

GENDER ASPECTS OF DOING BUSINESS IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES

Гендерные аспекты ведения бизнеса в разных странах

As everyone knows, the modern world is characterized by gender inequality at the same time as the growth of movements for women's rights and freedoms. The gender gap is still a big issue, and it is so serious that it's being dealt with at the state level worldwide. No country, even a developed one, has yet been able to fully eliminate elements of gender inequality. This problem can exist not only in politics, healthcare, education, science, culture, social sphere, but also in doing business. The objective of the study is to explore what are the barriers for women in business.

Out of the research by the company «Spencer Stuart», which is one of the world's leading executive search and leadership consultancies, specializing in executive directors and senior management positions, it was found that there was a decrease in the number of female directors in 2024 (42 %) compared to 2023 (46 %). This index was also lower than five years ago (it was 46 per cent then). Although a decrease is observed, the index is still higher than nine years ago, when the proportion of female directors was only 30 %. So, almost half of directors are women, although there has been a decline in the proportion of women directors.

The following will be discussed how and to what extent gender inequality manifests itself in doing business globally. In India, for example, women are more likely to face difficulties in obtaining financing and loans for business operations. In addition, it is not uncommon for women to face employment discrimination. In many ways, the gender gap was influenced by the fact that economic activity depends on the level of education of women. Historically, Indian girls did not go to school and many of them still remain illiterate. Moreover, in many countries, women are illiterate due to poor education, which sharply limits their business opportunities.

Despite efforts, progress in struggling gender inequality in Japan remains minimal. The main obstacles for women in business are lower salaries than men and a limited choice of professions. This is due to deeply rooted stereotypes among Japanese people about gender roles, ascribing women as housewives. The fact that working conditions in Japan completely do not take into account the fact that women need to combine both work and family obligations left an imprint.

In the ranking on the global gender gap index (it's made by the World Economic Forum), in 2024 Republic of Belarus took the 55th place, although in 2023 our country was on the 41th position. This can be explained by the fact that according to the criteria «Economic Participation and Opportunity» and «Health and Survival» our holds a leading

position, but by criteria «Educational Attainment» and «Political Empowerment» we are very far behind other countries.

At the moment, women are more active in holding leadership positions in Belarus. In addition, women are gradually becoming leaders in traditionally male areas, for example, in cargo transportation, industrial production. In Belarus, there is discrimination in the labour market, income inequality, as profits in the public sector are lower than in industry, and women work mostly in the public sector. In our country, 88 professions for women are prohibited, for example, refractory worker, fireman, diver, and boiler worker. It should be noted that until 2022, this number was 181.

To struggle gender inequality in business, the state needs to: improve education and professional training, develop or recreate anti-discrimination legislation and ensure equal access to markets and technologies. In addition, employers can introduce flexible working hours, create vacation policies and offer corporate social packages. These activities will only cumulatively help reduce the gender pay gap and improve the level and quality of life of citizens.

As a result of the study, the gender gap in doing business does occur in today's world as women are less likely to be in leadership positions. Every country needs to take measures to fight gender inequality, to give women more opportunities related to religious norms and conditions.

Religion plays a key role in shaping cultural norms and values. Religious beliefs often determine companies' paths to ethics and corporate social responsibility. For example, many companies in countries with strong religious traditions adhere to high standards of honesty and transparency. Some organizations may refuse to do business with certain industries, such as alcohol or gambling, due to their religious beliefs.

Religious norms can also influence how companies approach advertising and marketing. In some cultures, certain images or messages may be perceived as offensive or unacceptable. For example, the use of certain symbols or images of people may be undesirable in some religious contexts. When developing advertising campaigns, it is important to take into account the cultural and religious characteristics of the target audience. Companies can collaborate with local cultural experts to create more sensitive and respectful promotional materials.

Religious beliefs can influence a company's HR policy. In some countries, employees can expect flexibility in their work schedules to observe religious rituals or holidays. For example, Muslims may require time for prayer or fasting during Ramadan. Companies can implement flexible work schedules and take religious holidays into account when planning work processes. This not only helps to create a more inclusive work environment, but also increases employee loyalty.

Religious holidays, food bans and other religious customs directly affect the demand for certain goods and services. For example, in Muslim countries during Ramadan there is an increased demand for food for evening worship, and in Christian countries for Christmas gifts. Companies that take these features into account can adapt their marketing strategies and product range to meet the needs of the target audience.

For example, a toy in the shape of a «blue samurai», which the fast food chain McDonald's sold together with the «Happy Meal», according to the Saudi authorities, opens up the problems of Islam, in that the «blue samurai», like the prophet, was named Muhammad. A few days after the first toy was sold, Saudi children and their parents noticed the «offensive» inscription. Islamic activists immediately launched «hero» posters with slogans: «Together we will protect the prophet». In response, McDonald's withdrew the toys from sale to avoid «retaliation». However, there are cases when companies still respect the religious beliefs of their customers. For example, some businessmen believe that the Marriott International Hotel is a success due to its knowledge of the religious beliefs of society.

Thus, the influence of religion on international business is a complex and multi-layered aspect that requires careful analysis and adaptation of strategies. Successful companies understand the importance of respecting cultural and religious differences and use this importance to create sustainable relationships with customers, partners and employees.

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THE IMPACT OF THE SOCIO-CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT ON FOREIGN ENTREPRENEURS IN SOUTH KOREA

Влияние социокультурной среды на иностранных предпринимателей в Южной Корее

South Korea, officially known as the Republic of Korea, is a country that represents an amazing blend of ancient traditions and modern technologies, which has become a key factor in considering it as the most suitable state for research on this topic.

The main goal of our study is to analyze the emerging business relationships between foreign and local entrepreneurs, as well as to determine the role and influence of culture, traditions, customs, and many other components of the socio-cultural environment using South Korea as an example.

South Korea attracts the attention of many foreign investors and entrepreneurs with its innovative technologies. However, all foreigners who decide to start a business in this country eventually encounter certain cultural values and beliefs that may not align or even contradict their own cultural heritage, leading to potential intercultural conflicts. These conflicts are often difficult to resolve because both sides adhere to different beliefs. By studying the social structure of South Korea more closely, we can identify the main points of conflict that foreign entrepreneurs frequently face.