

CULTURAL DIMENSIONS IN ROMANIAN MANAGEMENT

SERGIU RUSU¹, FLORIN ISAC¹, RADU CURETEANU¹,

¹ *Aurel Vlaicu University of Arad*

***Abstract:** Numerous studies have presented models that address cultural differences and their dimensions. However, relatively little research has been conducted in the context of Romanian management. This paper makes an analysis of the findings of these studies..*

***Key words:** comparative management, business culture, cultural dimensions*

INTRODUCTION

Literature dedicated to comparative management and business culture presents a series of models that capture many aspects of differences between national cultures, identifying certain dimensions of them.

In the past 25 years, Romania, like other Central and Eastern European countries took over principles, methods and management techniques specific to developed countries, especially in Anglo-Saxon. In addition, developments in the Romanian management were marked by the entrance of multinationals in Romanian market.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

After 1990, few studies have been undertaken regarding the identification of cultural dimensions in Romania. One of these studies was conducted by Gallup International and Interact [Luca, 2005] using Value Survey Module tools developed by the Institute of Research for Intercultural Communication. Results of the study confirm the hypothesis that Romania has similar values to Balkan countries, being characterized by a large gap power, collectivism, femininity, uncertainty avoidance high, short-term orientation (Table 1). The values of each of the five cultural dimensions were evaluated on a scale of 0 to 100 (low level 0-40; 41-60 average, more than 60 high).

Table 1. Comparative results: Romania with other cultural groups

Balkan countries (Romania, Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia)	Latin countries (France, Spain, Italy)	Germanic countries (Germany, Austria, Switzerland)	Scandinavian countries (Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands)	Anglo-Saxon countries (UK, Canada, USA, Australia)
Collectivism	Individualism	Individualism	Individualism	Individualism
Great distance from power	Great distance from power	Small distance from power	Small distance from power	Small distance from power
Femininity	Femininity	Masculinity	Femininity	Masculinity
High uncertainty avoidance	High uncertainty avoidance	High uncertainty avoidance	Low uncertainty avoidance	Low uncertainty avoidance
Short term orientation	Short term orientation	Short term orientation	Short term orientation	Short term orientation

Source: Marinaș C., *Managementul comparat al resurselor umane*, Ed. Economică, 2010, p.288, based on results reported by Adina Luca (2005)

Countries such as Romania, Bulgaria, Greece, Serbia, which borrows many management practices of Anglo-Saxon countries, are at the opposite in terms of Hofstede's cultural dimensions model. [Bodea, 2013]

RESEARCH RESULTS

The power distance: Power distance index recorded surprisingly low (29 in the first study and 33 in the second). Such a result would suggest that in Romania, people are not used to talk about their relationship with authority, especially in a formalized framework, such as in a study. According to the study presented by Luca Adina (a), the spread of power in Romania is much higher, reaching 70. According to Geert Hofstede's score for power distance is registered in Romania 90 [<http://geert-hofstede.com/romania.html>], compared with countries like Russia (93) [<http://geert-hofstede.com/russia.html>] or Slovakia (100) [<http://geert-hofstede.com/slovakia.html>].

Low values recorded in Romania after Gallup International studies reflect a high degree of insincerity of Romanians filling in questionnaires distributed. If we analyze Hofstede score obtained by Romania, we understand that Romanians supports a hierarchical order in which each has a default place and does not requires additional justification. In some countries, in Hofstede's view, the gap of power can be demonstrated by the opposite, in situations where the index values are small, in fact it is characterized by high values. Centralization is common, people like to be told what to do, and ideal superior is the benevolent authoritarian. In general, Romanian employees do not express opinions contrary to those of the superior, carry out tasks without requiring further explanation.

A study by Mișuț and Lungescu [Mișuț, Lungescu, NA], which used a questionnaire with questions different from Hofstede study addressed a number of 931 subjects, confirmed his findings, namely that the power distance is very large, the average power distance favorable responses (by composing options for high and medium intensity) being more than 75%.

Individualism/collectivism: The results of the two studies Gallup showed that the individualism is low, Romania is a country of collective type (score 49). According to Hofstede study, the actual recorded value for individualism is 30, collective type cultural values are acquired by 70% of the population.

Paradoxically, it is estimated that in the future will increase the level of individualism, with the possible predominance of a culture of individual type. This "cultural shift" could be caused by Romanian market penetration of multinationals and consistent foreign financing that Romania benefited. [Marinaș, 2010]

Individualism as a way of showing the intensity of relations between members of a community is the one that generated in recent years in Romania initiative, entrepreneurial spirit, progress, high incomes, and a certain tendency to increase the share of the middle class (which mainly contains entrepreneurs) [Istocescu, 2013].

The study led by Mișuț and Lungescu concluded that the Romanian individualism is low, very close cultural dimension estimation Geert Hofstede because pro-individualism media responses is below 30% resulting that over 70% of the sample investigated is favorable attitudes pro-collectivist. The two authors consider as natural the combination of a large power distance and a low index of individualism, reckon that Romania needs time to reach an average index of individualism, through development of capitalism. [Mișuț, Lungescu, NA]

Masculinity/femininity: Romania is a feminine country, employees looking for a collaborative work environment and calls for support of all members of the group to which

they belong. In Romania the principle of "work to live" applies, performance and profit not being the main values that guide the Romanian companies. According to Gallup survey, masculinity index has the value 39, and in Hofstede study the index has a value slightly larger, 42. Values of femininity type culture determines a lower level of competitiveness of Romanian companies compared to foreign ones, and Romanian workers will contribute a small proportion to change the situation, because they put so much emphasis on free time available and cooperation at the expense of performance targets. [Marinaş, 2010] Mihaş-Lungescu study reveals a moderate level of masculinity, with a tendency to move towards a medium level. The sample average options in favor of a pro-masculinity characteristics company is around 47%, close to Hofstede scale estimation. [Mihaş, Lungescu, NA]

Uncertainty avoidance: In Romania, the level of anxiety is high, as evidenced by Gallup study, who presented the value 61 for uncertainty avoidance index. According to Hofstede study, the index is higher, 90. Romanian companies long-term planning is poor, the defensive mechanisms is predominating. Combining this dimension value with low individualism index reveals a high degree of reluctance of Romanians to the views of others, minority opinions are rejected, the general consensus is preferred situations. Romanian employees prefer to identify solutions that solve current ambiguous situations without causing impact in the future. Mihaş-Lungescu study shows a relatively high degree of uncertainty avoidance (above average). Average responses with sharp and moderate hue (around 65%) are for certain situations (controllable) for uncertainty avoidance. This dimension correlates with the low degree of individualism, the spread of poverty (social insecurity), Orthodoxy (for which the future is for the afterlife). [Mihaş, Lungescu, NA]

Long/short-term orientation: In Romania, short-term orientation is prevailing, this signifying a shift towards the present and the past at the expense of long-term vision. The level of savings is very low, Romanians are turning to credit and are consumer oriented. There is a concern to maintain a good public image, even if it is false, respect for traditions, even if they sometimes oppose progress, concern for strengthening all costs hierarchical position and maintaining it as much as possible. Gallup study identified a score of 42 for this dimension, which means framing in the lower level of the average, defined between the 40 and 60 points. Mihaş-Lungescu study revealed an average level of long-term orientation options pro long term orientation are less than 50%, manifesting itself in many ways a slight bias in favor of short-term orientation. [Mihaş, Lungescu, NA]

Table 2. Results of studies on the cultural dimensions in Romania

Study	Distance Power	Individualism	Masculinity	Uncertainty avoidance	Long-term orientation
Interact-Gallup	33	49	39	61	42
Hofstede	90	30	42	90	-
Mihaş-Lungescu	High Level (>75%)	Low Level (<30%)	Medium (<50%)	Relatively high Level (>65%)	Medium (<50%)

Source: Mihaş, I., Lungescu, D., *Dimensiuni culturale în managementul românesc*, Management și Marketing, p.24

Pragmatism: Companies which registered lower scores on this dimension prefer to keep norms addressing suspiciously to the change at the societal level. Those who register a high score have a more pragmatic approach, encouraging modern education efforts as a

way of preparing for the future. Romania has an average score (52) in this dimension. [<http://geert-hofstede.com/romania.html>]

Indulgence / restraint: A dimension defined as the degree to which people try to control their desires and impulses, based on how they were raised and educated. With a very low score 20, [<http://geert-hofstede.com/romania.html>] Romania is inclined to "hold": people have the perception that their actions are limited by social norms.

The main objective of the GLOBE Romania research project, undertaken by collaboration of 12 universities from different regions of the country in 2006-2007 has been collecting data in order to present a descriptive statistics of Romanian societal culture and to compare global data with Romania's position on the map of European cultures. 362 questionnaires were used whose questions related to societal culture. [Bibu et al, 2009]

Societal values in absolute measures are estimated as medium for gap power (score 2.78), high for collectivism within the group (score 6.12), high for uncertainty avoidance (score 3.66 to 5.39), average for orientation to performance (score 4.92) and relatively high for future orientation (score 5.56). Other cultural dimensions have average scores (Institutional collectivism, egalitarianism), low to medium (Assertiveness and Human Orientation). According to the survey, Romania is characterized by a preference for a smaller gap power, strong orientation towards group (cohesion in small communities), with a strong intolerance to uncertainty, with lower scores on performance orientation and directed more to the future than to the present.

CONCLUSIONS

Analysis of cultural dimensions in Romania in terms of several studies helps us to outline some features of Romanian management. Thus, management strategies applied in Romanian companies are characterized by the following features: difficulties in planning, lack of innovation, evolving instability. The most frequent form of organization is the pyramidal one, which highlights the great power distance. American management specific structures are difficult to apply because Romanian employees do not like the values of performance and competition, preferring a more casual work. French management organizational structure specific (high authority and centralization) seems to be more appropriate to the management model in Romania. Structures found in small private firms are based on family connections between their members and the matrix structure is rare, especially in companies organized by projects.

In Romania organizations we can find mainly two leadership styles. Some managers adopt *family leadership style*, wealth and personal interests, present profit, the possibility of risk and ultimately the company's development as its main coordinates. In other enterprises predominates *German leadership style*, based on responsibility for its own employees and society, orientation towards new, availability in taking risks. In Romanian organizations, managers and subordinates are on opposite sides and the high level of anxiety, high power distance and short-term orientation favors authoritarian style of leadership. Using delegation can imprint to subordinates the excessive power complex and there the temptation to use it discretionary in personal and small group level. (Marinaș, 2010)

In a study by Dorin Bodea [2013] it considers that "the current cultural model of Romanians is predominantly materialistic, self-centered, highly focused on the present ... Romania is an open conflict between self and others, a struggle in which money and power make the rules. Perhaps this is the price we pay to capitalism ". According to this model,

significant links between beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviors Romanians are: (Bodea, 2013)

- ✓ excellence influence attitudes toward work expressed through behavioral characteristics: discipline, skills, professionalism;
- ✓ valuing honesty is associated with the spirit of family, hospitality and freedom;
- ✓ confidentiality is negatively correlated with the tendency to betray, to that of envy and imitate the;
- ✓ power correlates with the desire to be leader with pride and stubbornness;
- ✓ adventure correlated with creativity and innovation, spontaneity and fun inclination.

REFERENCES

1. **BIBU, N.**, et al, Romanian Societal Culture: A Culture towards Westernization?, Chemnitz East Forum, Eds. Lang and Winkler, 2009, p.52-74
2. **BODEA, D.**, Valorile angajaților români, Ed. Result Development, București, 2013
3. **ISTOCESCU A.**, Civilizație, Cultură, Management. Condiționări, influențe, perspective, ediția a doua, vol.II.,Ed. ASE, București, 2013
4. **LUCA, ADINA**, (a), Studiu privind valorile și comportamentul românesc din perspectiva dimensiunilor culturale prin metoda Geert Hofstede, aprilie 2005
5. **LUCA, ADINA**, (b), Employeeescu, o scurtă caracterizare a angajatului român. Dimensiunile culturale și implicațiile lor în comportamentul organizațional, Ed. România pur și simplu, București, 2005.
6. **MARINAȘ, C.**, Managementul comparat al resurselor umane,Ed. Economică, 2010
7. **MIHUȚ, I., LUNGESCU, D.**, Dimensiuni culturale în managementul românesc, Management și Marketing
8. <http://geert-hofstede.com/romania.html>