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Article

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Comparative Economic Research. Central and Eastern Europe

Provided in Cooperation with:

Institute of Economics, University of Łódź

Suggested Citation: Glinkowska, Beata; Chebotarov, Viacheslav A. (2018) : A Comparative Cross-Cultural Analysis of the Profile of A Modern Ukrainian Manager: the Imperatives of the Future in the Context of Internationalization, Comparative Economic Research. Central and Eastern Europe, ISSN 2082-6737, De Gruyter, Warsaw, Vol. 21, Iss. 3, pp. 63-74, <https://doi.org/10.2478/cer-2018-0019>

This Version is available at:

<https://hdl.handle.net/10419/259173>

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A Comparative Cross-Cultural Analysis of the Profile of A Modern Ukrainian Manager: the Imperatives of the Future in the Context of Internationalization

Abstract

The preliminary results of the development of the initial theoretical, methodological and applied methodological provisions for the study of the profile of a modern Ukrainian manager are presented in the context of predicting its transformation in the future in the context of deepening internationalization. The results of the Polish-Ukrainian applied empirical analysis carried out by the authors are discussed. The content of the parameters of a modern Ukrainian manager is disclosed in the framework of the most common models of national business cultures, and directions for the further scientific, practical and methodological development of the problem are determined.

Keywords: *internationalization, manager profile, cross-culture, national business culture, Poland, Ukraine, parameters, competences, comparative analysis*

JEL: *D90*

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1. Introduction

Globalization and internationalization in modern conditions have become the dominants of social development in almost all countries of the world. Despite the inherent negative features in these phenomena, as well as any other fundamental phenomena and processes, positive features in all spheres of human activity clearly prevail. Theoretical-methodological and scientific-practical paradigms have already been formed that allow one to assume that globalization and internationalization will deepen and develop in the foreseeable future.

Herewith, the situation of any country in the system of international division of labor, as well as the common level of its socio-economic development, is, in many respects, predetermined by the nature and level of development of its national management and, directly, the level of professionalism of the managers of that country. In the generalized categorical definition in modern economic science, the latter was formalized in the definition of the “manager profile.” In accordance with the epistemology of cognition, the phenomena and processes reflected in this category are derived from phenomena and processes reflected in the “national business culture” and “corporate culture” categories (and interdependent with phenomena and processes reflected in the categories of “company profile”, “product profile”, “product quality” and “total quality management”).

The studying of these aspects is of particular relevance for former socialist countries, in particular, for Ukraine. This is due to the fact that, on the one hand, some experience of market development of these countries has been accumulated in the recent past. It will soon be the anniversary marking thirty years since the beginning of market transformations in a number of these countries. On the other hand, not only are the nature and pace of market reforms in some of these countries far from desired (hence their current level of social and economic development, and their place and role in the system of international division of labor), but the same is true for the potential objective capabilities of these countries. This, refers to Ukraine, above all, especially given its potentially high competitive advantages.

The need to increase the competitiveness of Ukrainian business structures necessitates the development of modern methods and technologies for making managerial decisions. It also requires that effective management systems for production and commercial processes be built by these business structures in the context of assessing the prospects for their entry into European markets. And this is the cross-road of the problems of economic science and economic practice, the micro level and the macro level, and with the “entrance” into the sphere of foreign economic activity. As a result, the problem of the profile of a manager, and in particular, the profile of a Ukrainian manager, is transformed into the dimension of a cross-cultural (intercultural) comparative analysis.

2. The analysis of the overall level of the problem's development

Along The general theoretical prerequisites for researching managerial problems are laid down in the framework of the study of social capital theory. Its founders were L. Hanifan (Hanifan 1916, pp. 130–138; <http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/1013498.pdf>) and P. Bourdieu (Bourdieu 1986, pp. 241–258). In this respect, should be pointed out, that in recent years, quite significant comprehension have been achieved in Ukrainian economic science.

However, one should note that the problem of the manager's profile has not yet become the subject of systemic research in Ukraine, nor in other countries of the USSR. There is not only a relatively well-established definition, but also a classification of the profile characteristics of the manager, and a comparative evaluation of the profile of a Ukrainian manager.

In Ukrainian economic science, various aspects of the profile of the manager have been developed as fragments when analyzing other socio-economic aspects. Grishnova explored them as a component of the formation of the modern level of organization of labor and personnel management (Grishnova 2014, No. 1, pp. 34–40); Zaitsev studied them as a component of the rationale for the corporate culture of an industrial enterprise (Zaitsev 2017, No. 2 (48), pp. 207–213); and Kamenska studied them as an element of the development of the concept of human capital management as economic entities explore an innovative development model (Kamenska 2016, No. 4 (5), pp. 31–39).

It should be noted one of the few attempts to highlight the scientific and methodological aspects of cross-cultural analysis in the entrepreneurial sphere was undertaken by a team of authors from Poland and Ukraine (Glinkowska, Chebotarov, Chebotarov 2018, pp. 1–138).

In English-speaking economic science and the science of countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the profile of a manager has been more developed. Kembel, at the turn of the 80s and 90s, laid the foundations for the concept of the “competence of a specialist” (Campbell 1990, pp. 687–732). On this basis, Bertram, Robertson and Kellinen later substantiated the need to additionally take into account the potential abilities of the employee, the conditions of his activity and the corresponding results (Bartram 2002, pp. 596–618). Glinkowska and Kaczmarek studied a set of management profile problems at the organizational level and their practical implementation in enterprises in the international sphere (Glinkowska, Kaczmarek 2016, pp. 1–290). At the same time, Kaczmarek substantiated approaches to overcoming cross-cultural barriers in the managerial activities of a modern entrepreneur (Kaczmarek 2016, pp. 87–95).

At the same time, the problematics of the profile of a modern manager, especially the cross-cultural dimension of this problem, is far from its acceptable scientific and practical resolution, also in the countries of the European Union.

The methodology of the research covers a set of specific methods of cognition. Thus, consideration of the conditions for the revival of entrepreneurship in Ukraine is built using, to the greatest extent, methods of logical and historical unity, induction and deduction, analysis and synthesis. In the process of questioning managers of Ukrainian and Polish enterprises and while processing the collected material, economic and statistical methods (groupings, comparisons, extrapolations) were used. Identifying and characterizing the profile of a modern Ukrainian manager is based on the use of methods of system-structural analysis, concreteness of truth and modeling.

The purpose of the article is to elaborate the scientific and theoretical foundations of the “manager profile” category, the conceptual determination of this definition, and the classification of the profile’s parameters of a modern Ukrainian manager. It will be done using empirical data from research conducted by the authors on the problems and prospects of the internationalization of Polish and Ukrainian enterprises in the context of implementing Ukraine’s plan to join the European Union.

3. The presentation of the main material

The Proceeding from the canons of the methodology of scientific cognition of economic phenomena and processes, the starting point should be an analysis of the general prerequisites for the emergence of these phenomena and processes. To understand the content of the profile of a Ukrainian manager, the necessary epistemological prerequisite is an analysis of the conditions for the revival of entrepreneurship in Ukraine in the late 1980’s and early 1990’s.

The authors draw attention to the scientific incorrectness of the widespread thesis about the alleged emergence of entrepreneurship in Ukraine, as in most former socialist countries, within the specified time period (for details see: Glinkowska, Chebotarov 2016, pp. 153–164). And from the historical, economic, and gnoseological points of view, there is no doubt about the level of development of entrepreneurship in Ukraine in the last third of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century as one of the leading fast-growing agglomerations not only in the Russian Empire but also in Europe as a whole. Also, the same is absolutely characteristic of Poland, and is mostly reflected in the modern economic science of the post-socialist countries. Confirmation of this is the multifaceted activity in Ukraine of the tycoons-bankers-philanthropists of the Tereshchenko and Brodsky dynasties, or the Alchevsky brothers, etc. In Poland, the same examples were Poznansky, Bartsinsky, and Scheibler, among others.

That is why in the 1850s and 1860s, on the basis of the Department of Political Economy and Statistics of the St. Vladimir Imperial University in Kyiv, the Kyiv school of political economy emerged. At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, it was one of the most authoritative in the world. It counted among its members world-renowned scientists, organizers of science, and government leaders of the top magnitude, including Bulgakov, Bunge, Vernadsky, Podolinsky, Struve, Tugan-Baranovsky, and Tsekhanovsky, among others.

Therefore, it is legitimate to speak about the revival of entrepreneurship in Ukraine, as in other post-socialist countries, with the transition to market reforms in the 1980s and 1990s. However, it is necessary to highlight the typical features of these processes in each of the post-socialist countries.

The theoretical and methodological, scientific and practical studies carried out (Chebotarov 2011, pp. 1–448) allow us to conclude that the most important essential characteristics of the revival of entrepreneurship in Ukraine in the late 1980's and early 1990's are as follows.

1. Proclaimed by the late-USSR government bureaucracy and newborn independent administrations declaratory transition to the market economy without adoption of appropriate state programs of market transformation.
2. The negative attitude towards entrepreneurship of the leadership of the then ruling Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the administrative and managerial economic apparatus and law enforcement bodies (moreover, members of these social groups through opaque privatization mechanisms quickly amassed material and financial resources of the former state as well as collective-farm cooperative property).
3. The negative attitude towards entrepreneurship of the vast majority of society (this was incomparably less characteristic for the western and southwestern regions of Ukraine, which were occupied and annexed by the USSR in the late 1930's and 1940's, where the custom, the connection of veneration, and respect for the very idea of entrepreneurship wasn't lost).

At the same time, paradoxical as it may seem, both the economic reform of Kossygin and also the number of manifestations of the “shadow economy” (very common within socialist economies, especially in the 70s and 80s) became the original stimulating factors for the revival of entrepreneurship. Examples included stealing, false accounting, and, later, so-called “shadow “manufacturing” as a sort of fully illegal in the USSR entrepreneurship.

4. The opaque nature of the formation of the first business structures using corruption schemes and non-economic mechanisms (the overwhelming majority of Ukrainian economy has been built by such structures, which play a leading role throughout the national, regional and local levels).
5. The absence of real state programs to support entrepreneurship (first of all, small and medium business) and the displacement of small businesses by large monopolistic and oligarchic business structures.

The unfavorable characteristics of the institutional environment for the revival of entrepreneurship in Ukraine (and it is difficult to call it positive) allow an unambiguous conclusion.

In contrast to Poland, entrepreneurship in Ukraine in the 1980s and 1990s was revived not because of, but in spite of the continued dominance of communist dogmas and after gaining state independence. A civil legal society that was not formed in subsequent years and the absence of a national idea that could be unifying (these phenomena were absolutely characteristic until the last three or four years) were additional aggravating factors restraining the development of full-fledged civilized entrepreneurship for the next three decades.

Together, this predetermined the nature of the national business culture and corporate culture that had not yet been formed in modern conditions (in this case, objectively, it should be reported that such phenomena, being institutional in nature, really “require” a long time for their maturation, registration and consolidation).

The above analysis of the institutional environment for the revival of entrepreneurship in Ukraine and the development of problems of the internationalization of Polish and Ukrainian enterprises (with a parallel survey and in-depth interviews of managers of Ukrainian and Polish business structures) done in 2016–2017 by the Poland-Ukraine Research Center give grounds to note the following.

The above generalizations of the analysis of the institutional environment for the revival of entrepreneurship in Ukraine are the general theoretical basis for researching the profile of a manager. Such analysis is necessary, but it must necessarily be supplemented by empirically applied developments.

They were implemented by the authors in the context of researching the problems and prospects for the internationalization of Polish and Ukrainian enterprises with the prospect of them entering world markets. This research was conducted by the Poland-Ukraine Research Center in 2016–2017 (the Center was established in 2016 on the basis of the Department of Management of the University of Lodz and the Department of Economic Theory, Marketing and Entrepreneurship of the Luhansk National University (Starobilsk) as the implementation of the Framework Agreement between those universities, agreed in 2014).

The main methodological tool for carrying out the noted applied developments was the parallel questioning of managers of Polish and Ukrainian enterprises using an identical questionnaire. The questionnaire was developed by Polish scientists-practitioners and included 28 questions with variants of answers in both closed and open forms (the number of answers to questions ranged from 3 to 12).

The questioning in both Poland and Ukraine was conducted on a face-to-face basis directly with the interviewees (attempts to conduct questionnaires with electronic mailing of questionnaires in both countries were almost 100% unsuccessful).

The questions within the questionnaire concerned the preparation, implementation and evaluation of both managerial components, as well as aspects of economics, finance, marketing and commercial communication technolo-

gies. The questionnaires covered the production and commercial structures of small, medium and large businesses (according to the legislative foundations of Ukraine and Poland), the classification parameters of the business structures of these countries are quite close (Glinkowska, Chebotarov 2016, pp. 153–164).

In Ukraine, the survey was conducted in Kyiv, Kharkiv, and in the Luhansk and Donetsk regions (on the territories under the control of the state). It should be noted that Ukrainian managers in the questionnaires and surveys took an active part and gave real answers; however, as a custom, they did this on condition that their anonymity would be kept.

In addition to the questionnaires for production workers, similar questions were discussed in the framework of in-depth interview surveys with members of government bodies, the Ukrainian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, research institutions, and business coaches at the Kyiv-Mohyla School of Business.

Based on the study of epistemological aspects of the problem, the general theoretical analysis of relevant institutional and economic issues and the comprehensive practical experience of the authors, a categorical definition of the “manager’s profile” can be explained as follows: a system of structured management, common cultural and psychological requirements for the competencies (and the requirements for the competencies associated with managing of the areas of economics, finance and marketing), disclosed by classifying characteristics and relevant assessments, the criteria to be met by a manager at certain hierarchical level of organization (enterprise, institutions, etc.) to fulfill specific job responsibilities.

Based on the studies conducted, it seems legitimate to conclude that the features of the Western management model are more typical for characterizing the profile of a modern Ukrainian manager. This, in accordance with the comparative parameters of the western and eastern models, manifests itself in the following.

1. In the approaches to strategic management, the focus is on results (as a rule, it is understood as the financial result of the organization over the short, medium and long time periods, and due attention is not paid to the institutional and environmental aspects).
2. For the order of non-strategic decisions, the most common is the “top-down” approach; management proposals in the opposite direction are not encouraged.
3. The information exchange system is highly formalized (but often – unclear) within the framework of rigidly established flows; the exchange of information at horizontal levels between the structural units of the various functional services of organizations is accompanied by bureaucratic misunderstanding.
4. The functioning of management systems is built on a clearly expressed individualistic basis; with any change of top managers, there is often a significant “readjustment” of these systems throughout the organization as a whole.

5. The distribution of functional duties and responsibilities in organization, individual characteristics (especially creative ones) of executive managers of lower levels are rarely taken into account.
6. The nature of job descriptions is characterized by a number of restrictive provisions, mandatory regulations and standards; these provisions often allow for them to be understood ambiguously and that they are subsequently not implemented in full.
7. The system of intra-firm planning is built according to the “top-down” model; this is characteristic of planning in different time dimensions.

Generally speaking, we note that for a modern Ukrainian manager, the marked features of Western management are quite typical. In contrast, the classical characteristics of Oriental management (orientated to the behavioral model, the widespread use of the system of planning business processes “from bottom up”, the construction of the functioning of management systems on a group basis) in modern Ukrainian realities are poorly manifested.

At the same time, there are reasons to conclude that the marked features of Eastern management are no longer a rarity for Ukrainian vertically integrated holding structures. This is also true in all sectors of the national economy: in the agro-food complex, the mining industry, the heat power industry, in the chemical industry, and so on.

If you characterize the profile of the Ukrainian manager using the parameters of the most popular theories of national business culture in modern management of Trompenaars, Hofstede and Lewis (all of them are not only authoritative theoretical researchers, but also leading management practitioners in international companies in the sphere of HR-management), then according to the results of our research, it looks the following way.

According to the theory of Trompenaars (Trompenaars 1993, pp. 27–54), the following characteristics are the most typical of a modern Ukrainian manager:

- particularism (as opposed to universalism of the same standards-rules in the implementation of industrial and commercial processes);
- collectivism (with an expressed desire to avoid taking responsibility);
- neutrality (with a clear desire to hide one’s own opinion);
- diffuseness (the boss-subordinate relationship permeates all spheres of the organization’s life);
- ascription (the status of a member of a collective largely follows from belonging to a certain social and professional group).

According to the theory of Hofstede (Hofstede 2001, pp. 55–74), the following are inherent in the modern Ukrainian manager:

- collectivism (with an explicit or implicit desire not to show self-actualization until a certain time);
- high power distance (honoring the hierarchy within the organization is unshakable);

- “femininity” (the desire to resolve conflicts through compromise and certain mutual concessions);
- rather strong avoidance of uncertainty is the attraction to formalization and regulation within the organization).

According to Lewis’s theory (Lewis 2013, pp. 1–312), using his famous “triangles,” the national business culture of Ukraine (the widespread opinion Lewis mentioned in his research is unreasonable) could be placed on the cathetus on which Poland, Romania and the Russian Federation are located (according to the results of the research, there is an obvious tendency to strengthening the common features of the younger generation of Ukrainian managers to bring them more in line with their Polish and Romanian colleagues).

The theoretical and methodological developments of the Poland-Ukraine Research Center, and the empirical scientific and practical studies supplementing them directly based on Ukrainian enterprises with various forms of management, allow us to distinguish the following typical characteristics of the profile of the modern Ukrainian manager.

To some degree, especially in the first years of his/her professional career, managers are deprived of a sense of leadership, as such (and they have a rather low sense of self-esteem). The desire to work proactively, or to take personal responsibility for the organization and the results of business processes are quite rare. For many managers, it is a challenge to implement business planning in practice (especially considering the industry-specific features of enterprises and the changing state of the world commodity and financial markets), build a sound marketing policy or use cross-cultural communication techniques.

Meanwhile, with ongoing intensive formation of positive features, Ukrainian manager, with his general cultural and personal qualities, is a fairly efficient and communicative specialist. He has mastered the fundamentals of modern management technologies and can successfully work in a team. For many managers who want to earn “a lot, fast and in any way,” which was widespread in the 1990s, their orientation towards a long and permanent career is becoming clear. More and more characteristic of the modern Ukrainian manager is the orientation towards constant development and the implementation of innovations both within the framework of production and technological activities, and directly in the organization and management of business processes. The trend for socially responsible entrepreneurship, which has always been inherent in the business environment of Ukraine, is becoming common for modern Ukrainian managers.

4. The prospects for the further development of the problem under analysis

Discussions on the study of these aspects are objectively determined by their insufficient theoretical and methodological level of elaboration of the given problems, which is generally true for all countries.

Prospects for further developing the analyzed problem lie in conducting a comparative cross-cultural analysis of profiles of modern Ukrainian and Polish managers, as well as managers of other countries of the European Union. Another direction of deepening these developments is by justifying proposals to the ministries of education in Poland and Ukraine that they improve both the professional training of managers in the context of internationalization and the didactic provision of academic disciplines on cross-cultural communications.

5. Conclusions

In Ukrainian economic science, like in Polish economic science to a certain extent, the problems of the manager's profile have not yet become a subject of systematic research.

The theoretical and practical relevance of the problem predetermined it quickly became necessary to justify the newly-proposed concept definition of the "manager's profile" and the outgoing (basic) classification of the profile's parameters of a modern Ukrainian manager. For these parameters, specific interlacing of positive and negative personal qualities in professional activity is characteristic, with pronounced positive general, cultural and psychological personal qualities, as well as the trend to increase of the professionalism of Ukrainian managers.

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Streszczenie

ANALIZA PORÓWNAWCZA PROFILU WSPÓŁCZESNEGO UKRAIŃSKIEGO “WIELOKULTUROWEGO” MENEDŻERA: IMPERATYWY PRZYSZŁOŚCI W KONTEKŚCIE INTERNACJONALIZACJI

W artykule zawarto wyniki dostępnych opracowań teoretycznych, metodologicznych i praktycznych do badania profilu współczesnego ukraińskiego menedżera i przedstawiono je w aspekcie przewidywania kierunków transformacji w kontekście postępującej internacjonalizacji. Omówiono wyniki prowadzonej przez autorów “polsko-ukraińskiej analizy empirycznej”. Większość parametrów dotyczących cech współczesnego ukraińskiego menedżera nawiązuje do najpowszechniejszych modeli narodowych kultur biznesowych, określających kierunki dalszego rozwoju: naukowego, praktycznego i metodologicznego w zakresie analizowanego problemu.

Słowa kluczowe: *internacjonalizacja, profil menedżerski, kultura wielokulturowa, narodowa kultura biznesowa, Polska, Ukraina, kompetencje, analiza porównawcza.*