

SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH

THE UNIVERSITY TEACHER AS A MORAL AGENT

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Abstract: From Aristotle to nowadays, most of thinkers believe that ethics can be taught. The research demonstrates that the students' moral profile is strongly shaped during the academic years. The actors of the university field are influencing each other and the university teacher, as a moral agent, has an important influence on students' moral development. The communication of the two main actors must fulfil certain criteria in order to teaching and changing on each side. The discourse of the professor has not only to communicate a scientific message but, more importantly, it has to create relationships, to help the transformation of youth into adults, and to recreate themselves within interpersonal relationships. The article is focusing on the importance of the teacher-student relationship during the academic years, aiming to emphasize that such a relationship really can influence the moral profile and behaviour of the student.

Keywords: moral model, communication, university field

„One might ask itself what is meant by saying that, in order to become just, one must practice justice and in order to become moderate, one must practice moderation; as the one that practices justice or moderation must beforehand be just or moderate, as the one that teaches grammar or music is beforehand a grammarian or a musician”.¹ How can one interpret the quote from Aristotle's *The Nicomachean Ethics* considering what role a professor has or at least should have in the becoming of students that are under his wing. Paraphrasing it, one can say that the teacher should be, first of all, a teacher.

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¹ Aristotle (1988). *Nicomachean Ethics*. Romanian translation: *Etica Nicomahică*. Bucharest: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, p.37

The student-teacher relationship must be seen as a bidirectional one, as, in fact, it is a relation based on communication. And as the communication scheme compulsory includes an inverse connexion – feedback – the didactic staff can find out if his presence as a person and personality has produced changes on the ones he mentored. Complying with Peseschkian, one can say that „if the teacher learns nothing from his relationship with the student, the student himself will leave having the feeling that nothing significant has occurred in that time frame.”² Any communication, as Watzlavick implies, is an involvement and therefore defines the relationship. „A communication, a message, does not transmit just content, a true or false, valid or invalid information that answers the question of „what”. It transmits at the same time a behaviour that defines the relationship between the partners of the communication. (...) any message transmits an attitude”³. It is easily understood why the same message (in the present case, the same course), can have different meanings to different auditoriums.

Moreover, during evolving student-teacher relationships and not only during different contexts and time frames, the same informational content can develop different meanings.

It is not always that the didactic staff realises the impact their own person (and not just the scientific content) can have on the academic development of students he meets over the years. Furthermore, taking into account the timeframe of reason maximal development and of moral behaviour formation, the loss that appears when the mentor is not aware of his colossal power over the pupils is enormous.

In this study we dare not discuss the subject of academic communication ethics, which would be a much valuable idea for future research; instead the fact that “the word that builds” is at anytime a brick in the strong construction of youth personality. Communication is among the methods through which a teacher becomes a mentor for his students. The communication must give info, beside the consistency of the message, on the one communicating and on the one that is being communicating to. The manner in which a teacher

² Nossrat Peseschkian (2004). „Prelegere” la Conferința Internațională de Psihoterapie Pozitivă”, Varna. See Maria Diaconescu (2007). „Repere pentru o etică a comunicării interpersonale”, in Ion Copoeru, Nicoleta Szabo, (coord). *Dileme morale și autonomie în contextul democratizării și al integrării europene*. Cluj-Napoca: Editura Casa Cărții de Știință, p.177

³ Paul Watzlavick (1980). *Le langage du changement*. Editions du Seuil, p.49

addresses his students, the mode in which he teaches, underlines the teaching staff's personality and the one of the students' as well. Better said, the image the teacher has of his students is mirrored in their eyes. Cummings's studies, quoted in one of the chapters of the present study, underline the social importance of communication for the forming of the self concept and its reconstruction. "We are not able to restrain from communication" as Watzlavick sustains, therefore there is a huge importance of the influence the didactic staff has over the people it educates. Their discourse must not only communicate the scientific message but, more importantly, to create relationships, to help transform youth into adults, and to recreate themselves within interpersonal relationships. We do not communicate only through words.

In "Tips for ethics of interpersonal communication", Maria Diaconescu underlines the fact that "notions are void of content, no longer have an emotional sense, they no longer lighten us. Maybe one of the reasons the Earth is sinking into greyness is the mould set on our words" (Diaconescu 2007, 178).

The Romanian philosopher and non-formal educator Constantin Noica used to claim that a good school is such due to its students and/or teachers. One can surely say that there is no good teacher without good students and no good students without a good master. The real "magic" is somewhere in the middle, where the two parts become a whole. It is there where the two meet in order to give and to receive (always a bidirectional situation) and to transform. If the meeting of the two parts transforms nothing, then the "meeting" was not of importance. Important people and events fulfil, reason and change. One cannot pass a person who transformed you as you would a stranger. Important people are those that you "stumble upon" from a positive point of view, a stumble that makes you stop from the maddening run of life. A true mentor is the one that stops you from seeing life by ear. Not only the "power of persuasion" is important, but more so is the "power of seduction".

Petre Andrei said that "the teacher that does not try to awaken in his students' souls that demonic or divine force has not done his duty. He must awake the young; he must put in motion the spiritual forces, leading the souls willing to find a sense in life. Courses and seminars are the direct means for this objective, being thus not only simple obligations imposed by the law". (Diaconescu 2007, 179)

Some authors observe that the teacher gifts his students with “behaviour models, brings forth -unknowingly sometimes-attitudes towards the taught subject, towards people, the whole world as micro- and as macro-cosmos. (...) the teacher will be responsible to himself when his students will opt for his course subject or for other ones.”⁴ The teacher’s responsibility has two stages: „the first, when the profession is chosen and secondly, when he accepts his pupils.”

During the two world wars „the conditions were: *to be chosen* (by the teacher which will coordinate your activity and thus your becoming, your professional, social and moral destiny); *that the job exists* and only thirdly *that the job be posted*.” The university relation is based on the teacher and the student. “The evolution of the students and of the didactic staff ensures a new content to the above mentioned relationship”⁵.

The main common activity is the didactic one; “the professor is a prestigious scientific personality, a landmark in the scientific subjects he teaches (...) he has his own vision and a methodology for theoretical approach and empirical investigations (...) he is a researcher”; his activity includes a compulsory dissemination of results and research products in the academic world. In the above paragraphs, we have mentioned that the teacher-student relationship has a formal as well as an informal character. The student needs a mentor to guide him in his professional and humane formation activity, beside the “mentoring” relationships (humane, professional, behavioural, moral etc).

Actually, the teacher is the mentor – a model that guides the student in becoming „what he can become based on his qualities and guides him on the ways of his own achievements (...) an expert and a guide” helping the young student become “what he should be and offer him the tools for reaching his goal”. The relationship with the mentor is a special one “with a strong emotional character. The young person verifies his options, ideas, and thoughts together with his mentor. Mentoring is a way of protecting the young from inadequate influences and dangers for his future spiritual evolution” (Schifirneț 1997, 239). A few relevant data from a study that has as objective reviewing the students’ image on mentoring, underline the necessity of the its experience in order to offer the student, on a permanent basis, a model

⁴ Laurențiu Șoitu (1997). „Etica formatorului”, in *Educație și valori românești în context european*. Jassy: Editura Spiru Haret, p.225

⁵ Constantin Schifirneț (1997). „Etica formatorului”, in *Idem*, p.238

he can confront. C. Schifirneț presents the following data: 50% of the students consider mentoring as possible, 36% don't know what they are, and 10% declare that they are not possible. The results are scary when compared to the ones N. Turliuc obtained in his study, where 92% of a lot of top-grades graduates declared that they had a mentor. Concluding, we can say that professional orientation depends on the professional guiding model. Extrapolating, one could say that the present lack of motivation of students for their professional and scientific life (instead of financial enriching activities or loisir) is a result of lack of mentoring.

This study identifies the types of teachers, as they are seen from the students; point of view: 27% appreciate the quality of being receptive to creation, 23% mention the relational capacity (cooperation, dialog, opening up), 18% underline a very good professional training, 18% consider that the teacher must be a good pedagogue, 18% mention being receptive to new things, 12% accentuate personality traits (friendly, intelligent, tolerant), 7% appreciate as very important the teachers' vision on life. Other studies' results show: dress code, language, receptiveness to other activity fields, taking part in extracurricular activities, events organisation, student-teacher activities. The author concludes that a teacher represents "not only the specialist or the person with a vast culture, but also the personality with a well-contoured profile, demonstrated in his professional, social daily behaviour and in his relations with the students. The teacher's interactions with the students lead to a change in paradigm: from the influence of power to the power of influence, from a rapport of subordination to one of partnership." (Schifirneț 1997, 240)

Some other studies analyse the normality degree of an "authority and power in the university field" relationship in Romanian cases.⁶ The results are eloquent proving the fact that the majority of students (70%) see the teacher-student relation as purely didactic. Only 10% think that an authentic communication exists in the university field. At the same time, 12,5% of the students underline the indoctrination means (authority use in excess, compulsory presence, lack of teacher-student dialogue, personal opinions are impossible to issue, lack of empathy, hidden propaganda during courses and seminars, originality

⁶ Teodor Cozma, Mariana Momanu (1997). „Formare și îndoctrinare în spațiul universitar”, in *Câmpul universitar și actorii săi*. Jassy: Editura Polirom, p.116

turn-down, evaluation of the course only as information source, imposing personal opinions of the didactic staff) while 67% of the questioned students believe that the university medium cannot be separated from political influences. The study accentuates the fact that indoctrination source is important: 70% of the students attribute it to an authority teacher personality, 67,5% to the legislative frame, 57,5% to maintaining the same teaching style and 50% believe that the cause is the nature of taught subjects.

The most significant disagreement between students and teachers is the ratio of didactic aptitudes and interpersonal competence when evaluating didactic staff. "While professors accentuate professional, scientific competence is the main condition (most of the times the only one) for promotion, students believe that, without exception, didactic aptitudes are the ones that are the most important, in parallel with a very good professional background. The teacher, students say, is first of all a didactic person, and then a science man, a researcher." (T.Coza & M.Momanu 1997, 117)

While the criterion for didactic qualities occupies the sixth place between the conditions approved by the University Senate for the position of Associate Teacher, the students would like to introduce some compulsory tests of didactic aptitudes. A study developed at „Al.I.Cuza” University of Jassy identified the elements that draw a prestigious teaching staff from the point of view of students. As determinant factors were the following:

1. competence (professionalism) – competence, professional training, professional achievements, creativity, individual work, vast knowledge, passion, experience),
2. capacity of forming relations (positive behaviour towards others, students' appreciation, how he is seen by fellow teachers, communication, open relations),
3. morality (morality , professional ethics, fairness, seriosity, authority, strictness),
4. popularity (reputation, popularity, widely known, prestige),
5. education skill (pedagogical "style", teaching methods, communication, open relations).

We notice that the elements concerning the academic status – academic title, position or time spent in the didactic position are weakly represented as prestige sources.

Among didactic staff competences' types that were identified in the study are: professional competence, social-relational competence,

didactic-pedagogic competence, situational competence, moral-ethic competence, research competence, student relationship competence, interdisciplinary competence.

Does university education need ethics courses? Will the students change their opinion on how to deal with life's moral problems? Is the teacher a moral agent? These questions' answers need elaborate research.

Clark Kerr underlines that the members of the "new generation" of teachers that activate in the present and who sometimes neglect their didactic responsibilities in favour of their own research, do not necessarily arrive in a conflict situation between their personal interest and research ethics. "Knowledge does not only mean power, but at the same time, money, this situation being a first; teaching, firsthand, means knowledge." From the author's point of view, the academic media is moving from the "traditional paradigm" towards the "postmodern paradigm" of academic life. In traditional paradigm, the majority of academic teachers were part of a private community, a centre of life, with social responsibilities. The ethic behaviour was "completed with advice and personal pressure when it was not followed voluntarily". (Idem, 118)

The post modern paradigm or the "new academic culture" is differently built. There is less implication in the academic community and the civic duties. Teachers are more interested in the economical opportunities appearing outside the academic media. "This new academic culture is much more focusing on the personal or group advantages and opportunities", and not on the well-being of the university as a self-governing institution. The major disadvantage of mobilities and academic collaborations is the fact that less and less teachers stay to remain guardians of the institution, while many more "monads exploit the academic medium." (Idem, 10)

C. Kerr believes that the academic world is, maybe, one of the most tolerable and open-minded professional communities, thus leading to a "self-poisoning of the open society", being not willing to efficiently fight against "internal enemies". This world, through its wish to become "more open and be completely free", may soon "be susceptible of disintegration." The author stresses the fact that, in the present, within the universities, the most important is what doesn't get the ethics issues; everything is a particular problem of many interest groups. C. Kerr underlines that, very often, teachers from the academic mediums wish that "ethics discussion should better be left for the

churches” with only one exception – adhering to the scientific truth from the academic medium, here being the didactic activity (transmitting the truth to students and not personal convictions) as well as research activity (truth in scientific research). Here, one can remember the words of William James, according to which there is need of help from the outside of the academic medium, as “a confession has reformed of its own”.

A study of 2003, led by the Research Institute of Academic Education (UCLA) shows that 76% of the students “search for meaning and purpose in life” during their academic period while 56% claim that there never was an opportunity in class to discuss this problem. Three quarters of the interviewed students have expectancies that will never be answered from their teachers. “It is surprising considering that liberal education included, traditionally, character building, preparation for civic duties, youth support in developing personal and ethics values and encouraging them to learn what is really the meaning of life.”⁷

Usually, the teachers’ staff is resistant to questions that engulf the moral and spiritual side of the students, during the academic class. If we take into account that these are the most important years for moral reasoning development and moral behaviour formation, especially when having models to follow, one can truthfully say, that, by neglecting this path, the universities miss out in a great chance of contributing to the moral and humane character of the students.

According to McLennan, the students have spiritual and moral expectations of the teacher at the same time with the expectations of their intellectual development; the teachers must teach, not just transmit knowledge. All these aside, the teacher must maintain the integrity of the taught discipline; he must teach what is appropriate for his domain and must remain within his current abilities; the professor must determine his students to cross subjectivism and relativism, past “what I believe to be internally justified and I must not be criticized” (McLennan 2006, 2-3), the teacher must encourage his students to learn how to adopt an ethical attitude, periodically revised in the light of critical reflection and life experience; the teacher must recognise the fact that to learn “to get to know yourself” is an important part of education of liberal arts, for the students and for the teachers as well;

⁷ Scotty McLennan (2006). „Moral and spiritual inquiry in the academic classroom”, *Journal of College & Character*, vol. VI, no. 4, p.2

the professor must learn how to adopt an emphatic approach to teaching, though which the student could place themselves in the others' place and see the world through the other's eyes. Last but not least, the professor must teach the students not just for security and financial success, but also for marriage/family and civic responsibility.

What the professor *must not do*: not promote his own life philosophy as the only correct one; not to determine the students to feel embarrassed of their own beliefs, but to encourage them to reflect more); not to pressure the students to reveal their personal problems in public; not to categorise students according to colour, race; not to be overly critical and help the students in their reconstruction processes.

Many authors have discussed the interaction method between students and teachers. As the goal of the university is not just to transmit knowledge but also "to help students to developing their intellectual capacity – not just career-wise – but also for their participation in family life and politic field" says Roberts Eric). An adequate method, by some authors, would be "Socrates learning – teaching the students by questioning them and determining them to redefine their position by critical analysis" (Satz, Debra, quoted by Mc Lennan 2007, 2). It is undoubtedly that „the lack of knowledge, culture and education represents a horrible disease that brings only suffering”⁸, eventually; not only for the individual, but also for the entire community.

The Aristotlian approach is another way of maintaining awake the young people's mind to science: "each activity is enhanced by the pleasure specific to each domain, those being more precise are those enjoying their activity."(Aristotle 1988, 249) Therefore, the mode of teaching that aims at the affective side, not just the scientific one, gains much more. But not applied just anyhow. Here is what the philosopher says: for a didactic activity, pleasure coming from other activities is an obstacle. Flute amateurs are incapable of concentrating their attention of a philosophic discussion if they hear someone singing the flute, as they find more pleasure in its sound than in their present activity. The consequence is that the pleasure of hearing the flute cancels the activity of a philosophic discussion. The same thing happens each time someone works in two domains at the same time: the more pleasurable activity eliminates the latter one, reaching its exclusion. That is why,

⁸ Carmen Cozma (2004). *Introducere în aretologie. Mic tratat de etică* (2nd edition). Jassy: Editura Universității „Al. I. Cuza”, p.199

when we are very passionate about an activity, we cannot deal with anything else.” The author of *Nicomachean Ethics* claims that activities differ from each other through their good or bad character, morally speaking, being “activities worth wanting, activities that must be avoided, some that are indifferent, as is the issue on pleasures”: for each activity has its own specific pleasure, the author’s point of view being that that only the activities through which the itself activity is looked for are viable.

Other authors are more pessimistic concerning value implementation at university level to individuals that have already been home or community trained over twenty years. “The best case scenario, the individuals can assimilate critical thinking on what he has inherited and talk in a civilized way about this with others. Morality can emerge from our original communities and can be particular in this sense, but few of us lead their life as if everything is relative. The goal of the moral theory is to explain the experienced moral positions and promote reflecting upon them. It is important to learn that there are mutual exclusive perspectives that have been owned over history, but which are not all correct from a normative point of view.”(McLennan 2006, 3)

Brent Sockness, professor of “Religious studies” at Stratford University, sustains the idea that the university should turn towards stimulating critical thinking in religious aspects as well, as “promoting religious literature would be a commendable objective, as most students are uninformed or badly informed on their own religious traditions (...). if the students were better educated about religion, as a human phenomenon, we would avoid many mistakes that are done daily in the public (...) The goal of academic education is to determine the unique space dedicated to studying, critical interrogation and reflective life.”(McLennan 2006, 9) From the author’s point of view, we should not expect teachers to be upright people, to listen carefully, to be responsible creators of the discipline they teach, to believe that being a professor is a vocation or care about the students in front of them, human beings. It would be advisable from time to time that the teacher use the student’s life experience or even his own in order to elucidate a course issue. The personal point of view is not the interesting part of the method, if the materials from the course are relevant for the students. What is important is that the student exits his own world, a goal that is beneficial morally and spiritual. Moreover, becoming an adult person, a superior human from an Aristotelian point

of view “is normal, as what is most valuable for a child differs from what is most valuable for an adult and what is valuable in the eyes of a vulgar man differs from what is valuable in the eyes of a superior man.”(Aristotle 1988, 252)

In his study, McLennan concludes: „There are many different ways, to engage students in a moral and spiritual interrogation in the class room. Our task in the university is to take this project seriously. We must remember our liberal obligation, even in the big research institutions, which is to help students find meaning in adult life. We must form graduates in order to “promote public good by exercising a positive influence on humanity and civilisation”, by being religiously instructed, ethically sensitive, critical thinking’s higher abilities. They must participate in projects of self-assessment and of emphatic knowledge (...). This is when we will be able to say that we are the worthy heirs and employees of liberal arts, that have always taken care of the development of academy students and civilisation’s survival in a dangerous world.” (McLennan 2006, 2)

If the teacher limits his activity to bland doctoral exposure of accumulated knowledge, “he does not fulfil his mission, as he must awaken new powers, making his science into a living force that enters the student’s spirit and envelop him, opening new horizons and higher, more luminous and noble targets. The University does not have the role of turning young students into savants. It cannot do that, as much more time and painstaking research are needed. The University must teach students with the *scientific working method* and it must awaken in their souls the passion for science and thought”.⁹

To conclude, we just underline that it deserves to turn ourselves to a fundamental opinion statuated in Romanian sociology of education by Dimitrie Gusti, who claims that the academic system must be, first of all, a method that “has as objective to rising the spirits above traditional knowledge, detailed”, in order to make them worthy of the dignity for self-thinking and creating personal ideas.

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⁹ Petre Andrei (1997). „Ce este universitatea și care este menirea ei ?”, in *Câmpul universitar și actorii săi*, op.cit., p.147

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ETHICS AND COMPLIANCE OFFICER'S ROLE IN 'HEALING' ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

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Abstract: Last decades have strongly imposed in the public mind the importance of taking in to account the organizational life's ethical dimension. If in the advanced states the terms of ethical management encouraging organizations to adopt compliance management programs, at ethical and legal level, are constituted in government strategies, in Romania these aspects are still little known. Today's Romanian society largely reflects what does exist, happens or changes in the organizational space. The article sustains the idea of institutionalizing ethics in organizations as a way to making the society 'moral draining'. Management specialists describe several ethics implementation strategies. We have chosen to dwell on the organizational culture changing strategy and creating a moral culture, focusing on the ethics and compliance officer's role. Because managers are 'products' of the organizations that they lead, and their perceptions are influenced by the mental frame promoted by the organizational culture, it is difficult to make a correct diagnosis of the organization and to establish a strategy for change. Ethics and compliance officer, an occupation yet unknown by the Romanian trade nomenclature, is the person who works closely with the manager determining which are the organizational culture's resorts; he or she is the one who, aiming organizational health, contributes to the development, the interpretation and the implementation of ethics policies and programs.

Keywords: ethics management, ethics and compliance officer, organizational culture, code of ethics

Since the early twentieth century in the Western world have been done numerous studies on organizations, from Elton Mayo's research in the years '20-'30, with the behaviorist approach and until current approaches regarding the organizations from the strategic management perspective. Americans were among the first who thought that

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organizations should be seen not only in terms of economic value but also in terms of moral values that must guide their management. At these concerns of managers, psychologists, economists, the philosophers haven't remained uninterested either, contributing and laying the foundation of an ethic applied in management and in the institutionalization of ethics in organizations. The ethical management concept, appeared in USA as a result of corruption scandals that have included large organizations, penetrated in Europe too through England. In Romania, a first attempt of organizations' analysis in terms of ethics is achieved only in 2008 by Valentin Mureșan¹.

Analyzing the ethics management situation in Romanian organizations, through an empirical study done on state universities and companies but also private, the mentioned author observes that here almost weekly one corruption scandal breaks out, stealing is designated, by tradition, as a virtue, and not as a bad habit, and the dominant culture is the one of bad done work and the rejection of rules. The Romanian organizations' dynamics is one of the best indicators of the social change that Romania is passing through: unemployment, bankruptcies, workers mentality, lack of evaluation systems and motivation of staff are just some of the indicators of Romanian society failure. Moreover, in Romania a "problem is management itself"².

According to Mihaela Vlăsceanu today's society is a society of organizations. The society we live in it looks just like the components of the organizations. "Good or bad, our society largely reflects what exists, happens or changes in the organizational space"³. Following this logic, the author argues that the change in society must start from questioning the organizational structures and management practices of organizations.

Recent years have brought frequently in the Romanian public consciousness the importance of taking into account the ethical dimension of organizations. Codes of ethics, ethics education for staff, creating an organizational moral culture, have been raised both by

¹ Valentin Mureșan (2008). *Cercetare pe tema stării managementului etic. Situația managementului etic în România*, <http://www.ccea.ro/index.php/evenimente/4-cercetare-pe-tema-stării-managementului-etice-?Showall=>

² Zoltan Bogathy (2002). *Introducere în psihologia organizațională*. Curs universitar. Timișoara: Tipografia Universității de Vest, p. 6

³ Mihaela Vlăsceanu (2002). *Organizațiile și cultura organizării*. Bucharest: Trei, p.16

academic environments and media. Valentin Mureșan believes that ethical issues in organizations can not be tackled only by laws, rules and regulations. The author states against strict legalistic approach to defining acceptable behavior and proposes the introduction of ethical criteria in the Romanian organizations' strategic plan.

Management specialists describe several strategies for implementing ethics in organizations, but we have chosen to dwell in this article on the strategy of changing the organizational culture and creating a moral culture, and the role of the one responsible for ethics in this difficult process.

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

All organization forms have their own deliberate defined or undefined culture. In the organizational psychology is stated that 'organizations have cultures just as people have personality'. Culture is the core of all organizational networks. It influences and is influenced by strategy, structure, system, personnel and skills. It is the identifier of an organization.

The organizational culture's study field has a relatively recent history, the term beginning to be used after the year 1980. The interest in organizational culture is explained by the fact that the world community in the current epoch is marked by processes of globalization and informatization of human activities. The importance of studying organizational culture is given by the practical capacities shown by this variable which is used, more often, in the development of organization's performances. Important changes that took place in the socio-economic space require changes to the objectives, structures and methods used in organizations.

There are different approaches to organizational culture. Over time many definitions have been made for the organizational culture term, each of these highlighting some of its components.

Mihaela Vlăsceanu (2002, 49-51) identifies three dominant perspectives of approach of the organizational culture:

- Unitary or integrative perspective, which defines organizational culture in terms of values, of interpretation shared by all members of the organization. This focuses on studying myths, symbols, ceremonies, rituals as an expression of cultural coherence.

- A perspective of differentiation and multiple meanings, according to which is impossible to find the same cultural manifestations across the organization and supports the existence of multiple cultures that represent the source of conflict or the organizational change.
- The ambiguity perspective, according to which the meanings that people give to things are in a constantly changing process depending on the situations, individuals or organizational life cycles.

Whatever the perspective of organizational culture approach is, it is kept the basic idea that behind the organization is a whole universe of meanings and interpretations which guide the actions and relations between people. The author stresses that in the social construction of the organizational reality an important role is played by the belief system, values, ideologies, rules, ceremonies, whose knowledge provides managers with a basis for understanding how to influence organizational change. Adopting a strategy for organizational change requires a subtle approach that aims the general orientation of events or of the future of the organization and which can not ignore the collective ethos as a theme of change.

Nicoletta Ferro believes that the organizational culture is rather the unconscious result of values imposed by the founders of the organization in question and the determiner example offered by policy makers. These elements are combined in the corporate culture, which is partly codified, partly implicit. Nicoletta Ferro cites studies that claim that this organizational culture is strongly influenced by national characteristics and the culture's importance within the organization is a fundamental one. Organizational culture can't be put in the background, it underlies the very existence of the organization and it is a key element of organizational excellence. "The distinctive elements of the organizational culture are part of the system of meanings, values, perceptions, behaviors, symbols and rituals that individualize the company in the business environment"⁴.

Organizational culture's core is the national culture because rules, norms, values found within an organization have their origin in the

⁴ Nicoleta Ferro (2006). „Diviziunea morală în afacerile internaționale: cadru descriptiv”, in Daniel Dăianu, Radu Vrâncănu (coord.), *Frontierele etice ale capitalismului*. Jassy: Polirom, p.109

rules, norms and values promoted at national culture's level. According to Geert Hofstede⁵, organizational culture is:

- holistic, being more than the component parts' sum;
- historically determined because it reflects the evolution of the organization over time;
- grounded in social terms, being created and kept by the organization's members;
- connected to elements subject to anthropology (symbols, rituals);
- hard to change over time, despite individuals' fluctuation.

Regardless of the addressing perspective of the organizational culture, that it is predominantly economic, psychological or philosophical, culture is a priority for managers. Current organization is not a closed universe anymore, relatively stable, but an open system that can not be independent of the environment in which it operates, environment from which receives stimulations, opportunities or restrictions. Organizational culture's change is not an end in itself but should be seen as a natural process having as main purpose the maintaining of a competitive position in the action environment.

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE'S CHANGE AND THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF ETHICS

Organizational activities' dynamics imposes at some point the need of some changes of the cultural paradigms because low performances achieved compared with the planed ones, because of the important differences between strategy and what is actually happening in the organization, because of hostility to the innovative elements, introduction of new management methods and techniques or because the changes in the economic, technological and social environments are sizable.

Some authors, like Menzel⁶, believe that in order to build 'organizations of integrity' is required to stand on ethics management and he describes four approach strategies: the strategy *based on*

⁵ Geert Hofstede (1996). *Managementul structurilor multiculturale*. Bucharest: Editura Economică

⁶ See Valentin Mureșan (2009). *Managementul eticii în organizații*. Bucharest: Editura Universității, p. 41

compliance (based on the formulation and enforcement of ethical rules in the organization), the strategy of *including in the cost* (unethical actions are treated as a cost factor which has to be reduced), the strategy of *learning* (emphasis is placed on ethical training and ethical provisions assimilations) and the strategy of *creating an organizational culture of moral nature*. According to Menzel, the fourth strategy involves all the other three strategies and is considered to be the most promising.

The same methods used to maintain an organizational culture can serve at its change too. Culture can be changed by: changing management objectives, changing procedures for resolving critical situations, changing the criteria for recruiting new members, the promotion criteria in the organization and reward criteria, changing organizational rituals and ceremonies.

Antonio Argandona⁷ considers that the design of a program aimed at changing organizational culture is an art. The author mentions a number of conditions to be accomplished by an efficient program: it should be adapted to the organization's particularities, it must anticipate the areas in which is most likely to appear ethical problems in order to prevent and resolve them, to stimulate a ethical dialogue process, to have an open and continuous character.

A successful cultural change requires understanding the previous culture: a new culture can not develop without both managers and employees to understand where to start from. It is important to support employees who behave ethically and to identify the most effective subcultures within the organization and use them as an example. The prospect of a new culture serves as a guiding principle for change but it will not make miracles. Zoltan Boghathy believes that inducing change in the culture of an organization is a difficult action, whose duration is measured in years and involves a high degree of difficulty, requiring as a prerequisite to trigger a crisis that is based on the failure or inadequacy of the old assumptions and values (Boghathy 2002, 22).

Cultural change takes shapes and variable size depending on the state at which it occurs in the organization's development. G.J. Rossouw and L.J. van Vuuren⁸ note that organizations today know an evolutionary process in terms of ethics management and he identifies 5

⁷ Antonio Argandona (2006). *Despre sisteme de management etic, social și de mediu*, in Daniel Dăianu, Radu Vrânceanu (coord.), *op.cit.* p. 201

⁸ See Valentin Mureșan (2009), *op.cit.* p. 42

stages: the immorality stage (organizations are not interested in moral issues which they consider impediments of current activities), reagent stage (organizations show a formal involvement in moral issues), compliance stage (disciplinary measures are introduced), integrity stage (ethical values are part of an ethical organizational culture) and total alignment stage (ethics becomes part of the organization's management).

An ethics management system consists of a set of internal efforts to formulate, plan and implement certain policies that will lead the organization to better fulfill its ethical duties, and employees to evolve in terms of ethics. If the program succeeds could bring a change of culture, new work routines, new information and communication models and new stimulation systems. Changing organizational culture is considered by Argandona as 'the key of success in terms of ethics'.

According to Corina Iulia Voicu⁹, in order to ensure a successful plan, its initiator must, throughout the planning and conduct, respect some rules: to analyze in advance the organization and the need for change, to create a vision shared by all members, to support the role of leader, to create a sense of urgency, to create an implementation plan, to develop structures that allow the change and then to institutionalize it. But the realization by managers of a real portrait of the organization is a difficult action because managers are "products" of the organizations they lead and their perceptions are influenced by the mental frame promoted by the organizational culture. They find it difficult to keep the required distance for a fair assessment of the situation. Managers may conclude that, as shown, the organization is totally appropriate to the outside context, prerequisite to enter into a vicious circle that becomes a barrier for implementing a strategy for change. Romanian research¹⁰ revealed that managers, instead of becoming agents of change in organizations have proved themselves to be the main resistant to change factors.

To develop an ethical organizational culture is needed, in Menzel's view, a exemplary management team in what concerns moral aspects, to achieve a lucid analysis of the organizational culture, the practice of

⁹ Corina Iulia Voicu (2008). *Obstacolele schimbării valorilor în munca de asistență socială*, in Ion Copoeru, Nicoleta Szabo (coord.). *etică și cultură profesională*. Cluj-Napoca: Casa Cărții de Știință, p. 349

¹⁰ See Laurențiu Maricuțoiu (2004). „Eficiența organizațiilor între acceptarea schimbării și managementul dominant. O analiză transversală”, in *Revista de Psihologie Organizațională*. Vol. IV, nr. 1. Jassy: Polirom, p. 94

ethical training, the development and implementation of ethical codes for establishing ethical audit. But for new activities we need new professions, here intervening the role of the ethics and compliance officer.

ETHICS AND COMPLIANCE OFFICER

The ethics and compliance officer profession, still foreign to the Romanian trade nomenclature, was first introduced in the U.S., country ranked as the most advanced in terms of ethical management. In the U.S., encouraging organizations to adopt compliance management programs, on ethical and legal plans, is done in governmental strategies. Here the ethics and compliance officer has found a place in the executive suite of an organization since 1977, as a result of the scandals involving companies that have bribed foreign officials and politicians to gain or maintain the gain in business. In 1992 a professional association was founded ("Ethics and Compliance Officer Association") which sets the values, mission and powers of this new job.

Ethics officer plays an active role in the work of ethical management of the organization, meaning that 'all activities and measures aimed at institutional organization of ethics for the creation of organizations of integrity' (Mureșan 2009, 39). Ethical management's goal is to strengthen morality as an essential part of culture and purpose of the organization. Argandona maintains that ethical management is not a substitute for a personal ethical conduct, neither for an organizational culture that involves an ethical behavior, but an effective mean to achieve these goals by directing them to an organizational excellence.

According to the emphasis of *Business Ethics. A Manual for Managing a Responsible Business Enterprise in Emerging Market Economies*¹¹, ethical officer's mission is the integration at all levels of the code of ethics and company values, and also ensuring compliance with rules of conduct. For this the ethics officer works closely with the management, recommends rules of conduct within the organization, and in case of reports of ethical problems, he analyses the situation and

¹¹ See Daniela Tatiana Corodeanu (2007). *Etica în administrația publică. Dileme etice în organizații și instrumente de rezolvare a acestora*. Jassy: Tehnopress, p.139

proposes ways of approach. Ethics officer's responsibilities include administration and development of ethical values of the organization, ensuring compliance with ethical rules of business conduct, in all organization's structures and at all levels, coordination and supervision of the development process, interpretation and implementation of ethics policies and programs, the activity programs' development concerning ethics code. Ethics officer is in charge of organizing training sessions on the line of ethics and compliance with rules of the organization, and he also conducts regular communications concerning ethics. He deals with the administration of the program of reports on violations of ethical standards, policies and organization's procedures. He is the one who determines which are the organizational culture's springs, the one who determines the risks that the organization is facing and he prevents breaches of ethical standards.

Within the organization the ethics officer meets the role of 'moral expert', he is the one who, according to Valentin Mureșan, possesses 'the mysteries of ethical decision', he knows how to hold an ethical audit process or of collective moral decision, he thinks morally more mature and precise than other specialists, all based on specific experience gained in the organization he serves.

CONCLUSIONS

After the fall of communism, our country went through a period of institutional vacuum following the collapse of the old centralized system. This state has allowed many individuals and organizations to act immoral, without fear of any sanctions. Widespread corruption and immoral behavior that still characterizes many of the Romanian organizations can be seen as features of institutional fragility and lack of democratic references.

Valentin Mureșan notes regarding the ethical management's status in Romanian organizations, that they are situated at the stage of immorality, total disregard for ethical dimensions, in which prevails a culture such as 'we live in a world of wolves', with tendency to move to the stage so-called reactive, in which managers start to recognize unethical behavior risks. According to the author, many of the Romanian organizations still show lack of interest regarding ethical issues, subordinating their activity to the profit obsession. There are also organizations which, because they are required to adopt a code of ethics are in an uncertain stage of development, this way keeping the

gap between words and deeds. The conclusion drawn by the author is that “in Romania the birth certificate of ethics management has not yet been signed” (Mureșan 2009, 68).

In this context, the completion of the staff scheme of Romanian organizations with the position of ethics officer is a difficult process. This requires the modification of the organization’s structure and we expect for many organizations to oppose such an approach, delegating this responsibility to other already existing functions, citing bureaucracy, duplication of tasks, and small businesses insufficient activity, limited personnel and lack of resources.

But the benefits of creating the position of ethics and compliance officer in an organization’s structure is obtained on long-term, by establishing and maintaining an ethical climate that will lead to the accumulation of the organization’s reputation capital.

Despite the difficulties of implementation due to resistance to change or lack of financial resources, we consider that the proposal to include the ethics and compliance officer profession in the Romanian trade nomenclature is evidence of overcoming the mentality of the communist regime in which were promoted ‘ethics and socialist equity’. Only through the institutionalization of ethics in organizations ‘moral sanitation’ of Romanian society can be achieved.

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THE CONTRIBUTION OF PHILOSOPHY AND PSYCHOLOGY IN THE ETHICAL DECISION MAKING PROCESS

DANIELA LIVIA DOLTU*

Abstract: This article aims to explore the relationship between morality and organizational culture with reference to the process of ethical decision making and to the cooperation between philosopher and psychologist for the improvement of ethical climate within a public institution. Firstly, we introduce the notion of organizational culture emphasizing the importance of moral values and their role in building a true ethical climate. Secondly, we focus on the study of ethical decision making. The process is examined from the perspective of the interaction between human personality and different elements of organizational culture. Philosophy and psychology differently approach this problem. Our intention is to bridge the gap between the two perspectives, by demonstrating their belonging to the same continuum as well as the need for knowledge from both fields in order to have a complete overview of its internal mechanisms. Deontological and utilitarian theories fail to explain by themselves the decision making process and so psychology does: moral development theories, the leadership type, and emotions have on their basis a personal moral philosophy. We will also consider the influence of social groups on individual decision making.

Keywords: organizational culture, moral values, decision making, social influence

Values, norms, moral principles, ethics, gradually became part of the vocabulary of any professional who is carrying out activities in the public and private organizations. Moreover, deviations from moral rules and the emphasis made by the media in highlighting the ethical aspects that had been violated, acts like a catalyst which triggers a continuous adaptation of the areteo-deontic approach within the institutions.

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Understanding the meaning of the used terms, creating a coherent and accurate organizational philosophy, understanding the complex realities of organizations, all of these involve the intervention of specialists from many fields: psychology, philosophy, economics, education, etc.

Starting with the 1960's, in the Anglo-American area it has been observed a revival of the study and application of ethics in human resources management, becoming a part of most scientific work. Once this transformation occurred, the need for the specialists in philosophy assistance was observed. The new realities have also influenced the way that organizational culture is defined and evaluated. Now more than ever before, moral values are considered to be essential elements of the organizational culture.

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Providing a definition that summarizes all the acceptances of the 'organizational culture' collocation, can be a laborious intercession. Many authors say that it is hard to intercept the meaning of this expression, because it refers to what is specific to an organization, distinguishing it in a certain socio-cultural framework. A common idea that derives from the most founded definitions is that the organizational culture consists of a more or less coherent and articulated set of values, meanings, behaviors and organizational practices, that represent the main interpretation grid of the organizational reality.

As Zoltan Bogáthy stressed out¹, each organization is governed by certain principles or values that get to be known by all members of an organization and they tell everyone "what is our mission" or "what is important to us". From this values, more or less obviously, more or less expressed, the management philosophy of the organization is composed; these values representing the organization's "soul".

Culture influences all other components of an organization which is viewed as a whole. Thus, culture is responsible for the emergence of rules governing behavior in different situations; they will be applied as response to a wide range of phenomena that occurs in the organizational framework, defining the communication style, the

¹ Zoltan Bogáthy (2002), "Valori în lumea muncii și în mediile organizaționale" in *Revista de psihologie organizațională* 4(1), Iassy: Polirom, p. 29.

reward policy and, in general, characterizing the organization's strategy. As we specified in the beginning of this work, it is very important that the terms - part of an active vocabulary of a professional in organizational culture - have to be clearly defined in order to be correctly used. Perhaps the most common terms are those of 'virtue' and 'values'.

Philosophers give a central significance to these two concepts, because they direct the way that people should behave, what they should do. Virtue is the norm, the general rule, which cannot be derived from exceptional circumstances, for it is the natural way of order; they are basic values, moral qualities, only in connection with norms, basic ethical precepts².

A number of theoretical approaches determine in the organizational culture framework the moral culture. This is defined as being "the entire organizational and inter-generational conduct, built by a group of leaders and their employees, [...] to show which are the boundaries between good and evil, and also the principles or rules of a proper behavior."³ The dichotomies between good and evil are based on a complexity of concepts and beliefs that are generalized and codified within some cultures or groups, thereby serving to regulate the conduct of its members.

A 'healthy' and effective organizational culture implies, first of all, the harmonization of its values. The "values harmony" basically means two things: the internal harmony of the organization's values and the harmony between organization's values and its members conduct⁴.

Values promoted by organizations are not rigid, but rather very dynamic. Not only that each culture has its own hierarchy, but within these hierarchies values may also vary depending on many factors.

ETHICAL DECISION MAKING

One of the areas in which the study of ethics intervenes, is in the ethical decision making. This work will present the factors involved in

² Carmen Cozma (2001). *Introducere în aretologie. Mic tratat de etică*. Jassy: Editura „Universității Al. I. Cuza”, p.78

³ John C. Thoms (2008). "Ethical Integrity in Leadership and Organizational Moral Culture", *Leadership* 4 (4), p.421

⁴ Zoltan Bogáthy (2004). *Manual de psihologia muncii și organizațională*. Jassy: Polirom, p.35

this process, aiming to make a bridge between philosophical and psychological approaches.

Although there are opinions according to which the study of ethics in an organization is redundant because moral values are taught in childhood or that we live in a world where non-values are first (winning at any cost, vices, false heroes, etc.), we also reject this assumption by saying that a revival of the “good fund” of man is absolutely necessary and possible by the rediscovery, defense, development of “moral sense” which, “continuously exists in a latent mode” (Cozma 2001, 56). In support of this idea education comes, offering ways of application of knowledge so that people can function better in society and thus they are able to make ethical decisions more accurately.

Ethics training determines a growth in the individual’s sensitivity towards the moral implications of personal decisions; it supports situations analysis from ethical view, so that the final decision to be consistent with moral values learned during the development of human personality.

Those who make ethical decisions use a set of fundamental moral values which help them to act in an intelligent and consistent way. Moral values influence the problem identification, definitions and settlement. The most frequently used values are: caring, honesty, responsibility, promises keeping, excellence, loyalty, impartiality, integrity, respect, citizenship⁵.

People have to take moral decisions daily on what is good or bad, right or wrong, scarcely using these sets of moral values or, in some cases, ethical tools. Sociologist J. S. Coleman⁶ argues that social actors have a range of qualities, norms, values at a t_0 time moment, and these will cause some structuring of social actions at a t_1 temporal moment. The values system’s consistency is therefore particularly important. To illustrate the link between individuals’ morality and organization’s morality, we will use one of the metaphors proposed by Lynch et al: “When someone hurts himself at his little finger, the whole body suffers until that wound heals.”⁷ The same happens with deviations

⁵ Mary Ellen Guy (1990). *Ethical Decision Making in Everyday Work Situations*. Westport: Greenwood Press, pp.26-27

⁶ See Adrian Neteđu (2005). *Fundamente teoretice la o sociologie a deciziei*. Jassy: Editura “Universității Al. I. Cuza”, pp.52-53

⁷ Thomas D. Lynch et al. (2002). “Productivity and the Moral Manager”, *Administration & Society* 34, pp.351-353

from moral standards of an institution's employees: individual deviations from moral norms are 'paid' by all the other employees through public image damage of the institution.

In daily activity we often face situations where we do not know which is the most correct decision that we can make in concrete situations that involve either a conflict between two principles or ethical values, or a conflict that appears in an ethical principle or value. These are ethical dilemmas⁸.

The most common ethical values or principles at which moral dilemmas refer to are:

- To whom do I have a duty - to myself, family, friends, colleagues, institution, future generations, etc.?
- How can I minimize the possibility of causing any harm – physically, economically, psychologically, an actual harm towards a potential one, to harm more people or only a small number etc.?
- What is fair or right – everyone should receive an equal proportion or those who deserve more or maybe those who have a greater need should receive more?
- How can I protect the rights of others – the right to life, to information, safety or health?
- How can I remain an honest, trustworthy, incorruptible person?

Moral dilemmas place the one who has to make an ethical decision in a position where the values or ethical principles discussed above are in conflict.

How a person relates to, or creates an ethical dilemma may depend both on the structure of that person's values and on its adherence to certain ethical principles. In this case we want to present the ethical decision making process both in terms of utilitarian perspective and according to the theory of moral duty.

The term 'utility' was introduced in the philosophical doctrine by Bentham as designating that property of which object tends to produce benefits, advantages, pleasure, a state of well or happiness or to prevent errors, pain, evil or unhappiness of the one in question.

Summarizing, by utilitarianism is understood "The greatest good for most people" and "the end justifies the means". Utilitarian people

⁸ *Encyclopaedia of Business Ethics and Society* (2007). SAGE Publications.
http://www.sage-e-reference.com/ethics/Article_n299.html

consider that possible results of a decision should be reviewed in light of potential beneficiaries and people likely to be disadvantaged.

Utilitarian thinking is specific to the rational pattern of decision making, but in reality, people do not have access to all data and therefore is impossible for them to foresee all possible consequences arising from their actions. An utilitarian must always have justifications to do the least bad thing that is necessary in order to prevent the worst thing that could happen otherwise, in given circumstances (including, of course, the worst thing that someone else could do)⁹. Consequently, this theory has a limited validity in the way that the end cannot always justify the means and that, in its shadow, serious breaches of ethics can occur.

Theories of ethics are most often associated with Immanuel Kant's philosophy, in terms of the categorical imperative: "Act so that the maximum of your will can always worthwhile as a principle of a universal legislation". Another famous statement of the German philosopher is that "man is an end in himself; he can never be used by anyone (not even by God) only as a means". By this last statement, Kant's ethics puts in the foreground the respect for individuals. Instead of requiring the verification of the principle's universality, we are asked in a less direct way to act so that we respect or, at least, not to affect the ability of others to act. The philosopher believes that each individual is both a source of laws, but also subject to laws, in which each is an autonomous being in the sense that he gives his own law, maintaining the condition that his laws have to respect the autonomy of others¹⁰.

The theory of duty directly deals with utilitarianism, scarcely by its categorical imperative: humanity has an intrinsic value, and therefore fundamental rights that can't be violated by treating people just like means of achieving goals is denied both their value and their fundamental rights.

A strict application of the categorical imperative is considered by many authors as a very difficult one. Ideals promoted by Kant's theory are striking, in human resources management practice, by considering people as 'resources' of the company, so means of achieving a goal, namely profit maximization.

⁹ Bernard Williams (2002). *Moralitatea: o introducere în etică*. Bucharest: Punct, pp.108-109

¹⁰ Onora O'Neill (2006). "Etica lui Kant", in Peter Singer (ed.). *Tratat de etică*. Iassy: Polirom, pp.207-208

Sociological theories of decision mention the utilitarianism and ethics intervention in the mixed pattern – a mix between the rational pattern and the incremental one (or of successive adjustments). For example, A. Etzioni proposes the operationalization of the mixed pattern, the two philosophical principles intervening at the alternatives analysis stage, supporting the rejection of some of them: by the help of utilitarianism, the means sufficiency is assessed and the governors' respect of basic values (Netedu 2005, 67-73).

Analyzing how individuals make decisions when faced with ethical dilemmas, researchers have imposed two patterns: a pattern of consequences contingency which postulates that the result's moral intensity is the most important and an interaction pattern that takes into account the interaction between the individual and contextual factors in decision making¹¹.

Many socio-psychological approaches of decision making emphasize upon interaction between personality and social factors. As a matter of fact, these two can be segregated only by scholastic reasons: between a person and social environment there is a continuum of influence and mutual determination.

In this study, we want to make just a brief note of those mentioned by the literature that we have studied, however, performing a selection. The following lines will present a number of factors specific to individuals' personality such as age, genre, moral development, experienced or anticipated emotions, locus of control.

Although some researches¹² found a positive relation between age and moral behavior or between ethical decision making and education, empirical evidences are limited. Some linked ethics by tenure and ethical climate, subject over 50 years old and minimum ten years work experience view themselves as being more ethically.

Although there is no a general accord on influence of genre over decision making, it seems like women define themselves through types of relations they are involved in. In addition of that, they tend to make

¹¹ See Richard Coughlan and Terry Connolly. *Investigating unethical decision at work: justification and emotion in dilemma resolution*. http://www.entrepreneur.com/tradejournals/article/188064186_5.html

¹² Denis P. Wittmer (2005). „Developing a behavioral model of ethical decision making in organizations: conceptual and empirical research”, in George H. Frederickson and Richard K. Ghore (eds.). *Ethics in Public Management*, New York: M. E. Sharpe, p.51

those decision which conserve the relations acting in a caring way (Wittmer 2005, 55).

We discuss individual's moral development by Lawrence Kohlberg theory. His concepts have been taken over in many fields such as psychology, philosophy, pedagogy, political science, business administration, and more recently public administration. The stadiality proposed by Kohlberg explains the process by which individuals deal with ethical dilemmas and, at the same time, he doesn't attempt to determine the morality or value of any person. Moral judgement refers to how a person thinks and not to what that person is thinking of.

Kohlberg's theory suggests a morality evolution in three stages: preconventional, conventional and post conventional, each having two under stages. The author motivates that these stages are hierarchically in nature, that individuals progress irreversible from the basic level to the highest and that they are valid regardless of the culture's influence and they are not dependent of any age.

L. Kohlberg summarizes his theory like this: level I is that of a preconventional person, for which rules and social expectations are perceived as being outside the self. Level II is that of the conventional person: 'self' identifies or interiorizes rules and expectations of others, particularly of those holding authority. Level III characterizes the post conventional person. Now the individual is differentiating himself from rules and expectations of others. Values are defined in terms of personal principles.

A study conducted by Sharie McNamee on a population of students from U.S. had the conclusion that, in terms of moral development, the averages obtained by subjects are normally distributed (according to Gauss curve), the average being in the first understage of the II stage: conformity, mutual interpersonal relations and expectations. Expectations of others become important for the individual; entourage's preoccupations can be more important than someone's own interests. To do what is right is to meet the expectations of the close ones: the individual does what is good in order to get approval (Lynch et al. 2002, 354).

If some patterns, which aim to offer explanations concerning the decision making process, have highlighted the importance of the consequences concerning individuals' choices justification, others have taken in consideration cultural and individual components, as theories of decision making which emphasize experimented or anticipated emotions. One of these emotions, which attracted a wide interest, is the

regret, “negative emotion based on cognition, which we experience when we realize or imagine that our present situation would have been better if we had acted differently” (Coughlan et al. 2009).

Another important emotion in decision making is the relief - a feeling experienced by those who are no longer burdened by a stressful situation. Relief was described as a basic emotion which can motivate individuals to act in a particular way. It can especially occur in situations where the fear of anxiety is present. Ethical dilemmas are often accompanied by the anxiety of decision makers who need to consider different alternatives and consequences determined by them.

Many decisions are affected by the expected satisfactions to be experienced after making them. Utilitarianism is a pattern of choice in which the results’ anticipated value play a key role in many decisions, and the role of anticipating satisfaction should not be ignored.

Locus of control, another individual influence on ethical decision making, is a relative perception over ones control on his/ hers life. By Rotter’s theory, individuals place themselves on a scale between internal and external locus of control, where internal means the perception of a person to have full control over his own life. The more internal locus of control one has, the more ethical decision makes (Wittmer 2005, 59).

The position in the organization of individuals makes the link with social influence. Leadership’s theories make a difference between the ethics of a leader and his leadership style. These differences depend on personal values, moral development stage, conscious intentions, freedom of choice and the use of ethical and non-ethical behavior (Thoms 2008, 419-422).

Depending on the position in an organization’s hierarchy, people have different views on ethics. Leadership implies a range of cognitive challenges which if not addressed properly, can lead to ethical errors. The tendency to easily abandon personal principles is what stands at the origin of many ethics violations, rather than lack of character strength or courage, or personal virtues. Therefore, morality is directly influenced by personal interests rather than ignorance.

As we announce above, ethical decision making is on intersection of individuals with their social environment, which in an organization is called organizational culture. Observing a group of people, we note the similarity of beliefs and rules to which they relate. This remains valid for the values unity and moral principles that govern work

groups. Each individual contributes to the formation of organizations' moral culture with a personal philosophy of life.

Organizational culture influences individuals in two main ways: forcing them to accept something (e.g. a point of view, a decision) or by convincing them to endorse. The process by which the group puts pressure on members to comply with rules is known in social psychology as social influence process. In the social influence processes, common rules to which individuals comply represent more than the sum of individual beliefs. Social psychology refers to the normalization, conformism, processes of the deviation tolerated as factors involved in group norms creation and shaping¹³.

Normalization necessarily involves a group in which members have mutual influence. What is characteristic for this social influence phenomena consists of the lack of rules established in advance, which the group might impose to individuals, without himself to be sensitive to their position. Lack of majority consensus regarding the correct answer makes members, unsure of their responses, to exercise influence over one another and to end by adopting a common standard that meets everyone's adhesion and represents that group's position.

If in what concerns normalization, the individual accepts the majority group's pressure, regarding conformism it adheres to group's norm by its own will, desiring to manifestly agree with the group, otherwise risking exclusion. Psychologist Leon Festinger intercepted the conditions which determine *public conformism* from the ones that lead to private acceptance. According to his view, the attraction felt by individual towards the group decides influence's degree at private level. Depending on how much the individual is attracted to the membership group, the private change of attitude will be more or less significant. This effect is mediated by the person's desire to maintain a positive relationship with the other group members. Conversely, groups that use punishment or punishment threat for getting their members to obey rules obtain complacency and not private acceptance.

Analyzing this situation from the adhesion prospect at a set of values and moral norms, conformism can explain the individual's subjection to group pressure even when his system of values comes in flagrant contradiction with the new requirements: that's how 'good' people come to commit 'bad' acts. Also by social conformity to group norms are assumed a set of moral values by an individual and of some

¹³ Ștefan Boncu (2002). *Psihologia influenței sociale*. Jassy: Polirom, p.52

principles that are very resistant to any modeling from outside. The proposal of new moral norms sets must take into account these psychological realities.

In order to determine organizational culture's alteration of some components is necessary to assess relationships within the group and identification of reference people (stakeholders) who could become agents of change.

Normalization and conformism are only two aspects of contextual factors, namely the presence of others, that influence decisions making.

People also make decisions when they are in cooperation situations. Almost every problem has multiple alternatives. Each perspective depends on how the problem is defined and by the individual priorities.

We will present in the following lines how decisions are made in groups. Making a decision implies solving a problem, reaching an agreement between group members. Experimental researches¹⁴ showed that, regardless of the procedure used for making a group decision is likely the appearance of the so-called effect of 'risky-shift'. It consists of the fact that groups can make more risky decisions than the ones that would be made by a single individual and may be manifested in different forms, such as:

- a) *decision-polarization* - phenomenon indicating that the position of the group in the final decision is more radical than the initial views of the group members. Thus, as the debate of the issue on which must be decided becomes more heated, participants' views are radicalized, getting further and further from the initial positions;
- b) *group thinking*, which represents uncritical decision making, determined by different factors, like: the high degree of group cohesion, leader's authority, a group's major threat perception from outside, time pressure.

CONCLUSIONS

New social demands emphasize the moral component of activity performance within an organization. The need of changing and improvement of moral culture is more present than ever. The need for

¹⁴ See Eugen David (2006). *Psihosociologia grupurilor umane* (Note de curs). Bucharest: Spiru Haret, pp.44-45

organizational ethics is claimed by both its inside and outside, and the moral decision's impact is becoming more ample, starting to be felt by the entire society.

Our work aimed to demonstrate that is possible and it is even necessary that ethics and psychology professionals to cooperate. Building a moral vision of an organization, changing organizational culture, understanding the ethical decision making process must rely on knowledge of the two related areas and the need for collaboration with sociologists and psychologists is proven.

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