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## Article

# Organisational Culture as a Determinant of Business Process Management in the Community Offices in Poland

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**Abstract:** The application of business process management (BPM) in public organizations is determined by multiple factors and, according to numerous studies, organizational culture is one of them. Therefore, the aim of the study presented in the article was to identify the organizational culture factors which occur in community offices in Poland. Subsequently, the identified factors were assessed in the context of their significance in the introduction and development of BPM in the examined entities. As a result of the conducted study, it was possible to indicate not only the factors, which have the potential to stimulate the implementation and extension of the concept in the community offices, but also the elements recognized as its barriers. Among the factors that can be considered as the mentioned stimulants, these were: the possibility of exchanging opinions with one's superiors and colleagues, the will to learn and to broaden one's knowledge, good and friendly interpersonal relations, or an orientation towards service quality. And among the elements that can be perceived as barriers, one can identify a lack of positive attitude to change or the formalization arising from the law.

**Keywords:** organizational culture; business process management; public organisation; community office

## 1. Introduction

Business process management (process approach, BPM)<sup>1</sup> is a concept which has proved useful in improving the effectiveness and efficiency of business organization operations. For this reason, it has become an object of interest for public organization managers. Process-based operations were initially implemented in the public sector in the early 1990s (Reyes 1998). At the same time, the possibilities of introducing process approach to public organizations have also begun to arouse the interest of researchers. The first papers on business process management in public organizations included those written by G. Bouckaert, A. Halachmi (Bouckaert and Halachmi 1995); R. Linden (Linden 1993), T. Packwood (Packwood et al. 1998), as well as L. P. Willcocks (Willcocks et al. 1997).

The introduction of BPM to public organizations is consistent especially with the assumptions of the New Public Management (NPM) concept. One of the doctrinal components of NPM is the establishment of professional management to public organizations, i.e., the transfer of concepts, methods, techniques used in business organizations to public ones, giving freedom of action, but at

<sup>1</sup> According to M. Weske, business process management includes other concepts, methods, and techniques supporting design of processes, their administration, configuration, implementation, and analysis. Moreover, the basis of BPM is a clear representation of processes along with their activities and implementation restrictions between them (Weske 2007).

the same time imposing additional responsibility on managers (Hood 1991). In addition, the use of the process approach is in line with some of the assumptions of the basic NPM models<sup>2</sup>, especially regarding the setting of service standards and the use of benchmarking solutions, the flattening of organizational structures and the increase in the importance of teamwork, the introduction of a horizontal management structure and the emphasis on radical decentralization, or the introduction of evaluation through achieved results.

Currently, the importance of using BPM in public organizations is emphasized, among others, in the case of introducing and developing the e-government concept (Gabryelczyk and Jurczuk 2016; Kasemsap 2019) or regarding the operationalization of the concept of good governance (Szumowski 2019).

The use of the process approach in transforming the public administration system in Poland, that has been going on since the 1990s, is not a whim, but a recommendation. The need for this approach is emphasized in various government documents<sup>3</sup>, and is also reflected in many modernization projects that have been carried out, i.e., *System support for management processes in local government units* or the *Institutional Development Planning*. In addition, in Poland, there are ongoing activities aimed at the widest possible introduction of e-services in different public organizations, including the community offices. This process cannot be carried out without introducing at least some of the BPM elements. That is why, according to the authors, it is so important to know the factors that may constitute potential barriers or stimulators of implementing the discussed concept into public organizations in Poland. Identifying these elements would allow public managers to focus on supporting elements conducive to BPM implementation and development, as well as trying to influence the aspects that may obstruct these activities.

The success of business process management implementation and development in all types of organizations depends on factors present in such organizational areas as: organizational culture, strategy, organizational structure, personnel's motivations and attitudes, finances, services provided, IT solutions, etc.

Organizational culture is an area which has gained high interest and is considered to be a stimulant or a barrier when implementing and extending the scope of process approaches in organizations, both in a theoretical and practical sense (Schein 2004). It can be testified to by the number of scientific studies on the links of organizational culture with a process approach. J. vom Brocke and T. Sinnl reviewed the literature concerning the mentioned relation and they identified nearly 600 research papers on the subject that were released before 2011 (Vom Brocke and Sinnl 2011).

Generally, the relationship between organizational culture and the process approach is considered by researchers in different ways. For example, process culture, as a specific form of organizational culture, has been dealt with by T. Schmiedel, J. Recker and J. vom Brocke (Schmiedel et al. 2013). Organizational culture is also seen a decisive factor of the process maturity models, especially in their holistic approaches (Maull et al. 2003). Finally, organizational culture is perceived as a specific, barely variable factor, which affects relations and actions within an organization (Beugelsdijk et al. 2006).

Specific features (elements) of organizational culture that have the potential of stimulating the successful implementation of the process approach in public organizations are still poorly recognized in the literature. In Poland, the existing studies mostly focus on identifying the cultural profile of public organizations, without indicating their potential in supporting the introduction of process solutions to these entities<sup>4</sup>. Therefore, the aim of the research presented in this article was to identify factors from the organisational culture area, which occur in the community offices<sup>5</sup> in Poland. Subsequently, the

<sup>2</sup> See: (Ferlie et al. 1996).

<sup>3</sup> See: (Boni 2009).

<sup>4</sup> See: (Siemiński and Krukowski 2015).

<sup>5</sup> Community offices in Poland are considered of greatest importance because they deal with different citizens' affairs by providing public services. Therefore, they were chosen for the subject of the research.

identified factors were assessed in the context of their significance in the introduction and development of BPM in the examined entities.

In order to achieve the goal of the presented study, associations between BPM and organizational culture were indicated and literature review on organizational culture, supporting the implementation and development of BPM in organizations was reviewed (Section 2). Subsequently, the research methodology was described, emphasizing, among other factors, the applied methods and the potential limitations of the research (Section 3). Finally, the results of the survey were presented, together with their discussion and summary (Sections 4–6).

## 2. Theoretical Background

Among the factors that influence implementation of business process management in organizations, one can indicate not only the IT-related ones, but also the aspects of economic and organizational nature, including organizational culture (in the area of organization research, management, and organizational psychology) (Grau and Moormann 2014; Felipe et al. 2016). Organizational culture, as a success factor in BPM implementation, is mentioned in regards to its organizational aspects. Thus, there are a number of determinants in business process management implementation, but it is the organizational culture that often underpins a lack of implementational success (Schmiedel 2014). And when it comes to introducing BPM to public organizations, organizational culture plays an increasingly important role, which is due to the fact that the causes of success or failure of these actions include, among others: personnel attitudes and behavior, client-oriented values, personal responsibility and readiness for change, as well as commitment of management of different levels (Cao et al. 2001; Hammer 2007).

Considering the associations between business process management and organizational culture, J. vom Brocke and T. Sinnl identified four areas of study on their relations (Vom Brocke and Sinnl 2011). They identified organizational culture as: an (independent) factor affecting BPM, a (dependent) factor affected by BPM, BPM subculture and one of the BPM components. Organizational culture (process culture) is most often referred to, in study findings published in the literature, as a factor which affects the attaining of objectives associated with the BPM, i.e., culture understood as an independent variable (Hammer 2010). It is associated with the fact that each BPM initiative in an organization encounters a certain—already developed—cultural environment called the “cultural context”.

A study presented by T. Schmiedel, J. vom Brocke and J. Recker attempted to identify the features of organizational culture which facilitate BPM in carrying out efficient and effective processes. They are also called CERT values (C—Customer orientation, E—Excellence, R—Responsibility, T—Teamwork) (Schmiedel et al. 2013). The study, in which the CERT values were identified, was performed by the Delphi method. Twenty-seven experts—both academics and practitioners—from 13 countries took part in the study. This resulted in determination of four cultural values which facilitate implementation of the process approach:

- client-orientation—proactive and flexible approach to client needs completing the process,
- excellence—orientation towards permanent improvement and innovation in order to achieve the highest process performance,
- responsibility—involvement in pursuing process objectives and responsibility for process management decisions,
- team work—positive attitude to horizontal cooperation in an organization.

According to another study, conducted by M. Zairi, culture-related values associated with the process approach focus on (Zairi 1997):

- orientation towards functional interrelations, i.e., focusing on processes rather than functional departments,
- orientation towards a client as a recipient of the results of process completion,
- quality as excellence and optimum process performance,

- focusing on process effectiveness,
- permanent improvement as a form of pressure on constant revision of conditions and processes to eliminate any potential shortcomings,
- innovation as introducing creative changes, which have a fundamental effect on the renewal of processes and/or their effects,
- the responsibility of focusing on commitment.

Similar factors to the above-mentioned cultural values, that support the implementation and development of the process approach in organizations, were presented by M. Kohlbacher and S. Gruenwald. They confirmed that the most important features of the organizational culture that assists these actions are the existence of inter-departmental teamwork, the customer-focused attitude of employees, employees' accountability for enterprise results, employees' positive attitudes towards change, and the existence of an open and collaborative leadership style (Kohlbacher and Gruenwald 2011).

However, it should be emphasized that the success or failure factors in implementing BPM in organizations may vary depending on the type of entities. In G. Hutton's opinion, these are the human issues that should be considered as being most important, especially when performing business process reengineering in the public sector (Hutton 1996). This view is shared by M. Smith, who stresses that the effective communication at all organizational levels should be considered as one of the critical factors here (Smith 2003).

Identification of cultural values that support the BPM implementation in public organizations, was carried out by i.e., J. Ruževičius, D. Klimas, and R. Veleckaitė. Using the K. S. Cameron and R. E. Quinn's organizational culture model, the authors conducted their studies in 40 Lithuanian institutions. Owing to their research, the authors were able to determine the effect of the type of organizational culture on the process orientation of the organizations under study (Ruževičius et al. 2012). The study results were used to build a model explaining the effect of the type of organizational culture on the success of the BPM implementation. This model shows that an organization dominated by an organizational culture of adhocracy achieves success in terms of improved quality and time following the implementation of BPM. And for the success factor, i.e., costs, market culture is the dominant type of organizational culture for public organizations.

Some authors focus their studies on the relationship between organizational culture and business process management in the context of culture as the main success or failure factor in implementation of business process reengineering or BPM initiatives in organizations (Grau and Moormann 2013). For example, O. F. Sentanin et al. demonstrated in their research that the organizational culture, which dominates public organizations even after the BPM is implemented, has a major effect on traditional functional thinking (Sentanin et al. 2008). They showed that a change of culture, which is reflected in personnel behavior, is a success factor in implementation of the process approach, but it also affects achieving process maturity in an organization.

A study conducted in Swedish public administration by H. P. Sundberg and K. W. Sandberg confirmed that emphasis on functionally oriented and traditionally hierarchic structures and control systems are especially anchored in the public sector and cannot be changed in a simple manner, which is one of the basic barriers for implementation of the process approach (Sundberg and Sandberg 2006). Therefore, it is important to put emphasis on changes in the organizational culture and changes from the personnel's functional thinking towards process-oriented thinking.

The study of the features of organizational culture conducive to the introduction of the process approach to public organizations in Poland, was the subject of very few studies. In fact, the widest research in this area concerned the cultural determinants of process maturity of the urban community offices in Poland and was conducted by K. Krukowski. As a result of the carried-out study, the author identified 14 features supporting process development in the researched offices, which are: respect for the client, desire to permanently develop and improve one's skills, willingness to broaden one's knowledge, innovation, creativity, thriftiness, professionalism, quality orientation, ethics in one's

actions, responsibility, commitment, confidence in interpersonal relations, teamwork skills, and intercultural skills (Krukowski 2016).

According to the literature, the relationship between process management and organizational culture, and their mutual impact, has a significant effect on organizations. These areas, and the relationship between them, can both have a direct and indirect impact on the operations of organizations, including the community offices. Therefore, it seems that measures implemented gradually, aimed at changes towards a process-oriented organization, require a specific approach in the public sector, based on the permanent work on changes in the organizational culture.

### 3. Research Methodology

In order to fulfil the research goal, a survey was conducted. It was aimed at identifying the occurrence of specific factors from the organizational culture area in the community offices (offices) in Poland. The questionnaire used in the survey contained questions on different areas, which potentially determine the implementation of BPM in public organisations, including the organisational culture area. The part of the questionnaire devoted to organisational culture listed 17 factors, which are:

- C1—The will to learn and to broaden one's knowledge,
- C2—Sharing one's knowledge,
- C3—Cooperation among personnel (including from different departments),
- C4—Possibility of exchanging opinions with one's colleagues,
- C5—Possibility of exchanging opinions with one's superiors,
- C6—Good and friendly interpersonal relations,
- C7—Atmosphere of mutual trust,
- C8—Commitment to one's duties,
- C9—Professional approach to one's work,
- C10—Creativity,
- C11—Self-reliance in one's actions,
- C12—Orientation towards service quality,
- C13—Flexibility in one's actions,
- C14—Positive attitude to change,
- C15—Clear and consistent set of values regulating procedures in the office,
- C16—Formalization arising from the law,
- C17—Leadership rotation in the office.

The basis for the selection of the above factors were the works of various researchers studying the features of process culture<sup>6</sup>.

These factors were evaluated on a five-point Likert scale<sup>7</sup>. The person responding to the questions in each of the community offices was the office secretary (secretary) and a person designated by the secretary, with—in the secretary's opinion—experience in implementation of BPM concept in the office. When choosing the secretary for the respondent, he or she was guided by his position in the organizational structure of the community office, as well as the scope of duties, often requiring extensive knowledge about the community office's functioning processes, applied methods, and management concepts in the office, the subject of individual cells in the organizational structure of the office, or legal acts regulating its work.

<sup>6</sup> See e.g., (Kohlbacher and Gruenwald 2011; McCormack and Johnson 2001; Ahmad et al. 2007; Van Rensburg 1998; Krukowski 2016).

<sup>7</sup> The respondents could evaluate the occurrence of different factors from the organizational culture area in a given community office, where: 1—a factor does not occur, 2—a factor occurs to a small extent, 3—a factor occurs to a medium extent, 4—a factor occurs to a big extent, 5—a factor always occurs.



The study was carried out in 2017. The questionnaire was sent to the respondents by mail or delivered to the offices personally.

The research was conducted in one of the voivodships of Poland—the Warmian-Mazurian voivodship<sup>8</sup>. All of the community offices from the Warmian-Mazurian voivodship (116) were included in the survey: 67 rural community offices (57.7% of the total population), 16 urban offices (13.8% of the total population) and 33 urban-rural offices (28.5% of the total population). The final study sample included 99 community offices and the community offices of rural type were a large majority of these (55.7%). They were followed by the offices of urban-rural type (28.9%), and the offices of urban type accounted for the smallest group of the entities, in which the study was conducted (15.4%). So, the responses with varying degrees of completeness were received from 99 offices (198 completed questionnaires), which was a response rate of 85%. 194 questionnaires—97 pairs from different community offices—were qualified for further analysis. Therefore, the final number of respondents was 194. The empirical material from the selected questionnaires was entered into an electronic database and analyzed in the IBM SPSS Statistics 24.

To avoid common method bias (CMB), the Brewer's Split Sample Method was used when constructing the questionnaire (Brewer 2006). This approach was intended to eliminate CMB by using one sample of respondents to evaluate independent variable and the other to measure a dependent variable. In the case of presented research, the independent variable, i.e., the type of community offices, was the administrative data (Podsakoff et al. 2012; Jakobsen and Jensen 2015). Moreover, as was mentioned before, the questionnaire was addressed to two people (the secretary and the person designated by the secretary) with sufficient specialist knowledge, so that the answers to the questions did not relate to vague concepts (MacKenzie and Podsakoff 2012). Also, the respondents were to assess the present occurrence of factors, which should also reduce the risk of the discussed error. As a next step, the Cronbach's alpha test, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test, and the Barlett's test were conducted (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Measurement properties.

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha Test	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Test	Barlett's Test *
Organisational culture	0.929	0.924	2176.694

\*  $p < 0.000$ . Source: Own work based on research results.

Thanks to the Cronbach's alpha and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test results obtained, the reliability of the research tool was confirmed. The authors are aware that the factors selected for the study are correlated with one another. However, this is due to the fact that they relate to one phenomenon occurring in an organization. The purpose of the study, however, was not to indicate their relationship but to identify their occurrence and to evaluate them in context of their influence on using BPM in the researched community offices.

Finally, a one-way analysis of variance for independent samples was conducted (by the statistic method developed by R. Fisher) in order to verify whether individual types of community offices differed with respect to the occurrence of the individual factors based on the area of organizational culture.

#### 4. Results

Table 2 presents a result of a one-way analysis of variance for independent samples. The F coefficient is slightly higher than 1, which means that it is statistically significant. However, at  $p < 0.05$ ,

<sup>8</sup> Despite the fact that the presented research was conducted in a single voivodship of Poland, in our opinion, its results can be extended to the entire population of the community offices in Poland. This assumption was made basing on the results of other research in this area, which proves that geographical distribution does not affect the specificity of the functioning of these entities and, thus, does not determine the possibility of introducing and expanding the scope of use of BPM in them. See e.g., (Krukowski 2016).

for the “organizational culture” area there are differences at a statistical tendency level, depending on the type of office ( $\eta^2$  is 0.03; 0.02, respectively).

**Table 2.** The result of a one-way analysis of variance for independent samples.

Dependent Variable	Type of a Community Office	M	SE	LL	UL	F	p	$\eta^2$ *
Organisational culture	urban	4.08	0.1	3.88	4.28	1.91	0.150	0.02
	urban-rural	3.89	0.07	3.75	4.04			
	rural	3.86	0.05	3.76	3.96			

\*  $p < 0.05$ . Where: M—mean, SD—standard deviation, LL—lower limit of the 95% confidence interval, UL—upper limit of the 95% confidence interval, F—result of the Fisher test, p—statistical significance,  $\eta^2$ —effect size. Source: Own work based on research results.

It may be noted that average evaluation of the occurrence of factors from the area of organizational culture was worse in the community offices of rural type, than in the offices of urban-rural and urban type. That is why a frequency analysis for these factors was performed to illustrate the disproportions between the entities of each category. The principle was adopted that a factor is qualified as “being present” in a given type of the office on condition of the sum of respondents’ declarations on its big and absolute (the factor is regarded as “absolute” if the response is “a factor always occurs”) occurrence (score 4 and 5 on the numerical scale in the questionnaire) being higher than 50%.

Considering the result of the analysis of variance described earlier, which indicated the existence of a relationship at a statistical tendency level and comparing the average responses for the examined area (4.08 for respondents from the community offices of urban type, 3.89 for respondents from the offices of urban-rural type and 3.86 for respondents from the offices of rural type), certain disproportions between the entities of different categories were expected. In particular, 16 factors were considered to be present (out of 17 possible) in the community offices of the urban type, 16 in the offices of the urban-rural type, and 15 in the offices of the rural type (Table 3).

**Table 3.** Frequency of indications of the occurrence of specific factors from the organizational culture area in the community offices from the Warmian-Mazurian voivodship (in %).

Factor	Type of the Community Office														
	Rural					Urban-Rural					Urban				
	Given Answers					Given Answers					Given Answers				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
C1	-	3.7	9.3	52.8	34.2	-	-	23.2	58.9	17.9	-	-	3.3	50.0	46.7
C2	-	5.6	25.9	49.1	19.4	-	-	33.9	46.4	19.7	-	6.7	16.6	30.0	46.7
C3	-	3.7	26.8	49.1	20.4	-	3.6	23.2	53.6	19.6	-	-	16.7	40.0	43.3
C4	-	1.8	17.6	53.7	26.9	-	3.6	8.9	55.4	32.1	-	-	13.3	33.3	53.4
C5	-	1.8	12.1	47.2	38.9	-	-	12.5	58.9	28.6	-	-	6.7	36.7	56.6
C6	-	2.8	20.4	53.7	23.1	-	-	19.6	58.9	21.5	-	-	13.3	56.7	30.0
C7	-	3.7	31.5	42.6	22.2	-	-	26.8	57.1	16.1	-	6.7	10.0	40.0	43.3
C8	-	-	15.7	54.7	29.6	-	-	21.4	58.9	19.7	-	-	30.0	40.0	30.0
C9	-	-	21.3	48.1	30.6	-	-	26.8	58.9	14.3	-	-	16.7	53.3	30.0
C10	-	3.7	42.6	37.0	16.7	-	3.6	37.5	48.2	10.7	-	-	46.7	30.0	23.3
C11	-	6.5	26.8	49.1	17.6	-	-	42.9	39.3	17.8	-	-	40.0	36.7	23.3
C12	-	2.8	35.2	37.0	25.0	-	-	14.3	57.1	28.6	-	-	13.3	50.0	36.7
C13	-	7.4	31.5	46.3	14.8	-	-	41.1	41.1	17.8	-	-	33.3	30.0	36.7
C14	2.8	11.1	40.7	29.6	15.8	-	7.2	48.2	35.7	8.9	-	20.0	30.0	13.3	36.7
C15	1.8	6.5	38.9	33.3	19.5	-	-	25.0	62.5	12.5	-	6.7	33.3	33.3	26.7
C16	-	0.9	19.4	44.4	35.3	-	-	10.7	60.7	28.6	-	-	16.7	36.7	46.6
C17	4.6	25.0	28.7	22.2	19.5	5.4	8.9	32.1	28.6	25.0	16.7	10.0	20.0	16.7	36.6

Where: 1—a factor does not occur, 2—a factor occurs to a small extent, 3—a factor occurs to a medium extent, 4—a factor occurs to a big extent, 5—a factor always occurs. C1–C17—are the abbreviations of the factors listed in “Research methodology” section. The factors which occur in the researched entities are highlighted grey. Source: Own work based on research results.



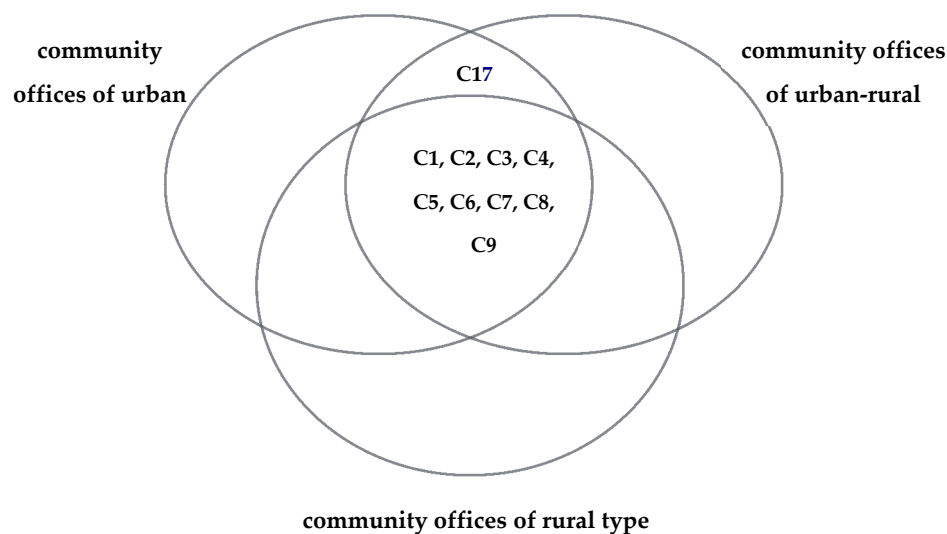
The study allowed for the identification of factors from the area of organisational culture, which appear in the surveyed community offices of all categories.

Respondents from the rural offices most often emphasized the occurrence of factors like the will to learn and to broaden one's knowledge (C1—87% of responses), the possibility of exchanging opinions with one's superiors (C5—86.1%), commitments to one's duties (C8—84.3%), and the possibility of exchanging opinions with one's colleagues (C4—80.6%). A slightly lower response rate among respondents from the offices of rural type was observed for such factors as: formalization arising from the law (C16—79.7%), professional approach to one's work (C9—78.7%), good and friendly interpersonal relations (C6—76.8%), cooperation among personnel (including from different departments) (C3—69.5%), sharing one's knowledge (C2—68.5%), self-reliance in one's actions (C11—66.7%), atmosphere of mutual trust (C7—64.8%), an orientation towards service quality (C12—62%), and flexibility in one's actions (C13—61.1%). The most rarely appearing factors from the examined area, in the opinion of the respondents from the offices of the rural type, included creativity (C10—53.7%), a clear and consistent set of values regulating procedures in the office (C15—52.8%). Factors that were indicated in less than half of the specific offices included a positive attitude to change (C14—45.4%) and leadership rotation in the office (C17—41.7%). Hence, both positive attitude to change and leadership rotation were the factors indicated by the respondents representing rural offices as occurring to the lowest extent in the entities that they work for.

The most frequent responses concerning the appearance of factors related to organisational culture in the urban-rural offices, in line with the respondents' opinions, included: formalization arising from the law (C16—89.3% of responses), the possibility of exchanging opinions with one's superiors (C5—87.5%), the possibility of exchanging opinions with one's colleagues (C4—87.5%), an orientation towards service quality (C12—85.7%) and good and friendly interpersonal relations (C6—80.4%). They were followed by: commitments to one's duties (C8—78.6%), the will to learn and to broaden one's knowledge (C1—76.8%), clear and consistent set of values regulating procedures in the office (C15—75%), cooperation among personnel (including from different departments) (C3—73.2%), an atmosphere of mutual trust (C7—73.2%), a professional approach to one's work (C9—73.2%), and sharing one's knowledge (C2—66.1%). The lowest response rate from the offices of urban-rural type, concerning the individual factors from the discussed area, was observed for creativity (C10—58.9%), flexibility in one's actions (C13—58.9%), self-reliance in one's actions (C11—57.1%), and rotation in the office leadership (C17—53.6%). And the factor—"positive attitude to change", in line with the respondents' opinion, should be regarded as not-present in the urban-rural offices (C14—44.6%).

Respondents from the urban offices most often emphasized the occurrence of such factors as the will to learn and to broaden one's knowledge (C1—96.7% of responses), the possibility of exchanging opinions with one's superiors (C5—93.3%), an orientation towards service quality (C12—86.7%), the possibility of exchanging opinions with one's colleagues (C4—86.7%), and good and friendly interpersonal relations (C6—86.7%). A slightly lower response rate among respondents from the urban offices was observed for factors like cooperation among personnel (including from different departments) (C3—83.3%), an atmosphere of mutual trust (C7—83.3%), a professional approach to one's work (C9—83.3%), formalization arising from the law (C16—83.3%), and sharing one's knowledge (C2—76.7%). Finally, the factors, which appear to the least extent in the researched offices of urban type were: commitments to one's duties (C8—70.0%), flexibility in one's actions (C13—66.7%), a clear and consistent set of values regulating procedures in the office (C15—60.0%), creativity (C10—53.3%), self-reliance in one's actions (C11—60.0%) and rotation in the office leadership (C17—53.3%). And similarly, as in the case of the offices of urban-rural type, the factor—"positive attitude to change" turned out to be an element which is not present in the surveyed urban community offices (C14—50%).

Similarities and differences in appearance of various factors from the area of organisational culture, according to the respondents from the community offices of different types, are shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Similarities and differences in appearance of different factors in the organizational culture area in the community offices from the Warmian-Mazurian voivodship, concerning the office type.  
Source: Own work based on research results.

The conducted research enabled us to identify 15 factors in the organisational culture area, which are perceived as “present” in all types of the researched community offices, and an individual factor which occurred only in the urban-rural and urban offices (Figure 1). It may also be noted that there were no characteristic culture-related features perceived as appearing, which are typical only for a chosen type of the community offices from the Warmian-Mazurian voivodeship.

## 5. Discussion

The presented study was a survey of respondents’ opinion on the appearance of different factors from the organizational culture area in the community offices from Warmian-Mazurian voivodeship. First of all, it can be considered significant that the absolute majority of factors assessed within the discussed area was indicated by the respondents as “occurring to a big extent” or perceived as “always occurring” in the researched entities. Considering the fact that most of the factors included in the survey questionnaire fall under the profile of the process culture, their declared appearance may stimulate the introduction and development of a process approach in the community offices in Poland.

Despite the fact that the one-way analysis of variance showed differences in the respondents’ assessment of the appearance of given factors in the offices of various types, this correlation was small. As a result, the subsequent analysis of the frequency of recognizing factors as occurring to different extent did not allow them to be profiled as characteristic only for the rural, urban-rural, or urban offices. This may be due to the fact that, despite the frequent difference in the size of employment in individual types of community offices, their general operating conditions remain similar, and are determined mainly by existing legal acts regulating their activities. Thus, their cultural profile also remains similar.

On the basis of the study results, it is possible to indicate some factors related to organizational culture, which are perceived as present to the highest extent in all types of the researched entities. These are: the possibility of exchanging opinions with one’s superiors and the possibility of exchanging opinions with one’s colleagues. These factors, indeed, have the potential to stimulate the introduction of the concept into organizations (not only those of a public nature). This is due to the fact that without the presence of these factors, effective teamwork or focusing on processes rather than functional departments, whose importance for the discussed process was emphasized, among others, by T. Schmiedel, J. vom Brocke, M. Kohlbacher, S. Gruenwald and J. Recker or M. Zairi, is not possible (Schmiedel et al. 2013; Zairi 1997; Kohlbacher and Gruenwald 2011). Moreover, the importance of

the effective communication in the process of implementing and extending the use of the discussed concept in public organizations was emphasized by M. Smith.

Depending on the type of researched offices, other highly rated factors in the field of organizational culture, in terms of their appearance can be indicated. These were: the will to learn and to broaden one's knowledge, good and friendly interpersonal relations, orientation towards service quality<sup>9</sup>, commitments to one's duties and formalization arising from the law. While the significance of the first four factors does not raise doubts for the implementation and extension of BPM use in organizations, the presence of the factor "formalization arising from the law" can be considered as a negative aspect. Usually, this factor is seen as a barrier of introducing and developing a process approach in organizations, as is evident, i.e., in the work of H. P. Sundberg and K. W. Sandberg (Sundberg and Sandberg 2006). But formalization does not necessarily have to undermine the introduction of BPM into an organization. Maintaining a rational degree of formalization ensures, among other things, precise and clear formulation of procedures, can be useful from the point of view of i.e., designing processes in organizations. Nevertheless, this issue would require further qualitative research.

However, the most surprising and disquieting result obtained was the low level of indications suggesting a positive attitude to change in all types of the surveyed entities. The need for a positive attitude to change, when introducing and extending the scope of using BPM in organizations, is a factor of undeniable importance, as understanding and acceptance of changes, including radical ones, is a very significant element of creating and maintaining a process culture (Van Rensburg 1998; Kohlbacher and Gruenwald 2011). Thus, identifying the reasons for a negative approach to changes among the employees of community offices could be of particular value for both theoreticians and practitioners of public management and could constitute another direction of research.

## 6. Conclusions

It can be concluded from the presented study that:

- the type of a community office does not affect significantly the occurrence of individual factors from the area of organizational culture. Thus, it could not be unequivocally stated that the offices of different type in Poland are distinguished by a different set of features in the field of organizational culture.
- respondents from all types of the examined offices paid special attention to the appearance of factors emphasizing the possibility of exchanging opinions with co-workers, including superiors. "The possibility of exchanging opinions with one's superiors" and "the possibility of exchanging opinions with one's colleagues" were among the indicated features associated with organizational culture, with the greatest perceived occurrence in all types of the researched offices.
- depending on the type of examined entities, highly rated factors in the discussed area, in terms of their appearance, were: "the will to learn and to broaden one's knowledge", "good and friendly interpersonal relations", "orientation towards service quality", "commitments to one's duties", and "formalization arising from the law".
- among the factors considered to be "absent" in all types of the surveyed offices was, surprisingly, a key factor for the success of implementing and developing the use of BPM, which is "positive attitude to change".

Although, in the authors' opinion, the results of the presented study could be used in the assessment of the entire population of the community offices in Poland, the size of the research sample could be perceived as a limitation of the conducted survey. Thus, research could also be carried

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<sup>9</sup> Orientation towards service quality can be perceived as the client-orientation (proactive and flexible approach to client needs completing the process) and excellence (orientation towards permanent improvement and innovation in order to achieve the highest process performance), so the C and E values from the study of T. Schmiedel, J. vom Brocke and J. Recker (Schmiedel et al. 2013).

out in other regions of Poland in order to compare the obtained results. Moreover, according to the results of the conducted research, it cannot be said that the type of examined offices differentiates the occurrence of individual features within the organizational culture. Therefore, an attempt to determine whether e.g., there is a relationship between the level of process maturity of the community offices and the specific features of organizational culture, could be perceived as an interesting direction for further research.

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