



Mechanisms of Cognitive Change in Organizations: A Sociological Study

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ABSTRACT

Cognitive change in organisations is one of the most striking aspects of social and cognitive transformation in the modern era, this prominence stems from the fact that production and circulation of knowledge at the heart of organisations have become a central factor in the renewing their structure and functions.

The sociology of cognitive change aims to study and examines to how social, organisational and cultural factors interact to reshape ways of thinking, working and knowing within the organisation.

Our research focuses primarily on analysing the transformations in the cognitive structures of organisations driven by advancement in the technological and digital fields, weight of intellectual heritage, and evolving roles of organisational stakeholders including directors, researchers, employees, knowledge networks, furthermore, it explores the impact of corporate philosophy and collective memory on the development and transmission of knowledge, as well as the role of organisational change as an essential mechanism for the development and renewal of knowledge and the assimilation of innovation.

From a purely sociological angle, cognitive change constitutes a highly complex social dynamic wherein values, norms, and practices all intersect and being shaped by the institutional context and the wider socio-economic environment.

This study concludes that organisations which manage this change flexibly and cultivate interactive knowledge systems demonstrate a superior capacity to innovate, adapt, and ensure their long term survival. ..

1. INTRODUCTION

The 21st century has been characterised by profound and rapid transformations, fundamentally altering the conception, generation, and dissemination of communication within both organisations and societies, propelled by the digital and IT revolution has given rise to a new situation where knowledge is the most paramount element in building structural capacity, while cognitive change acts as the most significant driver of adaptability and development in an environment of inherent complexity and instability.

This article provides a sociological and epistemological reading and analysis of the dialectical relationship between cognitive change and the generation of organisational knowledge, it frames this relationship as an ongoing social process that shows how well an organisation is doing and how well it can learn and change, a key indicator of an organization's vitality and its capacity for learning and transformation. In this light organisations are no longer inflexible institutions managed and governed according to a specific and static logic and fixed procedures, instead they have become evolving cognitive systems based on interaction, interpretation, and daily practices through which they reproduce their meanings, skills, and working methods.

we seek with this study to analyse the mechanism through which cognitive change occurs and contributes to the restructuring of organisational knowledge, achieved by examining the theoretical foundations that have approached the relationship between knowledge, organisation and change in contemporary sociological and administrative thought that address the nexus of knowledge. We have attempted to highlight the role of cultural, social and technological factors in the restructuring of organisational knowledge and collective learning mechanisms

Ultimately, the purpose of this article is to deepen understanding of the important position of knowledge as part of the organisational growth matrix and to explain how organisations can invest in cognitive change to develop their adaptability and capacity for innovation, allowing them to adapt to contemporary demands and control their own development.

Firstly, we will introduce the concepts of our approach.

The concept of cognitive change:

The Cognitive change, represents an evolution in the manner in which knowledge is generated and legitimized within social structures, this concept is elucidated through several key theoretical lenses, and is defined as “a process of transformation in the ways knowledge is generated and transmitted within social fields and institutional universes, which redraws the boundaries between what is considered legitimate knowledge and what is excluded from it”. (Knorr-Cetina, 1999)

According to Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, from a social constructionist standpoint, they conceptualize cognitive change as a social structure of knowledge itself, they define it as “the result of the rebuilding of social facts through alterations in the systems of meaning developed by social actors in their everyday interactions” (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Here, the focus shifts to the micro level processes where shared meaning is continuously created and revised.

In the field of organisational studies, Nonaka and Takeuchi, after a pragmatic model, framing knowledge creation as “the transformation of tacit knowledge into an explicit form, and of individual knowledge into collectively shared knowledge, via interactions, organizational processes, and institutional reflection” (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995).

Adopting a macro historical view, Michel Foucault said that cognitive change is a profound transformation in social systems of thought, and he defined it as “a shift in the epistemological frames of reference (episteme) that dictate the conditions for producing truth in each era” (Foucault, 1972).

in the larger trajectory of socioeconomic transformation and in a similar vein, cognitive change is perceived as a sociological response to technological and cultural shifts and upheavals, Manuel Castells (1996) points out, characterizes it as “a Direct result of a technological revolution that has prompted the transition from an industrial to a knowledge economic system, thereby altering the structure of power and society” (Castells, 1996)

2. The concept of organisational actors:

Organisational actors are human resources or human agency at the core of institutional life, they are individuals who contribute to decision-making and influence organisational policies and culture, this category can include executives, employees, expert advisers, representatives of trade unions, and even external partners who impact organisational operations (Scott & Davis, 2015).

Beyond their formal function, organisational actors are described as active units in an institution's social system who act according to specific social values and roles. These actors either reproduce or transform the organisational framework. (Crozier & Friedberg, 1977).

As they transmit tacit expertise and develop practices through daily interaction and collective learning, organisational actors constitute the main source of organisational knowledge (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995).

3. The concept of Collective Memory:

Classical definition: Collective memory is: “The social mechanism or system by which a group maintains its past and actively reshapes it in accordance with its current priorities, through social norms that dictate what is retained and what is neglected”. (Halbwachs, 1992).

Current sociological definition: Collective memory is understood as: “a social and cultural mechanism through which group members produce, retain, and communicate shared perceptions of the past, forming the core of their identity and symbolic continuity” (Olick & Robbins, 1998).

Organisational cultural definition:

In an organisational sense, collective memory refers to: “The accumulated shared knowledge and experiences of organisational individuals that provide a framework Contextualizing events and taking decisions on behalf of the organization” (Walsh & Ungson, 1991).

4. The concept of collective learning:

A Perspective from Social Learning Theory: This study defines collective learning as “the result of social interaction among

a group of people, enabling individuals to obtain new skills and knowledge through mutual observation, imitation, and collaborative experimentation” (Bandura, 1977).

Sociological perspective: Collective learning is conceived as “a dynamic social interaction involving the production of knowledge through shared activities and the ongoing negotiation of meanings, roles and relationships among group members” (Gherardi, 2000).

From the contemporary management perspective: Argote and Miron-Spektor (2011) describe collective learning as “a proactive organisational mechanism that converts personal knowledge into applicable shared knowledge through the interchange of experiences and consistent interaction among Organizational members”.

Secondly, the social dimensions of cognitive change:

Cognitive change in organisations represents one of the most salient manifestation of social evolution in contemporary socio-economic landscapes, the success of an organisation increasingly hinges not only material resources, but also on its ability to produce, to create, to generate, circulate and operationalize knowledge into collective expertise (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995).

This shift reflects the transition of organisations from systems of bureaucratic management to those of continuous corporate learning, wherein knowledge becomes a strategic resource and an essential tool for innovation and competitive advancement (Argyris & Schön, 1996).

Sociologically, cognitive change is conceptualized as an interactive social process that emerges from networks of individuals, rather than as merely a technical or personal transformation. Gherardi argues, “Knowledge is shaped through the dynamic interplay actors, organisational culture and institutional frameworks that delineate the boundaries of conceivable thought and exchange” (Gherardi, 2006).

2. THE FUNDAMENTAL SOCIAL DIMENSIONS OF COGNITIVE CHANGE CAN BE OUTLINED AS FOLLOWS:

2.1 Interactional dimension:

Highlighting the centrality of social interactions in the construction of knowledge, this dimension illustrates how tacit knowledge is converted into explicit knowledge through activities such as collective dialogue, knowledge sharing, and collaborative practice. According to Brown and Duguid (1991), knowledge is built collaboratively through the interchange of experiences and the interpretation of common meanings within communities of practice.

2.2. The Cultural Dimension:

The cultural facet is manifested through organisational values and culture functioning as a symbolic system, which establish the framework for what can be considered “legitimate knowledge”. Organisations that encourage experimentation and critical enquiry enhance knowledge acquisition, whereas those characterised by hierarchical control and procedural inflexibility inherently inhibit it. (Schein, 2010).

2.3. The Power Dimension:

Cognitive change is closely linked to organisational aspects of power, in this context, Knowledge experts often monopolise the establishment of knowledge, controlling the flow and recognition of information (Foucault, 1977), Consequently, knowledge becomes an instrument of symbolic domination or a potential site of resistance in professional fields.

2.4 The socio-technical dimension:

Technological systems and social practices in knowledge production are in continuous interaction with each other. Not only do information systems alter knowledge storage mechanisms, they also redefine the way actors interact, creating new opportunities for virtual collaboration (Orlikowski, 2002).

2.5. The symbolic dimension:

Specialised languages and organisational symbolic systems contribute to the creation of mental representations of knowledge. Technical vocabularies, institutional narratives and professional rituals help justify cognitive change in the organisational sphere (Weick, 1995).

The analysis reveals that cognitive change constitutes a highly complex social phenomenon, which can only be understood through a holistic approach that explores the interconnectedness of the cultural, power-related, sociotechnical and interactional dimensions. Such a shift not only represents a change in epistemic content, but also a fundamental restructuring of the social frameworks through which we generate and govern our understanding of knowledge. Consequently, this process provides valuable insights into the mechanisms of power acquisition and meaning reproduction within modern organisational environments.

Adopting an alternative analytical standpoint, cognitive change cannot be reduced to procedural or technical dimensions



exclusively. Instead, it is a complex phenomenon at the intersection of social, cultural and epistemological spheres, expressing dynamics of power and the reproduction of meaning inherent to the organisational system. Cognitive change is not limited to a transition between organisational paradigms; it is also a mechanism for the symbolic and normative restructuring of the organisation, reconfiguring relationships between actors and professional groupings, and directing fundamental processes of learning and renewal.

while external environmental factors can exert considerable influence, on some strategic decisions, this is not necessarily indicative of an inherent inability to address these challenges. A significant proportion of organisations develop sophisticated adaptation strategies that allow them to respond to environmental changes in various ways, including and adopting flexible operational frameworks that align with emerging environmental transformations, and supplanting traditional organisational paradigms.

As we have seen, cognitive change is an important and critical organisational activity that requires considerable skill and expertise to manage effectively, purposeful and intentional cognitive change enables organisations to update and develop their organisational knowledge by discarding the obsolete old practices and learning new ones, more appropriate ways to carry out organisational tasks. Alternatively, it may be an ill-considered process, where organisational knowledge is lost and dissipated unintentionally, which could negatively impact the capabilities and organisational knowledge of the organisation. The social perspective asserts that organisational decision-making, as well as learning and knowledge development, are collective activities that occur as part of a social context. Consequently, strategy formulation and organisational decision-making are carried out as a result of dialogue between managers and other staff members within the organisation, through formal or informal communications channels. Through this dialogue, a unified preoccupation is formed in understanding environmental threats and opportunities, and in working collectively to focus available resources and maximise potential opportunities. The social perspective recognises that there will be diversity and variation in ideas and proposals because different subgroups within the organisation will have distinct views on organisational policies a strategy. Some employees may find that their ideas are more successful and receive greater support from others, which, at an organisational level, will lead to ideas that did not receive much initial support being lost ((Easterby-Smith & Lyles, 2011, p. 313)

In some cases, the members of a work group or project team may leave the organisation, by retiring or simply by moving to another department. This means that, as well as losing individual knowledge and skills or expertise, the cohesion of the group or team will also be affected. Therefore, the departure of an experienced team members or the arrival of new ones, can disrupt the relationships and internal dynamic. There is a widespread assumption in the literature that this type of organisational turnover is detrimental due to the consequent loss of personal competencies and knowledge.

The role of identity within a social perspective is also crucial, it is not only the specific individuals who matter, but also the assumptions about its collective capacity and purpose, and the organisational history that has brought it to its current state, this History may be seen as a form of reinvention or rewriting, providing a rationale for current actions and ambitions. History may be rewritten either consciously and deliberately, or largely unintentionally as a result of powerful individuals and groups coming and going, or individuals simply changing the past.

From this perspective, change is more than the loss of social networks and shared perspectives that support specific views and strategies, it involves a breakdown in the interactions through which identity is maintained and preserved, evidently, change has taken on a strategic dimension that is linked to the existence and sustainability of the societal collective network.

3. THIRDLY: COLLECTIVE MEMORY AND THE PROCESS OF KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION AND REPRODUCTION:

Collective memory is one of the most fundamental components in the creation of knowledge for both, organisations and societies, as it provides the symbolic and social framework through which past experiences are recalled and reinterpreted in the present context. It is not just about preserving information, it also selects meanings and experiences that the group deems relevant to its values and identity, consequently, i collective memory becomes a pivotal and a key factor in knowledge reproduction and in shaping the standards that guide organisational and cultural behaviour.

collective memory significantly contributes to institutional learning processes by transferring tacit knowledge from one organisational generation to the following one, it also consolidates patterns of cognition and behaviour that determine how events are interpreted and decisions are made. However, the persistence of this memory can potentially result in cognitive rigidity if it is not complemented by organisational mechanisms that actively encourage the abandonment of outdated knowledge to make place for innovation.

Accordingly, collective memory is viewed as a double-edged sword, it preserves shared expertise and ensures the continuity of organisational identity, while simultaneously serving as a tool and vehicul for cognitive reformulation through the ongoing interaction between the previous and current contexts for generating meaning. (Halbwachs, 1992; Walsh & Ungson, 1991; Olick & Robbins, 1998).

Collective memory is created within organisations through continous interaction among their members, who exchange



experiences, ideas and values that accumulate over time in the form both of tacit and explicit knowledge, according to Walsh & Ungson (1991), organisational memory comprises a reserve of insights and experiences stemming from past activities and practices, which are preserved in individuals, documents, structures, and organisational culture. This type of memory does not form spontaneously, but rather arises from social processes such as group learning, organisational socialisation, and daily interactions that redefine shared experience.

Sociologically, Halbwachs (1992) contends that collective memory is constructed through social frameworks that determine what is to be remembered and what is to be forgotten. This concept can be adapted to organisations, where the past is reinterpreted according to current needs and organisational goals. In the words of Gherardi (2000), organisational knowledge is produced when these collective memories and experiences are transformed into repetitive practices that encapsulate shared meanings in the work environment. This means that collective memory acts as a kind of dual mechanism, it can store cognitive capital and past experiences and reproduce organisational knowledge through daily practice and social interaction. It forms the symbolic structure that ensures continued meaning within the organisation and guides the behaviour of members in response in the face of intellectual change.

4. FOURTHLY, FACTORS PROPELLING COGNITIVE CHANGE

Cognitive change is characterised by a shift in the methods by which knowledge is produced, circulated, and employed both within and between society or organization, the phenomenon is a result of a complex interplay of social, technological, economic, and cultural dynamics that have collectively reshaped the landscape of cognitive thinking and practice in recent decades (Castells, 1996).

The following sociological factors are considered the most pertinent drivers of this transformation:

4.1 The contemporary technological and digital revolution:

The information revolution and digital technology are widely regarded as significant drivers of cognitive change. The advent of the worldwide web, artificial intelligent systems and large-scale data storage and retrieval systems has fundamentally altered the conception of knowledge, transforming it from a static reserve of information into perpetual stream of data that is produced and revised in real-time (Drucker, 1993; Orlikowski, 2002). This transition, precipitated by the aforementioned shift, signified a paradigm shift from an industry-dominated society to a knowledge-based networked society, in which knowledge has emerged as the principal catalyst for social and economic advancement (Castells, 1996).

4.2. The processes of globalization and increasing internationalization of knowledge:

The phenomenon of globalization has precipitated a marked acceleration in the cross-border exchange of expertise and knowledge, concomitantly engendering an expansion in the networks of research and scientific collaboration. Standardisation of academic knowledge according to mainstream Western intellectual models has been identified as a key consequence of this process, leading to the emergence of novel dynamics in the domains of knowledge creation and assessment (Held & McGrew, 2003).

Such internationalisation has also been shown to engender significant cognitive imbalances, manifesting in a decline in recognition of local knowledge and national Scientific and Technological (S&T) identities (Connell, 2007).

4.3. Economic transformations directed towards a knowledge economy:

At the transition to the twenty-first century, the global economy underwent a fundamental shift from an industrial capitalism to a knowledge-based economy. This transition signified the emergence of knowledge as a pivotal productive resource and a crucial metric of value and productivity (OECD, 1996).

It is evident that this current transformation has prompted organisations to adopt a new organisational structure, becoming increasingly defined by their function as learning communities. Furthermore, it has led to the adoption of policies based on two key aspects: continuous innovation and the updating of their respective competencies (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995).

4.4 Cultural and value transformations:

This paradigm shift was marked by an ascendancy in the societal values of innovation, personal autonomy, and adaptability, superseding the conventional values of stability and institutional rigidity that characterised the industrial society (Beck, 1992). The propagation of higher education and the advent of a culture of incessant evaluation have also been identified as contributing factors to the emergent manifestation of a novel cognitive rationalisation predicated on performance and efficiency, superseding the erstwhile ideology of commitment (Giddens, 1991).

4.5. The role of organisational and institutional factors in shaping the narrative:

At the organisational level, alterations in organisational structures have given rise to the delegating of authoritative duties, the sharing of knowledge, and the undertaking of collective action. This has resulted in erudition becoming a collective resource produced through networks of social interaction (Gherardi, 2006). It is precisely these dynamics that have led to the emergence of what is known as organisational learning, which allows an organisation to develop cognitively through



the accumulation of previous experiences and interactions (Argyris & Schön, 1996).

4.6 Political and normative factors:

Educational and scientific policies have been demonstrated to influence developmental patterns of cognitive change through the implementation of mechanisms such as university rankings, quality standards, and financial support for scientific research. In the contemporary era, institutions are directed with a view to producing knowledge that is both measurable and categorisable. Knowledge thus becomes a tool for governance, and governance becomes a tool for knowledge (Foucault, 1977; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004).

Cognitive change is not the result of a single factor, but rather the result of the intertwining of multiple systems of social, technical, political and cultural factors. This change indicates the transition of human society to a new phase, characterised by the redefined meaning of knowledge, the methods of its production, and its value, within organisations and societies.

In addition to the aforementioned points, Holan & Phillips (2004, pp. 427–429) provide a comprehensive overview of the factors that motivate organisations to adopt cognitive change processes and strategies:

Financial cost: Organisations are faced with the task of effectively managing substantial and ever-growing volumes of organisational knowledge, a responsibility that comes with significant monetary implications. This puts organisations in a difficult position as their existing knowledge base grows. They must choose between incurring increasing costs to maintain a greater amount of knowledge or adopting a strategic approach to identifying and removing knowledge that is no longer needed.

Innovation: Any organisation with the capacity to generate a large amount of innovative knowledge will also generate a proportion of unwanted or irrelevant knowledge, either because the expected results are not achieved or because it does not align with the organisation's policies. Therefore, organisations must monitor and remove such unwanted elements so that they do not become part of their organisational knowledge, and also to avoid leaking them to any competing organisations.

Dominant organisational logic: Organisational logic refers to the fundamental principles, rules and frameworks that dictate how an organisation reaches decisions, plans operations and allocates resources. Fundamentally, it is the cognitive framework through which members of an institution interpret and understand their surroundings and take the appropriate initiatives.

5. FIFTH. FACTORS HINDERING THE PROCESS OF COGNITIVE CHANGE:

5.1 organisational routines:

The term 'change' often incites a reaction of disapproval or even provokes resistance towards what has been previously acquired, this resistance to inevitable change may reflect an inability to adapt to new practices and adopt the necessary skills, which requires disrupting established routines and habits. Consequently, in order to encourage participation, it is necessary to be aware of the phenomenon of resistance to change as an event in organisational behaviour and to implement specific mechanisms to address it.

Regardless of what type or the nature of change project undertaken, individuals may always resist and neutralise changes they are not prepared to accommodate, changes they fell unprepared to accept, it is important to bear in mind that the introduction of new policies and strategies and corporate mergers and reorganisations, all exert a powerful influence on established organisational they practice. Such changes can be a result of the restructuring of relationships with the present, or the introduction of new policies of development, which can be influenced by factors such as new management tools or administrative doctrines. This engenders an environment conducive to the denial of the past, thereby contributing to the marginalisation of the elderly as a symbol of a bygone epoch. In the transition from one professional cycle to the next, previous competencies, achievements, or obligations may undergo modification or even more meticulous selection in accordance with novel work pace criteria. This temporal cycle functions as a mechanism for the eradication of the past, thereby engendering a state of precarious order of stability, in anticipation of the future. (Bretesché, 2018, p. 93).

When there is no structural basis or mediation with previous achievements, change can be a source of deep questioning and re-evaluation of past experience, opening up a gap in an individual's personal and professional career. The old, the devalued, the past and incompetence relegate the customs and practices of the past to a realm inhabited by fading memories. These contexts of change present many risks for individuals. The imperatives of flexibility on which the organisation of the world of work is based compromise the individual's ability to project themselves into the future and take a critical look at their own needs in terms of cohesion.

5.2 Employing technological tools:

One of the most effective ways to reduce the perceived financial impact of engaging in a cognitive change process is to implement an easy-to-use technological tool that simplifies the task and reduces the time required to share information between team members (Cabrera & Cabrera, 2005, p. 731). However, even though technology plays an absolutely vital

function in facilitating the circulation of knowledge within organisations, research has shown that it often fails to achieve its intended purpose because of insufficient awareness of the psychological and personal characteristics of individuals, which are decisive factors in the effectiveness of any developing systems. As a result, the most effective technologies are those conceived to enhance the interaction of existing social networks and that harmonise with the existing organisational culture rather than competing with it. The new system may lead to a significant change in the decision-making environment, towards a more centralised environment. There is also a significant challenge to knowledge transfer come from the generational gap between older and younger colleagues. Given their differences in communication styles, work preferences and technological proficiency level of technological competence, it is essential to bridge this divide to ensure successful knowledge exchange

5.3 The fear of making changes:

Many employees work in inward-looking organisations, kept isolated from any developments happening in their external environment, in an operational climate dominated by fear and intimidation, which forces them to discuss work-related issues and problems discreetly and confidentially to keep their jobs. They really cannot imagine working any other way without these practices, limit their ability to open up and change, and create unspoken rules and behaviours for newcomers. (Vakola & Bouradas, 2005, p. 442).

Fear is a non-negligible cause of resistance among individuals, particularly the fear of losing their jobs and seeing their salaries decrease. They subsequently experience a level of uncertainty about their future, a feeling that likely stems from their past, unsuccessful dealings with change. Workers will feel even more inconclusive about their ability to perform successfully when they have the sensation that some additional change might be coming shortly, also, fear changes in organisational culture and a possible increase in evaluation and monitoring. The hesitation and fears about development are more pronounced among long-serving employees than for newcomers, as they are deeply attached to traditional work methods and practices.

6. SIXTH: THE PROCESS OF COGNITIVE CHANGE AND ITS IMPORTANCE FOR ORGANISATIONS:

Cognitive change plays a central role in organisational issues affecting all organizational actors those operating in the field, indeed, changes occur in the organisation's environment, within the latter itself and among its constituent individuals. Every nuance of change can impact the performance of individuals and organisations, requiring constant and dynamic adaptation to the evolving environment. The awareness of the necessity to combine productivity and efficiency requirements while managing costs has gathered pace in a changing environment, particularly as a result of the evolution of psychosocial risks, which has shown how traditional models of compartmentalised organisation have become unsuitable for managing knowledge in an organisation seeking to evolve in order to adapt to contemporary realities. Moreover, it is often said that the organisation of work will undergo profound changes due to automation and digitalisation, but also due to social norms related to the level of education and information of employees and the evolution of their expectations.

When we talk about change, we may also be implying that we are witnessing a transition from the traditional, dominant organisational model to a completely new system. Indeed, most organisations are seeking an organisational model that combines work rationalisation and employee participation, capable of responding to the needs of the digital revolution and the new aspirations of organisational actors, and of strengthening competitiveness and flexibility by promoting self-learning capabilities to improve collective productivity.

6.1 The process of cognitive change and decision-making organizations:

Cognitive change represents a fundamental element in reshaping decision-making processes as it can intervene and influences the interpretation of information, evaluation of any given situation and consideration of alternatives, as a developed knowledge base enables organisations to make more rational and innovative decisions by leveraging accurate information and collective experience (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995).

Cognitive change encompasses more than simply updating technical skills and competencies, it also involves redefining the organisational values that inform actions and choices, making these the processes more interactive and participatory through inclusion and by involving various relevant stakeholders. (Argyris & Schön, 1996), these new attitudes create a dynamic decision-making process that combines, integrate, prior experience with new knowledge. (Walsh & Ungson, 1991).

Gherardi (2000) conceives cognitive change from a sociological perspective as both a social process that redistributes cognitive power between individuals and units inside organisations, reshaping decision logic and promoting collective learning and adaptation to environmental transformations. (Gherardi, 2000)

6.2 The process of knowledge change and leadership behaviour:

The formalizing of organisational activities and control particularly in decision-making processes carried out and led by officials, is a decisive mechanism through which the collective intellectual efforts and cognitive skills of individuals can be preserved, unified and directed towards common achieving goals, because individuals may exhibit irrational behaviours,

so they require a certain degree of formal control to direct them towards the organisational objective, however despite the presence of necessary established rules and regulations within the organisation that are expected to ensure adherence to organisational objectives, problems arise from inconsistent application, from how these rules and regulations are applied more stringently to some individuals than to others, particularly those in positions of power.

The organisation's lack of fairness and transparency when applying control mechanisms to guide individual behaviour, particularly regarding activities and decisions of officials, makes it more susceptible to corrupt and unethical practices (Benlahcene & Meddour, 2020).

Officials may exploit the absence of oversight, transparency and accountability to use their positions for personal gain, benefiting from organisational resources without fear of being held accountable for their mistakes, as they have almost full authority over the organisation's resources. Consequently, the ambiguity of the organisation's management, the difficulty of accessing and disclosing information, and the lack of clarity and insufficient disclosure of information relating to the activities of officials have led to a loss of trust among its members and the emergence of unethical behaviours among them.

Moreover, rather than transferring or delegating authority to employees, officials may rely extensively on directive decision-making strategies, considering them as the most appropriate option, they do it because it represents a threat of their position of power and challenges their perceived weaknesses this type of decision-making keeps temporary officials in public organisations under the supervision of a higher level of authority, only allowing them to make functional or tactical decisions that are carefully examined to ensure consistency with the wishes of senior officials, some of them exploit their power to gain the future potential senior management team's obedience and loyalty to maintain firm control over the organisation.

In the same context, strict laws and executive decrees within an organisation, and the manner in which they are applied, may increase employee reliance on verbal instructions from officials, and obedience to their orders without question. This increases authority for officials, as well as their control and containment of the company. (Kaouache et al., n.d.).

We can also say that, nepotism has become a key criterion for hiring individuals in some organisations, serving as a defense mechanism against potential threats to officials, these are usually supported by a group of administrative workers appointed based on family ties and close friendship, they retain promotion opportunities for senior employees, mid-level administrators and a small group of union members to gain their loyalty and support when reaching administration decisions, reflecting the importance of loyalty in promotion decisions to maintain the normative order of the organization.

6.3 Organisational knowledge as a practice of change:

Understanding organisational knowledge as a vital practice for comprehending change by contextualizing then interpreting it in relation to past and future practices, thereby reflecting the persistent echo of continuous change ideas, this understanding of how organisational knowledge functions describes change as an ingrained translation of the traditions of knowledge formation and its social distribution directly into organisational knowledge.

Change is understood as an ongoing, evolving process based on continuous updates to work procedures and organisational practices. When thinking about cognitive change, it is essential to consider not only broad-scale changes, but also the many small daily shifts in organisational practices. Change involves a set of skills and is usually related to altering knowledge, including strengthening existing skills rather than replacing procedures. Large-scale change tends to be a crisis within an organisation, in which leaders play a crucial role in integrating change. If they are immersed in the organisation's traditions and represent it well, they develop what is called 'deep personal knowledge', which is critical to performance. They can translate changes by interpreting them through the value and belief templates provided by traditions, turning the anxiety resulting from change into motivation and capacity for change (Feldman & Feldman, 2006, p. 876). (Feldman & Feldman, 2006, p. 876). Under the definitions of organisational knowledge provided by the social sciences, which refer to its collective dimension acquired through learning, and by the management sciences, which present it as a shared resource in collective performance, organisational knowledge is a vibrant, dynamic reservoir that provides us with the cognitive competence required to accomplish our tasks. An organisation can possess effective organisational knowledge when its work teams share a similar approach to their work. In the context of environmental change, organisational knowledge plays a socialisation role, infusing meaning by engaging the social element, and an integration role, enabling workers' behaviour to adapt to organisational needs. Therefore, organisational knowledge is inherently transformative and renewing; knowledge that does not renew is essentially obsolete. This organisational knowledge is often presented as a valuable resource for organisational members and decision-makers and is crucial for achieving optimal organisational control. It is particularly important for newcomers to understand the culture and goals of any organisation.

6.4. The impact of cognitive change on organisational knowledge:

Cognitive change is considered an important organisational process because the vast amount of available and stored information can lead to difficulties in interpretation and hinder the evaluation of alternative ways to achieve strategic goals. This can also lead to uncertainty about achievable goals, or problems in establishing links and causalities given the vastness of all knowledge. (Kluge & Gronau, 2018, p. 1).

Cognitive change is likewise understood as an adaptive organizational form, where an organisation aims to organize again and order another time the knowledge and information it possesses, that is accomplished by acquiring and re-acquiring knowledge and informations, also as this refreshes and increase an organizational resource.

6.5. The impact of cognitive change on organisational knowledge:

Cognitive change is considered an important organisational process because the vast amount of available and stored information can lead to difficulties in interpretation and hinder the evaluation of alternative ways to achieve strategic goals. This can also lead to uncertainty about achievable goals, or problems in establishing links and causalities given the vastness of all knowledge. (Kluge & Gronau, 2018, p. 1).

Cognitive change is also seen as an adaptive factor for organisations aiming to reorder information. It involves acquiring and reacquiring knowledge to refresh organisational knowledge and discard what is no longer needed, through the destruction or reconstruction of parts of organisational knowledge. In this sense, it is a positive form of loss, representing the process of rebuilding old organisational knowledge and transforming it into new knowledge through a series of organisational procedures, some of which result in the loss of part of the current organisational knowledge. This knowledge includes skills, methods, processes, experiences, documents and techniques used by the organisation. Cognitive change can save organisations significant costs, since many spend considerable resources annually acquiring knowledge and information. (Ershadi & Eskandari Dehdazzi, 2019, p. 625). Furthermore, cognitive change can add an important new dimension to the concept of organisational knowledge dynamics, as it significantly impacts the effectiveness of the learning process within an organisation. Current organisational knowledge may become resistant to change and learning due to conditions such as environmental disruptions, so it is necessary to exclude and renew parts of organisational knowledge. Additionally, greater autonomy for individuals within the organisation will limit routine constraints, enabling the gradual changes necessary for development. Therefore, enabling individuals to participate in continuous improvement, contribute to discussions about their work practices and foster a culture of collective learning will transform the conditions for the evolution of routines and enhance the organisation's capacity for cognitive change. Without active change processes, acquiring knowledge will lead to incomplete adoption, increasing instability and reducing its overall impact on organisational performance.

Seventh: Resistance to cognitive change:

This term is often associated with a reactive and even typically refers to a conservative, response to what has been acquire to all our established knowledge and practice, therefore, such resistance to change may reflect an inability to participate in an inevitable necessary transformations movement that requires the abandonment of old routines and habits in order to adopt the new skills required by the organisation, thus viewing the phenomenon of resistance to change as a natural event in the development, requires specific mechanisms to enable its members to participate to facilitate member engagement. Regardless of the nature or origin of change, individuals may have the ability to resist and the capacity to neutralise changes for things that they do not support and to which they do not commit. The repeated introduction of new policies and strategies, mergers and reorganisation contribute to the concealment or even erasure of previously developed organisational practices by restructuring their relationship with the present. This policy of cognitive change, potentially conveyed through reorganisations, new management tools or administrative doctrines, creates conditions that deny the past and contribute to the exclusion of the old as a symbol of a bygone obsolete era. From cycle to cycle, skills, achievements or previous commitments may be abandoned or chosen more selectively to fit new work standards. This iterative temporal cycle serves to erase the past and creates uncertainty about the future (Bretesché, 2018, p. 93).

Without a structural basis or institutional mediation with previous achievements and accomplishment, change can become a source of accountability pressure, it can prompt deep questioning of past experiences and create a rift, or maybe a sense of disruption in an individual's personal journey. Old, low-value, unqualified references to past uses and practices serve as a record of a world inhabited by fragile memories. These contexts of cognitive change pose risks to individuals. The growing need for flexibility in the world of work can undermine individuals' ability to plan for the future and consider their own needs within a cohesive stable framework.

Organisational scholars unanimously agree that there is a close and strong relationship between conflict and cognitive change. The conversion of organizational knowledge often generates some conflict, which in turn results in innovation. Hence, while bureaucratic regulations offer particular protection, they simultaneously limit individual freedom and negate spontaneity, creativity, and initiative. In addition, individuals or organizations may not have an easy time coping with change from a crisis. Procedures based on training and skills, which were effective in the past, may determine responses that do not work in changing new conditions.

Discussing the content of our study:

In an era of exponential technological advancement, managing change has become a significant challenge for companies, firms and organisations, in order to keep pace with these technical progress, they must adapt to new situations, requiring adjustments in terms of not only equipment, but also organisational structure, processes, policies and roles. To be successful, change must focus on several and critical key tasks, it begins with clearly understanding the reasons for the

change and the expected benefits, this transparency is essential for gaining the support of the entire organisation for the transition. It is equally crucial to assess the organisation's readiness for change by identifying the difference and the gap between current practices and future requirements, employees must be kept informed about these changes so that they can identify those who will be affected by them and those who will be able to influence them.

Transformational leadership necessitates social competence to secure employee engagement and substantial expertise to effectively influence and guide behaviours. Preserving existing heritage and the best practices also demonstrates respect for organisational practices.

Collective Intelligence as a Lever

Emphasising that decision, learning and creating new ideas are inherently social processes, this approach is the key feature of any strategy, the strategy springs from conversations happening between managers and employees with a shared focus and ambition, a shared focus and ambition emerge, forming the basis of the subsequent strategy, the collective identification of opportunities and threats, and the concerted mobilisation of resources.

The optimisation of organisational potential: Recognising the value of cognitive diversity, this dynamic fosters the emergence of the most relevant concepts through the natural competition of ideas.

The Traps of Sclerotic Stability: Rigid knowledge management can stem from,

Reluctance to experiment with new methods, a lack of foresight, the underutilisation of the intellectual potential of employees, the rejection of innovative suggestions from staff.

This inertia is often fuelled by a 'dominant logic', which is particularly prevalent in large organisations. Although this cognitive framework can be structuring, it can also become counterproductive by:

- creating an informational filter that prevents the detection of weak signals.
- blocking proactive initiatives.
- causing decision-making paralysis in the face of new realities.

Towards Purposeful Change

Innovation often requires leaving behind the accepted paradigms of the past, well known and established constructs of logic and organisational routines may add up to insurmountable obstacles. Therefore, purposeful change in knowledge management requires the unlearning of antiquated cognitive and procedural routines.

Unlearning is essential to allow organisations to convert their intellectual capital into a sustainable competitive advantage but still be agile in adapting to changing environmental conditions.

7. SUMMARY:

Cognitive change is a factor that organisations adjust to, and to which they must adapt, it is associated with the reorganizing, then the restructuring of information and the acquisition of new knowledge. The intention is to refresh organisational memory, thus, cognitive change is identified and now absolutely understood as a constant process based on consistently updating working procedures and organisational practices. Cognitive change often involves developing organisational knowledge and advancing individual skills (where advancing a skill means enhancing an existing knowledge or skill set, which changes the way knowledge is processed).

This process requires dialogue, which is vital for addressing organisational forgetting as it does not always take place through formal, hierarchical channels, but also emerges through social networks and informal groups. Field-based training is also necessary, as there is a clear distinction between designing programmes and plans, and enacting and applying them, versus their practical implementation. Learning procedures without practical application is difficult as these procedures rely on context sensitive experiential knowledge.

Organisational forgetting can therefore be examined in terms of three dimensions: the processes involved in making the change; the practical application of the change; and the practitioners of cognitive change (the people involved).

Sociological examination

The sociological analysis of cognitive change demonstrates that knowledge is no longer just one of many resources; it now serves as the symbolic infrastructure on which management, innovation and organisation processes are founded. At its core, cognitive change reflects cultural change within organisations, as well as the evolving styles of professional practice and thinking that shape the institution's meaning-production activities. The findings indicated that social factors change networks, trust, power and organisational values are the decisive determinants of cognitive change paths. Technology merely acts as a mediator in a socially and knowledge-rich environment. It also became evident that organisational knowledge and cognitive change are two parts of a dynamic whole in terms of cognitive development. Organisational knowledge can only be retained through an organisation's capacity to evolve stale knowledge and absorb new knowledge.



The sociology of cognitive change provides a means of understanding organisational renewal processes from social and cultural viewpoints. It implies that control of knowledge is at its core, control of the individual, their relationships, and their interactional contexts, thus when creating organizations that are learning organizations capable of continuous evolution - the most important thing is to build an organizational-culture-systems, which fosters participation and supports people to be able to take part in the production and circulation of knowledge in nested-continuous production and collaborative contexts.

The sociological analysis of cognitive change demonstrates that knowledge is no longer just a simple way of resources, but now, I think that it serves as the symbolic infrastructure on which management, innovation and organisation processes are founded and based, at its core, cognitive change reflects cultural change within organisations, as well as the evolving styles of professional practice and thinking that shape the institution's meaning-production activities. The findings indicate that social factors change networks, trust, power and organisational values are the decisive determinants of cognitive change paths, technology merely acts as a mediator in a socially and knowledge-rich environment it also became evident that organisational knowledge and cognitive change are two parts of a dynamic whole in terms of cognitive development. Organisational knowledge can only be retained through an organisation's capacity to evolve stale knowledge and absorb new knowledge.

The sociology of cognitive change provides a means of or a framework for, understanding organisational renewal processes from social and cultural perspectives and viewpoints, implies that control of knowledge is, at its core, control of the individual, their relationships, and their interactional contexts, therefore, consequently when creating and building learning organizations capable of continuous evolution, the paramount golden objective is to engage to build organisational culture systems that fosters participation and supports people and empower individuals to be able taking part in the production and circulation of knowledge in nested, continuous production and collaborative contexts.

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