, as well as some practices that are not random at all [9].

Through “culture”, we understand among under things, the ensemble of behavior forms appropriated by the human communities. In this acceptation the organizational culture is an aggregate. This assumes a certain internal coherence, relationships between the elements that compose it and not a desperate collection of diverse habits [10]. The culture of an organization forms a total in which every element answers to the other ones. This aggregate is exclusive only to the organization. There can be some come common traces of the same culture, they can be alike, but they can’t be confused. Exactly this type of uniciti offers importance and makes from the organizational culture a domain of interest for the theorists and practicing of management [11].

The elements of the culture are “ways” of behavior. This means that the elements are not singular, ephemeris or accidentals. Regularities, types, stable characteristics and general that last and reproduce can be recognized. The organizational culture is a phenomena that lasts and which ca be modified, transformed, but in general through slower evolutions that after some sudden changes of situation.

The “ways” of behavior are appropriated by individuals. In dissimilarity of the organizational structure, the organizational culture is not supported, defined, explained through organigrams and procedures. As well as the habitants of a country wear with themselves the national culture so is the organizational culture, is being weared by the individuals that compose an organization. It can be found

inside the individuals by their levels of consciousness. If 500-1000 persons can find themselves in the same place at the exact same hour, even if they share the same emotions following a course, a conference or a concert, they form an assembly, but they don't have their own culture. Attributing a culture is a slow process which assumes not only a physical presence but an interaction and a continuous and intense learning.

On the other side, the "culture" once attributed becomes the source of the appurtenance feeling [12].

The behaviors are not the only elements of a culture, they are rather the consequences of the culture. An organizational culture induces some behaviors to the members of the organization and discourages others. But the ways through which the individuals follow or not the "instructions" of the culture puts in the spotlights some other elements: images, beliefs, symbols, phantasms. An organizational culture has more elements of different nature.

In the context of what the university managers should do, it would be necessary to remark the impact of the organizational culture and also the impact of the national one. Regarding the first aspect, the most popular essay is that of Peters Waterman. Probably a useful interpretation of the impact of the organizational culture on the managers formation are linked to the four types of cultures identified by him: the culture of power, the culture of the role, the culture of the talk and the culture of the person. Also the national cultural differences are important in every higher education establishments.

In its interior the university organization can be perceived as to having four components that interact with each other: the tasks, structures and organizational systems, the culture and the people, as members of the organizations, where:

Tasks, they form the primary component of the university organizational system. They include the activities that must be accomplished, the characteristics of those activities, the quantity and quality of the educational services and products provided by the respective higher education establishment.

The structures and organizational systems, within a higher education establishment include: responsibilities and subordinated lines, informational systems, the monitoring and control mechanisms, the management contracts, post files, the formal systems of reallocation and premieres, the structures of the sessions, the functioning procedures, etc. Even if these traits of the educational organization are relatively easy to describe, they often get to be outdated, incapable to answer to the waiting and the complexity of the university environment which is as well in a continuous change and evolution.

The organizational culture, it refers to the values, rituals and power sources, rules and loyalties from within the organization, as well as the informal system of recommendation or penalization, which determines the way in which the respective university organization works and acts.

The people, they come with their different skills, knowledge, experiences, personalities, values, attitudes and behavior.

It is necessary that the organization to adopt changes in order to survive in a concurrenial environment, somewhat imprevisible. The organization must consider the change a favorable occasion, because it helps it to develop and prosper.

The elements of the organization's cultures in the higher education establishments in Romania

The organizational culture is composed of a set of values, significations, behaviors and organizational practices. Adapted to the needs and realities within a certain higher education establishment this would be composed off:

a. Founders and circumstances in which it was founded.

b. The founding and the founder represent the first moments of the institution (first choice, first experience). The strong personality of the founder, the principles established initially. Most of the time these principles are specific characteristics that can be refunded in the culture of an organization as long as it will exist. At this step the historic personality and resonance of the one that names the

educational establishment can be assimilated.

History

The history of an higher education establishment can't be torn apart from it's external environment. The history that has the most interest, is the once that explains the collectives mechanisms of functioning. To study the history of such an organization it is necessary to start from:

- A list of activities and products accomplished by the institution: training areas, faculties, specializations, levels (universitary, post-universitary, doctorates, post-doctorales, etc).
- A list of the researched technologies, utilized, abandoned (to understand what were their competences and have a vision about their evolutions).
- The "internal" structures will be determined starting from the evolution of the organigrams, the apparition and evolution of the universitary functions, the raise and their decline, the influence upon the management.
- The "external" structures, the evolution of the universitary instruction by the founding of new faculties, specializations, material acquisitions, fusions, branches, etc; these can be analyzed showing the instruction's reports with it's activities(financial reports, etc).
- Managers and their portraits, professional experience, education, the function, occupation and the carrier it follows, etc.
- The strategies and how they succeeded: the evolution of the computational positions, specialization/diversification, internationalization, the relationships with other providers of education, with the preuniversitary environment, with the labor market, the strategies for the integration of the graduates on the labor market.
- The difficulty of studying the culture of an organization, through the prism of her history is generated by:
 - The institutions without history(or recent history). Some institutions of this kind are proud to exist totally in the present and to prepare their future without looking back. There can be educational establishments that have a well prepared and straight forward plan without them being interested to revendicate any traditions or to have a certain history.

➤ by the existence of many histories, they exist because of some reorganizations, some reorientations of the management or because of some inaccurate data.

By the existence of unreal histories. Their truth was altered in time.

Here are some examples from the Romanian universitary environment:

-The University of Bucharest was founded through the Decree nr. 765 of 4 / 16 of July 1864 of the Reigning Alexandru Ioan Cuza and reclaiming itself as the successor of the higher education structures inaugurated by the Royal Academy (1694).

-The University of Agronomical Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Bucharest (USAMVB) is one of the oldest education establishments in Romania. It's founding is due to the initiative of the Romanian Country Ruler, Barbu Dimitrie Știrbei who, in the year 1852, takes the decision to found the "Institute of Agriculture in Pantelimon". On the school's seal it was represented a hawk that was holding in it's claws a bunch of gleans. This old symbol of the school stands at the root of the actual seal of the USAMVB. After only three years, in 1855, was taking place the founding of "The school for Veterinary Teachings", the precursor of the actual Faculty of Veterinary Medicine.

-The Babeș-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca was founded in the September- October of 1872 through the law nr. XIX, adopted by the Hungarian Parliament on 17 of September and sanctioned by the Emperor Franz Iosif at 12 of October, it takes place the founding of the University in Cluj (with teachings in the Hungarian language). On 4th of January the Emperor Franz Iosif issues the official document of inception of the University in Cluj and accepts that this institution to wear his name. At 12 of september 1919 through the royal edict nr. 4090, signed by the King Ferdinand the First of Romania, it's decided that the "Hungarian University in Cluj transforms on the first day of october 1919 in the Romanian University". In 1927 the University in Cluj officialy adopts the name of the king Ferdinand the First. Between 1927 and 1984, the clujean university will be named the "The University King Ferdinand I". On 28

may 1945 through the royal edict nr. 207, in Cluj takes place the founding “on the date of 1 June 1945, a state university with the teaching in hungarian, with the faculties: “Letters and Philosophy; Law and Political Economy; Sciences; Human Medicine”. The new institution will obtain the name of the University “Bolyai”. In January 1948 – The University “King Ferdinand I” changes its name in The University “Victor-Babeş”. Between march-july 1959 it takes place the process of unification of the Romanian University in Cluj with the hungarian University which will wear the name of University „Babeş-Bolyai”. The first rector of the last University was the profesor Constantin Daicoviciu (arheolog).

-The University „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” in Iaşi is the oldest establishment of higher education in Romania, founded by the ruler that achieved the Union of the Principates which name it bares from 1860 to present.

-The University “Polytechnic” in Timișoara, was founded in the year 1920, at a period after the Union of the romanian territories, in a european context marked by the statal redifining and the dares of the First World War. At the beginning it was named The Polytechnic School in Timișoara. It formed the answer for one of the requests formulated by romanian society of that time: the forming of engineers.

c) The occupation(profession)

The object of activity of the higher education establishment in the context of alignment at the Process in Bologna and that of the european integration can be found at the crossroads between education, culture, scientific research and innovation and strategy because the input/output of the institution can evolve and even transform radically.

The higher education establishment is a center of research and innovation which forms the adequate professional competences, requested by the national and European market of labor by taking and applying of the advanced knowledge.

It’s the source of inventions, innovations and development technological and socio-

economical, provider of specialized services for the community.

This offers it’s own resources in order to hire for the civil rights, social justice and promotion of the universal values in the social and human development, it’s the source of promotion for the identities of the national culture, in the context of European and international space of knowledge and of that of the multicultural.

An institution of advanced education achieves her role through:

-Forming specialists with superior training, capable of integrating efficiently on the labor market and adequate in report with the European standards.

-The providing of forming services continues through conversion, reconversion and professional perfecting programs.

-The initiation and the ongoing of fundamental scientific research activieties and applied with the involvement of the teachers, students, masterands and doctorants.

-The participation through the results of the scientific research, to the perfecting of the technologies, socio-economical and cultural activities.

-The involvement in the development of civic consciousness, through which the values of pluralism of the state in law founded by respecting the fundamental rights of the man and citizen are promoted.

Knowing the competitive advantages of the market of Romanian providers for education, the critical steps, the success factors, the weak points and the strong ones.

It allows creating a strategy for the future which means a possible change (diversity of the educational offers).

The profession most of the time associated with the competence and savoir-faire-up are not reduced to knowledge.

It refers to the capacity of coming to a solution for the problems, to challenge situations, to treat the reality.

CONCLUSIONS

The need of studying the culture of an institution of superior education is imperative in these days because an organization can’t be

lead without knowing its values, the university being a small nation that has its own beliefs and values. Only by knowing the culture of the institution it can be acted accordingly with it and only by considering this we will be able to change, transform or modernize it. The powerful cultures often have a certain grade of rigidity and inflexibility and are often threatened with the loss of sensibility to internal or external changes fact that creates an danger for the “health” of the educational institution. As far as that goes, the changes determined by the external environment are fast and we cannot say that there are ideal cultures, but we can affirm with conviction that for the future the ideal cultures are the flexible ones.

It’s also being imposed a budgetary autonomy and not only. This fact is partially given by the universitary autonomy at the state universities and at the private ones. Considering that they benefit or not of funds from that state. Often a lot of courage is needed to impose drastic personal and organizational measures linked to the change. Sometimes is a management close to the human resources of the organization is beneficial, creating new cultural cells at inferior hierarchy levels, allowing to galvanize the wanted change.

The whole process of intervention upon the culture can be helped through behavior according to the wanted culture and by recompensating those who act in accordance with it. Even if it’s true that many leaders are not capable to manipulate the symbolic actions and the indirect means. It’s indispensable, to redefine the positions periodically, to observe the changes that he made and eventually to give new impulses.

Because in general it’s difficult, if not impossible for a manager to analyze objectively the culture of his own organization, it is preferably that this work to be done by specialists outside of it. Within the intervention upon the culture, the experience of a consultant can be of big help both in the plan of the method as well as to maintain the evolution of the process of intervention.

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