

Mental grounds for innovative development of Chuvashia

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Abstract. The article is dedicated to identification and study of mental grounds for innovative development of Chuvashia in modern conditions. Its novelty is defined by constantly emerging scientific literature studying the effects of sociocultural environment on economy development and various factors on the attitude to innovations, but also the need for a more complex study of the effect of Russian peoples' mentality on innovative development of areas since the latter almost always remains beyond the scope of research interests. The article is based on theoretical and evidential information found in the treatises of Russian and foreign researchers. It uses the methods of abstraction, analysis and synthesis, deduction and induction, modeling, generalization, comparison, and a cross-disciplinary approach. Innovation is considered as a modern feature of civilization development. Factors affecting the country's innovative development are identified. The mentality is considered as a sociocultural factor of innovative activity. Primary approaches to defining the notion of innovative mentality and its primary features are generalized. An abstract model of innovative mentality is proposed. Primary features of Chuvash mentality are considered. Comparative analysis of abstract models of innovative mentality and Chuvash mentality is carried out. A conclusion about the mentality effect on the innovative development of Chuvashia is justified.

Keywords: Chuvashia, innovative development, sociocultural factors, mentality, innovative mentality, Chuvash mentality

1 Introduction

Modern civilization clearly demonstrates the features of innovative economy. In some countries (China, Republic of Korea, etc.), the share of innovative sector in the GDP varies from 80% to 95% [1].

Innovative development of the country is related with a group of factors. The leading role is played by technological development. Sociocultural specifics of the population are

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its determinant. Referring to this aspect of the problem, N. Kolosova notes that values and behavior affirmations spread in the society affect the people's attitude to new technologies [2].

Recently, there have emerged a high number of researches considering the effect of multiple factors on the attitude to innovations namely: the nature of social mutual relations, organizational culture, education level, attitude to science, national culture, mindset [3]. Some researchers (N. Zarubina, N. Lebedeva, I. Minervin, etc.) were the first in the Russian science to create fundamental papers highlighting the effects of the sociocultural environment on economy development [4].

The issue of Russian peoples' mindset effect on the innovative development of their residential regions is still almost not explored. This allows expanding the scope of scientific surveys. In this context, the article is intended to compensate the gap in knowledge by analyzing scientific approaches to studies of mutual effects of the attitude to innovations and national mindset shown through one of the Russian peoples.

2 Materials and methods

The article is based on theoretical and evidential information found in the treatises of Russian and foreign researchers. It uses the methods of abstraction, analysis and synthesis, deduction and induction, modeling, generalization, comparison, and a cross-disciplinary approach.

3 Results

3.1 Effects of mindset on innovative development

The determinants of innovative development include sociocultural factors. L. Makayeva believes that they are determined by behavior affirmations and values of individuals resulted from historical development associated with ethnic, linguistic and religious uniqueness of the regional population [5]. One of these factors is mentality. It causes the people's ability of innovative thinking, defines their attitude to innovations depending on values and beliefs underlying the social culture and its nature in general.

Modern understanding of the effects of mindset on innovative development is based on the idea of G. Hofstede on measurements of the national culture whose object are characteristics varied over time – Power Distance, Individualism, Masculinity, Long Term / Short Term Orientation, Uncertainty Avoidance, Indulgence vs. Restraint [6, 7]. By developing this idea, the researcher writes that the economic evolution will be reflected in the collective mental programming of people and innovations are successfully implemented in those countries where the power distance is minimal and individualism is pronounced.

The concept of the Dutch sociologist has a significant cognition potential [8]. Created in the late 1970-s, it was widely used and is still used by other researchers as a methodological basis for studying the effects of mindset on innovative development.

3.2 Parameters of innovative mindset

Shein et al. concluded that in case of pronounced power distance, organizational members were more prone to seek help and support from governmental authorities than colleagues for implementation of some novelties [9].

Smith and Bond found that the human abilities to develop creative solutions, take, understand and create principally new things are related with such attitudes as flexibility of cognition and susceptibility to new experience, which is uncertainty avoidance [9].

Herbert and Johns showed that innovations are indeed implemented more successfully in those countries where the power distance is short and the level of individualism is high since otherwise people having a lower freedom and low level of tolerance to uncertainty are more eager to comply with official prescriptions, behavior standards, discipline, established hierarchy [9].

R. Akmayeva, N. Epifanova, K. Makarov in accordance with the theory of G. Hofstede and cultural measurements of GLOBE methodology (Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness) state that, on the one hand, there are factors favoring innovative development of Russia, while on the other hand, there are inhibiting factors. The first group includes individualism and long-term orientation. The second group includes a significant power distance and high extent of uncertainty avoidance [10].

It means that the research toolbox includes and actively uses characteristics of G. Hofstede innovative mindset. Primary characteristics include individualism, high level of tolerance to uncertainty, low level of power distance, long-term orientation.

3.3 Features of Chuvash mindset

Uniqueness of the Russian society is defined by the country’s multinationality. Due to its cultural multiplicity and vast spaces, sociocultural specifics such as mindset of individual regions can serve both a driver and a barrier for implementing innovations [11].

According to E. Nikitina, mental qualities of the Chuvash people such as collective spirit in everyday life, love for mother tongue, devout attitude to land and nature, honesty, loyalty to oath and duty, etc., are based on moral affirmations and axiological grounds that have been formed for many centuries and affected by the region’s geographical location, natural, cultural-historic and social conditions of ethnos development [12]. By analyzing treatises of some researchers, she tries to recreate specific features of the Chuvash mindset (see the table).

Table 1. Primary features of the Chuvash ethnic mindset

Features of the Chuvash mindset		Author(s)		
		T.N. Ivanova	E.V. Nikitina	E.L. Nikolayev, I.N. Afanasyev
D r i v e n b y a t t i t u d e	to society to power	- envy; - collective spirit; - peacefulness, good-neighborly, relations tolerance; - patriarchal relations, traditional character; - servility, high power distance, law-obedience	- hospitality; - collective spirit; - patriotism	- tact; - dependency; - conservatism; - conformality; - desire to respect people
	to oneself	- low self-esteem; - modesty, keeping head down	- aspiration for freedom; - aspiration for righteousness and justice	- desire to show necessary tolerance to small drawbacks of other people; - reserved demeanor; - modesty

	to labor, labor products and wealth	- diligence; - respect of wealth; - avarice	- generosity	- restriction of own needs by existing material condition
	Will	- patience, endurance; - obstinacy; - perseverance	- loyalty to words and oath; - military bravery; - insistence and patience in work	- voluntary submission to requirements of general discipline; - tension
	Emotional	- susceptibility, ill feeling	- loyalty to absolute rights	- judiciousness, reasonable nature in comprehension of the world; - admitting the harmony of opposite extremes
	Intellectual	- prestige of education	- impulsiveness; - naivete; - suspiciousness	- desire to critically regard own merits and drawbacks

Source: [12-14].

Specifics of empirical data describing the mindset of Chuvash people requires their additional interpretation when viewed through the theory of G. Hofstede.

Specific features of the Chuvash people relevant for innovative development include no individualism e.g., researchers unanimously indicate to an opposite factor – community spirit or such features as voluntary submission to requirements of general discipline, keeping head down, and modesty. Russia (including the Chuvash ethnos) will be historically a collectivist country, and researchers believe that it suffers complex global changes related with an ongoing transition from collectivism to individualism in new social reality. These two components are perceived not as mutually exclusive, but co-existing and manifested in each culture depending on circumstances and adaptive social behavior [15].

The notion of long-term orientation is not mentioned by the researchers of the Chuvash mindset. However, in light of the readiness to live for the sake of the future, indirectly appropriate qualities are commitment, insistence and patience in work; judiciousness, reasonable nature in comprehension of the world, prestige of education, and readiness to invest into education.

As applicable to the power distance, researchers highlight its high level naming such features as servility, law-obedience, dependency.

The level of urgency avoidance being rather high in the Chuvash mindset can be defined based on such features as conservatism, conformality, patriarchal relations, traditional character.

If we consider the Chuvash mindset through the prism of national culture variance parameters of G. Hofstede, the features substantially relevant for innovative development can be collectivism, high power distance, long-term orientation, low level of tolerance to uncertainty.

4 Discussion

1. A comparative analysis of abstract models of innovative mentality and mindset of the Chuvash people must be done based on the following criteria: individualism, long-term

orientation, uncertainty avoidance, power distance, which very well complies with achievements of the socio-humanistic knowledge.

2. The comparative analysis of the innovative mentality and mindset of the Chuvash people shows such a common feature as long-term orientation. Differences include various criteria values: individualism / collectivism, tolerance to uncertainty power distance. Innovative development of the Chuvash people suffers a certain retarding effect of the Chuvash people mindset. To show a more complete and detailed picture of this matter, future researches may collect data by polling multiple responders to create a representative sample and may use factorial analysis in processing obtained data.

5 Conclusion

Stability and success of innovative development in the modern world are supported by technical, technological and economic criteria as well as sociocultural criteria, mainly, the mindset, which is objectively reflected in the phenomenon of innovative mindset.

The mental component of the Chuvashia innovative development is double in its nature. On the one hand, it is characterized by no individualism, because high level of individualism is deemed to be a mandatory feature of innovative mindset. On the other hand, this component may not suggest a reasonable nature of world cognition, commitment, prestige of education, which promotes generation and realization of new ideas.

The strategy of Chuvashia innovative development must provide for development of a mental mechanism for innovative activity. The primary area of its implementation must be the educational environment of the region in order to create favorable conditions for creativity and innovation and promulgate traditional cultural values supporting innovative thinking.

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