Organizational culture of trade enterprises in the context of modern demographic challenges and applying information technologies

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Abstract. Transition of a significant part of developed and developing countries to “silver economy” characterized by the increase of aged population share is forming new demographic challenges for the labor market. They are expressed in two main trends: firstly, the average age of enterprise employees grows; secondly, the number of mixed labor collectives, which contains employees of various ages, grows. Both tendencies are extremely essential for enterprises of marketplace characterized by relatively lower (in comparison with other economy sectors) admission demands to employees’ education and experience, and in this regard, open for applying forces of jobseekers of various ages who have most diverse professional background. Efficient functioning of such various labor teams raises peculiar demands on organizational culture of a trade enterprise which should include values supported by all employees. Our research is focused on studying value orientations of employees of different age categories on the basis of M. Rokich methodology. Similarities between terminal and instrumental values among employees of different ages revealed as a result of the research may become the basis for forming efficient organizational culture of trade enterprises which provides high motivation, adaptability and flexibility of the staff in the context of constant evolution of customers’ demands.

1. Introduction
Successful activity of a modern trade enterprise depends on the fact how flexible and adaptive the system of personnel management is and on how organizational culture contributes to achieving goals set. Creating organizational culture, unified, accepted and understandable for everyone, can become an optimal solution for the problem of managing a trade enterprise in a volatile environment. Organizational culture is the basis of forming the system of personnel management; its task is achieving goals of the enterprise, profitability and material welfare.

Organizational culture is based on the social-psychological phenomenon of similarity of values and goals of employees. E. Schein defines organizational culture as an assembly of collective, basic rules,
invented, discovered or developed by a certain group of people while they were studying to solve problems related to adaptation to external environment and internal integration, and elaborated well enough to be considered valuable [1]. G. Hofstede thinks that organizational culture is a distinguishing and unique feature of an organization [2]. All principles of organizational culture should be based on values which determine collective identity and which are a deep concealed phenomenon of consciousness.

At the same time, understanding the importance of common values and norms inside a labor collective one should not underestimate the existence of certain differences in value paradigms different age categories representatives. Serious demographic challenges which are currently faced by world's major economies intensify this problem and lead not only to increasing the average workforce age but also to the necessity of forming mixed work collectives including representatives of various age and gender cohorts. The given tendencies are extremely essential for enterprises of marketplace characterized by relatively lower (in comparison with other economy sectors) admission demands to employees' education and experience [3, 4], and in this regard, open for applying forces of jobseekers of various ages who have most diverse professional background. Efficient functioning of such various labor teams raises peculiar demands on organizational culture of a trade enterprise which should include values supported by all employees.

2. Peculiarities of the modern labor market in the Russian Federation

Trends in increasing the average age of the population are characteristic of the Russian Federation economy as well (figure 1). According to the data of the Federal State Statistics Service, the part of population of the Russian Federation younger than the employable age in 2018 is 18.5%, the employable age – 56%, older than the employable age – 25.5%. By 2036 the proportions between the given population groups according to the average variant of the forecast by the Statistics Service will significantly change: the part of the population younger than the employable age will reduce to 15.8%, the part of the population of the employable age will insignificantly increase to 54.2% (that in absolute values corresponds to reducing from 82,239 to 79,038 thousand people), the part of the population older than the employable age will increase to 30% (in absolute values it means the growth from 37380.4 to 43774.6 thousand people or by more than 17%) [5].

The changes described will significantly influence the structure of the Russian labor market. The predictable prospects show that the group of older employees (aged 50–65) may become a large subgroup of the work force. It will be manifested in the growth of the number of aged workers in companies and organizations and, consequently, it will lead to the growth of age variety at work places. It can be positive for the organization-employer as the quality, variety and value of the information necessary for adopting management decisions will increase [6]. The importance of the information which circulates inside the organization is connected with cognitive resources of its employees which increase together with the growth of demographic variety. Besides, people with different life and professional experience may have different outer and inner social networks and that leads to the growth of additional value of information [7]. Informational variety may be especially useful for working with unstandardized problems and for searching creative decisions [8]. Thus, aged employees, as a rule, have knowledge and experience which are useful for increasing the efficiency of the group work. However, such human capital may be effectively used only in the environment where friendly and respectful relations between members of the collective are present [9]. Building such relations is possible only in the case when their basis is formed of common values of enterprise employees which are fixed in different elements of the organization culture.
3. Research methodology
In order to analyze similarities and differences between value paradigms of representatives of different age cohorts the authors have undertaken a comparative study on the basis of the structured interview method. The first part of the study was related to investigating the value paradigm of Belgorod Region employees. The poll was held in the period from 2012 to 2014. Workers, purchase and sales department managers and engineers and other technical workers were studied. 328 people were studied in total, among them: trading and purchasing departments’ managers – 65, workers – 155, engineers and technical workers – 108. The age of the studied people was between 37 and 53. 60 women and 268 men were interviewed. The second part of the study was held in 2015–2016 in groups of second-year students of Higher School of Service and Trade, Institute of Industrial Management, Economics and Trade of Peter the Great St. Petersburg Polytechnic University. 53 students at the age of 18–21 were studied, including 41 women and 12 men.

The traditional methodology of M. Rokich was used as an instrument of estimating value orientations. This methodology is based on direct ranging of two categories of values: terminal, determining ultimate objectives of existence of a person, and instrumental, determining the pattern of conduct or personality features which are chosen by the person in any life situation [10].

The research objective was defining common values for workers of different ages. For young specialists who come to trade enterprises for the position of a manager cooperation with older employees is a serious problem, especially if the latter are subordinates of the young manager. The complexity of cooperation is noted both from the side of young specialists and from the side of older workers. The research hypothesis was to find common values in the world view structure of different generations in order to form unified organizational culture which will contribute to mutual understanding and increase the efficiency of joint activities.

4. Results of research
The study results demonstrated the following. Calculation of mean group ranks according to two groups of values allows emphasizing the leading ones that is taking the highest ranks, terminal and instrumental values according to two age groups. Analysis of leading values of two age groups has demonstrated commonness in terminal values according to such ones as “an interesting job”: this value has the first rank for young people and the fourth rank for older people. The second terminal value on the basis of which one can unite workers of different ages is “health”: it has the third rank for young people and the
first rank for elderly generation. Thus, such terminal values as “an interesting job” and “health”, which determine life aspirations and objectives of a person, are very significant in both groups. Therefore, the elements of organizational culture of an enterprise should definitely include these values.

Instrumental values define the tools used for achieving goals. This concerns both personal life and professional activity. Such values as “honesty” and “politeness” have become common instrumental values having a high rank for the two groups of studied employees. The most important way of behavior at work will be related exactly to these values for both groups.

Comparison of mean group rank points of terminal values of young and older employees on the basis of the Student criterion helped to reveal a significant difference at the level of $p<0.01$ according to the following values: active, stirring life; wisdom; development. Representatives of the older generation appreciate the energy of life and wise relation to it significantly more than young people (the sixth and fifth ranks, respectively), at the same time development is appreciated less (the fifteenth rank) by them than by younger people. The significance of development for young people is natural (the fourth rank) because it is the peculiarity of their age and their general kind of activity – education. It should be noted that divergence in the values of ranks of two groups is related to those terminal values which have abstract, generalized character. One can suppose that high degree of uncertainty and generality of organizational culture doesn't contribute to forming cohesion and mutual understanding in a labor collective. Comparative analysis of ranks of terminal values for elderly people and youngsters is shown in figure 2.

Comparison of mean group rank points of instrumental values of older workers and youngsters on the basis of the Student criterion allowed to reveal a significant difference at the level of $p<0.01$ according to the following values: cheerfulness; responsibility; rationalism. Representatives of the older generation appreciate cheerfulness and rationalism less than young people (the thirteenth and sixteenth ranks, respectively), at the same time responsibility is appreciated significantly higher (the third rank) by them than by younger people. The value of responsibility for young people is low (the fifteenth rank) as it is not requested by them, it is not used in their professional activity. The rank of responsibility gets higher with the increase of years and professional experience. Divergence in relation to the “rationalism”
value is probably connected with differences in understanding the meaning of this word. People of different ages may put different sense into this concept. The same can be said about the value “cheerfulness”. Organizational culture should not include those elements the understanding of which depends on a person's age and life experience. Comparative analysis of ranks of instrumental values for elderly people and youngsters is shown in figure 3.

![Figure 3. Comparing ranks of instrumental values of grown-up employees (Row 1) and students (Row 2).](image)

5. Conclusions
We can make the following conclusions generalizing the obtained results:
– forming the elements of organizational culture should be based on values accepted by all employees of a trade enterprise and that provides social cohesion and internal stability of the community;
– it is possible to find unifying values for different age groups on the basis of which organizational culture is being built;
– elements of the organizational culture should not have vague, too abstract and amorphous character. It prevents forming cohesion and mutual understanding;
– organizational culture should not include the elements the understanding of which has prominent dependence on age and life experience.

Some enterprises ignore the significance of values of their employees; they try to create a prescriptive organizational culture which is not accepted by the staff. However in practice, the directive approach may only reduce the staff motivation that will have negative impact on workforce productivity in the end.

Efficient organizational culture must be based on key values of enterprise employees. Transition to “silver economy” is inevitably connected with the use of unrevealed potential of the older generation and with attracting a significant layer of society to its enrichment and development. Effectiveness of a manager's activity in trade is defined by a surprising combination of heterogeneous tendencies: creating a maximally flexible system of management in combination with stability of organizational culture. Trade enterprises which exist in unstable business environment should increase the degree of diversity and reject old patterns of functioning in combination with stable organizational values. Using informational technologies and CRM subprograms, installed in all large trade networks, allows to correct in due time the accents of organizational culture by studying changes in values of employees.
Employees' opinion polls for determining value priorities may be taken regularly with the help of informational technologies, a unified internal computer network. Anonymous answers of employees online through the internal network will help senior managers to evaluate trends in changing the enterprise culture, carry out comparative analysis of values of organizational culture of different subdivisions and work groups. Using value orientations in organizational culture is an important instrument of increasing effectiveness of an enterprise activity.

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