The Workforce Crisis Overcome with the Help of Cultural Management

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Abstract

One of the major concerns of today's management is the harmonization of employee-management relationships. It is a known fact that one of the main sources of conflict at the organizational level is the discrepancy between the employees' expectations and those of the managerial staff. Thus, managers are increasingly involved in the relationship with the staff, wanting to identify possible inconsistencies, in order to prevent conflicts. As a consequence, the present paper aims at providing managers with an organizational analysis model in order to identify possible discrepancies between higher and lower hierarchical levels, in terms of organizational culture. In order to come up with the diagnosis in what the organization is concerned, we have used in our research a tool for assessing the organizational culture, which records the choices that the members of the organization have made. The end of the paper provides with an assessment of these data, giving solutions to improve or even suppress these discrepancies.

Key words: organizational culture, leadership, organizational conflict, managers.
J.E.L. classification: M12

1. Introduction

In the context of a labour force crisis, triggered mainly by the employee migration from the private sector to the state sector as a consequence of some favourable actual regulations of this sector, the managers are striving to develop a series of tools meant to offer an explanation regarding the employees' lack of satisfaction with the private sector. Of course, one of these complaints are related to the organizational conflicts, which are usually generated by the cultural discrepancies between the employees and the leaders. In this respect, we have analyzed the dimension *Organizational leadership* within a private company from Craiova whose main area of activity is the distribution. Thus, the people who were involved in this study have answered a series of questionnaires that evaluate the organizational culture by mentioning both the actual state within the company, but also the state they aim at. The questionnaires have been divided into two categories of wage earners, managers and employees, and the results have also been interpreted in a different way by bearing in mind this division. In this way, we were able to analyze both the discrepancies between what the employees regard as being valid in what the leaders are concerned, but also the situation they strive for, which means the path that the members of the management could follow, but also the board's opinion regarding the actual leadership and the one they want to achieve.

2. Literature review

This workforce issue requires increased attention so that specialists in the field propose a series of instruments that can assess the satisfaction of employees. Thus, Hofstede proposes an analysis of behavioral differences starting from 5 dimensions: distance to power (power intensity), individualism / collectivism, femininity / masculinity, avoidance of uncertainty, long / short orientation (Hofstede, 1980, p.42-63). The model of the systemic approach (Burduş et al, 2008, p.41) represents another solution for evaluating the employees in relation to other variables such as

their technology, strategy or tasks. Schein's model presents a different approach based on a debate session which aimed at identifying differences between the two categories of employees at the level of shared beliefs. Kim Cameron and Robert E. Quinn are also proposing an instrument to evaluate one of the most important dimensions within an organization namely the Organizational Leadership Dimension.

3. Research methodology

In this respect, we have used a tool in order to evaluate the organizational culture (Organizational Culture Assesssment Instrument - OCAI), which belongs to the two specialists mentioned above, Kim Cameron and Robert E. Quinn, who have identified the 6 dimensions one should approach when shaping a full cultural profile. The 6 dimensions refer to: Dominant Characteristics, Organizational Leadership, Management of Employees, Organization Glue, Strategic Emphases, Criteria of Success (Cameron et al, 2011, p.39). The first part of the study aims at identiying a cultural type in what the dimension *Organizational leadership* is concerned. This dimension is analyzed both from the employees' perspective, as well as reflecting the status of the individuals who have a leading position. The role of this division into two wage earner categories, managers/ employees, is that of pointing out some potential inconsistencies between what the employees regard as being something dominant within the organization and what the managers think the specific culture is. The leading style is a specific element, because the leadership is increasingly significant when it comes to organizing the activity of the private companies. This study has counted with the answers of 50 subjects, out of which 12 have signaled that they have a leading position within the enterprise, whereas the rest has rendered itself as normal employees.

The hypotheses of the scientific research
Throughout this study we have borne in mind also the validation/ invalidation of the following scientifical hypotheses:
Hypothesis no. 1: When it comes to the dimension *organizational leadership*, there is a conflict between the employees and the managers, because the two categories of subjects tend to identify two different types of culture for this dimension.
Hypothesis no. 2: The culture identified by the employees will be the market type one, whereas the culture pointed out by the managers will be the clan oriented one.
Hypothesis no. 3: The employees strive for a clan oriented culture, a human resources oriented culture, thus claiming that they need the managers' attention.
Hypothesis no. 4: The managers aim at a hierarchy oriented culture because they assume that the more strict, formal and organized environment from the public sector is important for the personnel's stability and therefore that the harsher rules forestall the migration from the public sector towards the private one.

4. The Dimension of the Organizational Leadership viewed from the managers' perspective

Before starting to analyze the results that we have come up with, we will briefly describe the 4 types of culture, i.e. the clan oriented culture, the hierarchy oriented culture, the market culture and the adhocracy oriented culture.
The clan oriented culture: The leaders are seen as mentors or even as fatherlike figures.
The market culture: The leaders are regarded as being strong, productive and competitive managers. The managers are firm and strict.
The hierarchy oriented culture: The leaders are perceived as being good coordinators and organizers, efficiency oriented. Their purpose is that of maintaining the organization at a constant level.
The adhocracy oriented culture: the leaders are innovative, willing to take risks.
The dimension *Organizational Leadership* stresses out how the organization's leaders are perceived, the way they behave towards their employees and which their perception regarding success is. By analyzing the results that we have come up with after having interpreted the questionnaires, there can be noticed that, the opinion of the subjects who are at a high hierarchical

level, which means, they have leading positions, is that leaders are innovative and willing to take risks (the adhocracy oriented culture has registered 35.00 points). They are, at the same time, competitive, productive and good managers (the market culture has 30 points). At a lower level, they are regarded as good coordinators and organizers (the hierarchy oriented culture has 20 points). At a lower scale, the leaders are regarded as being mentors or fatherlike figures (the clan oriented culture has 15 points). This points out that, for this dimension, the discrepancies between the wanted culture and the actual one don't register higher differencies than 10 points or even this value, thus this does not require an increased attention in any of the 4 situations. The clan oriented culture has registered a positive increase of 5 points, whereas the market culture has a decrease of 5 points. The adhocracy oriented culture and the hierarchy oriented culture have registered no changes.

*Figure no.1. Organizational Leadership Dimension viewed from the managers' perspective*
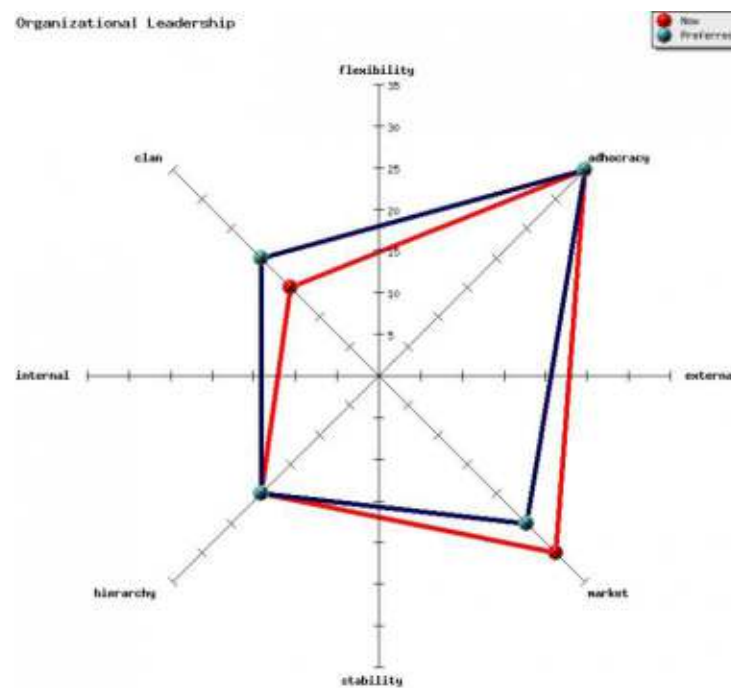
Source: data processed according to the applied questionnaire

5. The Dimension of the Organizational Leadership viewed from the employees' perspective

By analyzing the same dimension, but from the employees' perspective, there is a different situation in what the identified type of culture is concerned. The employees regard the leaders as being strong, productive and competitive, but, at the same time, also as being firm and strict (the market culture has the highest score - 50 points). When referring to the wanted situation, there is a significant difference regarding this type of culture, which means a decrease of 30 points, a wish to improve, even to supersede these features. Such a difference points to a way too high disparity between what the employees experience as being the actual organizational climate and what they really want. The adhocracy oriented culture has 30 points, and not 35 points as in the managers' perception, the latter ones have also mentioned features such as creativity and willing to take risks. Also in this case there is a tendency of improving this predisposition, sometimes the risk is considered to be a threat against the employee and the job reliability. The hierarchy oriented culture has only 15 points and thus the concepts of stability, reliability, of being something permanent do not shape the leader's profile, whereas the clan oriented culture is almost invisible. At this level also there is a difference of 45 points between the actual and the wanted state, a difference that urgently requires the managers' interference because it is an obvious source of conflict.

Figure no.2. The organizational leadership dimension viewed from the employees' perspective

	Now	Preferred
Adhocracy	30	20
Market	50	20
Hierarchy	15	10
Clan	5	50
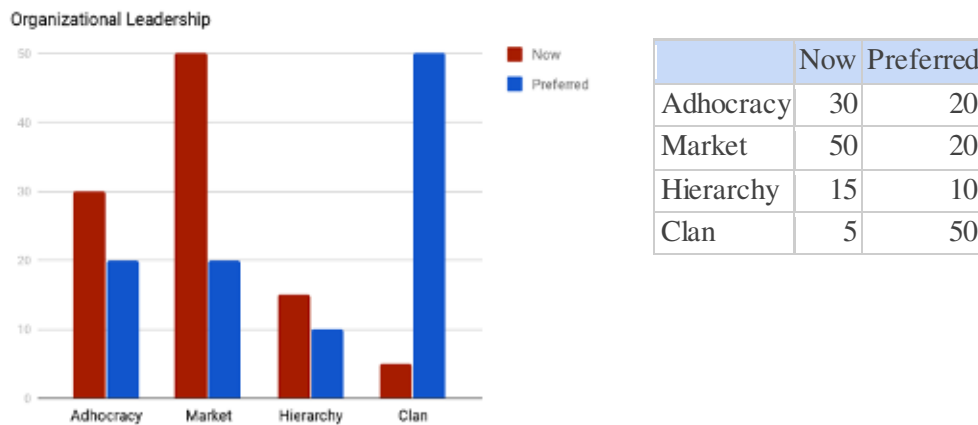
Source: data processed according to the applied questionnaire

6. The validation of the hypotheses of the scientific research

Hypothesis no. 1 is totaly valid, the two categories of wage earners have different visions regarding the leaders' behaviour. Hence, if, in the employees' opinion, the leaders appear as being firm and strict, (the market culture is the dominant one) they will consider themselves rather as being innovative and willing to take risks (the adhocracy oriented culture mainly shapes the leader's profile).

Hypothesis no. 2 is partially valid, the employees render the market culture as the dominant one, but the managers accept the low interest towards the human resources or towards the creation of a familiar environment, by rather stressing out a competitive climate.

Hypothesis no. 3 is totally valid, the employees claiming that they need an increased attention from their managers, who, being dominated by a high trade sense, ignore the significance of the human resource and become the prey of the desire to make profit.

Hypothesis no. 4 is not valid, therefore there are no significant discrepancies between the actual situation and the one the managers strive for. The adhocracy oriented culture has not registered any changes and it is still considered to be the best attitude the managers could have.

7. Conclusions

As a conclusion, with the help of this analysis we have identified the existence of a conflict within the organization, a significant unease pointed out by the employees, but also some disparities between the perspectives of the two categories (employees and managers). Hence what can be noticed is that the actual situation within the enterprise is perceived differently by the higher hierarchical levels, where the managers render themselves as innovative, autocrat, ambitious, whereas the lower hierarchical levels regard them as firm and strict. But the most important source of conflict is not the actual situation, but the situation the enterprise is striving for. If, from the leader's perspective, the situation is accepted, tolerated and even still wanted, the differences between the two states being insignificant, things are different from the employees' perspective. Not only they identify a different type of culture, but the major source of conflict is the dissatisfaction degree with the actual situation. The employees reprobate the authoritarian leading style, whose main purpose is the profit, the clients and requires an increased attention in what the employees' needs are concerned.

Taking this into consideration, it is recommended that the managers notice these disparities and take into account the employees' perspectives, especially when confronted with such a labour force crisis. Because the public sector offers its employees a series of indisputable advantages, such as the job reliability, continuity, a stable schedule, stability and even motivating incomes, the statistics showing that the incomes from the public sector are higher than the ones in the private sector, a change of attitude and perspective is required in order to annihilate or, at least, to improve these

negative aspects. Probably one of the aspects that the public sector does not take into consideration refers precisely to the close attitude between the employees or to the familiar environment which is not specific to state institutions. This aspect must be speculated on by the private environment that can compensate these disadvantages by showing an increased interest and attention in what the employee is concerned.

Taking this into account, the manager who is supposed to make the change must have as the center of his preocupations the human resource and therefore to identify its needs and potential ways of complying as efficient as possible with the employees' requests. A lot of private companies gamble on the relationships between the co-workers established within the enterprise, but also on the relationships between the employee and the manager, because they act as a bond, as a connection between the employee and the enterprise, thus ensuring a sustainable and stable relationship. In this respect, the manager stands for communication, for solving conflicts through negociation, for the cancellation of the borders between the higher and the lower hierarchical levels, for the team work, for the organization of social events which act as an integrating myth. Hence, the first step takes place when the managers admit that there is a need for change, then try to implement the way the company is going to follow in order to achieve this change.

A pertinent example refers to setting up team buildings, where the employees will acquire new skills or knowledge, where they have the possibility of knowing each other better, of creating social connections and of cooperating in order to solve some tasks, because team buildings are usually organized based on common activities.

Another significant aspect is connected to identifying a leader for these activities who manages to make the teamwork and encourage it, thus contributing to the annihilation of the borders between leaders and employees because when it comes to such activities the leader status is gained through the presence of a series of indisputable capacities and not through the stiff higher position within the organizational chart. What counts as another important aspect can be the increased attention shown to the signs and symbols, the rituals and the myths, that contributes to the shaping of an inner and outer organizational identity. The employees end up accepting these elements as their own and will form a powerful culture, which will prevent the surfacing of certain negative phenomena such as the migration and will cause the group to fall apart.

The participatory management contributes to the annihilation of the differences between the two categories of wage earners, therefore making decisions together is a good way to involve the personnel in the company's activity, to offer them attention trust and even to provide them with a series of responsibilities. At the same time, managers refuse to invest in the human capital any longer, because they regard the investment as useless when the employees leave the company and the possibility to recover the lost investment is basically non-existent because of the increasingly higher personnel mobility. On the contrary, such investments increase the degree of involvement the employee has, because he achieves new knowledge and it becomes more productive, and the investment is regarded as a way of agreeing with his skills, but also as a proof of the increased attention whose beneficiary the employee is, which is exactly what they claim as being necessary in order to improve the cooperation. Changing the organizational culture will also imply benefic effects in what the whole activity is concerned, thus annihilating a series of negative effects such as absenteeism, not being willing to work overtime when necessary, but also the improvement of the efficiency and efficaciousness through involvement.

8. References

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