

Criteria and Resources for Social Adaptation of Russia's Population*



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Abstract. The stress caused by social changes that Russia's population experienced due to the change of the socio-economic order forced them to choose adaptation behavior strategies: from active influence on the environment to avoiding problems. In these conditions, the developing branch of knowledge – the sociology of adaptation – was interested in the socio-economic aspects of the issue associated with changes in living standards, social status and economic behavior strategies of members of different stratification groups and the impact of different types of capital. However, studying adaptation as a component of social health is equally important. The goal of the present paper is to study social adaptation of Russia's population and identify its groups with different adaptation potential. We focus on adaptation in terms of resource and subject-activity approaches. European Social Survey data (Russia, sample size is 2,484 people) serve as an empirical base of our research. We consider social adaptation through the indicators of its result: adaptation level and through resources. We identify four latent variables using latent structural analysis of the observed variables that reflect different aspects of adaptation. Two of them characterize the result of adaptation: positive mental health and subjective activity (active behavioral practices in a changing environment). The other two are adaptation resources: internal (high adequate self-assessment, subjectivity, internal locus of control) and external (social support). Using latent-structural analysis we determine the grounds for stratification of Russian society according to the “social adaptation” criterion. We identify groups that are problematic in terms of the dynamics of adaptation processes in the case of the changes in the initial data such as an increase in the external load or a decrease in external resources.

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We reveal that from the standpoint of the subject-activity approach the maladjustment of an individual is connected with their alienation in professional activity. The novelty of our work lies in the fact that it implements an interdisciplinary approach to the study of social adaptation.

Key words: social adaptation, resource-based approach, activity-based approach, adaptation potential, social subjectivity, social support.

Introduction

A new surge of attention to the research on adaptation is due to the increasing role of man as a subject of activity in conditions of “opacity, vagueness, uncertainty and instability of the social situations in which people have to act” [1, p. 598]. Radical changes in the life of society are always accompanied by the “stress of social change” [1]. There is evidence that economic crises accompanied by financial pressure lead to deterioration of mental and physical health. Thus, as the economic situation becomes worse, the number of cases of deviant behavior, including suicides and alcoholism, increases significantly [2, pp. 75-92; 3]. The scale and pace of economic change in the Russian society in the 1990s did not match the adaptive resources of the majority of its members. According to researchers, no more than 25% of the population was able to adapt to dramatic changes in the social structure and institutions and to the return to the market mechanisms in the economy [4, p. 14]. After all, in the conditions of bifurcations, the load from the external environment increases and an individual has to use all available resources to the fullest extent, but subsequently the depletion of adaptive resources increases the probability of adaptive failure or adaptive risk [5].

The relevance of research on the nature of social crises, social disintegration and pathology, adaptation, its mechanisms and resources required the institutionalization of a new field of knowledge – the sociology of adaptation [5, p. 11]. Sociological science has focused on the study of socio-economic

adaptation [6; 7; 8; 9]. Scientists focused on the changes in the standard of living and the strategy of economic behavior of Russians and on assessing their resource potential. At the same time, there has been an increase in the number of publications devoted to the impact of economic crises on social well-being and in which adaptation was considered through the prism of public mental health increased [10; 11]. Today there is a need to systematize the knowledge about social adaptation from the perspective of the subject, about the adaptive resources of the population and about the stratification of society according to the “social adaptation – maladjustment” criterion. An integrated and interdisciplinary approach to this problem involves research on the basis of indicators that reflect people’s economic behavior during socio-economic crises and their mental well-being, as well. Indeed, for example, E. Durkheim noted that “social facts are the results of special processing of mental facts” [12, p. 478].

Initially, adaptation was considered as adjustment to the environment, and its result – as a state of equilibrium and homeostasis; in sociological theories – the balance between the institutional environment and individual behavior. This approach is seen in E. Durkheim’s concept of acceptance of social norms and socially approved behavior [12], in M. Weber’s interpretation of an optimum way to satisfy the needs of an individual [13]. Representatives of the structural and functional approach pointed out that to explain the essence of the adaptation process it is necessary,

first, to analyze norms, values and goals and second, to analyze the possibility of their implementation. According to supporters of this approach, adaptation is a balance between the value and needs of an individual and the values and norms of the social environment [14, pp. 185-192; 15, pp. 7-25]. Thus, from the point of view of the normative concept, adaptation is the process of active adjustment of the subject to environmental conditions on the basis of internalization of social norms.

The evolution of views on adaptation processes has shifted the emphasis from adaptation to integration with the environment and further – to mutual transformation of systems. In the 1970s–1980s, along with the “adaptation” paradigm, scientists increasingly use the concept of “supra-normative activity” and “social subjectivity”. Narrow consideration of adaptation–adjustment as the main indicator of the norm of behavior is replaced by a combination of two equivalent processes: adaptation and individualization. An individual psychological criterion of the norm of behavior is put forward; it includes an internal position of the individual in relation to the outside world and himself/herself, the ability to make decisions and make choices, and personal responsibility for his/her own behavior. The change of concepts was a response to social practice: the request to strengthen the influence of an individual led to the emergence of fundamentally new features of behavior and lifestyle, the shift from social conformism to social subjectivity and creative activity¹; “...the previously passive role of the mass of participants of social interaction has changed dramatically” [16, p. 5].

There is an opinion that an individual is the only true subject of social adaptation, because the process of adaptation is directed from the

individual toward society and not the other way around [14]. We have also built our research in line with the sociology of personality around subjective assessments of conditions, personality features and behavioral patterns that can serve as indicators of social adaptation or maladjustment and that are the variables which can be observed. Let us assume that adaptation processes are triggered by an imbalance of the two systems, when the patterns of an individual do not correspond to the current state of the social and institutional environment. An individual perceives such a deviation as a difficult life situation that requires mobilization of forces to return to the “normal” state.

Let us explain why we have chosen to consider adaptation from this very aspect. We adhere to a broad interpretation of social adaptation: it includes not only the processes of adaptation to the changing social reality through the internalization of social norms, but also the processes of individualization, which find their expression in the form of self-realization. In addition, we characterize social adaptation from the point of view of the subject through the result of this adaptation – adaptability and through an individual’s adaptive resources that will be used if necessary to influence social environment (situation, other subjects).

In the operationalization of the category “social adaptation” we rely on the activity approach combined with the resource approach [17; 18]. When the subject is studied in the framework of the activity theory from the point of view of his/her resources, this expands the possibilities of interpretation of the data on adaptation, because “the subject’s resource is a set of qualities that provide not only his/her ability to survive, but also his/her ability to expand the range of self-regulation” [17, p. 315]. Thus, if we are talking about self-regulation of behavior, then we can allocate

¹ Toschenko Zh. T. *Sociology. General Course*. Moscow: Prometey, 1994. Pp. 3-14.

the following personality features: adequate self-esteem, independence and responsibility as personal adaptive resources. Moreover, sociological works put forward new grounds for social stratification of population groups – “the level of adaptation to transformation process” [7, p. 327], “the volume and structure of resources” [18, p. 34]; the latter include economic, power, social, qualification, and cultural resources [19]. In our study, we use the indicators “providing/receiving support” to introduce the social resource in the analysis, since this resource is most closely related to the adaptation of an individual to the social system.

The result of adaptation can be assessed on the basis of the changes affecting the external behavioral responses of the adaptant and his/her internal state, which include needs, interests, responsibility, and activity [20, pp. 15-16]. L.V. Korel' proposes to consider social well-being (the internal state of the adaptant) and the presence of a set of solutions to various problems (external behavioral reactions) as the criteria for completion of adaptation [5, pp. 324-330]. Summarizing the provisions of sociological and psychological concepts, we come to the conclusion that they allocate the following indicators of adaptability: psycho-emotional stability, absence of anxiety, adequate self-esteem, time perspective and responsibility for one's actions [21, pp. 80-82], long-term planning, confidence in the ability to control their own living environment [17, pp. 314-317], the international locus of control, activity [22], self-efficacy [23], social status that reflecting the result of integration of the individual with the updated social environment [6]. Negative internal attitude toward social requirements, conflict, chronic emotional discomfort (from negative experiences to clinical psychopathologies) are considered as individual manifestations of maladjustment.

Research design

The aim of our research is to study social adaptation with the use of the qualimetric approach and on the basis of subjective assessments given by Russians. The empirical base of the study is presented by the data of an international comparative study within the European Social Survey (ESS) project².

Based on the analysis of theoretical concepts and empirical data, we have put forward the following hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1: adaptation potential of the individual consists of resources that are internal and external. Among the internal resources, self-assessment of the individual plays a significant role in the process of adaptation, and social support – among the external resources.

Hypothesis 2: Differences in the current load of the environment (strong–weak) and adaptation resources (small–large) determine the allocation of groups differentiated by the level of adaptation: adapted, maladjusted and problematic.

With regard to the database of our study, we have identified the following indicators of adaptation results: mental health (indicators: the presence/absence of depression, anxiety, worry, feelings of loneliness, pleasure from life, exhaustion as the inability to summon up enough energy) and activity, behavior patterns (“slowly coming back to a normal state”, “feeling like a loser”, “make decisions easily”, “envision the direction of life”).

² A long-term comparative study of changes in attitudes, beliefs, values and behavior of the population is carried out by means of its surveys: in Europe – since 2001, in Russia – since 2006. The sample is 1,500–3,000 interviews in each country. Free access to the data of all researchers is provided through the electronic website www.europeansocialsurvey.org. Our analysis is based on the secondary data for 2012 (29 countries, the volume of 42,630 people). In Russia, the study was conducted by the Institute of Comparative Social Research in November – December 2012, the sample size was 2,484 respondents. Available at: <http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/data/download.html?r=6>

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of variables characterizing social adaptation

Variable	Valid values	Missing values	Average	Standard deviation
d2 – optimism about my future	2439	45	0.74	0.19
d3 – good opinion of myself	2448	36	0.79	0.16
d4 – I don't feel like a loser	2427	57	0.70	0.20
d5 – depression	2441	43	0.43	0.19
d9 – loneliness	2439	45	0.43	0.20
d10 – I enjoy life	2376	108	0.67	0.19
d12 – I can pull myself together, summon up enough energy	2360	124	0.79	0.19
d14 – anxiety, worry	2444	40	0.50	0.19
d16 – I can decide for myself how to live	2466	18	0.79	0.17
d19 – I come back to a normal state slowly	2419	65	0.58	0.19
d23 – all I do is valuable and helpful to others	2396	88	0.74	0.17
d25 – I am strong in many areas	2395	89	0.65	0.18
d29 – My loved ones value it	2441	43	0.76	0.21
d30 – I make decisions easily	2425	59	0.64	0.20
d35 – I envision the direction of life	2422	62	0.72	0.22
d36 – I receive support from my loved ones	2468	16	0.74	0.23
d37 – I support my loved ones	2461	23	0.75	0.22
N valid (on the list)	1995			

Source: calculated with the use of ESS data. Available at: <http://www.ess-ru.ru/>

Adaptation resources were determined by such factors as: self-esteem (a good opinion of oneself; confidence that “All I do is valuable and helpful to others”; confidence that “I am strong in many areas”); internal locus of control (independence of decision-making concerning one’s own life); vision of prospects in life (optimism about one’s own future); high external score (confidence in what one’s loved ones value); social support (“receive support from loved ones”; “support one’s loved ones”). High social status can serve as an indicator or resource of the result of adaptation, so we used the observed variable “Subjective assessment of the social status” as an additional one when comparing groups with different levels of adaptation.

However, the variables we observe that were selected in the ESS database had response options with the use of different scales – four-,

five-, seven- and ten-point scales. For clarity of results and correctness of application of mathematical statistics methods we rebuilt these variables as follows:

- maximum score for all variables was made equal to one;
- for ten-point scales, with a spacing of one point, an additional wider spacing was made – after 0.2 intervals: 0.2; 0.4, etc.;
- we changed the points assigned to answers in scales d2, d3, d12, d16, d18, d19, d23, d25 so that the maximum point (unit) corresponded to the consent with the statement made.

Descriptive statistics on the variables we have chosen that characterize social adaptation are shown in *Table 1*.

Taking into account the missing values, 1995 valid values of each variable were selected for the analysis.

Table 2. Results of the factor analysis of social adaptation of the population of Russia

Factor (latent variable)	Variable	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
Positive mental state	d9 – feeling of loneliness	-.737			
	d14 – anxiety, worry	-.714			
	d5 – depression	-.688			
	d12 – I can pull myself together, summon up enough energy	.682			
	d10 – I enjoy life	.408			
High self-esteem and agency	d25 – I am strong in many areas		.660		
	d16 – I can decide for myself how to live		.641		
	d23 – all I do is valuable and helpful to others		.639		
	d2 – optimism about my future		.637		
	d3 – good opinion of myself		.589		
Social support	d36 – I receive support from my loved ones			.840	
	d37 – I support my loved ones			.779	
	d29 – My loved ones value it			.627	
Behavior in a changing environment	d30 – I make decisions easily				.667
	d19 – I come back to a normal state slowly	-.319			-.636
	d4 – I don't feel like a loser				.556
	d35 – I envision the direction of life				.520

Source: calculated with the use of ESS data. Available at: <http://www.ess-ru.ru/>

Subjective assessments of social adaptation of the Russian population

Analysis of the average values of the variables in the array showed that Russians generally treat themselves well, look at their future with optimism and are confident in the support of their loved ones. At the level of the whole sample (valid variables) there are practically no symptoms of depression and feelings of loneliness (86 and 82% of respondents, respectively).

According to their self-assessments, the majority of Russians rarely feel anxiety and concern, but at the same time the value of the standard deviation suggests that there is a group of respondents who experience such negative feelings most of the time, and this group is 20%. A significant part of Russians are hardly aware of the direction in which their life moves (30%), and make decisions on the issues they consider important (22%).

We conducted a latent structural analysis in SPSS³ program with the help of the factor analysis. As a result, we identified latent variables⁴ (factors) of social adaptation of the Russian population (explained total variance – 56%, *Tab. 2*).

³ SPSS is a program for statistical data processing. The data matrix was subjected to the procedure of factor analysis by the principal component method “PrincipalComponentAnalysis” with rectangular rotation according to the “VarimaxwitsKaiserNormalization” method. The number of factors was determined by the Kaiser criterion. In the analysis of the factor structure, the load of 0.350 on each factor scale was considered to be a significant factor load.

⁴ The latent variable represents the constructs that are not measured directly and that can be represented by two or more observable variables [24, pp. 21–41]. The latent variable includes features that correlate with each other. Grouping the observed features and arranging them in latent variables leads to the independence of indicators. The scaling of observed variables in the development of tests in psychology is based on this property. Latent variables are isolated using mathematical statistics methods. When using the factor analysis, latent variables are called factors.

We called the first factor (30% variance) “Positive mental state”, as it recreates positive manifestations in the mental well-being of the population. It includes variables that reflect enjoying life and the absence of negative mental conditions, namely: anxiety, worry, loneliness, and depression. This factor also includes variables that characterize the processes of maintaining a positive attitude and the ability to act in critical and stressful situations – “summoning up enough energy” and “quickly returning to a normal state”⁵. Positive values of the first factor indicate social adaptation.

We identified the second factor (10% variance) as “High self-esteem and agency”, because it includes a good attitude toward one’s own self, self-confidence and independence of vital decisions one takes. This latent variable includes reliance on optimism and the value of one’s activities in the eyes of other people. At the same time, the individual regards themselves not as a narrow specialist who shows results in one area, but believes that they are strong enough in many areas. In our opinion, the factor reflects the subjective position, because important life decisions are made independently, therefore, at the same time this position is a reflection of the internal locus of control. Social subjectivity combined with high self-esteem is the basis for adaptation of the individual, thus the second factor indicates internal adaptation resources.

The third factor (8.5% of variance) indicates social support. It includes variables that reflect the help of loved ones; moreover this help is mutual: the respondent helps their loved ones and vice versa. The openly expressed support is complemented by its other component – moral support, namely the assurance that the respondent is valued by

their loved ones. The third factor reflects the external resources of the individual.

The combination of variables in the fourth factor (7.5% variance) is quite interesting. It indicates the ease of making important life decisions and a quick return to a normal state when something goes wrong (the variable “it takes a long time to get back to a normal state” adds negative load to the factor). The vision of life, combined with rapid decision-making, helps to return quickly to a normal state and not feel like a loser. However, a clear idea of the direction in which life is moving is combined with a high assessment of what is happening in life in terms of luck. And this generally gives the factor a slight touch of externality. It is possible that decisions in problem situations are made easily, based on external attitudes (for example, “I’m always lucky”, “good luck is on my side”). With this interpretation we can raise a question concerning weak subjectivity and alleged problems with adaptation. In order to make final conclusions it is necessary to look at the combination of the fourth factor with the second and third ones. Then we will be able to talk more confidently about the strategies to overcome the problematic (crisis, stress) situations. We call the fourth factor “Behavior in a changing environment”.

Each latent variable can be considered as a scale when making a multidimensional methodology for studying adaptation. The internal reliability of each of the four selected scales (factors) was checked in the SPSS program. The values of Cronbach’s alpha⁶ coefficients determined in the analysis were greater than 0.7, indicating a high internal consistency of the variables that make up the scales.

⁵ Negative load for the variable “d19 – I come back to a normal state slowly”.

⁶ Cronbach’s alpha coefficient is a reliability estimate based on the correlation between the variables in a given population.

Differentiation of Russia's population in terms of social adaptation

Next, the clustering of the four components identified earlier in the process of factor analysis was carried out by the K-means method. Based on the number of components and the sample size, a fast cluster analysis with sequentially given four, five and six clusters was performed. Having studied their content, we decided to focus on six clusters.

Table 3 shows the average values of the normalized variables for each cluster, which determine their final centers.

The greatest contribution to the formation of the first cluster is made by the latent variable "Social support" with a negative indicator; this fact shows that members of this group have no support from their loved ones. The average values of positive indicators for the first and second factors indicate a that respondents have a good mental state that is based on internal support – high self-esteem. The first cluster, which we have designated as "Social adaptation on internal resources", includes 16% of respondents.

The second cluster can be described as "Social maladjustment when resources are available". We can say that this is maladjustment because there are manifestations of negative mental states like depression, anxiety, anxiety, feeling lonely. But it is interesting that the second cluster includes respondents with internal and external resources: internal

resources are expressed in the form of self-assessment above the average level and external – in the form of social support. Although the combination of poor mental health with self-esteem above the average level may signal the inadequate nature of the latter, i.e. this is not just a high self-esteem, but an inflated one, which is a risk factor for maladjustment behavior [21, p. 382]. One tenth of respondents (10%) belong to the second cluster, i.e. one in ten residents of Russia, when internal and external resources are available, experiences manifestations of negative mental states.

The third cluster was called "Potential social maladjustment" amid increasing external load. Representatives of this group are characterized by a normal mental state, without strongly manifested symptoms of depression, anxiety, etc. They possess internal and external resources, but the resources are insufficient, since the implementation of adaptation potential is difficult. We assume the presence of the latter circumstance on the basis of the fact that representatives of the third cluster get back to their normal state and find it difficult to make decisions when their living conditions are changing. It is possible that the actual positive mental state is associated with the absence of negative effects, and if stress situations happen, then mental health of representatives of the third cluster (which includes 15% of respondents) may deteriorate, which puts them into the risk group.

Table 3. Clusters of Russia's population that differ in the indicators of social adaptation

Factor (latent variable)	Final centers of clusters					
	Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3	Cluster 4	Cluster 5	Cluster 6
Factor 1 "Positive mental state"	0.25	-1.69	0.10	-0.96	0.21	0.83
Factor 2 "High self-esteem and agency"	0.41	0.42	0.43	-1.27	0.60	-0.84
Factor 3 "Social support"	-1.37	0.39	0.43	-0.61	0.46	0.34
Factor 4 "Behavior in a changing environment"	0.02	-0.01	-1.34	-0.02	0.84	-0.03
Size of the clusters:						
– people	325	201	306	237	505	421
– %	16	10	15	12	26	21

Source: calculated with the use of ESS data. Available at: <http://www.ess-ru.ru/>

Respondents belonging to the fourth cluster give negative subjective assessments of their mental state and note the lack of resources, so we have designated it as “Social maladjustment in the absence of resources”. Representatives of Russia’s population included in this group are characterized by low self-esteem (it is the lowest among all the groups) and levels of social support. The fourth group includes 12% of respondents, i.e. every ninth resident of Russia does not have sufficient psychological resources to overcome stress when negative external influences are increasing.

The fifth cluster has the following specific feature: positive values of indicators for all four factors, with two of them having maximum values: “High self-esteem and agency” and “Behavior in a changing environment”. Respondents included in this group (one in four valid respondents – 26%), have a good mental state based on internal and external resources. A distinctive feature of the cluster is a high level of adaptation to the changing reality and the presence of a time perspective, namely: members of the group easily make decisions on vital problems, quickly get back to a normal state in critical situations and also clearly imagine the direction in which their lives are moving. At the same time, these respondents have significant social support. This cluster is called “Social adaptation in highly stressful situations”.

The sixth cluster was formed around the first three factors. The persons included in this cluster have a good mental state, which they estimate with the highest subjective assessments compared to other groups. But there is one point here: this state is based only on external resources in the form of social support. As for internal resources, they are absent, as evidenced by the low values of the factor reflecting the impact of self-assessment and agency. We called this cluster “Possible maladjustment in case of

the loss of external resources”. However, here a question arises that needs to be clarified. Why do we define the state of respondents from the first cluster as adaptation and from the sixth cluster – as problems with adaptation and “possible maladjustment”, although the manifestations of mental states in the sixth cluster are better? It is all about resources: they are internal in the first cluster and external in the sixth cluster. When external support is lost, then the mental state can change for the worse, while internal resources for coping with the problem situation are absent.

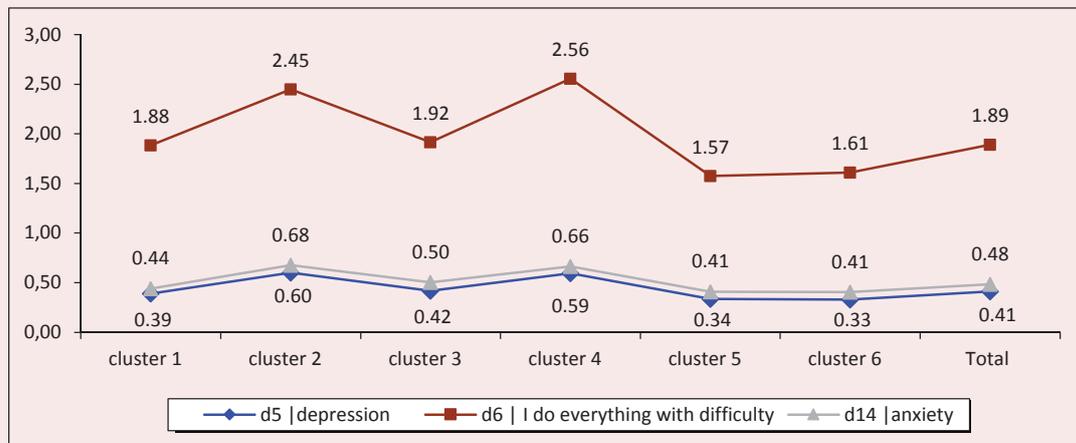
To answer the question whether the differentiation of variables by clusters is significant, a one-factor analysis of variance was carried out, which showed the presence of a significant difference between clusters.

During the cluster analysis, we identified six groups that differ in the degree of social adaptation. We classified two of them as groups of persons with adaptation (the first cluster “Adaptation on internal resources” and the fifth cluster “Adaptation in highly stressful situations”), two – with maladjustment (the second cluster “Maladjustment when resources are available” and the fourth cluster “Maladjustment in the absence of resources”). We also identified two groups with adaptation issues (the third cluster “Potential exclusion under increasing load” sixth cluster “Possible exclusion under the loss of external resources”).

Criteria and resources of social adaptation of Russians in the context of groups

To identify the problems of representatives of the third and sixth clusters, we conducted a comparative analysis of various indicators of adaptedness: mental states of different orientation, self-esteem, social behavior patterns, involvement in production activities. Let us just say that the indicators for the fifth cluster are fully consistent with the state of

Figure 1. Values of the variables describing negative mental states, broken down by allocated clusters of respondents, the average score



Source: own calculations using ESS data. Available at: <http://www.ess-ru.ru/>

adaptation, so we have not included them in the description, but they are present on the graphs for comparison.

We monitored negative manifestations of mental states by the indicators of depression and anxiety determined in the course of the factor analysis, and by a variable that reflects the feeling that one finds it difficult to do anything (*Fig. 1*). In addition to more frequent assessments of the presence of depressive and alarming states for the second and fourth clusters, we note high subjective assessments of the presence of difficulties in the representatives of the second cluster, and higher assessments (compared to the data for the fifth cluster – “adaptation”) – in respondents from the first and third groups.

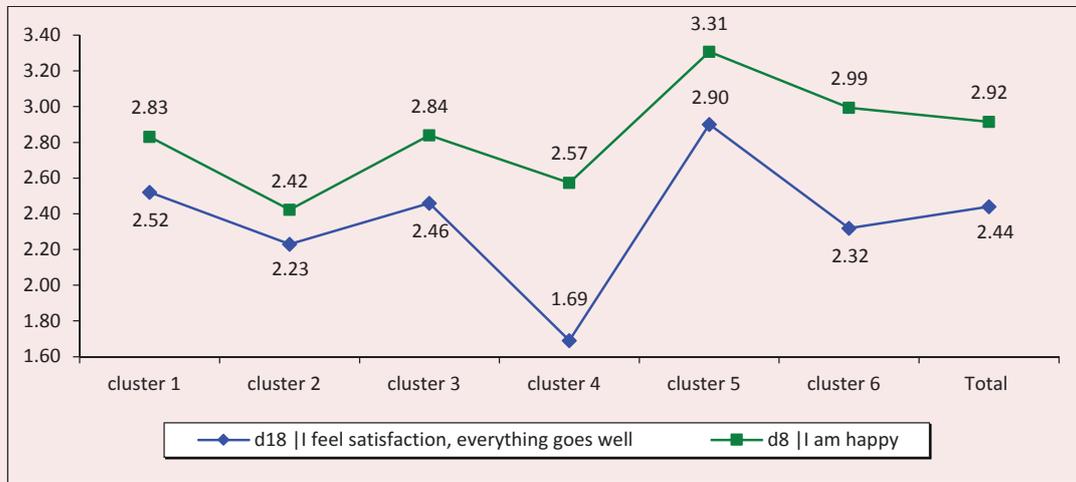
We compared the manifestations of positive mental states by additional variables – “Almost every day I feel satisfaction that everything goes well” and “I am happy(a)” (maximum score – 4; *Fig. 2*). The group of maladjusted respondents (the fourth cluster) shows the lowest satisfaction and happiness scores among the entire sample. The people in the sixth cluster have an interesting situation: they

feel happy and at the same time cannot say that they get satisfaction from the fact that everything turns out fine. If the reason for this situation consisted in poor performance results, the evaluation of which is important for respondents, then the level of happiness would not be so high. A more appropriate explanation, in our view, lies in the fact is that respondents in the sixth cluster do not find the results of their activities so important that their lack of satisfaction could affect their experience of happiness.

Let us now look at the relationship between self-esteem (the variable “I think well of myself”), the manifestations of agency (the variable “I decide on my own how I should live”) and the subjective assessment of one’s social status⁷. We see that, first, a good attitude toward one’s own self is associated with their independent adoption of vital decisions (*Fig. 3*). Therefore, the representatives of the

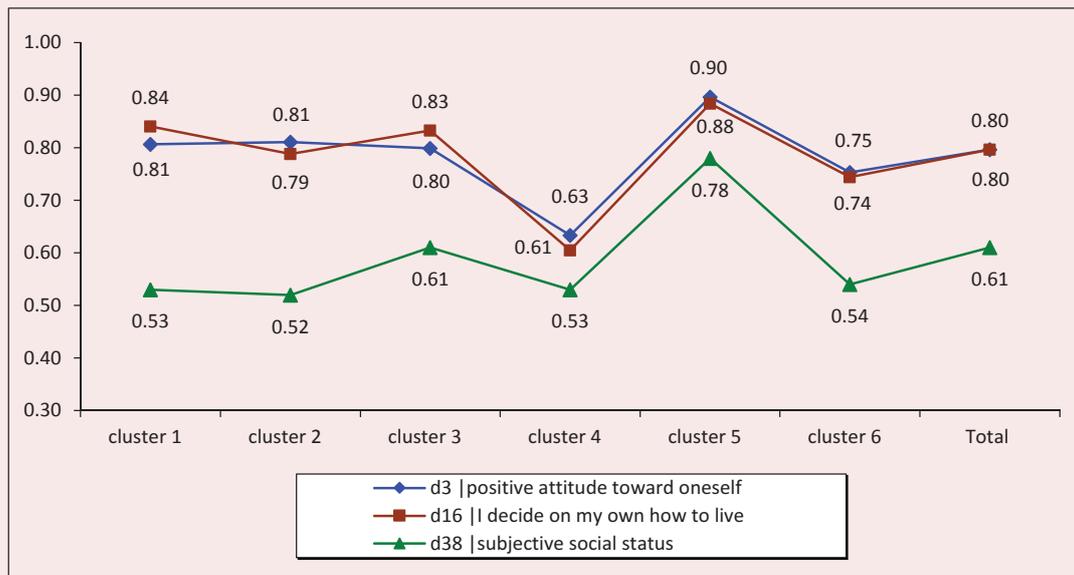
⁷ Subjective assessment of social status was put on a scale from 0 to 10 points as an answer to the question: “In our society there are people who are closer to the top of society, and there are people who are closer to its bottom. Where would you place yourself on this scale at the present time?”

Figure 2. Values of the variables that characterize positive mental states, in the context of the allocated clusters of respondents, average score



Source: calculated with the use of ESS data. Available at: <http://www.ess-ru.ru/>

Figure 3. Values of the variables characterizing self-esteem, in the context of the allocated clusters of respondents, average score



Source: calculated with the use of ESS data. Available at: <http://www.ess-ru.ru/>

sixth cluster have low scores on both points. If about a quarter of respondents in the first, second and third clusters absolutely agree with the statement “I think well of myself”, then in the fifth cluster – more than half think so, and in the sixth – only 11%. We observe a similar

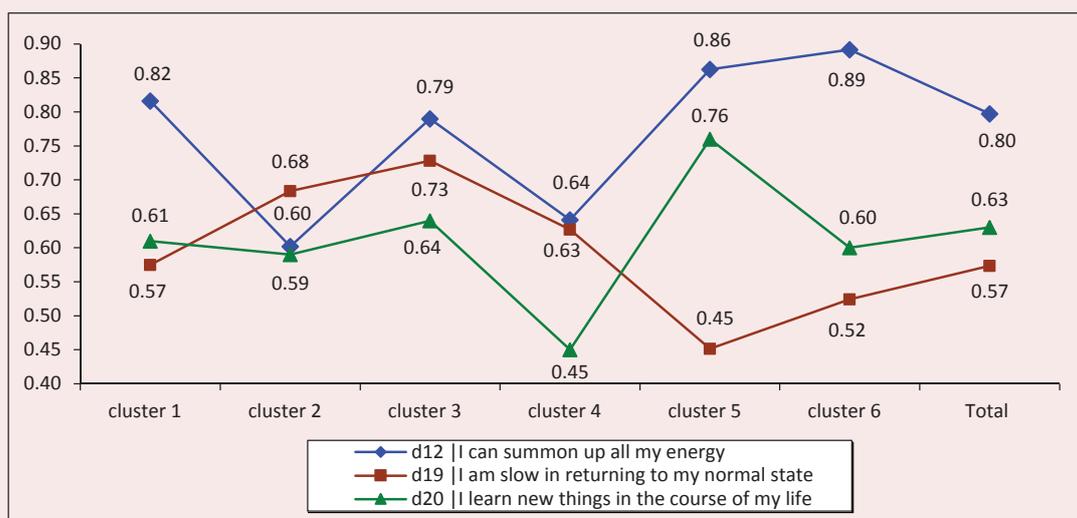
picture with the assessment of agency: 13% of respondents from the sixth cluster, more than 50% – from the fifth, and more than one third – from the first, second and third clusters express absolute agreement on independent decision-making of vital issues.

For the respondents of all clusters, except the fifth one, we should note a low subjective social status. Maybe this is due to the fact that the clusters include representatives of different social classes and groups? In the sixth cluster, along with representatives of the working class (45%), there is a high proportion of employees, white-collar workers (20%). For comparison, the fifth cluster includes 44% of top managers, 41% – of business representatives. This sector also includes one third of respondents who do not have financial difficulties (32%). Even though representatives of the fourth cluster give quite high estimates of their social status (they are at the same level with the estimates of respondents from the first, second and sixth clusters), this group is characterized by low self-esteem and lack of independence with regard to making vital decisions.

Figure 4 presents data characterizing the specifics of social behavior of the representatives of the allocated groups under the changing external environment and an increase

in its burden. Representatives of the first cluster assess their ability to adapt as average, but they point out that, if necessary, they can summon up all their internal resources and pull themselves together. The problem of that part of the population, which belongs to the third cluster, lies in the slow pace of adaptation to a changing environment. Respondents in the sixth cluster easily mobilize their energy and get back to a normal state quickly, if necessary; but they have little interest in changing or learning something new, i.e. they have low innovative potential compared to those from the fifth and third clusters. Individuals in the fourth group are slow to recover and are often unable to mobilize their energy; they are not inclined to acquire new knowledge and skills. Representatives of the second cluster more often than others note the inability to mobilize their energy, which is combined with negative mental states (see Fig. 1); at the same time, they quickly return to a normal state. It is possible that the response of this group

Figure 4. Values of the variables characterizing the processes of adaptation to the changing conditions, in the context of the allocated clusters of respondents, average score



Source: calculated with the use of ESS data. Available at: <http://www.ess-ru.ru/>

to stressful situations is acute and short, but even if they have the necessary resources, they find it difficult to take steps to remedy the situation.

Summarizing the data obtained, we can conclude that the representatives of the third and sixth clusters demonstrate sufficiently high rates of adaptability (both for their mental state and behavioral practices). But this adaptation state is relevant at the time of the survey, and we cannot predict the results of the adaptation process with an increase in the external load on the third cluster, because its representatives are characterized by a slow return to a normal state, and high loads can upset their routine. The result of adaptation for representatives of the sixth cluster is unclear as well, if they are deprived of external support, since they have low internal adaptation resources. According to the conservation of resources theory by S. Hobfoll, the loss of both internal and external resources leads to a decrease in subjective well-being and is perceived as a situation of stress,

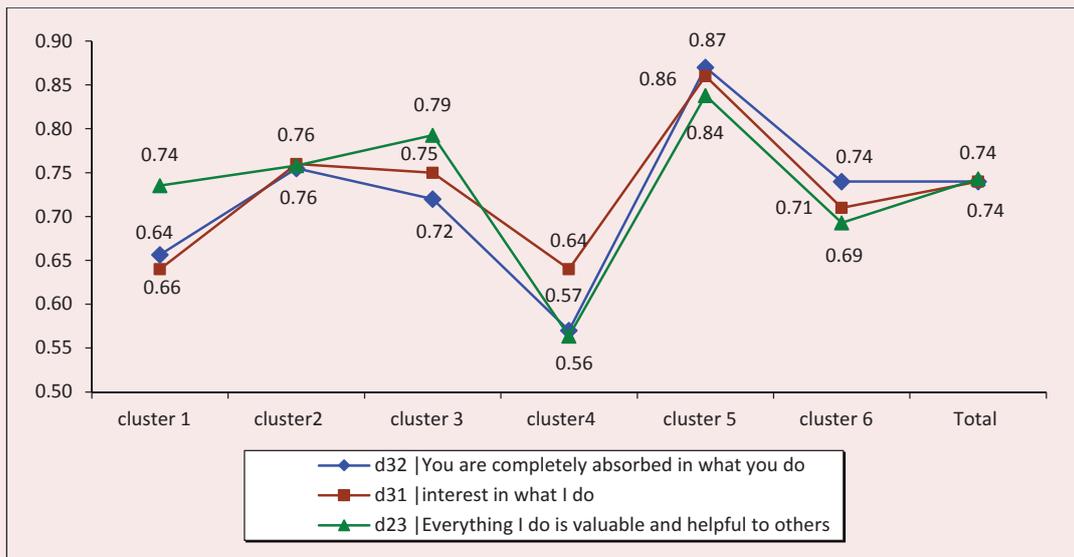
which ultimately adversely affects the mental health of the individual [25].

Analyzing social adaptation of Russians from the point of view of the subject-activity approach

In order to reveal the contribution of the subject-activity approach to the assessment of social adaptation, we relied on the principle of personal involvement in social relations, manifested in joint activities and communication. For example, we studied the attitude of respondents toward their own work – one of the main types of human activity: how much they are interested in it, whether they consider it valuable and necessary for others, whether they can have an impact on their daily work and on the work of the entire organization/enterprise (Fig. 5 and 6). Thus, we wanted to identify the situation of representatives of different groups in terms of adaptation in the continuum “involvement in labor activity” – “alienation of labor”.

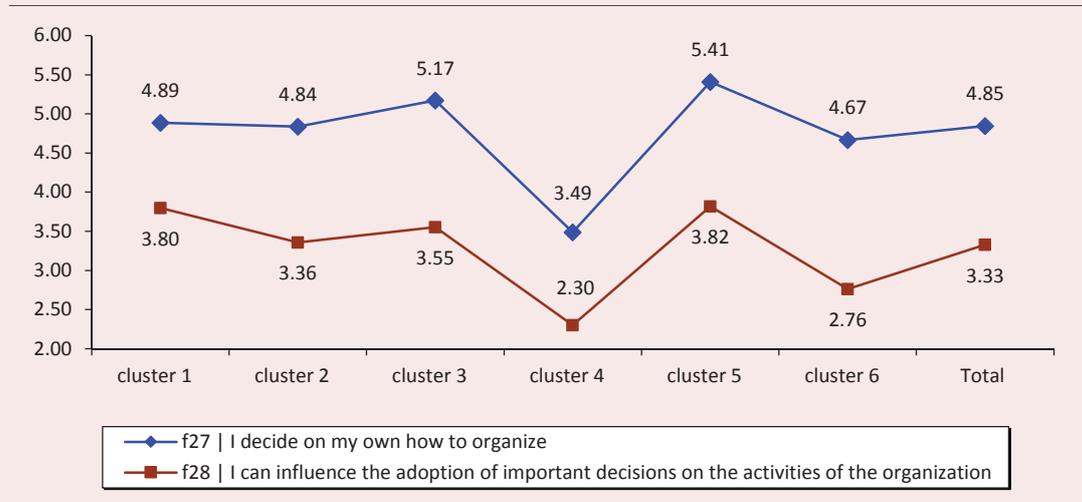
As can be seen, the persons belonging to the first cluster show little interest in their work.

Figure 5. Subjective estimates of one’s own production activities in the context of the allocated clusters of respondents, average score



Source: calculated with the use of ESS data. Available at: <http://www.ess-ru.ru/>

Figure 6. Subjective estimates of impact resources on the allocated clusters of respondents, average score



Source: calculated with the use of ESS data. Available at: <http://www.ess-ru.ru/>

They just do not find the time to do what they like. But at the same time they can influence the organization of their daily work and even influence the most important decisions about the activities of the entire organization/enterprise. In general, representatives of the first cluster have a low level of interest in their work and the feeling that they do everything with great difficulty. However, this fact does not affect their self-esteem; the group has sufficient internal resources and is characterized by good mental health.

Representatives of the third cluster, as well as the first, consider their activities more necessary to others than interesting, and they have sufficient resources to influence the organization of activities. Persons belonging to this group also have a feeling that they do everything with great difficulty, and it is superimposed on the difficulty of returning to a normal state under adverse effects. Weak internal resources are combined with low resource impact on the organization of work and with doubts about the value of the work they do.

Respondents from the sixth group sometimes doubt the usefulness and value of their business. However, the low resource impact is a serious problem for them. They are often unable to make their own decisions about their day-to-day work and influence the activities of the entire organization/enterprise. We characterized the whole complex of symptoms as “alienation of labor” in the sixth cluster.

So, as for the sphere of industrial activity, here we should agree with M.A. Shabanova who says that for the representatives of the majority of clusters (the second, third, fourth and sixth) “independent social actions and states in general so far in most cases...” are outside the sphere of industrial activity [26, p. 100].

Discussion

Since the main current challenges are economic, it would be interesting to compare the results of the study of adaptation strategies in situations of financial stress. Some people perceive financial problems as a challenge and mobilize their resources to solve them (changes the usual patterns of spending,

looks for other sources of income), others consider such situations as uncontrollable [27]. In our study, representatives of the third cluster adhere to the second strategy. Here we can draw a parallel with the data of S.V. Mareeva on the socio-economic adaptation of Russians, according to which 15% of Russians do not take any action to improve their financial situation, because they believe that they cannot do anything themselves to get out of the difficult situation [9, p. 69].

The obtained data on adaptation resources are consistent with the results of other empirical studies, which show the predominance of the social resource for Russians in the modern conditions [8, p. 48; 28]. Foreign researchers also found that just an idea of the possibility of obtaining support if necessary can help cope with many stressful situations. The perception of the presence of social support not only reduces negative experiences, but also in some cases motivates to independent efforts to overcome difficulties [29]. However, the impact of the variable "Social support" can be twofold. For example, in old age, the negative effects of economic stress are contained or compensated by the expected support, but the support received exacerbates the impact of financial stress on the symptoms of depression [30].

Psychological resources play a significant role in adaptation along with economic, human and social capital [31]. Effective coping strategies to overcome economic stress caused by dismissal and job-hunting are associated with the following types of actions: increasing self-efficacy, obtaining social support, setting goals and developing new skills [32]. According to foreign research, self-efficacy has the greatest protective potential in situations of economic stress or financial stress from personal resources [33; 34]. At the same time, psychological

resources characterize human activity, and are not a set of personal traits [31]. In general, people who use all resources (psychological, social, financial) have the greater resistance to crises [35; 36].

In order to carry out further work on the creation of sociological tools, we find it interesting to consider different experience of building such techniques. For example, P.S. Kuznetsov, interpreting adaptation as the process of establishing a correlation between the needs of the individual and the level of their satisfaction in his methodology offers both the calculation of indices and the definition of the level and profile of adaptation [37].

Summary

Thus, empirical data confirm the theoretical calculations of indicators of social adaptation. As a result of the factor analysis, we identified four latent variables describing the resources and the result of the adaptation process. Two variables reflect the adaptability of the individual: positive mental health and active behavioral practices in a changing environment (subjective activity). The other two latent variables summarize the characteristics of adaptive resources of the individual: internal (high self-esteem, subjectivity, internal locus of control) and external (social support). Thus, the first hypothesis was confirmed by the analysis of empirical data.

The hypothesis of the dependence of differentiation on the level of adaptation on the differences in adaptive resources and on the actual load of the environment has been also confirmed. Groups consisting of adapted and maladjusted persons are clearly distinguished, and adapted persons retain their status in the current and forecasted situation. We have identified groups that are problematic in terms of the dynamics of adaptation processes in the case of changes in the initial data: an increase

in external load or a decrease in social support. Therefore, despite the high actual rates of adaptation of representatives of these groups, we attributed them to the category of “potentially maladjusted”. The latent-structural analysis has allowed us to identify the grounds for stratification of Russian society according to the criterion of social adaptation.

The novelty of the work lies in the implementation of an interdisciplinary approach to the study of social adaptation. The latent variables obtained in the course of the factor analysis can be used as scales in the creation of a methodology for the study of social adaptation on the basis of subjective estimates of the population.

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