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## Selected aspects of the body culture in hotel enterprises

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**Key words:** cultural aspects, organisation, tourism, hotel enterprise, Opole Voivodeship

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**S u m m a r y:** Organisational culture is one of the most important aspects of management in modern enterprises, related especially strongly with the strategy of the organisation and its human resources. The issues of organisational culture seem to be of special importance in reference to tourist enterprises, including hotel ones. Tourism is related to spatial mobility of people which is due to voluntary change of the place of stay. A major part of tourist traffic is also of international nature and applies to tourists moving to the countries which are not their countries of residence. Thus, intending to meet the needs of tourists from various countries, hotel enterprises must take the cultural aspect into consideration. Therefore, their organisational culture must be based on such values as tolerance, hospitality, flexibility, innovativeness or the skill of combining tradition with modernity.

The objective of the paper was to characterise selected aspects of organisational culture in hotel enterprises in the Opole Voivodeship. The analysis covered 20 hotel enterprises. Empirical material was collected with diagnostic survey with a questionnaire of organisational culture by Lidia Zbiegień-Maciąg as the research tool. The results of the research were used to determine the average profile of organisational standards in hotel enterprises. The respondents best valued creation of relations with clients by the enterprises and innovative nature of the offered tourist products. In the respondents' opinion, much attention is also paid to the quality of the offered products and good interpersonal relations within the enterprise. Viewing the research results in the light of the Harrison typology, the organisational culture of the analysed hotel enterprises is based on tasks and people. In the time of progressing globalisation and internationalisation of many national economies, the shaping of the proper organisational culture may be expected to be one of more important objectives in modern hotel enterprises in the future.

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## 1. Introduction

Organisational culture is one of the most important aspects of management in modern enterprises, related especially strongly with the strategy of the organisation and its human resources. The research of empirical results indicates (1, p. 42) that the enterprises which are successful in the market allocate more time for briefing new employees with the secrets of their cultures. According to Agnieszka Sitko-Lutek (2, p. 50), organisational culture may be viewed from both microperspective (identified with the system of management in the enterprise), and macroperspective (related to the effect on organisational culture of the enterprise in the national and social context). The issues of organisational culture seem to be of special importance in reference to tourist enterprises, including hotel ones. Tourism is related to both spatial mobility of people which is due to voluntary change of the place of stay. A major part of tourist traffic is also of international nature and applies to tourists moving to the countries which are not their countries of residence. Thus, intending to meet the needs of consumers (tourists) from various countries, hotel enterprises must take the cultural aspect into consideration. Therefore, their organisational culture must be based on such values as tolerance, hospitality, flexibility, innovativeness, or the skill of combining tradition with modern approach.

In the context of the above, the objective of the paper is to characterise selected aspects of organisational culture in hotel enterprises in the Opole Voivodeship.

## 2. Organisational culture

Management practitioners and theorists perceive organisational culture as a “soul” of the enterprise that is a “live” part of every organisation, and all the activities as well as initiatives undertaken in the company pass through that soul. Organisational culture is also an axiological system of organisation which emphasises its individuality and originality, yet differentiates it from other entities in its surroundings. Many theories surfaced within the recent years which attempt to define the “organisational culture” term. Undoubtedly, the most popular of these definitions is the one proposed by Edgar Schein (3, p. 12) who defined “a pattern of the shared basic premises, learned by a group during solving of the problems of its external adaptation and internal integration, working well enough to be considered valuable, thus instilled with the new members as the proper method of perceiving, thinking and feeling in reference to these problems.” Organisational culture is thus a certain system made up of different elements with various relationships possible between them. The components of organisational culture may be broken down into three groups according to Sikorski (4, p. 25): thought patterns, behaviour patterns and symbols. With thought patterns, members of the organisation have assessment criteria for various phenomena

and situations. Behaviour patterns provide the appropriate forms of reaction to these phenomena and situations, and symbols allow spreading and grounding thought and behaviour patterns within the members of the group. Organisational culture grows sequentially, which results in the consecutive stages: forming, developing, functioning and maturity (5, p. 37). In the forming stage, the role of the leader is decisive, as members of the organisation follow him. Its borderlines are still quite liquid, the fight for influence continues, members strive to gain acceptance for their attitudes, and the group is looking for its identity. At the developing stage, mostly the items which are binding the members of the group are sought and this binding force is exposed. The differences between the members of the group are not subject to strict judgement yet. In the stage of functioning, the organisational culture is already established. The focus is here on observing its standards and behaviour patterns. Maturity of organisational culture is related to its complete stabilisation and concentration on maintaining the organisation. Thus reluctance to new ideas and the resulting differences in opinions and behaviour come up.

Culture is of major importance for both the interior of the body and its environment as it has certain functions in every one of these areas, which may be divided into internal and external (6, pp. 23–30; 1, pp. 33–37). The following may be found within the internal functions of the body culture: integrative, learning and information, and adaptive. The body culture integrates the members of the body, generates in them the feeling of safety and stability, and participates in building the identity of the entire the body. One of important functions of the body culture is also its delivery of knowledge. People who stay together share their knowledge, experience and skills. Organisational culture also provides new adopted methods of coping in life, thus helping reduce uncertainty. External functions of organisational culture consist in the effect of internal arrangements on external contacts (e.g. with the mission and strategic objectives of the organisation) and in the effect of the environmental factors (e.g. with the organisation joining various other organisations).

One of the most known typologies of organisational culture is the one formulated by Roger Harrison (7, pp. 122–126), the basis of which is juxtaposing such terms as individuality and collectivism and enforcing external control and internal control. The author selected the types of organisational culture focused on:

1. Power—the culture typical of organisations which are competitive and uncompromising and strive to dominate their surroundings. Employees strongly compete with each other and managers treat them like objects.
2. Role—the culture characteristic of bureaucratic organisations in which lawfulness of action and the feeling of responsibility are important. The scopes of duties and rights are precisely defined and depend on the work post occupied. Predictability of human behaviour is high, and the highest value is stability of activity and its compliance with the regulations in force.
3. Tasks—this type of culture is in flexible organisations focused on a fast reaction to changes in the surroundings. The predominant feature in human rela-

tionships is in this case the capacity to achieve the objectives of the organisation under changing conditions of the surroundings.

4. People—the culture typical of organisations focused on meeting needs of its members. The distance of the authority is small, and making decisions is based on social consensus. Interpersonal relationships are based on cooperation, mutual support and sharing experience. Fixed behaviour patterns and customs are the basis for formal rules.

### 3. Hotel enterprise as an entity in the tourist market

The tourist market may be analysed in two ways: objective and subjective (8, pp. 67–68). The objective approach refers to the process of defining the subject matter and conditions for the transaction of purchase and sale of tourist products executed by the entities in the tourist market. The subjective approach treats the tourist market as a sum of entities in this market, and these include: producers of tourist products (tourist enterprises), buyers of tourist products (individual and institutional customers) and institutions and organisations which execute tasks related to state interventionism in tourist economy (the subjects of tourist policy). Considering the added value generated to the tourist economy by the hotel industry, as well as the place of hotel services in the tourist chain of values, hotel enterprises are the most important group of tourist enterprises. They may be defined as a system made up of both resources (human, information, capital and financial) and processes which occur between particular resources and inside these resources. The subject matter of the operation of this system is managing business activities in an organised and continuous way, the activities which consist in generating hotel products, and the most important its objective is maximising economic benefits of the owners. The hotel product is a combination of all values which hotel enterprises offer to their buyers, which is composed of both material and intangible components (9, p. 73). The material elements include: goods acquired by hotel guests (e.g. a meal in the hotel restaurant, cleaning agents in the bathroom, notepads, pens or advertising brochures in the room), goods without which the service could not be provided (the hotel facility, elements of equipment or hotel interior design) and goods which are the material basis for the services provided (gastronomy equipment, computer hardware, ATMs). The dominant intangible items of a hotel product include, for example: safety of guests and of the goods brought in by them, hospitality, the proper atmosphere, providing information or making bookings.

Hotel enterprises are varied in many respects and are continuously undergoing changes under effect of many factors of internal and external nature. The most important of these factors, according to Daria Jaremen and Aleksander Panasiuk (9, pp. 52–53), are: the economic system, the degree of market balancing, the level of development of the economy, intensity of competition, business legislation (including related

to tourism), the degree of openness of the economy, valours of nature, culture and the condition of tourist development and the resulting tourist attractiveness of the area, the culture and traditions in the area of providing hotel services, the volume and time and space structure of demand and competencies of tourist entrepreneurs. The numerous set of hotel enterprises may be classified based on various criteria, the most popular of which are: the organisational and legal form, the size and type of the conducted business operations. Considering the organisational and legal form, hotel enterprises may be divided into: individual ownership companies, civil law partnerships and commercial companies, cooperatives and, to a small degree, state-owned enterprises. With the classification of hotel enterprises based on the size criterion, both number aspects (e.g. the number of employees, size of the annual net income, total balance sheet assets, the number of rooms and beds) and quality aspects (e.g. the domination of the owner in a company, operation in a market relatively close geographically or psychologically, or the degree of formalisation of the organisational structure) may be taken into account. The most often found division of hotel enterprises is the classification formulated by Zenon Bładek (10, p. 95). The author assumes the number of rooms as the size criterion. According to him, small hotels are those with up to 100 rooms, medium-size are those with 101 to 350 rooms, and large hotels have more than 350 rooms. The most common criterion in the hotel enterprises typology is, however, the type of the conducted hotel operations. According to the tourist industry legislation in Poland, the hotel enterprises may be divided into: hotels, motels, boarding houses, hostels, youth hostels, tourist houses, caravan sites, camping sites, and other facilities which provide hotel services. Table 1 presents synthetic characteristics of individual types of hotel enterprises.

Table 1

## Characteristics of individual types of hotel enterprises

Name of hotel enterprise	Characteristics of hotel enterprise
Hotel	Facilities with at least 10 rooms, including most of the beds in single and double rooms, providing a wide range of services related to the customers' stay
Motel	Facilities located close to roads, with parking lots, with at least 10 rooms, with most of them in single and double rooms
Boarding house	Facilities with at least 7 rooms, providing all-day feeding for its clients
Hostel	Facilities located outside of developed areas, close to tourist trails, providing the minimum range of services related to stay of clients
Youth hostel	Facilities allocated for individual and group youth tourism, appropriate for self-service clients
Tourist houses	Facilities with at least 30 beds, appropriate for self-service clients and providing the minimum range of services related to stay of clients

Caravan site	Guarded facilities for night accommodation in tents, caravans and trailers, preparing meals, parking cars, as well as providing services related to stay of clients. These facilities may additionally enable night accommodation in tourist houses or other permanent facilities
Camping site	Unguarded facilities allowing night accommodation in tents
Other facilities providing hotel services	Facilities which meet the requirements for size, equipment and range of services provided and sanitary, fire fighting requirements and other specified in separate regulations

Source: author's own study based on: the Act of 29 August 1997 on tourist services, Dz. U. 1997, no. 133, Item 884, as amended.

#### 4. Characteristic of the selected aspects of organisational culture in hotel enterprises in the Opole Voivodeship

Empirical material in the paper comes from the data obtained as a result of research conducted in hotel enterprises in the Opole region in February 2011. The analysis covered 20 enterprises, including 17 hotels and 3 boarding houses. Nine of the analysed hotel enterprises were located in the countryside, five in the cities of 20,000–100,000 residents, five in the cities of 100,000–200,000 residents, and one in the city of less than 20,000 residents. The largest number of companies in the discussed group were microbusinesses (8) and small businesses (7). Four of them were medium-size and one was a large business. The most frequent legal and organisational form of the businesses was a privately-owned enterprise (15), with two registered partnerships, one civil law partnership, one limited liability company and one joint stock company (Table 2).

Table 2

Characteristics of the analysed hotel enterprises

Description	Number	Percentage (%)
Type		
Hotel	17	85.00
Boarding house	3	15.00
Total	<b>20</b>	<b>100.00</b>
Location		
Countryside	9	45.00
<20,000 city	1	5.00
20,000–100,000 city	5	25.00
20,000–100,000 city	5	25.00
Total	<b>20</b>	<b>100.00</b>
Size		
Micro	8	40.00
Small	7	35.00

Medium-size	4	20.00
Large	1	5.00
Total	<b>20</b>	<b>100.00</b>
Organisational and legal form		
Private ownership individual	15	75.00
Civil law partnership	1	5.00
General partnership	2	10.00
Limited liability company	1	5.00
Joint stock company	1	5.00
Total	<b>20</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: author's own study.

The diagnostic survey with a questionnaire of organisational culture by Zbiegień-Maciąg as the research tool was used in collecting empirical material. The auditorial questionnaire was used, whose feature is that the pollster is in continuous contact with the respondents during filling in the questionnaires and explains to them all ambiguities and helps in filling in the questionnaire on the ongoing basis. The organisational standards questionnaire proposed by Zbiegień-Maciąg (1, p. 266) was used in the work. Five respondents were questioned in each of the analysed companies: the owner, the manager and three employees. On the basis of the obtained results from the conducted research and in accordance with the methodology suggested by the author of the questionnaire, the average profile of the organisational standards in the researched hotel enterprises was drawn.

Among the analysed hotel enterprises, none of the aspects of organisational culture taken into account was assessed definitely negative by the respondents. The respondents best assessed the activities related to building good relationships of the companies with their clients and the degree of innovativeness of the tourist products offered by them. The results of empirical research (11, pp. 76–79) confirm the noticed trend and indicate that instruments of relationship marketing are more and more often used in hotel enterprises. High competition in the tourist market forces on the entities providing services offering innovative hotel products which can satisfy more and more refined needs of the buyers. The thesis is confirmed also with the fact that the analysed hotel enterprises paid much attention to high quality of the offered products. The proper interpersonal relationships in the hotel enterprise were also very important, as the respondents positively assessed such aspects of its functioning as team work, friendly relationships with colleagues, openness of the organisation to the surroundings and development of human resources executed mostly with training events. The respondents assessed worst such aspects of the organisational culture as pride with the organisation, leadership and effectiveness (Table 3). Viewing the obtained empirical results in the context of the typology of organisational culture by Harrison (7, pp. 122–126), similarities may be found in the analysed hotel enterprises to the culture focused on tasks and persons. These enterprises are flexibly adjusting

to changes in the surroundings, paying much attention to quality and innovativeness of their products and to proper and continued relationships with clients. Human resources are highly significant for the analysed hotel enterprises. Warm relationships, camaraderie and team work skills are of special value. The owners also highly value the development of their employees, offering them various training events, which undoubtedly translates into quality and competitiveness of the offered hotel products.

Table 3

Profile of organisational standards in the researched hotel enterprises

Aspects of organisational culture	-100	-75	-50	-25	0	25	50	75	100
Organisation (personal pride)					X				
Execution (quality)						X			
Team work (communication)						X			
Leadership (supervision)					X				
Benefits (effectiveness)					X				
Colleagues (camaraderie)						X			
Relationships company–client							X		
Innovativeness (creativity)							X		
Training (development)						X			
Openness						X			

Source: author's own research.

## 5. Conclusion

In the time of progressing globalisation and internationalisation of many national economies, dynamic technological progress and increasing competition in the world tourists markets, the shaping of the proper organisational culture may be expected to be one of more important objectives in modern hotel enterprises. Shaping organisational standards focused on the development of human resources, as well as on increasing innovativeness and improving quality of the offered products, will translate into the level of competitiveness of hotel enterprises. Combined with high flexibility of organisational structures and striving to satisfy more and more refined needs of the

buyers may be the condition of survival and growth of hotel enterprises, which will in consequence contribute to creating new value for their stakeholders.

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## Wybrane aspekty kultury organizacyjnej przedsiębiorstw hotelarskich

**Streszczenie:** Kultura organizacyjna to jeden z najważniejszych aspektów zarządzania współczesnymi przedsiębiorstwami, związany szczególnie mocno ze strategią organizacji oraz z jej zasobami ludzkimi. Problematyka kultury organizacyjnej wydaje się szczególnie ważna w odniesieniu do przedsiębiorstw turystycznych, w tym hotelarskich. Turystyka wiąże się bowiem z przestrzenną ruchliwością ludzi, związaną z dobrowolną zmianą miejsca pobytu. Znacząca część ruchu turystycznego ma także charakter międzynarodowy i dotyczy przemieszczania się turystów do krajów niebędących ich krajami zamieszkania. Chcąc zatem zaspokoić potrzeby turystów z różnych krajów, przedsiębiorstwa hotelarskie muszą brać pod uwagę aspekt kulturowy. Ich kultura organizacyjna musi być oparta na takich wartościach jak: tolerancja, gościnność, elastyczność, innowacyjność czy umiejętność połączenia tradycji z nowoczesnością.

Celem pracy jest charakterystyka wybranych aspektów kultury organizacyjnej przedsiębiorstw hotelarskich z województwa opolskiego. Analizie poddano 20 firm hotelarskich. Zbierając materiał empiryczny, zastosowano metodę sondażu diagnostycznego, w której narzędziem badawczym był kwestionariusz ankiety kultury organizacyjnej autorstwa Lidii Zbiegień-Maciąg. Na podstawie uzyskanych wyników badań wykreślono średni profil norm organizacyjnych przedsiębiorstw hotelarskich. Ankietowani najlepiej ocenili tworzenie relacji przedsiębiorstwa z klien-

tami oraz innowacyjność oferowanych produktów turystycznych. Zdaniem respondentów dużą wagę przywiązuje się również do jakości oferowanych produktów oraz do dobrych stosunków interpersonalnych w samym przedsiębiorstwie. Rozpatrując wyniki badań w świetle typologii Harrisona, kultura organizacyjna analizowanych przedsiębiorstw hotelarskich ma charakter zadaniowy i osobowy. W dobie postępującej globalizacji i internacjonalizacji wielu gospodarek narodowych należy się spodziewać, że ukształtowanie odpowiedniej kultury organizacyjnej będzie w przyszłości jednym z ważniejszych celów współczesnych przedsiębiorstw hotelarskich.

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Sł o w a k l u c z o w e: aspekty kulturowe, organizacja, turystyka, przedsiębiorstwo hotelarskie, województwo opolskie

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