

I. ARTICLES

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PERCEPTION OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURES BY MANAGERS IN EIGHT ORGANIZATIONS

This paper presents the results of a study on organizational cultures in eight units from different organizations in Poland. A factor analysis showed individuals' values to be composed of five dimensions, and individuals' perceptions of their organization's practices of another nine dimensions. The scores on these new dimensions are related to the various demographic characteristics of the respondents. From among the quantitative data referring to structural features of the organization we have assessed the comparable data on the level of each organization/unit: budget, capital invested, number of employees, distribution of budget, managers profile and employee profile.

1. INTRODUCTION

During the 1990s organizational culture has gained, in scientific researches on organization, an importance given previously to structure, strategy and control. Researching organizational structure is one of the methods of examining the processes, phenomena and mechanisms of behaviour in contemporary organizations. This enables us to explain the nature of these behaviours.

Each organization creates its specific culture whose elements make it stand out from among other cultures. These are symbols, myths, rituals, values and norms. These elements create a specific atmosphere, shape relationships between workers, workers and management, and workers and customers; they teach people how to react in a period of changing organization and its environment. They enable the differentiation of members of one group from those of the others.

A few factors of organizational culture determine its force, these are: the numbers of elements within it, the number of people in a specific culture, and the clarity of implementing of reaching targeted values in the organizational strategy. K. Weick (1985) claimed that culture and strategy partly overlap, and examining organizational culture we get to know the strategy of the organization, thus, by

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examining the strategy of the organization we can construct certain assumptions on organizational culture.

Research and managerial practice of the 1990's point out that organizational culture and its elements, acting as internal factors, are the inseparable indicator/gauge of the organization's success, its better performance and its customers' satisfaction.

Nevertheless the elements present in the organizational culture perpetuated in behaviour by its participants, may also lead to the organization's failure in the market (R. Calori, De Woot, Bloom 1995). This is due to the management's fascination with the environment while in the process of creating strategy. Managers do not take into account the constituents of the organization; mainly attitudes, values and norms represented by its participants. This leads to a discrepancy between what we want to achieve in the future and the *status quo*; the lack of proper diagnosis of what is within the organization, may lead to failure. Since one of the most important features generally, especially when applied to organizational culture, is its stability and relying on the *status quo*, the environment in which the company operates is changeable and unpredictable.

By organizational culture we understand a specific way of perceiving the reality we live in. Specifics of perception stems from sharing the same assumptions, rules and values; these are the main patterns of behaviour for the members of a certain community that have been created and learned in the course of carrying out certain tasks which made it possible to function effectively in reality; this helped them to harden and in consequence to be passed over on to the other members of the organization.

Organizational culture is a group phenomenon shared by people who live or lived together in the same community; it is a programmed way of thinking reflected in the behaviour of its members – this constitutes a basis for differentiating some communities from others (Hofstede 1994). Organizational culture is manifested in many ways in the communication process of its members within a frame of a certain community.

2. THE AIM, THE SUBJECT AND THE METHOD OF THE RESEARCH

The main aim of the research was to define what characterizes an organization from a "cultural" point of view. Obviously the researcher is aware that the culture of any corporate body consists of many subcultures, of various departments and work groups. However, the aim of the study assumed, and the procedure of choice of people from the management will enable us to make some general statements on the whole organization based on these conclusions.

Research was done in a number of organizations with the intention of achieving a picture of cultural differences that could be encountered in practice. This in further analysis of the material would enable the assessment of the relative level of importance between similarities and differences of the examined organizations. The research was done in eight organizations. These were:

- State companies with a long history (30–40 years) which have been converted into public limited companies; two construction companies, building big industrial plants; one company producing household appliances; one company producing pneumatic and hydraulic tools and offering connected services.
- A car company, once state owned, now a private company with Polish capital.
- Two private companies with Polish capital – a computer and a security/cleaning company, set up in the beginning of the 1990s.
- A food company; once a state company, now a private company with Polish and American capital.

Research was done in three stages.

In the first stage detailed talks were carried out, each of them of about 2-3 hours, with nine people representing each organization. These talks enabled us to assess quality materials about structural factors (*Gestalt*) of culture of each individual. It also enabled us to collect material, which was afterwards used in a survey in the next stage of the research. People that we talked to were: the company's manager, members of staff, a union leader, a worker with the shortest experience in the company (minimum 6 months), a person with the longest experience in the company, a personnel department manager, a key accountant, informal leaders – people of the highest esteem, respected also by the management – (treated as the last resort by those workers who are at a loss and do not know who to address).

Each conversation helped us to write a report according to a pre-assumed order, applying vocabulary used by interlocutors. These talks were carried out in order to build a quality, unambiguous description of the culture of the eight examined organizations.

In the second stage the questionnaire was used. The basis for constructing the questionnaire was the material assessed during the talks conducted in particular organizations. Also the personnel questionnaire used previously by G. Hofstede, B. Neuijen, D. D. Ohayv and G. Sanders in 10 organizations, five in Denmark and five in Holland (1990), was applied here. Including this questionnaire in the study in Polish reality was going to be the reference point for constructing our own tool for gauging organizational culture, and it was going to be used to help compare the data gathered. The constructed survey consisting of 175 questions with given reference codes was used to run a pilot study in one of the chosen companies (this company was not included in the survey afterwards). After the analysis of the pilot material

collected and after assessing whether the tools used had been proper, a new survey was prepared consisting of 143 questions.

Since the organizational culture is the characteristic constituent of the whole organization as a society, and not only the culture of particular individuals that constitute this organization (an individual can be replaced, whereas the culture will remain), nevertheless, as the culture is the “soft” feature one of the methods of its examining is doing so by perceiving individuals as acting within its boundaries. As a result, the survey was applied to people within a certain organization, who were in management (including middle managers as well as presidents of the companies), or those who – because of the nature of their activity – had the biggest influence on shaping certain values and practices of behaviour in the companies.

In the third stage individual talks were conducted with the aim of gathering more information on the level of organization as a whole. Presidents, personnel department directors and key accountants were used as informants. The research was done between December 1997 and June 1998.

3. THE WAY OF GATHERING AND ASSESSING DATA

The purpose for using the research tool was gathering information which would enable us to get to know and describe the culture of the examined companies. While constructing the questionnaire certain manifestations of culture were taken into account, which we had previously attempted to identify during the talks separately conducted in each of these organizations. These manifestations included: symbols, myths, rituals, and values. The first part of the questionnaire included values, which describe organizational culture according to what the interviewees said, “should be.” Issues connected with values included questions concerning judging: the aims of the work (characteristics of ideal work); questions judging general beliefs of interviewees (e.g. independence of their children); questions about desired or known and perceived style of decision making, either by the immediate authority or by the manager; also questions about different management styles.

Questions concerning the aims of work refer to the “expected” values and people talking about these values express their expectations connected with the work and its environment. On the other hand, questions about general beliefs refer to desired values – people put them in the image of the world according to which they perceive the world. People questioned were given a scale according to which they were asked to rank their answers, from 1 to 5. Rank 5 meant that a certain value was very important to them; 1 meant it was the least important. Symbols, rituals and myths were grouped under the same name – practices; these manifestations of culture say how “things are”. This was aimed at defining how the examined managers behaved in their place of work. Issues concerning practices included the

following questions: judging practices perceived in the workplace situation; concerning behaviours of a typical participant in the organization; concerning the causes for promoting and dismissals; concerning the relations subordinate-manager; relations management-unions; relations between co-workers; also in this case the interviewees were given a scale 1–5, which was going to be used to rank the questions. 5 meant that the person confirms the existence of certain practices in the organization. 1 meant that this practice does not happen at all. Questions concerned with practices referred to specific situations that people were facing on an everyday basis. By including questions about practices we assumed that the organizations would show differences between each other.

Introducing differentiation between practices and values we assumed that it is present not only in scientific theory but also in the consciousness of the interviewees.

The questionnaire also included information about certain demographic data of the chosen individuals, such as gender, age, overall length of a career, years spent at a managerial position, years with the company, and education. After filling in the forms by the managers and by the management the pollsters interviewed these people personally.

Since organizational culture is a group feature, the analysis should take place at the level of organizational units. The answer given for each question by 480 individual interviewees was averaged for 8 corporate bodies/units.

The aim of the analysis of the empirical material was to detect the structure in a 143 (variables, without demographics) x 8 organizations ecological matrix. We computed a 143 x 143 product – moment correlation matrix, correlating the 8 mean scores for each possible pair of questions. This showed that: 1) the values correlated with other values, but rarely with practice; 2) perceived practices and typical member scores correlated with each other.

Due to this fact, in order to analyse the material we decided to divide the questions into: 52 questions on values; and 91 questions on practices; after that an analysis of convergence was carried out.

For the statistical analysis a convergence method was chosen based on the analysis of convergence, which helps to divide objects and features into subclasses of objects or features treated as similar (M. Zakrzewska 1987). Ascribing objects to one subclass is tantamount with stating about their mutual similarity. For the analysis of a cluster, analysis of k-means was chosen, as this method allows for verifying hypothesis on the subject of the number of clusters of the examined statements. In the case of values, a hypothesis of five clusters was proposed, while in the case of practices – about 9 clusters. The applied method aims at 1) minimizing variations within the groups of convergence, and 2) maximizing variations between these

groups of convergence. As a result of applying the k-means group method we are examining means for each cluster in each dimension to assess to what extent the groups of convergence differ (Sokołowski 1998).

4. THE RESULT OF THE STUDIES

The analysis of demographics data of the examined managers shows the domination of men aged between 42 and 51. More than 50% of those examined have a higher education, most of whom have worked between 20 to 30 years. The examined managers have worked from 7 to 29 years for the company. It is characteristic that half of the interviewees have worked more than 20 years at a managerial level, therefore these people, before 1989, acquired certain values and learned certain ways of behaviour indicative of that period. It should be noted that among the examined population of managers the least numerous category are managers with a medium work practice in a managerial position (of about 16 years in that position), whereas a quarter of the examined have only been in the managerial positions for the last three years. This may be the result of applying the unwritten law that "it is better to employ younger people in managerial positions rather than their older counterparts, as it is easier to teach the younger new rules than it is to correct the older ones of their habits".

4.1. Values

For all the questions classified with the values, convergence k-mean analysis was applied, which resulted in 5 groups of convergence. The following labels for these groups were chosen: V1 –need for authority; V2 – focus on work; V3 –need for security; V4 – alienation; V5 – personal need for achievement. The analysis of interrelationships between the examined dimensions of values and demographic features of the examined group follows:

V1: Need for authority

1. A good manager has exact answers to questions asked by his subordinates.
2. In our company the manager is entirely responsible for his subordinates.
3. The immediate manager should be autocratic but also caring.
4. The employee needs to be controlled to make full use of their potential.
5. The employee should be evaluated mainly in terms of personal engagement in the company's business.
6. In my company the authority of a manager cannot be questioned.
7. The knowledge that a subordinate is a good professional should be enough for the manager.

8. By-passing official channels in my company is not effective.
9. Work in a big company is more appealing to me than in a small company.

V2: Focus on work

1. The employee should be evaluated mainly in terms of their efficiency.
2. Competition does not stop me from achieving good results.
3. I do not prefer a manager-counsellor.
4. Individual decisions are better than collective ones.
5. Work is more important than free time for me.
6. Work benefits are important for me.
7. Variety and challenge at work are important for me.
8. Parents should encourage children to be the best in class.

V3: Need for security

1. Professional work is less important for women.
2. An employee who quietly does his job is a good employee.
3. People who have succeeded in their work should help those who haven't.
4. Companies who have eliminated conflicts fare better.
5. A job I like is more important than career development.
6. In a company every employee is responsible for themselves.
7. I would carry on work even if I didn't need the money.
8. Patriotism manifests itself in hard work.

V4: Alienation

1. Husband and wife should share opinions.
 2. A situation in which children get more independence should arouse parents' anxiety.
 3. Staying with the same company is the best thing for career development.
 4. Most people cannot be trusted.
 5. It's bad when young people criticize their superiors.
 6. A man should sacrifice his family life when his career calls for it.
 7. In my company employees are afraid to disagree with superiors.
 8. Minding my own business is the best thing I can do for society.
 9. The hierarchical structure in my company is based on knowledge – if you have knowledge, you have authority.
 10. In my company there is a shortage of authorities.
 11. I am planning to leave my company soon.
- V5: Personal need for achievement
1. Professional work is very important for men.
 2. Clear criterions at work are very important.

3. The fact that an employee expresses their opinion, even conflicting with their superior's opinion is very important for me.
4. Minor tensions and stress are inevitable.
5. A good opinion of my work is very important.
6. Freedom at work is very important.
7. The possibility to check with my boss is very important.
8. My working conditions are very important.
9. Contributing to the company's success is very important for me.
10. A good working relationship with my boss is very important.
11. The chance to show my skills and abilities is very important.
12. The prestige of the company I work for is very important.
13. Training opportunities in my company are very important.
14. The possibility of a high income is very important.
15. The chance to help others is very important.
16. Challenging tasks are very important.

The first dimension V1: The need for authority, is strongly related to the number of years the person has worked (the shorter the time, the bigger the need for authority), and between the number of years in the company (the less a person has worked in the company, the bigger the need for authority), and with the level of education (the higher the degree, the bigger the need for authority).

V2: Focus on work, reflects the degree to which work influences the lives of most people. This dimension is strictly connected with gender (women, to a greater degree than men, focus on work); between age (younger workers show a bigger preference for work compared to middle-aged and older workers); the number of years in work generally (workers who have worked a shorter time show a greater focus on work compared to workers who have worked more). Also the number of years worked in a particular company is strictly related to that dimension: workers who have worked less time in a company show a bigger emphasis on this dimension compared to others.

V3: The need for security expresses the need for stability, dependence, being free of fears, insecurity and chaos; the need for structure, law and order, clear-cut boundaries and dependence on a supervisor (Maslow 1990, p. 76). Research shows that this need is strictly related to the level of education of the examined group of managers (the higher the level of education, the greater the need for security). Conclusion – since 60% of the examined have a higher education, and 50% have worked longer than 20 years in managerial positions they show an awareness of a possible lack of security when facing the requirements of the free market economy.

V4: Alienation is related to gender of the interviewees: women show a greater feeling of alienation at work than men; the number of years in the company – the less someone has worked in the company, the greater the feeling of alienation; the

number of years on a managerial position – managers who have worked a short time in a managerial position show a greater feeling of alienation.

Dimension V5: Personal need for achievement is strongly related to gender; this dimension is of a greater importance to men than to women, both with a higher education. Managers with a higher education put the most emphasis on the personal need for achievement.

4.2. Practices

The cluster analysis of convergence of k-mean method for 91 questions on practices resulted in 9 groups of convergence, which were labelled as follows: P1: employee oriented; P2: integration; P3: professionalism; P4: distance from management; P5: openness; P6: normative; P7: hostility; P8: closed system; P9: independence.

P1: Employee-oriented

1. Employees are full of initiative at work.
2. Employees are nice to be with.
3. In our company managers help employees adapt to a changing environment.
4. A typical employee in our company is extroverted.
5. A typical employee in our company is nice to be with.
6. Our employees are loyal to the company.
7. Decisions of the executive management are understandable.
8. Decisions of the executive management quickly reach those they are meant for.
9. Our employees are open to outsiders.
10. Managers help good employees get a promotion.
11. Executive management always make decisions based on facts.
12. The work I do is always well organized.
13. I always do my work in a tidy, stable and safe environment.
14. Co-operation and trust among divisions is a common thing in our company.
15. Good relations at work are more important than a good salary.
16. Employees in my company are always told if they have done a good job.

P2: Integration

1. Optimists work for our company.
2. Managers in our company select for teams only people who have something in common.
3. A typical employee of our company is the source of new ideas.
4. Subordinates organize their work themselves.
5. Every day at my company brings new challenges.
6. Our division is the best in the company.

7. In our company the executive management requires a wide range of opinions.
8. I feel good in new situations.
9. We tell the history of our company.

P3: Professionalism

1. Our employees put a maximum effort into their work.
2. Employees try to be the best at technology and work methods.
3. Everybody speaks well of their company and feels proud to work there.
4. Employees of our company know they are to look for new ideas.
5. Every employee in our company knows their aim and importance of work.
6. Every employee is aware of the costs incurred by the company.
7. Every employee is concerned about his or her appearance.
8. People feel safe at work.
9. A typical employee of our company acts quickly.

P4: Distance from management

1. In my company important decisions are made individually.
2. Changes in the company are enforced through management instructions.
3. All decisions are in the hands of executive management.
4. At work you should obey your manager's orders.
5. Respect for the hierarchy of authority in a company is necessary.

P5: Openness

1. Management helps employees develop their abilities
2. Colleagues speak directly.
3. Employees value meetings with managers.
4. We appreciate people acting honestly and openly.
5. Every employee has access to information connected with his or her work.
6. Managers delegate tasks and responsibilities to employees.
7. At work everybody is responsible for himself or herself.
8. Employees in our company are aware of the competition.
9. In our company employees bring forth their own ideas for realization.
10. You should always be serious about your company and work.
11. In our company we focus on satisfying the customer.
12. The management keeps good employees in their departments.
13. To be more efficient you shouldn't follow fixed guidelines, but modify them according to the situation.

P6: Normative

1. Divisions operate according to their own codes.
2. Employees should subordinate themselves to the code followed by their team.
3. Work results are more important than accepted rules of behaviour.

4. The manager should not evaluate the motives of an employee but their work results.

5. Stability and regularity are always better than experimenting.

6. People feel better and work better when they share opinions.

7. Our management is interested exclusively in work results.

8. In conflict with trade unions the manager has to represent the company interest.

P7: Hostility

1. Management controls employees in every detail.

2. Employees in the company are reserved and distrustful.

3. Newly hired staff are left to their own devices.

4. A typical employee is difficult to be with.

5. Competitiveness and distrust is typical among divisions in our company.

6. Physical conditions of work in my company are of secondary importance.

7. The management usually addresses the employees in writing.

8. In my company information is so scarce that employees do not know what to do.

9. Mistakes are severely punished.

10. The management speaks a lot but rarely listens.

11. Only exceptional people suit our company.

12. The management does not like trade unions.

13. The management can't stand employees' opposition.

14. In my company little attention is paid to the personal problems of employees.

P8: Closed system

1. Low rank employees never meet executive managers.

2. I never tell the story of the company I work for.

3. Everyone has the right to be a lone wolf.

4. Our company contributes little to the region's development.

5. Our division is the worst in the company.

6. Order at work involves the unification of employees' behaviour.

7. New employees go through a period of adaptation for a year or more.

8. Somebody who has had a change of opinion does not deserve respect and trust.

P9: Independence

1. Co-operation helps a more rational use of corporate resources.

2. Competition helps a more rational use of human resources.

3. It is worth finding ambitious people who have a strong need for achievement.

4. In the process of economic development every country should find its path of development.

5. It is necessary to be aware of the competition.

6. Government should let companies be fully independent.

7. The private lives of people are their own business.
8. A company should only count on itself.
9. You should always think three or more years ahead.

The analysis of correlations between these dimensions – practices and demographic features shows:

Dimension P1: Employee-oriented shows an interest in an employee to a greater extent than in the interest in a job done. This is related to age; the younger the age of the interviewee, the greater the employee focus. Education: employees with a higher education show a bigger employee focus. The number of years: the shorter the number of years worked, the bigger the employee orientation.

This dimension is compared in the research of G. Hofstede, B. Neuijen, D. D. Ohayv and G. Sanders (1990) to two axes of a managerial grid constructed by R.R. Blake and J. S. Mouton, who considered employee focus and work focus to be two dimensions independent of each other. It should be noted, however, that their analysis concerned people and not systems. Nevertheless, it could be assumed that the result of our research would be placed on the right side of Blake and Mouton's managerial grid, which means that examined managers express employee focus on an organizational level.

Dimension P2: Integration is related to education (the lower the level of education, the lower the level of integration);

Dimension P3: Professionalism expresses an attitude towards identifying oneself with the tasks performed. This is strongly related to gender: men are more focused on professionalism than women; to age: the younger the person, the bigger the focus on professionalism; to education: the higher the level of education, the higher the level of professionalism (a very strong co-relation); to the number of years at work: the lower the number of years at work, the bigger the focus on professionalism.

In the literature on the subject professionalism is juxtaposed to parochialism which is a system where workers derive their identity from the organization they work for. Another differentiation between "local" and "cosmopolitan" is a contrast between an inner and outer reference system (Merton 1968, p. 447). The parochial type of organizational culture is ascribed to Japanese companies.

Dimension P4: Distance from management expresses the style of management and the way of decision making. This is related to age: young and middle-aged managers express the distance between employees and management to the greatest extent.

Dimension P5: Openness is related to age: the younger the manager, the more open he/she is. It is also related to the level of education: the higher the level of education, the bigger the openness. It is related to the number of years worked in general: the shorter the time, the bigger the openness. The number of years in a particular company; the shorter the time, the bigger the openness. The period of

time spent in a managerial position: managers who have worked in those positions from 4 to 19 years (a median period) express greater openness: finally by the managers who have worked the shortest.

This dimension describes the atmosphere of understanding within an organization (MS Poole, 1985), in reference to both human assets and public relations experts.

Dimension P6: Normative describes the way of perceiving one's own tasks in relation to the environment as introducing the rules that should not be violated. This is related to gender: both men and women show strict adherence to principles; to age: adherence to the rules is expressed to a great extent by the youngest and the oldest employees alike; to education: well educated people are more normative than those of a lower level of education; to the number of years worked: the longer the period, the bigger the focus on adherence to the principles; to the number of years in a company: the longer the period, similarly, the greater attention paid to the rules. Also the number of years in managerial position shows a relation to that dimension; the shorter the period, the bigger the emphasis on the rules.

This dimension is juxtaposed with a pragmatic attitude which expresses customer orientation/focus, and which stresses close ties with the market. A lot of attention is given to this dimension in the economic literature on the subject, for its pragmatic character reflects rule number 2: "be close to the customer" (Peters, Watermann 1982).

The convergence that is the result of the research includes both assumptions of "focus on performance" and "focus on normative aspect" as connected in the single dimension.

Due to the fact that during the research, young people, with a short period of time in the job, were mostly focused on a normative aspect, this might mean that they put more emphasis on that aspect rather than on the aspect of customer focus. Attention paid to a normative aspect may be the result of perpetual change of rules in the organization due to changing of rules in the environment.

Dimension P7: Hostility is related to the number of years worked; the shorter the period of time worked, the less hostility the managers feel and express within the company.

Dimension P8: Closed system does not reveal a relation to any of the demographic features of the examined managers. Perhaps it is a feature of the organization as a system, and not an individual feature of the managers.

Dimension P9: Independence is related to age and a period of time worked in the company: the shorter the period, the bigger the focus on independence. This explains the social emancipation of the young generation, which finds independence as the way of life.

5. RELATIONS BETWEEN STRUCTURAL FEATURES OF THE ORGANIZATIONS AND PARTICULAR DIMENSIONS OF VALUES AND PRACTICES

From among the quantitative data referring to structural features of the organization we have assessed comparable data at the level of each organization/unit. These include: budget (financial result at the end of the year), 2) capital invested; 3) number of employees; 4) distribution of budget, as a percentage, (at a constant level of employment) for labour and materials. 5) Key managers profile: the number of women in the management, average level of education, average age, promotions; 6) employee profile: percentage of women, percentage of women managers, absenteeism, average period of time worked in the factory, average age, average level of education of women and men, the latest employee intake (from 1st January 1997 till 31st December 1997), the number of union members.

Analysis of relations between the structural data and the dimensions of organizational culture, applying Spearman's coefficient of ranks correlation, showed that only three structural features of the company were strictly correlated with the cultural dimensions; budget, expenditures on labour in relation to the costs of materials, and the average age of workforce. In the case of budget, the correlation was favourable and very strong, which means that the better the financial performance of the company, the higher the particular dimensions were ranked. However, in the case of expenditure on labour in relation to the expenditure on materials the correlation was unfavourable, which means that the more money spent on labour, the lower the particular dimensions were ranked. Also, the average age of the employees correlates unfavourably – the higher the average age of the employees, the higher the particular values were ranked. Only correlations relevant at the level of 0.05 were taken into account.

Correlation analysis undertaken between structural features of the organizations and practices put an emphasis on a strong correlation of practices with financial performance of the company, with the participation of labour in relation to materials, and with the average age of the employees. There was a favourable correlation in the case of financial performance of the company; the higher the coefficient of this performance at the end of the year, the higher these practices were ranked. On the other hand, relations between participation of labour with respect to expenditures on materials showed an unfavourable correlation. This means that the bigger the expenditure on labour in relation to materials, the higher the particular practices were ranked. The correlation between the average age of the employees and the particular practices was unfavourable; the higher the average age of the employees, the lower particular practices were ranked.

In the case of other correlations the results were not relevant from the statistical point of view.

CONCLUSIONS

Presented dimensions for examining organizational culture may be helpful to judge, diagnose and describe characteristic features of any organizational culture. They do not constitute, however, the ultimate tool of research on issues of corporate culture. They should not be considered universal. However, for practical reasons we have been looking for indicators, which taken into account would characterize culture of a particular organization, and have influence on work effectiveness. Only then may the analysis of the proposed cultural dimensions and their mutual relations in respect to other factors (including socio-demographic factors of the employees) provide us with a great deal of interesting data. Since only eight organizational units were the source of the data, this is of course too few to make any general statements and to determine a universal character of the tool. The objects of our research were the five industrial companies, one food company and two new companies. On the other hand, we have not included in our research other types of organizations, such as health care or social sectors, banking, state administration or army organizations, which could have produced different results. Nevertheless, it seems that using this tool one might partly describe the organizational culture of a particular company and gather data that would help analyse certain ambiguous aspects belonging to the realm of organizational culture. This is the information that might be used by managers in the process of fusion between organizations which differ culturally.

Such a tool for comparing other organizations with them helps managers perceive cultural differences that should be taken into account when building company strategy. The undertaken analysis of corporate culture relations and its dimensions shows, that in the case of values, they are partly determined by the demographic features of the examined group. It turned out that in particular education, age, period of time worked, and (in some cases) the period of time in a given company exert a tremendous influence on how the questions on values were answered. However, as for the practices, this correlation is even stronger. This may be the result of the fact that managers' behaviour in the organization is influenced by practices shared by all (or at least by a majority of employees).

Values expressed by managers, who (in some cases) are perceived as unquestioned leaders, become practices for middle management and for other members of the organization. Regarding the theory of organization processes of transferring values onto practices perpetuated by the members of a community were described by M. Weber: "...when the institution of authority becomes stable the staff who supports a charismatic leader becomes a routine" (Weber 1948, p. 297); the author proposed various types of actions, including social activities towards values, describing them as *deeply rational*, and dominated by common behaviour – *traditional*. Taking into account the fact that presented research shows a generation

gap (young people are more open, they possess a very strong feeling of security, and prefer independence) one might conclude that they are focused more on rational activities, which would give them a greater opportunity of contributing to change, unlike their older counterparts whose behaviour is more traditional.

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