

## **Debate on the Cultural Style Indicators. The Case of Cross-Cultural Teams**

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**Abstract – This article aims to analyze the Cultural Style Indicator using Peterson Cultural Style Indicator™. Starting from the conceptual framework definition of the organizational culture, the paper will present then a possible research approach for investigating organizational culture dimensions using Peterson Cultural Style Indicator™ (the cultural intelligence and the cross-cultural differences are defined by considering dimensions as: management, strategy, planning, personnel communication and reasoning). In addition, this article presents the research results done in the university. The pilot research results achieved, can offer the possibility of a comparison between the data obtained and the data already collected by Dr. Peterson. Keywords: Cross-cultural members, Peterson Cultural Style Indicator™, cultural intelligence.**

### I. INTRODUCTION

Over the past decades, engineering processes have evolved dramatically. These changes have led companies to review their working methods and realize an organizational culture definition, to be able to move from one culture to common conservative culture knowledge (and to define them as a learning organization). In the current economic world, time differences existing and the languages seem to no longer a prohibition on the team creation teams.

Taking into account the specific needs of communication and information, sharing knowledge between employees from different services, it is necessary to incite participants to behave collaboration, regardless their level in the company hierarchy. Cultural differences, language or location having no essential.

In the current economic world, time differences existing, the languages multitude, seem no longer a prohibition on the teams creation. In multinational companies tend to form teams to work together. Cultural differences, language or location having no essential. Culture is a learned meanings system in a given society, transmitted and shared that facilitates the survival community ability and the adaptation of one community to the external environment.

From the point of view of cross-cultural psychology, we are particularly interested in subjective culture, the individual inside. Subjective culture components are referring to cultural traditions, subject cultural beliefs, cultural values, norms and cultural rules. In the work context space, we deal with the organization cultural identity, company culture. Heintz said about organizational culture that supports its proper functioning and that, this concept emerged in the twentieth century [7]. Since then, labor sociology focuses on the enterprise culture and identity at work.

Enterprise cultural characteristics may be [21]:

- Activity (mission design and organization reason for);
- Person (design rights and duties organization towards the person and the person rights and liabilities towards the organization) [15];
- Environment (design boundary relations and interaction between organization and environment).

We cannot however limit to observing the organization internal framework to explain its function and dysfunctions. It is also important to understand what place the organization works in life of its employees compared to other works submitted by them.

Brooks defines the cultural intelligence and explains the cross-cultural differences having the purpose to make you define your own cultural style in six important areas: management, strategy, planning, personnel communication and reasoning (cite by [1]).

This article presents the results obtained from a research made in our university, using The Peterson Cultural Style Indicator™ [15]. Pilot research results achieved, can offer us the possibility of a comparison between the data obtained in our Institution and the data already collected by Peterson.

### II. CONCEPTS DEFINITION

The concept of “organizational culture” nowadays is very present in management, acquiring

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over time an important place in scientific papers analyzing organizational behavior. Although organizational culture characterizes organizations along, it became the subject of debate 25 years ago, because contemporary managers showed a great interest in identifying the elements that make the difference between success and failure in an organization [2, 3, 4].

The concept of corporate culture emerged in late 70's, in the United States of America. That finding was made by Jean-Luc Vachette in French magazine management (*Revue Française de Gestion*), in a

number dedicated to the concept of corporate culture [17, 18, 19].

“Organizational culture” definition is difficult to be made because there is now a widely accepted vision by researchers or theorists. Considering these aspects, it is interesting to see different specialists’ opinions and theories on organizational culture content [11, 12].

Finally, it is able to see identity or differentiation elements. Table 1 summarizes the definitions for organizational culture made by some of the experts in the field.

Table 1. Organizational culture: main definitions synthesis (a synthesis made after [17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23])

#	Author / Authors	Organizational culture is defined as:
1	M. R. Louis (1980)	A set of beliefs/interpretations shared by a group of people. These beliefs are generally silent, are relevant to that group and are distinctive for the group. Also, they are sent to new members.
2	Thomas J. Peters and R.H. Waterman (1982)	A dominant and coherent set of values shared by members, induced by symbolic means.
3	Frost et al. (1985)	Talking about organizational culture is to talk about the symbolism importance for people - rituals, myths, stories and legends - about the events interpretation, ideas and experiences are influenced and structured by groups in which they live.
4	L. Smircich (1985)	By developing a common understanding of the events, objects, words and people in the organization develop a shared sense of their experiences facilitating coordinated action.
5	Van Maanen and Barley (1985)	Culture can be understood as a set of solutions defined by a group of people to face specific problems ... which they experience together.
6	Schein (1985)	Fundamental model assumptions made in the group and measure to resolve the external adaptation problems and internal integration that has worked well enough to be considered valid and therefore sent to new members as the correct way of thinking and perception in relation to these problems.
7	T. J. Sergiovanni and J. E. Corbally (1986)	The values system, symbols and shared group meanings transferring these values, symbols, meanings in material objects and ritual practices. Culture shows what is important to a particular group and how they should think, feel and behave group members. Elements of culture include customs and traditions, historical memories, whether mythical or real, collusions, customs, norms and expectations, shared meanings, common assumptions.
8	A. Strati (1992)	A symbol set, beliefs and behavior patterns learned, produced and recreated by people who devote their life energy and labor to one organization.
9	G. Kunda (1992)	Symbols group and shared meanings that provide shared rules governing cognitive and affective aspects of membership to organization.
10	G. Hofstede (1996)	Collective mental programming that distinguishes members of one organization from members of other organizations.
11	E. Burdus and G. Caprarescu (1999)	An artificial products set, core values and concepts, thinking and behavior modes in an organization generally accepted as common basis for action.
12	T. Gavrilă and V. Lefter (2002)	Managers thinking, ethical standards, behavior type’s management policies adopted traditions, attitudes and specific events that have marked the company evolution.
13	S. Certo (2002)	A common values set and beliefs which organization members have it regarding the operation and existence of their organization.
14	D. Iacob and D.M. Cismaru (2002)	Regular behavioral actions that occur between individuals (rituals, ceremonies, languages), the rules accepted by all employees, philosophy pursued by the organization's policy, rules for integrating employees new feeling or climate.

15	I. Cochina (2004)	Represented by the components beliefs of one organization expressed through an attitudes system, behaviors, attachments, expectations, aspirations and performers and managers values, outlined during its development, outlined them in some measure the functionality and performance, with a impact on its members satisfaction.
16	Dygert C.B. and Jacobs R.A. (2006)	Involves rituals, symbols and stories associated with people categories, offering an insight into people's beliefs and values, the things that are important to them and the reasons behind those choices.
17	Alexandru Puiu (2007)	A structured material and spiritual results set of the organization by integrating a values and belief system that is cultivated and transmitted among members and outside the unit.
18	O. Nicolescu and I. Verboncu (2008)	A values, beliefs, aspirations set, expectations and behaviors shaped over time in each organization prevailing there and his condition directly and indirectly functionality and performance.
19	E. Schein (2010)	A shared pattern basic assumptions of group problem solving external adaptation and internal integration that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be shared with other new members as the correct way to perceive, understand and feel in relation to those problems.
20	M. Thévenet (2010)	How to respond to the current situation in life.

In addition to national culture, organizational culture has a strong effect on management. Organizational culture is embedded in national cultures in which an organization operates. Although both cultures play different roles, each affect how things work in multinational corporations. Thus, both factors must be considered, especially in the context of global virtual teams using information and communication technologies.

It must recognize the complexity, range and distinctiveness corporate cultures. By definition, organizational or corporate culture includes values and beliefs expressed in artifacts, symbols and practices, and organizational language, traditions, myths, rituals, and stories [4, 7, 8, 9, 13].

Schein (1999) sees it as “the way we do things around here. In essence, corporate culture is learned hypotheses jointly in common, such as values, beliefs, and assumptions” (1999, p 48) [18]. Therefore, organizational impact varies largely by communication technology used in global teams - can act as a barrier or information retention and communications technology or to provide the necessary support in terms of culture technology infrastructure and organizational culture to actively promote.

Current interest, given to measurement intercultural competence has inspired the development of many new assessment tools. These tools are related to a needs variety for measuring outcomes, program evaluation and personnel selection, and providing tools for vocational guidance and training [10, 17, 18, 19].

### III. DEBATES ON THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Peterson Cultural Style Indicator (PCSI) is a tool that allows international comparisons with their own culture typical of people in over 70 countries. The questionnaire consists of 25 questions. A different colors graph has your own cultural style that you can compare with over 70 countries targets. Brooks Peterson is using five global cultural dimensions (cite by [6, 13]:

- Equality versus Hierarchy,
- Direct versus Indirect,
- Individual versus Group,
- Task versus Relationship,
- Risk versus Caution.

A pilot research was also made in Timisoara, Romania. The research was realized during the month of October 2012. Figure 1 represents the personalized suggestions based on our score investigation.

Based on the answers received from the questionnaire, the research results and conclusions were summed in Table 2.



Fig. 1. Peterson Cultural Style Indicator™ chart – Romania  
Source: Peterson Cultural Style Indicator

Table 2. Peterson Cultural Style Indicator™ chart – Romania versus United States of America

<i>Romania</i>	<i>United States of America</i>
<p>1) <i>Equality versus Hierarchy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In Romania, people are more focused on Hierarchy, they are more self-in directed;</li> <li>• There is no flexibility as a member in a company or a team;</li> <li>• Men and women are treated differently and expect them to behave differently;</li> </ul>	<p>1) <i>Equality versus Hierarchy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In USA, people are more focused on equality, they are more self-directed;</li> <li>• They want more flexibility as a member in a company or a team;</li> <li>• No differences are made between men and women.</li> </ul>
<p>2) <i>Direct versus Indirect</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Here, people are more diplomatic, the opinions are expressed diplomatically living room for interpretations;</li> <li>• When it is the case, they are not open to confront difficulties or conflicts.</li> </ul>	<p>2) <i>Direct versus Indirect</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Here, people are more direct, they are trying discretely to avoid differences;</li> <li>• When it is the case, they are open to confront difficulties or conflicts.</li> </ul>
<p>3) <i>Individual versus Group</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Romanian are more focused on collaborations and group ideas and goals;</li> <li>• Most of the time follow and enforce guidelines;</li> <li>• The group affiliation is used as a way of determining their identity;</li> <li>• Conform so much to social norms.</li> </ul>	<p>3) <i>Individual versus Group</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Americans are more focused on the individual level;</li> <li>• They are more flexible, but focused more on the individuals and less on the team;</li> <li>• A group affiliation is not used as a way of determining their identity;</li> <li>• Not conform so much to social norms.</li> </ul>
<p>4) <i>Task versus Relationship</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Romanians are focused on Relationship;</li> <li>• People are defined based on who they know;</li> <li>• Before starting a new business, there are established some comfortable relationships;</li> <li>• For hiring a person for a job, sometimes are used more personal selection criteria (such as family connections).</li> </ul>	<p>4) <i>Task versus Relationship</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Americans are focused on Task;</li> <li>• People are defined based on who they do;</li> <li>• They start first the business and then establish the relationships;</li> <li>• For hiring a person for a job, there are used impersonal selection criteria (such as résumés, test scores).</li> </ul>
<p>5) <i>Risk versus Caution</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Before taking a decision, more information are collected;</li> <li>• They want more rules, guidelines, and directives;</li> <li>• Don't change plans at the last minute.</li> </ul>	<p>5) <i>Risk versus Caution</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More comfortable with Risk, they take quickly a decision with less information;</li> <li>• Prefer less rules, guidelines, and directives;</li> <li>• Prefer to change plans at the last minute.</li> </ul>

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Unfortunately, until now, in the literature there has been no highly described Romanian Cultural model. At the base there are some Romanian research studies, studies which can be highlighted by a factors number that characterize much a good part from the organizations in Romania. Typically, an organizational culture analysis is based on elements of national culture. The studies made in Romania have concluded that our country still maintains a conservative design based on life experience. Middle-aged people are close to family, traditions, nature, always seeking to make sense of life. In addition, the opposite are young people who are oriented to new,

being extremely capable for efforts to succeed. An individual's behavior is influenced by personality traits held. Studies have revealed that some understanding organizational behavior is possible by considering the emotional element, represented by interests and motivations. They may be innate or acquired, conscious or unconscious, physiological needs are simple or abstract ideals. Sex and age variables also explain certain work performance.

Many activities, by their nature, are specific to women, and that they tend to reach high performance in a relatively short time. In some professions, age could be a problem or, conversely, a notable advantage. Some professions are considered boring by young people (for example working on automobile assembly lines), but the elderly are well professional

integrity, obtain professional satisfactions and, are less prone to fluctuation [12].

Organizational culture is born with the organization.

A strong organizational culture is one in which there is a strong alignment to the values and principles. An organization with such a culture does not require control systems and bureaucratic systems. People that make a strong culture do not require additional impulses, already accepted unconditionally “game rules” and the organization manages to form a desirable employee type.

Resources within an organizational system are characterized by certain interdependence, what means that it should prevail in its teamwork.

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