

Organizational culture in the human resource of a mexican hotel organization

La cultura organizacional en el recurso humano de una organización hotelera mexicana

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Abstract

This document describes the organizational culture factor of the human resource that works in a Mexican hotel organization. The theoretical path was made from the inputs of Barney, Hill, Pérez Mayo, Gordon, Thévenet, Golden, Stoner, Serna, Koontz y Cooke y Lafferty; as a explanatory framework which distinguishes the importance of identifying through an inventory of organizational culture, as it builds and defines such organization, it's relations and it's processes. The methodology is empirical, descriptive and quantitative. The instrument used for the collection of data was the questionnaire generated by Cooke and Lafferty, called Inventory of Organizational Culture. This instrument allowed to identify the Organizational Culture starting from the methodological categorical criteria proposed by themselves, meaning, they measured the dimensions: realization, auto-update, humanistic-encouraging, affiliate, conventional, approval, dependent, of evasion, antagonistic, power, competitive and perfectionist; defined by the instrument.

Culture, organizational culture, hotel

Resumen

La obsolescencia programada surgió de la necesidad de mantener una El artículo revisa la cultura organizacional del recurso humano que trabaja en una organización hotelera de México; la ruta teórica realizada es bajo la mirada de Barney, Hill, Pérez Mayo, Gordon, Thévenet, Golden, Stoner, Serna, Koontz y Cooke y Lafferty (1989) como marco explicativo que destaca la importancia de identificar a través de un inventario de cultura organizacional del cómo se construye y define dicha organización, sus relaciones y procesos. La metodología es empírica, descriptiva y cuantitativa. El instrumento utilizado para la recolección de datos fue el cuestionario generado por el Cooke y Lafferty, denominado Inventario de Cultura Organizacional. Este instrumento permitió identificar la cultura organizacional a partir de los criterios categoriales metodológicos propuestos por ellos mismos, es decir se midieron la dimensión: realización, auto-actualización, humanístico-alentador, afiliativo, convencional, aprobación, dependiente, de evasión, antagonístico, poder, competitivo y perfeccionista

Cultura, Cultura organizacional, Hotel

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Introduction

Studying culture in organizations has a high degree of importance within the organizational environment, due to the influence it has on the behavior of employees. Its diagnosis is fundamental. The existence of an adequate or optimal organizational culture has a positive impact on the performance of employees and the organization in general. Therefore, studying the culture in a public or private organization and whether it serves the decision making of the top management is decisive, to directly influence the service provided to the clients. In a hotel, strategies, policies, objectives, and goals should focus on customer service that is satisfactory. The most important point in any organization that is dedicated to lodging service, is to know just what kind of service culture it provides. In other words, the organizational culture is a set of beliefs, values and norms that are specific behavioral expectations imbued in the organization, which are not simply written down in a manual that must be known to improve. (Manucci, 2010).

Literature review

Amid the accumulation of research efforts deployed, trying to prove and specify the true relationship between organizations and the environment in which they operate, the concept of culture has been incessantly linked to the study of organizations. Trying to understand the relationship between organizational culture and performance, Barney (1986) describes organizational culture as a complex set of values, beliefs, assumptions, and symbols. It is considered an unusual competitive advantage by which the organization/company can be perceived in a totally different way with respect to its competitors, consequently generating a certain type of differentiation (Hill, 1988) with respect to its customers.

Having transferred the concept of culture to organizations, as a differentiating element of their internal life of how to face their own challenges in a diverse and complex environment of permanent change, his study becomes essential. This, from the point of view of trying to understand the impact that the organizational culture has had, in the achievement of the economic and social objectives of the organizations that, have built strong and successful cultures.

Pérez Mayo (2017) suggests that the peculiarity and specificity of human beings in organizations must be understood, and this leads to the study of culture within organizations.

Although there are many characteristics in the organizational culture, it is important to note that it is "based on beliefs that are internally oriented to how to manage and externally to how to compete" (Gordon, 1991). It means that the culture is transformed in a conscious or unconscious way, as a way to face the evident paradox of the organizations, to find a balance between their adaptation to the environment; in which they develop responding to its pressures and demands, and the need to maintain an internal cohesion of all its operation system (Thévenet, 1986).

The concept of organizational culture arises, because many authors try to know the organization in depth and not only superficially, hence the overpopulation of the concept. Golden (1992), defines organizational culture as "an interpretative, historically developed and socially maintained scheme that team members use to give meaning and structure their own actions and those of others", Stoner and other authors (1984), define organizational culture as "the set of important understandings as the norms, attitudes and beliefs shared by all members of the organization" (Stoner et al. 1996 in Nicolini & Parodi, 2015).

Serna (2003), points out that "each organization has its own culture, different from the others, which gives it its identity"; which affirms that "the culture of an institution is the way in which the organizations do things, how they establish properties and give importance to the different business tasks, besides including what is important for the company" (Rendón, 2004). Koontz (2007), refers to it as "general model of conduct, ideas and values shared by its members and inferred from what people say, what they do and what they think in an organizational environment" (González, 2012). Most authors agree that culture is shared and learned by all members of the organization.

The administrative literature on organizational culture emphasizes that: first, the organizational culture is associated in an important way with the result of the work; second, that the contents or particular characteristics of an organizational culture explain this association; and third, that a change in the result of the work can be achieved by changing the particular contents of the organizational culture (Aguilar Edwards, 2006, p. 3)

The organizational culture has been measured by instruments that bring together the main characteristics of the organization. One of them is Cooke and Lafferty's (1989) Organizational Culture Inventory, which has a fully human orientation, reflecting perceived support, cooperation, mutual respect, and consideration, as dimensions.

Cooke and Lafferty's model provides an image of the organization's culture, based on the norms of human resource behavior in organizations. It focuses on the behavioral patterns that members believe are necessary to fit and meet expectations within their organization. There are 12 types of behavioral patterns, which are organized in three general dimensions; they are distinguished between:

- Constructive culture: Its members are encouraged to interact with people and approach tasks in ways that help them meet their needs. It has 4 subgroups: Accomplishment, self-actualization, humanist-encouragement, and affiliation.
- Passive/Defensive Culture: Its members believe that they should interact with people in a way that does not endanger their own safety. It has 4 subgroups: approval, conventional, dependent and avoidance.
- Aggressive/Defensive Culture: Its members seek to approach the task in forceful ways to protect their status and safety. It has 4 subgroups: antagonistic, power, competitive and perfectionist.

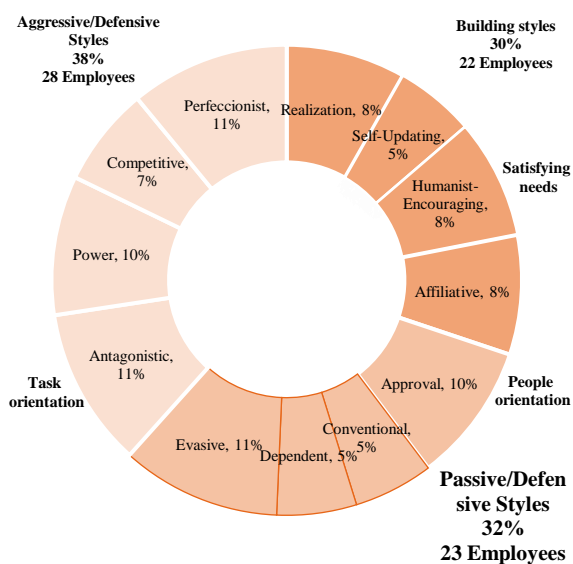
Cultures of building styles	Passive/Defensive Culture	Aggressive/Defensive Culture
<p>1. Culture of accomplishment or achievement: A culture of accomplishment style characterizes organizations that do things well and achieve their own goals. They work to achieve established objectives, explore alternatives before acting, take on challenging tasks, set moderately difficult goals, follow a standard of excellence, work for the sense of achievement, think about the future and a plan, take moderate risks, openly show enthusiasm and know the business.</p> <p>2. Self-Updating Culture: A culture of self-actualization is characterized by the value of creativity, quality over quantity, both the fulfillment of tasks and individual growth. Members of these organizations tend to enjoy their work, develop themselves, tend to be innovative, offer high quality products and/or services, and attract and develop outstanding employees. A culture of self-actualization is like the achievement and humanistic culture, the culture emphasizes personal growth and development.</p> <p>3. Humanist and encouraging culture: A humanist culture characterizes organizations for being participatory and person-centered. Members are expected to be supportive, helpful, and open in influencing their relationships with each other. A humanistic culture leads to effective organizational performance, providing growth and active participation of members who, in turn, report high satisfaction and commitment to the organizations. The Humanistic culture is related to the synergy and effectiveness of problem solving within the teams. Humanist cultures emphasize the development of the knowledge and skills of others.</p> <p>4. Affiliation culture: An affiliative culture characterizes organizations that place a high priority on positive interpersonal relationships. Members are expected to be friendly, open, and responsive to the satisfaction of their working group. An affiliative culture can improve organizational performance by promoting open communication, good cooperation, and effective coordination of activities. Members are loyal to their working group and feel that they "fit in" comfortably.</p>	<p>5. Approval culture: A culture of approval describes organizations that conflicts are avoided and interpersonal relationships are pleasant, at least superficially. Members feel that they must agree, must have the approval of the group, and be accepted by others. Although possibly, this type of working environment can limit the effectiveness of the organization by constructively minimizing "different" and expressing ideas and opinions. Approval cultures are the most susceptible to what has been called the "paradox" - where members reach consensus on decisions but lack any personal commitment.</p> <p>6. Conventional Culture: A conventional culture in organizations describes them as conservative, traditional and bureaucratically controlled. Members are expected to follow the rules and make a good impression. An overly conventional culture can interfere with effectiveness by suppressing innovation and preventing the organization from adapting to changes in its environment. Members of organizations with strong conventional norms report that they are expected to: not "make waves," avoid confrontation, make a "good impression," fit in, follow rules rather than ideas, tell people different things to avoid conflict, accept the "status quo," always follow policies and practices, put aside solutions that seem different or risky, and fit into the "mold".</p> <p>7. Dependent Culture: A dependent culture in organizations is hierarchically controlled and not participatory. Decision-making is centralized, with members of the organization being led to do only what they were told. -are and to clear decisions with superiors. Dependent cultures commonly emerge at lower levels of the organization in response to expectations and norms that may be operating at higher levels.</p> <p>8. Culture of evasion: A culture of avoidance characterizes organizations in which success is not rewarded, but mistakes are nevertheless punished. This system of not rewarding leads members to shift responsibility to others and to avoid any possibility of being blamed for a mistake. The survival of this type of organization is doubtful as members are not willing to make decisions, act or accept risks. Members of organizations with strong avoidance policies report that they are expected to: make "popular" decisions instead of what is necessary, have few opportunities, shift responsibility to others, put things off, manage a "low profile" when things get tough, never be to blame for problems, not get involved, wait for others to act first.</p>	<p>9. Antagonistic Culture: An antagonistic culture describes that in organizations confrontation predominates and negativism is rewarded. Members gain status and influence by being critical and therefore are empowered to oppose the ideas of others and to make safe decisions. Confrontational norms encourage norms to prevent members from becoming increasingly frustrated with the prevailing negativism. Members of organizations with strong antagonistic norms are expected to: point out shortcomings, remain independent and perfectly objective, oppose new ideas, be difficult to impress, seek error, oppose things indirectly, stay out of the situation and refuse to accept criticism.</p> <p>10. Culture of power: A culture of power is structured based on inherent authority. Members believe they will be rewarded for taking control of change and subordinates. Power-oriented organizations are less effective than there could be, subordinates resist this type of control, retain information and reduce their contributions to the minimum acceptable level.</p> <p>11. Competitive Culture: competitive culture is one in which winning is valued and members are rewarded. People in these organizations operate on a "win-lose" basis. It is an excessively competitive culture, can inhibit effectiveness by reducing cooperation and promoting unrealistic standards of performance.</p> <p>12. Perfectionist Culture: This type of culture values persistent perfectionism and hard work. Members feel they must avoid all mistakes, keep track of everything and work long hours to achieve strictly defined goals. Members of organizations with strong perfectionist norms are expected to: take personal care of every detail, work very hard, never make a mistake, set unrealistic goals, be precise even when unnecessary, stay on top of everyone, do things perfectly, work is more important than anything else, appear competent and independent and persist and resist.</p>

Table 1 Types of culture and their characteristics
Source: Elaborated from the reading of Organizational Culture Inventory (Cooke and Lafferty, 1989)

Description of the method

This research comprises a descriptive study with a quantitative approach. In this sense, "descriptive studies seek to specify the properties, characteristics and profiles of people, groups, communities, processes, objects or any other phenomenon that is subject to analysis", "in quantitative studies their purpose is to measure independently or jointly the variables that will allow evidence of the study of the phenomenon in particular and establish the relationships" (Hernández, 2014). The aim of this research is precisely to describe the dominant culture of an organization in Mexico. This information will make it possible to determine what aspects of its culture are. The Organizational Culture Inventory (OCI; Cooke & Lafferty, 1987) was used, which is a quantitative instrument by Cooke and Lafferty. The design of this research can be defined as non-experimental. "Non-experimental research is observing phenomena as they occur in their natural context, and then analyzing them" (Hernández, 2014). The data collection for this study was cross-sectional since the data collection was in a limited time. The sample to be considered for this study is 73 hotel employees, 100% of whom are employees.

Results



Graphic 1 Results of the application of the instrument
 Source: Prepared based on the application of the tool using the model by Cooke and Lafferty (2013, pp. 149-150), based on the graph resulting from the use of Human Synergistics International software

The results of the instrument applied are very similar to those of other investigations in Mexico, that is, not necessarily unfavorable, although the highest percentage is of aggressive/defensive style 38% (1 and 8 of the configuration of the measurement table of Cooke and Lafferty), which are of opposition, perfectionist, antagonistic styles, retain the information and reduce their contributions to the minimum acceptable level, besides being competitive, it is a real opportunity for organizational intervention. The hotel is a service company, where the most important thing is the guests and the service they receive, they cannot be the majority of workers of this style, but they must worry about giving a friendly service not so square or perfect. Being such a perfectionist can cause members to get lost in the shuffle and get lost in the details.

A proportional relationship is found with the styles of competition and performance or (achievement) where both styles tend to follow the activities. A point in favor of hotel organization is that competitiveness is moderate and that is motivating for hotel members as they focus on always being the best, which makes them seek to achieve good feedback from guests in order to access existing stimulus packages. Another finding is that we find a relationship between these three styles of culture: perfectionist, power and antagonistic. Similar results to those found by Velasco Ocampo in his thesis to obtain the Master's degree in Organization Administration (Velasco Ocampo, 2017).

The next two organizational culture styles, passive/defensive and constructivist, are almost the same percentage, which is the other half of the hotel's employees. Although the passive/defensive style is 1% more (32%), which does not say that they are evasive, dependent, conventional and approving, although they tend to be more evasive, this is not very good since they do not get involved in the hotel projects or pass the responsibility of the work to the most, they do not make decisions and this is bad since many times they must know how to make decisions at the moment with each guest.

Unfortunately, many of these cultural surrogates promote the norms for the defensive. And the behavior ultimately has negative effects on members and the organization. This style of culture disconnects evades, puts on the defensive the bad attribution of success and this highlights the importance of alignment. We find cultural disconnections in the same dimensions of analysis and this suggests that this organization needs to align its missions and objectives with shared values and assumptions, and then make appropriate changes or improvements in its systems, structures, technologies and member skills. On the other hand, finding approval style employees is very good, as they always look to be approved by others, which means they look for guests to accept them. There is a proportional relationship between approval and conventional organizational culture style since conventional ones are conservative, traditional, and bureaucratically controlled. Members are expected to follow the rules and make a good impression. The last style of organizational culture according to the results in percentage is the constructivist (30%), within this style are the: affiliative, humanist-encouraging, self-actualization and realization. In it we can see that there is a correlation between humanist-encouraging and affiliative because they tend to know how to listen to the needs of themselves, help others, take their time with customers, caring for them and at the same time have tact with customers, are friendly consider people as the most important, know how to have good relationships with others, this correlation is very good because in the hotel almost all employees have direct contact with guests always and the objective of the hotel is to achieve customer satisfaction.

Conclusions and recommendations

The organization must seek to increase the constructive style of its organizational culture to achieve the objectives since, according to the theory of Cooke and Lafferty is the best style for optimal performance in the organization. It is also necessary to lower the percentages of the aggressive/defensive and passive/defensive styles because it is a service organization.

The implementation of an intervention program is recommended to implement the constructive style because they are the ones that are more oriented to the human being and his relations, since in the hotel there is always direct contact with the guests and these are the main objective of the organization for the construction of the fidelity with the organization.

With this program of intervention of the organizational culture the percentage of passive/defensive style would be lowered since they do not like to get involved with the activities if they do not feel safe, protected or comfortable, this can cause that when there are changes in the procedures they get involved late this may not achieve the objectives or goals of those changes due to lack of time and because in the hotel sector it is very important that the employees are active and friendly to meet the different needs of each guest, which can help the guests leave satisfied with the service. Also impacting the program would be the percentage of the aggressive/defensive style that resulted in a very high percentage because they always seek to approach activities in an aggressive or antagonistic manner which is bad because they cannot attend guests in an aggressive manner. In the hotel the most important thing is the service towards the guests and as each guest is different, they cannot treat the guests in the same way they cannot be perfect. In the end, there are 3 styles of culture in the organization: Constructive culture, passive/defensive culture, and aggressive/defensive culture, more or less but coexist. Strategically managing a culture requires not only the clarification of visions and values, but also the identification of hints (and unanticipated consequences).

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