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TOURISM COMPANIES: VALUES AND NORM PROFILES: THE CASE OF A RUSSIAN TOUR OPERATOR

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TOURISM COMPANIES: VALUES AND NORM PROFILES: THE CASE OF A RUSSIAN TOUR OPERATOR⁴

This paper presents the results of research into the values and norms which are adhered to a Russian tour operator, the employees' personal business values, and the level of their adherence to company regulations. The empirical data of this research includes the company's internal documents, four in-depth interviews with senior management employees, and a survey of 98 employees. The value and norm profiles of the organization and its employees were identified, as well as the areas in which they converged and diverged. This research shed some light on those values and norms which are characteristic of a tourism organization, and attempted to fill the gap in the extant knowledge on this topic in the academic literature.

JEL Classification: M54, L83, Z13

Key words: tourism industry, personal values of employees, organizational values, organizational norms, value congruence, Russia.

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INTRODUCTION

Hospitality and tourism are a rapidly growing global industry. In the past few decades, the hospitality and tourism (hereinafter H&T) industry has made a significant contribution to the global economy. Currently, the share of H&T industry in the global GDP is 9.3 (WTTC, 2013), and 8.7% of those employed in the global economy work in this sphere. The annual number of international tourists is almost 1.2 billion (Worldbank). The Russian H&T industry also demonstrates a rapid pace of development, which is accompanied by an increase in competition between the industry players.

Competitiveness of companies operating in various sectors including the H&T can be improved through management by values (MBV), which supplements or replaces the management by instructions (MBI) and management by objectives (MBO) (Dolan, & Garcia, 2002). The role of values in MBV is to regulate the employees' conduct, in order to achieve the company's goals. The results of studies which examined the relationship between employees' personal values, their perception of organizational values and the organization's performance, indicated that the convergence of an employees' personal values and the organization's values (value congruence), is beneficial both for the employee and for the organization (Hoffman, & Woehr, 2006). According to Dolan et. al (2006), values implicitly and explicitly direct the behavior of employees at all levels. The formation of organizational culture with shared values is aimed at "humanizing" a strategic vision, to ensure the survival and development of the organization in order to eventually maximize its profits and satisfy the interests of all stakeholders (Dolan, Garcia, & Richley, 2006).

It has been maintained that human resource management is a key success factor in an H&T organization (Baum, 2007; Okumus, 2004). Most research, which examines values as an element of human resource management in the H&T industry, tends to be focused on hotels and restaurants, rather than travel companies. The Russian H&T industry and the internal processes within individual companies remain a new and relatively understudied area of research, and research focused on understanding the values of travel companies which operate in Russia has hardly ever been conducted. It is this gap that this paper intends to attempt to fill.

This paper highlights the results of studying the values and the norm profile of a Russian tour operator and its employees, which was conducted in the winter-spring of 2014. The study sought to identify those organizational values which were congruent and divergent with employees' personal values, as well as analyzing to what extent the rules and norms of the organization are being complied with.

THE RUSSIAN HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM INDUSTRY

The socio-economic changes that have occurred in Russia over the past decades had a profound effect on the H&T industry. In 2012, the H&T industry's contribution to the Russian GDP was around 2.5%, and the number of people employed in the tourism industry exceeded 1 million (Federal State Statistics Service).

The number of Russian tourists served by travel agencies increased from 5,075,000 in 2005 to 9,179,000 in 2012. The total number of trips made by Russian citizens to non-CIS countries increased from 6,405,000 to 14,816,000 over the same period (Federal State Statistics Service). According to expert estimates of domestic tourism, around 30% of Russians spend their holidays within the country, while only 5% go abroad annually (AIF). Therefore, domestic tourism is the only holiday option for the majority of Russians. However, the flow of people coming into the country is several times smaller than the outbound flow, and shows virtually no positive trend. The number of international tourist trips to Russia in 2005 and 2012 was 2,251,000 and 2,430,000 respectively (Federal State Statistics Service). According to the Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI) presented at the World Economic Forum, Russia holds 63th place out of the 140 countries listed (WEForum). As a result, the data indicated above demonstrates that Russia is more of a generator of international tourism flows, than a recipient.

Despite this, although the H&T industry has not traditionally been a flagship of the Russian economy, since last two decades it has nonetheless demonstrated quite a high rate of growth.

The most important driving forces of H&T industry development in Russia are predominantly in outbound tourism, which includes (Furmanov, Balaeva, & Predvoditeleva, 2012):

- Government's support for tourism businesses (primarily a law which was introduced on "The Fundamental Principles of Tourist Activities in the Russian Federation")
- the increasing income of Russian households, particularly in large cities
- visa-free regimes or visa facilitation policies with a number of other states
- people's desire to travel as an element of lifestyle
- foreign tour operators and international hotel chains which have gained access to the Russian market
- development of related and supporting industries, such as ICT, rail and air communication, and the financial sector

There are also factors which constrain the Russian H&T industry's development, such as (Efremova, 2010; Ovcharov, 2012; Chudnovsky, Zhukova, & Kormishova, 2014):

- the lack of an integrated approach to the country as a whole and its individual regions as tourist destinations
- weak promotion strategies for Russian tourism products, including promotion on the international market
- a lack of up-to-date accommodation designed for mass tourism
- an underdeveloped high-standards rail and road transport infrastructure, particularly in the eastern part of the country
- the insufficient development of seaports
- the relatively low quality of airlines (aside from the largest national airlines), and a lack of service in lower class airports (aside from the 15-20 largest airport hubs)
- the complicated entry procedures for foreign citizens.

One of the most serious obstacles to further development of the tourism industry in Russia is the human resources and management quality. The development of tourism is inextricably tied to increasing staff numbers in tourism companies. The amount of employees at Russian tourism companies, including part-time employees and legal contractors, increased from 39,700 to 46,700 people from 2009 to 2012 (Federal Agency for Tourism).

The Russian tourism industry formed at a time when the Russian job market was undergoing immense structural changes. Specialists hoping to leave economic sectors which have been hit hardest by the crisis of the late 1980s and early 1990s, as well as university graduates looking for work, found employment in the tourism industry, which at that time was a brand new concept. Therefore, the "oldest" employees in the tourism industry today lack a professional education, and managers typically do not have a degree in economics or management.

Since a significant part of tourism companies' operating costs is the cost of personnel, the issue of qualified staff and effective human resource management in the Russian tourism business is becoming more important and salient.

ORGANIZATIONAL RESEARCH IN THE HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM INDUSTRY

Companies in the H&T industry belong to the service sector, and their work has been traditionally seen as part of this research direction. Most Service Management theories are based on the assumption of the specificity of the service process and the service itself as a result of organizational activity. Various authors (Zeithaml, Bitner, & Gremler, 1996; Kurtz & Clow, 1997) have identified the service characteristics. The most widely cited ones were pointed out by

Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985): intangibility, inseparability (simultaneous delivery and consumption of services), heterogeneity and perishability (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1985). These characteristics are significant to various degrees for different types of service activities, but all service organizations have one thing in common - the interaction between the customer-contact employees and customers, or service encounters (Bitner, 1990; Czepiel, Solomon, & Surprenant, 1985; Lewis & Entwistle, 1990).

In the literature, there is a general consensus that the role that employees play in providing services can be defined as crucial for a service organization, both at a strategic and operational level. The decisive role that employees play in a service organization's activities is reflected in a number of models. According to the Gap model, front office personnel play an important role in ensuring service quality (Parasuraman et al., 1985). Another well-known model of Service Management, the Service Profit Chain Model (Heskett, Jones, Loveman, Sasser, & Schelsinger, 1994) reflects the relationships between profitability, customer loyalty and employee satisfaction, loyalty, and productivity. Moreover, the key role of service employees in providing services is noted in service recovery and service guarantees, in the service triangle model (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010), and in the service workers empowerment. These and other models, which were originally developed for service organizations in a general sense, have been repeatedly used in research within various service sectors, including the H&T industry (Jeong & Oh, 1998; Huang & Rundle-Thiele, 2014; Cohen & Olsen, 2013).

In academic and business literature, there is an established opinion that effective Human Resource Management (HRM) practices largely determine the success of an organization within the H&T industry: *"The treatment and management of the employees should be a crucial concern for managers in the tourism and hospitality industry"* (Kusluvan, Kusluvan, Ilhan, & Buyruk, 2010, p. 173). A large body of work on HRM in the H&T industry is dedicated to the study of organizational culture. Various publications consider the role and place of organizational values in shaping and changing the H&T industry's company organizational culture. For instance, Kusluvan and Karamustafa (2003) propose a model to change the H&T company's organizational culture. The model assumes that if the existing organizational culture does not match its strategy, mission and goals, then the company should focus on creating new values, employee behavior and attitudes. In their paper analyzing the organizational culture at the Regent Hotel, Kemp and Dwyer, (2001) noted that *"the ... culture is based on `soft' control. This is a much more subtle and potentially more powerful means of influencing behaviour, through shaping the norms, values, symbols and beliefs that managers and hotel staff use in making day-to-day decisions"* (Kemp & Dwyer, 2001, p. 89). Another study, which focused on Hong Kong food service outlets, found that in spite of the values declared by the company's

management, and the employees' personal characteristics, cultural values influenced service predisposition through specific job attitudes (Johns, Chan, & Yeung, 2003).

The study of literature on the subject of organizational culture and values in H&T companies allows us to suggest that the hotel and restaurant sectors have been examined more extensively, while travel companies are rarer objects of study. Studies related to the activities of travel companies and their internal processes and in particular, the use of management by values, have not yet been adequately addressed in the existing academic literature.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Despite the widespread use of the term "values" in scientific literature, there is no unified definition of this concept (Kilmann, 1981; Clare & Sanford, 1979; Rokeach, 1973). Scientists attribute values to one's beliefs (Rokeach, 1973), but also needs and goals (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1990).

Most researchers, however, agree that values are a set of standards or criteria for selecting goals or courses of action. In a broad sense, values are beliefs about the goals which should be pursued and how to implement them, which are shared by all people. Rokeach's theory, which we follow in this study, defines values as a form of beliefs and life guidelines that define behavioral forms, a desired state of being and way of life (Rokeach, 1973).

Whilst there are several approaches to the definition of "values", there are also many classifications of values on different criteria. Classification by subject - individual, group, organization, society - is the starting point for our research, which focuses on personal values associated with employees' work behavior in the organization, and the organization's values. It is worth noting that researchers of work values have not been able to reach a consensus on the definition. For instance, personal work values can be associated with an attitude to work (Magun, 1996), or with behavior in the workplace and overall job satisfaction (Locke, 1976). To demonstrate the cross-section of work values which are associated with the employees' behavior not only in the workplace but also in the organization as a whole, we introduced the concept of business values.

We consider business values to be those principles and beliefs which determine an employee's behavior in the organization, in a given situation that they face while carrying out their daily job functions.

There is generally no significant difference between the concepts of "organizational" and "corporate" values in the literature, although we believe that small differences do exist. For example, corporate values are mostly understood as formal values which are declared by the

management and used as a management tool (Grof, 2001), while organizational values are sometimes understood as informal norms which are inherent within the organization as a social system (Argandoña, 2003). It should be noted in advance that in the organization we studied there are no stated values, and formal values are not used as a management tool. Therefore this paper uses the “organizational values” term.

Organizational values are defined as the principles and standards that guide employees in decision making and prioritizing their actions in the organization (Tomsen, 2003; Van der Wal & Hubersts, 2007). Organizational values reflect employees’ beliefs and understandings of organization’s ends and means (Reino & Vadi, 2010). Some authors argue that organizational values should reflect the collective values of all employees, whilst also taking into account their personal values (Jaffe & Scott, 1998; Sawey, 2002; Peat, 2003). Organizational values are therefore often defined as “shared values” (Chatman, 1991).

In our research, we relied on the definition of organizational values as approved and desired goals which determine the organization’s general direction, principles and methods of action, such as the rules that regulate the decision-making processes and the behavior of employees in the organization (Edwards & Cable, 2009).

If there are no officially approved values in the organization, it can be expected that its various departments will implement different sets of values. In this case, the researchers’ task is to identify the priority values that are "attributed" to the organization by the employees. We defined this set of priority organizational values as the "values profile of the organization." By this we mean a set of priority personal values which serve as principles of the employees’ behavior within the organization.

There are many studies focused on understanding the relationship between personal and organizational values, which have recognized their close relationship and interaction with one another. The relationship between personal and organizational values is usually investigated in terms of congruence or the sharing of common values by individuals and groups. This interest in the value congruence in organizational studies is due to the fact that it is a convergence of values, as noted above, that leads to positive results for the organization. No less interesting is the divergence of values, as the knowledge of a potential conflict of values allows people to work to improve the organizational and human resource management systems.

Knoppen et al. understand the congruence of values to be values which are shared by individuals and a group at a certain moment in time (Knoppen, Dolan, Díez-Pinol & Bell, 2006). We distinguish different types of congruence: the congruence of values between individuals (e.g. superior and subordinate), the congruence of values between an individual and the organization, and the congruence of all the employees’ values, and the organization.

Research on value congruence often focuses on the degree of congruence between employees' personal values, and organizational values (Kristof, 1996).

Researchers have implemented different methods to measure value congruence. One of the simplest methods is to ask respondents to rate their own opinion on the congruence of their values and the organization's values (Posner, Kouzes, & Schmidt, 1985).

Chatman (1991) proposed a method for measuring the value congruence by assessing values on standard scales, in order to minimize the researcher's influence or bias (Chatman, 1991). Using this method, Chatman studied the congruence of employee's and the company's work values. The study found that employees who had a high level of value congruence quickly fitted into the organization and were more satisfied and intended to continue working for the organization longer than employees with lower levels of value congruence.

Different studies have also shown a positive association between value congruence and total job satisfaction (Bretz & Judge, 1994) and career (Aryee, Chay, & Tan, 1994).

Value congruence is an important parameter which can be used to assess the compatibility of an employee and their organization. Using the ASA (Attraction - Selection - Attrition) model, researchers have noted several significant and interesting findings on value congruence (Schneider, Goldstein, & Smith, 1995). Specifically, they found that people tend to choose to work for organizations that have corporate values similar to their own work values. In turn, companies tend to hire employees whose values coincide with those of the corporation (Judge & Cable, 1997). Moreover, employees tend to leave those organizations whose values do not match their personal work ones (Cable & Parsons, 2001). At the same time, if an employee remains in an organization whose values do not coincide with the company's values, they are more likely to become dissatisfied with their job (Chatman & Jehn, 1994).

We used the conceptual approach proposed by Naumova (2005), a Russian sociologist, as the foundation for constructing our theoretical model, in order to examine the social organization of an industrial enterprise. This approach describes the organization in terms of values and norms.

Naumova defined values as "*legal, regulatory approved, desired goals that determine the general direction and ultimate aims of a subject of social action's activities...*" (Naumova, 2005, p. 400). Values should be distinguished from norms, which are "*rules, spontaneously developed or installed in any way, behavioral standards which impersonally prescribe types of behavior, legal, approved, expected ways to achieve goals, patterns or rules of "normal" behavior for a given organization*" (Naumova, 2005, p. 402).

It is assumed that a person working in the organization is able to internalize these values and norms. According to Naumova, in order to study the involvement of an employee in

organizational processes, the degree to which they accept the values and norms of the organization (value congruence) must be determined. At an empirical level, this means examining the degree of congruence between organizational and personal values, as well as the congruence of organizational norms, with the norms that are accepted by the individual.

To additionally compare the organization's and the employees' personal values, Parsons' conceptual approach was used (Parsons, 1951), as it allows us to associate value orientations with the forms of activities and behavior demonstrated by members of the organization. During an interaction, the actors choose a way to of orientation to another, and this choice is determined by value orientations - "pattern variables". Parsons identified five pairs of alternatives:

1. affectivity - affective neutrality,
2. self-orientation – collectivity-orientation
3. universalism - particularism
4. ascription - achievement
5. specificity - diffuseness

In this study, the expression of these pattern variables has been considered at two levels – personal and organizational. On a personal level, both managers' values, which shape the system of company management, and the values of ordinary employees, were analyzed.

Comparing two types of social systems will allow us to determine to what extent the employees' value orientations (ordinary employees and managers on a personal level) correspond to the value orientations which are prevalent in the organization.

METHODOLOGY

The object of this study was Russian Tour operator X, which was founded about 20 years ago and whose main activity is outbound tourism. The Russian outbound tourism market is characterized by the presence of five major players, which together take in a substantial share of the Russian tourism industry, and actually determine the existing rules of the game. Tour operator X does not belong to the top five leaders of the industry, but it does however demonstrate sustainable growth, offering tours to 40 countries. The number of tourists served by this company in 2013 was significantly less than that of the top five market leaders. Nevertheless, the market share of Tour operator X in one of the traditional Russian tourists' destinations (country N) is comparable to those of the market leaders. From the overall outbound flow of Russian tourists who traveled to this country through all Russian travel companies, the share of X's customers is about 30%. These high rates are also due to a sufficiently wide geographical spread, since tour operator X has its own charter chains in around 15 Russian cities.

The total number of employees of X is 274 (89 men and 185 women).

More than one third of all employees were surveyed. The ratio of men to women in the sample corresponds to the staff structure by gender. Male employees represent slightly more than 34% of the sample and female employees represent 66%. It should be noted that this is quite typical of the tourism industry, where, as a rule, women tend to significantly outnumber men.

The age of the sample can be characterized by equal shares (around 40%) of employees under the age of 25, and from 26 to 30. A smaller part of respondents (20%) are over the age of 31.

Finally, the aggregate sample was split into 2 groups according to the respondents' position: ordinary employees make up almost two thirds (64.5%) of respondents, while managers made up one third (35.5%).⁵

Data were collected through both qualitative and quantitative methods. Four senior managers were interviewed; 11 company's standards and administrative documents were analyzed and 98 employees were surveyed.

Most of the questionnaires were completed by employees at their workplace. Employees who worked in regions which received the questionnaire via email were given the researchers' email address to send us the completed questionnaires.

The organization's and the employees' value profiles were determined based on the employees' survey. It should be noted that in this study, the data reflects how employees see the organization's business values. The study did not aim to determine whether these values truly reflected the tourism company's actual goals, which were the basis of managerial decisions. The objective of this research was to see how these values are perceived, imagined, and interpreted by all the employees as well as by specific groups of personnel, such as managers or other employees.

The congruence and divergence of values was determined by comparing the organization's values and employees' business values priorities from a value list, which was composed based on the results of research conducted by the authors of this paper (Kabalina & Cheglakova, 2013; Kabalina & Reshetnikova, 2014). The original list included the most typical values that were publicly voiced by the leading Russian companies. It was subsequently revised based on the results of studying Russian managers' personal values, using the value orientation diagnostic methodology (Rokeach, 1973). The value list was then revised, based on an analysis of organization X's documents, and interviews with its management.

An analysis of the regulatory documents and the results of the in-depth interviews with senior managers also allowed us to create an organizational norm profile. In order to identify an

⁵ The sample includes managers of middle and lower levels

employee's norm profile, we included various questions on the employees' self-assessment of their attitudes to the organization's norms and regulations in the questionnaire.

RESULTS

The research findings are presented as follows: first, in-depth interviews with the company's senior management allowed us to identify the organization's business processes and its intrinsic values. Second, the quantitative data analysis of the employees' and managers' survey identified and allowed us to compare the value profiles of the organization and all its employees. Third, an analysis of Tour operator X's internal regulatory documents was conducted to describe the regulatory requirements set out by the organization, and the employees' self-assessment on their adherence to the organization's norms were also estimated.

Tour operator X and its organizational values through the eyes of company managers

The analysis of interviews with the company's senior managers allowed us to get an idea of Tour operator X's internal business processes, which, are aimed at meeting the company's aims and determining the employees' behavioral framework.

The senior management sees the company as a factory, and they describe their business processes in technological terms, like a conveyer belt. Particular attention is therefore placed on providing a seamless service production (servuction) process. It assumes strict discipline, adherence to the developed standards and an employee's readiness to "throw themselves to the wolves" in case something goes wrong (which it inevitably does in a tourism company, often through the fault of outside partners and counteragents), and a willingness to work overtime in order to meet the company's goals and achieve client satisfaction.

All new employees undergo the "circle": reservations, information, and visa departments, in order to fully understand how the organization works. This approach underlines once again the similarity between organizing business processes and business technology with conveyer belt production lines.

One of the main goals of the employees' adaptation process is not only to learn how to use the technology, but also to learn the values that, as the results of the interviews show, are not officially written out or even stated in any of the company's documents. At the same time, the senior managers noted that, in their opinion, these values are set out at an organizational level, and are transmitted at various corporate events, which is recognized by the employees. The company's key value was team spirit, a concept mentioned by all the senior managers

interviewed. It is understood as a value shared by all company employees, who consider the benefits to the organization first and foremost, putting its interests above their personal ones. These employees are considered to be the most valuable. Senior managers placed management of all levels in this employee category.

According to the respondents, one of the most significant values in the organization is readiness for development and creativity. Readiness for development (and learning) is important because the dramatic growth of the Russian tourism business requires organizational change and innovations. The organization's learning process, particularly involving new tourism products, is constant. The question of whether this process includes all employees and therefore, whether this value can be adopted by everyone, or just those who work with new products, remains currently unanswered.

The senior management mentioned that being results-orientated and reaching set goals are also important values for the organization. However, they do emphasize the fact that goals are set by the company management, and regular employees do not participate in the goal-setting process, but work on the tasks set.

Respondents' answers to questions about their ideas of what the organization's values are, and their role in the management process, show that the senior managers see values primarily as an instrument of reaching the organization's goals.

Value profiles of the organization and its employees

An analysis of the survey results should begin with two key questions, which were posed to employees. They were asked to identify the values that, in their opinion, are adopted by the organization they work for, as well as to evaluate their values (or principles) of business conduct. Respondents could select up to seven values from a list of 24.

Employees chose the following key organizational values:

- Being results-oriented (75.3%)
- Maintaining the company's reputation (42.3%)
- Teamwork (41%)
- Openness to change (37.1%)
- Professionalism (37.1%)
- Customer orientation (35.1%)
- Training, acquiring new knowledge (35.1%)

Next, from the same list of values, respondents were asked to select those that were relevant to them personally, being their own principles of workplace behavior. The results of this showed a somewhat different picture:

- Decent pay and working conditions (61%)
- Professionalism (57.7%)
- Reliability, responsibility (56.7%)
- Training, acquiring new knowledge (55.7%)
- Being result-oriented (47.4%)
- Respecting the rights and interests of employees (39.2%)
- Creative approach (37.1%)

A comparison of personal and organizational values is presented in Figure 1.

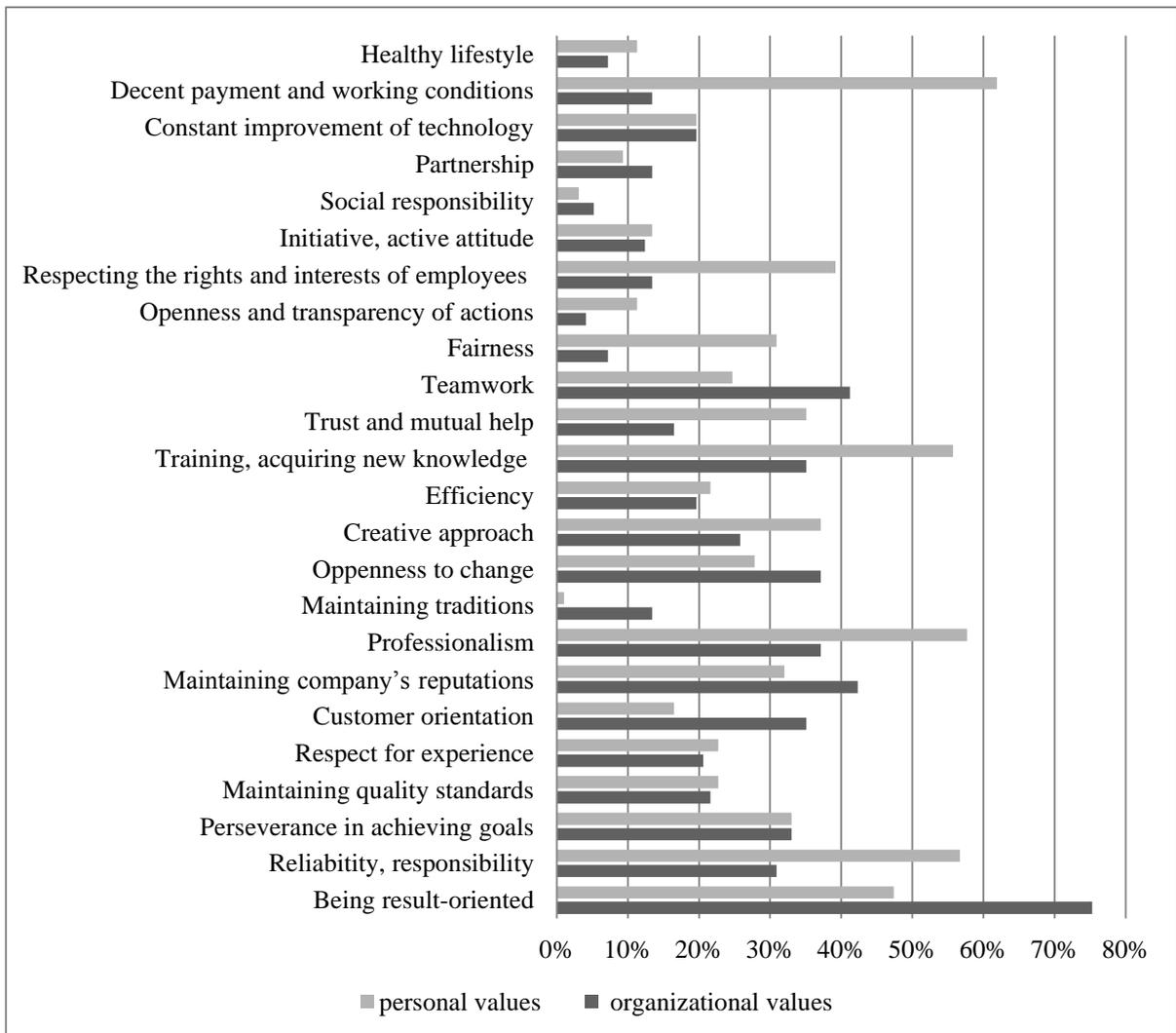


Fig. 1. Personal and organizational values

As seen in Figure 1, there are significant differences in employees' assessments of the importance of particular values, depending on their position in the company. For example, while 75% of employees see "Being results-oriented" as their main organizational value, less than half the respondents selected it as their personal value (47.7%). It is interesting to note that an

analysis of the two sub-samples - employees and managers - shows that 80% of employees see this as a key value for the organization, but only 66.7% of managers feel the same way.

A number of organizational values (teamwork, maintaining company's reputation, customer orientation) are not among the most important values for the organization's staff, and are not followed by the employees as principles which guide their business conduct. The staff's level of value internalization seems rather low, and it could be assumed that they are no more than superficially aware of the presence of these values in the organization. However, the estimations of ordinary employees and managers differ only slightly.

Conversely, we can see that there are several values which are significant for staff, such as a decent wage and working conditions; personal development (professionalism and training); and respect for employees' rights and interests, which are weakly recognized at an organizational level. In general, employees do not see that these values are crucial for the organization. This is confirmed by the fact that, in the eyes of the managers, these values seem much less significant than from the ordinary employees' perspective. For example, while 40% of ordinary employees consider professionalism to be a value which should be inherent to the company, only 27.3% of the managers agree. While 18.3% of ordinary employees believe that the organization considers decent wages and working conditions and respect for an employees' rights and interests to be an important value, only 3% and 6.1% of the managers respectively support these ideas.

Therefore, these discrepancies suggest that, respondents think that the company puts its own interests first, and pays much less attention to the interests of its employees. It should be noted that a similar pattern was discovered in our previous study, where a survey was conducted which involved managers from different organizations (Kabalina & Reshetnikova, 2014).

When comparing the personal values of both the management and the employees of the company, we mostly found no significant differences in respondents' answers (Figure 2).

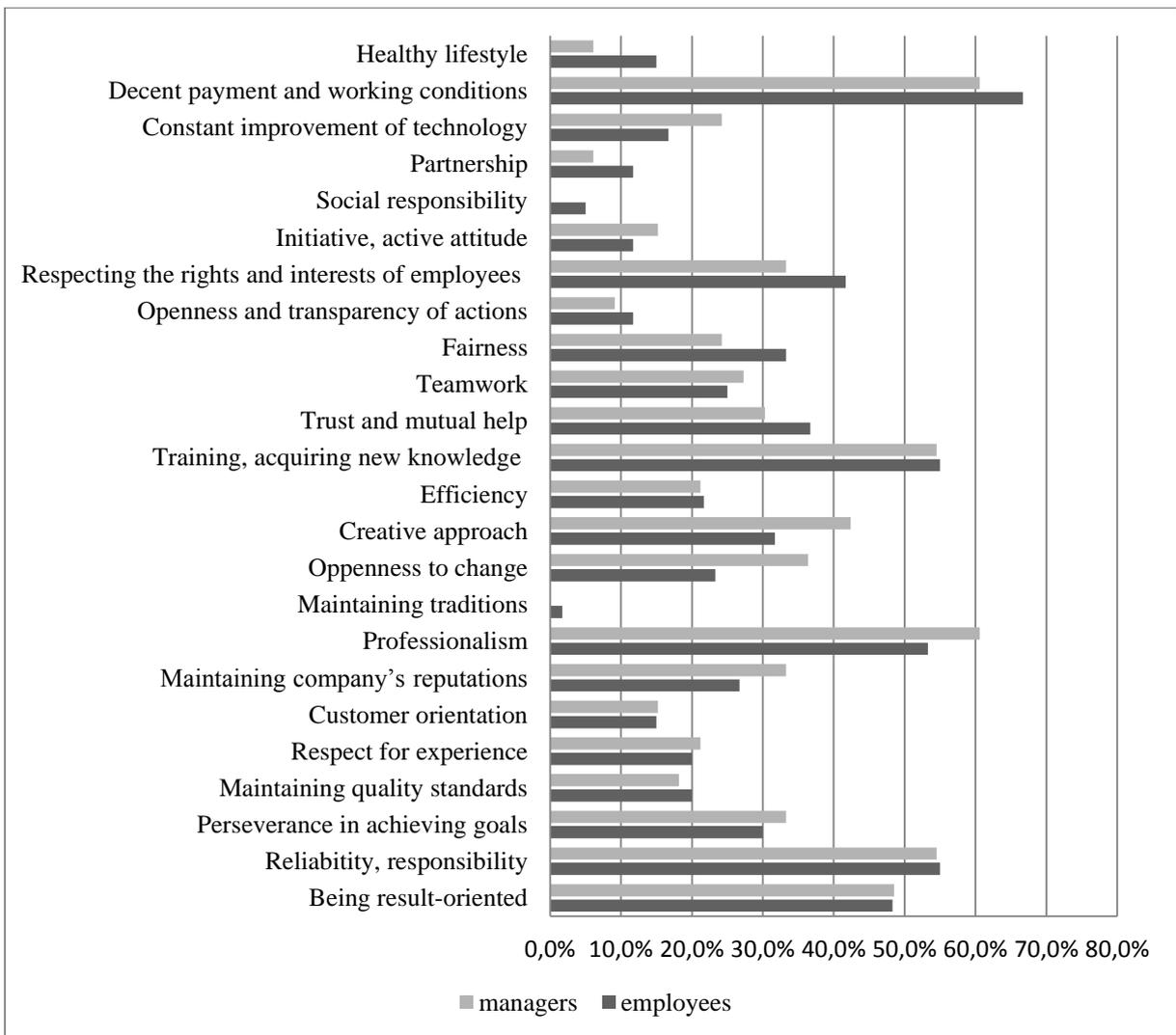


Fig. 2. Personal values of manages and ordinary employees

However, managers are slightly more focused on professionalism (60.6% vs. 53.3%) and creativity (42.4% vs. 31.7%) than ordinary employees, also showing more openness to change (36.4% vs. 23.3%). However, respect for the rights and interests of employees is less significant for them (33.3% vs. 41.7%) as is fairness (24.2% vs. 33.3%). It is also interesting to note that none of the managers chose social responsibility or preserving and maintaining traditions as one of the principles of their business conduct.

To clarify the characteristics of the organization in terms of its subjective orientations, an assessment was conducted based on Parsons' classification. On the basis of his theoretical framework two questions were formulated for each pair of pattern variables, which characterize the organizational principles of the company where the respondent works. For each dichotomy, points are defined on each of the pattern values in accordance with the choices: "Not at all" or "To a very great extent" – 2, "somewhat" – 1, "don't know" - 0.

Similar questions were formulated with for the principles of business conduct which the staff adhere to and implement (or try to implement) in their daily activities.

The results of the subjective orientations analysis are shown in Figure 3.

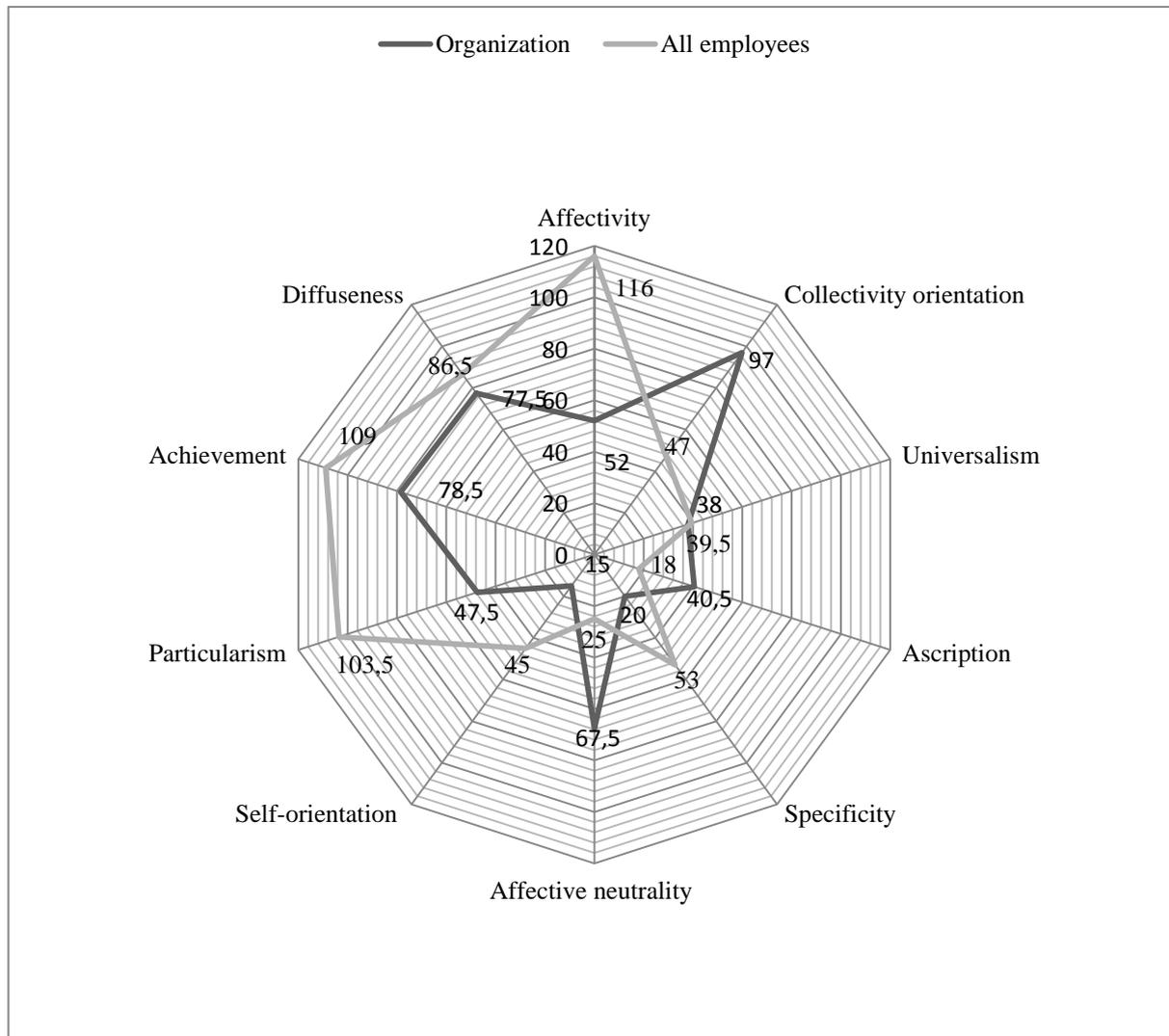


Fig. 3. Organization and employees values profiles

Here each dichotomy is considered in more detail.

1. Affectivity vs. affective neutrality

The results for the organization (accumulated points) show that this pair demonstrates no explicit expression of either characteristic: affectivity - 52 points, affective neutrality - 67.5 points, but the organization is still slightly more prone to regulations. The strict adherence to the organization's rules and standards and the maintenance of discipline, which characterizes affective neutrality, co-exists with the manifestation of initiative by the employees, which is characteristic of the degree of affectivity within an organization. It can be assumed that it is possible to differentiate between places where you take the initiative and highly regulated places in the company.

We observe a significant expression of affective behavior (116 points) amongst the employees, compared with affective neutrality (25 points). Employees are focused on taking the initiative, but this is contrary to the organization's basic value orientations.

The survey demonstrated that 46% of respondents believe that it is important to try and meet the company's requirements, but that sometimes the particular working situations necessitate ignoring them. Another 19% believe that it is virtually impossible to follow all the rules and regulations. Comparing these data, we find that while the organizational rules exist and are acknowledged in the company, most of the employees (65%) consider it possible to deviate from these regulations at some point.

Slightly more than half of the respondents (66%) believe that taking the initiative is encouraged in the company. A slightly lower percentage of respondents (58%) argued that taking the initiative should be mandatory for all employees.

2. Self-orientation vs. collectivity orientation

The organization is predominantly team-oriented (97 points), with a tendency towards teamwork, mutual trust and support. Self-orientation in a form of competition, which is dominant among employees and departments of the company, is much less pronounced at the organizational level (15 points). Employees still tend to care more about their own interests, regardless of how they relate to the interests of the team (47 points), though collectivity orientation does not lag far behind (45 points).

Less than half of the respondents (45%) believe that they are equally comfortable working in team and independently. However, almost a third (28%), is more likely to prefer to work independently, consulting their colleagues and managers only when necessary.

The employees' views on the need for competition between colleagues are somewhat contradictory: 46.3% of respondents believe that competition can be useful, as it provides an incentive to achieve new goals. 44% of respondents think that it can either lead to problems within the organization, or is simply unacceptable because it creates conflicts between employees.

3. Universalism vs. particularism

While universalism is characterized as the use of uniform criteria and a fair performance appraisal, particularism means a differentiated approach to employee and departmental evaluation. We can interpret this as an elaboration of the employees' evaluation system and departments that take different criteria into account. A similarity can be observed in the estimates of the degree of employees' and departments' universalism: 39.5 points for the employees and 38 points for the organization. However, the focus on differentiation in the employees' estimates

is still higher: on the particularism axis, the employees scored 103.5 points, while the organization achieved 47.5 points.

It can be assumed that the company seeks to develop universal approaches to performance appraisal, but that the employees do not see fairness in these criteria, assessing them as a form of "egalitarianism". Hence, their focus is on a more differentiated approach; only two thirds of employees were able to estimate the use of common criteria for the evaluation of employees in the company, while 45% believe that the work is assessed fairly, and the approaches are unified. However, half the respondents (51%) believe that there is a differentiation in performance appraisal, meaning that there are quite conflicting ideas about how performance appraisal is implemented in the company. This is confirmed by the fact that about 30% of respondents found it difficult to answer these questions.

One third (34%) of employees feel that the assessment criteria cannot be the same for everyone. The rest of the employees are more or less prone to develop unified criteria for evaluation. Interestingly, if a colleague were to make a mistake, more than half of the employees (53%) stated that they would try to correct it together, without it bringing to the attention of managers. Another 22% would think about the possible formal course that this situation could take, but only after having a conversation with the colleague who made the error. Therefore, in practice, employees still display an orientation towards individualism.

4. Ascription vs. achievement

The findings show a clear orientation towards the effectiveness of activities, and the employees are even more focused on achievement-oriented criteria than the organization itself is (109 points for employees and 78.5 points for the company). Attributiveness as a characteristic of an ascriptive approach gained significantly lower scores for the organization (40.5 points), and even lower scores for the employees (total 18 points). However, just over half of the respondents (58%) still believe that the organization pays great attention to personal ties as the main factor in a person and the organization's success. Still, the score for effective performance is higher: 87% of respondents understand that the organization focuses mainly on performance.

A person's professional qualities such as competence, personal development are evidently more important for employees than personal ties and recommendations of friends are.

5. Specificity vs. diffuseness

The organization shows a clear tendency towards diffuseness, with 77.5 points vs. 20 points on a specificity axis (Fig. 3) that characterizes a person's desire to separate personal and business matters. The employees reveal a tendency to form friendships within the team (86.5 points) to a greater extent than the company does, but they still try to protect a part of their personal space (53 points on a specificity axis).

Around 66% of the respondents perceive the organization as an environment where friendly informal relations are established and actively developed. Half of the employees (50%) regard the organization as a family.

Employees also tend to establish informal relationships with colleagues, where 31.7% think that this helps them to resolve their work-tasks and problems quickly and efficiently, and where 30.5% say that it makes them feel more comfortable at work.

In general, characterizing the organizational values as they are seen by the employees, and the guidelines they use, it can be stated that the shape of the organization's and employees' values profiles have a common focus. There has been a certain mismatch on the axes of diffuseness, achievement orientation and particularism. The organizational profile has shifted somewhat towards the center of the diagram and the zero values on the scales. On the one hand, this could indicate the employees' low awareness of the company's value orientations, or on the other hand, that those orientations may be conflicting.

No distinct contradictions are observed between them, except for the first dichotomy, affectivity vs. affective neutrality. This contradiction could be due to a lack of balanced management initiative, and a lack of employee discipline in the organization. Results from other studies indicate that, within the last few years, the company focused more specifically on regulating its activities. At the same time, given the staff's characteristics (most employees are quite young, active and focused on professional development), additional efforts are required to manage these employees' initiative. Moreover, the employees listed "collectivity orientation" as the company's value orientation, but do not yet adequately share this value, despite the results indicating that they were aware of it.

Organizational norms and normative behavior of employees

Formal organizational norms have been studied based on the analysis of the company's regulatory and administrative documents. An analysis of the internal documents shows that the company management puts particular emphasis on efficiency and high-performing discipline.

Instructions mainly regulate three processes:

- communications (with the customer, between employees, with the management, as well as holding meetings)
- marketing (exhibitions, negotiations, sales, promotions, webinars for travel agencies)
- everyday life in the office.

According to the documents, workers' activities are strictly regulated, with three groups of employees who are assigned certain roles. The management observes the level of discipline

and the business results; experienced employees know and follow the rules and newcomers must prove themselves, and adhere to the current rules and regulations.

Therefore, the boundaries of employees' independence, in terms of the core business and communications (internal and external), and in domestic matters, are clearly laid out in the instructions. With the current detailed regulations, which are understood by everyone clearly identified, there is practically no place for an employee to promote their own independence.

To determine the degree of compliance with the current standards and requirements, the questionnaire included a number of questions which were aimed at respondents' estimations of their own behavior in the organization⁶. There are 12 indicators which were used to describe employees' normative behavior in the organization:

1. I comply with all requirements, norms and regulations that exist in the organization
2. I perform all functions as assigned to me according to my position
3. I perform all the tasks that are assigned to me (regardless of whether they fall within the scope of my functions)
4. I fulfill all my work in a timely manner and according to the required level of quality
5. I provide assistance to team members (of my department) when they need help (advice or consulting)
6. I help other employees if it is required to achieve the objectives of the whole department
7. I help other members of the department to carry out their functions
8. I help new members of the department to fit in
9. I make suggestions to improve the internal regulations and rules
10. I make suggestions for improving the efficiency of work
11. I make suggestions to improve the atmosphere within the team
12. I am submitting proposals on streamlining the work and using new methods

The five-point self-esteem scale varies from a minimum of 1 point "for me it is absolutely not the case" to a maximum of 5 points; "this is exactly what is typical for me". The intermediate values are worded as follows: "I do not do it often because I do not consider it my task" (2 points), "occasionally" (3 points), "I mostly do it, but it does not always work" (4 points). The "ideal norm profile" consists of a maximum value of 5 points.

⁶ For the development of this block of questions we used a questionnaire, which was kindly provided by V.V.Kuskova Associate Professor at HSE. This questionnaire is designed for managers to assess the behaviour of their subordinates, but due to the difficulties encountered in the organization of the survey was transformed into a self-assessment questionnaire for employees.

If we consider the generalized norm profile of all employees (see Figure 4), half of the indicators (1-6) are close to the ideal profile. The values for two indicators are particularly high (4.7):

- performing the functions assigned according to one's position
- assisting team members.

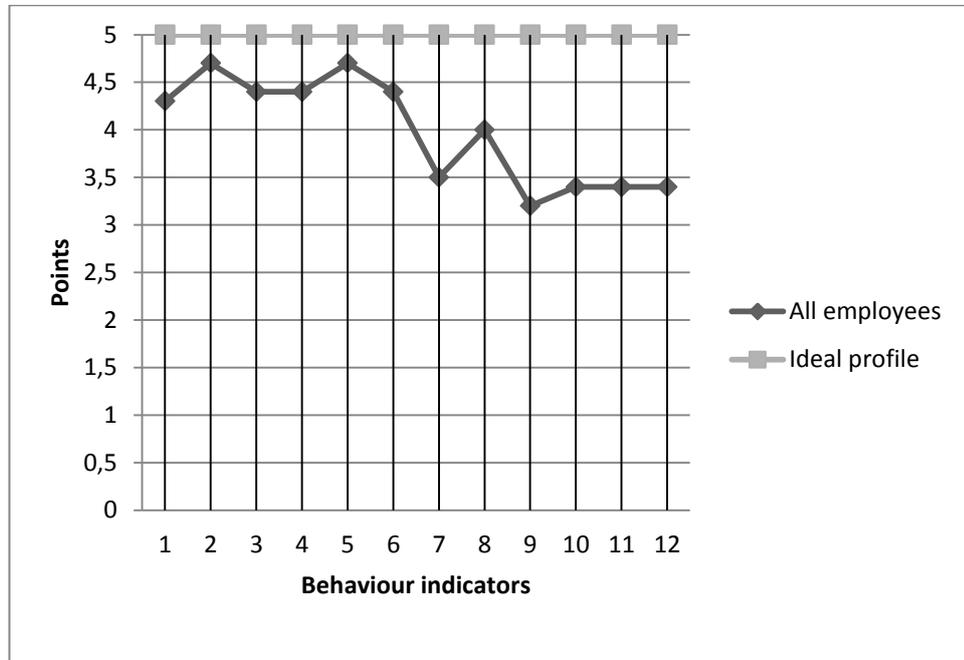


Fig. 4. Generalized norm profile of all employees

A number of indicators have average values (between 3 and 4 points). These are indicators which are related to employees taking the initiative and making various suggestions as to how to improve the organization's work, and the interaction between employees. These indicators may show that taking the initiative is not mandatory for the company's employees. If we return to the aforementioned dichotomy "affectivity vs. affective neutrality", those findings confirm once again that there is no support for the initiative employees that could show (and would like to show, judging by their value orientations) in the company, neither at the value level, nor at the normative level. However, this is not necessary, since at the normative level discipline and compliance with standards is encouraged, but taking the initiative is not.

The norm profiles of ordinary workers and managers are summarized in Figure 5.

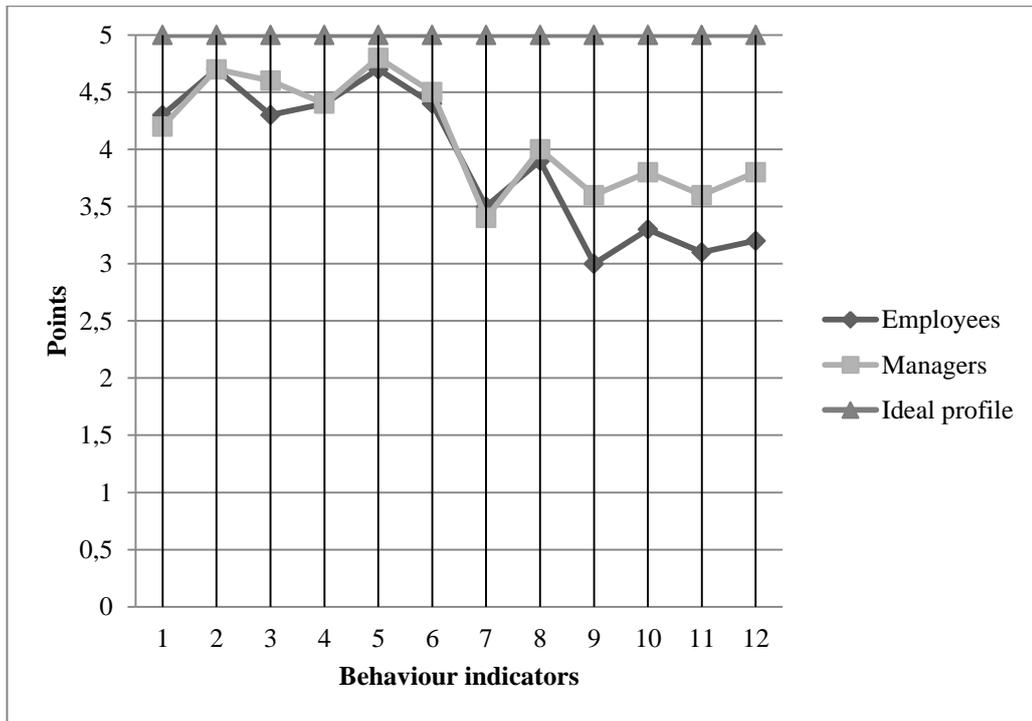


Fig. 5. Norm profiles of ordinary employees and managers

Some of the estimates between managers and employees are rather close, such as compliance with organizational standards and requirements, quality performance of functions, and assisting colleagues within the department. For other indicators, they differ quite significantly, particularly making suggestions to improve organizational processes. It is also possible to observe a general trend, where both managers and employees highly appreciate the way they carry out their functions, and emphasize their desire to do the job efficiently. However, we can also see that questions associated with the introduction of various suggestions as to how to improve the company scored less than 4 points. The estimates of managers of their compliance with the functions that are assigned to them by their position (4.7), and helping their direct subordinates (4.8) are close to the maximum score. The indicator associated with helping subordinates to carry out their official functions received the lowest score (3.4). Ordinary employees' maximum values are close to those of the management, but all those results linked to taking the initiative and introducing suggestions for improving the company's activity are located at the middle level (around 3 points).

In general, the results of the analysis suggest that the company is mostly focused on management by instruction, where the norms are specified as prohibitions and restrictions, and not as values which encourage initiative and independence.

CONCLUSIONS

We would like to discuss the obtained results from our research conducted on Tour operator X, in comparison to the results of our previous study. Our previous research was aimed at revealing the organizational and personal values of managers working in different industries. Comparison between the two studies is correct as a similar questionnaire with a practically identical set of values (insignificant corrections to the compiled list are mentioned earlier) was used in both surveys (Kabalina & Reshetnikova, 2014). Tour operator X's value profile and the way it is perceived by its employees is not particularly different from the general value profile of Russian companies which operate in various industries (tourism companies were not included in that research study), as per the results of the survey on Russian managers. The 7 priority organizational values, selected out of 24 included in the list, were in both cases mostly the same. It was found that the most important organizational value was being results-oriented. Respondents of tourism and non-tourism companies valued maintaining the company's reputation (about 42%) and readiness to exact organizational changes (37%) to be equally important. Tour operator X's employees valued teamwork higher (41%) than managers in other fields (30%). However, the value of being "customer-oriented" was rated higher in other fields (54% of manager respondents) than in the tourism company (35%). Only one organizational value, "decent wage and working conditions", which was listed as number 7 by managers in other fields, was not marked as a priority value by the tourism company managers.

Differences between the personal business values of tourism company managers, and managers from other industries, are more pronounced. Although the list of 7 priority values compiled by both groups is similar - results-oriented, decent working conditions, professionalism - their significance differs. Managers of the tour operator most valued decent wages and working conditions, while managers from the previous study put prioritized being results-oriented. Finally, managers working in the tourism company viewed training and respecting the rights and interests of employees as two of their main business principles (these principles were not named by managers of non-tourism companies), but, such business values as teamwork, taking the initiative and readiness for change are not as important for the previous group.

The tourism company's norm profile also showed that independence and initiative are not standard requirements for employees, and the organization functions as a factory whose work is hierarchically based with clear roles assigned between managers and employees.

Russian tour operator X's value and norm profiles, as identified in this study, are consistent with conclusions drawn by a number of authors. According to Kuslivan and Karamustafa (2003), the H& T industry is not a creative, highly attractive, or a well-paid

occupation. As they state, *«in the tourism and hospitality industry, specific factors or characteristics, employment conditions and human resource practices such as low pay, labor turnover, unsocial working hours, unstable and insecure employment, ... lack of training, lack of empowerment and participation, ... lack of career development and planning, autocratic management styles and low employment satisfaction act against creating and sustaining a strong and uniform organizational culture aligned with organizational objectives»* (Kusluvan & Karamustafa, 2003, p.473).

A strong and consistent organizational culture is characterized by a high level of congruence between organizational and personal values. A comparison between the values of a tourism organization and its employees demonstrates that these values are in fact not highly congruent. Only three common values define the area of value congruence, although they all carry a different weight; being results-oriented (75.3% of respondents assign this value to the organization, which is shared by 47.3% of employees), professionalism (37.1% and 57.7% respectively) and training (35.1% and 55.7%).

For the tourism company in question, there is a divergence between organizational values and employee values. This conclusion is supported by a value profile analysis, using Parsons' methodology. The value profiles of the organization and its employees have a similar configuration, with a certain difference in diffuseness, achievement and particularism. The similarities of the value profiles concern the understanding of business relationships, which typically include informal and friendly relationships with colleagues. The overlap is consistent with the necessary universal assessment criteria for activity. Based on a number of pattern variables (affectivity — affective neutrality, collectivity orientation — self-orientation), differences in the assessment given by employees about their organization and their personal value orientation have been noted. A much lower degree of variables characterizing the organization should also be noted, which could be regarded as evidence of employees' inconsistencies in their assessment (in this case, value characteristics of the tourism company) due to their lack of information on the organizational priorities.

Our research shows that the discrepancy between organizational and personal values in the tourism company is greater than in other industries. The results demonstrate that employees are results-oriented and that they value training and acquiring new knowledge, as well as professionalism and responsibility. It is unsurprising that the greatest value is placed on decent wages and working conditions and that respect for employees' rights and interests is also amongst the priority values. The value profile of the organization is dominated by the organization's goals. Those organizational values that are linked to employees' behavior (team-work, readiness for change, customer orientation) are not shared by the employees themselves.

The interviews with the senior management demonstrate that they do not yet recognize the importance of management by values, and are unaware of the actual values that guide their employees in their business behavior within the organization.

The senior management believe that teamwork is Tour operator X's main value. Whilst managers value team-work more highly than ordinary employees, neither staff group considers this value to be a priority.

Although initiative did not make it into the employee value profile, an analysis of the data using the Parson's methodology showed that a strict adherence to rules and norms, and following discipline in the company, co-exists with employees demonstrating initiative. This may seem contradictory at first, but it can be explained by the fact that the tourism company has few positions that require a creative mind, and there are employees that follow these values. In order to test this assumption, a detailed analysis is needed of value profiles for different employee categories.

The study revealed the discrepancy between the assumptions of the senior managers on employees' business values, and the value profiles of middle and lower managers, and regular employees. This mismatch can be regarded as evidence of the tour operator's lack of attention to human resource management. Those organizational values that employees have been informed about are not fully supported by management activity in the fields of selection, qualification improvement and personnel motivation. It could be suggested that a lack of a uniform organizational culture and support for organizational values from amongst the company employees may adversely affect the organization's overall efficiency.

Regardless of the importance of these findings, the study has a number of limitations.

First of all, there are some limitations which are linked to the current state of academic literature on values in an organizational context, since there is no singular interpretation of the terminology, and there is a general dearth of research on tourism companies' internal processes.

Second, our sample size is small and consists of one organization. Therefore, all the conclusions that we reach should be verified and re-examined with a larger sample size. For further research, the tourism companies which represent a particular country/region and different employees' categories could be examined. Conducting representative research into the tourism industry would make it possible to study various value profiles, from the perspective of organizations and their employees, and comparisons between them, including front and back office employees.

Moreover, interesting comparative research could be conducted into tourism companies' value profiles when operating in different countries; or offering mass tourism vs. individual tourism services. One more research question could be the dependency of the organization's

value profile on the specifics of the industry and the national characteristics of a tourism company's management.

This study provides significant contributions to academic literature, and has implications for business practices. The results of this research provide some empirical evidence on a research problem which has thus far been insufficiently studied in the previous literature. The practical importance of our results lie in the fact that they can could contribute to the development of managerial instruments to influence an organization's staff, particularly in companies with a network structure, in order to improve the efficiency of their work.

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