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THE STUDY OF THE SPECIFIC FEATURES OF LABOR EXPERIENCE OF THREE GENERATIONS OF RUSSIAN WORKERS

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Abstract

Based on the materials of an empirical study conducted by the authors, the article highlights the features of the working life of representatives of three generations of Russian workers. Particular attention in the study is paid to analyzing the value-motivational structure of respondents and assessing the role of the informal component in the social and labor behavior of workers of different age categories in modern Russian organizations.

It is concluded that the specifics of the working path of representatives of the three studied generations of Russian workers have significant differences due to changes in public order in all the main aspects of working life: attitude to the choice of profession, informal relations at work, expectations of employees from the employer, trade union, government and team, valuable orientation and labor motivation. However, there are a number of common points - universal values inherent in each generation, despite socio-economic and political changes.

Keywords: theory of generations, labor market, social-labor relations, transformation of the social system.

I. INTRODUCTION

The transformation of the social organization is always a huge shock for the country and its citizens. Such a process affects all spheres of public life without exception, changing the established system and value orientations of several generations at once. The sphere of social-labor relations is no different. Working-age population is more influenced by these large-scale transformations, since it is them who bear the major risk connected with the instability in the social-political sphere. In this context Russia is a unique country: each of the last three generations of Russian workers started their working life in completely contrasting economic, social and political environments.

On the whole, nowadays the topic on the differences between generations is rather acute. The theory of generations appeared in America more than 25 years ago. Its authors, the Americans Neil Howe and William Strauss (Howe & Strauss 1991), came to the conclusion that the values of the generations were defined by those social-economic conditions, in which the formation of the personality and the worldview of the representatives of these generations had occurred.

In Russia this theory became well-known later and, of course, obtained its own specifics. The most popular Russian periodization of the theory of generations looks like this (Antipov 2013):

- Generation of Winners – 1900-1923 years of birth;
- Silent generation – 1923-1943 years of birth;
- Baby-boom generation – 1943-1963 years of birth;
- Generation X (Unknown Generation) – 1963-1983 years of birth;
- Generation Y (Generation Millennium) – 1983-2003 years of birth;
- Generation Z – 2003-2023 years of birth.

The application of the generational theory has its own specifics in Russian practice, due to the unique historical and political situation, overlapped with the generation change, which formed main value orientations for the representatives of each generation.

The major milestones for the Generation of Winners were the revolutionary events and the subsequent processes of industrialization and collectivization; for the Silent Generation those were the Second World War and the Stalin personality cult; for the Baby-boomers – the epoch of the Khrushchev Thaw and the Cold War that replaced it; the Generation X witnessed Perestroika and processes of democratization; and the Generation Y grew up practically in a new country, when processes of democratization have almost turned around and Russia has again found itself behind the same “iron curtain”. This fact does not contradict with the Strauss–Howe generational theory, since its key principle is the cyclic recurrence of generations – according to their studies, every fifth generation has similar values, which helps to make farsighted prognoses. In our opinion, in the current rapidly changing world, in the epoch of informational abundance, such transformation of orientations should occur more quickly, and it becomes more difficult for generations to understand each other.

In the current research there was analyzed the value-motivational structure of the representatives of three generations of Russian workers (baby-boomers, X, Y), defined their characteristic features of attitudes towards various aspects of the working life at all its main stages (starting the labor activity; career trajectory, including the formation of the employee as a professional, his promotion and stable work; finishing the working path). What is more, in the course of this study of the peculiarities of the labor behaviour of different generations of workers, there was tried to investigate the role of the informal component in their working life.

II. DISCUSSION

In the context of the theory of generations the contemporary studies are mainly dedicated to various issues that have practical significance for the business: how to attract, adapt, evaluate, teach, and motivate employees of different generations. In the USA, for instance, there are regularly held international conferences by the ASTD (American Society of Trainings and Development) regarding the problems of the theory of generations, which attract a large number of participants. We also notice an active discussion of this topic at the HR forums and seminars, in the specialized magazines on personnel management. In Russia the theory of generations was being developed in the works of the following practical scientists: Eugene Shamis (2007; 2008), Alexey Antipov (2007), Yury Levada (2001) and so on. Two Russian projects are well-known today: “RuGenerations” and “The generation of the 21st century: structure and “environment” of the attainable strategies”, which are dedicated to the peculiarities between the generations, the conditions of formation of their values and the specifics of the labor relations.

On the project RuGenerations’ website there are regularly uploaded the materials on the topics under study. Besides, in the framework of these projects, business trainers are systematically conducting various specialized trainings and seminars, for example, “How not to lose in the management war of generations?”, “What is really the basis of the value orientations for the generations, and how can businesses use it correctly?”, “How to create conditions for the mutual understanding and cooperation of all generations in the modern organizations?”, etc.

The marketers also pay great interest to this theory, studying the preferences of consumers of various ages (Antipov 2013). Furthermore, the themes of the attitudes of the representatives of different generations towards the economic crisis of 2008 in Russia and the conflicts between the generations are rather thoroughly studied (Shamis, 2009).

However, nowadays the greatest attention of researchers is paid to the generation Y, is of paramount interest for the employers. That is why the majority of the contemporary publications concern the younger generation: their values, expectations, education, career strategies, etc. The representatives of other generations have been deprived from the researchers’ attention so far. Nonetheless, the rapidity and the cardinal nature of changes, which happened and are still happening in Russia, determine the current striking differences between the generations and the uniqueness of the today’s research opportunities.

When it comes to the research on the motivational problems, their study also has a history in Russia. During the USSR times there were held constant experiments in the sphere of motivating and stimulating the workers, and the experience of the most advanced labor collectives was sought to be replicated across the country. The Western and American classics were analyzed, however the attempts to adapt the classical theories of motivation to the Russian realities has been majorly unsuccessful. A lot of works of Russian scientists was published on motivational problems, which reveal theoretical and practical aspects of this issue. The problem of the employees’ motivation was examined in the works of O.S.Vichansky (2002), A.P.Egorshin (2001), E.A.Utkin (1999), V.V.Travin (1995), S.A.Shapiro (2005) and so on. In their works there was given the analysis of a wide range of motivational problems, mainly for the sphere of the large-scale industrial production and for the conditions providing for the stable economy. At the same time the problem of the motivational peculiarities of the representatives of different generations was not singled out by the scientists as an independent field of research.

One of the ways of studying the labor motivation is to practically research labor values, i.e. to gather and analyze the people’s statements regarding what is important and meaningful to them at work.

The Russian studies in this sphere, both academic and specialized, were based on the data of individual enterprises and were focused primarily on the workers’ evaluations.

One of the fundamental studies of this kind is “Man and his work”, edited by A.Zdravomyslov, V.Rozhin and V.Yadov, published in Russia in 1967, where the authors emphasized three criteria for attitudes to labor: 1) the degree of responsibility and conscientiousness at work; 2) the degree of labor initiative of the worker; 3) the level of discipline of the worker (Zdravomuslov *et al.* 1967).

This study was continued in the fundamental monograph “Man and his works in the USSR and later”, published in 2003 (Zdravomuslov *et al.* 2003).

In 2006 the Institute for Comparative Social Research (CESSI) conducted an all-Russian study “Values and interests of the Russians”, which in a great extent repeated one of the few nationwide studies, held in 1986 by the Institute of Sociology of the Russian Academy of Sciences under the supervision of the professor I.T.Levykin. The results of these surveys allowed us to see the scale of values of the average Russian resident in the 1980s, as well as to evaluate his attitude to labor after twenty years (Milanchenko 2012).

Among the comparative cross-country studies, we should note the work “Hierarchy of the labor values in the European countries”, written by the researchers from the National Research University “Higher School of Economics” V.S.Magun and G.A.Monusova and published on the basis of the results of the experimental authors’ study which had been held in 2010. The study was based on the processing of the results from the International Social Survey Programme, ISSP (Monusova & Magun 2010).

Among the Russian scientists, who studied the value differences between the generations, we should also point out U.R.Vishnevsky and V.T.Shapko (1995), O.U.Klochkova (2003), I.M.Chistyakov (2001), U.A.Levada (2001).

The conceptual foundations of the research on the informality in the sphere of labor relations are laid down in the works of the Russian researchers V.Y.Yadov and A.G.Zdravomyslov (2003), V.E.Gimpelson (2002), T.I.Zaslavskaya and M.A.Shabanova (2002), S.U.Alashev (1995), P.V.Romanov (2000), P.Timofeev (2000), S.U.Barsukova (2003), N.V.Bordacheva (2004), V.V.Radaev (2005), V.A.Davydenko and A.N.Tarasova (2008), S.Glinkina (1998), A.Ledeneva (1997), etc., who are studying the informal employment, the influence of the informal relations on the formal labor market, non-legal practices in the sphere of employment and other burning issues, connected with the informal side of the social-labor interactions.

There are also joint projects. For example, the Russian scientists from the Institute of Sociology of the Russian Academy of Sciences and the Canadian researchers from the University of Carlton, when studying the formation of the labor relations in the post-Soviet Russia, paid substantial attention to the problems of the formal and informal rules of the labor relations (DeBardleben *et al.* 2004). A.Ledeneva, together with A.Rogachevsky and S.Lovell, becomes a co-editor of the book “Bribery and Blat in Russia: Negotiating Reciprocity from the Middle Ages to the 1990s”, where the works of specialists of a wide spectrum of disciplines were collected. These works were mainly focused on two key issues: “bribery” – the use of public office for private gain, and “blat” – the informal exchange of favors (Lovell *et al.* 2000).

Thus, the process of studying social-labor relations, their motivational and informal components has a rather long and rich history in Russia. However, the problems mentioned earlier have not been conceptualized and studied in the context of the theory of generations enough.

As already mentioned, the global changes of the past decades in Russia have had the most significant impact on the representatives of the three generations, most actively involved in the Russian labor market: baby boomers, who are now around 65 years old, the generation X (they are about 45 years old now), and the generation Y (now around 25 years old).

The uniqueness of the situations is in the fact that the representatives embody not only different generations, but different epochs. The representatives of the generation 65 are now finishing their working path, retiring. They are the working people of the USSR, whose peak of working activity occurred in the period of the “developed socialism”. The representatives of the generation 45 are now in the active period of their working activity, having reached the peak of their career despite all the difficulties of the times of Perestroika. The generation 25 is only at the beginning of their working path, but they have already become bright representatives of the contemporary market relations.

According to the Federal State Statistic Service, in 2018 out of 146.267 million people there were 30.491 million representatives of the baby-boom generation (20,8%), 41.103 million people – from the generation X (28,1%) and 40.834 million people – from the generation Y (27,9%).

As stated above, according to the theory of generations, the values of a person and his attitude towards different spheres of the public life (including the working life) are determined by the peculiarities of the economic, political and social life of the country in the period, when the formation of his worldview was happening.

The concept of value is difficult for understanding not only because various scientists define it differently, but also because in the society there existed and still exist various values that have different backgrounds and perform specific functions in the public life. In order to somehow navigate between them, people classify them. There are a lot of classifications, however among them there is no generally accepted one.

According to F.Heller and S.Antonio Ruiz-Quintanilla, the employment and work are characterized by one of the four values: the work can be perceived as a burden/heavy responsibility, coercion, duty or public contribution (Heller & Ruiz-Quintanilla 2002). This or that belief dominates in a certain country, which helps us to understand the specifics of the social-labor relations.

In the course of the research “Hierarchy of the labor values in the European countries” stated above, the authors V.S.Magun and G.A.Monusova show that various countries differ also when it comes to the ratio of the value of earnings and the guarantee of employment. While studying the value-motivational structure of the Russian and foreign workers, the scientists come to the conclusion that for a number of years one of the key factors for the analysis of the labor values has been the opposition “extrinsic – intrinsic”, in which the contentious, “internal” labor values (such as self-realization, results of work or an interesting job) oppose to the “external”, instrumental ones, connected with the personal interests of the worker or his family (how high is the salary, good working conditions, minimization of labor efforts, partially – guarantee of employment) (Monusova & Magun 2010). In particular, the researchers conclude that the West-European labor market sets a high bar of the professional competencies and requirements for the employee. That is why, in the West people aspire to be useful, in the first place, to contribute to the company's achievements more. This personal contribution, – if they, of course, believe in such a connection, – is what their remuneration depends on.

For many years we observed and still observe quite a different situation in Russia. The success of the career path (including the remuneration for work) often depended and still depends not on the personal contribution of the worker to the company's business, but on his personal connections and ability to build informal relations.

Regarding the labor relations of the Soviet period in the life of Russia (1917-1990), it is necessary to mention the fact that, despite a seemingly high degree of formalization of the public life, the informal relations constituted its most important and integral part in that period. The distinctive feature of the labor relations of that era was the close intertwining of the productive, social and cultural life, where the informal relations spread on both productive and non-productive spheres (Romanov 2000). Besides, they were based on the principles of mutual help and mutual support. For the paternalistic relations of the Soviet times it was typical to have a completely specific understanding of the workers' loyalty, which implied that in exchange for the privileges granted by the administration, the employees should have been absolutely loyal (Goman 2004).

In the conditions of transition to a market economy, labor relations and the policy of the employers have acquired a dynamic nature, which reflects people's aspiration for profit, competitive struggle of entrepreneurs for a market's share and struggle of workers for necessary material benefits. Formally, the government should have taken care of reaching a balance in labor interactions between actors of these relations, however the general situation on the Russian labor market was characterized by a high level of opacity, where latent processes were dominant: high level of unregistered employment, including secondary, incidental employment; fictitious employment; hidden employment among fully and partially unemployed, followed up by hidden unemployment. The general consequence of these transformations was the further

increase in the scale of informal relations in the labor sphere. Thus, the transition to the market economy has added to the historically developed specificity of the Russian labor market a wide spread of various non-standard forms of economic behavior in the sphere of employment, both among workers and employers.

In times of Perestroika (1985-1991) and in the 1990s the interaction between formal and informal mostly happened in accordance with the old Soviet scheme, when the official Soviet system and the system of informal connections supported and intertwined each other, representing some sort of a symbiosis. But the main newly emerged feature was that the informal sphere started to occupy more and more space, and the formal one was significantly weakened. Official salaries were paid irregularly at that time (including those provided by the government), the norms of protection of the workers' rights were reduced, and the system of social guarantees appeared to be almost completely destroyed. In these conditions, forced practices of survival have further increased the instability of the workers' living conditions and brought to life more and more of the new forms of informal mutual help.

It is obvious that in the transition to the market economy, along with the elimination of the commodity shortage, there has disappeared such thing as "blat" (the informal exchange of favours) in the sense of using informal channels of access to scarce goods and services. The very word "blat" has almost completely gone out of the Russians' colloquial speech. However, this does not mean that informal connections, which limit an individual's resource capabilities, have lost their significance. The victory over the commodity shortage does not signify the elimination of shortage in general. As the market is developing, money is becoming the scarcest resource and a universal need; all social connections of a person or a group are directed at achieving it. The informal connections have become a key factor of access to profitable loans, high-salary positions, fast registration of licenses, state contracts, information about legislative innovations being prepared and so on. In these conditions, social contacts of the Russians started to play an important role. As for the business, the contacts with government officials gained a key significance.

All these changes could not but affect the attitude of workers towards labor. So, according to the results of the research "Values and interests of Russians" highlighted above, labor was and still remains a crucial element of public life for Russians. However, over the past twenty years the attitude towards it has changed quite greatly. If earlier work could be viewed as the goal and means of achieving all sorts of benefits – material, social status, public respect, satisfaction of needs in self-expression, at the turn of the century work started to be regarded by the majority of people only as the means of achieving the material well-being. The value of an "interesting job" in the hierarchy of other life goals has gone down from 41% to 29% (Milanchenko 2012).

However, not all scientists agree with this point of view. So, a well-known Russian economist, sociologist and politician V. Inozemtsev believes that in a "post-economic" society there is happening a number of the following fundamental changes: along with the material progress, the personal value orientations, a person's attitude towards himself and his place in the surrounding world are changing, the main motive for activity is becoming to be the improvement of one's own potential. Having satisfied the material needs, a person of the post-industrial culture gets an opportunity to master and cultivate the needs of a higher range – the need in self-improvement and self-expression (for instance, the participation in various social organizations, self-education, sport, etc.). "With the change of the motivational structure there is forming a type of personality that is focused not on the maximizing of the material consumption, but on the achievement of inner harmony and perfection" (Inozemtsev 2000).

Thus, it is evident, that each period in the life of the country forms its own generation of workers, who share common ideas towards work and their specific labor experience. In the view of the foregoing, there appears a situation that is insufficiently studied, the situation, when in the current Russian labor market there simultaneously interact representatives of three different generations of workers, who represent three different epochs in the life of the country, which is reflected in various aspects of their labor behavior and activity.

III. RESEARCH GOALS, METHODS AND HYPOTHESES

The subject of the current research is the three generations of the Russian workers and the peculiarities of their labor experiences. The goal of our research is to study the specific features of labor experience (including its informal aspect) of the representatives of different generations of the Russian workers, as well as their motivational and value orientations.

To test the hypothetical provisions of the current research the authors conducted a questionnaire among 726 residents of Nizhny Novgorod, Kazan, Samara and Kirov: 241 people at the age of 55-75 years (the baby-boom generation, or, as we called it, the generation 65), 245 people at the age of 35-54 years (the generation X or generation 45) and 240 people at the age of 15-34 (the generation Y or generation 25). There was an approximately equal number of males and females. Questions of the questionnaire were formed on the basis of a preliminary conducted qualitative expert survey, and during a pilot study it was possible to identify flaws of the questionnaire and correct them. The final version of the questionnaire included 35 questions with open or closed answers. The questions referred to the choice of profession and factors that influence a successful employment and career growth; the registration of labor relations; values and motivation for labor; the expectations from the working life; formal and informal relations with the director and colleagues; conflicts, discrimination, use of free time, attitude towards retirement, etc.

There was conducted a separate expert survey among the owners and top-managers of 25 Russian organizations from different spheres of activity. The questions to experts concerned the extent of development of informal relations in the organization and their transformation since the USSR times.

The hypotheses of our research were the following assumptions:

The peculiarities of the social-economic situations, in which the worldview of three various generations has formed, caused serious differences at all stages of working life of these generations – from primary employment to retirement, creating a specific to a certain generation labor experience.

Most significantly between the generations differ: the attitude towards work and the prestige of professions, the ideas concerning the value of labor, the attitude towards material and non-material motivation, etc.

The rules of interaction in the social-labor sphere are defined by both formal and informal components. Along with formal relations in Russian organizations there also have always existed and still exist informal relations (to some extent). At the same time, informal relations in the post-Soviet Russia are the modern transformation of the system of informal relations of the Soviet period.

Despite numerous differences, all generations share some common ideas regarding universal values: health, family support, desire to work, and only then material well-being – those are the main priorities for all three studied generations.

IV. RESULTS

We started our research with the analysis of the problems of primary employment. The primary employment is the process of including young men and women in a real, “adult” working activity, not on a home, but on a public level, after finishing education, i.e. acquiring main and rather constant life occupation (Volkov 2009). The social interaction, as well as in the process of employment, between the actors of the social-labor relations is defined by a number of key issues: reasons, conditions and factors of occurrence; means, mechanisms and processes of interaction; common values, norms and rules (formal and informal); mutual expectations; mutual influence and effectiveness. In a more practical sense, when considering the problems of employment the following factors matter: the candidates’ education, ways and means of

searching for a job, the process of candidates' evaluation, the requirements for them, methods of adaptation and so on (Chilipenok & Gaponova 2012).

The first set of questions of the questionnaire concerned the choice of profession and education. The most prestigious professions of the respondents' times are:

The generation 65: engineer, party member, diplomat; teacher, scientist, doctor; trade worker, highly skilled worker, supplier. The respondents also noted a number of popular at the time "romantic" professions: sailors, pilots, geologists, actors. The representatives of the generation 45 listed the following occupations and professions: business owner, entrepreneur, official, deputy; accountant, lawyer, realtor, attorney; manager, secretary-referent. The generation 25: doctor of the private clinic (dentist, plastic surgeon), state official; designer, bank worker, top-manager; programmer, sales manager.

By the way, in this context the data about the graduates of the Russian universities by professions in 1900-1913 appears to be quite interesting. According to the statistics, a hundred years ago the most popular professions (judging by the amount of graduates from the Russian universities) were: lawyers – 26 089 people, doctors – 15 991 people, teachers – 14 576 people and officers – 3 443 people (Ivanov 1991).

The question "How did You decide on the choice of the profession" received various answers: went where there was an opportunity, it did not really matter; had a dream since childhood; parents advised; followed friends; always knew what I wanted. Although it is necessary to state that among the representatives of all generations there was quite a large percentage of those who did not have a clear idea about their career aspirations when they first applied for a job: the generation 65 – 21%, the generation 45 – 37%, the generation 25 – 25%.

After the graduation from school, the representatives of the generation 65 most often studied in vocational schools or technical colleges, the generation 45 – technical colleges and universities, the generation 25 mainly receives education at universities.

The largest percentage of those who started to work accordingly to their specialization acquired is with the generation 65 – 47%, 33% – with the generation 25. The representatives of the generation 45 rarely started their working activity with the specialization acquired while studying – 28% – and it is not surprising, since the processes of Perestroika that took place in Russia in that period of time changed the plans of the majority of the population of our country greatly. However, it is necessary to mention that at all times the most "dedicated" to their profession are graduate doctors (Gimpelson et al. 2011).

As for the age at which the respondents started their working activity, there was no great difference among the answers – the representatives of all generations indicated an average age of 18-22 years.

The problems with employment are the most familiar to the generation 45 – 67%, less familiar – to the generation 25 – 33%, and the representatives of the generation 65 experienced problems with employment very rarely – 11%.

The main problems that appear in the process of employment were defined by the representatives of the generation 45 as: the absence of vacant jobs and information about the openings, the importance of having a residence permit, the work experience, the necessity of knowing how to work with the PC, the unsuitability of the education received, the difficulty at understanding the essence and duties of new professions, the absence of the official employment, etc. The generation 25 notes the following among the main difficulties: a large number of low-quality information about openings and employers, the necessity of work experience, the difficulty at getting a good job and a low salary. The generation 65 sees the main problem in the absence of freedom of choice (referrals, assignments) and the necessity of having a party membership for getting a good position.

When answering the question about the importance of the higher education for the employment, the opinions formed in the following way: the generation 65 emphasizes the prestige of the higher education which was not publicly available and gave those who had it respect, higher salaries and status. The generation 45 does not believe that the higher education paid the most important role in their employment. The first education that the generation 45 got was, in more than half of the cases, not the only one. The

problems of the Perestroika pushed back the issues of obtaining (or finishing) education, to which people had to return after some time. The generation 25 points out that the necessity of the higher education for the employment goes without saying, but does not rank it as one of the most important ones.

Regarding the necessity of knowing a foreign language for a successful employment, the majority of the representatives of the generation 25 noted it as a significant factor (68%). Significantly less importance was paid to it while employment of the generations 45 and 65 (28% and 13% respectively).

According to the respondents of all generations, the success of employment and further career always depended on several factors: education, work experience, connections, personal qualities and the share of luck and fortune. The representatives of all generations give the top priority to experience, although connections have always been important, and only after that – education and personal qualities.

Further questions to the respondents were dedicated directly to the very process of employment. The ways of finding a job differ greatly among the generations, though at all times one of the most popular ways of finding a job remains looking for a job through personal connections, relatives or acquaintances, i.e. through informal channels (more than 50% of the respondents of each generation noted this option). Furthermore, for every generation there appeared the job search channels that the previous generations did not have: media, Internet, recruitment agencies, etc.

The generation 65 is also the least familiar with the problems of the interviewing for a job. The major part of the respondents report that this process was rather formal in the personnel department (53%), or there was no interview at all (38%). Likewise, the generation 45 points out the nominal nature of the interviews (33%) or their absence (38%). The generation 25 in the majority believes that nowadays it is quite difficult to succeed in a job interview when applying for a good position (72%).

The representatives of the generation 65, unlike the generation 45 (28%), were most frequently acquainted with the job description and instructions when being hired (78%), since for the newer professions and positions there were simply none yet. The instructions which were left from the Soviet times did not reflect the actual state of affairs and the issues of the official employment were not paid much attention to in the transition period. Besides, the today's youth does not often get introduced with the job description and instructions in the process of the employment either (34%), although nowadays there exist job descriptions for practically all positions.

The question of discrimination during the process of employment remains always acute when studying the social-labor issues. 12% of the generation 65, 29% of the generation 45, 18% of the generation 25 faced with the gender discrimination when being employed for a certain position, the age discrimination is familiar to 15% of the generation 65, 24% of the generation 45 and 25% of the generation 25, the national discrimination is well-known to 3% of the generation 65, 14% of the generation 45 and 37% of the generation 25.

Next, we asked our respondents about the problems of adaptation at a new workplace. The labor adaptation can be defined as the process of a person's adjustment to the essence and conditions of the working activity, which he starts to be engaged in, to its requirements. This process occurs when a young person, after finishing the education at a certain educational institution, for the first time engages in a real working activity, which is called the primary labor adaptation (Volkov 2009).

As far as the adaptation is concerned, 62% of the generation 65 noted that they had never experienced difficulties at the first workplace, as well as 43% of the generation 45 and 52% of the generation 25. The generation 65 pointed out mentoring as the most popular way of adaptation, the team helped more or "no one helped" the generation 45 and the representatives of the generation 25 also noted mentoring and help from the team.

Then we asked our respondents about their opinion on changing the job. When answering the question about how long they worked at one place, the majority of the representatives of the generation 65 (57%) said that 20-25 years of work at the same place was a norm in their times, the generation 45 believes that it is possible to work at the same place without changing the duties for 5-10 years (56%), the major part

of the representatives of the generation 25 (61%) are determined to change the essence of work every 3-5 years (although 11% of the youth would like to find the pursuit of their life rather now than ever). It is not surprising considering the general acceleration of the pace of life, the development of informational and innovative technologies, the changing demands of the employers, which requires people to be more flexible, to react to changes faster, to continuously improve and grow professionally and personally.

The attitude towards this issue of the employers is changing as well (according to the results of our expert survey). If earlier the employers were concerned with numerous changes of jobs of the applicants ("Why is he changing them so frequently?"), nowadays they are more preoccupied that over the past 10 years a person occupies the same position and conducts the same duties at a certain enterprise ("Why was not he interested in the career growth? Why was not he promoted? Can he do anything else?").

As for the move to another city or country for work, naturally, it is more inherent for the younger generation (58% of the generation 25 noted that they are ready to move to another city for work and 49% indicated readiness to move to another country for work), especially considering that they have more opportunities for it than the previous generations. Although about 20% of the representatives of the generation 25 found it difficult to answer this question. For the generation 65 the possibility to move to another country for work is practically zero. The generation 45 also had fewer opportunities to work abroad, but a lot of them were ready to move to another city (43%), if only there was an opportunity to earn money.

The following block of questions of our questionnaire was focused on evaluating our respondents' value-motivational orientation. At all times the issue of remuneration, the ratio of material and non-material motivational factors were the most important. On the whole, in the course of our research we managed to identify a general tendency of the diminishing role of non-material motivational factors from generation to generation, although they, of course, have not lost their significance completely. Material motivation is always important, but it is of a particular value for the today's youth.

The most significant for the generation 25 are: the possibility of the career growth, the salary and flexible working hours; the least important factors – the proximity of workplace to home and friendly relations in the team. The generation 45 considers the salary, the acquisition of a new experience and the possibility of self-realization as the most significant ones; less important – stable quiet work and its proximity to home. For the generation 65 important are: the proximity of workplace to home, the salary and stable quiet work, less significant – the independence in the decision-making and the acquisition of a new experience.

The difference in answers of the respondents from various generations concerning the attitude towards overtime work without payment, "subbotniks" was not surprising as well. This situation is more common for the representatives of the generation 65 – 72% of the respondents of this generation noted that in the Soviet times "subbotniks" were an ordinary thing and were not viewed as some sort of duty or obligation. The representatives of other two generations do not completely deny the possibility of overtime work without payment (32% of the generation 45 and 29% of the generation 25), although they are far less enthusiastic about it than their predecessors. The percentage is approximately the same, but the reasons are different. Among the answers to the open question about the situations when it is acceptable, the most spread were the following opinions: the generation 25: "If it is a new experience", "If afterwards I receive some sort of obvious or implicit benefit from it"; the generation 45: "If it is necessary to help the colleagues", "If it is a rush job or some urgent or important situation". The representatives of all generations (in either of the explanations) pointed out such option as: "If the director asks (makes), in order not to spoil the relations". Thus, if the representatives of the generation 65 regarded the additional (and often someone else's) work as the indicator of trust towards them and their capabilities (they could have even been happy about it), the representatives of the generations 45 and 25, vice versa, are very sensitive to the matter, trying not to fulfill the duties of "that guy".

In our opinion, it is connected with the fact that in the Soviet times personal matters were, by default, secondary to public ones. That is why the representatives of the older generation are oriented both on social norms and common moral principles and values. In the comparison with young people they specify the necessity of following the rules for the common well-being, as well as universal ethical principles more often. The representatives of the younger generations are more focused on themselves, their personal and

professional growth, then – the compliance with ethical rules and norms, and only after that – the compliance with public interests.

The next section of the questionnaire was devoted to the education and included questions regarding: the importance of the higher education; the discrepancy of the education obtained and its relevance at work; the necessity of getting additional knowledge and attending refresher training courses during the working life.

In the course of the survey we identified the following main trends:

The indispensability of the higher education for obtaining a top position or high salary has not lost its primary importance. However, if the representatives of the generation 65 in the majority (60%) underlined that the higher education gave them great advantages for occupying higher positions, although it was possible to occupy them even having a secondary education, for the younger categories of respondents this condition is already mandatory (82% of the respondents of the generation 25 and 76% of the generation 45 think this way).

Many modern Russian workers have the level of education that does not correspond to the complexity of work they are doing. About 30% of the interviewed from all three generations defined their education as excessive, around 10% called it insufficient. And about 60% of them consider their education adequate to their work. At the same time, there was noted no difference between the generations. It is interesting that around 55% of the representatives of the older generations admit that their descendants have a higher level of education and knowledge, “unfortunately often only theoretical”.

Currently the percentage of the graduates from the universities and colleges who do not work in the specialties for which they were trained is rather high (48% of the total number of the interviewed).

While analyzing the answers to the open questions, we found out that nowadays there still exists the differentiation of salaries, however not from the point of view of the educational level, but from the perspective of the professions that the employees occupy. Salaries of workers from different spheres of activity but with the same educational level can vary greatly, depending on their professional affiliation and even their gender. For instance, the work of teachers and medical workers, who have higher education, is paid much less than that of lawyers and financiers. And women who have higher education and who occupy the same positions as men frequently earn less than their male colleagues. Consequently, higher education in itself does not guarantee great earnings.

Throughout the years enterprises and organizations had systems of the refresher training for the employees, however nowadays their focus has shifted from the political education (for example, 96% of the representatives of the generation 65 attended a short course of the Party’s history or political briefing) to a corporate training of the professional skills and competencies (79% of the representatives of the generation 45 and practically 100% of the representatives of the generation 25, who, due to their young age, still continue to study, attended refresher training courses in any form throughout their working life). The main difference here is that the respondents of the generation 65 often attended all these courses forcibly, whereas the representatives of the younger generations voluntarily determine, the lack of which skills they need to compensate, and find the appropriate training programs themselves (49% and 24% of the interviewed generations 25 and 45 respectively), although a lot of respondents pointed out that the organizations from time to time offer them the option of the corporate training (56%). Today the most popular courses among the generation 45 are business education (MBA) and English language courses, and the generation 65 is actively mastering computers.

The next set of questions touched upon the workers’ expectations from the employers. There were a lot of such expectations expressed: from the standard provision of the proper working conditions and decent salary, vouchers, kindergartens, health insurance, training, the recognition of credits and the encouragement of the initiative and independence, good recommendations upon dismissal to the organization of corporate events and employers “putting themselves into the workers’ shoes” (to let go home earlier, lend money, etc. (Chilipenok & Gaponova 2012).

At a more detailed consideration it appeared that these expectations had something in common with the most and least important factors listed earlier. The representatives of the generation 65 expected, in the first place, the provision of normal working and leisure conditions, the formation of a good moral-psychological climate in the team, the recognition of the worker's credits and the assistance in solving the housing issue. The least important are: the encouragement of the worker's independence in completing a task and the provision of the opportunity of the personal growth for the workers. The generation 45 considers the provision of a decent material reward and compensation package, as well as the encouragement of the worker's independence in completing a task as most important. The least significant – the guarantees of safety at the workplace and corporate events. For the generation 25 the material reward and the possibility of the career growth appeared to be important. The least important – the moral-psychological climate in the team and the provision of the guarantees of health insurance and pensions.

The question "What did You expect from the team?" was answered quite similarly by the representatives of all three generations: friendly, informal relations; assistance and support in work; help and support in personal matters; productive teamwork; communication outside of work. However it is necessary to note that assistance and support in work is of most importance for the generation 45, and the generation 65 finds non-working aspects of the relations with the colleagues more important.

The representatives of the generation 65 had "friendly" relations at work most frequently (77% of the respondents chose this option), 69% of the generation 25 define relations at work as "formal" and 54% of the generation 45 have most often faced with different kinds of rivalry among colleagues. That is why it is not surprising that, according to our research, the most frequent participation in conflicts is observed with the generation 45, the generation 65 was more peaceful at the workplace, the generation 25, due to a young age and lower positions, has not yet participated in conflicts that much.

Pride for their enterprise is most characteristic of the generation 65, the generation 25 is interested in the prestige and image of the company, whereas the representatives of the generation 45 were, in the majority, indifferent to either of the two.

The respondents were also asked the question regarding the interaction with trade unions. More than 90% of the generation 65 regularly paid trade union fees and had a constant contact with trade unions on a wide variety of social issues, the generation 45 points out that in their times the role of trade unions came to naught, though they still remained at large enterprises but could not and did not want to protect workers' interests, and the most representatives of the generation 25, although knowing what a trade union is, have never come across any, 6% of the interviewed could not explain what it was.

The expectations from the government among the representatives of different generations were also diverse: nowadays the majority of the representatives of the generation 65 expect decent pensions and medical services, the generation 45 and the generation 25 would like the government to help them with employment and control the unscrupulous employers.

The next block of our questionnaire concerned the problem of the informal relations. 92% of the respondents replied that they have, to some extent, encountered the manifestations of the informal relations throughout their working life.

The representatives of the generation 45 had to work without the official employment most often (57%). The generation 25 faces job offers without the official employment quite often now as well (41%), especially during the first months of work and in situations, when the working experience is not a necessary condition for the employment (call-centre operators, promoters, network marketing, etc.). The generation 65 is almost completely unfamiliar with the problem of working without the official employment – 6%.

The most frequent answer to the question about whether or not the respondents currently have informal agreements with the directors, which are not stated in the official documents, was "yes" for the 43% of the interviewed. 22% did not want to answer this question and only 35% gave a negative answer. Regarding the question about the contents of these informal agreements, the most popular answers were: the employee's performance of the duties, which are not mentioned in the job description; extra work; overtime work. During the analysis of the answers to the open questions we noted that sometimes the

directors were not hesitant to give their subordinate employees different tasks of personal nature. For instance: purchasing gifts; sending personal correspondence; buying groceries and even paying the utility bills.

The data of the current research also showed that the Soviet system of informal relations has undergone a significant transformation lately. So, in the process of expertly interviewing the owners and directors of companies, the respondents over the age of 50 years were asked the question concerning the existence of informal practices in the past and their difference from the current informal labor relations. The respondents unanimously confirmed the existence of the so-called system of blat in the Soviet Russia, but, at the same time underlined that at the moment this system of relations has significantly changed. The Soviet blat system, as the interviewed said, served daily consumption practices, whereas the post-soviet relations focus on the needs of the modern business. The relations of the Soviet blat system implied the potential reciprocal help; it was an exchange of favors between people, who had access to various scarce resources due to their activity. The post-soviet informal connections allow people to solve many business issues, but at the market rates. These rates are, of course, informal, yet quite stable. Instead of reciprocal obligations there exists the rule to repay for a favor according to the market rates.

The next group of questions touched upon the respondents' interests outside their work, as well as their opinion on finishing their working activity. The majority of the representatives of the generation 65 spent their vacation at home, in the countryside, on the Black Sea; the generation 45 throughout all the eventful life has tried all the options from not being able to go on a vacation at all to traveling to the most exotic countries; the generation 25 prefers to go on a vacation abroad, although most often at the expense of parents. However some students choose to work in summer. On the whole, the answers to the questions regarding the ways of spending free time and vacations were quite diverse. But, surprisingly, the answers about the plans for the retirement appeared to be the same for the representatives of all generations: take care of health, grandchildren, hobbies, travels.

42% of the interviewed representatives of the generation 65 are working and another 23% are ready to work after the retirement. 54% of the generation 45 do not exclude the possibility of working after reaching the retirement age, the generation 25 does not give this issue much thought yet.

As for the question "Would You like to not work at all?" the percentage of those who answered "yes" was negligible among the respondents of all three generations. Most of the answers "yes" and "don't know" came from the representatives of the generation 25 (8%).

At the end of the questionnaire we asked the respondents if they were content with their working life. The majority of the respondents of the generation 65 replied that they were satisfied on the whole, that they worked with pleasure and loved their job (62%). Most respondents of the generation 45 (51%) answered that at the moment it was all good, although it had been very difficult in the beginning. Regarding the start of their working life the major part of the generation 25 (57%) responded as follows: everything is okay, not bad but also without much enthusiasm, would like something bigger and better.

V. CONCLUSION

Thus, while analyzing the answers of our respondents we could identify the differences in the course of the whole working life of the representatives of the three studied generations. They have been defined and are still defined by the peculiarities of a certain stage in the country's life. The social-economic and political situations as well as the changes that are rapidly happening in them have left traces on all spheres of public life. The sphere of social-labor relations was no exception. The Soviet era – the period when the current generation 65 actively pursued their working life, the Perestroika – the period of forming of the labor activity for the generation 45, and the current period of the market relations when the generation 25 starts working are radically different. These differences have already occurred at the first stage of the working path, to be precise – in the process of the primary employment.

Having analyzed our respondents' answers to the questions of the questionnaire on the beginning of their working life, we could outline some specific peculiarities, which characterize the process of entering the working life for the representatives of different generations. This specificity touches upon such aspects as the prestige of the profession, the importance of the higher education, the expectations from the job and ways to find it, the desire and possibilities to move to another city or country for work, the official nature of employment, the methods of evaluating the candidates for the position, the discrimination and the adaptation at a new workplace and many other issues.

Regarding the further development of the career path for the representatives of various generations, we found that there also exist quite a few differences. They concern the opinion on how long one should work at one place, the attitude towards working extra hours, the use of the education received, the upgrading of skills, the expectations from the employer, trade unions, the government and the team, as well as the informal relations at work.

When it comes to leisure time and vacation, on the one hand, they have, again, been defined and are still defined by the specifics and priorities of the social-economic and political circumstances of a certain period in the life of a country, but on the other hand, they demonstrate the values and opportunities of a specific generation and the society on the whole.

Only the representatives of the generation 65 and the generation 45 could determine their attitude towards the end of the labor activity and the retirement (more than the half of the interviewed are ready to continue working after reaching the retirement age), while young people do not reflect on this issue that much yet.

Besides, our research approved the hypothesis that the values, the attitude towards work, the employee motivation and, on the whole, the attitude towards life differ seriously between generations. The representatives of the older generation were more focused on the public good rather than the personal well-being.

The hypothesis that the informal practices definitely exist in the modern Russian organizations was fully confirmed. They are consciously being created and supported by the organization's management, and it is possible to assume that on the higher level they are indirectly supported by the government. Narrowing the sphere of formal earnings and protection, government institutions obviously rely on the sphere of informal relations which is designed to solve problems of the population's well-being. The hypothesis regarding the continuity of the system of informal labor relations in Russia and of the Soviet system of blat was affirmed as well.

Another our hypothesis that all generations share common basic values, which are, however, ranked differently, was also confirmed. Throughout their history the relations between the major actors of the labor market have repeatedly changed: either faded away or evolved. Only the basic needs remained constant, from century to century continuing to exist and motivate a man. The qualitative expression, scale and limits of the wishes have changed, but values that underlie the needs, once formed, remained the main indicator of human aspirations throughout the life. First of all, that is health, family well-being, love and support of relatives. At the same time, summarizing the results of the analysis of the value structure for the representatives of different generations, we came to the conclusion that the younger respondents put forward values that are more personal, whereas the older generations consider public interests as more important. However, in any case, on the individual level the representatives of all generations determine health and support of family as major values and only after – material well-being.

In the light of main principles of the generational theory projected onto the world politics, we can see that personal traits of the representatives of different generations have formed under the influence of either relatively long-term calm and stable (regarding political situation) time periods or, on the contrary, affected by short periods of instability and fluctuations. In this regard Russia has been unlucky – there were almost more revolutionary periods in its history than evolutionary. The specifics of the application of the generational theory in Russia has thus found its reflection in that for all three studied generations the significant difference in their value orientations was exactly due to the impact of the tragic events that had happened during their

lives: the collapse of the Soviet Union, Perestroika, crash and devaluation of the strong ideology, which had been prevailing over the minds of people for 70 years. That is why the Generation 65, having spent most of their lives under its influence, projected its values and ideals on their working experience; the Generation X, who witnessed the collapse of the country, appeared to be totally lost and confused; and the Generation Y, who have not experience this ideology, resembles its Western peers, and, on the whole, its representatives give answers that fit world trends.

The practical and theoretical importance of the conducted research is unquestionable, even though the hypotheses have a possibly controversial nature which, on the other hand, only shows the complexity of the problem raised. The research provides the data set that lets a reader reflect on the current Russian system of social-labor relations which was studied in the light of the theory of generations. In our opinion, it will be interesting not only to the researchers who work in this direction but also to a wide range of readers who are making attempts to understand the uniqueness of the transformations of Russian society.

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ИЗУЧЕНИЕ ОСОБЕННОСТЕЙ ТРУДОВОГО ОПЫТА ТРЕХ ПОКОЛЕНИЙ РОССИЙСКИХ РАБОТНИКОВ

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Аннотация

На основе материалов эмпирического исследования, проведенного авторами, в статье освещаются особенности трудовой жизни представителей трех поколений российских рабочих. Особое внимание в исследовании уделяется анализу ценностно-мотивационной структуры респондентов и оценке роли неформального компонента в социально-трудовом поведении работников разных возрастных категорий в современных российских организациях.

Сделан вывод, что особенности трудового пути представителей трех исследованных поколений российских рабочих имеют существенные различия, обусловленные изменением общественного порядка во всех основных аспектах трудовой жизни: отношение к выбору профессии, неформальных отношений на работе, ожидания работников от работодателя, профсоюза, правительства и команды, ценностные ориентации и трудовая мотивация. Однако есть и ряд общих моментов - универсальные ценности, присущие каждому поколению, несмотря на социально-экономические и политические изменения.

Ключевые слова: теория поколений, рынок труда, социально-трудовые отношения, трансформация общественного строя.

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