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**PSYCHOLOGICAL SPECIFIC FEATURES OF THE RUSSIANS  
WITH DIFFERENT LEVELS OF MIGRATORY INTENTIONS**

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***Abstract***

Emigration of the RF citizens presents a significant challenge for today's Russia in a socio-psychological dimension. The study aims to identify psychological characteristics of the Russians with different levels of migratory intentions. The methods used in the study included: the Schwartz Value Survey; the five-factor model of personality by R. R. McCrae and P.T. Costa; the LifeStyle Index by R. Plutchik, H. Kellerman & H.R. Conte; Preparedness to Risk Scale by A.M. Shubert; the World Assumptions Scale by R. Janoff-Bulman; the authorial modified Likert scale for identifying the level of emigration intentions (affective, cognitive and behavioral components); the J. Berry questionnaire for assessing acculturation (the variable "Perceived security"). The results were processed via SPSS Statistics 17.0 with the use of k-means clustering, single-factor variance analysis and comparison with the help of Student's T-test. Based on the sample's clustering (N = 200) the group with low level of migration intentions (N = 110) and the group with high level of intentions (N = 90) were revealed (the authorial modified Likert scale was applied). The third group (N = 100) involved the RF emigrants who have been residing in the EU for 1-9 years. The results of the comparison allowed for singling out statistically significant differences, compiling psychological portraits of each group. The data obtained can be widely applied in a social sphere, improve mental climate in societies and deepen contacts with Russian-speaking diasporas abroad.

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**Keywords:** Migration, personality intentions, levels of migratory intentions, cross-ethnic interaction.



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## 1. Introduction

Nowadays theories describing acculturation are large in number. Notable among the well-known researchers is Massey (2002) who in his “synthetic theory of international migration” argues that forces of gravity prevail in international migration; the more a state is open for the world system and the world economy, the more difficult it is to regulate flows of migrants and refugees. Works of Stouffer (1940), Lee (1966), Schwartz (Schwartz, Struch, & van der Kloot, 2002; Schwartz, 2006) are also worth mentioning.

In case of a migration shift a subjective, psychological interpretation of how the individual assesses his life prospects for a future and opportunities opening in a new country acquires particular importance. On the basis of the existing theoretical and methodological research efforts this study aims to identify psychological characteristics of the Russians with different levels of migratory intentions and emigrants.

## 2. Problem Statement

The existing methodological and theoretical approaches to investigating migratory intentions are quite heterogeneous and are traditionally fixed on models, which leads to underestimation of psychological factors of emergence, development and realization of personality migratory intentions. In most cases, situations are analyzed post factum.

## 3. Research Questions

By the start of the study we had put forward these hypotheses:

- migratory intentions consist of cognitive, affective and behavioral components;
- the respondents’ groups with different levels of migratory intentions are likely to differ in their psychological particularities.

## 4. Purpose of the Study

To identify psychological particularities of the respondents who are ready to relocation to another country and of Russian-speaking emigrants in the EU countries.

## 5. Research Methods

The first sample included 200 people – the RF citizens. The second sample involved 100 emigrants who have been residing in the EU for 1-9 years. Both samples were equalized by age, gender, education. The average age is 39 (from 19 to 56), 52% males, 48% females. The respondents are high school graduates or are receiving tertiary education. The results were processed via SPSS Statistics 17.0.

Thanks to the authorial modified Likert scale for identifying the level of migration intentions (15 items to assess cognitive, behavioral and affective components of migration intentions (Mostikov, n.d.) and the use of k-means clustering to process the data two clusters were singled out: the Russians with high level of migration intentions – HLMI (N = 90) and the Russians with low level of migration intentions – LLMI (N = 110). Indicators of significance of the data partition into two clusters are the results of multiple single-factor analysis of variance. F-criterion was statistically significant where  $p < 0.01$  for 14 out of 15 variables

involved in the analysis, which provides evidence of statistically significant differences between these clusters.

The data acquired through applying the Schwartz (1992) Value Survey, the five-factor model of personality by Costa and McCrae (1985), the Life Style Index by Plutchik, Kellerman, and Conte (1979), preparedness to risk scale by Shubert (as cited in Fetiskin, Kozlov, & Manuilov, 2005), the World Assumptions Scale by Janoff-Bulman (1992), the Berry (2006) questionnaire for assessing acculturation (the variable “Perceived security”) were used to reveal the presence (absence) of significant differences between the three groups of the respondents: the group with low level of migration intentions, the group with high level of migration intentions and the group of the Russians settled permanently in the EU countries.

To resolve this comparison we exploited Student’s t-test. This test is used for determining statistical significance of mean values differences. An important condition for t-test application is normalcy of distribution of the variables compared. In our case skewness values do not exceed 3 and kurtosis – 7 for each variable (Byrne, 2009), i.e. we can consider that the distribution of the variables will not differ essentially from normal one. Consequently, the use of Student’s t-test is correct.

## 6. Findings

The comparison of the groups made in the Shubert method of RSK (diagnostic of preparedness to risk) are presented in tables 01, 02, 03.

**Table 01.** Comparison of the group of emigrants and the group with LLMI in terms of their preparedness to risk

Variables	Mean values, emigrants	Mean values,LLMI	Student’s t-test value	P-level, p< 0.05
Preparedness to risk	-5.1	-9.8	-2.10	0.038

**Table 02.** Comparison of the group of emigrants and the group with HLMI in terms of their preparedness to risk

Variables	Mean values, emigrants	Mean values,HLMI	Student’s t-test value	P-level, p< 0.01
Preparedness to risk	-5.1	-14.3	-3.72	0.000

**Table 03.** Comparison of the groups with LLMI and HLMI in terms of their preparedness to risk

Variables	Mean values,HLMI	Mean values,LLMI	Student’s t-test value	P-level, p< 0.05
Preparedness to risk	-14.3	-9.8	-1.73	0.086

Emigrants significantly differ from other groups for the parameter “preparedness to risk”. The respondents with HLMI exhibit maximum penchant for risk-taking (-14.3) but after emigration readiness to take risk decreases (-5.1); the person “exhausts” this potential and tries to choose a less risky socio-psychological pattern of behavior. Preparedness to risk is a dynamic, situationally changeable construct of personality.

Next method to compare the data is 5-factor questionnaire by R. R. McCrae and P.T. Costa (5PFQ).

The respondents with low level of migration intentions exhibit low values of “extraversion” (43.6) and “emotional stability” (38.7) but high values of “agreeableness” (53.5) and “conscientiousness” (51.9). The subjects with high level of migratory intentions demonstrate intense “emotional stability” (49.1), but less pronounced “agreeableness” (45.5) and “conscientiousness” (47.3). Emigrants’ scores are closer to the testees with LLMI (one exception is the variable “openness”). We can conclude that the respondents with HLMI are emotional enough but it is not always easy for them to control this process. Taking into account the poorly pronounced “agreeableness” one can assume that this can lead to problems in family and interpersonal relationships.

Next questionnaire is “Life Style Index”, LSI by R. Plutchik, H. Kellerman & H.R. Conte.

In line with the data presented the respondents with HLMI demonstrate high intensity of almost all types of defense with the variables “denial” (6.6), “regression” (6.4), “projection” (7.3), and “substitution” (5.1) being dominant. The subjects with LLMI use these defenses to the minimum degree.

Enhanced psychological defenses in the respondents with high level of migration intentions testifies to severe stress and tension which are probably associated with “exclusion” of the existing social situation and one’s place in a society; it is a more emotional experience for them than for those who have already left for another country; emigrants exhibit less intense emotions. In both groups the use of primitive psychological defenses prevails.

The exploitation of J. Berry questionnaire for assessing acculturation (the variable “perceived security”) gave us the opportunity to trace the following tendencies (tables 04, 05, 06).

**Table 04.** Comparison of the group of migrants and the LLMI group according to the level of the intensity of security values

Variables	Mean values, emigrants	Mean values, LLMI	Student’s t-test value	P-level p < 0.01
Cultural security	13.5	12.9	-3.08	0.000
Economic security	10.4	11.9	4.55	0.000
Physical security	15.1	16.5	4.80	0.002

**Table 05.** Comparison of the group of emigrants and the HLMI group according to the level of the intensity of security values

Variables	Mean values, emigrants	Mean values, HLMI	Student’s t-test value	P-level p < 0.01
Cultural security	13.5	12.7	-3.26	0.001
Economic security	10.4	10.9	1.77	0.077
Physical security	15.1	15.3	0.615	0.540

**Table 06.** Comparison of the HLMI and LLMI groups according to the level of the intensity of security values

Variables	Mean values, HLMI	Mean values, LLMI	Student’s t-test value	P-level p < 0.01
Cultural security	12.7	12.9	-0.68	0.50
Economic security	10.9	11.9	-2.70	0.008
Physical security	15.3	16.5	-2.92	0.004

According to the data presented the respondents emigrating from Russia and the group with low level of migration intention show statistically significant differences for all indicators of security (the higher the value, the more complete a sense of security is).

The following technique used is the Schwartz’s Value Survey. The questionnaire consists of two parts:

1. “The Value survey” is directed towards insights into the structure of personality values which exists at the normative level but seldom manifests itself at the level of actions.

2. “The Portrait Value Questionnaire” is designed to study the value structure through behavior, not as a moral imperative.

The Value Survey.

The respondents with low level of migration intentions give priority to the items “tradition” (3.5), “universalism” (4.4), “conformity” (3.8), “self-direction” (5.4), “achievement” (5.2), “power” (4.3), and “security” (4.3). The most valued items for emigrants are “benevolence” (4.9) and “hedonism” (4.1). It is characteristic of the LLMI testees to give high ratings to a greater number of values whereas the respondents with high level of migratory intentions prioritize fewer values at the normative level. At the level of value-based prescriptions the HLMI subjects are less categorical than the other two groups: on the one hand, it helps be less dependent on the society, on the other, provokes antagonism of “Self” and “Other”.

The Portrait Value Questionnaire is presented in tables 07, 08, 09.

**Table 07.** Comparison of the group of emigrants and the LLMI group according to value ratings

Variables	Mean values, emigrants	Mean values,LLMI	Student’s t-test value	P-level, p< 0.05
Conformity	3.1	0.8	-14.780	0.000
Tradition	1.1	0.9	-1.56	0.120
Benevolence	1.2	1.9	4.54	0.000
Universalism	2.3	2.0	-2.160	0.036
Self-Direction	2.7	2.8	1.08	0.283
Stimulation	2.9	1.2	-11.41	0.000
Hedonism	1.7	1.75	0.809	0.419
Achievement	1.86	1.83	-0.138	0.890
Power	1.7	1.0	-3.91	0.000
Security	1.0	2.0	5.68	0.000

**Table 08.** Comparison of the group of emigrants and the HLMI group according to value ratings

Variables	Mean values, emigrants	Mean values, HLMI	Student’s t-test value	P-level, p< 0.05
Conformity	3.1	1.1	-12.75	0.000
Tradition	1.1	0.5	-3.787	0.000
Benevolence	1.2	1.3	0.620	0.536
Universalism	2.3	1.5	-5.954	0.000
Self-Direction	2.7	2.3	-2.055	0.042
Stimulation	2.9	1.0	-12.40	0.000
Hedonism	1.7	1.16	-4.298	0.000
Achievement	1.86	1.82	-0.168	0.867
Power	1.7	2.3	3.092	0.000
Security	1.0	2.5	10.858	0.000

**Table 09.** Comparison of the HLMI and LLMI according to value ratings

Variables	Mean values, HLMI	Mean values,LLMI	Student's t-test value	P-level, p< 0.05
Conformity	1.1	0.8	2.88	0.04
Tradition	0.5	0.9	-2.47	0.015
Benevolence	1.3	1.9	-4.08	0.000
Universalism	1.5	2.0	-3.48	0.001
Self-Direction	2.3	2.8	-2.75	0.007
Stimulation	1.0	1.2	-1.58	0.117
Hedonism	1.16	1.75	-3.28	0.001
Achievement	1.82	1.83	-0.056	0.955
Power	2.3	1.0	7.34	0.000
Security	2.5	2.0	3.121	0.002

The data show that the respondents with low level of migration importance attribute more importance to such parameters as “benevolence” (1.9) and “self-direction” (2.8). The values they reject include “power” (1.0) and “conformity” (0.8). The subjects with high level of migration intentions exhibit lower values for scales “power” (2.3) and “security” (2.5) and low values for scales “tradition” (0.5), “universalism” (1.3), “self-direction” (2.3), “stimulation” (1.0).

On the basis of the results obtained with the help of the Schwartz’s Portrait Value Questionnaire it can be argued that if we observe consistency among the groups (the range of boundary values is low) in terms of normative perceptions about values, the range of values for some scales with regard to behavioral manifestations of values is significant. Not all declared values are realized through actions, i.e. there is a “clearance” between normative level of values and behavior. The respondents with high level of migration intentions tend to be more likely to reject values normatively but they are not prepared to reject them in their actions. The subjects with low level of migration intentions demonstrate a reverse tendency: they normatively accept values but deny them through their behavior.

The following method is the World Assumptions Scale by R. Janoff-Bulman (tables 10, 11, 12).

**Table 10.** Comparison of the group of emigrants and the LLMI group for the items of the World Assumptions Scale

Variables	Mean values, emigrants	Mean values,LLMI	Student's t-test value	P-level, p< 0.05
The world is benevolent	17.6	19.5	4.31	0.000
People are benevolent	13.3	13.3	0.038	0.970
The world is meaningful	13.3	14.3	2.49	0.014
The world is controllable	15.2	15.8	-1.33	0.186
What happens is random	13.0	14.3	-1.91	0.058
The self is worthy	18.5	17.5	1.97	0.050
The degree of self-control	16.0	16.9	1.87	0.063
The degree of luck	16.4	17.8	2.58	0.011
Overall attitude to benevolence of the world	15.7	16.7	2.96	0.004
Overall attitude to the meaningfulness of the world	16.4	17.0	1.63	0.104
Beliefs with regard to self-worth	16.7	17.8	3.66	0.000

**Table 11.** Comparison of the group of emigrants and the HLMI group for the items of the World Assumptions Scale

Variables	Mean values, emigrants	Mean values, HLMI	Student's t-test value	P-level, p< 0.05
The world is benevolent	17.6	17.5	-.265	0.792
People are benevolent	13.3	13.2	-.122	0.903
The world is meaningful	13.3	14.9	2.94	0.004
The world is controllable	15.2	16.6	1.51	0.132
What happens is random	13.0	12.3	-3.34	0.001
The self is worthy	17.5	18.6	2.13	0.034
The degree of self-control	16.0	18.8	5.23	0.000
The degree of luck	16.4	17.4	1.88	0.062
Overall attitude to benevolence of the world	15.7	15.7	-.073	0.942
Overall attitude to the meaningfulness of the world	16.4	18.2	4.36	0.000
Beliefs with regard to self worth	16.7	18.3	4.29	0.000

**Table 12.** Comparison of the HLMI group of the LLMI group for the items of the World Assumptions Scale

Variables	Mean values, HLMI	Mean values, LLMI	Student's t-test value	P-level, p< 0.05
The world is benevolent	17.5	19.5	-3.97	0.000
People are benevolent	13.2	13.3	-0.151	0.880
The world is meaningful	14.9	14.3	1.185	0.238
The world is controllable	16.6	15.8	3.52	0.001
What happens is random	12.3	14.3	-1.335	0.184
The self is worthy	18.6	17.5	0.045	0.965
The degree of self-control	18.8	16.9	4.541	0.000
The degree of luck	17.4	17.8	-0.699	0.485
Overall attitude to benevolence of the world	15.7	16.7	-2.293	0.024
Overall attitude to the meaningfulness of the world	18.2	17.0	3.564	0.001
Beliefs with regard to self-worth	18.3	17.8	1.294	0.198

As the results of the study show the group of emigrants exhibit paradoxically low values for the scales “Beliefs with regard to self-worth” (16.7), “Overall attitude to the meaningfulness of the world” (16.0) and “The degree of luck” (16.4). It might be related to disappointment and broken dreams with regard to their resettlement. So, in the view of Dontsov and Zotova (2013) “Migration is not to be compared with any other individual experience as it divides a person’s life into “before” and “after”. Despite status, age, gender, education he starts his life from scratch” (p. 77). The respondents with high level of migration intentions share beliefs of the world being controllable (16.6), the world being meaningful (18.0) and self-worth (18.3). While the subjects with low level of migration intentions emphasized benevolence (19.5) and luck (17.8), they appreciate their self-worth to a lesser degree (17.5).

## 7. Conclusion

These empirical data allow for compiling a psychological portrait of the respondents with high level of migration intentions, low level of migration intentions and the former Russians emigrated to the European Union (table 13).

**Table 13.** Empirical psychological characteristics of the respondents with varying levels of migration intentions and emigrants

The group of the subjects	Psychological and social characteristics of the subjects
High level of migration intentions	Priority to work and self-development. High penchant for risk. Normatively understood value of kindness; normatively rejected values: stimulation, power. Values accepted at the level of behavior: security, power; rejected values at the level of behavior: tradition, stimulation. Intense expressiveness and emotionality. Basic beliefs – self worth and self-control. Enhanced psychological defenses.
Low level of migration intentions	Average degree of risk-taking, high level of perceived physical security. Normatively accepted values: self-direction, security, achievement; normatively rejected values: tradition, stimulation, hedonism; values rejected at the behavioral level: tradition, conformity. Intensity of expressiveness and attachment. Weak psychological defenses.
Emigrants	High sensation of cultural security, low level of economic security perception; low preparedness to risk-taking. Normatively accepted values: self-direction, kindness, achievement; normatively rejected values: tradition, power. Values shared at the level of behavior: conformity, stimulation; values rejected at the level of behavior: tradition. Exhibited attachment and control. Basic belief in self-worth. Developed psychological defenses: projection and denial.

The obtained empirical results give the opportunity to better understand the nature of genesis, formation and dynamic changes of personality in the course of a migratory shift. Therefore, migratory intentions act as a complex, systemically organized phenomenon emerging at the interface of social, economic, political and psychological processes. As Zinchenko and Zotova (2013) pointed out, “the problem of research on intentions as a substance-based characteristic of personality orientation and an indicator of its subjectivity remains open” (p. 18).

One can assume that personality characteristics and one’s unique interpretation of social reality is capable of triggering migratory processes, and migration tendencies at that are always “a throw for the future” (Figuroa-Hernandez& Perez-Soto, 2011). Psychological specific features of the respondents with different levels of migration intentions are likely to reflect dynamic changes in the individual striving to realize his/her intentions and are of adaptive character. Thus, penchant for risk-taking, enhanced psychological defences as well as low priority of values at the normative level maintained by the group with high level of migration intentions can be explained by compensatory mechanisms and personality activation. And conversely, emigrants exhibit minimum pursuit of risk and high value of control and social identification.

The results obtained can be applicable in the work of social structures: improve the quality of psychological support to clients who are thinking of emigration; facilitate the adaptation of Russian-speaking people abroad.



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