

A. Anisimova, A. Shurpa,
1st year students of School of Business of BSU
Scientific supervisor:
senior lecturer
S. Ostapuk

BELARUS BUSINESS CULTURE

Countries differ greatly from each other in terms of the level of economic development, political structure, culture, historical experience, natural and climatic conditions, etc. Our objective is to find out what factors affect people's behaviour and culture and describe Belarusian business culture.

Geert Hofstede is a Dutch sociopsychologist and anthropologist who studies the interaction between cultures. He has received numerous awards for cross-cultural research around the world. One

of his most significant achievements is the development of the theory of cultural dimensions, providing a systematic basis for assessing differences between nations and cultures.

The theory is based on the idea that value can be distributed across six dimensions of culture. These dimensions include power distance (equality versus inequality), collectivism versus individualism, uncertainty avoidance (against tolerance for uncertainty), masculinity versus femininity, indulgence versus restraint, short-term or long-term orientation. Most of the information about the world cultural values Hofstede received from surveys conducted by IBM, the American technological and consulting corporation. He proposed a rating system on a scale from 1 to 120.

The results of Hofstede's study are relevant for Belarusian leaders in the light of:

- growing influx of labour force from abroad;
- an increase in the number of foreign companies;
- a high turnover of staff;
- belarussian companies enter international markets, where they are likely to face difficulties in overcoming cultural barriers.

In order to find out what features of business culture prevail in Belarus, we conducted an Internet survey among students of the School of Business of BSU.

In the course of scientific work we objective was to identify the main features of Belarusian business culture, based on the results of the study. We asked two questions in order to figure out what kind of power distance we have in Belarus.

The diagram below on fig. 1 and one more from our survey show us that Belarusians are characterised by a low power distance index, which means that in business culture managers respect their subordinates, treat them as equals and listen to their opinions.

Do your parents treat you as an equal?

75 ответов

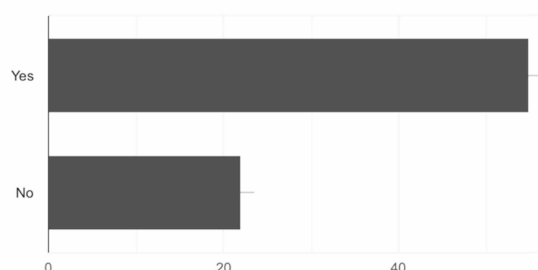


Fig 1. Do your parents treat you as equal? [1]

The results of the next two questions on fig. 2, 3 show us that people in Belarus have a high uncertainty avoidance index, which means that they are less tolerant towards changes and try to avoid anxiety that the unknown carries, through the establishment of strict rules, regulations and laws.

Do you live for today or you rather think about what will happen tomorrow?

75 ответов

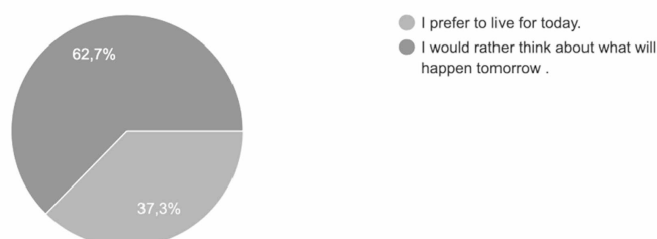


Fig. 2. Do you live for today or you rather think about what will happen tomorrow? [1]

Are you afraid of changes?

75 ответов

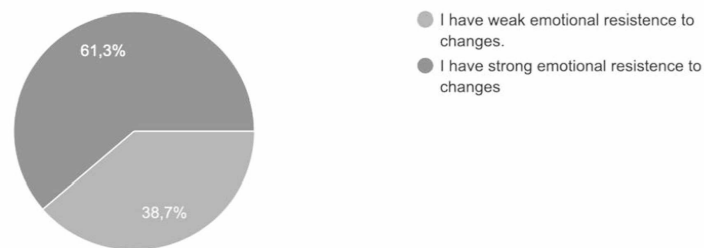


Fig. 3. Are you afraid of changes? [1]

The next question on fig. 4 is about collectivism and individualism, and our country is characterised by collectivism. Employees put social goals and welfare above personal ones [2].

In a dispute, what's more important for you to maintain a good relationship or to prove your case?

75 ответов

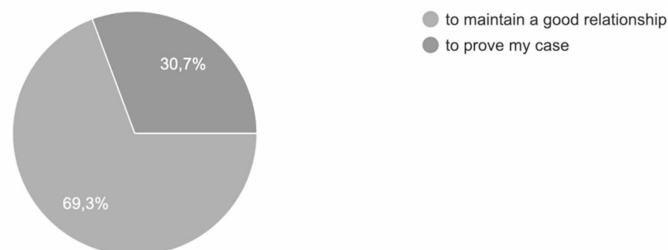


Fig 4. In a dispute, what's more important for you to maintain a good relationship or to prove your case? [1]

The next type of questions on fig. 5, 6 is about Feminine and Masculine Societies, and survey participants felt that our country is rather Feminine than Masculine, which means that our culture is characterized by less significant differences between the genders and a higher value of relationships, such as family.

Have you ever been affected by gender inequality?

75 ответов

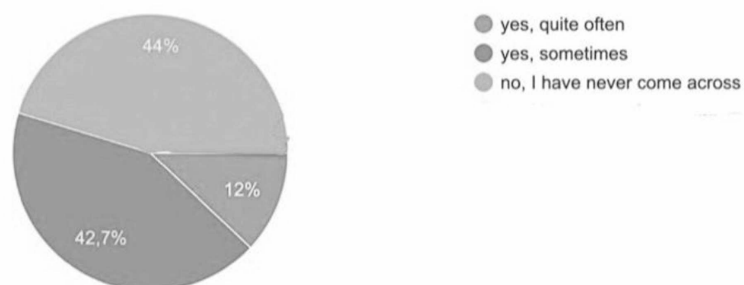


Fig. 5. Have you ever been affected by gender inequality? [1]

A few more questions in our survey (you can see one of them on fig. 7) are about Short-term or Long-term orientation. The results show us that long-term orientation prevails in Belarusian culture, which assumes that people are ready to refuse meeting their needs at present, they are ready to invest in projects and programs that will be implemented in the future.

What, in your opinion prevails: work or family?

75 отвѣтов

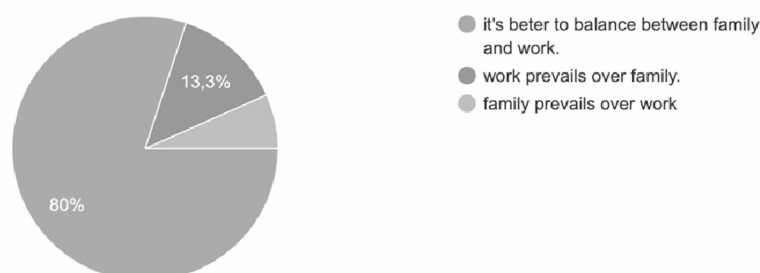


Fig. 6. What in your opinion prevails: work or family? [1]

Can we change traditions in our country or are they untouchable?

75 отвѣтов

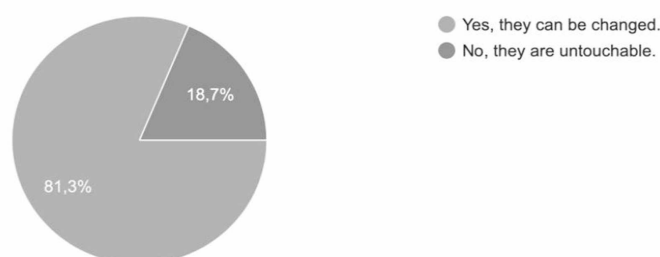


Fig. 7. Can we change traditions in our country or are they untouchable? [1]

And the last questions of our survey (you can see an example of one of them on fig. 8) are about indulgence versus restraint societies. These two criteria were created by Michael Minkov for identifying some social differences that weren't mentioned in the Hofstede classification. According to the result of our survey Belarusian society is characterized by indulgence. Unlike restrained societies, indulgence societies don't repress satisfaction needs and don't regulate them through strict social norms [3].

Does freedom of speech seem very important or it is not a primary concern?

75 отвѣтов

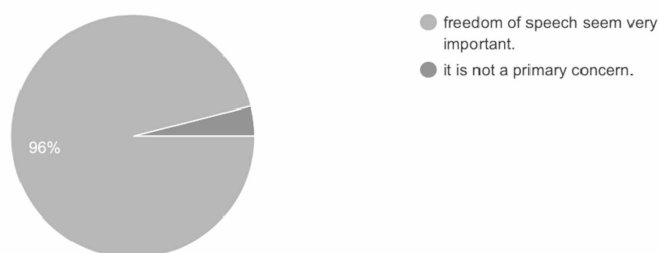


Fig. 8. Does freedom of speech seem very important or it is not a primary concern? [1]

To draw a conclusion, it is necessary to say that Belarusian business culture is characterized by a low power distance index, high uncertainty avoidance and femininity. It is also characterized by indulgence and collectivism.

References

1. Belarus according to a Hofstede theory [Electronic resource]. – Mode of access: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/13k43yVT83JOlj2GaX8se_nVWMt6_4TAKc9ripXJyt1w/edit. – Date of access: 10.05.2019.