

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE, A SUCCESSFUL ELEMENT IN THE EVOLUTION OF A COMPANY

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Abstract: *Man, always in search of his own identity, evolves and develops in a cultural space, created by him. Just as people have different personalities, organizations differ in organizational culture. Organizational culture goes beyond the values of a group, it represents the final result achieved through repeated success and not only but also through the gradual process of taking into account certain actions that have been approached as undoubted truth. Organizational culture is a force that allows the integration of the company in the environment and simultaneously ensures its specificity, stability, consistency and performance. It is very important for the organization to have a strong organizational culture and for the employees to understand and believe in it. The paper aims to present some theoretical aspects of organizational culture and then to present a successful Romanian organization specifying the fundamental values, mission, vision and products / services. For this company, the factors that influenced the organizational culture were analyzed and then, following a survey based on a questionnaire, it was desired to frame the organizational culture in a typology. From the beginning, it was known that a strict framework is not possible in reality and it was wanted to highlight the link between organizational culture, success and employee perception. The conclusions drawn from the study are mentioned and interpreted. This strong organizational culture but also the efficient management gave strength to the company and determined the good evolution even in the difficult conditions generated by the pandemic.*

Key words: *organizational culture, success, failure, evolution, company, management.*

1. THEORETICAL ELEMENTS REGARDING ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

The concept of organizational culture appeared relatively recently and has experienced a strong theoretical and practical development. Interest in the face this new side of managerial practice resulted in the plan theoretically with numerous attempts to delimit it from others and to define it. Petit Robert defined culture as a "set of forms of behavior created in human societies". On this basis, through association, organizational culture can be defined as "a set of forms of behavior created in an institution" [1]. A broader definition of organizational culture is elaborated by E. Schein, quoted by E. Burduş in [2], who calls it "the set of basic hypotheses that a group invented, discovered or developed by learning to deal with the problems of external adaptation and integration which have been conducted well enough to be considered valid and so to be learned by newcomers as the right way to think, by to perceive and feel in the face of these problems".

Organizational culture represents much more than the values of a group, it being the final result reached through repeated success and a gradual process of considering certain actions approached as undoubted truth. What is cultural, says E. Schein, is "obvious".

In the concept of organizational culture, the general and the particular aspects coexist, a continuous way of learning or changing the perspective on problems, but this process does not always reach certain well-known things that would ensure the stability of the group.

Organizational culture can be a factor of success or failure for the organization. It can ensure success, because it contributes to the survival of the entity and to its adaptation to the spatial and temporal context of the environment and to the achievement of the internal integration of employees.

Each organizational culture is unique because it is built and developed to solve the organization's own problems. A strong culture always implies success, but also the existence of widespread and respected norms of behavior. How culture influences the entity's performance depends on its resemblance to the exogenous environment in which it operates. The stability or instability of the environment induces particular elements such as the immediate or medium-term reactions that the company must manifest [3].

The organizational culture of a company is something that cannot be seen or measured, being a complex system of common values agreed and adopted at the company system, a set of unwritten rules that guide and act employees every day.

The basis on which the organizational culture is built consists of its pillars – its values, mission and vision – translated explicitly and implicitly into norms, beliefs, practices, procedures, habits of interaction and behavior between its employees.

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The organizational culture of a company is formed with the establishment of the entity and starts from its shareholders.

According to specialists, several types of cultures have been identified: clan type (based on team, collaboration and cohesion between its members) or start-up type (where each employee is responsible for their work and where they can enhance their creativity). All assume relatively common and unitary norms of behavior.

An organizational culture is built over time, but it is not something that lasts very long and always needs improvement.

A solid culture denotes a cohesive company that is aligned with a unitary purpose and way of working, where there is a high level of internal cohesion and adherence to the values that define it. The synergy and efficiency with which things are done in the organization spring from the organizational culture [4].

The system works because it is successful and it is successful because it works!

Employees make it work but the organization manages to find exactly the people it needs, motivates, educates and develops them in such a way that the cycle continues. The more successful an organization is in its culture, the more effective it will be.

Organizational culture is based on a series of principles such as [5]:

1. To err is not wrong: It is indicated an organizational culture where to err is human because no one acts with the intention of making a mistake, and if they still exist, they are exceptions.

2. People not Jobs: Everyone must know exactly what to do and there must be no ambiguity about the results to be obtained. Thus, there are many organizations that have given up job descriptions and rather defined roles.

3. Vertical communication: Where there are no bottom-up and top-down communication channels exceed, there is no culture of open vertical communication.

4. Everyone is a Talent - there is room for everyone as long as they meet their goals with the expected results. Every person has their own value and if they feel understood and encouraged they can become more valuable to the company.

The types of crops identified by Roger Harrison [6]:

1. Power-type culture that is rendered graphically in the form of concentric networks, having a source of central power. These are unpleasant but very effective.

2. Role-type culture - where there is a high degree of formalization and standardization and activities are conducted through very precise procedures and rules.

3. Task-type culture, where the emphasis is on the execution of tasks, is ensuring adequate material and human resources. It is a team culture where group results are a priority for individual goals.

4. Culture of type Person where the organization has the role of serving individuals, promoting their interests, without any global objective.

The problem of organizational culture is also addressed in Romanian literature, especially by G. Ionescu, who defines it as a "system of values,

presumptions, beliefs and norms shared by members of an organization" [7].

One can conclude that organizational culture can be defined as the way in which service tasks are performed and the way people are treated in an enterprise.

The operation of the company generates intentional or unintended effects on the consolidation or change of the organizational culture [8].

The organizational culture seen in terms of the decline of Japanese companies is a guarantor of the proper functioning and performance of the organization.

A number of endogenous and exogenous factors influences organizational culture as Fig. 1 shows [9].

People need to evolve in a familiar context so that they can adapt to the demands of that environment. It was found that when there is an acquaintance with the environment employees have increased intellectual and emotional stability.

In this context, history and tradition are a modeling factor for organizational culture.

Staff expectations are a particularly important influencing factor in defining employee behavior.

The organizational culture explains to the employee what is allowed in the respective company and what is not accepted.

If there are big differences between formal and informal elements then the employee will have a conflicting perception with unwanted outcome by any organization.

The characteristics of the workforce allow it to be divided according to various criteria such as: sex, age, physical abilities, etc.

At present, in the conditions of globalization, an operative management in a multicultural environment is required to successfully achieve synergy.

The way in which the evaluation is made with reference to frequency, type is reflected in the motivation of employees generating a behavior in which the staff will focus on what is evaluated in order to obtain maximum benefits, which has repercussions in the organizational culture of the company.

The fantastic fast pace of technological evolution, shortening the life cycle of products / services are current challenges for both managers and employees. The development of information technology offers more and more possibilities to users. Digitization is needed and the pandemic crisis has proved this. Hence the importance of the influencing factor of information technology in organizational culture.



Fig. 1. Factors that determine the organizational culture.

The technology and products of the company are one of the most important factors that determine the organizational culture because the change of customer attitude towards the company's products / services make their mark on the behavior of employees in the organization and beyond.

The availability of resources is especially important in any organization. If resources are limited, a competitive attitude can be born to show that a department / section is more efficient and will thus attract an increased amount of these riches. The extreme shortage of resources is harmful because it can degenerate into conflict.

It was observed that where resources are available, employees are more relaxed, but even in this case there may be a danger that employees will no longer be motivated or waste them. It is therefore found that resources are a factor in influencing organizational behavior.

The legislation is reflected in the organization of any entity, in the activities it carries out and therefore in the organizational culture. Studies have shown that participatory management focused on documents and procedures is beneficial.

Customers are particularly important in the life of any company and in this sense the organizational culture should give them the value they deserve because in their absence the perpetuation of activities becomes impossible.

Social conditions are crucial in the organizational culture and the phenomenon of aging of the workforce has been found, but also the fact that it is better prepared, requires adequate recognition and reward. There is a growing involvement of women in management but also in work processes.

The literature has built true cultural models for nations, so it turns out that a very strong determinant in organizational culture is national culture.

Globalization influences the organizational culture through the interactions that are established between states, companies, and people with different cultural features.

Organizational culture, as Cummings put it, is the only competitive advantage that is entirely under the control of the entrepreneur [10].

There are several classification criteria for organizational culture.

In 1993 Charles Handy conceptualized four types of organizational cultures, noting that they are not actually found in their pure state:

- culture of power focused on leadership through a single person;
- role culture focused on the roles held by each employee;
- the culture of tasks aimed at professionals to perform certain tasks;
- people-oriented culture aimed at the interest of employees part of the organization.

Other criteria highlight clan culture, hierarchical culture, market culture, etc.

The foundations of an organizational culture are built with the realization of a differentiating environment, namely its own climate or a specific atmosphere,

elements that define an organization and through which customers and candidates recognize it in the market.

2. THE COMPANY'S PRODUCTS

The benefits of the fire led to the start of a family business that has evolved well over time and is currently the market leader in this field with the largest online fireplace store in the country. The strategy created by the company has always been developed with customers, the offer being constantly modified, depending on their requirements. The company also enjoys many certifications, in countries such as Germany, the Czech Republic, and Poland.

The company is motivated by the desire to respond to as many requests as possible and to be accessible in terms of price, for as many customers as possible. This has resulted in more than 8,000 customers who have purchased at least one of the company's products. The products / services are of high quality, have affordable prices, have a long lifespan with 5-year product warranties and last but not least, extra safety. The products are delivered with the help of express courier companies, free of charge to the customer at home, anywhere in the country, between 24 and 48 hours.

Poland, Germany, Denmark, the Czech Republic, Italy and Croatia are some of the countries that import a large part of the products. Due to the continuous need to adapt to market demand, organization is constantly improving the range of products obtained through an increasingly advanced manufacturing technology.

Among the products sold one can mention: fireplaces / stoves, thermofireplaces, biofireplaces, electric fireplaces; chimney, fireplace accessories, mounting materials, spare parts / consumables.

3. FUNDAMENTAL VALUES, MISSION, VISION

In a global environment in a continuous dynamic, it is especially important to know what the company represents, what it does and where it wants to go.

The company's values are part of the organizational culture and determine the behavior of employees.

Company values – "The values that guide in achieving this high standard are integrity, teamwork, excellence at all levels, respect for the customer and professionalism in the services provided."

Vision – "The company aims to develop in the long run by producing fireplaces under its own brand".

Mission – "Our mission is to provide the market with high quality products/services with advanced technology and to advise customers on optimizing consumption, increasing comfort and choosing the right equipment."

At the strategic level, the statements of vision, mission and values are defined. Their content comes from the organizational culture that allows them to evolve.

The vision, mission and values of the organization reflect the identity of the company and define the aspirations, the goals that govern any firm.

Analyzing them for the studied company shows a solid organizational culture where they communicate transparently, the team is welded providing stability and actions are focused on the customer.

4. ANALYSIS OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

In order to identify the type of organizational culture existing in the company, a research was conducted using the survey method and the questionnaire as a tool.

A questionnaire was prepared for the company's employees. It was requested that 100 points be divided between the existing statements in the 4 areas (Table 1).

Table 1

Questionnaire		
1. Type of organization	A	My organization is very personalized. It's like a bigger family. People get very involved.
	B	My organization is very dynamic and active in business. People are combative and willing to take risks.
	C	My organization is formal and strongly structured. Well-established procedures govern people's work.
	D	My organization is strongly production-oriented. The principle is to do your job without getting too involved.
2. Leadership	A	The leader of my organization is seen as a wise mentor, as the embodiment of the father or mother.
	B	The leader of my organization is seen as an entrepreneur, an innovator, or a person who takes risks.
	C	The leader of my organization is seen as a coordinator, organizer or administrator.
	D	The leader of my organization is considered production-oriented, a technician.
3. Cohesion factors of the organization	A	The binder that ensures the cohesion of my organization is loyalty and tradition. People are very attached.
	B	The binder that ensures the cohesion of my organization is the interest in innovation and development. Competition is very important.
	C	The binder that ensures the cohesion of my organization is compliance with established rules and policies. It is important that everything works well.
	D	The link that ensures the cohesion of my organization is the emphasis on tasks and the achievement of objectives. The production orientation is shared by everyone.
4. What is important	A	My organization focuses on the human factor. Good understanding and morals are important.
	B	My organization focuses on growth and attracting new resources. The ability to accept new challenges is important.
	C	My organization emphasizes continuity and stability. Effective operations are important.
	D	My organization focuses on competitive action and achievement. It is important to determine the objectives.

Questionnaire Results

	Type of organization	Leadership	Cohesion factors of the organization	What is important
A	32	11	16	18
B	26	33	31	29
C	23	34	24	20
D	19	22	29	33

The average of the results obtained after the interview is presented in Table 2.

1. COMPANY RESULTS

In order to present the evolution of the company, the reference period 2018–2020 was chosen and the main economic indicators were analyzed.

The analyzed period was difficult, but it was a beautiful and beneficial journey, both for the company and for the clients, and these challenges showed that the new orientations and preferences of the clients are moving towards more professional products and product ranges.

There were increases on the large product categories, there were also proportional increases on the accessory segment.

It is surprising that people, in addition to good accessories, also wanted quality, professional assembly materials, dedicated to the thermal field. Not only the cheapest products were chosen, but the best and most durable options! It was found that in recent years, the Romanian studied the market, compared prices and specifications and then opted for the product with the best value for money.

The pandemic favoured sales because many people staying longer at home sought to improve the comfort of their home and made investments in this regard.

The merit of these results also results from the organizational culture which is strong and the employees understand and believe in it.

An important contribution to the change in total turnover goes to the income obtained from the core business of the company.

The evolution of the turnover in the period 2018–2020 is presented in Fig. 2.

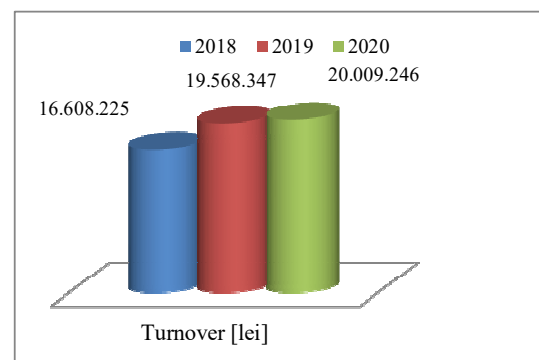


Fig. 2. Evolution of turnover in the period 2018–2020.

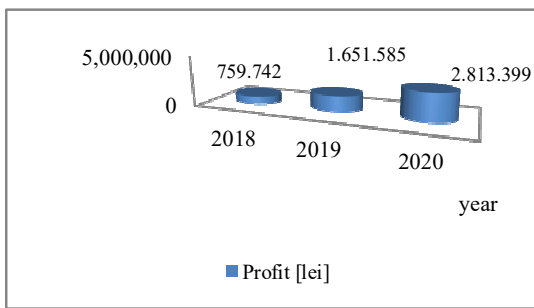


Fig. 3. The evolution of the company's profit in the period 2018–2020.

The turnover in the period 2018–2020 has seen a permanent growth proving an efficient management, dedicated employees and a strong organizational culture.

The evolution of the company's profit in the period 2018–2020 is presented in Fig. 3.

In 2019, the profit exceeded twice the registered value in 2018 and in 2020 it became almost 4 times higher than the reference value at the beginning of the analyzed period, which denotes a competitive company with a strong organizational culture.

The profit rate expresses how profitable is the activity that the company carries out being highlighted during the period analyzed in Fig. 4.

If in 2018 the company generates 4.57 lei for every lei of sales in 2020, it reached 14.06, a significant increase impossible to achieve without professional employees with a strong organizational culture.

The value of the indicator is in the range (1–15)%, which indicates a stable situation of the company.

The evolution of the number of employees in the analyzed period is presented in Fig. 5.

It is found that the number of employees in the analyzed period increased in 2019 by 2 and in 2020 it reached 17 again due to the retirement of two people.

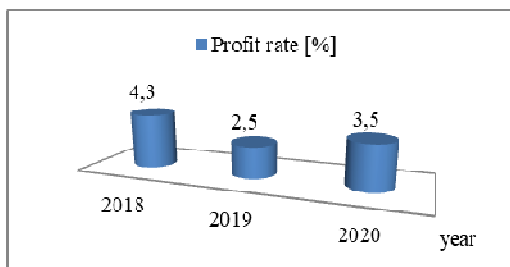


Fig. 4. Evolution of profit rate in the period 2018–2020.

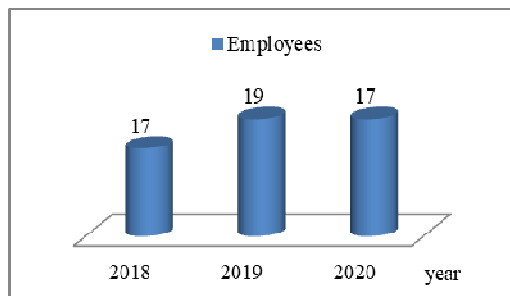


Fig. 5. Evolution of the number of employees.

It is noted that there are no staff fluctuations, employees respect the company and organizational culture and in turn the company values human resources.

Labor productivity is high, employees understand its importance and work for the good of the company and implicitly theirs.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The results recorded in the analyzed period show a strong stable company, with an efficient management, with a well-cohesive team, with a strong organizational culture.

The history and tradition of the company have influenced the organizational culture given the fact that the entity has always wanted to retain its employees and most have worked there for a long time.

Communication is very good, employees know the important role they play and their expectations generate a behavior devoid of conflicting perceptions.

The management of the analyzed company is efficient and allows the successful management of the characteristics of the workforce, a fact that is also reflected in the organizational culture.

The system of evaluation and motivation of employees is functional, employees are constantly monitored and guided not only during the designated evaluation period.

Information technology is used successfully in the company, employees know the importance of permanent adaptation to change.

The company's technology and products are of a high quality, as evidenced by the satisfaction of customers who in turn have brought other customers. Employees know that this is the result of their work and the company's effort, which is also present in the organizational culture.

There is availability of resources but they are used with maximum responsibility and this is a basic pillar of the organizational culture.

The company strictly complies with the legislation in force and the standards necessary for the optimal operation of the products / services provided.

This attitude is part of the organizational culture and shows respect for the customer but also for the company's reputation.

As it has been observed that customers are particularly important for the company, there is customer orientation the desire to satisfy and even come up with proposals, products that anticipate their expectations.

The company's employees are also people with a lot of experience but also young people eager to learn and make a career in the organization. They know that they are respected and in turn respect the company and the organizational culture.

The national culture through which Romanians, in general, are hardworking, honest, professional people, eager to work for a better life has influenced the organizational culture.

Globalization has also influenced the organizational culture, the company successfully collaborating with suppliers and customers around the world.

Following the employees' interview, it results that the organizational culture of the studied company is mixed. The company adapts a little to all four types of culture, but is not characterized by a predominant type.

Thus, in terms of the type of organization, it corresponds most to the clan-type culture, being a personalized organization, where each employee is involved and motivated to achieve the company's objectives. In fact, the business at its origin is a family business, which seems to still have influences on the environment in the organization.

According to employees, leadership in the organization is closest to the hierarchical type of culture, where the leader is seen as a coordinator, organizer or administrator, and employees must respect the decisions of the leader and comply with his coordination.

As for the cohesion factors of the organization, they are characteristic of an autocratic culture. According to the autocratic type, the link that ensures the cohesion of the organization is the interest for innovation and development. Competition is very important for the company.

Finally, what is important for the company has been identified. The predominant answer of the employees is that from this point of view the company is closest to the market type culture. The organization focuses on competitive actions and achievements, which shows that the organization seeks to grow in the long run. It is important to determine the objectives.

This kind of organizational culture allowed the development of the company. Thus, even in the conditions of the pandemic, due to the online store, the

sales increased. People during this period were more concerned with the comfort and beauty of the home and invested in this by using the company's products/services first on the online channel and then directly to the company.

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