

OPPORTUNITIES TO INCREASE PERFORMANCE BY INTEGRATING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE INTO A RESILIENT MILITARY ORGANISATION'S CULTURE

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ABSTRACT

Regardless of the field of activity in which it operates, the type, purpose or degree of internal structuring, the organization is once again the subject of increasingly complex studies and analyses, and is the focus of interest for researchers, theorists and, above all, practitioners. Organizational management is making great efforts to adapt, rigid structures are moving towards viable solutions, traditional methods are gradually being replaced by modern procedures facilitated by technical developments, activities are being simplified and the whole system is being optimized. Access to new information resources opens up often unforeseen opportunities, and the requirement for digitization, often imposed at organizational level, has proved to be the solution to ensuring prosperity. In this context, where the possibilities for development seem endless and organizations should build bridges to strengthen economic and diplomatic relations, both nationally and internationally, the first flaws are in fact appearing, which, with a slow but consistent evolution, have produced irreparable effects. Uncontrolled market developments, the unpredictability of macroeconomic indicators and an unstable workforce are just some of the factors putting pressure on today's managers. This article summarizes efforts to identify a solution to the issues that are manageable from a manager's perspective. The link between organizational culture and performance has already been demonstrated in the literature through frequent studies and research. What we want to demonstrate in this article is a link between the emotional intelligence of human resources and the adaptation of a culture that ensures organizational survival and success and that all of this is resilient. The method used is a questionnaire (the target group is part of the defiance sector) coupled with a bibliometric analysis of the literature. The research was conducted by applying two questionnaires, the main purpose being to create a link in how to apply emotional intelligence and culture to increase the performance of the military organization.

KEYWORDS: *culture, emotional intelligence, organization, performance.*

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1. INTRODUCTION

The current problems that have placed the organization in the spotlight of researchers are the effects of crises that are significantly increasing in terms of financial and security aspects, generating uncertainties at all levels of a society. Efforts to create the image of stability at EU level, coupled with attempts to keep the imbalance that threatens to change the existing security architecture as low as possible, require a major financial effort. All these efforts in the current context create uncertainty in terms of resources and the stability and continuity of systems. Directly affected by

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the current situation is the organization which, regardless of the context in which it is placed, is struggling to survive in the face of adversity, and managers are directly responsible for its failure or success. (Smith et al., 2020).

The way to overcome such events is to increase human resilience. Starting from human resilience, thought of as a personality trait, as a whole, groups, organizations and even communities can learn to develop a culture of resilience that manifests itself as a form of „psychological immunity”. (Suryaningtyas, 2019).

The aim of the article is to identify the directions of change needed in an organization so that it can increase its resilience. (Everly, 2011). The adaptability of a system depends on the flexibility of its components. If we view the organization as a whole, a system made up of people, who, distributed according to structures, functions and responsibilities, make a joint effort to achieve the objectives set by the mission, the question that arises is: What can a group of people do to keep their assumed obligations, maintaining cohesion and a high level of professionalism, regardless of the challenges? Contemporary Western society is characterized by an increasing tendency to focus on the individual self at the expense of a culture based on interpersonal relationships. (Gardner, 2022). Managers need the ability to care for the human resource by recognizing their own projection in their behavior and actions. Another type of intelligence facilitates this capacity, the emotional one, and the challenge for managers becomes to create an organizational culture that is flexible but sustainable through the values it integrates.

The aim of the article is to identify the extent to which emotional intelligence competencies enhance organizational culture to maintain and enhance organizational performance.

The sustainability of an organization cannot be separated from effective human resource management. (Sutton, 2018) Multiple studies and research have linked performance in human resource management with ensuring an appropriate culture for developing employee skills. On the other hand, „any attempt to define the culture of an organization can only succeed by starting from the human being, from their historical existence, from the psychology of the people to which they belong and, last but not least, from their national culture”. (Popescu, 2012).

Aspects of performance in human resource management include loyalty, hard work, honesty, discipline, creativity, cooperation, leadership, personality, initiative, skills and responsibility (Sancoko et al., 2019). These elements can form the basis of an organizational culture, which can be maintained with the support of increased skills in the emotional sphere.

Focusing precisely on these emotional skills, in 1990, Peter Salovey and John Mayer conducted a thorough analysis of the concept of emotional intelligence, defining it as „a form of social intelligence”, validating the place of emotion in traditional conceptions of intelligence. At the same time, they outlined a set of skills to help individuals regulate their own and others’ emotions. (Salovey & Mayer, 1990).

Thus, for values to motivate an organization, managers should, supported by emotional competencies, develop management philosophies that drive the organization towards performance. The most appropriate organizational behaviors are fostered by an organizational culture promoted by leaders with high emotional intelligence, (Ugoani, 2015) because culture refers to all human creations in the fields of technology, sciences, arts, literature, religious beliefs, traditions, morals, law, ways of life and value systems. (Punnett, 2019).

Studies have shown that lower levels of emotional intelligence in the workplace have a greater impact on job performance; thus creating a link between the two concepts. (Jorfi et al., 2010) Other findings have demonstrated a significant relationship between group-level emotional intelligence and trust in the leader or group member. Trust is the basis of a successful professional relationship. (Downey et al., 2011).

An article published in Forbes in 2020, captures the issue from a different perspective and highlights the importance of changing the criteria underlying the recruitment of managers, with greater emphasis on the person’s ability to process their own emotions, understand the emotions of

others and respond in a healthy and productive way. (Millet, 2020). This ability can help maintain a company culture based on teamwork, mutual support, greater empathy and understanding, fostering group cohesion. A culture becomes emotionally intelligent when employees interact well with each other and, in general, the number of conflicts is very low. (Rajagopal).

2. BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS OF THE LITERATURE REVIEW

Using the VOSviewer tool, a quantitative analysis of articles that addressed organizational culture and emotional intelligence was conducted. The purpose of the analysis was to identify the researchers' interest in the topic addressed by the article. The limitation of the bibliometric networks carried out lies in the fact that they are built only on the database related to the Web of Science platform.

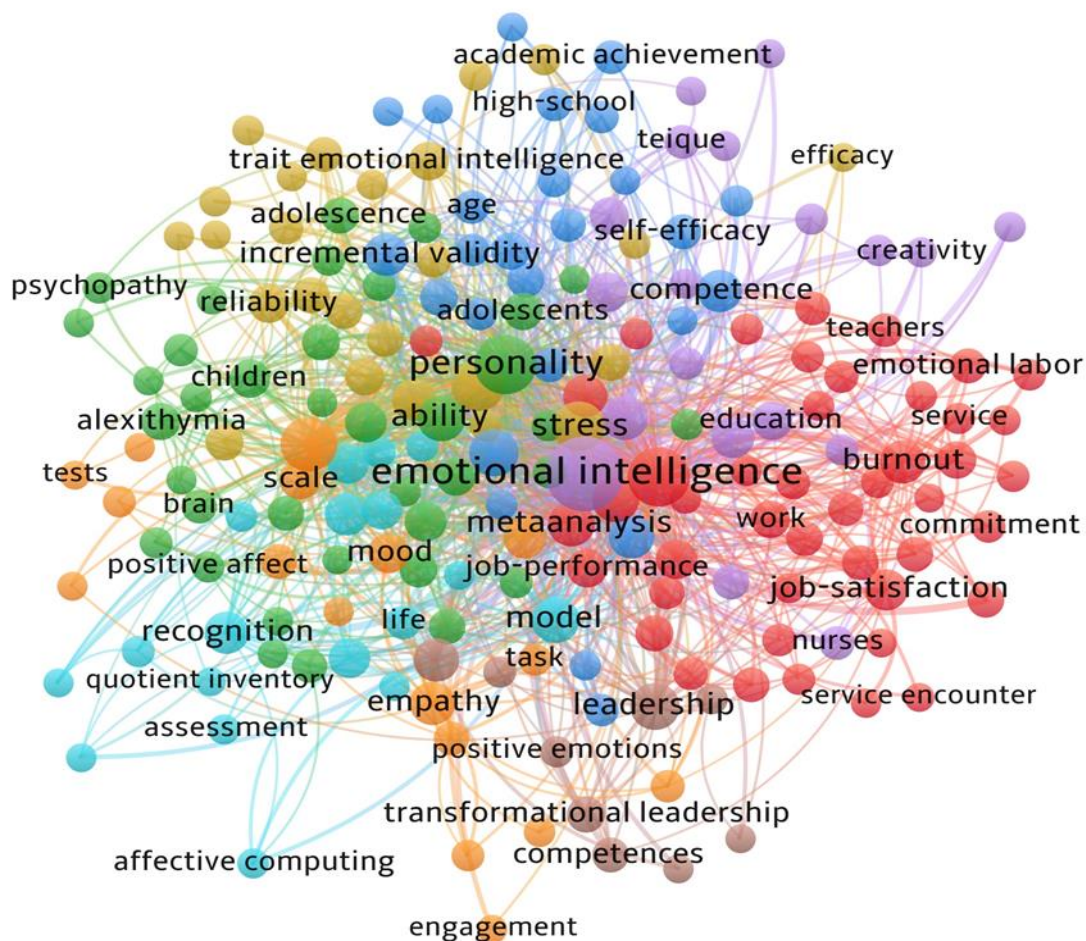


Figure 1. Keywords related to emotional intelligence in the literature

Source: drafted by the author

A total of 5524 articles indexed on the Web of Science platform deal with the topic of emotional intelligence in the studies and research presented; and in Figure 1, with the help of VOSviewer, keywords have been highlighted in relation to which it has been addressed. Keywords with a frequency of at least five appearances in articles were considered for analysis, resulting in a total of 196. For each of the 196 keywords, the total strength of the co-occurrence links with other keywords was calculated. The keywords with the greatest total strength were selected.

From the keywords discussed in relation to emotional intelligence, a number of notions from the sphere of interest of organizational management stand out, such as: transformational leadership, job performance, job satisfaction, commitment, assessment, competences, positive emotions. In terms of the number of authors, out of the total of 2118, only those items were selected between which connections were made.

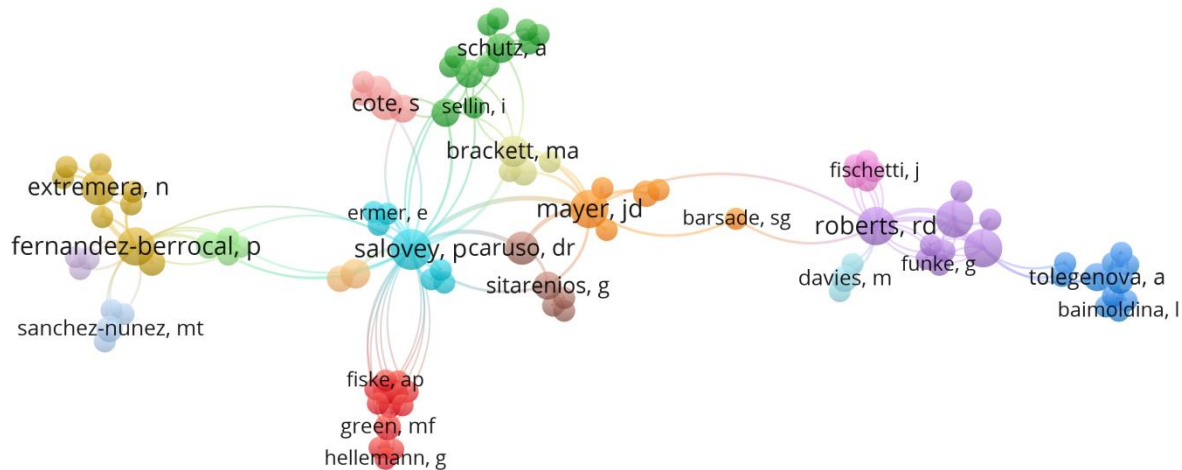


Figure 2. Bibliometric network built on authors who have studied emotional intelligence
 Source: drafted by the author

In terms of organizational culture, a total of 3388 articles were generated, processing 1097 keywords. Selecting only those keywords with a minimum of 5 repetitions resulted in 147 items, which can be seen in Figure 3.

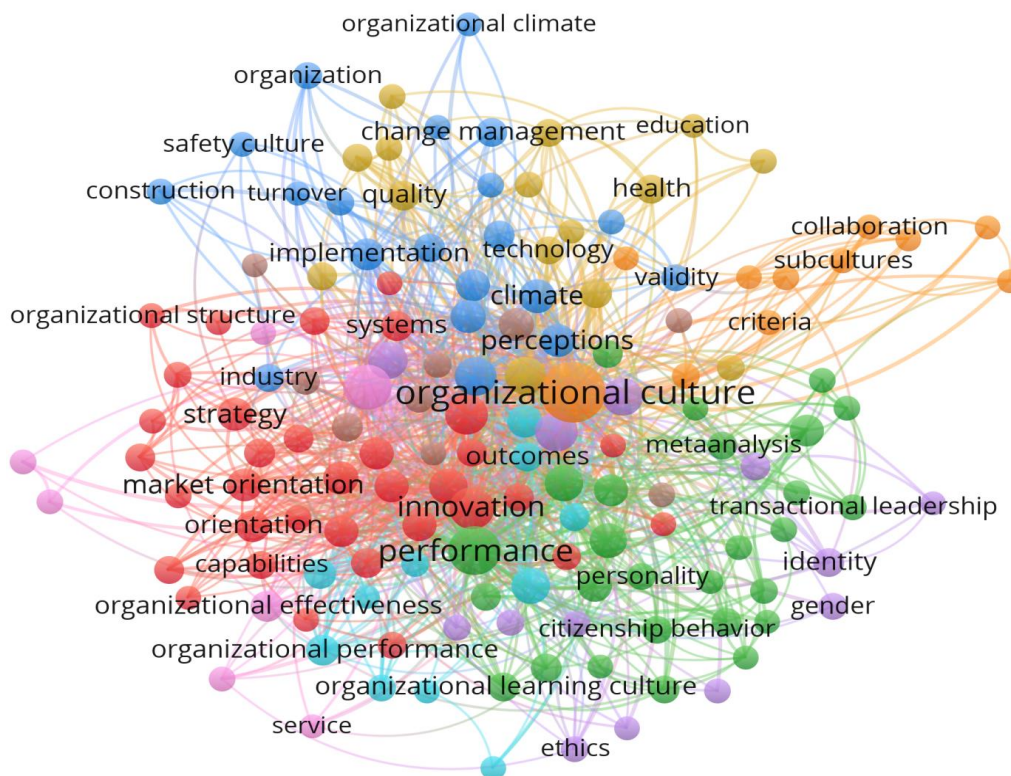


Figure 3. Keywords related to organizational culture in the literature
 Source: drafted by the author

The articles analyzing the link between organizational culture and performance were repetitive. As far as the authors are concerned, out of a total of 1982, only the items between which connections were generated are highlighted in the network.

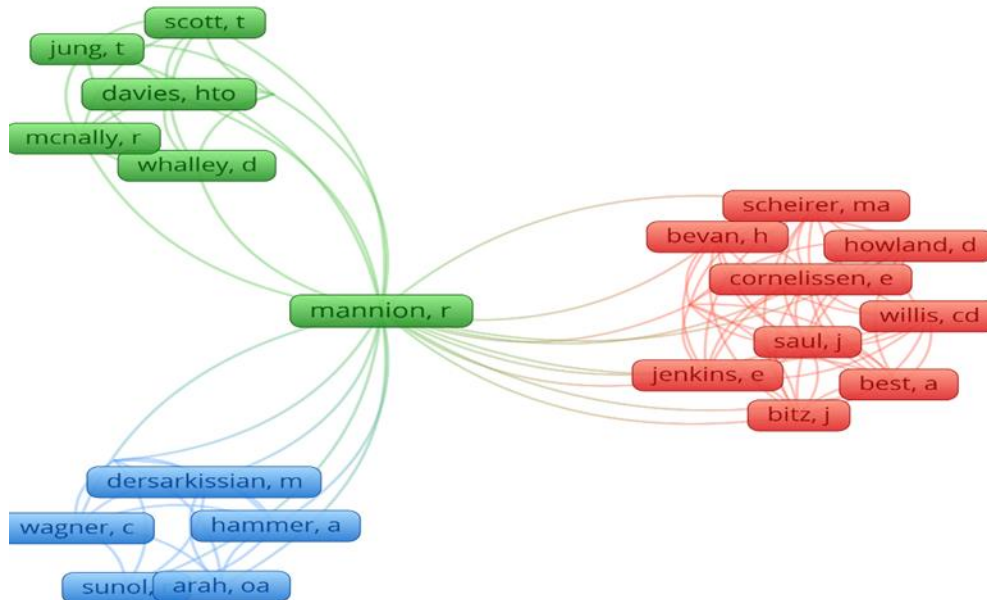


Figure 4. Bibliometric network built on authors who have studied organizational culture
 Source: drafted by the author

In contrast, only seven papers have demonstrated the usefulness of integrating emotional intelligence elements into an organization's culture. The Web of Science database generated a total of 28 keywords. The connections created between the concepts, based on the articles reviewed, are shown in Figure 5.

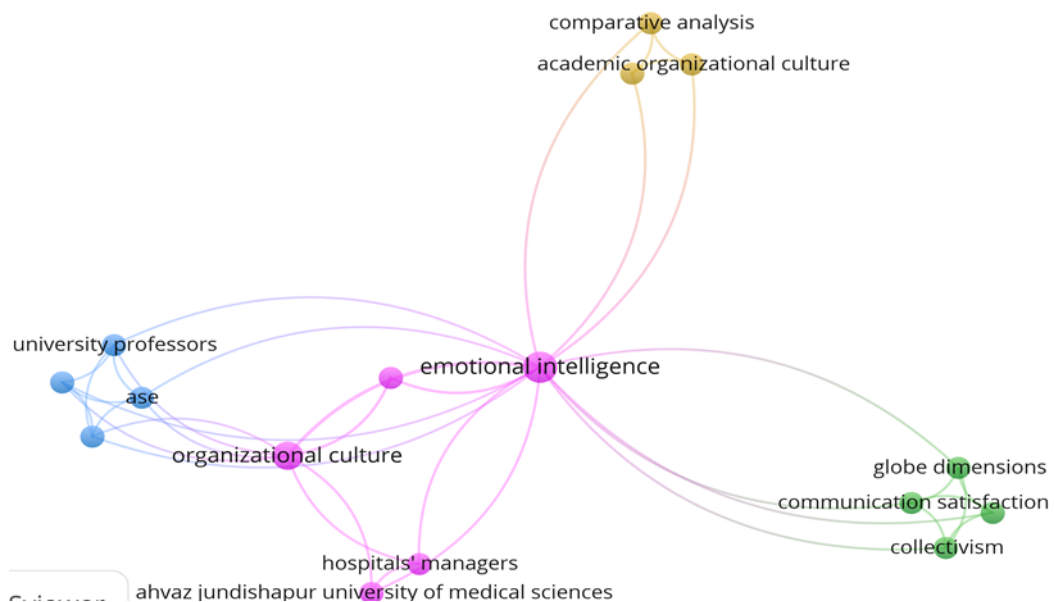


Figure 5. Bibliometric network built on the interactions between organizational culture and emotional intelligence
 Source: drafted by the author

3. RESEARCH ON THE CONTRIBUTION OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE COMPONENTS TO AN ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE CONDUCTIVE TO INCREASED SECURITY AND DEFENCE PERFORMANCE

A quantitative, questionnaire-based research was used to conduct this study. As highlighted in the introduction, the problem identified is the emergence of malfunctions at the organizational level as a result of the uncertainties created by the global financial and security context. The aim of the research is to identify the presence and influence of emotional intelligence elements at the human resource level in the military organization, and how organizational culture influences organizational performance.

3.1 Analysis of the presence of emotional intelligence in the organization

Two questionnaires were applied to achieve the proposed goal, targeting two different target groups. The target group, namely the population of interest for the study of emotional intelligence, is made up of 105 third-year students from the „Nicolae Bălcescu” Land Forces Academy of Sibiu, for the academic year 2021-2022.

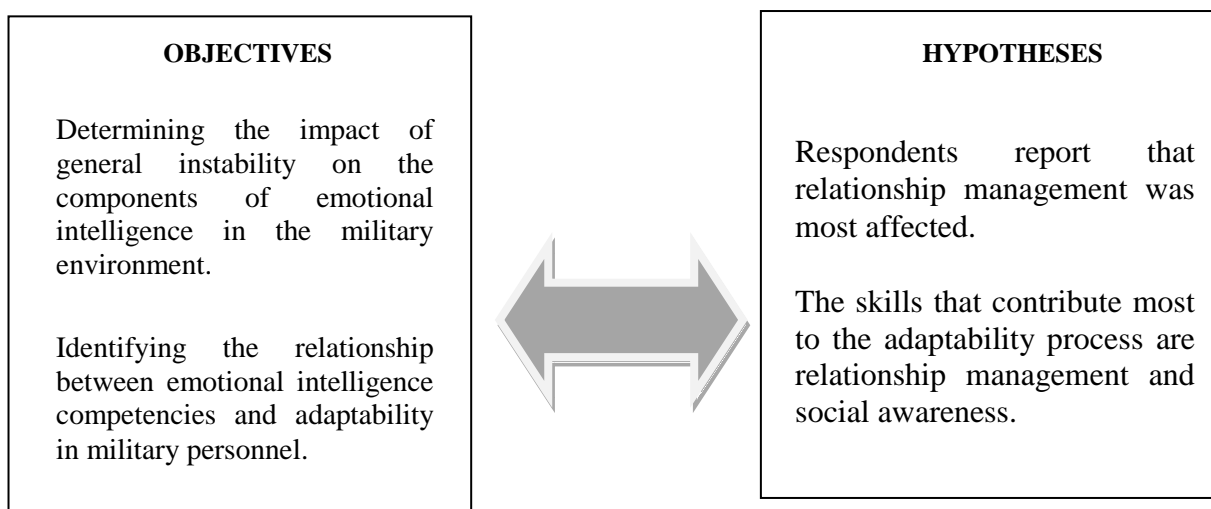


Figure 6. Objectives and hypotheses of emotional intelligence analysis

Source: drafted by the author

In order to investigate the degree to which the elements of emotional intelligence are found in the military environment, the Goleman model was used as the basis, conceived as a type of competencies and skills that specifically contribute to managerial performance (Bharwaney, et al., 2011). Figure 7 highlights, through the calculated scores (based on grades from 1 to 5), how the skills and competencies of the emotional sphere are perceived by the military personnel investigated. For each competency, an average skill score is calculated.

Comparing the scores obtained by skills, it is observed that none of them exceeds a value of 4, remaining only slightly above average, and of note is self-management, whose skills obtained slightly high values.

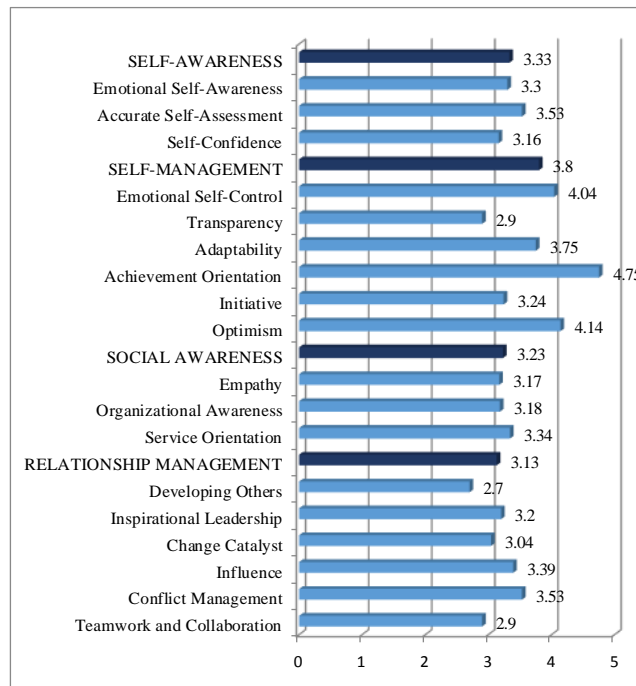


Figure 7. The extent to which components of emotional intelligence influence organizational performance

Source: drafted by the author

Figure 8 compares the components of emotional intelligence in relation to the contribution they can make to employees’ adaptability, not just at the hiring stage, but throughout their work and in relation to all the implications and challenges of a military organization.

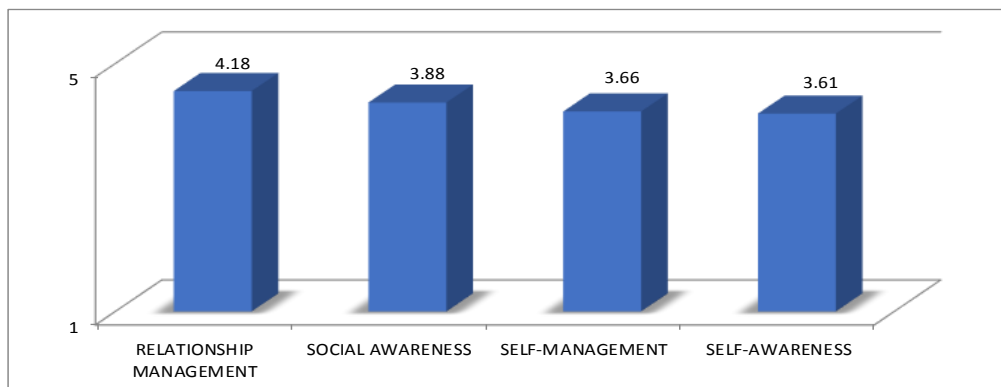


Figure 8. The contribution of emotional intelligence components to employee adaptability

Source: drafted by the author

It can be seen that it is precisely those competences, which in Figure 7 have the lowest scores, that are actually responsible for the adaptation of employees, and therefore of the organization, to the changes that are required. The hypotheses were confirmed.

3.2 Analysis of the particularities of organizational culture in military organizations

The second study, undertaken in the same period (academic year 2021-2022), aimed to analyze organizational culture, and more precisely the way in which it, through its elements, influences the performance of the military organization investigated a target group of 75 officers from the Nicolae „Bălcescu” Land Forces Academy of Sibiu.

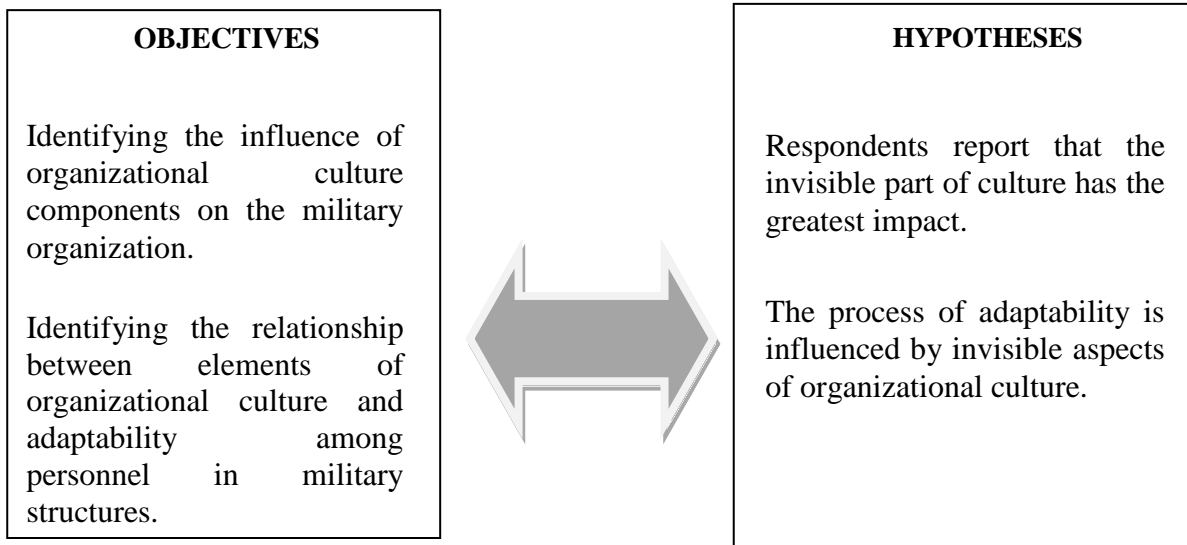


Figure 9. Objectives and hypotheses of organizational culture analysis

Source: drafted by the author

In order to identify a link between the components of culture and organizational performance, we started from the Iceberg Model, which divides the elements of culture into visible aspects (those observable elements, symbols, rituals, ceremonies, etc.) and invisible aspects (the category of implicit assumptions: principles, values, beliefs, etc.). (Schein, 2004)

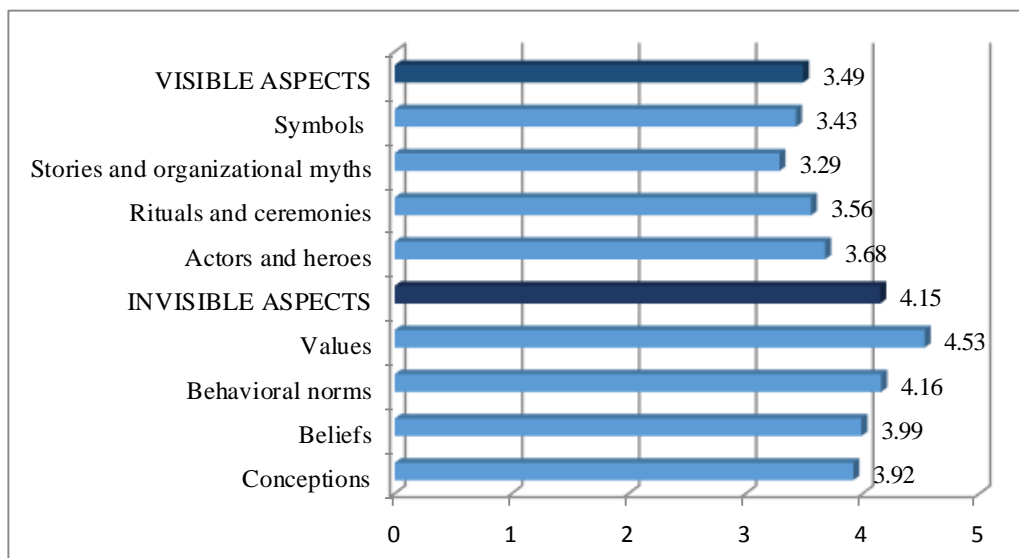


Figure 10. The extent to which elements of culture influence organizational performance

Source: drafted by the author

Looking at Figure 10, in which the elements of culture were given scores from 1 to 5 to capture their contribution to building a sustainable organization, we see that values are most important in the respondents' opinion. Invisible components, which scored an average of more than 4, are responsible for the way people behave, relate to each other and perform the tasks assigned to them.

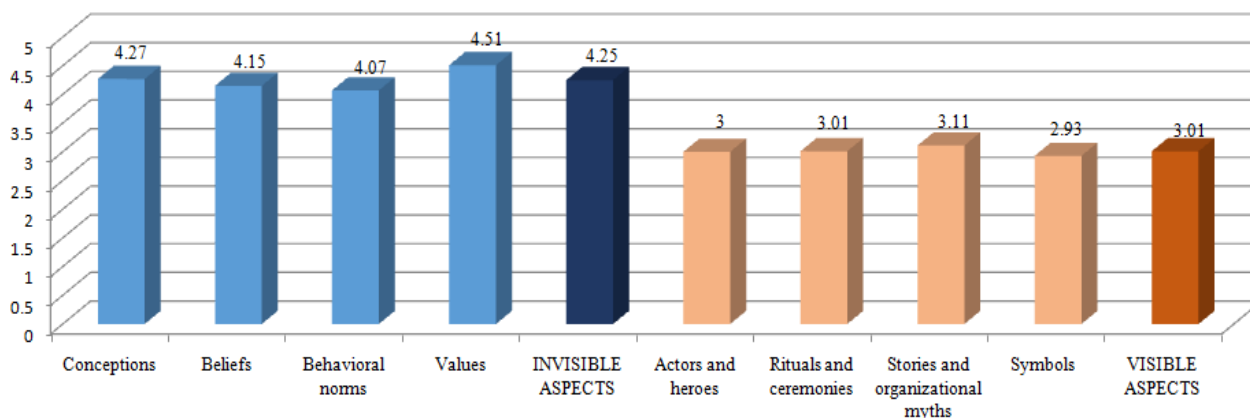


Figure 11. The extent to which elements of culture influence adaptability

Source: drafted by the author

The results obtained in Figure 11 confirm that managers need to focus on those elements of culture, which are not observable, but which have a high impact on the business, create a sense of identity, influencing all aspects of an organization. The two hypotheses were confirmed.

4. CONCLUSIONS

From the results obtained in the two researches, it can be mentioned the influence that emotional intelligence and organizational culture have on performance. Another result is the link with adaptability, the difference being that among the elements of culture are the invisible ones, namely those principles governing people and organizations, which managers should emphasize in order to guide the organization in the direction they want.

As far as the results of the first research are concerned, they validate Goleman's statement that „to become an expert in a particular emotional competency such as teamwork, we need to develop skills from the foundations of emotional intelligence, namely social awareness and relationship management.” (Goleman, 2017)

Enhancing the technical skills of human resources through behavior based on high professionalism can be achieved by embedding in organizational cultures those values that attract and keep emotionally intelligent employees in organizations.

Figure 12 summarizes the research results in a model that highlights the elements of culture and emotional intelligence and how they influence each other in an organization. The attention of the manager of the contemporary organization should be on the hidden aspects of organizational culture, shaping an organizational philosophy that directs human resources in a unified direction, creating a shared identity that impact on all elements of the organization.

Assuming this role implies responsibility and a different kind of intelligence than the rational one, it implies skills in the emotional sphere, such as being aware and in control of one's own emotions and understanding the emotions of others, understanding what motivates oneself and putting together the best teams, both in terms of skills matching and emotional matching, so that the number of conflicts decreases and work productivity increases.

With the objective of supporting organizations in a period of readjustment, in which continuity is increasingly sought, an attempt has been made to identify those elements that could ensure sustainability and continuity. To this end, the article focused on human resources, managers and employees, on identifying those common principles that would lead them in the same direction of increasing organizational performance.

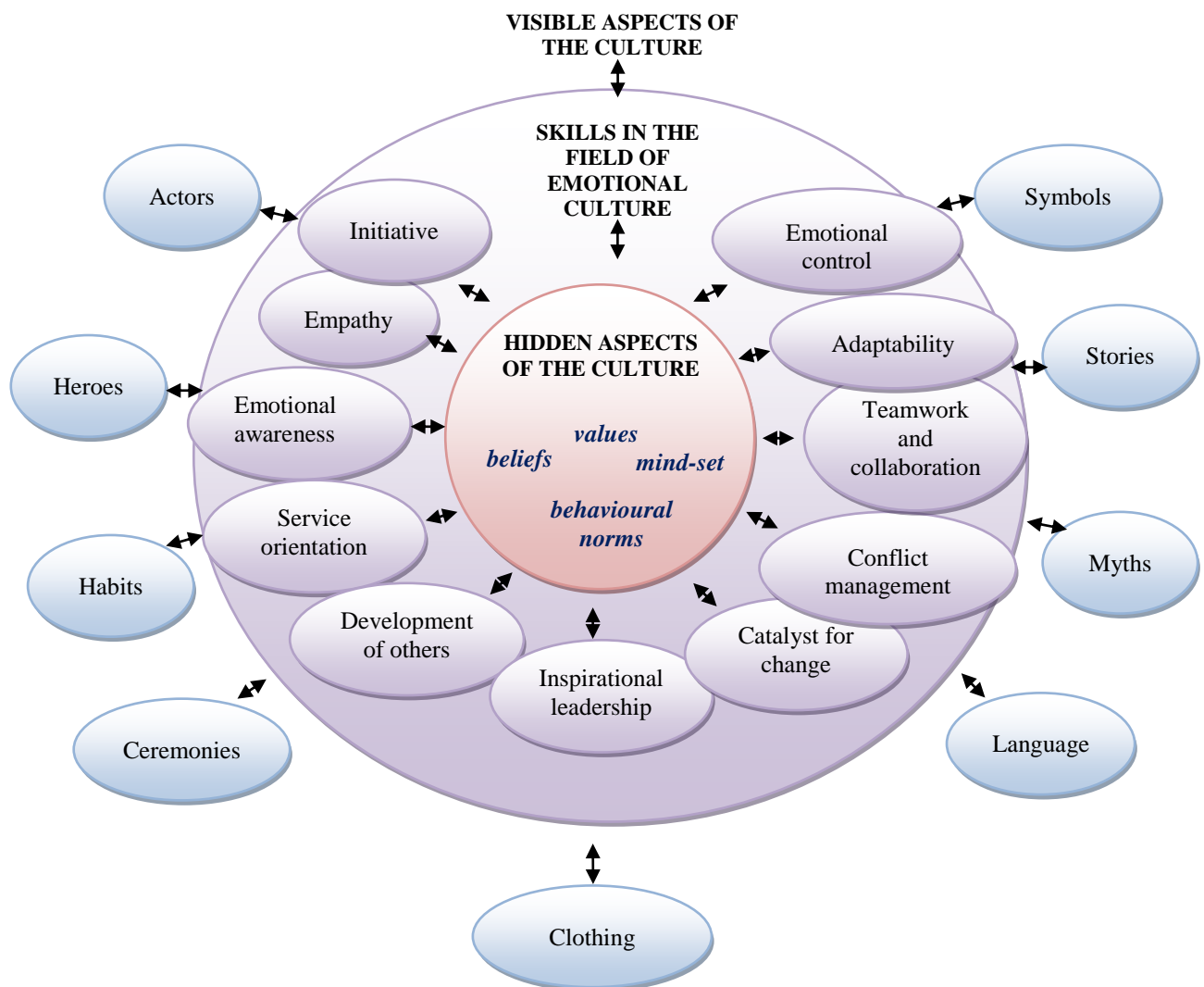


Figure 12. Model of relating elements of culture and emotional intelligence
 Source: drafted by the author

It was started from the idea that people have two types of intelligence: rational and emotional, and success depends on how we combine them, because intellect cannot function without emotional intelligence. And to become emotionally competent, we need to develop skills from the foundations of emotional intelligence, such as social awareness or relationship management, which the questionnaire found to be too less emphasized and too less taught in the military.

The presence of these emotional skills is not enough, it is the role of the manager to transform them into competences. These transformations take place in the substrate, in the hidden side of the organizational culture, those elements that are not visible, but produce the greatest effects, must be passed through the filter of emotional intelligence to improve the visible elements of the culture. Change must be from the inside out, only then can we talk about the potential for organizational growth, sustainable, healthy growth, with long-term beneficial effects.

Organizational culture, as a potential area of performance growth, is a soft one, which in turn drives the whole organizational dynamic. Its role will increase as, in an increasingly versatile global organizational context, resilience is a standard requirement for survival and learning.

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