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Artyom Talmachyov, Darya Branovitskaya
Science tutor *I. Kuzminova*
BSEU (Minsk)

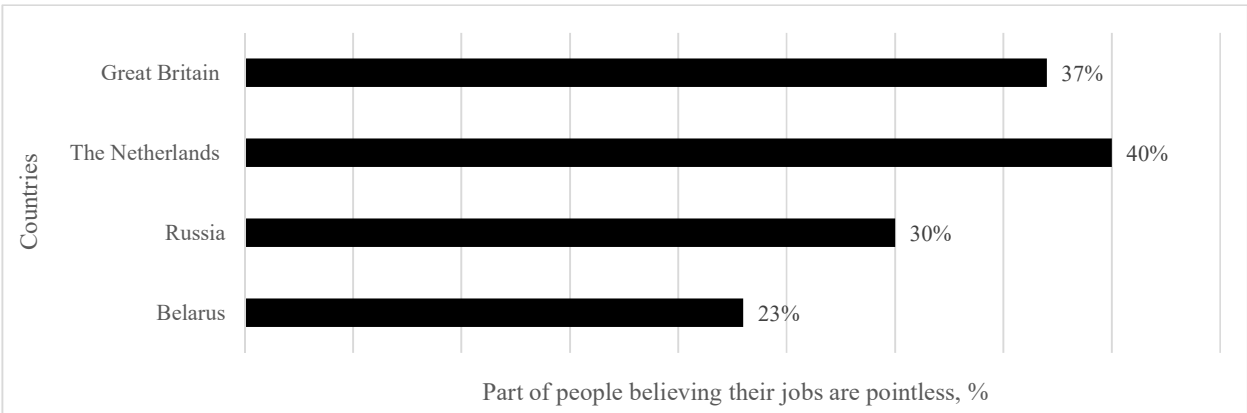
CULTURAL DIFFERENCES THROUGH THE POINTLESS JOBS

The phenomenon of senseless jobs is relatively recent yet proliferating. Surveys held in different countries elucidate this to be a widespread problem of a developed society. Plenty of jobs hardly provide employees with a sense of their work, however, people of various cultures perceive their existence differently. The objective of our research is to analyse how differently Belarusian and Western society tolerate the senseless.

Anthropologist David Graeber carried out research on the matter of pointless jobs. It was the first work on the problem that in its popular form spread widely. He received a large number of letters from concerned people doing unnecessary jobs that cannot bring satisfaction to them even if the salary is quite competitive. Influenced by Graeber's work, the British government conducted a survey. The question was "*Is your job making a meaningful contribution to the world?*".

The results were indeed surprising. 37% of the British think their jobs are meaningless. In the wave of this research some polls were conducted in countries of different economic development, for instance, the Netherlands and Russia and revealed that the problem of useless labour exists in countries with completely different economic development levels.

Thus, we have conducted a similar survey to reveal the situation specifically in our country. Graeber implied that the majority suffering from meaningless jobs by default are dissatisfied. Yet, we decided to clarify if this conclusion is applicable to our realities. So, the questions were as follows: “What part of your work do you believe is meaningless?” and “Does it bother you?”. The results are given in the following graphics.



As we can see, the results were analogous to the previous European and Russian polls. 23,3% of the respondents believe their work to have a substantial part (30% and more) of the traumatising senselessness. Interestingly, 1,8% argued their work has never had any sense at all. Hence, we formally state meaningless work to be present on the Belarusian job market.

Although Graeber had focused on the causes of the phenomenon of useless labour itself, we have concentrated on how the employees perceive the waste of their time. Respondents from Western countries tend to be highly concerned about useless employment. However, in our reality, the situation is quite different. According to our survey, 50% of the workers state they are not concerned about wasted hours of working-time.

At the next stage of our research, we tried to identify potential reasons for such a difference. As we have mentioned before, the problem of useless work definitely is present in countries with different levels of economic development, so we attempted to explain various attitudes towards this matter through cultural differences.

Belarus is located far more to the left on Inglehart–Welzel cultural map of the world. The map depicts closely linked cultural values that vary between societies in two predominant dimensions: traditional versus secular-rational values on the vertical y-axis and survival versus self-expression values on the horizontal x-axis. Therefore, closer to the Survival values than Self-Expression ones.

If in the latter countries work is today perceived as a means of self-realisation, as individualism is inherent in people, collectivism is predominant in the former. That primarily derives from differences in historical and political evolution, orthodox impact, and level of economic stability of the region. Different values and priorities are to be taken into account if an employee strives to evolve professionally in another environment.

Thus, we can conclude that the phenomenon of purely useless work exists independently of the state’s economic development level and continues to spread. Albeit of being everywhere, pointless jobs are perceived by people differently based on their

inborn cultural values. To perform in a foreign environment successfully, their attitude to societal constructs is to be understood, and pointless jobs as an enemy of self-realisation is one of them.

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Glafira Khavstovich

Science tutor: *O. N. Frantsuzova*

BSEU (Minsk)

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The coronavirus pandemic is a unique phenomenon. In just a few weeks, people enjoying a highly competitive supply of a wide variety of goods and services suddenly found themselves locked up and cut off from their familiar world and way of life. The global economy has been more affected by the number of people who fear COVID-19 than by the number of people who get sick. Fear changes people's behavior. And it changes the behavior of those who make decisions.

A huge number of companies in our country were not ready to quickly adapt to new realities. Those which staked on digital long before the pandemic won.

According to Buzzfactory, a communication agency, the coronavirus crisis and the forced self-isolation regime have radically changed the media behavior of users. Top bloggers and micro-influencers began to gain more popularity [1]. As a result, in April 2020, their Instagram posts grew in number by 57.3%. They published 25.2% more posts on Facebook and 10.2% more on VKontakte. Another important feature of the coronavirus era for the digital market had been the surge in the popularity of the TikTok app. On TikTok, users post short videos ranging in length from 15 to 60 seconds, which get millions of views [2].

In just the first month of the pandemic, the e-commerce market in almost all countries had doubled. Many companies quickly redistributed their advertising budgets. Managers realized the importance of finding a brand in social networks [3].