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X AND Y GENERATIONS IN BASHKORTOSTAN REPUBLIC: CONTINUITY AND TRANSFORMATION OF VALUES

Dilara Yagafarova (a)*, Nailya Shamshutdinova (b), Olesya Akhmetova (c),
Elmira Adigamova (a)
*Corresponding author

- (a) Center for the Study of Social Development and the Formation of Human Capital of Institute for Strategic Studies of the Republic of Bashkortostan, 15, Kirova st., Ufa, Russia, dilara.yagafarova@yandex.ru, 8 (347) 272-78-34
- (b) Center for the Study of Social Development and the Formation of Human Capital of Institute for Strategic Studies of the Republic of Bashkortostan, 15, Kirova st., Ufa, Russia, shamsutdinovank@gmail.com, 8 (347) 272-78-34
- (c) Center for the Study of Social Development and the Formation of Human Capital of Institute for Strategic Studies of the Republic of Bashkortostan, 15, Kirova st., Ufa, Russia, isyangulovaei@isirb.ru 8 (347) 272-78-34
- (d) OOO RN-BashNIPneft, 31, K. Marksa st., Ufa, Russia, olesya_log@mail.ru

Abstract

The article studies the issue of integrating the young generations of the Republic of Bashkortostan into the modern society. From the methodological point of view the study is based on the Strauss–Howe generational theory according to which the changing social and historical conditions ensure the development of a specific background. The study based on the results of a representative survey of the population of the Republic of Bashkortostan and a series of in-depth interviews with the representatives of two generations shows the dynamics of the values of generation Y born at the turn of the Soviet and post-Soviet eras, and generation X, which is the generation of their parents socializing in Soviet times. The study made it possible to analyze values from generation to generation, their transformation depending on external conditions of social environment. In general, a trend has been revealed for the development of more independent type of personality, more inclined to innovative solutions and pro-active and focused on their own strength compared to previous generations. The following peculiarities of behavior in different fields and aspects of life are considered: reproductive attitudes and family values, migratory attitudes, income level and material well-being, labor behavior and employment. The article confirms the research hypothesis that in a relatively short time, norms of society, the nature of relationships in the family and society have undergone rapid and significant changes. However, at the same time, it can be concluded that the reproduction of traditional models and the basic value core continues.

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1. Introduction

The modern image of Russia is largely determined by the younger generation, whose social life took place in the era of the transformation of the social and economic as well as political systems of society. Both the attitudes and life guides of today's youth are qualitatively different than those of the previous era, which poses the problem of integrating the modern generation into society.

This is influenced by following reasons: changes in the social and economic structure of society, process of technological development, manifestation of new forms of social and cultural dynamics, and political transformations. New social conditions create new specific forms of behavior that meet the challenges of the time.

The integration implies a two-way process, i.e. transformation and continuity of values of generations, as well as adaptation to changing social and economic conditions. It is possible to single out a set of problems that hinder the integration of young people, i.e. the generation gap, differences in social experience, change in demographic behavior, problems with employment and provision of optimal income level.

2. Problem Statement

The provision of innovative development of the Russian Federation and response to new global challenges are connected with the use of the innovative potential of young people. This in turn determines the relevance of improving the youth policy. At the same time there is a contradiction between the declared goals of state youth policy and the real integration of young people into the social and economic as well as social and cultural space of the Russian Federation and its regions. Young people are economically and socially the most active part of the population, however, the discrepancy between possibilities for meeting the needs of young people does not allow them to effectively apply their innovative potential (Zubok, 2004).

The research project is aimed at studying the problem of generation gap, the mechanism of social and cultural continuity and the need to adapt to new social and economic realities.

In the 20th century, the topic of generations was developed in the works of such sociologists as Mannheim (2000), Eisenstadt (2015), et al. The problem of generations attracted them because of the possibility of contact with the "factory" of social processes (Mannheim, 2000) explaining the peculiarities of the interaction of individuals constituting one generation, as well as the interaction of different generations.

In general, a generation is a social and demographic as well as cultural and historical community of individuals united by age and conditions of establishment and functioning in a specific historical period. The generation is marked with features of anthropogenetic, social and psychological, ethnic and cultural features, values, social experience and lifestyle.

The study is based on the Strauss–Howe generational theory according to which the basic values of individuals change over time and are associated with experienced events and peculiarities of upbringing (Isaeva, 2011; Lyons, 2012; Guillot-Soulez, 2014). In the framework of the theory adjusted for Russian mentality, several modern groups of generation are singled out, i.e. silent generation (1923-1943), baby boomers (1944-1963), Generation X (1964-1984), Generation Y (1985 -1999), Generation Z (2000-2020).

3. Research Questions

The research is focused on the specifics of the integration of generation Y into modern society. At the moment, generation Y, i.e. people aged 19-34, is both socially and economically most active generation. In Russia, the socialization of this generation is associated with a complex of significant historical as well as social and economic events: the collapse of the Soviet system, a significant change in the trend of political, social and economic development of the country, the default of 1998, growth in the development of digital technologies, and virtualization of social space. All this is the specific features of new historical epoch. The generation Y is an agent that collided and perceived new social and economic ways of interaction.

The boundaries of generations are not so clear, there are different approaches to the identification of generation groups; however, the most standards allow us to define generation Y as a group of people born in 1984-1999.

The project tested several hypotheses. Firstly, it is assumed that with the social changes of the end of the 20th century there was a change of social elevators, which were typical for generation X, however new ones have not yet emerged. The next statement is that the values, motives and models of behavior are mainly transmitted from the parents and impede their successful integration, since they do not meet modern realities. However, new life conditions ensure the establishment of new values, which gradually leads to a systematic change in the lifestyle and life priorities.

4. Purpose of the Study

Thus, the aim of the project is to study current trends, factors, contradictions and to identify the prospects for social and economic and social and cultural integration of young generations into the social space of the region.

5. Research Methods

Several research methods were used in the project. First, the analysis of secondary quantitative data on the results of a large-scale sociological study “Strategy for social and economic development of the Republic of Bashkortostan until 2030” (Data from the sociological study, 2015) was involved. The object of study: population of the Republic of Belarus aged 18 to 75, sample: quota, stratified by the type of settlement and social and economic areas of the Republic of Bashkortostan with the assigned quotas at the stage of selection by age, sex, sample size: 6270 people, research method: self-filling at the place of residence. This study made it possible to examine in detail and compare generation gaps.

A qualitative research methodology was used, i.e. a series of in-depth interviews with representatives of Generation Y (1985–98) and Generation X (1964–1984 birth). The formation of a cluster, its social and demographic characteristics is implemented on the basis of hypotheses based on the analysis of secondary data. The selection of respondents was implemented by the method of developing quotas equal in number; sampling by targeted selection included typical representatives of generations, taking into account their gender, level of education, primary socialization in urban or rural areas.

The study used biographical method that allowed focusing on the life history of generations. The method allowed the authors to evaluate the effects of the influence of historical events on society, the dynamics of changes in values and patterns of behavior in the lives of different generations (Saganenko, Geger, & Stepanova, 2011). The methodology of empirical research is based on the stages of human life cycle. The biographical interview allowed to build the story of a person's life from childhood to the present moment. Thus, a comparative analysis of the values of young people in the Republic of Bashkortostan born in 1990s and in the period of Brezhnev, i.e. Soviet "perestroika" time was carried out.

6. Findings

The theory of generations is described as the influence on life strategies and behavior of people of the historical and social and economic conditions where they socialize and develop their personality. It is quite difficult to identify these differences since the orientation and values are often influenced by the life cycle stages, i.e. the older generation, because of their age, assess the events and choose a behavioral model in a different manner compared to the young one.

However, the expansion of technologies had a significant impact on people's lifestyles, contributing to a change in worldview with the prevalence of traditional basic values. In Russia, this is connected not only with the change in both social system and economic systems, or with the transition from a survival strategy to the strategy of self-expression with an increase in the economic well-being of the state, but also with a fundamentally new lifestyle.

The most vividly revealed are the gaps in the values of generations with regard to assessments of innovation, readiness for new things, changes ("I like to live in a changing world": generation Y is 74.2%, generation X is 58.0%), focusing mainly on themselves ("the man is the architect of his or her own fortunes": 76.3% and 66.3%, respectively), manifestations of initiative ("the main thing is the initiative; search for something new at work, life": 73.1% and 55.9%), careful attitude to the surrounding social space ("the majority of people are trustworthy": 28.7% and 35.8%).

A similar phenomenon is revealed when analyzing terminal values. Starting from the generation of 1922-1943, the so-called "silent generation", and up to generation Y, the values have gradually changed. In addition to such significant basic aspects of life as health and family (the least affected by any changes), the influence of values of the information society is manifested. This trend is gradually intensified in the generation Y, i.e. the choice of the job you like, spiritual growth, creativity (generation Y is 14.1%, generation X is 9.4%); friends and communication (35.5% and 28.8%, respectively); unlimited material resources (23.5% and 19.3%); freedom and independence (28.5% and 22.9%); high position in society (18.5% and 7.5%). Specific to generation Y is the need for mental well-being, self-harmony (generation Y is 18.9% and generation X is 30.1%); quiet safe life (34.4% and 47.9%). Interestingly enough, the choice of priorities of generations does not depend on the type of settlement, i.e. for urban and rural environments the choice in the similar age groups is the same, which indicates the presence of more objective determinants rather than living conditions.

An important indicator illustrating the specific nature of changes in values are qualities that parents consider necessary to bring up in their child. There is a basic set of traits that barely change from generation to generation, i.e. a sense of responsibility, hard work, tolerance and respect for others. However, there is

a set of values, character traits the importance of which varies from generation to generation and points to generation gaps, i.e. independence (“silent” generation is 11.3% and generation Y is 33.7%), imagination (5.2% and 14.0%, respectively), stubbornness and perseverance (30.9% and 56.0%), sincerity (24.7% and 35.7%).

Among personal qualities there are the following features the importance of which is gradually decreasing: thriftiness and economy (54.6% and 39.6%, respectively), obedience and respect for elders (67.0% and 53.8%).

The choice of a particular value is certainly influenced by the stage of a person’s life cycle. However, there is a certain trend in the formation of a new type of personality with different behavioral models and strategies in life and the potential implementation.

One of the main features is the desire for independence and freedom. There is also reluctance and dislike for restrictions, as well as any outside pressure. The Ys often show a thirst for independence, the absence of dependent positions, there is an understanding that they must rely on themselves. In contrast to the Xs, the Ys are aimed at constant movement, showing immediate results.

The continuity of traditional family values as a whole is preserved within generation Y, with the formation of new patterns of behavior. For young people who have moved to the city the contradiction is especially typical, i.e. adjustment to social and economic realities contributes to a change in the gender regime in the family. With the greater prevalence of traditional values in the same generation, the traditional regime is more preferable, similar their parents, although the role of a woman in the family has been modernized, men have little participation in taking care for the family. The double burden on women is reproduced in the norms and practices of behavior of generation Y. The presence of brothers and sisters, the density of the affinity definitely has an impact on reproductive systems; however, the abundance of children as a norm is not reproduced. The child-centered approach in small families in the city contributes to the period lengthening of maturity of generation Y. Life experience of generation X and modern realities contribute to the consolidation as the norm of marriage after passing a period of training and employment. However, the socialization of generation X is characterized by high role of public institutions (which were called state institutions in the Soviet period) and for the representatives of generation Y it is not only the growing role of multi-generation family as an institution of socialization, but also the survival role.

In modern conditions, the question of choosing a labor strategy becomes crucial. The labor values, which have become fundamental, become a significant criterion that forms the future career model, the degree of satisfaction with their activities and determine the choice of profession and priorities. At the same time, the development of post-Soviet society has changed the area of occupation, since new forms of labor relations have emerged, new possibilities for implementing their labor potential. These transformations affected both of the studied generations.

The reforms carried out by the government of the Russian Federation in the 1990s led to a sharp drop in the standard of living of the population, an increase in unemployment, a reduction in production, and a drop in buying capacity. Survival has become a leading strategy that changed the labor installations of both generations. At the same time for the generation X the work was a vital necessity. For generation Y one of the prevailing strategies in terms of employability becomes freelance work. At the same time, there is an understanding that the conditions for implementing their potential are quite tough. However,

there are this choice implies some drawbacks. New life conditions make one sacrifice something to achieve professional goals. Quite often this “sacrifice” means less time spent with the family.

Moreover, a significant feature of generation Y as far as work is concerned is the ability to find the job that would bring pleasure. The generation X is conservative as the respondent’s occupation is associated with one activity and one place of work throughout his or her life. For the representatives of generation X the typical strategy would be home-work-home, while for the generation Y traveling and hobbies are becoming the inherent part of life.

At the same time, among the representatives of generation Y, the setting for financial well-being and high expectations from wages dominate, whereas, representatives of generation X, who survived the “perestroika” time, social and economic crises are ready to work for lower wages.

Childhood period of generation Y was at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s. They did not find stability and confidence in the financial well-being of the Soviet era, which was typical of generation X. In the childhood, they had an example of their parents who had to make great efforts to provide the family with minimal income, basic living conditions.

This generation treated money differently; it is them who had an idea to make money. Money was a driver to earn, move to another place and find another job. That was largely due to a completely different attitude of society in terms of wealth.

At the same time they were ready to spend money on their personal development, contribute to the family, and develop children. In the 2000s, the Ys had their part-time job, being college students as the desire for independence from their parents is great.

In the beginning of their life path, generation X was very active in terms of moving within the region: “we moved from one village to another”, “...we lived in a village and there was no place to work that is why we moved to the city to work”. Over time, the number of migrations was reduced, which was associated with family circumstances, stable way of life, stable social position, unwillingness to change the lifestyle of children.

Generation Y is much more active: “we did not live in my mother’s village or father’s place; there was built a village for working people in our region”, “I moved to Ufa, then I went to Kazan”, “when I graduated from 11th grade and moved to Ufa”, “we went to the suburbs of Moscow”. Their movements are mainly characterized by receiving vocational education in a large city of a region. Other migration activities are related to finding a job or a “better” lifestyle. However, as the representatives of this generation become mature, there is a shaping trend which can be described by the following saying “dry bread at home is better than roast meat abroad”.

7. Conclusion

Thus, the study analyzed the values and life reference models of generation Y, the socialization of which took place in the 1990s, and, on the other hand, generation X, the formation of which began in Brezhnev period of Soviet history and the years of “perestroika”. The results of study show the difference in life priorities, behavioral patterns, and a way of life that develop in specific historical as well as social and economic conditions. Representatives of the X and Y generations were faced with the task of accelerating adaptation in changing conditions of life, with the only difference that for some it happened in

the conditions of adulthood, at the stage of adolescence, and for others at the adult stage of life, with the developed patterns of behavior. Some difficulties that arise during socialization of generation Y are related to the fact that behavior and norms that were typical for older generation are not always relevant in modern society and do not allow to occupy a worthy niche. Besides, this new technological developments have significantly changed the way of life and affect the values of people, which create prerequisites for the development of new generation values. In a short period of time, the norms of society, the relationships in the family and society have undergone significant changes. At the same time, it can be said that the reproduction of the values core is in progress.

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