

PERSPECTIVES OF THE UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE CULTURAL DIMENSION IN GALATI COUNTY ORGANIZATIONS

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Abstract: Quantification of cultural dimensions is an innovative idea, comparing the scores obtained on the basis of the cultural dimensions makes it possible to analyze the organizational culture level. Based on data collected as part of the COMOR Project for the analysis of organizational culture in the Romanian business environment, developed by The Scientific Society of Management from Romania, we have initiated, using Business Intelligence tools, a scan of the characteristics of organizational culture for Galati County. The study is based on the views of a representative sample of respondents from the business element from Galati in order to assess the current situation and the desired one. The administration of the questionnaires was conducted with the support of the project team of the University "Dunărea de Jos". The proposed aim is, from the analysis of the determined statistical indicators based on the questionnaires from the Galati county, leaving behind the classical linear thinking, to identify new relationships, connections that can be revealed by analyzing the database, obtaining information about organizational culture that highlights the evolution of environmental trends Business in Galati, the practical goal of the research being to provide useful results and conclusions necessary to the local organizational development process. An important topic of the research is to identify the factors that influence managerial behaviour at the level of the Romanian organizations in order to promote and to guide the change at the level of the microeconomic structures.

Keywords: organizational culture; managerial behaviour; cultural dimensions; Business Intelligence tools; data mining.

JEL classification: M10; M14; C8; D89.

1. Perspectives of the cultural dimensions

Cultural dimensions represent common structural elements in cultural systems of the countries, based on fundamental questions that every society responds in a particular way.

In the study conducted at IBM subsidiaries in different national contexts, Hofstede has shown that from organizational point of view cultural differences consist more in practice, while at national level, the difference lies more in values (Hofstede, 1996).

The Globe project has identified the existing connections between the national culture and the one at the organizational level, and also the mutual influences, expanding the Hofstede model. (House, 2006)

The Hofstede model superimposed over the map of Europe highlights the differences between Western Europe, characterized by a reduced gap of power, orientation toward success, separation between the church and the state, respectively Eastern Europe, characterized by a strong social hierarchy, community orientation and a strong church. As expected, for Eastern Europe, traditions and customs of features borrowed from both the West and the East, while from the opposite direction we can say that acts of globalization trends.

The cultural differences are quite large between America and Europe and also between the islander Europe and the continental one, characterized by reduced bureaucracy, respectively through the organization and control, integration of the new comers, the defence of the national identity.

A low index of indulgence can be considered a feature of the countries with predisposition toward totalitarian regimes of dictatorship. Regarding the individualism index, analyzing the country scores for this dimension we find that the more a society has a higher individualism, the richer it is. (Hofstede, 2001)

The country scores determined by the Hofstede project does not represent a standard constant but a relative comparison tool, evolving according to the time of evaluation.

"The obtained results for each dimension, in conjunction, can be used for comparisons at international level, in order to develop the standard for the organizational culture and of the Romanian managerial behaviour pattern." (Marinescu, 2013)

2. The study of the dimensions of the cultural organizational characteristics

2.1 The model of the cultural dimensions developed by Geert Hofstede

The six dimensions are represented by particular values for each country that define the score and allow the comparison for respective dimension (CultureCompass, 2015):

1. Attitudes toward social inequality: Power Distance Index (PDI)
2. Attitudes toward community: Individualism vs. Collectivism (IDV)
3. Attitude toward success: Masculinity vs. Femininity (MAS)
4. Attitude towards unknown: Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI)
5. Attitude toward time passing: Long-Term Orientation (LTO)
6. Attitude towards prohibition and control: Indulgence vs. Restraint (IND)

The PDI dimension expresses the degree to which the less powerful members of a society accept and expect that power is distributed unequally. In countries showing great inequalities between members, one can see that even the principle of power separation is not appreciated.

Individualism vs. collectivism dimension is determined by the specific answer at the following questions:

- How do members of the same culture relate?
- Who are they loyal to?
- How is stimulated performance?
- How is encouraged freedom of opinion?
- Priority given to the company interests versus personal interests?

In our organizational culture, still feel the reminiscent of the pre-December era, e.g. working in a global agreement can be considered as a precursor of the teamwork today, so it can be explained the fact that the Romanian workers were relatively easily integrated in the work system of the developed countries, which offered a more flexible organizational system, but well organized in terms of the tasks. At the same time a very strict control of labour regarding the reporting activities can have negative effects on the work outcomes, limiting the decentralisation of the decisions, the initiative.

The relative collectivist orientation is considered an advantage by the multinational companies who came to Romania because they overlapped well-structured organization with clear work procedures over our rooted tradition of the teamwork.

In the collectivist cultures, individuals rely on other group members in exchange for loyalty, while in the individualistic cultures, individuals rely only on their own strength.

A low score of the IDV size explains a collective consciousness in which the relationships and the obligations to the group membership represent a priority. An increased score of the IDV represents a powerful self-awareness in which own interests prevail.

The orientation of a person to time, from cultural point of view, represents important information in management and negotiations, playing an important factor in motivation.

Knowing the orientation to time of their employees, the managers will be able to provide motivating adequate incentives with their orientations, such as a bonus - a short-term incentive - respective on long-term, an additional contribution to the pension fund of an employee. The long-term orientation reflects the need for stability, while the short-term orientation reflects the adaptability to change.

The human freedom and the high performance are related with the equality toward the power in the countries with liberal traditions.

The organizational culture influences the economic performance. For Romania to achieve a high level of economical growth it needs a change of the mentality, of the organizational culture through the development, at national level, of some excellence clusters to attract skilled specialists from within the country and from abroad, creating models of good practice.

2.2 Correlations between the six cultural dimensions

Noticing the six organizational dimensions analysed by the cultural model Hofstede which also adds the two dimensions identified by Michael Minkov in 2010, we find a series of correlations between indicators, which may constitute, without generalizing, a pattern. Thus the countries with a high degree of masculinity have an uncertainty avoidance lower index and a high individualism index corresponds to a lower long-term orientation. In general, the countries with low power distance are statistically correlated with a high index of indulgence.

Uncertainty avoidance is associated with Roman Catholicism and with the legal obligation in developed countries for citizens to carry identity cards. Individualism is correlated with national wealth and with mobility between social classes from one generation to the next. Masculinity is correlated negatively with the percent of women in democratically elected governments. Long-term orientation is correlated with school results in international comparisons. Indulgence is correlated with sexual freedom and a call for human rights like free expression of opinions.

(CultureCompass, 2015)

3. Manifestations of the uncertainty avoidance dimension

"Innovation is a bridge to the future" said Michael Minkov. "Uncertainty is one of the key points of the international businesses and plays a critical role in business decision" (Hofstede, 2001).

According to the results of the study conducted by Hofstede, from the cultural point of view, Romania shows a high aversion to risk. UAI expresses the degree in which the members of an organization are able to manage the uncertainties and the risks. In the questionnaire 25 questions make reference to the Avoiding uncertainty dimension that is expressed by:

Table 1: Forms of expression of the UAI dimension

no	dim	Indicator	Forms	Items
1	UAI	Novelty adopting	Organizational change	Q35, Q39, Q40
			Professional Development	Q28
2	UAI	Attitude	Maintaining a collaborative environment, based on trust	Q50, Q59, Q73,
			Proactive Behaviour	Q80
3	UAI	Organizing	Work organization clearly defined	Q19, Q20

			Work organization based on teamwork	Q52, Q29
4	UAI	Planning	Future Plans	Q23, Q41, Q61
			Change based on innovation	Q32
5	UAI	Procedures and rules	Instructions for goals achievement	
			Motivation based on performance	
6	UAI	Problems solving	Procedures predetermined	Q70, Q71
7	UAI	Strategies	Marketing & communication, and Human Resources Strategies	Q36, Q37, Q38

Hypothesis: Preference manifested for compliance with the laws and regulations at the expense of ambiguity and the risk within the business organizations element in Galati.

Table 2: Indicators of the dimension Uncertainty Avoidance Index, calculated for the Galati County:

	UAI		Score	No. respondents	Medium Score
1	Novelty adopting	Pa	4156	1164	3,57
		Pd	4788	1091	4,39
2	Attitude	Pa	4159	1150	3,62
		Pd	4919	1080	4,55
3	Organizing	Pa	4746	1165	4,07
		Pd	5006	1092	4,58
4	Planning	Pa	4075	1153	3,53
		Pd	4812	1093	4,40
5	Procedures	Pa	4483	1159	3,87
		Pd	5074	1100	4,61
6	Problems solving	Pa	6614	1744	3,79
		Pd	7263	1637	4,44
7	Strategies	Pa	3208	875	3,67
		Pd	3792	829	4,57
8	TOTAL	Pa	31441	8410	3,74
		Pd	35654	7922	4,50

The research feedback is to collect the information about organization through questionnaires and their forwarding to the managers and the employees so they should be able to diagnose the problems and to be able to develop action plans for solving the problems.

The results obtained, respectively the 3.74 score for the current practice in organizations element analyzed in Galati county and 4.5 for the wanted practice, confirms the preference hypothesis for the safety and the increased adversity toward uncertainty and risk at the medium business level in Galati.

The specific indicators for the UAI dimension, calculated based on responses to the COMOR questionnaire for the 299 respondents from Galati County, are represented graphic on current practice in Figure 1, while on desired practice in Figure 2.

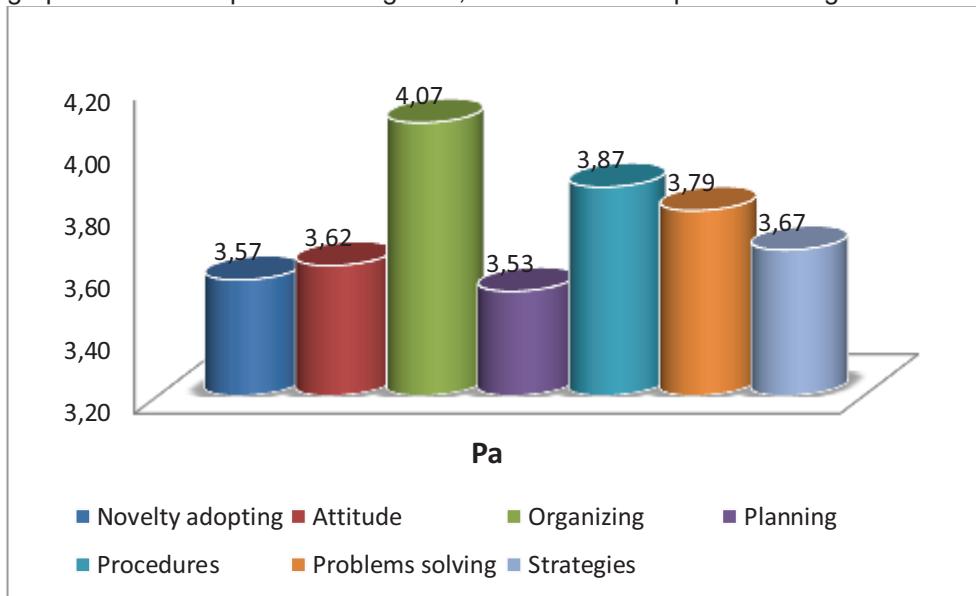


Figure 1: UAI indicators for current practice (Pa)

The questionnaire aims to identify the factors of maintaining the current level of performance and those that could cause a higher level of performance.

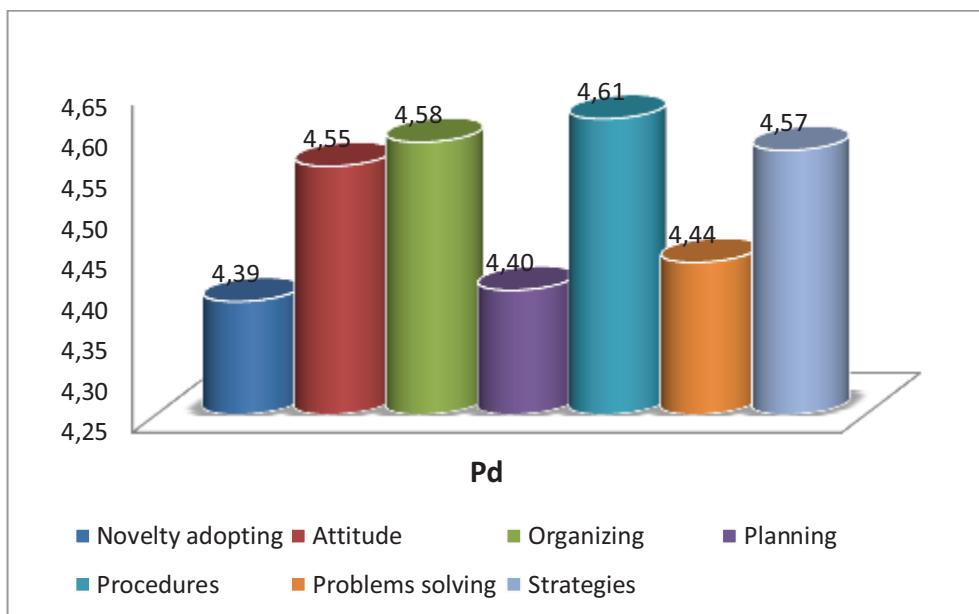


Figure 2: UAI indicators for desired practice (Pd)

4. In conclusion

We can make an analogy between organizational change and an innovation. In this matter the innovation can be defined as a technology, a product or a practice "first used by the members of an organization, regardless of the fact that was already used in other organizations" (Nord, Tucker, 1987, p.6) while its implementation is "the process to determine the appropriate and continuous use of an innovation by individual members of an organization" (Klein, Sorra, 1996, p. 1055), this idea applies equally to the organizational change. From this point of view, under the influence of developments occurring in IT the change can be understood as "an ongoing process of preparing the organization for the new system and its introduction so as to ensure its success" (Olson & Eoyang, 2001), the aim of the organizational change being a better interaction between the organization and the environment in which it evolves and a more efficient and effective method of work.

The need for change starts from the premise that the environment is changing rapidly, the organization being subjected to many pressures and challenges. Environmental actors have a great importance for the organization's work (partners, suppliers, customers, normative type organizations, legislative changes, etc.) as a result, the changes are major and rapid and the role of the management is changing, becomes an active one, the accent focusing on forecasting, commitment and resourcefulness.

The change initiation requires the leadership involvement - the top management. The problems diagnose requires a detailed analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the organization, the obtained results constituting targets for the interventions to come.

The changes should be implemented bidirectional in order to have a successful change at the level of an organization must be superimposed the plan of change designed at the organizational level thought at individual level.

First it must be acted at the level of the organizational culture through interventions which include training programs, programs to improve the ability of solving the problems, critical analysis of current procedures and practices.

Burke-Litwin model premise is the following: the organizational development interventions on the structure, management styles and practices and the policies and upon the procedures leading to the "first order change"; interventions on the organization's mission, of the strategy and organizational culture leads to "second order changes" in the organizational system.

The organizational change must promote a dynamic organizational development of the organization's evolution, the organizational change success depending both on the quality of the solution found and the effectiveness of its implementation. (Tripon, Dodu, 2012)

If we will explore the organizational culture from Romania through the 6-D model, we can get an overview of the characteristic stimulus of Romanian culture, and, relating to other cultures of the world, an insight into how these mechanisms can become engines of society.

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