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PROBLEM AREAS IN CORPORATE CULTURE FORMATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

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Abstract

Social practice during fledging years of Digital Economy indicates that a well-formed corporate culture is a necessary tool in the hands of the head of an institute for formation of a united team. The article is devoted to the study of the problem areas of the corporate culture of a university to optimize its work. The article has an interdisciplinary character and is written at the intersection of sociology and management in the education system.

The author presents results of empirical research. The quota sample consisted of 170 employees of the Ural Financial and Law Institute (UFLI). During the work, it has been revealed that at the university there is a shortage of young personnel leadership; the style of management is focused on the priority of orders and strict methods of influence on workers; etc. The authors of the article attempts to uncover main reasons for the "culture of task" formed at the UFLI, which is not optimal for the work of a modern educational organization.

As a result of the study, it was found out that internal elements of corporate culture are fully represented in the institute, but they need to be improved by the administration. The author substantiates the idea that universities of Russia have characteristic features of corporate culture. This problem is relevant and requires further research.

The article can be used both by managers and staff of universities in order to improve the work of organizing and teaching social and humanitarian disciplines.

1. Introduction

The reciprocal link between social adaptation and socialization became seen more clearly when the twenty-first century declared itself to be a sharp acceleration of historical time, an increase in the pace of social change, globalization and universalization of economic, political and cultural life, an unlimited increase in the role of information and information technologies in social development.

The society has gained a lot of benefits from the development of digital economy, although this effect is not directly reflected in GDP indicators. According to the forecasts of the UN and the Federal State Statistics Service, in Russia the number of working-age population will decline in the next two decades. Automation will help to mitigate the negative effects of this phenomenon. Under such conditions, "digital" staff presents a strategic asset. Its shortage inevitably leads to a slowdown in the growth rate of both digital economy and the country's economy as a whole. Thus, the state priority is to provide Russia with the necessary number of qualified specialists, and this task is to be accomplished with the help of a modern, high-quality system of higher education.

The crisis of corporate culture in the higher education system, which had started in the Soviet period and broke out in post-Soviet Russia, exposed the real tempers that were carefully masked due to the uniformity of behavior expected from teachers and universities.

Nowadays at any moment it is possible to gain access to the knowledge that mankind has accumulated over the centuries, or an unlimited stream of information on social networks, completely free of charge. In the period of digital transformation, the role of a teacher in general education system changes significantly, they must use all possible techniques, methods, means of electronic and distance learning, as well as participate in innovative transformations of society and business communities, then they will be in demand in informational and educational space. Teachers - the authors of online courses organize and involve students in online group learning, developing their creative abilities, because the creative class is able to manage the processes of sustainable socio-economic development in the context of digital transformations of social relations.

The reform of the main social institutions - economic, political, science, culture, health, family, education, etc., associated with the implementation of the fundamental needs of a person and society, leads to a change in social adaptation of an individual - one of the main integrated indicators characterizing the level of the development of countries and people. In the complex structure of interrelations, mutual influences, interdependencies of all elements expressing the system-integral nature of the development of social adaptation of an individual, the education system as a basis for the self-development of mankind has a special role in ensuring the life and vitality of society.

In the near future, the competitiveness of higher education system will be determined by the level of its digitalization. Order No. 816 of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation of August 23, 2017 approved the procedure for the use of e-learning and distance learning programs by educational organizations. According to this document, educational organizations have the right to implement educational programs or their parts using e-learning, distance learning technologies, organizing training sessions in the form of online courses. The students who have mastered educational programs in the form of online courses are provided with appropriate document, giving the right to admit the student to the intermediate certification in another educational organization.

First of all it will be necessary to introduce new approaches to learning and ensure a high level of basic digital competence of population in the system of fundamental education. At present, the education of the future is undergoing digital transformation, goes beyond the time frame of life, beyond the educational institutions using the unique capabilities of network and digital technologies, involving all direct and indirect participants in the educational process. The role of a teacher in the era of digital economy is changing; there are new forms of interaction between a teacher and students, the so-called network interaction. Due to the specificity of a profession, the society has the most serious requirements to academic staff.

2. Problem Statement

It was much easier to adapt for university teachers in the totalitarian regime. They were translators of their culture, their activity shifted from the pedagogical function to the function of translation, transmission of activity, i.e. to a completely passive activity. Nobody thought about corporate culture in the higher education system. The central burden in a fundamentally democratic culture (syncretic culture), more and more falls on individuality and individual consciousness, upbringing, rather than learning. Nowadays a teacher is no longer an example, but an individual, a person who wants to be understood and applies all the skills to achieve this purpose. Moreover such a person also wants to understand others, also individuals who have the right to a word and thinking, therefore the formation of corporate culture in higher educational institutions requires the greatest attention from scientific community.

The studies of corporate culture and its influence on the processes of social interaction in organizations were carried out by both Western and Russian scientists such as M. Weber, T. Parsons, T. Veblen, A. Zlozover, V. Vasilyeva, E. Golubeva, S. Ivanova, M. Kapitonov, T. Persikova, Subbotina, V. Spivak, U. Chukayeva and others (Weber, 1964; Parsons & Shils, 1951; Persikova, 2011).

Any scientific approaches, including social studies of corporate culture are promising only when they differentiate real phenomena in scientific concepts. It should be noted that the study of the influence of the role of organizational pedagogical culture in the system of higher education and the factors contributing to its intensification and the spread of progressive values in it is relevant for the study as never before.

3. Research Questions

The fact is that in the period of the emergence of Digital Economy, high technologies infiltrate the entire system of higher education, pushing into the background the key figure of a teacher, as a knowledge translator. Practice shows that there is a drama of "traditions and innovations" among teachers of different age categories in the process of social interaction. The solution of this problem requires a high self-organization of society, which took information technology into his service. The tools for the solution may be presented by the raising the level of social culture, as well as moral criteria in the life and activities of employees. Among the modern Russian tempers reigning in the system of higher education, there are quite a few which reduce the efficiency of teachers, their vitality, exacerbate conflicts, and force out a high level

of corporate culture from relationships. This aspect is often discussed at scientific conferences, but the situation does not change both in a separate university and in the entire education system.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study: the investigation of problem areas of corporate culture and the culture of an institute in order to optimize its work

5. Research Methods

One of the elements of corporate culture is the perception of employee of the organization's mission. How does the staff of UFLI imagine the mission? As the results of the study showed, 41% of respondents believe that the mission of the university is to produce professionally-trained specialists. It seems to the authors that such an opinion of the respondents is quite reasonable, since UFLI is the only autonomous non-profit educational organization of higher education in Yekaterinburg, established in 1995 and reorganized in 2014. Only 15% of respondents suggested that the university's mission is to create a favorable university environment that supports a high level of development of science and education.

In addition it is necessary to mention the purpose of the institute. The main purpose of the university (according to the opinion of 50% of respondents) is the formation of students' knowledge and skills. It can be concluded that the main goal of the staff of the UFLI is the training of scientific and pedagogical personnel who possess modern methods of scientific analysis, capable of developing "breakthrough ideas" and innovative solutions.

In order to work successfully, an employee must first understand the main purpose of an enterprise.

In this regard, we would like to mention sources from which the employees learn about the goals of the institute, 34% of respondents noted "documents", 22% "conversations with colleagues", and 23% "from conversations with a manager".

The heads of UFLI created a strategic program for the development of the university, which clearly reflect its strategic goals. The majority of the staff of the institute, as we see is aware of the strategy of the corporate culture of their organization. 21% of respondents "do not receive information", this indicates to their reluctance and the fact that "corporate culture" in their concept is a kind of ridiculous person's sacrifice to the interests of the company and other people. Many employees not only of educational organizations have the same opinion. As it is known, one of the internal elements of corporate culture is the style of communication (Kogan, 1976.). In order to solve this task, we asked respondents to answer whether there was a special communication style at the institute, 24% of teachers answered "was", 47% - "was not", 29% of respondents found it difficult to answer.

It is extremely important to pay attention to the rituals of encouraging the "best" in the profession in the formation of corporate culture at the institute. In addition to the "photographs on the stands", 20% of both men and women received gratitude from the administration, 50% of men and 30% of women received "verbal praise", 29% of men and 45% of women received "certificates of honor" only 1% of men and 5% of women were awarded.

We see that for the administration of the institute it is not typical to encourage employees materially, and in fact it was the material component in the form of reward that satisfied 89% of those surveyed. Since any corporate culture is a system of rules of conduct and values, according to the survey data, it was revealed that 51% of respondents are aware of the existence of fixed rules of conduct and etiquette, and 14% of respondents found it difficult to answer.

6.   Findings

The structure of corporate culture includes not only internal, but also external elements, such as the system of social relations, the established management practice (Kogan, 1992). In the subsequent questions, the authors will consider the relationship of the staff of UFLI with students, colleagues and administration. The staff's trust in the leader is based primarily on his ability to achieve concrete results of activity. To the question "Attitude of employees towards administration" 53% of employees answered positively, 38% negatively and 9% found it difficult to answer the question.

Next, it is necessary to consider the attitude of administration towards the employees. In the opinion of 48% of respondents, the administration interacts with subordinates on the basis of a consumer approach, i.e. professional qualities of employees are highly valued and due to this, the administration achieves its goals. 29% of the respondents do not see any bias towards them on the part of the administration and define it as neutral. We can consider this opinion from two sides: first, the administration treats all the subordinates equally: this also applies to requirements, rewards, etc., secondly, the administration does not care about the employees themselves, but cares about the result of their work. Nevertheless the authors tend to think that this opinion of the respondents is subjective, since the same actions cause not only various, but even opposite assessments among different people. 47% of respondents "rarely" express disagreement with the opinion of their direct manager, 24% gave the answer "never", i.e. employees are completely satisfied with the situation.

29% of respondents do not fully agree with the activities of management, this is due to the ability of employees to depend on random mood, impulsive imitation, or, on the contrary, from the desire to stand out, to draw attention to them.

The favorable process of the formation of a corporate culture is influenced by mutual cooperation between all the subjects of educational process. When asked what emotions teachers have in the process of communicating with students - 10% answered "only negative" and 22% - "more negative", 9% "no emotions" - in total it is 41% of negative reactions. The result is explained by the fact that moral and psychological attitudes formed by the higher education system among teachers over the last decades (endless routine paperwork) did not direct a person's efforts towards establishing mutual understanding, achieving mutual forgiveness, and most importantly did not form a protective attitude of people towards each other. In communication with students, 58% of teachers working at the institute receive positive emotions ("more positive" - 32% and "only positive" - 26%). Not only, but one of the indispensable conditions for maintaining friendly relations between people, their mutual trust and respect, a successful educational process and a high level of corporate culture is presented by coinciding moral ideas on life values.

Another characteristic of management style is the encouragement of employee's initiative (Table 1).

Table 01. The encouragement of the initiative of employees by direct manager *(in% of the number of respondents)*

The encouragement of initiative	%
Is not encouraged	51
Is encouraged	37
Found it difficult to answer	12

Many respondents expressed that initiative is encouraged, but at the same time it is punishable. This fact again demonstrates the authoritarian management style. (Table 2).

Table 02. The style of university management *(in% of the number of respondents)*

The style of university administration	%
Focuses on the priority of orders and strict methods of influence on workers	53
Focused on a situation, there is no clearly defined program of action	22
Based on the participation in the development and adoption of management decisions by employees.	18
Based on the minimum intervention of the head in the activities of subordinates	6

In order to fully solve the purpose of a sociological research, firstly it is necessary to find out how the corporate culture is represented by the staff of UFLI.

Table 03. The opinion of the staff of UFLI on the presence of corporate culture *(In% of the number of respondents)*

The presence of corporate culture	%
Exist	49
Does not exist	46
Found it difficult to answer	5

Also, 46% of employees believe that the institute does not have a corporate culture. We assume that respondents do not quite understand the definition of "corporate culture" and its components. What is included in the concept of corporate culture? First of all, it is a psychological climate that has developed in the team. In this regard, it is necessary to find out what employees understand by the term "corporate culture" (Table 4).

Table 04. The understanding of the term "corporate culture" by employee *(In% of the number of respondents)*

The understanding of the term "corporate culture"	%
As a strategy of management tool necessary for the implementation of the mission of the institute.	37
The basis of corporate culture is the holding of traditional events dedicated to holidays, competitions, awards, etc.	19
Publicity and collective discussion of the problems and tasks of the institute, partnership relations between the administration and staff of the university.	11

Corporate media: the newspaper "WE are UFLI", the site of UFLI, television panels in the halls of buildings.	9
Constant mutual cooperation	8
Institutional symbolism, coat of arms, corporate color.	8
Favorable internal environment of the institute: the latest equipment of audiences and other business premises.	7

Social practice shows that a well-formed corporate culture is a necessary tool in the hands of the head of the institute in order to form a single team.

Table 05. The form of the participation of respondents in the realization of the tasks of corporate culture *(In % of the number of respondents)*

The form of the participation in the realization of the tasks	%
Round-table discussions and conferences	38
Working group solving the situation posed by the administration	26
Survey questionnaire and interview	18
Not ready to participate	9
Found it difficult to answer	8

In order to determine the type of corporate culture of the institute, the authors asked a question that describes the characteristics of the essence of the organization.

Table 06. The essence of the organization according to the respondents *(In % of the number of respondents)*

The essence of the organization	%
The members of the organization share the focus on achieving the purpose and the task. It is acceptable to discuss common topics - a common focus on aggressive victory.	33
The members of the organization are united by mutual trust and movement towards a common goal. The relations of employees are built on a high level of the "commitment" formed by the administration.	30
The members of the organization are united by creativity and innovative approaches to achieving the goal. The authorities stimulate the attitude of employees to be advanced.	25
The members of the organization are united by a charter, work rules and corporate ethics. The organization is managed smoothly and without any drastic innovations.	11

The analysis of the table shows (Table 6) that it is impossible to say with certainty about the type of corporate culture formed in UFLI. The percentage of responses that characterize the essence of the organization is almost the same, but still "a common focus on aggressive victory" prevails.

Hence it appears that the corporate culture of the institute can be described as a "task culture". "Task culture" is the type of culture oriented, first of all, on problems solution, on project implementation. The effectiveness of organizations with such a culture is largely determined by the high professionalism of the employees and the cooperative group effect (Robbins &Coulter, 2002).

7. Conclusion

As a result of the study, it was found out that the internal elements of corporate culture are fully represented at the institute, but they need to be improved by the administration of UFLI. It should be noted that the answers of the respondents may be subjective and do not fully reflect the state of the corporate culture of the university. According to the majority of respondents, the administration of the university does not focus on both material and non-material incentives; it is characterized by strict regulation of work that affects the work of the organization. The above-described picture of corporate culture at a higher education institution is typical of most Russian institutions and is the basis for further study from an objective point of view, namely with the help of HR experts, managers in the education system, and authorities. .

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