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The Subjective Well-being of Russian Migrants in Spain and of Foreigners in Russia

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Abstract

The research of personal and cultural factors of subjective well-being of a personality, held in different countries with implementation of various methods, showed identities and differences of some dimensions. However, the question of subjective well-being alteration in case of fundamental changes in life preceded by migration of a person to another country is still unclear. The results of study of similarities and differences in structure of subjective well-being of three groups of people under test: Russian citizens, foreigners in Russia and Russian migrants in Spain are discussed in the article. The interconnection between its emotional and cognitive components is revealed. The distinctive structural features of a cognitive-evaluation component of subjective well-being of different groups of people under test are defined: the structure of subjective well-being of Russian citizens is more integrated (75%) than the structures of Russian migrants (50%) and foreigners in Russia (22%).

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1. Introduction

Global social changes that took place in the world in last decades, technical and technological progress caused changes in projecting of individual destiny of a human. The real opportunity to overcome territorial (regional and national), cultural limits as well as the increase of material welfare have determined new perspective in extension of a person's activity. That is why the change of residence has become a rather ordinary occurrence; a social migratory norm is being formed gradually (regional, interregional migration or migration between countries and continents). Following the analysis of the research of the migration problem Gritcenko came to a conclusion

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about interaction of objective and subjective factors of migratory behavior [1]. Yet, today we face two main parameters of such behavior – rational determination of a person and social pressure. Lately the research of the forced migration became more active while the research of the premeditated migration decreased to some extent [1], [2], [3], [4]. We examine the phenomenon of the premeditated migration as a form of social activity of a person [5].

In his research Linneweber [6] made a deduction that a personality has psychological relationship with the social environment which affects its identity and well-being as it creates the context of social activity. In this sense the premeditated change of residence (even temporary) influences the system of relations and the emotional experience of a personality. That is why the study of subjective well-being in interaction with a factor of premeditated migration will let reveal its mechanisms and work out a number of measures for socio-psychological adaptation of a personality. Meanwhile, one of the important factors of subjective well-being of a migrant is his relationships with the inhabitants. Berry's [3] researches show that adaptation in the accepting environment is connected with the inhabitants' expectations concerning the way migrants should behave from the point of view of integration/autonomy.

The research of ethnic, cultural factors of subjective well-being of a personality became urgent in last decades. The analysis of cross-cultural study of subjective well-being in particular made it possible to expose a number of important dimensions like circumstances of life, cultural variables, living standards, etc. [7], [8]. Earlier we held a series of important researches of subjective well-being. The researches carried out by Shamionov [7] are dedicated to study of interconnection of personal characteristics and satisfaction with life of four ethnical groups. Shamionov [9] has examined the problems of ethno-psychological factors of subjective well-being in different ethnical groups; he has examined the interconnection between behavioral strategies and characteristics of subjective well-being of ethnical groups (Russians, Kazakhs, and Armenians). It is shown that in case of a threat to the well-being the representatives of different ethnical groups use different behavioral strategies. It is also established that there is an ethnical specificity in connection between satisfaction and willingness to risk [5]. However, not the cross-cultural research itself is of interest to us, but a comparative inquiry with neutralization of an ethnical factor, what is possible while observing the representatives of one ethnical group in various circumstances – during settled life and migration.

The examination of satisfaction with different aspects of life activity of the forced migrants carried out by Gritchenko showed the significance of the following factors: the type of settlement, self-acceptance in a new situation, building relations with the natives, etc. and the correlation with the nature of socio-psychological adaptation of a personality [1]. At the same time premeditated migration does not presuppose total collapse of existing social links (including professional, friendly, etc.), and the presence of some convictions about the personality's social activity may help overcome difficulties caused by migration. In his research Shamionov [5] showed that subjective position of a personality leads to subjective well-being mostly; restriction of subjective position leads to decrease of subjective well-being affected by awareness of incapability to display activity in a broader context and to discontent with the one's life's impact, etc. We may suppose that subjective well-being of the migrants may be provided by special combination of various relationships and components of well-being.

The goal of our research is a comparative study of the structure and the interconnection of emotional and cognitive components of subjective well-being of migrants (from/to Russia) and native population of Russia.

2. Methodology of Research

2.1. General background of research

The paradigm of the study: This study is conducted on the basis of methodology for systematic and structured approach in psychology. In accordance with the purpose and basic approach, the study is carried out with correlation and comparison survey method.

2.2. Participants

170 people took part in the research: 50 migrants to Russia (M=31.24; 1.34), 60 native habitants of Russia (M=34.8; 1.77), 60 Russian migrants to Spain (M=37.12; 1.47).

2.3. Instruments

Participants of the study were offered to answer the questions of the Perrudet-Badoux, Mendelsohn, Chiche scale of subjective well-being [10] adapted by M.V. Sokolova [11], the L.I. Vasserman Scale of evaluation of social frustration level [12]. The subjective well-being scale used for measuring the emotional component of the subjective well-being (17 statements, maximum point – 100, corresponds to lack of subjective well-being), Wassermann's method for measuring the cognitive component of the subjective well-being (20 statements, maximum point – 4, corresponds to lack of subjective well-being).

2.4. Data analysis

The statistical analysis has been conducted by SPSS 17.0. The results are processed with the Student t-criteria and the Pearson correlation analysis.

3. Results and discussion.

According to the results of the examination of various indicators of subjective well-being, emotional and cognitive components of subjective well-being are expressed differently in different samples. Thus, there are differences in majority of parameters between Russian migrants and foreigners in Russia (table 1). Russians and foreigners in Russia show similar results: the Student t-criteria index indicates similar average values in the integral scale of emotional well-being. At the same time there is a great difference by the importance of social environment, and this certifies of more tension connected with solitude and social support among foreigners (Russians and migrants have lower figures in similar).

Table 1. Emotional subjective well-being in figures

	Integral index of subjective well-being	Tension and sensibility	Psycho-emotional symptoms	Mood changing	Importance of social environment	Self-definition of state of health	Satisfaction with everyday activity
Foreigners in Russia (1)	57.00	12.08	12.82	5.24	10.26	6.06	10.54
Russians in Spain (2)	50.24	10.40	10.30	5.10	7.20	6.60	10.70
Russians in Russia (3)	54.21	12.00	12.10	5.00	7.90	6.50	10.60
t-criteria (1-2)	3.79**	2.79*	4.44**	0.87	5.66**	0.04	0.09
t-criteria (1-3)	1.34	0.66	0.85	0.06	4.96**	1.06	0.29
t-criteria (2-3)	2.26*	3.45**	3.01**	0.31	1.68	0.17	0.18

Note: * p < .05. ** p < .01.

However, there is a big difference in psycho-emotional symptoms, tension and sensitivity and integral index of emotional subjective well-being between native Russians and migrants as well as between migrants and foreigners in Russia (Russians display the highest index). Migrants to Russia and from Russia demonstrate the biggest differences in some emotional subjective well-being figures. This data proves that Russian migrants have a higher level of emotional subjective well-being. Obviously the emotional component of subjective well-being is affected by changes in life of a person as well as by permanent personal values formed in the process of a person’s socialization.

Let us turn to some of the indicators of the cognitive component of well-being in the groups under test. Foreigners in Russia and Russian migrants demonstrate the lowest level of social frustration towards the citizens of Russia. It should be mentioned that the factor of financial well-being doesn’t play a significant role because the level of welfare satisfaction of Russians and Russian migrants to Spain is lower than satisfaction of foreign migrants to Russia. However, while analyzing definite spheres of satisfaction it is possible to discover basic patterns of the people’s attitude towards these and those phenomena. The main differences occur in the spheres of education, welfare standards, services sector, vacation, choosing jobs, way of life in general.

It means that migrants are happier at the cognitive level because of higher satisfaction in some specific spheres like services sector, health service and vacation organization, while the fundamental spheres like social status, financial position, relationships, etc. are not touched at all. This testifies that social mobility of Russian migrants is strongly connected with a search for a limited range of events – objects of needs. More than that, it seems that premeditated migration levels the factors of social difficulties and preserves the cultural factors of well-being.

Cognitive component index of subjective well-being of foreigners and Russian citizens differ in dependence of satisfaction with education, financial position, social atmosphere, services sector and health service, availability of jobs (table 2). The higher level of satisfaction among foreigners living in Russia (30% of spheres) demonstrates that there are no premises for their unhappiness. Moreover, they are highly satisfied with the spheres that are most important for normal life activity.

Table 2. Cognitive component of well-being in figures

Spheres of satisfaction	Foreigners in Russia (1)	Russians abroad (2)	Russians in Russia (3)	Student’s t-criteria (1-2)	Student’s t-criteria (1-3)	Student’s t-criteria (2-3)
Education	0.44	0.92	1.10	2.21*	3.82**	0.03
Relationships with administration	1.54	1.16	1.25	1.94*	1.36	0.52
Work conditions	1.02	1.39	1.11	2.03*	0.49	1.68
Financial position	1.00	1.79	1.73	5.01**	3.51**	0.34
Relationships with a child	1.36	1.07	1.41	1.63	0.28	2.10*
Social situation	1.48	1.73	1.96	1.31	2.12*	1.34
Services sector	1.20	0.91	1.75	1.60	2.55*	4.70**
Health service	1.26	1.36	2.30	0.60	4.36**	4.62**
Possibility to organize vacation	1.62	1.06	1.83	2.38*	0.93	4.10

Possibility to choose jobs	1.26	1.94	2.01	4.06**	3.56**	0.39**
Way of life in general	1.14	1.46	1.11	2.11*	0.13	2.06*
Satisfaction with life (integral index)	1.15	1.10	1.41	0.48	2.49*	3.01*

Note: * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

At the same time, there are distinctions in satisfaction level of foreigners in Russia and Russian migrants (35% of spheres). Thus, satisfaction with education ($t=2.21$, $p<.05$), work conditions ($t=2.03$, $p<.05$), financial position ($t=5.01$, $p<.01$), possibility to choose jobs ($t=4.06$, $p<.01$), way of living in general ($t=2.11$, $p<.05$) is higher among foreigners; satisfaction with relations with administration ($t=1.96$, $p<.05$), possibility to organize vacation ($t=2.38$, $p<.05$) is higher among Russian migrants to Spain. In other words, the spheres of difference are closer to the groups of Russians and Russian migrants.

Let us examine the correlative links between various components of subjective well-being in the groups under test. Lack of coordination between emotional and cognitive components is detected among foreigners living in Russia (connection between their integral data is insignificant ($r=0.03$, $p>.05$)); the only connection detected is the connection with satisfaction in relationships (with friends ($r=0.32$, $p<.01$) and parents ($r=0.37$, $p<.01$)). At the same time, there is an interconnection between integral index of a cognitive component and tension and sensibility ($r=0.31$, $p<.01$) and mood changing ($r=0.33$, $p<.01$). The latter indicates that despite the increase of satisfaction with different spheres of life activity the index of mood changing rises. This may be the evidence of more profound reasons for subjective well-being decrease at the expense of the emotional component of the foreigners.

There is a direct relation between cognitive and emotional components of subjective well-being among Russians – citizens of Russia ($r=0.41$, $p<.01$) and migrants ($r=0.37$, $p<.01$). It should be mentioned that the emotional component of subjective well-being of Russian citizens is determined by satisfaction with relationships with colleagues ($r=0.30$, $p<.01$), subjects of professional activity ($r=0.46$, $p<.01$), social status ($r=0.27$, $p<.01$) and financial position ($r=0.26$, $p<.01$), relationships with friends ($r=0.32$, $p<.01$), spending leisure time ($r=0.34$, $p<.01$), way of living in general ($r=0.35$, $p<.01$) [40% of spheres]. Besides, mood changing ($r=0.44$, $p<.01$), importance of social environment ($r=0.43$, $p<.01$) and self-definition of one's state of health ($r=0.47$, $p<.01$) are connected with an integral index of satisfaction. This means that evaluation of the spheres of life activity from the point of satisfaction with these spheres plays a significant role in emotional subjective well-being of Russian citizens. There is the same situation with Russian migrants, when a cognitive component (75% of spheres of life activity) is connected with an emotional component in strict compliance and integrity between them. Probably it has to do with the world view of the migrants who move abroad for permanent residence and some changes in the system of personal values.

Let us pay attention to the core substructures of the cognitive component of subjective well-being in different samples. Thus, the structure of Russian migrants consists of satisfaction with education, work in general, social status, relationship with friends, possibility to organize vacation, possibility to choose jobs, with services sector, entertainment, way of living in general, which have interconnections with other characteristics. The structure includes 50% of highly important links and is rather stable. The professional and vocational components are the core.

The structure of Russian citizens is characterized by a great amount of interconnections (75% of highly important links); the core substructure includes satisfaction with financial position, social situation, social status, relationships with colleagues, subjects of professional activity. However, a great amount of connections makes its

stability doubtful. Nevertheless, the core substructure consists of fundamental spheres that are notable for high importance for people under test.

The structure of foreigners combines only 23% of highly important links. It is probably caused by a mismatch of cognitive components of subjective well-being, opposition of different spheres, based on different personal values (what needs to be studied additionally). The core substructure includes satisfaction with the one's social status, work in general, relationships with colleagues, relationships with administration and between spouses. It better displays the professional (industrial) sphere of life activity.

4. Conclusions

Premeditated migration as a phenomenon of social behavior is a factor of subjective well-being of a personality. Foreigners in Russia and Russian citizens demonstrate the highest level of the emotional component of subjective unhappiness in contrast to migrants from Russia.

Interconnection of the emotional and the cognitive components (consistency) of subjective well-being supports a higher level of its stability among Russian citizens and migrants from Russia as opposed to migrants to Russia.

Both, migrants to Russia and native inhabitants of Russia demonstrate similar results in satisfaction with their life activity in a number of spheres (of minor importance). There are serious distinctions in level of satisfaction in up to 35% of spheres of life activity of different combinations of groups under test.

The core substructures of characteristics of the cognitive (evaluation) component of subjective well-being of migrants (to Russia and from Russia) include professional spheres, subjective well-being of Russians – social and everyday spheres. The higher integrity of various characteristics of cognitive-valuation component of subjective well-being among Russian citizens and migrants from Russia is discovered.

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