Information Processing Approach in Organisational Cognitive Structures: Relationship between Top and Middle Managers’ Cognitions

Jukka-Pekka Bergman*, Lappeenranta University of Technology, Finland
Vladimir Platonov, St. Petersburg State University of Economics, Russia
Igor Dukeov, Lappeenranta University of Technology, Finland
Pekka Röyttä, Institute of High Performance Computing, A-STAR, Singapore
Pasi Luukka, Lappeenranta University of Technology, Finland

ABSTRACT

Despite of increasing interest in social cognitive research in strategic management during recent years, few studies have examined the relationship between cognitive structures of top management and middle management. This study represents the information processing approach in managerial cognition research assuming that top management communicate their shared cognitions into the organization reducing ambiguity of operative environment faced by the other levels of organization shaping the operations of the organizations. Our empirical study examines managerial cognitive maps collected with a cognitive mapping method in a transportation company. In the study, top managers and middle managers separately evaluated sustainability management issues and their relevance for the company providing 75 individual cognitive maps. Based on this, our study aims to fill the gap in research of relationship between top management and middle management cognitive structures and increase understanding on role of managerial cognition in strategic management research.

Keywords: Cognitive mapping, shared cognition, dominant logic, middle management, top management, distance ratio, cognitive structures.