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## Modern Ukrainian and Polish business cultures: G. Hofstede's classification

**Abstract.** For the last twenty years, G. Hofstede's classification of cultural factors has been one of the basic approaches to the development of the majority of modern typologies of national business cultures. The purpose of the research is to compare cross-cultural characteristics of modern Ukrainian and Polish business cultures with regard to G. Hofstede's classification of cultural factors. To achieve this goal, we have compared modern Ukrainian and Polish business cultures according to Hofstede's classification of cultural factors. Key cross-cultural differences of Ukrainian and Polish business cultures have been defined, which are a higher level of collectivism in Ukrainian culture, masculinity of Polish culture versus femininity of Ukrainian culture and medium-term orientation in Ukrainian culture in comparison with short-term orientation of Polish culture. Further research will be devoted to the development of practical recommendations regarding cross-cultural interaction with representatives of modern Ukrainian and Polish business cultures based on the defined cross-cultural peculiarities of the Ukrainian and Polish management.

**Keywords:** Power Distance; Individualism; Collectivism; Femininity; Masculinity; Uncertainty Avoidance; Long-term Orientation; Restraint; Ukrainian Business Culture; Polish Business Culture

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### Сучасна українська та польська ділова культура: класифікація Г. Хофстеде

**Анотація.** Останні двадцять років концепція культурних чинників Г. Хофстеде є одним з основних підходів для розробки більшості сучасних моделей типології національних культур. Метою цього дослідження є порівняння крос-культурних особливостей сучасних ділових культур України та Польщі на основі концепції культурних вимірів Г. Хофстеде. Для досягнення поставленої мети проведено порівняння особливостей сучасної ділової культури України та Польщі на основі концепції Г. Хофстеде. У результаті проведеного дослідження виявлено ключові крос-культурні відмінності української та польської ділової культури, а саме: більш високий рівень колективізму в українській культурі; мужність польської культури на протизагу жіночності української культури; орієнтація на майбутнє в українській культурі на відміну від орієнтації на минуле й сьогодення польської культури. Подальшими шляхами продовження дослідження стане розробка практичних рекомендацій щодо крос-культурної взаємодії з представниками сучасної української та польської ділової культури на основі визначених крос-культурних особливостей менеджменту цих країн.

**Ключові слова:** дистанція влади; індивідуалізм; колективізм; жіночність; мужність; уникнення невизначеності; довгострокова орієнтація; стриманість; українська ділова культура; польська ділова культура.

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### Современная украинская и польская деловая культура: классификация Г. Хофстеде

**Аннотация.** Последние двадцать лет концепция культурных факторов Г. Хофстеде является одним из основных подходов для разработки большинства современных моделей типологии национальных культур. Целью данного исследования является сравнение кросс-культурных особенностей современной деловой культуры в Украине и Польше на основе концепции культурных факторов Г. Хофстеде. Для достижения поставленной цели выполнено ряд задач: проведено сравнение особенностей современной деловой культуры Украины и Польши на основе концепции Г. Хофстеде; определены, систематизированы и проанализированы особенности современной украинской и польской деловой культуры в контексте системы менеджмента. В результате проведенного исследования выявлены ключевые кросс-культурные различия украинской и польской деловых культур, а именно: более высокий уровень коллективизма в украинской культуре; мужественность польской культуры в противовес женственности украинской культуры; ориентация на будущее в украинской культуре в отличие от ориентации на прошлое и настоящее польской культуры. Последующим направлением исследования станет разработка практических рекомендаций по кросс-культурному взаимодействию с представителями современной украинской и польской деловой культуры на основе выявленных кросс-культурных особенностей менеджмента этих стран.

**Ключевые слова:** дистанция власти; индивидуализм; коллективизм; женственность; мужественность; избегание неопределенности; долгосрочная ориентация; сдержанность; украинская деловая культура; польская деловая культура.

## 1. Introduction and Brief Literature Review

The differences in cultures of different countries and peoples have been known for centuries. However, only since the mid 20th century the idea of holistic description of a cultural phenomenon has been further developed in research with the aim to create a typology of national business cultures. At that time, ethnometry began to develop as a new direction of ethno-social research, which analyses mental characteristics of different ethnic groups using formal methods.

On the basis of empirical studies, scientists and researchers tried to determine variables («cultural factors»), which can identify cultural characteristics of each country and classify countries according to these parameters. According to M. Myers and F. Tan (2002) [1], researchers of various scientific schools have identified over 30 cultural factors, which are associated with the behaviour of the representatives of different national cultures and their cross-cultural interaction.

According to A. Gutterman (2016) [2], the most famous modern classification concerning the typology of national cultures is the classification of cultural orientations by F. Kluckhohn and F. Strodtbeck (1961). Also, there are Hall's classification of cultural context (1976), Hofstede's classification of cultural dimensions (1980, 1984, 1991) and Trompenaars' parametric classification (1993).

F. Kluckhohn and F. Strodtbeck (1961) [3] suggested one of the earliest classifications of national culture and proposed a theory of culture based on value orientations, arguing that there is a limited number of problems that are common to all human groups and for which there is a limited number of solutions. Therefore, in any culture there is a set of dominant types of value orientations (cultural orientations). The theory initiated further studies in this direction. However, the shortcomings with respect to the cultural orientation classification by F. Kluckhohn and F. Strodtbeck include the use of research tools, which were originally developed in the USA without the adaptation of them for use in other societies [4].

E. Hall's (1963) [5] cultural context classification is based on the results of the ethnographic research in several societies (Germany, France, the USA and Japan). Hall's theory focuses on how representatives of culture vary in interpersonal communications, personal space and time [5]. However, as A. Gutterman (2015) [6] mentioned, this theory is focused on psychological characteristics of managers and their employees in the work place.

Trompenaars' parametric model is focused both on variations in values and personal relationships across societies. The first five cultural factors focus on relationships among people (close to Hofstede's classification), while the last two focus on time management and society's relationship with nature (close to R. D. Lewis's (2006) model) [7]. But the results of the evaluation of the first five cultural factors are significantly different from Hofstede's classification, especially in the «individualism/collectivism» cultural factor [8]. Therefore, the results of the classification for this parametric model are controversial.

G. Hofstede [4], the founder of ethnometry, showed the origins of cultural factors in basic social institutions (religion and family) and their implications for such secondary institutions as (economics, politics and business organisations) and argued that these cultural dimensions define the ways of structuring and managing organisations. According to the first results (1980, 1984), G. Hofstede [4] identified four major dimensions for measuring the interaction of national cultures: «power distance»; «individualism versus collectivism»; «masculinity versus femininity»; «uncertainty avoidance». As M. Tayeb (1994) mentioned [9], Hofstede's work has been criticised as being biased toward American ownership and types of jobs. As a result of extra studies which were conducted in China, Japan and Southeast Asia, G. Hofstede [4] added an eastern dimension - the factor of Confucian dynamism («long-term orientation»), which explains the fundamental difference between Western and Eastern mentality. Recently, he proposed the last cultural dimension, which is «indulgence versus restraint» concerning human needs and wants related to the joy of living [4].

According to G. Hofstede's classification of cultural dimensions [10], each country (culture) gets points for each of

the cultural factors (from 0 to 100); 0 is the lowest value of the index and 100 is the highest value of the index (although in theory values can exceed these limits). Parameters of each culture are relative, not absolute, that is, in any culture, there is a manifestation of two opposite values, but their ratio will be different. The scoring system allowed G. Hofstede [10] to give each factor a quantitative assessment of the national culture. Thus, the six-dimension classification (6-D model) by G. Hofstede is used nowadays [11].

As A. Gutterman (2015) [6] mentioned, each of these models has been used to investigate how cultural differences might impact national styles of management (leadership styles, human resource policies). However, as M. Myers [1] noted, Hofstede's approach, which is the basis for developing the majority of the models of national cultures typology, is most popular in many different fields of management.

## 2. Purpose

The purpose of this study is to determine and compare cross-cultural characteristics of modern Ukrainian and Polish business cultures according to G. Hofstede's classification of cultural dimensions. To achieve this goal, a set of tasks has been performed: modern Ukrainian and Polish business cultures have been analysed according to the 6-D model; the peculiarities of modern Ukrainian and Polish business cultures have been defined and systematised in the context of the systems of management in Ukrainian and Polish companies.

## 3. Results

The cultural dimension «power distance» (PDI) is conceptually linked to the idea of «concentration of power» (centralisation) and indicates to which extent society approves the uneven distribution of power in institutions and organisations. The value of «power distance» reflects the extent of uneven power distribution in social structures (the family, the organisation or society) and tolerance to inequality.

According to the *Cultural dimensions* by Geert Hofstede [11], Ukraine (PDI = 92) and Poland (PDI = 68) both have large «power distance», but Ukrainian business culture has a higher level of internal inequality and more hierarchical pyramid structures. At the same time, as A. Jackowicz and S. Pettitt (1993) mentioned [13], Polish managers also have a tendency to adopt an autocratic management style and to resist everything that could dilute managerial authority. G. Hofstede (2005) [12] suggested that corruption is common and income distribution is even in large «power distance» societies. These are the key issues in the political system of Ukraine to a greater extent than in Poland.

Ukrainian and Polish enterprises have a high level of power distance and common characteristics which are defined by [4; 14-16] and classified in Table 1.

The indicator of decentralisation level of power and its influence on the country's economic system shows the Doing Business Index [17]. In 2017, the size of this Index was 80 for Ukraine and 24 for Poland (out of 189), which proves a higher level of power centralisation in Ukraine comparing to Poland.

Another indicator of power distance level is the Corruption Perceptions Index [8]. In 2016, this Index was 131 for Ukraine and 29 for Poland (out of 176). It explains the reason why the power distance index in Ukraine is 25% higher than in Poland.

The cultural dimension «individualism versus collectivism» (IDV), also known as «social orientation», is offered to define how the people of this country act as individuals or as members of a particular group.

According to the *Cultural dimensions* by Geert Hofstede [11], Ukraine is a country with collective culture (IDV = 25), where there is a system of values, in which an individual is primarily part of a group, and only then he is a personality; all employees are focused on achieving collective goals and collective success; all staff suffers from the drawbacks and failures of an individual; promotion doesn't depend on the personality of an employee [19]. On the contrary, Poland is a country with individual culture (IDV = 60) [4], where there is a system of values, in which the personality dominates; people have a right to criticise colleagues and management; promotion depends only on qualities and achievements of the individual, as described by V. V. Korzhenko (2009) [19].

At present, the national styles of Ukrainian and Polish management are at the opposite directions of this cultural dimension. The impact of «individualism versus collectivism» on the management systems in these countries is defined by [4; 14-16; 19] and systematised in Table 2.

Yet, over the past years the scientists [19-21] have noted some changes in the IDV index in Ukraine from collectivism to individualism. The reason for such changes is a number of factors: dualism of the Ukrainian mentality, the combination of collectivism features (the influence of the Soviet past) and individualism (the manifestation of the Zaporzhian Cossacks' morale) in Ukrainian culture, as stated by T. Blyznyuk and T. Lepeyko (2016) [21]. There are two types of mentality in Ukraine [21]: the Eastern Ukrainian mentality and the Western Ukrainian mentality. The mentality of West Ukrainian regions is closer to the Polish cultural values (individualism). The mentality of the Eastern, Southern and some Central regions of Ukraine explicitly combines the post-Russian and post-Soviet cultural values (collectivism).

This is the reason why over the next 10-20 years, along with the generation change in Ukraine, the culture of individualism, which will be close to Polish culture, will be formed. At the same time, Poland shows the medium level of individualism, as in Polish culture there are features of collectivism. As J. N. Yanouzas and S. Boukis (1993) [22] mentioned, Poles are more inclined to form a group with strong trust relations and work together in «beating the enemy». According to L. Kolman, N. G. Noorderhaven, G. Hofstede and E. Dienes (2003) [16], Poland is much more collectivistic than Western European countries.

The cultural dimension «masculinity versus femininity» (MAS), also known as «focus on achieving goals», reveals a method for motivating people to perform certain work to achieve the goals. This factor is related to the division of emotional roles between men and women within society and the balance struck between ego and social values by society, as described by A. Guterman (2015) [6].

According to the *Cultural dimensions* by Geert Hofstede [11], Polish culture (MAS = 64) is characterised by medium masculinity and active target behaviour where there is dominance of traditional male values such as success, money, wealth, ambition, career, competition. There is a clear division of gender roles. Femininity and passive target behaviour are inherent in Ukrainian culture (MAS = 27) [11] where there is harmony and inclination to compromise, and the quality of life and care for others dominate. Femininity dominance in Ukrainian culture has deep historical roots, as it is connected to the Ukrainian archetype of the «Great Mother», which is part of the Ukrainian mentality [21].

Peculiarities of the impact «masculinity versus femininity» on the Ukrainian and Polish management systems are defined by [4; 14-16; 19] and systematised in Table 3.

The indicators of this cultural dimension are opportunities for females to realise themselves as professionals and to get equal salary. According to the Global Gender Gap Report by the WEF (2014) [23], the subindex of economic participation and opportunity of Ukraine is 31, whereas it is 61 for Poland (out of 142). According to the Wage equality survey, the Ukrainian rank is 46 and the Polish rank is 120.

The cultural dimension «uncertainty avoidance» (UAI) is associated with «structuring activities» (formalisation, specialisation and standardisation) and indicates a lack of tolerance of society towards uncertainty and ambiguity.

According to the *Cultural dimensions* by Geert Hofstede [11], Ukrainian business culture (UAI = 95) and Polish business culture (UAI = 93) both have a high level of uncertainty avoidance. In such societies, a failure (breach) of numerous laws and regulations generally is not only

Tab. 1: Management system of Ukrainian and Polish companies: large power distance impact

System components	Large power distance (PDI≥50)
Organisational structure	Hierarchy - natural inequality; multilevel structure of the organisation; tendency towards centralisation
Aims	highly formalised aims; distributed by the levels of hierarchy
Authority	power base is the strength and charisma; advantage of individual power base; delegation through decentralisation
Management style	authoritarian management style and the principle of «strong hand»; significant makeup of management and control specialists; senior management is out of reach
Management decision-making	only structured problems are taken into account; priority of political decisions; difficult to find the person responsible for the decision
Motivation	big difference in privileges and salaries of different ranks employees; differentiation in payment due to direct payments and privileges; subordinates are willing to get orders; subordinates' initiative is not approved by leadership

Source: Systematised by the authors based on [4; 14-16]

Tab. 2: Management system: «individualism versus collectivism» impact

System components	Ukrainian management (collectivism)	Polish management (individualism)
Identified as part of the organisation	moral participation; affiliation; the aim is to be a member of the organisation	sensible engagement; an emphasis on individual initiative and achievements
Leadership	attention to the relationship in the structure; managing the group of individuals	
Authority	particularism; mainly status power source; relationships prevail over task fulfillment	
Management decision-making	collective decisions; coordination based on integration; focus on internal issues	
Motivation	remuneration is proportional to the achievement of the team	the reward is proportional to personal achievement
Career	the company's interests dominate own interests; group opinion is important	own interests are above the interests of the company; taking into account individual abilities

Source: Systematised by the authors based on [4; 14-16; 19]

condemned morally but also has support from the majority of citizens; everything which is not allowed in society is banned and illegal, however violations of the laws are widespread and legal nihilism is typical. This index has a significant impact on the management systems of Ukrainian and Polish companies. The peculiarities of this impact are systematised in Table 4.

A high level of uncertainty impacts the management style of those Ukrainian enterprises which transformed from government ownership or still remain governmental. They are predominantly large agrarian holdings (Astarta Agroindustrial Holding, Mironovsky Hliboproduct, etc.), and enterprises of machine and mining industries (State Enterprise «Electrotyazhmash», State Enterprise «Yuzhmash», etc.). Their organisational structures are burdened by a significant number of levels.

The examples of a high level of uncertainty in the management of Polish companies are the tendency to the centralisation and many levels in organisational structure in large companies such as ZA PUŁAWY and Polski Holding Obronny.

Tab. 3: Management system: «masculinity versus femininity» impact

System components	Ukrainian management (femininity)	Polish management (masculinity)
Aims	focus on the role; difficulty (quality) of work	Target orientation; amount of work
Leadership	ability to organise conflict-free team work, to achieve consensus, to develop fair motivation; importance of the relations	Respect for strength, fast decision-making, scale of approach, determination and rigor; appreciated expert knowledge
Management decision-making	solidarity in decision-making; decisions are more intuitive; interest in the problems the solution of which is directed to a new application; attention to the views of others	the leader independently solves problems; decisions are made on the basis of logic; interest in problems, the solution of which is aimed at obtaining a new one; attention to facts
Career	men and women want a career in various fields	men are promoted in traditionally male activities

Source: Systematised by the authors based on [4; 14-16; 19]

The cultural dimension «long term orientation versus short term orientation» (LTO) determines the necessity of long-term (or short-term) plans for the future in terms of work, life and other aspects of social life.

According to the *Cultural dimensions* by G. Hofstede [11], Ukrainian business culture (LTO = 55) has medium-term orientation. This is manifested in the desire of members of society to save and accumulate, as well as in their willingness to sacrifice current consumption in order to achieve long-term re-

sults. At the same time, Polish business culture (LTO = 38) is relatively closer to the short-term pole. It testifies to the pursuit of fast results and a high inclination to consumption, not accumulation.

The features of the impact of «long-term orientation versus short-term orientation» on the management systems in Ukraine and Poland are systematised in Table 5.

The macroeconomic indicators, which are confirmed by the correlation of this cultural dimension, form the structure of gross savings of each country [17]. Even at a level of income which is 5 times lower than that of the Poles, Ukrainians accumulate savings 4.8 times more often than the Poles.

The cultural dimension «indulgence versus restraint» (IND) shows the solution level of the problems of socialisation of children and the attitude to control impulses and desires as a result of education and socialisation. It has appeared in the methodical approach recently.

According to the *Cultural dimensions* by Geert Hofstede [11], Ukraine (IND = 18) and Poland (IND = 29) have restrained cultures, which means a relatively strong control over desires and impulses within the culture. This culture is characterised by inhibition of needs and its regulation by means of strict social norms. There is a tendency to pessimism and cynicism in such societies. Unlike indulgent cultures, restrained cultures do not pay special attention to leisure time and control the satisfaction of wants. People with this orientation think that social norms control their actions and consider the satisfaction of their wants to be a wrongdoing [11].

**4. Conclusions**

As the result of the analysis and comparison of the dimensions of Ukrainian and Polish business cultures on the basis of G. Hofstede's classification cultural factors, the following results have been obtained. Ukrainian and Polish business cultures are similar with respect to three cultural dimensions: 1) rather large power distance is common both for Poland and Ukraine, but in Ukraine this index is higher, and Poland has a medium level of power distance; 2) within the framework of cultural dimension «level of uncertainty» Ukrainian and Polish business cultures are very close, as they demonstrate very high level of uncertainty; 3) Ukrainian and Polish business cultures are restrained. The research shows cross-cultural differences in Ukrainian and Polish business cultures: Ukrainian collectivism versus Polish individualism; masculinity of Polish business culture versus femininity of Ukrainian culture; medium-term orientation of Ukrainian culture versus short-term orientation of Polish culture.

**Tab. 4: Management systems of Ukrainian and Polish companies: impact of high level of uncertainty avoidance**

System components	High level of uncertainty avoidance (UAI≥50)
Organisational structure	rigid hierarchical management structure; reference rules and procedures for doing business; priority of vertical chain of command with many levels
Aims	more expressed in quantitative terms; mainly long-term; set by leaders
Authority	subordinate to the leader; In case of disagreement with the leader's decision subordinates are silent
Management style	big difference in competence between managers and subordinates; tough management is preferred; subordinates are more dependent on the leader and make it the norm; subordinates have pessimism about the effectiveness of participation in management
Leadership	leader is liked or hated; leader tries to do business appropriately
Management decision-making	recognition of only structured problems; belief in the need to obtain a single correct answer; the panelists are expected to resolve all issues; decisions are made by consensus; the panelists who disagree bear danger
Motivation	motivation for safety, self-esteem and participation prevails; the desire to work hard and always be busy with something

Source: Systematised by the authors based on [4; 15-16; 19]

**Tab. 5: Management system: «long term orientation versus short term orientation» impact**

System components	Ukrainian management (medium-term orientation)	Polish management (short-term orientation)
Aims	rather quantitative and are set by the leader	rather qualitative and are set by managers themselves
Management decision-making	vision of problems in «others»; decisions on the basis of seniority or majority	vision of problems «in itself»; decision on the principle of minority
Authority	deficit is one of the key sources of authority	respect for rights and laws
Leadership	attitude to the leader as the «father» or patron (relations like «master-slave»)	attitude towards the superior as a partner (relations such as «subordinate chief» or «leader-follower»)

Source: Systematised by the authors based on [4; 14-16; 19]

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