

Attitude as labor migrants' social-psychological adaptation factor (Labor migrants from Uzbekistan taken as examples)

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This article is devoted to current issues of labor migrants' adaptation. The research is based on questioning 210 labor migrants from Uzbekistan aged 17 to 49, at present living in Saint Petersburg. It should be mentioned that Uzbekistan labor migrants constitute a considerable part of the entire labor-migrant flow to Russia, Saint Petersburg, in particular.

The research targets the analysis of personal characteristics contributing to effective adaptation by labor migrants. The research contains an analysis of the system of personality "I"-structures interrelation, their constructive, destructive, and deficient components as well as the analysis of life-meaning guidelines and the system of migrants' family and interpersonal relationships. The outcomes obtained make it possible to examine labor migrants' unique personality characteristics, depending on their attitude toward whether to stay in Russia or return to Uzbekistan, as well as to provide an analysis of migrants' mental health or psychological well-being and to forecast the effectiveness of migrants' adaptation. Two groups of labor migrants — those intending to stay in Russia and those wishing to return to Uzbekistan — differ in a number of indicators. The forecast of mental health or psychological well-being of labor migrants intending to stay in Russia is more favorable. A rather high personal level of mental health and adaptation resources are based on a strong potential of activity, ability to achieve definite goals, and capacity to establish and maintain interpersonal relationships. The outcomes of migrants wishing to return to Uzbekistan give us grounds to assume that there exist both threats to their psychological well-being and emergence of psychopathological symptoms. Thus, the forecast of this group's adaptation appears less favorable. Following up, it is reasonable to sort out some groups at risk among migrants wishing to return to Uzbekistan and develop relevant programs of mental-disorder prevention.

Nonetheless, we consider the status of both groups to be marginal, that, in its turn, undoubtedly affects the process of their adaptation. The latter is an extremely complex process because, even under quite favorable conditions, it includes many attendant factors.

Keywords: labor migrants, adaptation, potential for adaptation, mental health, psychological well-being, attitude, constructiveness, destructiveness, efficiency, life-meaning guidelines

Introduction

The psychology of migration is a long-running essential issue concerning both theoretical and practical matters. Labor migration has recently become quite troublesome for Russia (Dmitriev & Dmitriev, 2006; Krasinets, Kubishin, & Tyuryukanova, 2000; Modenov & Nosov, 2004). Any migration has its own advantages and disadvantages. It concerns the life of society entirely, including political, economic, and social spheres. That is why the tasks of searching for and choosing proper approaches to interrelations with labor migrants and seeking effective strategies that keep the society system balanced are quite urgent.

Failure to focus on the psychological problems of labor migrants in Russia is caused by acute economic, social, and legal issues of labor migration as is. From our point of view, it is the psychological approach that largely can help reveal labor migration issues well and develop adequate methods of psychological assistance, permitting a person to adapt to a new sociocultural environment painlessly. Public and state institution heads and staff feel a pressing need to develop socio-psychological assistance programs for labor migrants. Thus, seeking new forms of interrelation with labor migrants is a significant task for the government not only to help these migrants adapt to common local everyday rules and apply new labor resources efficiently but also to direct local society toward tolerant interrelations with them.

The issue of migration psychology is widely addressed by Russian and foreign studies. There are descriptions of migration kinds and various theoretic and methodological approaches to its study (Berry, Poortinga, Breugelmans, Chasiotis, & Sam, 2011; Khotinets, 2001; Khrustaleva & Novikov, 1995; Pochebut, 2012; Zayonchkovskaya, Molodikova, & Mukomel', 2007). Intercultural attitudes, relationships, and communication as well as intercultural cooperation strategies are being viewed. Factors and psychological principles of various migrant groups' adaptation are being described (Khrustaleva & Novikov, 1995; Pochebut, 2012; Soldatova, 2001; Stefanenko, 2007; Triandis, 2010). Different ways of assisting migrants, as individuals and in groups, are presented (Soldatova, 2001; Stefanenko, 2007). Refugee migrants and forced migrants should be dealt with individually, and authors pay attention to such conditions (Soldatova, 2001; Soldatova, 2002).

Nevertheless, it is labor migrants' issues research that lacks psychological follow-up. They are mainly sociological ones (Dmitriev & Pyadukhov, 2006; Gritsenko, Kobzeva, & Maslova, 2007; Inozemtsev, 2003; Rybakovskiy, 1995).

Russia is confronted with issues that are not unique in the rise of the number of labor migrants. The experience of Europe is sure to be considerable, because it faced this problem some decades ago (Bonifazi, Schoorl, Okólski, & Simon, 2008; Oguz, 2012; Silj, 2010). We can say that the migration policy of hosting countries is aimed at including migrants in a new social system that sustains their ethnic identity as well as adaptation to a new cultural environment with its own guidelines and rules. However, American and European experience proves that this aim is extremely tough.

A widespread model of acculturation, offered by J. Berry, is suitable for the analysis of various models of migrant adaptation. Acculturation means changes that appear as a result of contact between different ethnic groups. The author con-

siders the interethnic contact itself and the process of a migrant's psychological adaptation to depend mainly on the type of a person's acculturation strategy. Four acculturation strategies are offered: assimilation, integration, marginalization, and separation (Berry, Poortinga, Breugelmans, Chasiotis, & Sam, 2011).

This model is available not only for the analysis of acculturation strategies migrants choose, whether consciously or not, but also for the analysis of migration policy in countries hosting a considerable number of migrants.

America has been and remains a leader in migrant hosting. Most of these migrants are staying in the country illegally. America, called a melting pot, has chosen assimilation as the goal of its migration model. However, this strategy has resulted in ghettoization of various ethnic groups not only in the first but also in the second and third generations.

European countries such as Germany and France prefer an integration strategy. The model of these countries is also called multiculturalism. The goal is not to dissolve migrants in new cultures but to keep their national identity, being at the same time loyal to the hosting culture and active when entering new social systems. However, some authors concluded after some time that the model of multiculturalism actually had not achieved the necessary goals or implemented this model adaptation's potential (Bonifazi, Schoorl, Okólski, & Simon, 2008; Sam, Vedder, Leibkind, Neto, & Virta, 2008; Silj, 2010). The paradox was that social securities, including social allowances issued to migrants, instead of stimulating them to active integration, promoted the first generation's passive position and marginalization. The hosting societies may not have been ready for reforms that, in their turn, influenced the second-generation migrants' adaptation.

Labor migration essentially differs from the classic one by its temporary nature. A justified question is whether labor migrants need to adapt, because labor migration, unlike classic immigration, implies temporary residence in a hosting country. However, rather often, labor migrants who initially intended just to earn a living, arrive later at a decision to become permanent residents of the Russian Federation. Europe faced the same situation. Thus, an adaptation issue turns out to be vital.

The term "adaptation" itself, involving multiple systems and levels, is reviewed in various aspects. The term involves a wide range of regularities: biological, psychological, social, economic, and so on. Adaptation is looked at as both a process and an outcome; its levels and strategies are described; personal adaptation potential and adaptation criteria are considered (Dikaya & Zhuravlev, 2007; Larionova, 2002, Posokhova, 2001; Rean, Kudashev, & Baranov, 2002). The labor-migrant adaptation issue may be approached in turn by considering different points of view. Most modern adaptation definitions include active intention, not only perception of something new but also adjustment, change, co-change, aspiration, movement, inclusion, resistance, and so on (Dikaya & Zhuravlev, 2007; Meshcheryakov & Zinchenko, 2003; Rean, Kudashev, & Baranov, 2002).

As we see it, two approaches, depending on which labor migrant group, may be reasonable. When we speak about labor migrants who are temporary residents of Russia, those intending to return to Uzbekistan, we should think of assistance (backing), not adaptation. The former (assistance) may be administrative, legal,

health and safety, insurance, and so on. When we speak of labor migrants intending to become permanent residents of Russia and undertaking relevant steps to do so, the issues of assistance and adaptation arise.

Labor migrants from Uzbekistan took part in our research. They constitute a considerable part of the entire flow of labor migrants to Russia and Saint Petersburg in particular. Studies devoted to inner and outer migration in Uzbekistan also reveal the urgency to consider the issues of assistance and adaptation of these migrants (Abdullaev, 2008).

Method

The research target was to analyze psychological characteristics that facilitate successful adaptation of migrants from Uzbekistan.

The hypothesis of the research was that migrants intending to become Russian permanent residents have a more favorable forecast of psychological well-being than those who are going to return to their native country.

Participants' group characteristics

A total of 210 men — Uzbekistan labor migrants aged 17 to 49, at present living in Saint Petersburg — took part in the research. On the whole, the flow of labor migrants from Uzbekistan to Russia constitutes a considerable part of the entire labor immigration flow to Russia and Saint Petersburg in particular. Our participants were divided into two groups:

- Group 1 includes 62 men (29, 5%) whose intention is to return to their native country as soon as possible.
- Group 2 contains 148 men (70, 5%), who intend to become permanent residents of the Russian Federation.

Method descriptions

The participants were examined with a single purpose–design questionnaire containing 27 questions concerning such social aspects as education level, living and working conditions, family status, personal contacts, and so on.

The following psychological methods or techniques were chosen.

- The “I”-Structural test by G. Ammon (ISTA).

The questionnaire deals with well-being, emotional experience, peculiarities, and actions in various life lines. It consists of 18 scales, which are combined into six blocs. Each of these blocs characterizes one of the six personality parameters, or a person's “I”-functions, such as aggression, fear or disturbance, outside “I”-restriction (bordering), inside “I”-restriction (bordering), narcissism, and sexuality. Every psychological component is assessed by three scales to determine the degree of constructive, destructive, and deficiency severity. According to G. Ammon's theory of personality structure (on which the questionnaire is based), psychic processes are grounded in attitudes. A personality structure reflects these attitudes. A psychic structure is determined by revealing separate “I”-functions, altogether constituting the core function, namely “I”-identity. Central “I”-functions (aggression, fear or

disturbance, outside “I”-restriction [bordering], inside “I”-restriction [bordering], narcissism and sexuality) appear to be complex, integrated, constantly interacting elements of a psychological structure. All central “I”-functions perform fundamental tasks of both “I”-structure control or regulation and interpersonal interaction processes. The questionnaire contains 220 statements.

- The technique of mental health assessment on the basis of G. Ammon’s test.

The technique of mental health assessment based on G. Ammon’s “I”-structure test has been used for primary information collection. Within the technique of mental health estimation, the integrated grouping (blocs) of “I”-structure test indicators has been applied. Accordingly, three blocks have been determined.

- The constructiveness bloc estimates a person’s adaptation resources, his or her ability to cope with unfavorable circumstances and protect personal life lines along with valuable interpersonal relationships.
- The destructiveness bloc represents psychopathological symptoms.
- The deficiency bloc exposes failure of self-actualization as well as intention to live using a minimum of one’s own abilities.

In addition, two purposely designed indices are employed in the technique. They are based on integral scales and enable correlation of the extent of abilities to adapt, the severity of psychopathological stigmatization, and the level of a person’s psychological self-actualization.

- The index of psychic activity (the index of a person’s potential psychic implementation) reflects correlation between the potential adaptation dimension and his or her level of psychic activity.
- The index of psychic compensation level (the index of psychopathology compensation) correlates available adaptation resources dimension and psychopathological display severity.

Unlike other techniques, the technique of mental health assessment applies the procedure of a psycho-diagnostic test based on the concept of level of mental health as the correlation of two psychic activity components, that is, constructive (adaptation) and destructively deficient (psychopathologically altered and under-developed) ones.

Thus, the technique enables integral estimation of the current psychological state such as constructive adaptation resource levels, psychopathological symptomatology degrees, and their correlation in derivative indices.

- The scale of family environment (adapted by S. Koupriyanov).

The Family environment scale estimates the social climate in whatever family type. It is based on the Family Environment Scale (FES) technique developed by R. H. Moos in 1974. It focuses on the measurement and description of:

- a family member’s relationships (relationships indices).
- the directions of personal development, which are particularly valued by family members (personal development indices).
- a family’s basic organizational structure (indices of a family system).

The questionnaire contains 90 statements.

- The test of life-meaning guidelines (orientations) (by D. Leontyev).

The technique contains 20 points, each one describing a certain action, emotion, or state of the person being examined. There are two opposite statements in each of the points. A respondent's task is to define which of these opposite statements is closer to him or her, and to what extent by choosing one out of seven gradations. The index of general life meaningfulness is obtained after the test interpretation by calculating the average number of all points' marks. The larger the number, the higher the life comprehension level. Besides these, five other subgrades can be obtained and analyzed in addition to a general life comprehension level. They reflect certain aspects of a man's life-meaning guidelines (orientations): life targets; life process or interest in and emotional wealth of life; life outcomes or satisfaction of self-actualization; locus of control — "I"; locus of control — "life."

- The questionnaire titled "A personality adaptation to a new sociocultural environment" (by L. Yankovskiy).

The test contains 96 statements. The respondent points out ones either agreeable or disagreeable. The questionnaire is designed to define migrants' adaptation level and type to a new sociocultural environment. It indicates six scales corresponding to different adaptation types: ability to adapt; conformity; interaction; depression; nostalgia; rejection.

Statistical analysis of the research results was performed using an SPSS statistical package.

Results

Table 1 provides average indicators and statistically essential differences of the test of life-meaning guidelines (orientations). In both groups, average scores on the "index of general life meaningfulness" exceed regular average ones. Along with that, the second group results on this scale are statistically above those of the first group.

Table 1. Indicators of the test of life-meaning guidelines (orientations)

Scale Title	Group 1	Group 2	Reliable Differences $p <$
	Score ($M \pm \sigma$)	Score ($M \pm \sigma$)	
Life targets	35.15 \pm 6.617	37.99 \pm 3.831	0.01
Life process or interest in and emotional wealth of life	31.62 \pm 4.745	31.46 \pm 4.533	
Life outcomes or satisfaction of self-actualization	28.22 \pm 4.618	29.57 \pm 4.086	0.05
Locus of control — "I"	22.72 \pm 3.627	22.92 \pm 3.321	–
Locus of control — "Life"	29.48 \pm 5.503	31.27 \pm 5.055	0.05
Index of general life meaningfulness (life comprehension)	147.18 \pm 19.304	153.21 \pm 16.328	0.05

High scores on both “life targets” and “life outcomes” scales in each group on the one hand prove life efficiency and comprehension and, on the other hand, reveal further targets that make life oriented and perspective. These scales’ outcomes prove to be higher in the second group, thus making the adaptation forecast for this group more favorable.

Financial shortfall is the key reason for labor migrants’ arrival in Saint Petersburg (85.7% of those interviewed). Labor migrants are seeking earnings to provide adequate living conditions for themselves and their families. This need dictates all of the labor migrant’s activity. Meeting this need makes life reasonable. Nearly all migrants interviewed were employed and paid at that moment; therefore, they met the leading need and support their families.

Table 2 provides average indicators and statistically essential differences in the “A personality adaptation to a new sociocultural environment” questionnaire. Average scores in the first group of labor migrants, those intending to return to Uzbekistan, are within general parameters except the index of “rejection,” which is a bit lower than the general standard. Average scores in the second group of labor migrants, those intending to become residents in Russia, on “ability to adapt” and “conformity” scales, are over the standard ones, but “depression” and “rejection” scales reveal indicators lower than standard. Besides, the levels of both “ability to adapt” and “conformity” are statistically reliably higher in the second group compared with the first group.

Table 2. Indicators of the “A personality adaptation to a new sociocultural environment” questionnaire

Scale Title (adaptation kind)	Group 1	Group 2	Reliable Differences $p <$
	Score ($M \pm \sigma$)	Score ($M \pm \sigma$)	
Ability to adapt	10.42 \pm 1.850	13.63 \pm 2.094	0.01
Conformity	8.58 \pm 1.714	10.43 \pm 2.230	0.01
Interaction	9.37 \pm 1.893	9.46 \pm 0.878	–
Depression	4.22 \pm 2.723	3.64 \pm 1.894	–
Nostalgia	6.83 \pm 1.533	6.14 \pm 1.586	0.01
Rejection	5.31 \pm 2.380	5.57 \pm 1.409	0.01

Table 3 provides average indicators and statistically essential differences in the “The scale of family environment” method.

In both groups, high indicators on such scales as “solidarity,” “control,” “moral and ethical issues,” and “organizational ability” are worth paying attention to. They all characterize explicit feelings of belonging to a family, gradation and hierarchy in a family arrangement, clarity and certainty, rigidity of family rules and obligations, and common esteem for ethical and moral values and provisions.

Table 3. Indicators of the “The scale of family environment” method

Scale Title	Group 1	Group 2	Reliable Differences $p <$
	Score ($M \pm \sigma$)	Score ($M \pm \sigma$)	
Solidarity	7.12 \pm 1.378	7.61 \pm 0.806	–
Expressiveness	6.22 \pm 1.219	5.29 \pm 1.165	0.01
Conflict	6.73 \pm 0.944	6.99 \pm 1.156	–
Independence	5.51 \pm 1.165	6.36 \pm 1.424	–
Attitude aimed at achievements	5.56 \pm 0.952	6.84 \pm 0.582	0.01
Attitude aimed at intellectual-cultural development	5.88 \pm 1.620	6.46 \pm 1.267	–
Attitude aimed at intense rest	5.92 \pm 1.236	5.80 \pm 1.000	–
Moral and ethical issues	6.71 \pm 1.661	7.25 \pm 0.971	–
Organizational ability	8.19 \pm 1.167	8.30 \pm 0.831	–
Control	5.61 \pm 1.462	6.69 \pm 0.718	0.01

The second group of labor migrants (intending to stay in Russia) presents higher indicators on the “control” scale that are statistically reliable. If we look at Table 2, we can see that indicators on the “conformity” scale of this group exceed the ones of the first group. It signifies the second group seeking for interrelation with people, being a group, their rules and values. Meanwhile, the first group shows a higher indicator on the “expressiveness” scale that defines the level of a family encouragement to act and express its members feelings explicitly.

Table 4 provides average indicators and statistically essential differences in the “I”-structural test.

In our research, we have focused on the assumption that labor migrants' adaptation peculiarities and forecast will be connected with personality “I”-structure distinctions, in particular with their explicitly constructive components. One of our research hypotheses is the assumption that constructive components of a personality's “I”-structures will be predominant with respect to labor migrants intending to stay in Russia, which may favor their successful adaptation.

On the whole, both groups have a normal range of indicators regarding the level of explicit constructive components except the “outside I”-restriction” scale, where the indicators are insignificantly lower.

At the same time, the second group shows the level of explicitly constructive components on the aggression, inside “I”-restriction, narcissism, and sexuality scales that is reliably over the first group's indicators. Such high indicators reveal the second group's representatives' ability to be openhearted, targeted, capable to establish and maintain relationships with various people, and interested in new experiences and impressions. These all provide dynamic development of one's life. We can also speak about a pronounced ability to forward one's powers to dynamic inner process regulation, thus controlling borders between different “I” aspects as well as between various psychic processes and contents.

Table 4. Indicators of the “I”-structural test

Scale title	Group 1	Group 2	Reliable Differences $p <$
	Score ($M \pm \sigma$)	Score ($M \pm \sigma$)	
Constructive aggression	9.96 \pm 1.572	11.15 \pm 0.931	0.01
Destructive aggression	3.11 \pm 3.013	1.96 \pm 1.950	0.01
Aggression deficiency	3.27 \pm 2.220	2.90 \pm 1.525	0.05
Constructive fear	7.75 \pm 1.909	8.33 \pm 0.939	-
Destructive fear	2.68 \pm 2.046	2.06 \pm 1.334	-
Fear deficiency	4.29 \pm 1.826	2.70 \pm 1.025	0.01
Constructive outside “I”-restriction (bordering)	7.61 \pm 1.448	7.01 \pm 0.828	0.01
Destructive outside “I”-restriction (bordering)	3.84 \pm 1.547	2.62 \pm 1.439	0.01
Outside “I”-restriction (bordering) deficiency	4.38 \pm 1.912	4.22 \pm 1.346	-
Constructive inside “I”-restriction (bordering)	9.70 \pm 1.476	11.01 \pm 0.748	0.01
Destructive inside “I”-restriction (bordering)	3.86 \pm 2.284	3.27 \pm 1.230	-
Inside “I”-restriction (bordering) deficiency	4.00 \pm 2.420	3.14 \pm 1.475	0.01
Constructive narcissism	9.96 \pm 2.366	10.42 \pm 1.007	
Destructive narcissism	4.29 \pm 1.659	2.04 \pm 1.555	0.01
Narcissism deficiency	1.54 \pm 2.215	1.27 \pm 1.997	-
Constructive sexuality	9.50 \pm 3.406	11.85 \pm 1.379	0.01
Destructive sexuality	6.82 \pm 2.784	7.03 \pm 1.826	-
Sexuality deficiency	2.64 \pm 1.823	1.27 \pm 1.130	0.01

In both groups, the constructive “narcissism” component is within normal ranges. This scale determines how a person treats him- or herself. It provides both a positive self-image and a feeling of satisfactory self-significance, thoughts, and ideas. This indicator also ensures the possibility to apply the complex of “I”-structures to maintain interrelations with people, allowing them to take part in one’s own life.

Although the first group of labor migrants provides us with a normal constructive component of narcissism, its destructive component is a bit higher than a normal one, and its level is statistically reliably higher in comparison with the second group. It indicates the tendency of the first group’s members to fail in perceiving the criticism of others properly and reveal their own weakness. It also demonstrates their need for recognition and attention.

Table 5. Indicators of the technique of mental health assessment

Scale Title	Group 1	Group 2	Reliable Differences $p <$
	Score ($M \pm \sigma$)	Score ($M \pm \sigma$)	
Constructiveness	54.48 \pm 9.258	59.78 \pm 3.644	0.01
Destructiveness	24.59 \pm 9.507	18.99 \pm 6.162	0.01
Deficiency	20.11 \pm 10.59	15.51 \pm 7.089	0.01
The indication of the psychic (mental) compensation level	-7.36 \pm 13.27	2.86 \pm 6.47	0.01
The indication of psychic (mental) activity level	-6.09 \pm 13.49	2.37 \pm 6.99	0.01

Table 5 provides average indicators and statistically essential differences according to the technique of mental health assessment that allows for estimating psychological well-being, considering relevant indicators.

The fact that reliable differences were found between groups on a quite significant level of all integral scales and indicators is worth paying attention to. The indicators on the integral “constructiveness” scale are over general ones and statistically reliably higher in the second group in comparison with the first group. The second group is also characterized by indicators of “psychic (mental) compensation level” and “psychic (mental) activity level,” which correspond to established normal ones. It enables us to consider that the second group has a high adaptation potential, good ability to set targets and stand up for lifelong values, and the ability to establish and maintain interrelations with others. Thus, many fewer threats exist against the psychological well-being of the participants in the second group.

The first group indicators on the “constructiveness” scale are normal, but the “destructiveness” scale indicators exceed normal ones, and their level is statistically reliably higher in comparison with the second group, and the “indication of the psychic (mental) compensation level” is close to border range. Thus, the forecast for the first group members' psychological well-being is less favorable, and the threat of psychopathological symptoms escalation is rather severe.

Conclusion

The outcomes of this research revealed a high level of life meaning in both groups of migrants that, in its turn, may be a considerable resource for further adjustments and adaptation to new environment conditions.

Through obtained outcomes analysis, it has become apparent that these two groups of labor migrants — those intending to stay in Russia and those wishing to return to Uzbekistan — differ in a number of indicators.

The forecast of mental health for migrants intending to become Russian residents is more favorable. A rather high personal level of mental health and adapta-

tion resources are based on a strong potential of activity, ability to establish definite aims, and capacity to establish and maintain interpersonal relationships.

The outcomes for migrants wishing to return to Uzbekistan give us grounds to assume that threats exist for their psychological well-being and emergence of psychopathological symptoms. Thus, the forecast for this group's adaptation is considered less favorable.

In our opinion, it is reasonable to sort out some groups of risk among migrants wishing to return to Uzbekistan and develop relevant programs of psychological assistance.

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