

UDC [005.73:005.94]:027.52(497.541Požega)

Original Scientific Paper

<https://doi.org/10.62598/JVA.10.2.2.7>



Received: September 30, 2024

Accepted for publishing: December 10, 2024

IMPORTANCE OF ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE FOR EFFECTIVE KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT IN LIBRARIES: EXAMPLE OF THE CITY LIBRARY OF POŽEGA

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Abstract:

Purpose:

This research aimed to explore and assess the organizational culture of the City Library of Požega using Goffee and Jones' Double S Cube Model.

Design/Methodology/Approach:

A quantitative approach was adopted, utilizing a structured questionnaire to measure sociability and solidarity within the library. All 18 employees participated in the study, with their responses analyzed to classify the profile of organizational culture and determine whether it was perceived as positive or negative.

Findings:

The study revealed that 17 respondents identified the library's organizational culture as communal, while one respondent assessed it as mercenary. Among those who perceived the culture as communal, there were mixed evaluations regarding its positivity. No significant differences were found between managerial and non-managerial staff or between older and younger employees in how the culture was assessed.

Originality:

This research offers a novel analysis of organizational culture in a public library. The results can help the library leadership better understand the cultural dynamics within the organization, enabling them to create strategies that enhance teamwork, communication, and employee relations, while guiding organizational changes that support both employee well-being and institutional success.

Keywords: *organizational culture, Goffee and Jones, sociability, solidarity, knowledge management, The City Library of Požega.*

1. Introduction

Libraries are institutions whose mission is to collect, organize, provide access to, and preserve valuable human knowledge that has been published on some material carrier. However, what libraries often forget to do is manage the knowledge about the work and business they themselves generate. In the business world, the importance of knowledge management (KM) activities is recognized as one of the key factors for their competitiveness in the market (Dalkir, 2011). Knowledge has been identified as an extremely important component embedded in the products and services of every organization, as well as being an integral part of the tacit knowledge of their employees (Dalkir, 2011). Institutions that successfully manage their knowledge have success in various areas such as customer services, cost reduction for employees and infrastructure, making better decisions, business innovation, quick and efficient conflict resolution, and efficient transfer of best practices (Davenport and Klahr, 1998; Hansen and Oetinger, 2001; Skyrme and Amidon, 1998).

However, KM also brings a number of challenges that organizations must overcome. One of the major challenges is creating a positive organizational culture that promotes the sharing of existing and the creation of new knowledge within the organization. According to Schein (1999, p. 385), organizational culture is defined as a set of organizational assumptions that a certain group (employees) has invented, discovered, or developed in order to solve certain business problems. Successful solutions that are considered valid are passed on to new members of the collective as the correct way of thinking, feeling, and seeing things. Organizational culture is important because of its influence on beliefs, values, and work systems, and it can either encourage or hinder the creation and sharing of new organizational knowledge (Janz and Prasarnphanich, 2003).

In Croatian librarianship, there are several papers on the subject of organizational culture in libraries, but there are no papers that address KM, especially from the context of organizational culture. The aim of this study is therefore to explore what type of organizational culture exists in the City Library of Požega and whether the existing culture has positive effects on the creation and sharing of organizational knowledge in the institution.

2. Organisational culture and KM

Organizational culture is considered to be a key factor for successfully managing the knowledge of any institution. However, very often, culture is a set of behaviours and operating principles that nearly everyone knows, but which are not written down (Wellman, 2007).

According to Schein (1992), there are three levels that define an organizational culture. At the lowest level are the so-called artifacts - these are visible characteristics of organizational culture such as uniforms, seating arrangements, or employee jargon. At the middle level are values - strategies, goals, and the philosophy of the work organization. And, finally, at the highest level are assumptions and beliefs - a set of unspoken beliefs that employees often haven't even consciously realized, beliefs that are unquestioned and taken for granted. In case the organisational culture needs to be changed, changes must start at the highest level (which is also the most difficult to change) and then trickle down to lower levels. If changes are limited only to the lowest level, level of artefacts, the change in organizational culture generally won't be successful.

Pettigrew (1979) uses the term 'cultural artefacts' for symbols, language, ideology, belief, rituals, and myths and believes that employees use those cultural artefacts to explain their working environment to themselves.

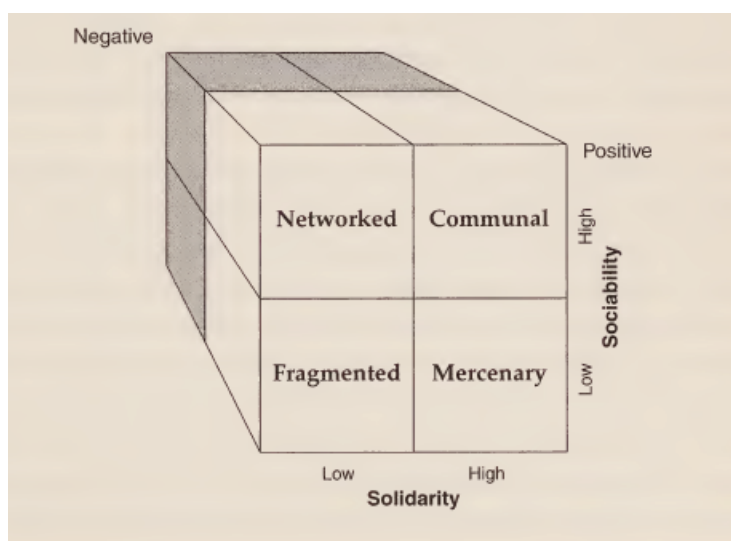
Organisational knowledge can be captured in various ways. Wellman (2007) suggests to use organisational *culture*, which usually captures lessons repeatedly learned by the organisation. *Older and experienced employees* are valuable in the sense that they have accumulated a great deal of

experience about the organisation and its procedures. Organisations that have lost valuable knowledge set out to construct archives in which they store and retrieve their organisational knowledge. And finally, (formal) *processes* can serve as both repositories and disseminators of lessons learned.

As it was already established, positive organisational culture is very important for organisational success, but it is necessary to be able to measure the present organisational culture in order to manage it and correct possible problems and threats. One way of exploring organisational cultures is to classify them into types (Dalkir, 2011). Goffee and Jones (1998) identified four types of organisational culture in their Double S Cube model (Fig. 1). Their classification is based on two dimensions: sociability and solidarity. *Sociability* refers to the friendliness among members of the organization. It reflects the extent to which relationships are based on mutual respect, care, and social interactions. High sociability means people get along well, are supportive, and maintain personal friendships within the organization. However, high sociability can also be problematic, as it may lead to tolerating poor performance or avoiding difficult conversations, such as terminations, due to personal friendships. *Solidarity* refers to the community's ability to pursue shared objectives efficiently and effectively. It measures the degree to which members are united by common goals and are willing to cooperate to achieve organizational success. High solidarity indicates a focus on performance, shared goals, and a strong sense of purpose. The downside is that excessive focus on goals can lead to neglecting the individual needs or interests of employees.

Based on these dimensions, Goffee and Jones (1998) classified organisational culture into the four types. *Networked culture* (high sociability, low solidarity) is characterized by a friendly and relaxed environment where personal relationships and social interactions are highly valued. However, there might be less emphasis on performance and achieving common goals. *Communal culture* (high sociability, high solidarity) combines a strong sense of camaraderie with a shared commitment to organizational objectives. Members feel like part of a family and work together cohesively towards common goals. In *Fragmented culture* (low sociability, low solidarity) employees are more isolated, with few personal connections and a lack of collective purpose. There is minimal interaction and cooperation among members, which leads to a more disjointed and segmented environment. And, finally, *Mercenary culture* (low sociability, high solidarity), which focuses on achieving goals and high performance with less emphasis on personal relationships. The environment is competitive, and members are driven by results, often at the expense of social bonds.

In the Double S Cube Model, the vertical axis represents sociability, while the horizontal axis represents solidarity. The shaded section on the back of the cube represents negative forms of culture, while the front section represented positive forms of culture. Using this model, it was possible to determine whether the organizational culture was networked, communal, fragmented, or mercenary and whether the culture was positive or negative (Goffee and Jones, 1998: 25-43).

Fig. 1. Classification of organisational culture (Double S Cube Model) by Goffee and Jones

Source: Goffee, R. and Jones, G. (1998)

Goffee and Jones' taxonomy of organizational culture was used in other studies, such as a study on a state-owned Greek organization (Malagas, Gritzalis, Nikitakos, and Fragoudaki, 2017), the assessment of the organizational culture of a medical school's family medicine department (Calzada and Shaw, 2011), or the examination of the impact of organizational culture on attitudes toward organizational change (Rashid, Sambasivan, and Rahman, 2004). However, this is the first time that this approach was used to measure the effect of organisational culture on the effective KM within a library setting.

3. KM in libraries

Library and information science has twofold approach to KM, which results from the complex nature of knowledge. The first approach support authors such as Gorman (2004) and Koenig (1997) who believe that it is just a new name for what librarians have been doing for years or Wilson (2002) who states that KM is nothing more than information management (IM) in libraries. Another set of authors (e.g. Middleton, 1999; Davenport, 2004; Gandhi, 2004), however, regards KM as broader in scope and different to library and IM. Those authors accept that IM is an important component of KM, but the latter is also concerned with management and with organizational issues, including an emphasis on less tangible and elusive resources like human expertise. KM, in contrast to IM, deals with **unstructured, tacit knowledge** (Schwarzwalder, 1999; Koenig, 1997), emphasizes **organisational learning** (Gandhi, 2004), collects information both from external and **internal** sources (Gorman, 2004; Koenig, 1997). And finally, whereas both knowledge and IM are greatly interested in information sharing, only KM is also concerned with information **creation** (Davenport, 2004).

Having in mind those differences, KM in libraries offers various benefits – (1) it facilitates better communication between staff and management and fosters a collaborative culture centered on knowledge sharing; (2) it enables the development of user-centric solutions and streamlines operations by identifying and eliminating redundant processes; (3) and, reduces response times to user inquiries and service requests. All these benefits lead to reduced costs, increased performance and a more satisfied library staff, as well as the user (Islam, Agarwal and Ikeda, 2015).

KM was mostly explored in academic libraries. Similarly, organisational culture and its role for effective KM was also primarily studied within the framework of those type of libraries (Porumbeanu, 2010; Ugwu and Ejikeme, 2023).

The few studies on KM in public libraries were either general in nature (Teng and Hawamdeh, 2002), or focused on topics such as the maturity of KM (Shafee, Moradi and Jafari, 2019; Kianrad, Andayesh and Mahboub, 2024), knowledge sharing (Biranvand, Seif, and Khasseh, 2015; Kaffashan Kakhki, Rajabi, Naji, AsemanDoreh and Harati, 2019), the role of social media (Forcier, Rathi and Given, 2013) or service innovation (Ghavami, Kazemi and Ghasemizad, 2015), among other topics. This is the first paper which examines the relationship between KM, organisational culture in a public library in Croatia.

3. Context of the study

The City Library of Požega is the central public library and the regional library for the Požega-Slavonia County. Founded in 1845 as *Lectoria societas*, the City Library of Požega has a long history of supporting cultural and educational progress. A major renovation project, running from 2006 to 2020, culminated in the reopening of the expanded library in 2021, marking its 175th anniversary. The library's mission is to provide citizens with access to reading, learning, and the development of personal cultural, spiritual, and democratic potential. It also aims to familiarize the public with the benefits of modern technology and facilitate its use, while offering opportunities for creative and quality leisure activities, regardless of age, gender, social status, nationality, religion, or race. Through its programs and services the library supports the social inclusion of marginalized groups, promotes Croatian literature and heritage, and strengthens the values of a multicultural society. The City Library of Požega consists of several departments, including the Literature Department, Children's Department, Scientific and Study Department, and Youth and Multimedia Department. In addition, it operates various services, such as General affairs, County library development, Acquisition and cataloging, Program development, User information and lending, and Technical Services. The library also maintains three satellite branches (Gradska knjižnica Požega, n.d.).

4. Study

4.1. Research methodology, instrument, and sample

The purpose of this research was to assess the organizational culture of the City Library of Požega using a questionnaire based on the Double S Cube model (Fig. 1) by Goffee and Jones (1998) described earlier in this paper. They argued that the character of an organization could be determined by identifying its sociability and solidarity.

Measurement of organisational culture according to Goffee and Jones consists of the application of four methods - observational checklist, a questionnaire, analysis of the questionnaire findings and critical incident analysis. Observational checklist categorizes the four main cultural types by examining physical space, communication, time management, and personal identity expression. Physical space reveals clues about status and hierarchy, such as open-plan offices versus private rooms, who has larger spaces, or how shared areas like coffee rooms are used.

Communication patterns offer insight into hierarchy and openness. Frequent, informal chats may suggest a collaborative culture, while formal, hierarchical communication points to a more structured environment. Time usage is another key indicator. Whether long hours are expected or flexibility is encouraged reflects organizational values. Finally, personal identity expression, such as dress codes, indicates loyalty and engagement. Employees may identify strongly with their department or the

broader organization, visibly expressing this connection through branded clothing or other markers. The second tool is the questionnaire. This questionnaire asks respondents to consider twenty-three statements about their organization and indicate how strongly they agree with each statement. The third tool builds upon the results of the questionnaire, identifying the organizational culture type and then determining whether it manifests in a positive or negative form. Finally, the fourth tool involves critical incident analysis, which presents ten scenarios for each cultural type. Respondents are required to identify how individuals in the organization would react in each situation. The results of this exercise further validate the identified culture and assess its balance of positive and negative behaviors (Goffee and Jones, 1998: 41-71).

For this research, methods two and three were used, while the observational study and critical incident analysis were not utilized. The questionnaire was translated into Croatian and adapted for use in cultural institutions such as libraries and for the purposes of our study. It consisted of six sections. In the first section of the questionnaire (the first four questions), respondents were asked about demographic data (age, job responsibilities and position within the library)

The second section contained twenty-three statements which helped determine the type of organizational culture present in the library. A five-point Likert scale (1 - strongly disagree, 5 - strongly agree) was used to measure agreement. To determine the library's culture, the Scoring key (Fig. 2) provided by Goffee and Jones (1998) was applied. According to Goffee and Jones' model, organizational culture is defined by sociability and solidarity. Sociability is assessed through statements 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 13, 15, 17, 19, 21, and 23, while solidarity is measured through statements 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, and 23. The level of agreement on these statements is summed, resulting in two scores: one for sociability and one for solidarity (Fig. 2), and the results are plotted on a coordinate system to determine the library's culture type¹.

After identifying the organizational culture, the next step (third section) was to determine whether it was positive or negative. This was done by analyzing a set of twenty-four statements (statements 1-6 relate to networked culture, 7-12 to mercenary culture, 13-18 to fragmented culture, and 19-24 to communal culture) with respondents indicating their level of agreement on a five-point Likert scale (1 - strongly disagree, 5 - strongly agree)². For example, if the results obtained from the second section in the questionnaire indicated that the library had a networked organizational culture, statements 1 to 6 in the third section of the questionnaire were examined. If respondents rated statements 1, 3, and 5 higher than 2, 4, and 6, the culture was negative; if 2, 4, and 6 were rated higher, the culture was positive (Fig. 3).

Our research was guided by the following research questions:

1. Which organisational culture type prevails in the City Library of Požega?
 - 1a. Is the prevailant organisational culture type dominantly positive or dominantly negative?
2. Are there differences in perception of organisational culture between employees with and without managerial function?
3. Is the perception of the type of organisational culture affected by the age of the respondent?
 - 3a. Do younger employees view the organisational culture as more positive than their older colleagues?

¹ For example, Respondent 3 (R3) gave the following level of agreements for sociability: $3+4+2+4+5+3+3+5+4+1+5+3=42$, and for solidarity: $5+4+3+3+4+4+3+4+5+5+5+3=48$. When we plot these results on the coordinate system, we can see that R3 determined the organizational culture in the library as communal.

² For example, R3, who determined that the organizational culture in the library was communal, gave the following level of agreement for statements 19, 21, and 23: $4+2+5=11$, while for statements 20, 22, and 24, the level of agreement was $3+3+3=9$. The total is therefore higher for statements 19, 21, and 23 than for statements 20, 22, and 24, indicating that R3 assessed the communal organizational culture as positive.

Fig. 2. Scoring key for questionnaire

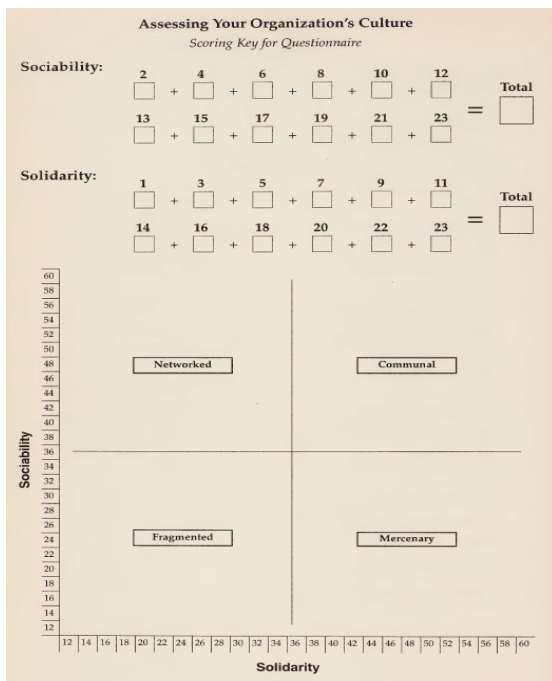


Fig. 3. Is culture positive or negative-example statements for networked culture

Networked	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. There's too much gossip here.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Close relations help people communicate quickly.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Presentations are all show and no substance.	1	2	3	4	5
4. People don't allow rules to hold them up; they cut through the bureaucracy.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Friendship often stops people from making tough decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Friendships mean people stay even when times are rough.	1	2	3	4	5

High scores on 1, 3, and 5 suggest your networked culture is negative.
 High scores on 2, 4, and 6 suggest your networked culture is positive.

Source of Fig.3 and Fig. 4: Goffee, R. and Jones, G. (1998)

The research sample included all employees of the City Library of Požega (18 employees), specifically staff from all departments: the Children’s Department, Youth and Multimedia Department, Scientific and Study Department, Literature Department, Central Lending and Information Desk, Acquisition, Cataloging, and Conservation Services, County Library Development Department, Administrative Office, Director, and Cleaning Staff. The research sample consisted of seven department managers, two cleaning staff, a secretary, and the remaining eight employees were librarians without managerial roles.

The research was conducted on December 8, 2023, at the premises of the City Library of Požega. The respondents were coded as Respondent (R1) to Respondent (R18) to ensure anonymity. Furthermore, for the sake of anonymity, the head of the library’s responses were grouped and analysed together with the responses of other library departments’ heads.

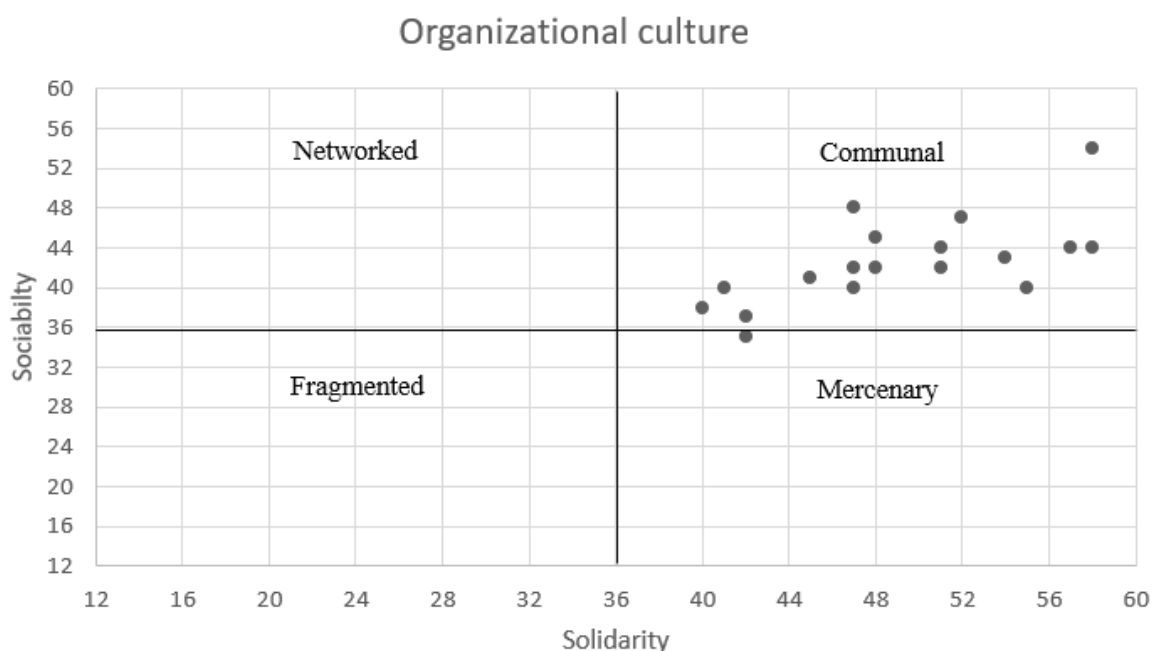
5. Results

The results, as shown in Table 1, indicate that 17 respondents (R1-R17) identified the organizational culture of the library as communal, while one respondent - R18 classified the culture as mercenary. Regarding the assessment of whether the communal culture is positive or negative, eight respondents (R1, R6, R8, R9, R11, R13, R14, R16) evaluated the communal culture as positive, while five respondents (R2-R5, R12) evaluated the culture as negative. For four respondents (R7, R10, R15, R17), it was not possible to determine whether the communal culture was positive or negative, as their scores for both positive and negative statements were equally high. Respondent R18 who identified the organizational culture as mercenary, evaluated this culture as positive. Table 1 also presents the individual responses of each participant regarding their managerial role (head of a department and/or head of the library), sociability and solidarity scores, the identified organizational cultural profile, and the evaluation of whether the organizational culture was perceived as positive or negative.

Table 1. Overview of respondents' managerial role, sociability and solidarity scores, organizational cultural profile, and positive/negative evaluation of organizational culture

RESPONDENTS	MANAGERIAL ROLE	SOCIABILITY	SOLIDARITY	ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE PROFILE	POSITIVE/NEGATIVE
R1	No	40	55	communal	12/10 - positive
R2	No	47	52	communal	12/13 - negative
R3	Yes	42	48	communal	9/11 - negative
R4	No	41	45	communal	7/11 - negativna
R5	No	45	48	communal	12/13 - negative
R6	No	38	40	communal	9/6 - positive
R7	No	42	51	communal	12/12 – positive and negative
R8	No	40	41	communal	11/10 - positive
R9	No	37	42	communal	11/10 – positive
R10	Yes	43	54	communal	12/12 – positive and negative
R11	Yes	54	58	communal	15/11 – positive
R12	No	44	57	communal	9/10 – negative
R13	Yes	44	51	communal	9/7 – positive
R14	Yes	48	47	communal	14/11 – positive
R15	Yes	42	47	communal	10/10 – positive and negative
R16	Yes	44	58	communal	13/12 – positive
R17	No	40	47	communal	10/10 – positive and negative
R18	No	35	42	mercenary	8/4 - positive

Figure 4. presents the results in a coordinate system, which also shows that only one respondent (R18) assessed the culture as mercenary, while the rest of the respondents (R1-R17) identified it as communal.

Figure 4. Organizational culture profile of the City Library of Požega based on sociability and solidarity scores

Respondents were also asked whether they held a managerial role. The results show that seven respondents (R3, R10, R11, R13, R14, R15, R16) hold a managerial position. These include the head of the library and heads of the library departments (the Literature department, the Acquisition department, the Scientific and study department, the Children's department, the User information and Lending services for fund distribution, and the Acquisition, cataloging, and conservation services). Respondents were not required to specify which department they manage to maintain anonymity, and one respondent chose to remain anonymous. All seven employees with managerial roles assessed the organizational culture as communal, while of the remaining eleven employees without managerial roles, ten of them (R1, R2, R4-R9, R12, R17) also assessed the organizational culture as communal, and only one employee (R18) assessed it as mercenary (Fig. 5).

Fig. 5. Organizational culture profile according to employees with and without managerial role

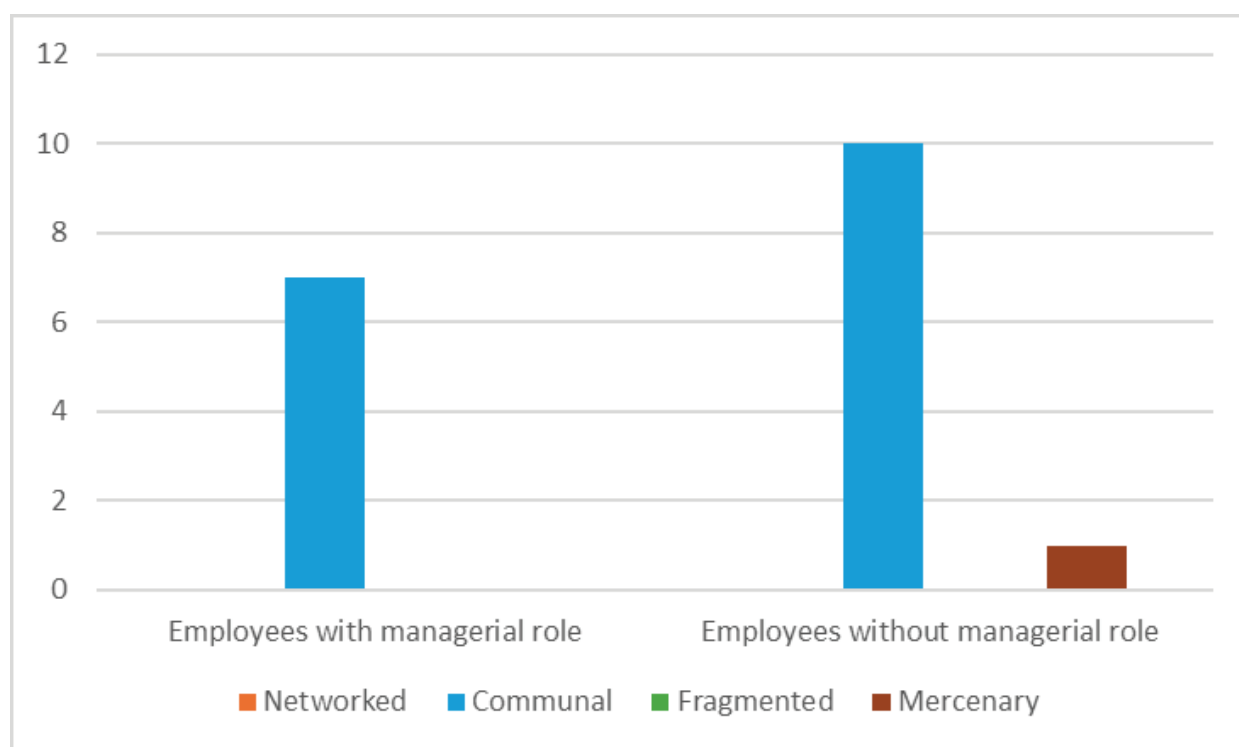
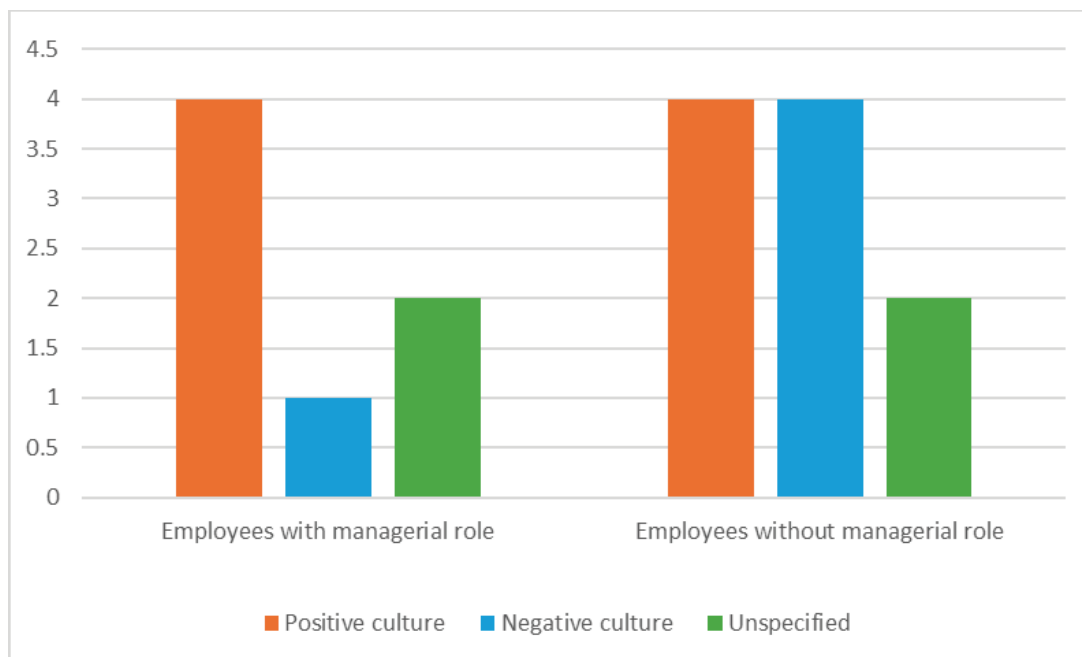


Figure 6 shows how respondents with and without managerial roles evaluated the communal organizational culture. Of the seven respondents with managerial roles, four (R11, R13, R14, R16) evaluated the communal organizational culture as positive, one respondent (R3) evaluated it as negative, and the remaining two respondents (R10, R15) gave equally high ratings for both positive and negative statements, making it impossible to determine whether the culture is positive or negative. Of the other ten employees without managerial roles (R1, R2, R4-R9, R12, R17), four (R1, R6, R8, R9) evaluated the communal organizational culture as positive, four (R2, R4, R5, R12) as negative, and the remaining two respondents (R7, R17) gave equally high ratings for both positive and negative statements, making it impossible to determine whether the culture is positive or negative (Fig.7). Respondent R18, who assessed the organizational culture as mercenary, evaluated this culture as positive (Table 1).

Fig. 6. Evaluation of communal organizational culture by employees with and without managerial roles



Furthermore, the goal was to determine whether younger employees assessed the organizational culture of the library more positively than older employees. Employees born after 1978 were considered younger employees. Eight respondents (R4, R5, R7, R9, R13, R14, R15, R18) were born after 1978 (younger than 46), nine respondents (R1, R2, R3, R6, R8, R10, R11, R12, R17) were born before 1978 (46+), while one respondent (R16) did not disclose their birth year. All nine respondents born before 1978 assessed the organizational culture as communal, while of the eight respondents born after 1978, only one - R18 assessed the organizational culture as mercenary (Fig. 7).

Fig. 7. Organizational culture by age

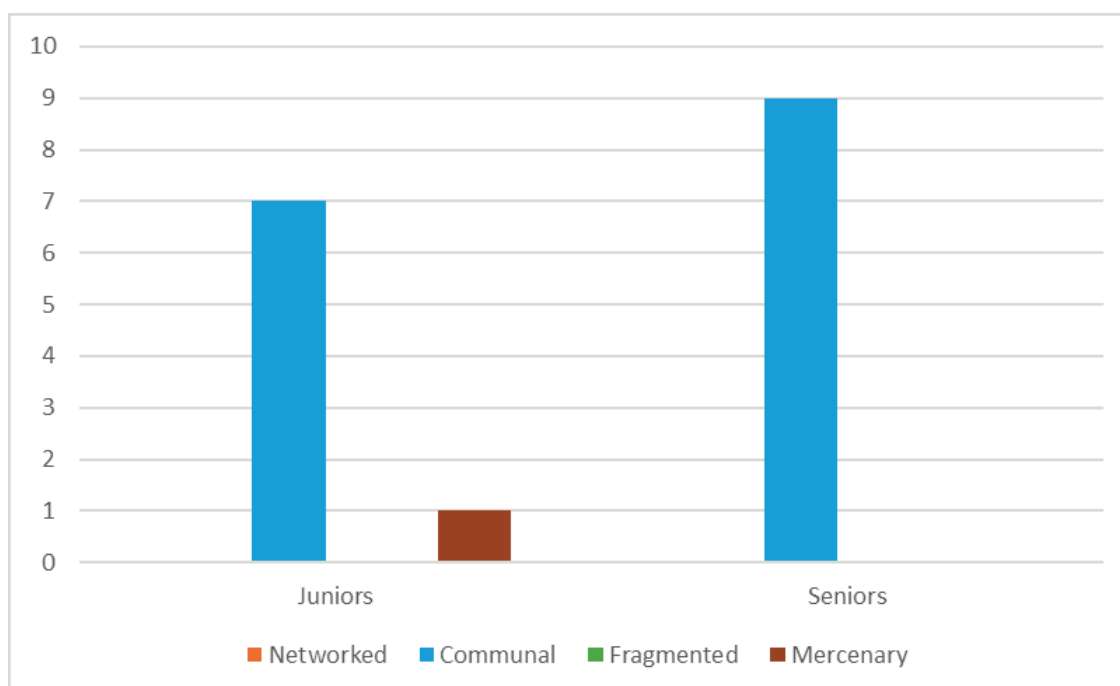
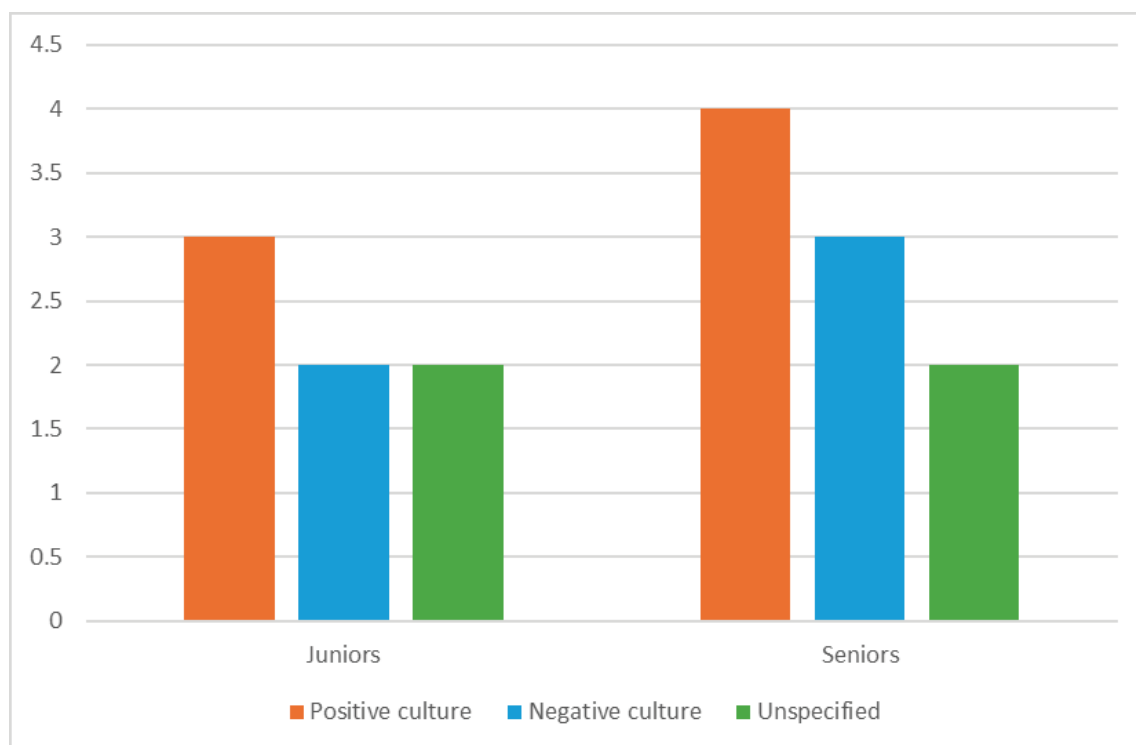


Figure 8 shows how respondents, depending on whether they are younger or older, assessed the communal organizational culture- either positively or negatively. Senior group (aged 46+) consisted of the seven respondents (R4, R5, R7, R9, R13, R14, R15) where three respondents (R9, R13, R14) assessed the communal organizational culture as positive, two assessed (R4, R5) it as negative, and for the remaining two respondents (R7, R15), it was not possible to determine as their scores for both positive and negative statements were equally high. Junior group (younger than 46) contained nine respondents (R1, R2, R3, R6, R8, R10, R11, R12, R17) where four assessed the communal culture as positive (R1, R6, R8, R11), three as negative (R2, R3, R12), and for two respondents (R10, R17), it was not possible to determine the nature of the communal organizational culture (Fig. 8). Respondent R18 (junior group), who assessed the organizational culture as mercenary, evaluated this culture as positive (Table 1).

Figure 8. Evaluation of communal organizational culture by age



6. Discussion

The results indicate that the majority of respondents perceive the organizational culture of the City Library of Požega as communal (RQ 1). Communal culture is characterized by strong collaboration, teamwork, and a sense of shared purpose, which aligns with the nature of library work and its focus on serving the community. This type of culture fosters a sense of belonging and solidarity among employees, potentially enhancing job satisfaction and commitment to the organization. A significant number of respondents viewed this communal culture as positive, suggesting that the environment within the library is one of support and mutual trust (RQ 1a). Employees who evaluated the culture positively are more likely to believe that cooperation within the library contributes to operational success and improves service delivery to users, which is beneficial for KM processes of the library. However, a portion of the respondents assessed the communal culture as negative (RQ1a). This divergence in perception could reflect potential challenges in balancing collective goals with individual needs or differences in how collaboration is experienced by different staff members. In

some cases, a negative communal culture may result in excessive sociability, where informal networks, subgroups, or favoritism emerge. Such dynamics can undermine professional responsibilities and lead to the tolerance of poor performance, as maintaining personal relationships is prioritized over organizational objectives. This could explain why certain respondents may experience the communal culture in a less favorable light. It is also worth noting that for several respondents, the results did not clearly indicate whether the culture was perceived as positive or negative, pointing to a degree of ambivalence or mixed experiences within the organizational framework. The one respondent who identified the organizational culture as mercenary, and viewed it positively (RQ 1; RQ 1a), may reflect an outlier perspective that values competition or individual achievement within the organization. This highlights the complexity of organizational culture, where different individuals may experience and interpret the same environment in varying ways. The fact that one respondent identified the culture as mercenary supports research (Goffee and Jones, 1998; Schein, 1992) that suggests organizations often exhibit more than one organizational culture simultaneously.

The results highlight that both employees with managerial roles and those without primarily perceive the organizational culture of the City Library of Požega as communal (RQ 2). This uniform perception across hierarchical levels suggests a shared understanding of the library's organizational dynamics, emphasizing collaboration and teamwork, regardless of the position held. The communal culture appears to pervade all levels of the organization, reinforcing a collective sense of belonging and shared purpose. However, there are notable differences in how this communal culture is evaluated between employees with and without managerial roles (RQ 2). Among the seven employees with managerial responsibilities, the majority assessed the communal culture positively, indicating that the leadership perceives the collaborative environment as beneficial for achieving organizational goals. Positive evaluations from employee with managerial roles suggest that they view the communal culture as supportive of effective leadership and operational success, where cooperation and teamwork help facilitate decision-making and daily operations. Only one respondent with managerial role assessed the communal culture as negative. This may point to challenges that leaders face in balancing communal expectations with the need for authority and decision-making. As Goffee and Jones (1998) suggest, in negative communal cultures, maintaining harmony can come at the cost of productivity, leading to frustrations among managers who may struggle to enforce accountability within a cohesive team dynamic. Additionally, two respondents with managerial roles were unable to clearly determine whether the culture was positive or negative, possibly reflecting ambivalence or conflicting experiences in balancing leadership responsibilities with the expectations of a communal culture. Among employees without managerial roles, the evaluations were more evenly split between positive and negative assessments of the communal culture. This suggests that non-managerial staff may experience the communal culture differently, with some appreciating the sense of friendship, while others might feel constrained by the collective approach, possibly perceiving it as limiting individual initiative or fostering favoritism. As Goffee and Jones (1998) note, negative communal cultures can sometimes create informal networks that undermine formal structures, leading to frustration among those who may feel excluded or marginalized. Interestingly, the one respondent without managerial role who assessed the culture as mercenary, and viewed it positively, may reflect a unique perspective that values individual performance and competitive drive within the organization, further underscoring the complexity of how organizational culture is experienced across different roles.

The results also sought to determine whether younger employees assessed the organizational culture of the City Library of Požega more positively than older employees (RQ 3). Interestingly, both younger (younger than 46) and older (46+) employees predominantly identified the culture as communal. This consistency suggests that the communal nature of the library's culture is recognized across

generations, emphasizing the organization's emphasis on collaboration, shared goals, and collective engagement. However, the evaluation of whether this communal culture was positive or negative varied between the two age groups (RQ 3a). Among younger employees, there was a more diverse range of opinions, with some perceiving the communal culture as supportive and others viewing it as less favorable. Younger employees who evaluated the culture positively may appreciate the teamwork and inclusive environment, viewing it as conducive to professional development and collaboration. On the other hand, those who assessed the communal culture as negative may feel constrained by the collective approach, perhaps perceiving it as limiting individual autonomy or career advancement opportunities, as Goffee and Jones (1998) suggest in their analysis of negative communal cultures. Among older employees, a similar pattern of mixed perceptions emerged. While some valued the communal culture for its focus on collaboration and unity, others found it less appealing, possibly due to frustrations with the potential downsides of a cohesive organizational structure. As Goffee and Jones (1998) note, in negative communal cultures, maintaining harmony can sometimes result in the suppression of critical feedback or innovation, leading to dissatisfaction among employees who may feel that individual contributions are undervalued. Notably, for both younger and older employees, a subset of respondents provided equally high ratings for both positive and negative aspects of the communal culture, indicating a degree of ambivalence. This suggests that while the communal culture is pervasive, its impact may be experienced differently by individuals depending on personal expectations and workplace dynamics. From this analysis, it cannot be conclusively determined that younger employees assessed the organizational culture more positively than older employees, as the variations in perception appear to be influenced by individual experiences rather than generational differences.

7. CONCLUSION

Libraries are institutions that serve a fundamental role in the collection, organization, preservation, and dissemination of knowledge. However, in their pursuit of these goals, libraries often overlook the importance of managing the knowledge they themselves generate through their internal operations. KM, which is recognized as a key factor for organizational success in the business world, is equally critical for institutions like libraries. Effective KM not only enhances internal processes but also directly impacts service quality, innovation, and decision-making. A critical component of KM is the organizational culture within which it operates. Organizational culture influences how knowledge is created, shared, and preserved. It shapes employee behaviors, work systems, and attitudes toward change. A positive and supportive culture can encourage collaboration and knowledge sharing, while a dysfunctional culture may hinder these processes. This underscores the importance of understanding and managing the prevailing organizational culture within institutions such as libraries. In the context of public libraries, particularly those that have not systematically addressed KM, organizational culture plays an even more crucial role. Without a clear understanding of the underlying cultural dynamics, libraries may struggle to optimize their internal knowledge processes or foster an environment conducive to innovation and learning.

Our study aimed to explore the type of organizational culture present in the City Library of Požega and to determine whether that culture is positive or negative. This study confirmed that the organizational culture in the City Library of Požega is predominantly communal, as identified by both employees with and without managerial roles. This strong sense of social cohesion and collective engagement reflects the communal nature of the library. However, the identification of a mercenary culture by one respondent supports the idea that multiple cultures can coexist within a single organization. The split between positive and negative perceptions of the communal culture reveals the complexity

of working in such an environment. While many viewed the culture as supportive, others raised concerns that a strong emphasis on community could limit individual growth or stifle constructive feedback. This suggests that communal cultures, while fostering loyalty and collaboration, can also pose challenges in balancing collective and personal needs. No significant differences were found between how employees with or without managerial roles assessed the culture. Both groups recognized the communal nature, though their views on its positivity varied. The analysis also showed no clear generational divide in cultural perceptions, suggesting that other factors, such as individual experiences, may play a more significant role.

These findings are essential for library management in fostering a more inclusive environment that acknowledges the diverse needs of its staff. The results can help the library leadership better understand the cultural dynamics within the organization, enabling them to create strategies that enhance teamwork and communication. Additionally, they provide a foundation for addressing potential areas of tension or dissatisfaction, helping to promote a more balanced approach between collective goals and individual growth. Ultimately, these insights can guide future organizational changes, ensuring that the library's culture supports both employee well-being and institutional success.

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