

INFORMATION CULTURE

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Abstract

Any organization that employs more than one person has a culture and therefore an information culture. Information culture refers to any activity and behavior that is related in any way to knowledge, communication, information and data. We live in an era where information is a major source of profit for most companies. It is therefore not surprising that information culture plays a key role in the successful functioning of organizations.

The aim of the paper is to provide an overview of information culture, the importance and perspectives of its development. The paper demonstrates the importance of raising the organizational culture among employees, which contributes to the successful functioning of the organization itself.

Keywords: *Information Culture; Organization; Organizational Culture; Information Culture in Organizations.*

INFORMATION CULTURE

The development of modern countries is in the direction of creating an information society, i.e., to create a society in which a large proportion of employees will be engaged in the production, collection, storage and use of information. The term information society and information culture are becoming more and more relevant.

For the information society, the priority is not the production of goods and services, but the production and consumption of intellect and knowledge, which logically leads to an increase in the share of mental labor. With all this, the demand for knowledge and creative skills increases. Therefore, we live in an era where information is the main source of power and profit for most companies, and the existence of an information society is an indicator of culture. For this reason, it is important to develop and promote information culture in organizations, raise the awareness of the information society among the population and popularize education in this regard. Taking all of this into account, this paper will focus on these issues.

Culture is one of the most widely used words in the scientific literature as well as in everyday use. It has many meanings due to the complexity and diversity of the phenomenon of culture itself.

In the modern sense, the term culture has been used since the 17th century. It is believed that it was first used as an independent lexical unit by the German lawyer and historian Samuel Puffendorf (1632-1694), who contrasted culture with the natural state of man. The term culture originated from the Latin word (kultura), which means to cultivate the soil. I.e., refers to a change in a natural object caused by human impact, as opposed to changes caused by natural causes. The word culture is found in the lectures of virtually every human being, but this commandment has a completely different meaning. One refers only to the values of the spiritual life, second attribute it only to art, the third generally conceives of a certain ideology.

Culture is a combination of person and his creations. This commandment means „created“, „unnatural“ in the context. The world of culture, any of its objects or events is perceived not as the result of natural forces, but as the result of human efforts aimed directly at the perfection, processing and transformation of nature, which is why culture does not exist without man. It is from the beginning connected with man and originated in order for him to constantly strive for the purpose of his life and action, for the perfection of himself and the world in which he lives [1, p. 34]¹.

Culture shapes members of society, thus regulating their behaviors to a certain degree. Clifford Girtz (1973) calls culture „a system of regulatory mechanisms, which includes the plans, instructions, rules, instructions by which behaviors are governed“. He believes that without culture, people will find it difficult to orient themselves in this world.

The behavior of people unconditioned by cultural models would become virtually uncontrollable. It would equate to meaningless spontaneous behaviors, uncontrollable emotions, a person would not actually accumulate any experience.

Technological and economic changes related to the information society are accompanied by cultural changes. Including lifestyle, consumption structure, types of cognition and experience.

When talking about information culture and its beginnings, it is necessary to emphasize that information culture has changed the whole world. Information culture expresses the level of human knowledge that enables one to freely navigate in the information space, participate in its formation and promote the interconnectedness of information. At the same time a person has the ability to create and practically use qualitatively new information based on receiving, accumulating, coding and processing any kind of information. Information is becoming an important and valuable resource day by day, such as traditional natural, labor or human resources. Therefore, the process of information processing in relation to the process of processing material resources can be considered as technology.

To begin with, understanding and acknowledging that good informational behaviors can increase job satisfaction (even for beginners, reducing idle time) would not be bad. In view of all the above, it is very important to have an information culture in the organization, to work on its development and refinement [2, p. 775]².

The formation of information culture and its further development is an irreversible process and it gives direction to the culture. As time goes by under the influence of the development of new technologies the culture undergoes a substantial change. A clear example of this is the formation and development of a mass information culture in the 21st century that targets a wide audience and spreads through the mass media [3, p. 15]³. The media has accumulated the information culture of mankind.

It is a comprehensive revolution not only technically but also socially in the way people think, work and relax. Mass information culture is one of the main achievements of globalization and it radically changes the communication culture of people, minimizes time and effort and makes people's lives easier. Different countries, different times, different nationalities and races were connected through mass communication.

Part of communication theorists and thinkers (Harold Adams Innis and Herbert Marshall McLuhan) believe that fundamental changes in the history of mankind are related to new technical means of communication

¹ Vick, T. E., Nagano, M. S., Popadiuk, S. (2015). Information culture and its influences in knowledge creation: Evidence from university teams engaged in collaborative innovation projects. *International Journal of Information Management*, 35(3), 292-298.

² Choo, C.W. (2013). Information culture and organizational effectiveness. *International Journal of information management*, 33, 775-779.

³ Wright, T. (2013). Information culture in a government organization. *Records Management Journal*, 23(1), 14-36.

and the technological (technical) revolution determines the development of society history [4, p. 11]¹. Representatives of this view distinguish three periods in the development of civilization:

First period. Primitive – oral culture (the period before the culture of printing), which was based on the collective principles of understanding the existing reality and life; at this stage of public life, communication was by oral means.

Second period. Print culture stage – this stage laid the foundation for the era of nationalism, individualism and didactics. The result of this culture is a „typographic and industrial“ person. Because print culture was distinctive and elite, it became accessible only to educated people. The specificity of print communication lies in the fact that it is possible for hearing and sight to exist separately. That is, it became possible to read „me“. However, it is also noteworthy that in doing so, oral dialogue has lost its former meaning.

Third period. Electricity played a major role in the formation of this stage. Electronic mass communication has made it possible to overcome space and distance. People can instantly connect with each other anywhere in the world, at any time of the day. According to McLuhan [5, p. 45]², it transforms the world into „one large global village (space)“. The world has become relatively small, and the changes and processes taking place at one end of it have had a direct impact on not only the economic but also the social condition of other, remote parts of the world. The exchange of ideas accelerated and acquired a global character. The increasing development of the mass media in the 20th century changed the perception of people and laid the foundation for the formation of a new, virtual world. The means of collectivity and the diverse perception of the world, both audio and visual, are still relevant through electronic mass communication. Electronic means of communication: telegraph, radio, telephone, television and computer have become an integral part of human life and consequently affect and transform all aspects of human mental and social life.

One of the most important elements of human information culture is the knowledge of information resources (the ability to receive them freely). Many organizations in our country are involved in the process of collecting, processing, storing and disseminating information (libraries, statistical centers, information services and media representatives).

The American Library Association considers information literacy to be human skills such as identifying, retrieving, evaluating, and ultimately using information effectively [1, p. 292]³.

There are following definitions of informational culture [6, p. 84]⁴:

- Interest, motivation and need to acquire knowledge and skills in the technical, software and information fields;
- Combining social, physical and technical knowledge that is reflected in modern information systems;
- Knowledge of information base components for exploratory, cognitive activities;
- Ways and actions that define operational boundaries for exploratory, cognitive activities;
- Exploration experience in the field of software and technical resources;

¹ Castells, Manuel. The rise of the network society: The information age: Economy, society, and culture. Vol. 1. John Wiley & Sons, 2011.

² Cameron, K. S., & Quinn, R. E. (2011). Diagnosing and changing organizational culture: Based on the competing values framework. Reading, MA: Jossey Bass.

³ Vick, T. E., Nagano, M. S., Popadiuk, S. (2015). Information culture and its influences in knowledge creation: Evidence from university teams engaged in collaborative innovation projects. International Journal of Information Management. 35(3), 292-298.

⁴ Choo, C. W., Bergeron, P., Detlor, B., & Heaton, L. (2008). Information culture and information use: An exploratory study of three organizations. Journal Of The American Society For Information Science & Technology, 59(5), 792-804.

- Experience of human-computer interaction.

The following components are distinguished in information culture [6, p. 84]¹:

- o Information use culture (choose information wisely based on daily life, news, leadership);
- o Culture of information selector (public life systematic monitoring of the information environment, informative ability to analyze the environment);
- o Search culture (offered information services knowledge of range, finding different search engines, getting acquainted with and use);
- o Information processing culture (analytical-synthetic activities);
- o Culture of information development and use (publications, Participate in scientific events, science and application of technologies in practice);
- o Creating cultural bibliographic information;
- o Culture of using computer and office equipment;
- o Culture of information relations
- o Information dissemination culture.

Academic literature defines four types of information culture [7, p. 175]²:

1. **Functional culture:** Managers use information about others for influence and power;
2. **Culture sharing:** Managers and employers trust using each other's information to improve performance quality;
3. **Survey culture:** Managers and employees are looking Information to better understand the future and ways to change if what to do for future trends / directions;
4. **Discovery culture:** Supervisors and staff are ready for new challenges and learning about crises and about radical change and looking for ways to create competitive continuity.

The study of information culture should be based on the knowledge, skills and habits required for everyday human activities. Based on the above, the following components of culture can be combined in a person's information culture [8, pp. 15– 17]³:

1. Information retrieval;
2. Reading and perceiving information;
3. Processing large volumes of information arrays;
4. Creating your own search and reference systems;
5. Establishing professional relationships between individuals;

¹Choo, C. W., Bergeron, P., Detlor, B., & Heaton, L. (2008). Information culture and information use: An exploratory study of three organizations. *Journal Of The American Society For Information Science & Technology*, 59(5), 792-804.

² Marchand, D., Kettinger, W., & Rollins, J. (2001). *Information orientation: The link to business performance*. New York : Oxford University Press.

³ Maghradze, M. (2013). *Informative Management Headbook*. Editor: Enver Lagvilava.

6. Striving to increase communicative competence;
7. To cultivate in oneself the ability to be patient with the views of others and the ability to receive and impart knowledge;
8. Using telecommunication channels for joint activities, ability to find partners;
9. Ability to clearly and convincingly convey your own activities results.

There are the following barriers to the production, transmission and consumption of information (9, pp. 1-2)¹:

Geographic – the completeness and accuracy of information is directly proportional to the distance that separates interconnected objects.

Historical – the completeness and accuracy of information is also proportional to the time interval that separates any event and information about it.

Socio-political regime – information that belongs to certain public organizations and is not subject to publicity, consequently, the majority of the public does not have access to this information.

Departmental – some information for unknown reasons delayed negligence of some agencies and organizations because of the employees.

Economic – affects when it fails due to lack of funds extensive production, dissemination and training of information. Also staffing preparation.

Technical – lack of new technologies leads to information retrieval procrastination and a waste of time and effort.

Terminological – there are many terms nowadays that it can be understood in different ways and not always available to a wide range of information users.

Linguistic – There may be a problem with the exchange of information widespread languages.

Psychological – refers to human characteristics, perceptual ability, memory, beliefs and other aspects of human psychology.

Resonant – information does not always match individual needs and does not come to terms with it.

If we look closely at the compatibility of the information we will find not only the above barriers, but also a large number of sources from which different barriers are expected to arise. There is a subjective interference of individuals who specifically try to distort, replace, or destroy information in order to influence people's interests and emotions.

There are barriers that still retain their negative value despite any informational impact. The system is as follows:

The first threshold may be called the sign (language) threshold. If the information is provided in a form that is incomprehensible to the recipient and cannot or does not understand the information, an intermediary must be used to cross the threshold, which can translate the information from a foreign (closed) form into a form familiar to the recipient.

¹ Oliver, G. (2011), *Organizational Culture for Information Managers*. Chandos Publishing.

Second Threshold – Imagine a situation where the sign threshold is crossed and content is available. Can this information always be used as an object of information processes? We should not rule out a situation where all (or almost all) of the words are familiar and understandable, however significance of the information is still unclear because the information relates to an issue that requires additional knowledge.

The third threshold is when both the marker threshold is crossed and the content is clear but the recipient does not agree with the content of the information.

Fourth – situational barrier, when the situation may turn out to be such that the object can not use the information.

The above barriers are not insurmountable, but serious work is needed to analyze the situation and outline ways to solve it, as well as to consider similar problems in the future.

One of the easiest and most frequently used ways to find information is libraries, which contain a lot of information on almost everything. However, in today's reality, the number of users of Internet resources is growing day by day. Internet libraries and archives are being created. Almost all kinds of information can be found on the Internet and it is much more convenient even if only in the sense that a person does not have to go to the library and go through various procedures. Through the Internet, it is possible to quickly, remotely access a person to the desired information and then use it as desired. Libraries and educational institutions are also showing great interest in the concept of information culture and are trying to accustom users to use and find information. Libraries in most European countries are equipped with the appropriate equipment and users can find information both through books and the Internet. Various trainings and retraining programs are conducted to enable people to master new technologies and simplify the work process. Among them, a program was introduced in Georgia a few years ago, which allowed those who want to study office programs for free and work with the Internet. Nowadays, almost everyone has the ability to work with the Internet and computers. Everyone is trying to develop computer skills, because in today's reality it is impossible to establish oneself without these skills. A person who does not have these skills is always one step behind compared to a person who is well versed in the computer and can search for the desired information anytime, anywhere and be always informed. It is therefore critical that all people have access to computer education and the use of these skills in their daily lives.

The use of the best channels for information exchange, open and streamlined forms of communication, as well as a high level of trust in employees and a well-built organizational structure contribute to faster, more efficient management of processes in the organization, increase employee engagement and, consequently, more successful operations.

In the modern world, the demand for information retrieval and processing is growing day by day and the demand for staff who have computer skills is growing. Able to quickly find and process information, whatever will eventually be reflected in the result. Employers' demand for employees in this regard is growing. A person who does not possess computer skills can not literally use his full potential. Almost all employers require to apply electronically for this or that vacancy, knowledge of office programs, free orientation on the Internet. Therefore the person who possesses these skills is in a more privileged position. Even people who are true professionals in their field have the relevant knowledge and education, but belong to the older generation and do not possess these skills are separated from the general mass and become divided into layers of society.

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