

Preferred Type of Organizational Culture in Light of Surveys of Employees Operating in an Agile Work Environment

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Abstract

Background: Modern times, which are often characterized as volatile and unpredictable, are prompting companies to use agile working methods. Agility is described as an answer to the challenges faced by today's organizations, as it offers the opportunity to respond almost instantly to customer demand and minimize waste. One of the elements supporting employees performing professional tasks under agile working conditions is a favorable organizational culture. Creating the right working conditions for employees, in line with their preferences, can contribute to their well-being and productivity, and thus to the success of the entire enterprise.

Research objectives: The purpose of this article is to identify and present the preferences of employees performing their professional tasks under agile working conditions in the area of organizational culture dimensions (in accordance with the typology of K. Cameron and R. Quinn). This article presents the results of an empirical study conducted among employees of IT companies that are part of the ICT cluster of Central Poland.

Methodology: This article is empirical in nature. The survey was conducted in January–March 2022 in 8 ICT enterprises that are part of the ICT cluster of Central Poland. All enterprises participating in the survey were large enterprises. The survey included 249 members of agile teams performing their professional tasks under agile working conditions. The survey was conducted using a proprietary research questionnaire.

Results: The results of this study showed that according to members of agile task forces, the preferred type of organizational culture is the market type, according to K. Cameron and R. Quinn's typology. These employees prefer it when stability and control prevail in the organization, and they are required to comply with numerous formal rules and regulations. They prefer work characterized by immutability, orderliness, stability, and increased control. The success of an organization is measured in terms of market share and penetration, competitive pricing and being a leader, and as a result, the organization is mainly oriented to its position in the environment and differentiation.

Originality: This article is an original and valuable resource for both those with real influence on the functioning of employees in agile work environments and members of agile teams, making an important contribution to the field of research on the functioning of employees in agile work environments in the context of their preferred organizational culture solutions.

Keywords organizational culture, agility, agile working conditions, employee well-being.

INTRODUCTION

The conditions in which modern organizations operate are described as unstable, volatile, and unpredictable, which has to do with the fact that these organizations operate in an unpredictable environment. Therefore, in order to cope with this unpredictability, every modern organization should closely and continuously observe changes in its near and further environment, which will allow it to take actions that contribute to its development and success. The key is to treat these changes as opportunities rather than threats. Volatility in the business environment has a direct impact on the formation of strategy, structure, and organizational culture and is crucial to it. Accordingly, the adaptability of organizations, related to the ability to adapt to changes in the environment, such as responding quickly to customer demand, reacting quickly to the actions of competitors, as well as being flexible and innovative, becomes particularly important in today's reality (Samuel-Idzikowska, 2023). One of the answers to the above-mentioned challenges facing modern organizations is the introduction of agility, manifested primarily as the organization's ability to monitor the business environment and recognize the opportunities and threats flowing from it (Trzcielinski, 2007). Another key element that makes up the success of an organization operating in times of uncertainty is a specific view of how employees function. Just as the organization's environment is dynamically changing, so are the preferences of employees regarding the work environment in which they are expected to function. These

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expectations may relate to working conditions in general, compensation, but also to the organizational culture cultivated in the company. The author of this article assumes that in order for an organization to function efficiently, it is necessary to look at its function from the perspective of a system, which takes into account both aspects of its environment and a look at the solutions used in the organization that support employees in effectively achieving its goals. One of the determinants supporting the functioning of employees in an organization is organizational culture. In view of the above, the purpose of this article is to present the preferences of employees performing their professional tasks under agile work conditions in the area of specific dimensions of organizational culture, in accordance with the typology of K. Cameron and R. Quinn. The presented research results can be a valuable source of knowledge for those who have a real impact on the functioning of employees in agile work conditions.

THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

The theoretical and conceptual background for the considerations carried out in this article is the systems approach to the functioning of organizations. It is based on two assumptions, formed in the 1950s, about the perception of the organization as a socio-technical system (Davis & Trist, 1978). First, each organization serves a specific purpose, and achieving this purpose requires active activity on the part of employees. At the same time, the desired result consists of the action of both the social and technical systems in the enterprise. These systems coexist with each other, so that the results achieved can be considered functions of their joint activities. What is worth emphasizing here is the involvement of both these systems in achieving the desired goal and their mutual alignment. Secondly, the socio-technical system has been embedded in a specific environment, which influences it through cultural values, existing traditions, etc. This approach may suggest that the socio-technical system is located within a larger system. It may imply that there is a constant exchange between what is happening in the wider environment. The boundary between this environment and individual systems is highly permeable, so it can be expected that if something fundamentally important occurs in society, it will cause inevitable changes in the organization (Rudolf, 1988). The author of the present study assumes that for the effective functioning of any organization, the interaction of both elements from the social and technical spheres of the organization is needed, taking into account the factors that act on it in the environment. Organizational culture is seen by the author as an element of the social sphere of the organization, which is also an important determinant supporting the functioning of the employees employed in the organization.

Although the first definition of organizational culture by Jacque appeared in the 1950s, special interest in this issue, both by scholars and management practitioners, came in the 1980s, when it was identified as one of the factors for success and building competitive advantage of enterprises (Białas et al., 2023). Nowadays in the literature from the field of organization and management sciences one can find more than a dozen definitions of organizational culture, which are the result of many years of research and analysis on this issue. One can also encounter the opinion that the term culture is one of the most ambiguous, variously interpreted and therefore variously defined concepts. For example, Schein defines organizational culture as a certain pattern of assumptions developed by a group, considered so significant and important that it is passed on to new members as the right way to see, think, and feel (Schein, 1992). For the purpose of this study, the author adopted the following definition of organizational culture: in any organization it is possible to distinguish certain norms, values, and attitudes, accepted by all (most) employees. They constitute more or less compact systems that merit the name of culture. It exists as long as its components are accepted by the members of a given collective. In this sense, culture is a creation of the collective (community), not a creation of nature (Kania, 2007). Organizational culture manifests itself in professed values and beliefs, in accepted assumptions, in language and symbols, and in the methods of conduct used by members of a given organization. These are the peculiar characteristics of an institution that distinguish it from others. Each organization creates a specific culture (...). These elements shape the atmosphere, relations between employees and management, as well as connections with external customers (Chuda & Wyrwicka, 2013). Authors who are given special credit in the area of studying and diagnosing organizational culture include G. Morgan, L. Smircich, T. Deal, A. Kenedy, G. Hofstede, E. Schein, S. Robbins, J. Peters, K. Cameron, and R. Quinn. Polish authors, dealing with the topic of culture and making significant contributions to it, include K. Konecki, Cz. Sikorski, A. Marcinkowski, M. Kostera, E. Masłyk-Musiak, L. Zbiegień-Maciąg, and J. Łuciewicz (Chuda, 2017). The diversity of existing organizational cultures makes it necessary to organize them and introduce schemes for their assignment, which allows differentiation between types of cultures. Often used in research on employee well-being in the context of organizational cultures are their one-dimensional typologies with particular attention to the distinction between hierarchical and equalitarian, collective and individualistic, as well as bureaucratic and pragmatic types (Białas et al., 2023). According to a review of the literature on the subject, both scholars and management practitioners agree that organizational culture is a factor

that has a significant impact on the functioning of entire organizations, on the one hand enabling the organization to achieve its goals in accordance with the adopted mission and strategy, on the other hand uniting people around these goals and enabling the development of common ways for all employees to solve problems or deal with situations of uncertainty. Remaining in line with the system approach, the individual elements of the system of which the organization is composed are in mutual relations with each other, on which depend, on the one hand, the ability to achieve organizational goals and act in accordance with its mission, on the other hand, increasing the level of job satisfaction and professional fulfillment among employees, which is consistent with the views of labor psychologists, in particular regarding the mutual fit between the employee and organization, which consequently translates into the former's well-being.

Like organizational culture, the concept of employee well-being is a complex one, including such elements as satisfaction with life, a sense of happiness, a sense of security, the ability to realize personal potential, and also such issues as the ability to cope with stressful situations. Given both the importance of organizational culture in shaping employee behavior and the benefits of increasing employee well-being, it is important to determine which characteristics of organizational culture will promote employee well-being in an organization and which will limit it (Białas et al., 2023). As noted by Czerska, Czerminski, Nogalski, Rutka, and Apanowicz, a person is a peculiar component of an organization, since they are not only an entity in the physical sense, but also a subject, that is, a person who cognizes, thinks, experiences and acts. Being a subject, they have their own personality, which includes habits, skills, cultural values, and interests. As a component of an organization, they are therefore not only a means to achieve its goals, but also an end in itself. Their performance in the organization must therefore be considered from two aspects. Firstly, a person is expected to fulfill the established functions and actively participate in achieving the organization's goals. Secondly, when aiming at the goals of a given organization, it is necessary to take into account the expectations of a person from that organization, with the usual importance of their needs, both human-wide and personal (Czerska et al., 2002).

According to Wychowaniec, it is nowadays known that organizational space can influence the psychological state of an employee, give them a sense of meaning, belonging to a group, and shape their happiness. Work is satisfying when relations between co-workers are good, the atmosphere is pleasant and the employee himself is appreciated and rewarded (Robertson & Cooper, 2011). Thus, it appears that organizational culture can act as a mediator between well-being, human resource management, and productivity, for example, by shaping employees' understanding of processes and messages, including the role of pressure (Erdogan et al., 2006). This hypothesis appears to be an important direction for research in well-being from a management-science perspective (Wychowaniec, 2022). The development by the organization of solutions in the area of organizational culture, in accordance with the preferences of the employees, can contribute to increasing their sense of well-being, which as a consequence, can translate into their greater motivation and commitment, ensuring the effectiveness of management processes.

Staying in line with the theoretical and conceptual background adopted for the considerations carried out in this article, i.e., a systemic approach to the functioning of organizations that takes into account the impact of the environment, it is worth noting at this point the typical conditions in which modern companies operate. These conditions are often described as turbulent and unpredictable, which means that organizations are faced with the need to constantly adapt to the expectations of customers, stakeholders, and employees in order to remain in the market, and, importantly, to maintain their competitive advantage. This often entails adjusting management methods and selecting organizational solutions so that organizations have the ability to cope with such a turbulent and unpredictable environment. One of the methods currently used by companies to cope with such conditions is the introduction of agile work methods. Among other things, employees who are part of agile teams are expected to have high adaptability, flexibility, innovation, the ability to quickly change priorities when customers demand changes, and the ability to constantly monitor the situation, which consequently contributes to their effective functioning in a turbulent environment, translating into the success of the entire organization. However, in order for a person in an organization to function effectively, the organization should provide them with the right conditions (Samuel-Idzikowska, 2022). In traditional methodologies, clients participate actively mainly in the first phase of project development, where the specifications of the planned solutions are defined. Their involvement at later stages is very limited. In agile methodologies, customers and developers, working together in small groups during all stages, define the desired features of the final product and exchange information in the subsequent passes of the development and implementation cycles (Chan & Thong, 2009). Agile is defined as an idea that is a set of values and beliefs. In other words, agile defines a culture that enables successful project implementation, and is synonymous with a fundamental change in thinking and perception of the project implementation process (Sahota, 2012). Agile work methodologies allow projects to be implemented in a volatile and unpredictable environment, which can be confirmed by the results of ongoing research available in industry reports. For example, in the conducted research entitled "PMI's 2012 Pulse of the Profession In - Depth Report: Organizational Agility" among 1234 project management practitioners from around the world indicated unequivocally that among successful

companies, as many as 60% are high agile companies, and only 27% are low agile companies (Project Management Institute, n.d.). Another example confirming the high effectiveness of agile projects can be found in the annual CHAOS report published by American experts from the Standish Group. The report presents the results of a study of the effectiveness of IT projects, in which the reasons for success and failure are analyzed in detail. The report also includes statistics on the number of projects completed successfully, i.e., according to the client's requirements, within the specified budget, within the deadline. Comparing the results obtained between 2004, when 29% of the surveyed projects were successful, and 2012, when it was already 39%, one can see a significant improvement. According to data published in a report in 2011, the analyzed projects using agile methodologies were three times more successful than those conducted according to the classical approach [...]. They were less likely to experience problems related to budget or deadline overruns (Konieczny, 2014). For this reason, the decision of which IT project management method to choose is of great importance, especially given the fact that, according to some estimates, about two-thirds of software projects miss their original budget or business goals (Ahimbisibwe et al., 2017).

The growing popularity of the use of agile methods of work, translating into the effectiveness of the projects implemented with their help, as well as the awareness of the impact of organizational culture on the functioning of employees, taking into account the issue of their well-being, became arguments that led the author to seek an answer to the question: What organizational solutions in the area of organizational culture, are treated by members of agile teams as supporting them in the conditions of agile work? Finding the answer to the above question may contribute to the fact that those who have a real influence on the functioning of employees in agile working conditions can create working conditions for employees in accordance with their preferences, which as a result, can contribute to increasing their comfort and productivity, and thus the success of the entire enterprise.

RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

A significant number of publications on the analysis of organizational culture deal with organizational factors that increase employee well-being (Johnson et al, 2018), selected management practices (Lichtenthaler & Fischbach, 2018), structural solutions (Soonhee, 2002; Lok & Crawford, 2004), as well as leadership styles (Nielsen & Randall, 2009; Carmeli et al., 2009). There are many publications and studies on selected characteristics of organizational culture that determine the effectiveness of knowledge management processes in project organizations (Hanisch et al, 2009; Lee & Choi, 2003; Lewicka & Krot, 2014; Oliver & Kandadi, 2006; Kozarkiewicz, 2012; Jarecki, 2012; Paterek, 2013, as cited in Paterek, 2016). According to a study by D. Strode, S. L. Huff, B. Hope, and S. Link, organizational culture shows a correlation with the success of agile implementation. Such indicators as the company's feedback culture, the way of learning and development, the level of social interactions, the attitude towards cooperation, trust in team members and competence are important (Strode et al., 2012). With reference to the literature review and industry studies and reports presented above, it was noted that the topic of agile team members' preferred solutions, in the area of organizational culture (in line with Cameron and Quinn's typology), which support their functioning in an agile work environment in relation to the realities of Polish business practice, are insufficiently described. Therefore, here, the author observed an existing research gap and the purpose of this study became to fill this gap, at least in part.

Since organizational culture is a concept that is variously interpreted, consisting of different, often ambiguous elements, in order to diagnose the type of culture preferred by employees, it seems necessary to use a theoretical model to focus on its key elements. In the research conducted by the author of this article, the competing values model developed by Kim S. Cameron and Robert E. Quinn was used. The competing values model is characterized by the fact that it was constructed on the basis of the results of empirical studies conducted, taking into account the various dimensions of culture proposed by various researchers and the subsequent studies conducted using the model confirmed that it proved to be supportive of organizations when carrying out changes in organizational culture, for this reason the model is a valuable tool from both a practical and scientific perspective. The competing values model is based on opposing dimensions of values, which is related to the fact that its authors assumed that what would be a strength for an organization in one industry, for a company in another industry may be perceived as a weakness (...). The model is widely used in management science, as it allows diagnosing such aspects of an organization's performance as company strategy, personnel policy, organizational change, management information systems, as well as organizational culture and climate (Marek, 2014). According to its authors, one of the most important functions of the competing values model is to identify dimensions of the organization that exist in all or almost all human organizations and activities and make it possible to discover the regularities that exist in the organization's culture, employee

motivation, leadership, decision-making, cognitive processes, and so on (Cameron et al., 2006). In order to build the model, a statistical analysis of 39 distinguished indicators of organizational performance was carried out, which led to the distinction of two dimensions, allowing the division of these indicators into four groups. In the first dimension, criteria emphasizing flexibility and freedom of action and stability and control were placed at opposite poles. The second dimension, on the other hand, is based on the competition between orientation to internal affairs, integration, unity, orientation to position in the environment, differentiation, and competition (Marek, 2014). Consequently, the competing values model was created by superimposing two opposing dimensions, resulting in four quadrants, denoting four distinct types of organizational culture: clan culture, adhocracy culture, hierarchy culture, and market culture (Cameron & Quinn, 2003).

METHOD

With regard to the considerations outlined above, in January–March 2022, the author conducted a survey among members of agile teams employed in IT companies mainly engaged in software development. The companies participating in the survey were selected purposively. In the first stage of the research, a detailed analysis was made of the enterprises that are part of the ICT cluster of Central Poland. Of the 35 enterprises, those whose activities were related to software were singled out. The key to selecting enterprises for the study was their predominant or additional business activity related to software (PKD 6201Z). As a result of the analysis, a group of 19 enterprises meeting the established criteria was identified. After obtaining permission to conduct the survey, a pre-survey questionnaire was sent to each enterprise to verify that the respondents met the criteria established for the respondents. The survey questionnaire consisted of questions on the specifics of the function of teams performing tasks in software development departments. All questions were closely related to the specifics of the function of agile teams and were a synthesis of the literature analysis carried out. The above activity was a criterion for the selection of respondents to the survey. Finally, the survey was carried out in eight sites of companies operating in Poland, so the results obtained relate to the realities of Polish business practice.

All of the companies participating in the survey were large companies, meaning they employed 250 people or more. The survey included 249 members of agile teams performing their professional tasks in an agile work environment. Tables 1. to 4. show the percentage of each group of respondents by gender, age, education, and seniority in the ICT industry.

Table 1. Structure of the number of team members by gender

Gender of respondents	Number of respondents	Percentage
Women	86	34,5
Men	163	65,5
Total	249	100,0

Source: Author's own research.

Table 2. Structure of the number of team members by age

Age of respondents	Number of respondents	Percentage
18–28	16	6,4
29–39	138	55,4
40–50	95	38,2
Total	249	100,0

Source: Author's own research.

Table 3. Structure of the number of team members by education

Education of respondents	Number of respondents	Percentage
Middle school	7	2,8
University	242	97,2
Total	249	100,0

Source: Author's own research.

Table 4. Structure of the number of team members by seniority in the ICT industry.

Seniority of respondents in the ICT industry in years	Number of respondents	Percentage
0–5	5	2,0
6–11	125	50,2
12–17	115	46,2
17+	4	1,6
Total	249	100,0

Source: Author's own research.

The survey was conducted using the author's research questionnaire. The purpose of the survey was to find answers to the question: Which organizational culture solutions, are considered by members of agile teams as supporting them in agile working conditions? During the survey, respondents identified which of the four dimensions of organizational culture (in line with K. Cameron and R. Quinn's typology), in their subjective opinion, support them in functioning effectively in agile working conditions.

The questions in the survey questionnaire were constructed on the principle of semantic differential. Respondents were asked to identify their preferences on a scale containing two opposing statements on either side, and to mark the intensity of those preferences. All statements directed at members of agile teams were accompanied by the question: "How important, from the point of view of your functioning in an agile team, is it for the organization to have a culture characterized by the following features? Please refer to each of the two opposing statements, marking the area that is closer to your preference." Due to the specificity of the question under study (in relation to Cameron and Quinn's model), respondents referred to two statements (representing opposing dimensions of organizational culture):

Table 5. An excerpt from the questionnaire on surveyed preferences in the area of organizational culture

From the point of view of your functioning in an agile team, how important is it for an organization to have a culture characterized by the following features?

Please refer to each of the two opposing statements, marking the area that is closer to your preference:

Column A	A++	A+	Does not matter	B+	B++	Column B
Do you prefer when:						Do you prefer when:
In the organization, employees have freedom of action and flexibility. Employees are not afraid to take risks and are encouraged to be free and show initiative. Work is characterized by dynamism and independence. (Question 1)						Stability and control prevail in the organization. Employees are required to comply with numerous formal rules and regulations. Work is characterized by immutability, orderliness, stability, and increased control.
The organization is mainly oriented towards internal affairs and integration between employees. The success of the organization is measured by the development and care of employees. (Question 2)						The organization is mainly oriented to its position in the environment and differentiation. The success of an organization is measured by market share and penetration, competitive pricing, and being a leader.

Source: Own study

The same scale was applied to all statements in the presented section of the survey questionnaire. Respondents were given the opportunity to indicate their preference by selecting one of the following answers: A++ - strongly prefer, A+ - rather prefer, does not matter, B+ - rather prefer, B++ - strongly prefer. In order to standardize the responses for all the variables involved in the survey (so that they could be subjected to statistical analysis), coding to the right was applied (the analysis was made with reference to the statement placed on the right side of the questionnaire). A value of 4 was taken for the B++ category, a value of 3 was taken for the B+ category, a value of 0 was taken for the does-not-matter category, a value of 2 was taken for the A+ category, and a value of 1 was taken for the A++ category).

The findings presented in this article are part of a larger study conducted by the author as part of her dissertation on the determinants of employee support in an agile work environment and only address aspects of the respondents' preferred type of organizational culture.

RESEARCH RESULTS

With the help of statistical methods, such as measures of central tendency, the obtained responses were verified for their validity regarding the respondents. Table 6. shows the results obtained regarding the respondents' surveyed preferences in the area of organizational culture.

Table 6. Responses received from respondents regarding preferred organizational culture solutions

	N	Mean	Median	Modes	Count	Standard deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Question 1	249	3,10	3	4	114	1,14	-1,48	1,57
Question 2	249	2,93	3	3	99	1,22	-1,26	0,69

Source: Author's own research.

As mentioned earlier, in order to standardize the responses for all variables involved in the survey, coding to the right was applied (the analysis was done for the statement placed on the right side of the questionnaire). A value of 4 was taken for the B++ category, a value of 3 was taken for the B+ category, a value of 0 was taken for the does-not-matter category, a value of 2 was taken for the A+ category, and a value of 1 was taken for the A++ category). The results obtained regarding the respondents' surveyed preferences in the area of organizational culture after recoding are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Responses received from respondents with regard to preferred solutions for organizational culture after recoding

Solution from the area of organizational culture	Freedom of action and flexibility vs. stability and control	Organization's orientation to internal affairs and integration among employees vs. organization's orientation to position in the environment and differentiation
Number of responses	249	249
Mean	3,08	2,92
Median	3	3
Modes	4	4

Source: Author's own research.

As can be seen from the above summary of respondents' answers:

1. For the dimension of freedom of action and flexibility vs. stability and control, respondents indicated stability and control—employees are required to comply with numerous formal rules and regulations; work is characterized by immutability, orderliness, stability, and increased control (median 3 and modes 4 indicate this choice).
2. For the dimension of the organization's orientation to internal affairs and integration among employees vs. the organization's orientation to position in the environment and differentiation, respondents indicated the organization's orientation to position in the environment and differentiation—the organization's success is measured by market share and penetration, competitive pricing, and being a leader (median 3 and modes 4 indicate this choice).

RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BUSINESS PRACTICE

According to the results obtained from the research, for members of agile task teams, the preferred type of organizational culture is the market type, according to K. Cameron and R. Quinn's typology. Members of agile teams prefer it when stability and control dominate the organization and employees are required to follow numerous formal rules and regulations. Work is characterized by immutability, orderliness, stability, and increased control. The success of an organization is measured in terms of market share and penetration, competitive pricing and being a leader, and as a result, the organization is mainly oriented to its position in the environment and differentiation. The conclusions of this study prove to be quite surprising, since employees, who are part of agile teams are expected, among other things, to be highly adaptable, flexible, innovative, able

to change priorities quickly when customers demand changes, and able to continuously monitor the situation. Meanwhile, the indicated preferred organizational solution is to oblige employees to comply with numerous formal rules and regulations, which at first glance may seem difficult to combine. The second surprising finding is that members of agile teams prefer a work style characterized by immutability, orderliness, stability, and increased control, which seems contrary to the characteristics of agile work. Indicated as the preferred type of culture, the market type, as shown by previous research in the area of the type of culture that increases employee well-being, turns out to be unfavorable. Studies on specific culture types in line with Cameron and Quinn's classification point to clan and adhocracy types as those most conducive to employee well-being. For example, a survey of employees at universities in northern Canada found that employees working in organizations with clan and adhocracy cultures showed the greatest job satisfaction. The least satisfied were members of organizations with a market culture (Olynick & Li, 2020, p. 24). Wziątek-Staśko's research (Wziątek-Staśko, 2017a) including more than 660 economically active people also points to clan culture as a favorable work environment. The results of studies by Cameron and Quinn (2005) and Cameron and Freeman (1985) also confirm that clan culture is most strongly correlated with employee satisfaction. Similar conclusions are drawn from Lund's (2003) study of 360 marketing professionals from various companies located in the United States, as well as from Gong, Jiang, and Liang (2022). The research also shows that the culture of the market and hierarchy is associated with the presence of factors that reduce employee well-being. As described by Białas, Molek-Winiarska, and Pelc, market and hierarchy culture correlate with higher levels of job burnout than clan or adhocracy culture (Wziątek-Staśko, 2017a, 2017b). The negative impact on the employee of the market culture can be related to the fact that it requires working irregular hours, places high demands on employees, and emphasizes aggressive competition. The organization of work in such circumstances is geared toward the achievement of individual and organizational goals (increasingly demanding), which can cause employees to spend more and more time to achieve them (Cameron & Quinn, 2015). Also, in a market and hierarchical culture, employees are overburdened with responsibilities (Wziątek-Staśko, 2017b). Employees of organizations with a clan culture showed the lowest level of stress, followed by adhocracy and hierarchy, while the highest level of stress was reported by employees working in organizations with a market culture (Olynick & Li, 2020), which is characterized by inducing a sense of fear in employees and constant control (Wziątek-Staśko, 2017). Research by Yip, Levine, Brooks, and Schweitzer (2021) also indicates that employees experience greater feelings of anxiety and higher levels of stress in result-oriented cultures, especially if they are set at a very high level and require tasks to be completed under high time pressure (Yip et al., 2021, as cited in Białas et al., 2023). With regard to the performance of professional tasks in an agile work environment, research results presented in the works of Fong and Kwok (2009) and Wiewióra et al. (2014), indicate clan culture as the most fitting type of culture in project organizations. This type of culture fits especially well in organizations using agile methods, where there is strong team collaboration and informal knowledge-sharing (Pérez-Bustamante, 1999, as cited in Paterek, 2016).

The obtained research results can, in the author's opinion, be interpreted as follows: Employees performing their professional tasks under agile working conditions operate on a daily basis in an extremely volatile and turbulent environment, and therefore, in order to function effectively, they need procedures that organize their activities, which translates into their efficiency. Consequently, the first recommendation for business practice is to take the above into account and refine in the organization such rules of conduct that employees can refer to in situations where decisions need to be made on short notice, often under conditions of uncertainty. With regard to the preferred work style indicated by the respondents characterized by immutability, orderliness, stability, and increased control, a recommendation worth considering, in the author's opinion, especially for those responsible for the functioning of agile teams, is the introduction of rotating jobs or differentiated tasks within agile teams. This can contribute to reducing the psychological burden of working under the constant stress of working in an unpredictable and rapidly changing environment, which can consequently translate into employee well-being and thus the success of projects implemented by agile teams. On the other hand, the respondents' preferred choice of organizational culture dimension referring to the fact that the measure of an organization's success is market share and penetration, competitive pricing, and being a leader, therefore, the organization is mainly oriented towards position in the environment and differentiation, seems to be consistent with the specifics of the functioning of modern organizations in the studied IT sector, especially in software development teams. At this point, it seems worth emphasizing the fact of the bidirectionality of the relationship occurring between organizational culture and employee behavior. The norms of behavior adopted in an organization as well as the values of organizational culture cultivated in the company undoubtedly affect the functioning of employees, while certain decisions made by employees, and consequently the actions they take, translate into the values of organizational culture. Due to this relationship, organizations can consciously shape certain values, support and develop them, so as to obtain certain employee behaviors as a result. **Importantly, according to Smolarek, Dzieńdziora, and Jaworska, there are no universal procedures that can ensure the development of an organizational culture based on trust and knowledge and, at the same time, maintain a positive**

corporate image, both internally and externally. Each organization has to develop solutions that work best for it.

Possible solutions proposed by the authors include:

- refraining from imposing ready-made solutions and ways of working on employees;
- implementing mechanisms that give employees a sense of belonging to a larger group;
- building relationships based on trust and a sense of community;
- promoting forms of communication that facilitate the flow of knowledge;
- creating venues and situations that facilitate formal and informal knowledge sharing;
- encouraging trial and experimentation;
- creating an atmosphere where the value of ideas is more important than where they come from; and
- tolerating mistakes made during creative work and helping employees to learn from their mistakes (Smolarek, Dzieńdziora, Jaworska, 2018).

Finding out about employee preferences regarding solutions in the area of organizational culture that correspond to the specifics of their work can indicate the direction in which the organization can go, which elements the organization should pay attention to, and which values it should support, so that it contributes to the realization of the established organizational goals and acts in accordance with its strategy, as well as to increase the fit of the organization's people and thus increase the well-being of its employees. As such, the results of the research can contribute to increasing the awareness of organizational managers concerning which elements of culture to support in the specific conditions of agile work.

LIMITATIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The research conducted on agile team members' preferred solutions in the area of organizational culture was subject to certain limitations. The first is certainly the small size of the research group, relative to the size of the general population. This was due, firstly, to the fact that the research was conducted in the final phase of the COVID-19 pandemic, which made it much more difficult for the author to reach a larger number of respondents. The second limitation was related to cost and logistics factors and the inability to reach all employees performing their professional tasks in an agile work environment from software companies across the country. Another limitation often associated with the use of quantitative methods is the inability to deal with the respondent individually (if the respondent does not understand the question, there is no way to clarify or further explain the purpose of the survey).

Despite the limitations of the study indicated above, it can certainly provide a starting point for further considerations. In the author's opinion, an interesting direction would be to conduct research that would allow verification of the results obtained on a nationwide scale. An interesting direction, it seems, would be to study the preferences of employees regarding organizational culture solutions in industries other than IT and to make a comparative analysis. It would also seem interesting to compare the preferred solutions to support the function of employees in an agile work environment over time, as such an analysis could be a valuable observation on whether the preferences of employees working in these organizations also change as changes in their environment occur.

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