

THE INFLUENCE OF CULTURAL AND ETHNIC FACTOR ON THE FORMATION OF INDEPENDENCE OR PERSONAL HELPLESSNESS (BASED ON THE STUDY OF YOUNG MIGRANTS FROM CENTRAL ASIA)

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Acknowledgements: The study was supported by the Russian Foundation for Basic Research grant (project No. 19-013-00949A, Cultural and ethnic determinants of independence-personal helplessness of young people in Russia and neighboring countries (based on the material of migrants from Central Asia)).

Abstract: The article substantiates the cultural and ethnic factors of the formation of personal helplessness and independence based on the study of migrants from Central Asia. The factors are indicators of cultural values and ethnic identity of migrants. Personal characteristics, determining the behavior, activities and relationships of a migrant, can contribute to or hinder the process of adaptation and integration into the host community. As a result of the conducted research, it was found that the features of cultural values and ethnic identity act as a risk factor for the formation of personal helplessness. The data obtained form the basis for the development and testing of programs of psychoprophylaxis and psychological correction of personal helplessness, programs to support the adaptation process in migrants.

Keywords: personal helplessness, independence, cultural and ethnic factor, ethnic identity, cultural values, migrants, adaptation.

1 Introduction

The dynamism of social processes taking place in the life of modern society, the unstable socio-economic situation of recent decades have an unpredictable and uncontrollable impact for most people, the programs of modernization of social and economic spheres carried out by the state cause difficulties not only of a financial nature, but also psychological. The necessity to be involved in the innovation processes being implemented requires, in addition to material, financial costs, stress resistance of people, their psychological readiness for changes and innovations.

Human behavior in a difficult life situation is complicated and has ambiguous effects and consequences. When a stressful event occurs, homeostasis, the internal balance of the subject is disturbed. The choice of resources for effective stress management is influenced by the personal characteristics of the subject and environmental factors. The ability of a person to resist the forces that disrupt his internal balance is an extremely important characteristic of his life activity. Everyday observations show a clear connection between personal formations, characteristics of the subject (stability, features of attributive style, self-esteem, level of anxiety, potential resources, features of coping behavior, etc.), and how the subject realizes himself, achieves his goals, overcomes various kinds of difficulties. Uncontrolled social, economic and political events that are traumatic for the subject can act as a predictor of the formation of personal helplessness in the latter (Tsiring, 2010).

Despite the achievements in the development of the psychology of personal helplessness, the genesis of research on this phenomenon indicates that only some aspects of personal helplessness are in the attention of scientists. The main factor in the formation of personal helplessness are violations in the style of family relationships, in addition, as the causes of personal helplessness may be traumatic events beyond the control of the individual's influence, a number of social indicators: the level of material security, the completeness of the family, external serious social, economic, political incidents. In addition, we assume that there are cultural and ethnic factors in the formation of personal helplessness. The revealed fragmentary nature of research on personal helplessness hinders the holistic study of the subject, the representation of the psyche in the unity of its organization, the study of behavior, activity as mediated by the

inner world of a person. Therefore, for a more holistic and in-depth understanding of the nature of the phenomenon of personal helplessness, a systematic view of environmental, namely cultural and ethnic factors of the formation of this characteristic is necessary. The study of cultural and ethnic determinants of personal helplessness will enable not only to develop the concept of personal helplessness, discovering new data on the nature of personal helplessness, but also to create a theoretical basis for solving applied problems related to the correction of the phenomenon under study, the question of which also remains open today.

Thus, further development of the psychology of personal helplessness in the context of a detailed study of the factors of its formation can answer a number of questions concerning the nature of personal helplessness, its possible prevention and correction.

2 Literature Review

Personal helplessness, understood as a set of psychological and behavioral characteristics of an individual, affects the behavior and activity of the latter, leaving an imprint on his relationship with other people, on his self-attitude. In the concept of personal helplessness, actively developed in the national school of Psychology (Tsiring, 2010; Zabelina et al., 2018; Evstafyeva, 2013; Ponomareva, 2013; Klimova & Tsiring, 2017; Tsiring & Sizova, 2018) within the framework of the subject-activity approach, personal helplessness is defined as "the quality of the subject, which is the unity of certain personal characteristics arising from the interaction of internal conditions with external ones, determining the low level of subjectivity, that is, the low ability of a person to transform reality, manage the events of his own life, set and achieve goals, overcoming various difficulties" (Tsiring, 2010, p. 195). Personal helplessness allows the subject to reduce the traumatic impact of a difficult life situation, providing an adaptive effect due to the perception of events as beyond his control. Studies on personal helplessness (Zabelina et al., 2018; Ponomareva, 2013; Evstafyeva, 2013; Klimova & Tsiring, 2017) describe the content of the phenomenon under study, structural components are identified, the family is studied as the main factor in the formation of personal helplessness, the relationship with some aspects of life, various types of personal helplessness in adolescents are identified.

It should be noted that D. A. Tsiring (2010), the author of the concept of personal helplessness, proved the continuity of the nature of personal helplessness, the opposite characteristic of which is the independence of the subject, which determines a high level of subjectivity (Tsiring, 2010). Independence, as a characteristic of the subject that is opposite in its content, determines the peculiarities of an individual's life activity in such a way that his behavior, activity and relationships turn out to be a manifestation of a high ability to transform reality, to act as an active beginning of his own life position (Tsiring, 2010).

The cultural and ethnic factor includes the traditional way of life, features of human reproduction and everyday life, characteristics of the worldview, methods of socialization of children and adolescents, beliefs, various cultural traditions, socio-legal and moral and ethical norms, and others (Kharitonov et al., 2004; Safarova, 2020). The culture of society and peculiarities of a particular ethnic group are extremely important factors in the formation of a subject (Warikoo & Carter, 2009), they influence the behavior and activity of an individual, starting from the nature of solving everyday issues and ending with the peculiarities of personal, family and professional activities. The influence of ethnic factors on the formation of personal helplessness can also be considered from the point of view of cultural characteristics (collectivism-individualism) of the family's region of residence. By dividing cultures into collectivist and individualist, differences in the behavior of

representatives of different cultures are explained (Schwartz et al., 2012a, 2012b; Vietze et al., 2019).

Consideration of ethnic factors in relation to the ethnic identity of subjects, in our opinion, will provide valuable data on the factors contributing to the formation of personal helplessness. Ethnic identity as awareness of belonging to a certain ethnic community enables a child to realize, on the one hand, his identity with the group, and on the other– his own uniqueness (Stefanenko, 1999). Belonging to a certain group creates a sense of security, satisfies the need for belonging, and sets common life values. The level of ethnic identity affects the attitude towards oneself as a whole: the higher the level of ethnic identity, the more positive the self-attitude (Mironov, 2012). Positive ethnic identity, which consists in the subject's awareness of belonging to his ethnic group, assessing the significance of ethnicity, showing interest in the history and culture of his people, a sense of national pride, forms the basis of effective socialization and professionalization, contribute to successful productive personal and professional development (Stefanenko, 1999). Therefore, it is important to study ethnic identity in individuals with personal helplessness, to identify the main guidelines that it sets. In addition, we assume that through the development and change of ethnic identity, through the formation of a positive ethnic identity, it is possible to correct personal helplessness.

3 Research Methodological Framework

The purpose of this work is to assess the influence of the cultural and ethnic factor on the formation of independence and personal helplessness on the material of migrants from Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan). In accordance with the purpose, the objectives of the study were put forward: to diagnose the phenomena under study (personal helplessness/independence, ethnic identity, cultural values) in migrants of Central Asia and, based on the results obtained, to conduct a discriminant analysis; to interpret the data obtained.

The general scheme of empirical research was determined by the purpose of the work. In accordance with the purpose of the study, the sample consisted of two groups of respondents: migrants from Central Asia (N=222, average age 20.84, median 20). The survey of respondents was conducted using Google Forms.

The research methods were questionnaire survey, testing method, methods of mathematical data processing. The testing and questionnaire survey were conducted in an individual form. The questionnaire allowed us to collect data on socio-demographic indicators. The following research methods were used: the questionnaire of personal helplessness (Klimova & Tsiring, 2017), the questionnaire "Types of ethnic identity" (Soldatova & Ryzhova, 1998), the method of G. Hofstede (2015) "Value survey module", the method of studying cultural values S. Schwartz (Schwartz et al., 2012a, 2012b). Mathematical methods of statistical data processing are presented by methods of descriptive statistics, discriminant analysis. Discriminant analysis is used to decide which variables distinguish (discriminate) two or more emerging aggregates (groups). In this study, discriminant analysis is used to determine the cultural and ethnic determinants of personal helplessness and independence of youth from neighboring countries.

4 Results and Discussion

To study the cultural and ethnic factors of personal helplessness and independence, two groups of respondents were formed based on the results of the diagnosis (questionnaire of personal helplessness (Klimova & Tsiring, 2017)): subjects with personal helplessness (N=56) and subjects with independence (N=94). Subjects with intermediate indicators were not included in the further study (N=72). In order to determine the totality of cultural and ethnic factors of the formation of personal helplessness, we conducted a discriminant analysis, based on the obtained indicators of ethnic identity and cultural values, in

groups of subjects with personal helplessness and subjects with independence. The results are shown in tables 1-4. As a method, the Wilks method was used, referring to step-by-step methods. Table 1 shows the coefficient λ (Wilks Lambda), the F -criterion and the level of significance that characterize significant differences in average values for the studied groups of youth with personal helplessness and independence from Central Asia.

Table 1 Average values, Wilks lambda coefficients, F-criteria and significance levels of cultural and ethnic factor indicators among Central Asian youth with personal helplessness and independence

| Discriminant variables | The average values of the cultural and ethnic factor indicators among the youth of Central Asia | | λ | F | P |
|---|---|-------------------|-----------|--------|--------------|
| | with personal helplessness | with independence | | | |
| Indicators of cultural values (Schwartz et al., 2012a, 2012b) | | | | | |
| Conformity | 3,53036 | 4,18617 | 0,947 | 8,293 | 0,005 |
| Traditions | 3,19464 | 4,07660 | 0,907 | 15,258 | 0,000 |
| Kindness | 4,06607 | 5,19043 | 0,876 | 20,994 | 0,000 |
| Universalism | 3,79643 | 4,75213 | 0,902 | 16,147 | 0,000 |
| Independence | 3,74286 | 5,07872 | 0,831 | 30,115 | 0,000 |
| Stimulation | 3,54643 | 4,46064 | 0,900 | 16,431 | 0,000 |
| Hedonism | 3,95179 | 4,76170 | 0,925 | 11,934 | 0,001 |
| Power | 2,83929 | 3,40638 | 0,954 | 7,088 | 0,009 |
| Safety | 3,76071 | 4,87872 | 0,869 | 22,330 | 0,000 |
| Achievements | 3,68214 | 4,84362 | 0,846 | 27,011 | 0,000 |
| Value survey module (Hofstede, 2015) | | | | | |
| Power Distance (PDI) | 3,31250 | 3,12234 | 0,968 | 4,863 | 0,029 |
| Individualism (IDV) | 2,82143 | 2,78191 | 0,998 | ,273 | 0,602 |
| Masculinity (MAS) | 3,07589 | 3,27660 | 0,960 | 6,236 | 0,014 |
| Uncertainty Avoidance (UAI) | 3,34375 | 3,17553 | 0,979 | 3,140 | 0,078 |
| Types of ethnic identity (Soldatova, Рызгова, 1998) | | | | | |
| Ethnonigilism | 13,62500 | 16,43617 | 0,924 | 12,222 | 0,001 |
| Ethnic indifference | 8,66071 | 8,27660 | 0,997 | 0,482 | 0,489 |
| Positive ethnic identity | 6,16071 | 4,11702 | 0,960 | 6,189 | 0,014 |
| Ethno - egoism | 14,51786 | 16,53191 | 0,966 | 5,216 | 0,024 |
| Ethno - isolationism | 14,35714 | 16,59574 | 0,956 | 6,800 | 0,010 |
| Ethno - phanatism | 14,19643 | 15,24468 | 0,987 | 1,877 | 0,017 |

Source: authors' own processing

Further, we carried out the interpretation of the data obtained. According to the results of the discriminant analysis, indicators of cultural values, ethnic identity and learned helplessness are associated with the fact of the formation of personal helplessness/independence. Cultural and ethnic characteristics, acting as discriminant variables, indicated in Table 1, act as variables, the differences in which between groups of migrant youth with personal helplessness and independence are statistically significant, except for indicators of ethnic indifference and individualism (IDV). Turning to the average values, it can be noted that the formation of cultural values acts as a factor preventing the development of personal helplessness. Values and value orientations, acting as a guideline, form the independence of the subject. The distance of power, according to the results obtained, is more pronounced in respondents with personal helplessness. "The power distance is the degree to which people who have no power or have little power agree that power is unevenly distributed in society" (Hofstede, 2015, p.

32). The indicators of the distance of power are different depending on the country of residence and its cultural characteristics. Hofstede notes that at the cultural level there is a "collective programming" of consciousness, which includes as stages the experience of relationships in the family, school, university (or other educational institution) and at work, as well as the peculiarities of state power and the ideology of the country. In families from countries with a long distance of power, the need for a respectful and dutiful attitude towards adults is conveyed to the child, and independent behavior and independence are not encouraged. Parents remain throughout their lives an authority for their child, who makes all important decisions only with their approval. In families of countries with a small distance of power, the child is perceived by parents as a partner, relationships are built on equal rights from an early age, the child is taught to make independent decisions and be responsible for them. Thus, according to the results obtained, a large distance of power acts as a factor that increases the risk of personal helplessness.

Analyzing the indicator of masculinity (MAS), we can note that it is more characteristic of subjects with independence. According to Hofstede, the cultural stereotypes accepted in society regarding masculinity and femininity begin to be transmitted to the child in the family. So, in countries with a masculinity culture, children are taught ambition, rivalry, ambition, the ability to assert themselves, form leadership qualities and the desire for success. In feminine cultures, children are taught values such as modesty, obedience, respect for the elders, the priority of harmonious relationships with others over personal success, form the ability to find a compromise in controversial situations, as well as adapt to society. Children brought up in a culture of femininity do not strive to achieve high results. Masculinity, acting as a cultural value, prevents the formation of personal helplessness and is typical of young people with independence.

The next indicator of national culture – avoidance of uncertainty (UAI) – is more characteristic of respondents with personal helplessness. A high level of uncertainty avoidance implies a clearer adherence to rules and regulations, defining the boundaries of what are possible and available, dangerous and non-dangerous, which helps to reduce anxiety, fear, ambiguity and unpredictability. In countries with a high degree of uncertainty avoidance, people feel the need for formalized clear guidelines and norms of behavior, a strict distinction between "bad" and "good". In cultures with a low level of uncertainty avoidance, people are characterized by calmness, tolerance and carelessness. The norms of relationships in these countries are also present, but residents understand that depending on the situation, they can behave differently, be more flexible, adaptive and tolerant to new and uncertain situations, experiences, people or ideas. The high degree of avoidance of uncertainty, characteristic of both the culture in which a person lives and subsequently himself, acts as a predictor determining the risk of personal helplessness.

In addition to indicators of cultural values, we studied the ethnic identity of respondents from Central Asia. Thus, the predicative marker of the formation of personal helplessness was the indicator of positive ethnic identity. Positive identity implies a tolerant attitude towards one's own ethnicity, as well as tolerant views towards other ethnic groups. The data obtained on the relationship between personal helplessness and positive ethnic identity allow us to conclude that the combination of a positive attitude towards one's own people with a positive attitude towards other peoples is more typical of young people from Central Asia with personal helplessness. The indicators of ethnonihilism, ethno-egoism, ethno-isolationism and ethno-fanaticism are more pronounced in subjects with independence. Ethnonihilism implies the search by the subject for socio-psychological options to unite with other people, while an ethnic trait does not act as a significant indicator for building relationships. It is easier for people with independence to build harmonious relationships with others at the expense of common interests, their own uniqueness, without resorting to ethnic

criteria. Types of ethnic identity, assuming to varying degrees the expression of the belief in the superiority of "their" people over others, are also more pronounced in subjects with independence and act as a factor in the formation of independence. These types of identity include ethno-egoism, ethno-isolationism, and ethno-fanaticism. Migrants from Central Asian countries, who distinguish "in-group" and "out-group" among the inhabitants according to ethnic criteria, recognize the priority of ethnic rights of the people over human rights, and are also ready to justify the presence of victims in the struggle for the well-being of their people. The severity of the ethnic orientation sets a clearer understanding of one's own ideals, allows one to realize one's ethnic superiority, to understand who is "friend" and who is "foe". All these aspects can act as a life guideline, allowing the subject to be more self-confident and independent. However, the severity of the types of ethnic identity listed above may pose a threat to national security and provoke interethnic conflicts. These results require additional empirical verification, but, nevertheless, open to us a different understanding of the phenomenon of independence in the context of the study of ethnic factors of the formation of personal helplessness and independence.

Table 2 shows the values of the discriminant function.

Table 2 Basic statistics of the canonical discriminant function

| Function | Proper value | % of variance | Total % | Canonical correlation | λ | Chi square | p |
|----------|--------------|---------------|---------|-----------------------|-----------|------------|--------|
| 1 | 2,195 | 100,0 | 100,0 | 0,829 | 0,313 | 169,598 | 0,0001 |

Source: authors' own processing

Based on the data obtained, we can say that the canonical discriminant function is informative and explains 100% of the variance, and also with a Wilks value of 0.313 and a statistical significance of $p=0.0001$, indicates that the set of discriminant variables has a good discriminative ability. However, not all variables were included in the discriminant equation, which is due to taking into account not only their discriminative ability, but also their unique contribution to the aggregate with the rest of the variables.

Table 3 shows the coefficients of the canonical discriminant function.

Table 3 Coefficients of the canonical discriminant function

| Function | Masculinity (MAS) | Ethno-isolationism | Ethno-fanaticism |
|----------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| 1 | -0,236 | -0,493 | 0,354 |

Source: authors' own processing

The coefficients of the canonical discriminant function indicated in Table 3 characterize the contribution of each variable to the value of the discriminant function, taking into account the influence of the other variables. Thus, the indicators of masculinity (MAS), ethno-isolationism and ethno-fanaticism make the greatest contribution to the value of the discriminant function that divides migrants into independent and personally helpless.

Table 4 shows the combined intra-group correlations between discriminant variables and the standardized canonical discriminant function.

Table 4 Structural matrix

| Characteristic | Function |
|--------------------|----------|
| Ethno-isolationism | -0,145 |
| Masculinity (MAS) | -0,139 |
| Ethno-phanatism | -0,076 |

Source: authors' own processing

The variables presented in Table 4 are ordered by the absolute value of the correlation in the function. Thus, the greatest absolute correlation is observed between the discriminant function and the indicator of ethno-isolationism. According to the data obtained, the discriminant equation includes indicators of ethno-isolationism, ethno-fanaticism and masculinity, which contribute to the differentiation of respondents – migrants from

Central Asian countries – into personally helpless and independent. The severity of these indicators contributes to the formation of independence. With a low level of severity, these indicators act as risk factors for the formation of personal helplessness.

5 Conclusion

The process of adaptation requires the individual to mobilize personal resources. The success of adaptation depends not so much on external factors as on the internal characteristics of the subject. Personal characteristics, determining the behavior, activities and relationships of a migrant, can contribute to or hinder the process of adaptation and integration into the host community. The study of cultural and ethnic factors of the formation of personal helplessness includes the study of the ethnic living conditions of the individual, the system of cultural values, as well as the ethnic identity of the subject. This study opens up the possibility of a holistic and deep understanding of the studied phenomena - personal helplessness and independence, enables to create a basis for the development and testing of programs of psychoprophylaxis and psychological correction of personal helplessness, programs to support the adaptation process in migrants.

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Primary Paper Section: A

Secondary Paper Section: AN, AO