

COMOR PROJECT – EXPLORATORY RESEARCH ON THE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE IN ROMANIA

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Abstract: The research of managerial behavior in Romanian organizations – COMOR - aims to identify the particular features of cultural indices' manifestation form compared to those described in the specialized literature so to provide to those interested information useful to the practices of performing management in the context of economic globalization.

The study includes about 300 business organizations from all counties and areas of activity and is based on the opinions expressed by a sample of approximately 6.000 respondents from all demographic, educational and organizational hierarchy layers.

This material refers to the methodological benchmarks based on which the research is conducted.

JEL classification: M12, M54

Keywords: scientific research, methodology, sample, value judgments, scale of values, analysis indicators

1. INTRODUCTION

Managerial Behavior in the Romanian Organizations is an applied research that explores how the dimensions of organizational culture described by Geert Hofstede are manifested in the Romanian space, by acknowledging:

- relationships between national culture and its subcultures, on one hand, and organizational culture, on the other hand;

- influence of the organizational culture on management practices, in general, and on managerial behavior, especially;
- influence of subcultures specific to various ethnic groups in Romania on managerial behavior in the economic organizations operating in different counties/geographical areas of the country (Maramures, Oltenia, Dobrogea, Bucovina, Transylvania, Moldova, etc.);
- factors acting on managerial behaviors in order to promote and manage change at the level of micro and macroeconomic structures.

In the organization and development of this project, a special attention was paid to respecting the scientific requirements specific for the socio-economic research by survey, so to draw truthful conclusions after the proper processing and analysis of the information gathered, and the solutions proposed to be as useful as possible to the Romanian management.

In this article we present the synthesis of research methodology, regarding:

- the sample group subject to the study;
- instruments to measure opinions;
- organization and collection of data;
- data processing;
- analysis of the research's results.

2. SAMPLING

The stratified sampling procedure was applied to determine the number of respondents took into the survey, which required going through two main stages:

- the first phase - dedicated to choosing the observation units (economic organizations in which the research was carried out);
- the second phase - in which we established the units randomly, i.e. the respondents to which instruments for the measurement of opinions were applied.

The selection layers were different at each stage by proceeding sequentially through several steps, starting from the general community, represented by the existing economic organizations in every county on December 31, 2008, and to each respondent in the sample.

First, to identify the business units subject to observation, three layers of selection were defined, with increasingly comprehensive degrees of prevalence.

The *first layer* was the multitude of economic organizations registered under the Trade Register Database, meaning the entire statistical community from which we have extracted the sample subject to the research.

Considering that an organizational culture conclusive for our study can not be formed in small units, we formed a *second layer* that included only the economic units which, at the end of the reference year, had a number of at least 50 employees.

As the number of units that met the selection criteria specified in the second layer has an uneven distribution on counties, the next step was to determine the number of organizations taken into the study by using the algorithm shown in table no. 1.

Based on this algorithm, from the list drawn up for layer 2, we have randomly identified the units to be studied, having two selection criteria for guidance:

- most representative domains of activity undertaken in the county according to the CAEN¹;
- units chosen to operate in many cities of the respective county.

Table no. 1

Nr.	Number of units in a county determined in layer 2	Number of units taken into the sample
1	under 50	4-5
2	between 51 – 100	6 – 7
3	between 101 – 200	8 – 10
4	between 201 – 400	11 – 15
5	over 400	16 - 20

By applying this procedure the list of units in *layer 3* was prepared, including the survey units to which the actual request to participate in research was sent.

Stage II of the sampling process consisted of more steps in their transition through the following layers. Thus, for each economic organization of layer 3, the approximate number of respondents was determined using an algorithm that took into account the total number of employees in that unit.

Table no. 2

Nr.	Number of employees in the unit subject to study	Number of respondents in the surveyed unit
1	50 - 100	5 - 8
2	101 – 250	9 – 12
3	251 - 500	13 – 15
4	501 – 1000	16 – 20
5	over1000	21 - 30

This guidance algorithm was the basis for the composition of *layer 4*, for determining the sample units (respondents), according to the following criteria of representativeness:

- occupational layer, meaning the type of activity developed within the organization: manufacturing (materials processing), administration, marketing, research etc.;
- organizational layer, i.e. the hierarchical level to which they belong: managers (top, middle, basic), executive staff;
- sex of the respondents: male, female;
- generation (age): youngsters, adults, elders;
- level of education: elementary, medium, high.

¹ CAEN – Clasificarea activităților din economia națională

Note: noted that, depending on the specific situation encountered in the field, some deviations from the algorithms mentioned were accepted, but they did not affect the units subject to observation and the representativeness of respondents.

3. QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE MEASUREMENT OF OPINIONS

3.1. QUESTIONNAIRE STRUCTURE

A complex questionnaire was used for data collection, in which the items were structured into several distinct segments, according to the goal aimed for getting answers, as follows:

- organization sheet, which contains general information identifying the statistical observation unit: organization name, location (city, county), CAEN code, date of establishment, type of organization (joint stock company, limited partnership, limited liability company, autonomous administration unit), social capital, the main economic indicators (turnover, net profit, number of employees), the structure of staff (by gender and occupational layer: managers, executive staff)
- general information about respondents (their social and / or organizational variables): status in the organization, sex, age, marital status, level of school education, managerial training, and employment status (working in the field of activity: management, production, sales etc.);
- value judgments to allow the characterization of organizational culture's dimensions (individualism – collectivism; distance from the power, uncertainty control, masculinity – femininity report; time horizon);
- value judgments on the character profile of effective leader;
- value judgments about behavioral profile of effective leader;
- value judgments of the leader of excellence.

Being keen to ensure the proper understanding by respondents of what we target in the research undertaken, each section of the questionnaire is prefaced by brief methodological information (content) and / or recommendations on how to complete the expected responses. The voluntary nature of participation in the survey and provision of anonymity and confidentiality of the opinions expressed were also specifically mentioned.

3.2. NATURE OF THE QUESTIONS

In its content, the questionnaire includes both closed and open questions. Open questions refer to information identifying the unit of observation and the respondents. The closed ones allow the expression of value judgments (from strongly agree to strongly disagree) on the matters investigated.

How it can not be drawn a conclusion about the opinions and attitudes of people by looking at the responses to only one question, sets of questions that allow determining the position towards the problem investigated were elaborated.

Thus, "*individualism-collectivism*", as a dimension of organizational culture, is characterized by several forms, such as:

- individuals' aspirations and their desire / tendency to succeed;
- commitment demonstrated towards the organization they belong to;
- motivation of individuals, causing them to justify certain attitudes and behaviors;
- decisional organizational structures and their functioning mode;

- opinions about the human and hierarchical-functional relationships;
- special relationship stated and / or put in practice and so one.

Each for of manifestation is characterized by a set of questions. For example, to characterize the privileges, the questionnaire includes the following questions:

Do people with a certain rank and a given position (family, business, etc.) have special privileges to help them to exert their function's duties?

Rewards to be granted in your organization are based on performance, but also on other factors (seniority, kinship, political, business, sympathy etc.)?

Rewards that are granted in your organization are based on factors unrelated to performance (seniority, kinship, political, business, sympathy etc.)?

The research has a double purpose: on the one hand to photograph the situation, and to prefigure the future behavior of managers, on the other hand. Therefore, each question requires from the respondents to express their views in two instances:

- one to identify the current practice of the organization;
- the second meant to enable the respondents to issue projections, expressing their opinions about "how should such practices be" in future.

3.3. VALUE JUDGMENTS

To express the intensity of attachment, agreement or disagreement with the matters investigated, the rating scale responses is covering the full spectrum of views:

- from strongly positive, to intense negative, with intermediate stages like: total agreement, partial agreement, indecision, partial disagreement, total disagreement, respectively
- from total acceptance (Yes), to total rejection (No).

4. DATA COLLECTION

For field data collection, questionnaire operators were teachers, PhD students, master students and students. When completing the questionnaire's responses was used the extemporal method (for those with secondary and lower education) and self administration method, applied to managers and people with higher education.

5. DATA PROCESSING

The stage of processing the data collected on the field is based on specific software that allows: to create the database, to calculate econometric indicators of analysis and to chart the summary statements. The database consists of central processing, at the level of each organization investigated, of the data obtained through the processing of the questionnaire by respondents in the sample. For the analysis and interpretation of the opinions expressed, the following system of mathematical-statistical indicators was elaborated within the research methodology:

- *Position Indicators* (percentage shares) – to characterize:
 - the representativeness of the observation units reflecting the structure of economic organizations, on domains of activity, according to CAEN code, considering their type (SA, SC, SRL, AR) and size, depending on the number of employees;
 - the degree of confidence in the value judgments / opinions expressed depending on various demographic and institutional variables (sex, age, education, organizational hierarchy), each item that characterize the forms

of manifestation of organizational culture's dimension and character, respectively behavioral traits of leadership.

- *Indicators of the central position* (average score, median, coefficient of asymmetry) with which we emphasize the essential trends of the variability of responses to the questionnaire questions.
- *Indicators of variation* (amplitude variation, individual deviations from the calculated average values, standard deviation and coefficient of variation) used to characterize by the degree of homogeneity or the spread of opinions expressed at the level of economic organization, county, development region or national economy and the social structures of institutional respondents (sex, age, education, hierarchy).
- *Indicators of correlation* (correlation table, graphical method, regression coefficient), which helps us commensurate the strength of causal links between factorial variables (behaviors, personality traits, etc.) and the variable outcome (dimensions of organizational culture or only forms of manifestation of those).

Note: Calculation of the last three groups of indicators was done in advance to convert in numeric expression on the value scale with five levels, the value judgments of the spectrum of opinions, as such: *Total agreement* – value 5; *Partial agreement* – value 4; *Indecision* – value 3; *Partial disagreement* – value 2; *Total disagreement* – value 1.

6. ANALYSIS AND CAPITALIZATION OF THE RESULTS

The results of data processing are analyzed on levels of aggregation: large economic units, counties, development regions, national economy.

The capitalization is done by reports of analysis presented to the decisional structures above mentioned, by exposure in scientific meetings and publications.

7. CONCLUSIONS

We appreciate that the finality of COMOR project will help to promote local scientific research in organizational culture and managerial behavior, providing useful information to those interested in the businesses' development in the context of globalization.

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