

QUALITY ORIENTED ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

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Abstract

Total Quality Management is an attractive philosophy and its implementation involves many difficulties. Implementation of total quality management requires a profound transformation of the organization so that the appearance of strong resistance is inevitable. For this reason, it is necessary to consider the huge effort that is required to resolve difficulties that appear in this process.

Total quality management is based on knowing the stage of organization and its environment and through continuous improvement for it to try to reach excellence.

It is well known that the implementation of quality management systems depends on the specifics of each organization. Functions performed, defining features, characteristics of public administration systems, rigidity given by the multitude of laws make it difficult to implement quality management systems, on the one hand and on the other hand, these difficulties are given from the specific service.

The introduction of total quality management in public administration cannot and should not present a radical reform of it. Public administration, like any other public or private organization, can be improved. In essence, the practice of recent years shows that the model Total Quality Management in public administration allows improvements, but it only with an appropriate organizational culture.

Key words: public administration, organizational culture, quality management, innovation management, quality

JEL Classification: H83, M14, L38

1. Introduction and context of the study

Due to one of the definitions of the concept of public administration according to which the government, is called to execute the law to satisfy certain regional interests of the citizens', quality management in local government is not an additional element, but a basic one for these institutions. A modern administration has a number of tasks that are continuously growing, and have to be realized by their specific functions. One of the great challenges of our time is finding new forms of management and their implementation in order to obtain a more efficient use of public resources. The organization consists of people who share ideas, values and attitudes about the organization's mission, its policies, and rules generally about the behavior within it. In order to develop quality, a change from an existing culture to a culture of quality is indicated [3].

Organizational culture can be defined as an ensemble divided in opinions, values, attitudes and patterns of behavior that characterizes its members. This system of views and values taking place within the organization, guides all components, being a constant reference point. Culture favors continuous action lines forming behaviors and conveys a sense of identity to the members of the organization, giving them recognized and accepted assumptions.

Total quality development involves the creation of a solid organizational culture that promotes and performs important functions such as broadcasting philosophy of quality, staff motivation and group cohesion in line with the tasks database.

Cultural values of quality management could be [5]:

- ✦ the organization must be customer oriented, identifying and meeting their needs;
- ✦ quality is given by people, so human resources are the main asset of an organization, therefore, its satisfaction is a primary objective;
- ✦ quality involves all activities of the organization;
- ✦ continuous improvement is the basic pillar of total quality;
- ✦ the spirit of cooperation, being the expression of teamwork is the best road towards progress
- ✦ in looking for permanent practical improvements, it is necessary to maintain receptivity, the experiences and innovations that have occurred in other organizations, may they private or public

So, the starting point in creating an appropriate organizational culture for the introduction of quality management system, is the public official intended to create the conditions for a culture to be able to meet the needs of customers "both internal and external " of the organization. On the other hand, own organizational structure is a plant culture in that it creates, makes and supports certain cultural values. Therefore, any cultural exchange should be based

on an analysis of existing structure and provide an outline organization to be consistent with the objectives of the organization's top management

2. Quality management in the context of organizational change

When referring to the important functions of any organization, creating a strong culture such as - broadcast quality philosophy, staff motivation and group cohesion - we realize the obstacles encountered in creating such a culture in public administration. The multitude of laws adopted the frequent changes made to the laws, are negative factors regarding the creation of an appropriate organizational culture. Government organizations are rigid and therefore less able to adapt to any technical and social change. Consequences of vertical structures with a distribution determined power and characterized by centralization, oppose to specific cultural values of total quality. Previous statements can be applied to organizations of any kind. But in public administration, any possible change is difficult because of its extensive history, characteristics derived from its name and its organizational chart because of which rigidity can be extended.

The main function of organizational culture is that it offers to the members of the organization organizational identity and generates a commitment to shared beliefs and values. Although the ideas that become part of organizational culture they come from anywhere within the organization it usually begins with an organizational culture founder or one of the top leaders who generate and implement certain ideas and values as a vision, philosophy or strategy. When these ideas and values translate into positive results, and give return, they become institutionalized and arises an organizational culture that reflects the vision and strategy of the founder or leader. In the current administration we can see that there are several founders and leaders, and there are several levels where they can be more hierarchical organizational cultures in the same organization, and each organization or each hierarchical level within the same organization, depending on the industry operating domain system can determine their own values and own fundamental ideas to their organizational culture. The main problem is that these different cultures should be coordinated towards the main quality management philosophy respectively oriented to the customer.

Amid these approaches in relation to what has been said before, it is obvious that it is a requirement to operate an exchange in traditional organizational administrations schematization of public administration. It is necessary to configure flexible organizations which allow the integration of individual potential and facilitate response to customer/citizen demands [2].

In this new scheme, people's behavior will change, as will their attitudes and values to impose an orientation to changes and qualitative results. Change is difficult and this difficulty is based more on cultural transformation than management techniques application and models of achievement. For example, drafting a new process is not difficult. More complicated is to follow the work process and making sure that this is not paralyzed by resistance from staff dealing with the process.

3. Organizational culture and resistance to change

In organizations changes are inevitable, and these changes occur daily. Because these changes are in relation to their environment and recognize that it is a continuous process of transformation, the only remaining option is the alternative approach of constant adaptation . Public institutions are no exceptions.

A total quality management involves the implementation / introduction of trade missions, policy, objectives and culture. Changes in components and in forms of management and also in its organizational structure. Although these missions, policies and objectives still exist in public organizations, the issue of their implementation falls on their purpose to act. Therefore, change has to be initiated by the acting individual.

As mentioned before, leaders are those individuals who drive exchanges and determine the actions necessary for them to succeed. They also initiate the development of quality culture values. Cultural transformation is basic, the first problem could be - how can it be realized so that the agreement on quality to be extended to the entire organization

Acquisition of this agreement is initiated together with staff training .The total quality concepts should be included at all organization levels, the need for change, how it will be affected and what is required for materializing it. However, this formative process will not only be achieved by cultural innovation. This is important but not singular. Changing attitudes and behavior are vital. Attitude is the tendency of individual to respond to a person or object. Attitude is one's tendency to respond to a person or an object. To establish a cultural exchange, attitudes and behaviors need to be modified. In the order in which to act, there are two distinct perspectives. One that says that attitudes have to change before, a previous condition of behavior exchange. A second alternative suggests that the change in attitudes should be preceded by acting on behavior.

4. Organizational culture and management innovation - implications for management innovation in customer-oriented enterprise

Offering products and services focused on meeting customer requirements is not limited to ensuring the current offer. Increasingly, in the vision of customer orientation, services and products must be created which meet the latent, still inarticulate customer expectations. If companies succeed in identifying these needs and "hidden" expectations it

opens for them an interesting possibility to develop customer orientation. The economy is directed by the fact that entrepreneurs replace “the old” with “something new”. The interpretation refers exclusively to product and/or technology innovations.

The interpretation of the narrow concept of innovation refers exclusively to product and/or technology innovations. Under this narrow sense, the terms “innovation” and “new product” are used interchangeably. In a broad interpretation of the concept of innovation this is associated with all “renewals” of the enterprise. In this case the needs of innovations can be products, processes, technological procedures, structures, and new distribution channels [2].

An innovation means direct or indirect transposition of a new idea - considered as such in terms of enterprise and customers - in the business offer in order to impose the idea on the market successfully and increase significantly and sustainably the utility of product / service for customer.

Independently from the chosen interpretation for innovations generally it has four characteristics. Central characteristics of innovations are: novelty, complexity, uncertainty, conflict potential.

Experience has shown that the development of customer orientation of enterprises can help to improve innovation management. The main success factors are:

- ✦ planning management in a process;
- ✦ considering the scientific knowledge management;
- ✦ structures and cultural adaptation;
- ✦ focusing on customer utility

It should be recognized and acknowledged that innovations have to be planned and carried within a management process. This means, we have to establish framework procedures with stated objectives of innovation within which the phases of innovation process can be run. Based on a strategic concept, it becomes possible to assess the effects of innovation ideas on such factors such as company structures, costs and utility for customers.

Another implication of management consists in the fact that achieving success in innovation involves the obtaining of a systematic management of knowledge.

The managers of the enterprise have to ensure that consumers' latent needs are known and they are processed, so that this information can be asserted both in the... marketing department and management of innovation.

A third consequence is the necessity to adapt the organizational structures and business culture of the employment to improve the innovative climate. In order to achieve successful conditions for increasing capacity of innovations we have to mention factors such as the simplicity of organization, appreciation of the people value, simplified information flow, high responsibility of persons and liberty of action of employees.

The validity range of the above listed factors allows the conclusion that this request is directly related to the affirmation of resources of the customer oriented enterprise, therefore should be considered in the context of development customer-oriented company. It should be mentioned that successful innovations are always related to ensuring the consumer utility, it must be considered permanent and long-term in innovation management.

Community strategic guidelines that the European Council has adopted in October 2006 in innovation and research, confers the cohesion policy with a double role: it must support the regions in the implementation of action plans and regional strategies for innovation to increase the competitiveness of the involved entities and the European Union as a whole. On the other hand it is necessary to contribute to increase research and innovation capacity in the region to a level that allows them participation in the international research projects.

International studies show that the density and vitality of local networks of knowledge contributes significantly to the dynamism and competitiveness of organizations and provides a vital role to local and especially regional politics of economic development [6].

In the publication entitled “*Innovation Scoreboard 2010 Union*” were highlighted those countries which are the first regarding the level of innovation. The study divides the level of innovation of the countries into four categories, as it can be seen in the figure below.

Thus, the categories are the following: (figure no. 1.)

- 1) *innovation leaders*, such as Germany, Denmark, Finland
- 2) *adepts of innovation*, such as Slovenia Estonia, Austria, Belgium, UK etc
- 3) *moderate innovators*: Portugal, Malta, Italy, Hungary, Spain and Slovakia
- 4) *modest innovators*: Bulgaria Romania, Lithuania

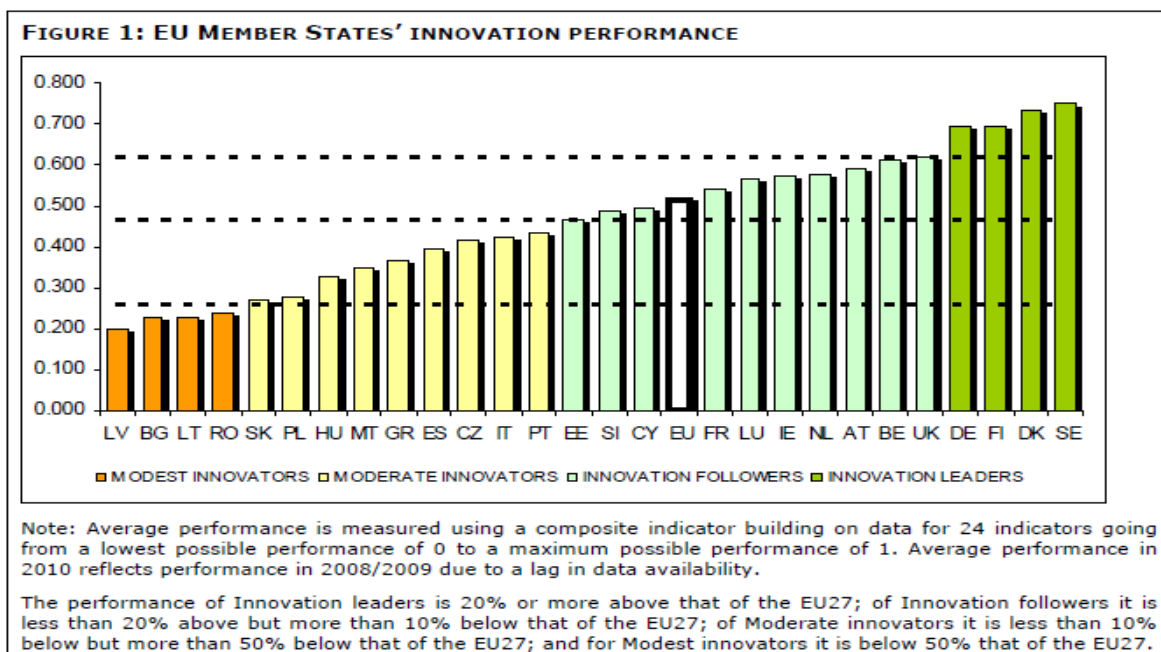


Figure no. 1. Degree of innovation of countries by category

(Source: INNOVATION UNION SCOREBOARD 2010, The Innovation Union's performance scoreboard for Research and Innovation, 1 February 2011)

Innovation is not a purpose in itself; it appears only when it responds to customer needs and by it can contribute to economic success of the enterprise. This vision from customer's perspective is more clearly expressed in the last period and is the central factor of success in the management of innovation.

In the same study was shown the importance of innovation in public administration. More accurate, the study Innobarometer 2010 was dedicated exclusively to public sector. The research was realized in 4000 public organizations in Europe, and was showed that the innovation in public services is presented on a large scale.

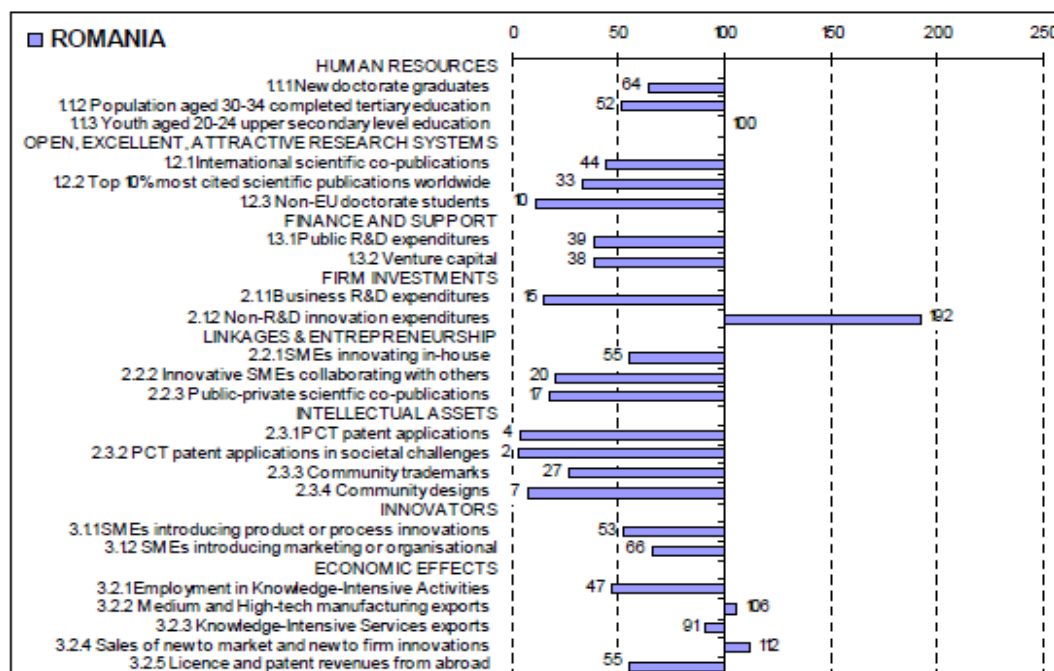


Figure no. 2. Relative indicators of innovation in fields in Romania compared to EU-27

(Source: Innovation union scoreboard 2010, The Innovation Union's performance scoreboard for Research and Innovation, 1 February 2011)

In Europe, two of three organizations of public administration has introduced a new service or improved at least one service in the last three years.

The advantages that form the base of innovation in public administration are: improved customer satisfaction to information relating to services, improvement customer satisfaction, both external and internal, more specialized services, faster services delivery, simplified manageability

All these effects would increase customer satisfaction, which is required and is...undoubtedly the importance of introducing the concept of innovation in public administration in our country.

5. Conclusions

Culture and organizational performance are clearly interrelated, although the evidence on the exact nature of these relationships are heterogeneous. An organizational culture formation in public sector organizations start with determination of basic values and its orientation in terms of content in a common direction, ideas, values orientation, activities guidance to customer's satisfaction. Organizational culture could have a significant impact on long-term economic performance of the public.

A culture based on performance and oriented to quality and customer has to promote practices such as: the delegation of tasks, competences and responsibility, teamwork with a powerful leadership, correlation and integration of human resources with technology, employees are directly responsible for how they capitalize the technical potential to make better use the human potential and amplify the performances, orientation to a common goal. As we know the offer of quality products and services is primordial for any type of organization, whatever the profile, though the implementation of an integrated management system is related also to the specific of the organizational culture. Thus, in order to successfully implement these systems, it is necessary for an organization to have an organizational culture focused, most of all, on quality.

Another specific aspect is the definition and presentation of the relation between the management of innovation and organizational culture. The analyses made have highlighted the fact that the innovation management has major implications on the organizational culture, in relation to its orientation toward the customer.

Therefore organizational culture should be integrated into quality culture of public institution where the accent has to be on the customer, on developing relationships with them and team work.

Employees of these public institutions should be aware that service users are the source for future development of the organizations.

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