

## Managers' Perception of Organizational Culture and Organizational Communication

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**ABSTRACT** Examination of communication in organizations in a cultural context can provide a different point of view to managers for purposes of resolution of communication problems. Besides, determination of dominant communication tendency in an organization can be an element which needs to be prioritized for structuring of organizational processes. This study is intended to identify the relation between sports managers' perception of organizational culture and organization communication. In the research, survey form has been used as data collection tool. These survey forms contain organizational culture and organizational communication scales. Research samples consist of 200 sports managers selected by random sampling method. As the result of the research, a direct relation between organizational culture and organization communication has been found.

### INTRODUCTION

Organizational culture is highly important for socialization of new members of an organization, and for this purpose, organizational communication and organizational culture cannot be considered individually from each other (Sisman 2002).

The main drive of an organization is individuals who are connected to each other with organizational culture and associated through corporate means of communication. Therefore there is a highly close relation between organizational culture and organization communication (Eren 2010).

#### Organizational Culture

All societies need many tools to resolve problems individuals encounter and to meet their needs. Environmental conditions of an individual and human relationships existing in such environment change and set bounds depending on skills and competencies earned to meet their needs which mutual impacts as a form and biological being. At the same time, a common concept called culture exists in all human communities.

All cultures are associated with internal and external dynamics which show change depending on their specific characteristics and structur-

al status. It is impossible to consider cultures out of such type of association. When a society is reviewed wholly or only partially or development of individuals is examined, it is realized that the term culture leads to various associations. Culture of individuals is directly related to culture of society while culture of society is also directly related to each individual. Therefore, the first thing which needs to be discussed first is the meaning of culture (Durgun 2006).

Discussions on organizational culture gained weight from 1970's to 1980's and the reason for that is an expression related to upper culture of the organization. Organizations usually emerge from individuals coming together from various sub-cultures. This causes a constant conflict between teams from such sub-cultures. In such conflicts between teams from different sub-cultures within an organization, each team attempts to make other teams accept superiority of their own cultural value and identity. Thus, it leads to an undesirable situation for organization. Upper culture of organization is considered to be a measure against conflicts existing between sub-cultures. It is said that if upper culture of organization was brought into existence despite this, such conflicts encountered would be removed out of organization (Budak 2004).

When business administration and management in Japan began to demolish superiority of the USA as of 1970's, organizational culture started to develop (Bakan et al. 2004).

Factors affecting organizational culture can be listed in general as follows: experience, collaboration, trust, high expectation, competency,

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access to information-based outputs, open support, recognition and approval, congratulation, interest, participation in decisions, courage, honesty, protection of what is important and open communication. Factors improving organizational culture can be listed as follows (Aydin 2008).

1. Clear disclosure of boundaries separating organizations from each other
2. Lack of organizational identity of organization members
3. Loyalty of organization members to organization
4. A strong social system balance within organization
5. Existence of control mechanisms directing attitudes and behaviors of personnel.

### Organizational Communication

Communication between individuals is one of the elements creating social life. If there is a mutual communication between individuals, then we can speak of interaction between individuals. Organic integration is required for development of societies and people. To ensure organic integration, a society should not contain people who are alienated to each other. Therefore, inevitable element of social development is communication. Wrong or deficient communication brings along social problems. The most significant factor for an organization to achieve its targets is communication, which means assigned duties or decisions of an organization are not as important as communication.

Communication within an organization is the most important element which ensures maintenance of that organization. Benefits of organizational communication are as follows (Bakan and Büyükbese 2004):

- ♦ Reduces pressure and conflicts in work life.
- ♦ Increases sense of sharing among personnel.
- ♦ Allows management to obtain information needed to make decisions.
- ♦ Increases efficiency and profitability.
- ♦ Ensures performance of organizational activities steadily and cooperatively.
- ♦ Ensures personnel to understand and implement decisions made by managers.
- ♦ Is an important element for effective implementation of strategic plans.
- ♦ Enables decrease in margin of error and thus reduction of expenses.
- ♦ Speeds up period of change and enables confidence in organizational change.

- ♦ Gives a positive impression to personnel including motivation, organizational loyalty and work satisfaction and thus improves organizational performance.

In business life, same as in social groups, people constantly communicate both to prove their own characteristics as required by their social roles and exist and to achieve organizational targets. They communicate and interact with many people and entities such as their shareholders, managers, customers, coworkers and auditors under individual connections and official relationships (Yavuz 2008).

Way of communication used in management and production process needed for achievement of organizational purposes is called organizational communication. In this context, organizational communication can be defined as a social process allowing both flow of thoughts and information occurring between organization and its surroundings and necessary links between departments to ensure realization of organizational targets and maintenance of organizational functionings (Sabuncuoglu and Tüz 2008).

Organizational communication through which information is provided to many people is also a necessary element for coordination of organization (Guthrie and Reed 1991).

With communication, it is possible to bring collective action or production into life. If there is no communication, it is not possible to know how and what to produce in whichway (Halsam 2002).

Purposes of organizational communication process can be listed as follows (Yavuz 2008).

- ♦ To improve relationship between individuals and group,
- ♦ To establish a communication network within organization,
- ♦ To ensure effective coordination,
- ♦ To provide personnel constantly with information on developments in organization.

Functions of organization communication are as follows (Candan 1999).

Organizational communication connecting individuals and units within an organization is the base of the system. Thus, individuals and units can work both in cooperation and harmony.

- ♦ Organizational communication is an important factor for problem solving, maintenance of organizational activities and use of creative power.
- ♦ It ensures a healthy relationship between organization and outer world and an efficient information flow. Stimulating organi-

zations to adapt to new conditions emerging due to constant change of environmental conditions can also be provided by organizational communication.

- ♦ Organizational communication is one of the most important tools in terms of organizational management. An effective organizational communication allows performance of decision-making, cooperation, planning, control and motivation processes efficiently.
- ♦ Organizational communication plays a significant role in establishment of relationship with each worker and also the entire organization through small groups created. It improves loyalty of employees to organization, sense of belonging and integrity of organization.

Organizational communication has an extremely critical function in ensuring organizational integrity by allowing all elements within an organization to communicate to each other according to organizational targets. If there are certain weaknesses in communication system, it adversely affects functioning of each system in organization, leads to impairment in organizational integrity and causes various problems due to organization drifting apart from its aims (Gürgen 1997).

Organizational communication has a vital value to organization. It enables many functions from success of management activities to self-realization. Organizational communication which interlocks individuals, values, emotions, aims and units, that is, many material and moral elements within organization is a cyclic process ensuring generation and regeneration of the said elements as well. The system approach clarifying the concept of organizational communication shows that organizational communication has much more functions than individually stated. The most important role of organizational communication is that it ensures sustainability of organization with a blood circulation-like system, from the argument that an organization may not survive without communication.

### **Purpose of the Study**

Scientific research on the concepts of communication and culture draws attention to concepts and also allows organizations to know themselves, because each organization has an

individual culture with an individual structure, individual values and individual beliefs. Culture is an invisible element which ensures perception of an organization as a whole, brings values and an identity to organization, makes it a part of society, brings employees together to achieve an aim, and carries organization to the target. What makes culture is communication which creates and conveys it and supports its adoption. In fact, these both concepts exist together or do not exist at all. As explained in the sections where these concepts are discussed, culture does not exist without conveyance and communication has no meaning without culture.

## **MATERIAL AND METHODS**

### **Data Collection Tool**

In the research, survey form has been used as data collection tool. Scales used in survey forms are as follows:

**Organizational Communication Survey:** Developed by Öksüz (1997) the survey form consists of 35 questions in the form of 5-point Likert scale.

**Organizational Culture Survey:** Cultural Adaptation Model suggested by Kanun goand Jaeger (1990) was subsequently tested by Ay-can et al. (1999), and Mathur et al. (1996). The survey was used in three international studies previously and tested for validity and reliability. The scale has 8 sub-scales. They include importance of trust, performance-based external reward, performance-based internal reward, target setting, and reinforcement, directing individuals by their supervisor, supervisory control and diversity of skills.

### **Sampling**

The research population consists of 200 sports managers selected by simple random sampling method.

## **RESULTS**

Sports managers participating in the survey consists of 89 percent males and 11 percent females (Table 1). Of them have a seniority of 1-10 years 81 percent. Of them have 11-20 years 14 percent. Of them have 21-30 years 5 percent.

When relation between gender and organizational culture examined, no statistically significant difference has been found between organizational culture and gender ( $p>0.05$ ) (Table 2).

**Table 1: Demographical characteristics of sports managers**

Gender	Frequency	%
Male	178	89
Female	22	11
Total	200	100

  

Occupational Seniority	Frequency	%
1-10 years	162	81
11-20 years	28	14
21-30 years	10	5
Total	200	100

**Table 2: Gender and organizational culture relation**

	Average	t	p
<i>Importance of Trust</i>			
Male	3.22	1.210	0.421
Female	3.14		
<i>External Reward</i>			
Male	3.21	1.021	0.563
Female	3.25		
<i>Internal Reward</i>			
Male	3.52	0.952	0.641
Female	3.41		
<i>Target Setting</i>			
Male	3.65	0.978	0.621
Female	3.21		
<i>Reinforcement</i>			
Male	3.54	1.056	0.537
Female	3.65		
<i>Directing Supervisor</i>			
Male	3.44	1.138	0.481
Female	3.24		
<i>Supervisory Control</i>			
Male	3.12	1.144	0.470
Female	3.22		
<i>Diversity of Skills</i>			
Male	3.35	1.038	0.584
Female	3.38		

When relation between occupational seniority and organizational culture examined, no statistically significant difference has been found between organizational culture and occupational seniority ( $p>0.05$ ) (Table 3).

When relation between gender and organizational communication examined, no statistically significant difference has been found between

**Table 3: Differences between occupational seniority and organizational culture**

	Average	F	p
<i>Importance of Trust</i>			
1-10 years	3.26	1.024	0.354
11-20 years	3.55		
21-30 years	3.21		
<i>External Reward</i>			
1-10 years	3.42	0.965	0.463
11-20 years	3.56		
21-30 years	3.85		
<i>Internal Reward</i>			
1-10 years	3.74	0.963	0.431
11-20 years	3.65		
21-30 years	3.21		
<i>Target Setting</i>			
1-10 years	3.32	0.841	0.593
11-20 years	3.56		
21-30 years	3.54		
<i>Reinforcement</i>			
1-10 years	3.55	1.013	0.384
11-20 years	3.47		
21-30 years	3.65		
<i>Directing Supervisor</i>			
1-10 years	3.56	1.034	0.391
11-20 years	3.45		
21-30 years	3.54		
<i>Supervisory Control</i>			
1-10 years	3.36	0.963	0.436
11-20 years	3.43		
21-30 years	3.56		
<i>Diversity of Skills</i>			
1-10 years	3.63	0.977	0.415
11-20 years	3.54		
21-30 years	3.52		

organizational communication and gender ( $p>0.05$ ) (Table 4).

**Table 4: Gender and organizational communication relation**

	Average	F	p
<i>Organizational Communication</i>			
Male	3.45	0.954	0.541
Female	3.55		

Occupational seniority and organizational communication examined, no statistically significant difference has been found between occupational seniority and organizational communication ( $p>0.05$ ) (Table 5).

**Table 5: Differences between occupational seniority and organization communication**

	Average	F	p
<i>Organizational Communication</i>			
1-10 years	3.54	1.136	0.354
11-20 years	3.65		
21-30 years	3.44		

When perceptions of organizational culture and organizational communication are examined, a positive and statistically significant relation has been identified between organizational culture and organizational communication ( $p < 0.05$ ) (Table 6). This indicates a direct relation between organizational culture and organizational communication. When organizational communication is strong in an entity, then organizational communication is also strong. Similarly, in organizations that has established organizational communication, norms regarding to organizational culture are adopted and implemented more easily.

**Table 6: Relation between organizational culture and perception of organizational communication**

		<i>Organizational communication</i>
<i>Importance of Trust</i>	r	.112
	p	.000
	N	122
<i>External Reward</i>	r	.010
	p	.000
	N	124
<i>Internal Reward</i>	r	.077
	p	.000
	N	124
<i>Target Setting</i>	r	.110
	p	.000
	N	124
<i>Reinforcement</i>	r	.079
	p	.000
	N	119
<i>Directing Supervisor</i>	r	.062
	p	.000
	N	124
<i>Supervisory Control</i>	r	.071
	p	.000
	N	124
<i>Diversity of Skills</i>	r	.111
	p	.000
	N	120

## DISCUSSION

Organizational culture constitutes basis for sharing of beliefs and values within entity and unites managers and workers on a common ground. Therefore, there is a direct relation between organizational communication and organizational culture. Similarly, Kocabas (2005) and Karcioğlu and Kurt (2009) argued that there is a significant relation between organizational culture and organizational communication. In this sense, organizational culture provides workers and managers with suitable environment in terms

of change. Similarly states organizational culture unites workers on a common ground and communication reinforces this common ground (Özalpet 2004).

A positive relationship has been detected between organizational culture and organizational communication. Likewise, the same positive relationship was detected by Dinçer Aydın on his own work (Dinçer Aydın 2010). According to this research, the organizational culture improves due to organizational communication. Due to Su et al. (2010) research in companies which optimized the organizational communication between employees have developed organizational culture. In their research, Polat and Meydan (2011) found that all employees should have been thought as one and this way, better communication leads to an improvement on organizational culture (Kwantes and Boglarsky 2007; Laswell 2007; Croucher et al. 2009; Eroglu and Özkan 2009).

Members of an organization are under influence of organizational culture in terms of exposure, maintenance and improvement of business life attitudes and behaviors. Organizational culture makes difference in customary life standards emerging by occurrence of basic values considered within the scope of organization rather than individual cultural values of workers. Organizational communication is a social toll enabling both flow of thoughts and information between organization and its surroundings and establishment of necessary links between departments to achieve purposes of organization and ensure its functioning.

## CONCLUSION

Communication is not considered only a process enabling information flow but also regulating organizational activities, ensuring cooperation, motivating workers and contributing to organizational culture. Organizational culture is a constantly process which involves collective and individual beliefs, values, and management policies and strategies within an organization. However, organizational culture is sometimes open to change. Organizational cultures which quickly understand change needs find themselves in a better competitive position. Health of organizational culture is directly related to vision, mission, purpose and aim of an organization. Organizational communication plays an important role in successful creation of organizational culture

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The suggestions of the research are:

- Organization management should be managed by considering the facts of communication and culture.
- Problems of organizational communication and culture should be detected and there must be new plans to improve them.
- New communication technologies should be used to improve the communication in the organization.
- There should be more social activities for employees to improve organization-employee relations.
- Organizational culture should be delivered to all employees by informing them about the purposes of the organization. Organizational language should be protected and developed. The stories about the heroic events of organization should be told to employees.
- Organization management should be clear and fair.
- Every member of the organization should know their responsibilities and authorities and should be active on deciding about something.

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