Coping with stress in migrant workers

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Migration is an objective process in Russia as worldwide. It has always existed and played an important role in human history. The problem of migrant workers is acute in Russia, because it borders on 18 countries. The collapse of the USSR severely damaged the economy of many former socialist republics. Consequently, people who cannot find employment in their country are forced to migrate to Russia to earn money. Most migrant workers face social, economic and psychological problems. Often, lack of social skills adds more problems to their everyday life difficulties. These things cause stress reactions and slow down their adaptation process.

On the other hand, one of the most difficult things for migrants is negative attitudes they encounter as newcomers. People around often associate migrants with illegal work, crime and terrorism. On a regular basis, media report about crimes committed by migrants.

Ключевые слова: migrant, labour workers, stress, coping strategies.

We should remember, however, that labour migration offers great opportunities for any country. Apart from economic advantages, it improves international relations and fosters mutual tolerance, particularly when this process is legal and carefully controlled. Successful social adaptation and assimilation of migrant workers is profitable for both themselves and Russian citizens. Authorities of large cities and non-governmental organisations assist migrants in their cultural adaptation. At present, it is particularly important to study the psychological problems experienced by labour migrants. The results of such research could assist in their adaptation and alleviate the negative attitude of the society to them.

All ethnic migrants encounter psychological difficulties assimilating into the new cultural environment. In cross-cultural psychology, the state they initially experience in their adaptation is termed the cultural shock. The cultural shock is an emotional reaction arising when a person is unable to understand and predict other people's behaviour. The shock is aroused by uncertainty about living standards and expectations, and therefore by the difficulty in controlling and predicting the future situation. For this reason, a migrant is exposed to anxiety, confusion, and

apathy unless he forms new cognitive constructs for understanding another culture and adopting an appropriate behaviour.

Every culture holds a variety of social symbols, including verbal and non-verbal communication methods. We rely on such signals in everyday life even without fully realising many of them. In a new cultural environment, a person is faced with an absolutely unfamiliar system of communicative signs, and therefore suffers a deep nervous shock (Furnham and Bochner 1986).

As a rule, the cultural shock is examined using the adaptation curve. In accordance with the curve, H. Triandis divides adaptation into five stages. The first stage is called 'honeymoon', being characterised by positive emotions, enthusiasm, cheerful mood, and great expectations. The second stage is distinguished by negative influence of the unfamiliar social environment. There is a feeling of mutual misunderstanding and rejection between migrants and local inhabitants. This leads to disappointment, frustration, and depression. At the third stage, the symptoms of the cultural shock may become critical, showing in serious diseases and in a feeling of absolute helplessness. The migrants who failed to successfully adapt to a new environment return home ahead of time. Much more often, however, migrant workers overcome cultural differences, mastering a new language and becoming familiar with a local culture and traditions. At the fourth stage, the depression is gradually replaced with optimism, confidence, and satisfaction. A person feels more adapted to and assimilated into the new society. Finally, the fifth stage is marked by full or long-term adaptation implying relatively stable individual transformations in response to current requirements.

In agreement with the given theory, the cultural shock came to be considered a standard human reaction, part of normal adaptation to cultural stress, and an aspiration to a more understandable, stable, and predictable environment.

Successful assimilation of migrants into a new cultural environment depends on a number of factors. 'Cultural distance' is one of the most essential factors in migrants' adaptation. It denotes objective or subjective cultural differences between migrants' country and the country of their temporary residence (Furnham and Bochner 1986).

N.M. Lebedeva obtained interesting research data regarding this factor: the more distant and dissimilar a culture seems to people adapting to it, the stronger their defence mechanisms can be. These mechanisms – manifested in heightened intragroup suggestion, the positive image 'we', and group counter-suggestion, the negative image 'they' – are aimed at perceptual estrangement from the 'distant' culture for the sake of preserving one's own ethnocultural identity (Lebedeva 2011).

Besides, successful adaptation depends on tolerance of the receiving society to migrants' values and cultural peculiarities, and on stability or flexibility of migrants' individual system of values and attitudes.

Migrants' expectations are another important factor which may complicate or, on the contrary, alleviate adaptation. Researchers proved that realistic expectations make cross-cultural adaptation easier, while illusory ones are fraught with a larger number of problems and more intense stress (Furnham and Bochner 1986).

Many researchers tried to identify the impact of migration on a person's mental health. It is established that migration breaks habitual social relations, entails long-term separation from family and a loss of social status, and causes everyday difficulties. As a consequence, a person may display a negative response similar to suffering or sorrow.

Migration severs the social and emotional links that are significant for a person. This, in turn, has rather a destructive effect on his or her mental health. This is why the relations with fellow countrymen play such an important role for a migrant living in a foreign cultural environment. According to S. Cohen and H. Noberman, the authors of the social support theory, preservation of

one's own ethnic environment relieves nervous breakdowns, especially during the initial period of migrants' life in a new culture (Cohen 1992).

There is also an opposite view: living in joint national groups hinders adaptation. A number of studies showed: the migrants, whose informal relations with local inhabitants are closer than those with fellow countrymen and who have close friends among the local population, internalise new cultural skills faster and more successfully (Gritsenko 2002).

The degree of socio-cultural adaptation is, in many respects, determined by language proficiency. Living in a foreign culture, a person makes hard effort to understand and accept a new concept of the world. In order to penetrate the world of another culture, he needs, first of all, to view everything in the light of the new language. In other words, it is necessary to learn another linguistic organisation of the world (Lebedeva 2011).

The theory of selective migration suggests that people of certain personality types are inclined to migration. Normally, two classes of migrants are singled out. The first class includes stable and economically interested people who leave their country due to unemployment. Meanwhile, the second class embraces unstable personalities who have potential problems and migrate in the hope of solving them at the new place of residence (Stefanenko 2004).

It is well-known that young and educated people more easily adapt to a new culture. Cultural flexibility and ability to resolve conflicts also help overcome adaptation difficulties. Cultural flexibility implies a person's general ability to orient oneself in a new cultural environment.

Since the beginning of the 1990s, John Berry's theory of acculturative stress has been considered a more popular model for studying the psychological adaptation of migrants by comparison with the cultural shock theory of the 1970-80s (Berry et al. 2007).

Berry suggested four acculturation strategies: assimilation, separation, integration, and marginalisation. Finding oneself in a new cultural environment, a person suffers an acculturative stress. Berry defines this stress as a response of an individual to events which stem from cross-cultural contacts and overweigh his possibilities of their management. Quite often such a response increases depression, associated with a cultural loss, and intensifies anxiety resulting from uncertainty about the way of living in a new society. This concept is very similar to the cultural shock. The term 'stress' serves as a theoretical basis for studying people's negative experience (the so-called stress factors) and various coping strategies. Thus, relying on the concept of stress, we may draw the following conclusion. Depending on effectiveness of coping strategies, acculturation can appear favourable, and therefore provide new possibilities and interesting experience; or it may undermine the living foundations of an individual, and thus restrict one's capabilities and reduce meaningful experience (Berry et al. 2007).

The concept of acculturative stress emphasises that emotional strain originates from cross-cultural interaction. The given model describes a situation when people, adapting to a foreign culture, can hardly alter their behavioural patterns. As a result, their acculturation is accompanied with a serious conflict.

The issue of overcoming stress is comprehensively discussed in Russian and foreign books on psychology. Already in 1936, studying adaptation diseases, Hans Selye discovered the general adaptation syndrome in which stress performed the primary role. The syndrome prepared an organism for meeting varying environmental conditions. The concept of coping includes mental processes and behavioural patterns aimed at overcoming stressful or critical situations, especially those of psychosocial nature.

The notion of coping is connected with the idea of psychosocial adaptation. Stress arises from the interconnection between a person and a situation he or she is involved in. For this reason,

the management of a difficult situation and of its negative effect depends on many factors. Adaptation may require that both the situation and the person's needs should be changed. Adaptation strategies are also variable: people can learn new skills, including self-controlling or management of circumstances; and this will help them out. There is evidence that acquisition of inappropriate methods for dealing with stressful situations contributes to maladaptation rather than adaptation to them.

The psychological mission of coping is to maximally adapt a person to the challenges of a situation, helping him master, alleviate, avoid, or adjust to this situation and thus relieve the stress caused by it. Hence, the main task of coping is to ensure and maintain a person's well-being, physical and mental health, and satisfaction with social relations (Ababkov and Perre 2004).

R. Lazarus made a significant contribution to the study of this phenomenon. According to him, coping includes cognitive and behavioural efforts aimed at managing specific external or internal requirements (and conflicts between them) which are evaluated as stressful or exceeding one's resources (Lazarus 1984).   Not only external factors, but also internal ones – needs, motives, values, aims, evaluations, etc. – may act as stressors. The neglect of these factors or failure to implement them may entail adverse consequences for a person. After assessing the significance of a problem and the resources required to manage it, with the necessary emotional response, a person takes actions for handling stress (Vasserman, Ababkov and Trifonova 2010).

A number of researchers view coping as external, behavioural manifestations of psychological defence mechanisms. In other words, they define it as the conscious variants of subconscious coping mechanisms which develop with the growth of a person's self-awareness (Ababkov and Perre 2004).

There are two categories of coping strategies: adaptive or constructive coping, and maladaptive coping or non-coping. Adaptive coping includes problem-solving, seeking of social support, focus on positive emotions, religious support, etc. Maladaptive coping comprises avoidance and escape, self-accusation, emotional discharge in the form of aggression, drinking alcohol or drug abuse, etc.

Moving to a new place of residence is always accompanied by certain problems and difficulties, and requires time for adaptation to new living conditions. Even temporary residence in a foreign country takes much effort, and is accompanied by everyday stress caused by new environment, unfamiliar and often unpredictable. The simplest problems turn into a torture for foreign guests. Rather often they appear absolutely helpless in a large city; and various criminal groups take advantage of that, deceiving miserable migrants and making a profit on their account. At the same time, foreign guests themselves do not always adequately resist stressful circumstances, and thus may get involved in illegal actions, failing to understand the existing laws and finding themselves in hopeless situations.

This research was performed to study the stress management peculiarities of labour migrants from Central Asia and seasonal workers from various regions of Russia coming to earn money in St. Petersburg.

Methods

Participants: 60 male labour migrants working on reconstruction sites in St. Petersburg, 30 of them were from Central Asia (average age 34.5) with an average experience working outside of their home country – 3 years. Other 30 seasonal workers from other regions of Russia (average age – 33) had, on average, 3.5 years of experience working outside of their region. The study was carried out in the offices of construction companies. It is noteworthy that all foreign workers had an official permission for working in Russia and thus were legally staying in the country.

Lazarus coping strategies test (The Way of Coping Questionnaire (WCQ))

The research method was designed by R. Lazarus and S. Folkman in 1988. It was adapted for Russia by T.L. Kryukova, E.V. Kuftyak, and M.S. Zamyshlyaeva in 2004. The method is based on eight-factor coping model that involves the following coping strategies:

Confrontive coping is an effort to solve problems on account of emotional release. The behaviour may be characterised by impulsiveness, sometimes with elements of a conflict; hostility; difficulty in planning actions, predicting their results, and correcting behavioural strategy; and unreasonable persistence. Confrontation is often considered a maladaptive coping strategy. At a moderate use, however, it ensures a person's ability to resist difficulties, defend one's own interests, and tolerate anxiety in stressful conditions. It also gives vigour, inventiveness, and resourcefulness in resolving problems.

Distancing is a strategy aiming to relieve negative emotions by subjective lowering the significance of a stressful situation and the degree of emotional involvement in it. The strategy usually employs intellectual techniques, such as rationalisation, re-concentration of attention, detachment, humour, lowering of a problem's significance, etc.

Self-controlling is used to overcome negative emotions by their conscious suppression and control, as well as by minimisation of their impact on perception of a problem and on the choice of a behavioural strategy. It also presupposes an increased control of one's own behaviour, an aspiration to self-command, a desire to conceal personal feelings from others, and reticence. Such a behavioural pattern often indicates a person's acute anxiety about revealing one's own identity, and unreasonably strict requirements to oneself leading to an increased control of one's actions.

Seeking of social support is an effort to handle problems by involving external or social resources, i.e. by seeking informational, emotional, and active support. The strategy is distinguished by orientation to interaction with other people, and expectation of support, attention, advice, and compassion. The search for *informational* support implies turning to experts and well-informed friends, who are considered to have the necessary knowledge, for advice and recommendations. The need for *emotional* support is manifested in an aspiration to receive the necessary attention, get an empathic response, and share one's emotions with an understanding and compassionate person. The need for *active* support shows in a desire to obtain help in the form of concrete actions or material resources.

Accepting of responsibility for one's own actions presumes that a person admits his fault and takes on the responsibility for solving a problem. In a number of cases, such people are distinguished by self-criticism and self-accusation. At a moderate use, this strategy shows people's effort to comprehend the dependence between actions and consequences; besides, it demonstrates their readiness to analyse their behaviour and seek the source of their difficulties in personal drawbacks and mistakes. At the same time, an excessive focus on the given strategy is likely to cause unreasonable self-criticism, self-reproach, a feeling of guilt, and constant dissatisfaction with oneself. The given peculiarities form a risk factor in development of depressive states.

Escape-avoidance presumes an effort to overcome problems by avoiding them. The methods of this strategy include denial of problems, daydreaming, unreasonable expectations, distraction, etc. Besides, there can be infantile behavioural patterns in stressful situations: denial or complete neglect of problems; efforts to shirk responsibility and avoid actions aimed at solution of difficulties; passiveness, impatience, fits of irritation, immersing oneself in dreams, overeating, drinking alcohol, etc. In this case, the aim is to relieve the torture of emotional tension. Most researchers rate this strategy as maladaptive. In some cases, however, it may prove useful, particularly in short-term perspective and in acute stressful situations.

Planful problem-solving is an effort to overcome difficulties by deliberately analysing a situation and possible methods of behaviour, by inventing a strategy for problem-solving, and by planning one's own actions taking into account objective conditions, former experience, and available resources. The strategy is usually considered constructive in managing difficulties.

Positive reappraisal means that a person approaches a problem through its positive reconsideration, thus turning it into a stimulus for personal growth. Adherents of this strategy often adopt a philosophical view of a challenging situation which thus becomes part of personal development.

Tested subjects are offered 50 statements regarding their behaviour in a critical situation. They need to evaluate the statements taking into account their typical response to problems. The resulting points fit one of three levels: 0-6 points indicate a low level of tension and adaptive coping; 7-12 points show an average level of tension and a borderline state of a person's adaptive potential; and 13-18 points testify to a high level of tension and marked maladaptation.

S. Hobfoll's test (SACS)

(the Russian version adapted by N.E. Vodopyanova and E.S. Starchenkova)

The research technique is intended for studying coping behaviour as the types of a person's response to stressful situations. It includes nine scales:

1. Assertive behaviour is an ability to give relations a desirable impulse, make a request, or reject a request from other people.

2. Social cooperation indicates an ability to resolve problems with the help of other people. This is a pro-social behaviour manifested in the need for interpersonal relations, and in the aptitude for cooperation and compromise.

3. Seeking of social support is an ability to find assistance from surrounding people – family, friends, or colleagues – in a problematic situation.

4. Cautious actions are manifested in efforts to avoid the risk of failure, inclination to overcaution, and continuous analysis of solution variants and their possible consequences.

5. Impulsive actions consist in quick, ill-considered decision-making or adherence to an intuitive impulse.

6. Avoidance implies that a person refuses to face a problem and pretends that nothing has occurred. He either avoids tackling a problem or re-directs attention to something else.

7. Manipulative actions is a way of problem-solving in which 'manipulators' attain their goals on account of various tricks, flattery, lies, or pulling on somebody's heartstrings.

8. Asocial actions presume rejection of conventional behaviour. They may include illegal actions, hostility, mistrust, or disruption of social relations.

9. Aggressive actions.

Tested subjects are offered 54 statements on human behaviour in stressful situations. They are to be assessed based on the five-point scale from one point 'No, it is absolutely wrong' to five points 'Yes, it is absolutely true'.

		Low	Medium	High
1	Assertive actions	6-17	18-22	23-30
2	Social cooperation	6-21	22-25	26-30
3	Seeking of social support	6-20	21-24	25-30

4	Cautious actions	6-17	18-23	24-30
5	Impulsive actions	6-15	16-19	20-30
6	Avoidance	6-13	14-17	18-30
7	Manipulative actions	6-17	18-23	24-30
8	Asocial actions	6-14	15-19	20-30
9	Aggressive actions	6-13	14-18	19-30

Rosenzweig Picture-Frustration Test (RFT)

Adult version (adapted for Russia by N.V. Tarabrina)

The research technique belongs to interpretative projective methods, and is designed to study human response to failure and human methods for management of problems hindering activity or satisfaction of one's needs. The technique includes 24 schematic drawings showing people engaged in an unfinished talk. The situations presented in the drawings are divided into two basic groups: (1) obstacle situations, when an obstacle, a person, or an object discourages and confuses a person by means of a word or something else; and (2) situations of accusation, where a person is an object of accusation.

A subject is offered to look at the pictures and write his usual response to the scenes portrayed. In this case, a subject takes the position of another man presented in the drawing and suggests a response for this man. For this reason, a subject is presumed to express his opinion more freely and reliably and to show his typical response to conflict situations. The answers obtained are assessed based on two criteria: a direction of response (or aggression) and a type of response (or) aggression.

There are three directions of response:

• *Extra-punitive response* is directed outwards, at other people; an external cause of frustration is blamed; the degree of a frustrating situation is emphasised; and, occasionally, another person is demanded to resolve a problem.

• *Intra-punitive response* is directed inwards, at oneself; a person accepts guilt or responsibility for handling a problem; a frustrating situation is not subject to criticism. A subject accepts that a frustrating situation is favourable for him.

• *Non-punitive response* implies that a frustrating situation is regarded as something insignificant or unavoidable that can be gradually resolved; a person blames neither himself nor others.

There are also three types of response (or aggression):

1. *Obstacle-dominance.* This type of response is focused on an obstacle. The obstacles causing frustration are accentuated in different ways regardless of whether they are rated favourable, adverse, or insignificant.

2. *Ego-defence.* This type of response is focused on self-defence, and includes criticism of other people, denial or acknowledgement of one's own guilt, and efforts to avoid reproach with the aim to defend one's own self. The responsibility for frustration cannot be attached to anybody.

3. *Continued Need.* This type of response is focused on satisfying needs. There is a constant need for finding a constructive solution to a conflict situation. A subject may either demand help from other people, or take on responsibility for solving a problem, or be confident that time and a course of events will lead to the necessary solution.

The average statistical data for groups of healthy people (%), based on Rosenzweig test

		Direction of response			Type of response		
		E	I	N	O-D	E-D	C-N
S. Rosenzweig	75 (9/12)	40	30	30	20	50	30
N.V. Tarabrina	62-64 (8/14)	46-52	25-27	23-26	32-34	35-39	27-30

In-depth Interview

The primary aim of the interview was to identify basic difficulties encountered by migrant workers, including: the time needed for adaptation; the type of resources – external or internal ones – that helped them manage stressful situations; and plans for the future and an emotional state.

'Man under the Rain' Projective Test

This research technique is a projective drawing test. It is widely used in applied studies for detecting personality characteristics, including the ones related to overcoming critical situations and stress management (coping) methods. The technique enables diagnosing personal reserves and peculiarities of defence mechanisms. A subject is offered a piece of paper with a lead pencil and is requested to draw 'a man' on one side of the paper and 'a man under the rain' on the other. The comparison of two resulting pictures makes it possible to determine a person's response to stressful, adverse situations and a person's feelings in complicated and problematic cases. Analysis of the drawings enables codification of defined psychological characteristics which are further estimated according to the following scales: possibility of adaptation, resistance to stress, self-esteem, level of anxiety, and aggressiveness.

Data analysis

The research employed the methods of mathematical statistics: the values of independent samples were compared using Student's t test, Mann-Whitney U-test, and Pearson's chi-squared test; correlation analysis was performed using the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient; and SPSS Statistics 17.0 software package was employed for calculation of data.

Results

The results of comparative analysis performed with the help of Lazarus's research technique are presented in Table 1 and Figure 1.

Table 1.

Comparative analysis of coping strategies based on Lazarus test (WCQ)

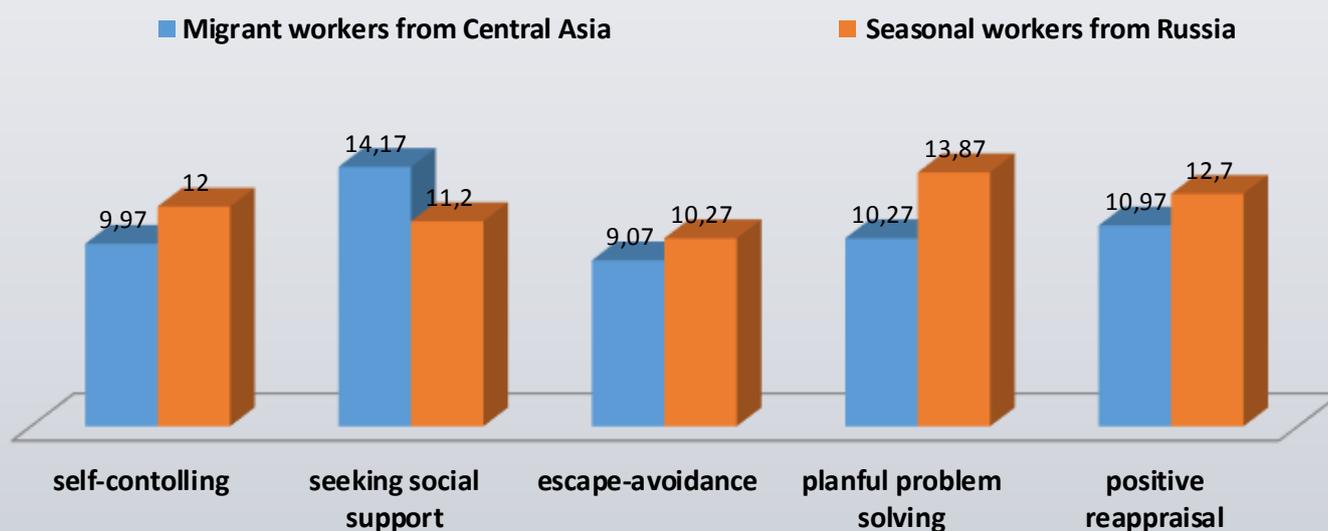| Coping strategies	Migrant workers from Central Asia		Seasonal workers from Russia		t	p
	M	σ	M	σ		
Confrontive	9.20	1.58	9.13	1.45	0.17	NS
Distancing	7.77	1.56	7.93	1.43	-0.42	NS
Self-controlling	9.97	1.75	12	2.15	-4.01	p<0.01
Seeking social support	14.17	2.43	11.20	1.84	5.3	p<0.01
Accepting of responsibility	7.17	1.51	7.77	1.47	-1.55	NS
Escape-avoidance	9.07	2.13	10.27	1.78	-2.36	p<0.05
Planful problem solving	10.27	1.78	13.87	1.92	-7.5	p<0.01
Positive reappraisal	10.97	2.04	12.73	2.25	-3.17	p<0.05

Figure 1

As the data show, the prevalent coping strategy among migrant workers from Central Asia is seeking of social support (14.17). Thus, foreign workers primarily need the support of their family and relatives. They are oriented at interacting with other people, and expect support, attention, advice, and compassion from them.

Social support may also be considered one of the basic factors in cross-cultural adaptation. Migrants need social support in order to effectively resist the negative impact of stressors.

It is also obvious that the following coping strategies dominate among seasonal workers from Russia: planful problem solving (13.87), positive reappraisal (12.7), and self-controlling (12).

Statistically significant differences between the groups were identified according to 5 out of 8 criteria. By comparison with Russian seasonal workers, labour migrants from Central Asia considerably more often need social support and less often resort to such coping strategies as planful problem-solving, self-controlling, escape-avoidance, and positive reappraisal. Interestingly, there were no significant differences in confrontive coping. Hence, by comparison with Russian seasonal workers, the coping behaviour of migrants from Central Asia is not distinguished by a heightened degree of conflicts.

The results from the comparative analysis of coping behaviour, performed on the basis of SACS test, are presented in Table 2 and Figure 2.

Table 2.

Comparative analysis based on SACS test

	Migrant workers from Central Asia		Seasonal workers from Russia		t	p
	M	σ	M	σ		
Assertive actions	20.4	5.3	21.9	3.17	1.32	NS
Social cooperation	26.53	0.7	23.83	0.6	-3.06	p<0.05
Seeking of social support	24.32	1.4	22.8	1.2	-2.8	p<0.05
Cautious actions	26.8	1.1	21.53	1.2	-4.3	p<0.001
Impulsive actions	19.17	6.1	17.17	3.9	1.4	NS
Avoidance	16		17.53		-1.5	NS
Manipulative actions	18.23	5.01	20.6	3.54	-2.1	p<0.05
Asocial actions	15.7	2.4	17.9		-2.29	p<0.05
Aggressive actions	17	2.8	19.7	1.9	1.6	NS

Figure.2

Comparative analysis based on SACS

	social cooperation	seeking of social support	cautious actions	manipulative actions	asocial actions
Migrant workers from Cental Asia	26,53	24,3	26,8	18,23	15,7
Seasonal workers from Russia	23,83	22,8	21,53	20,6	17,9
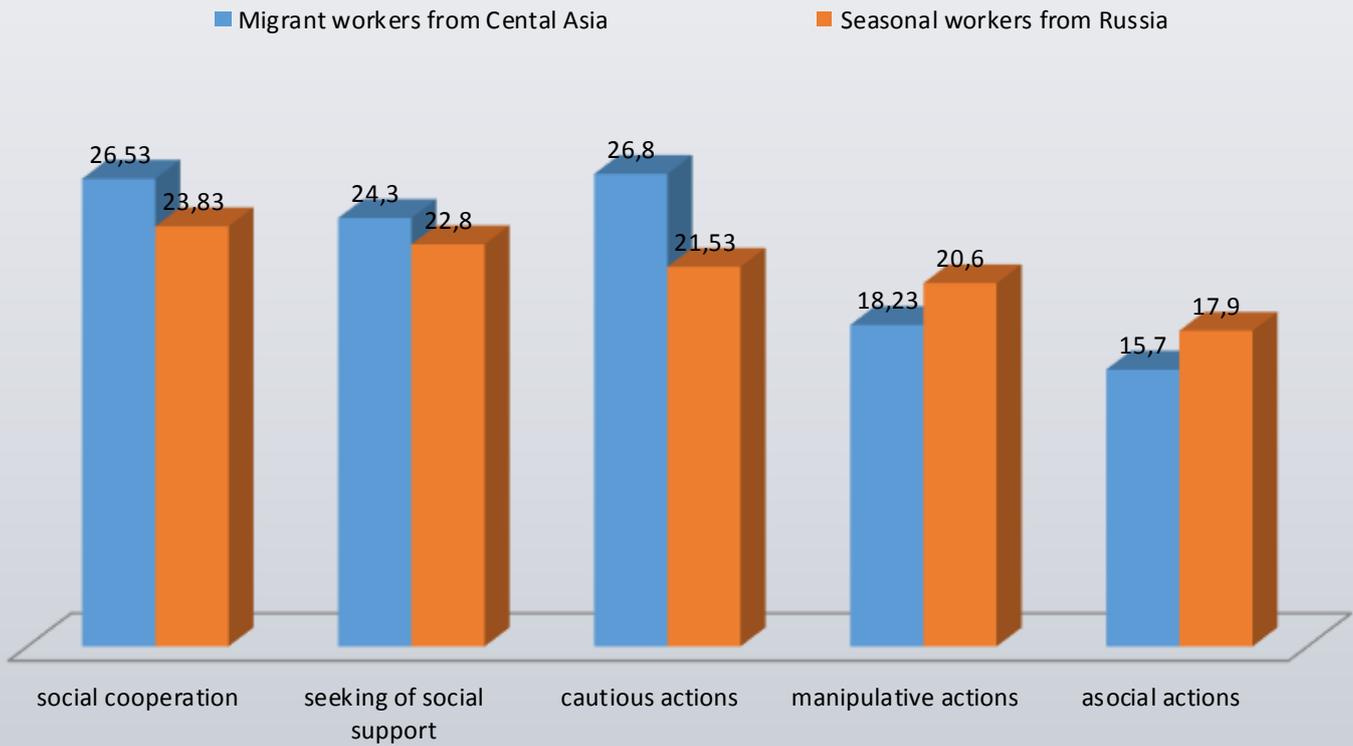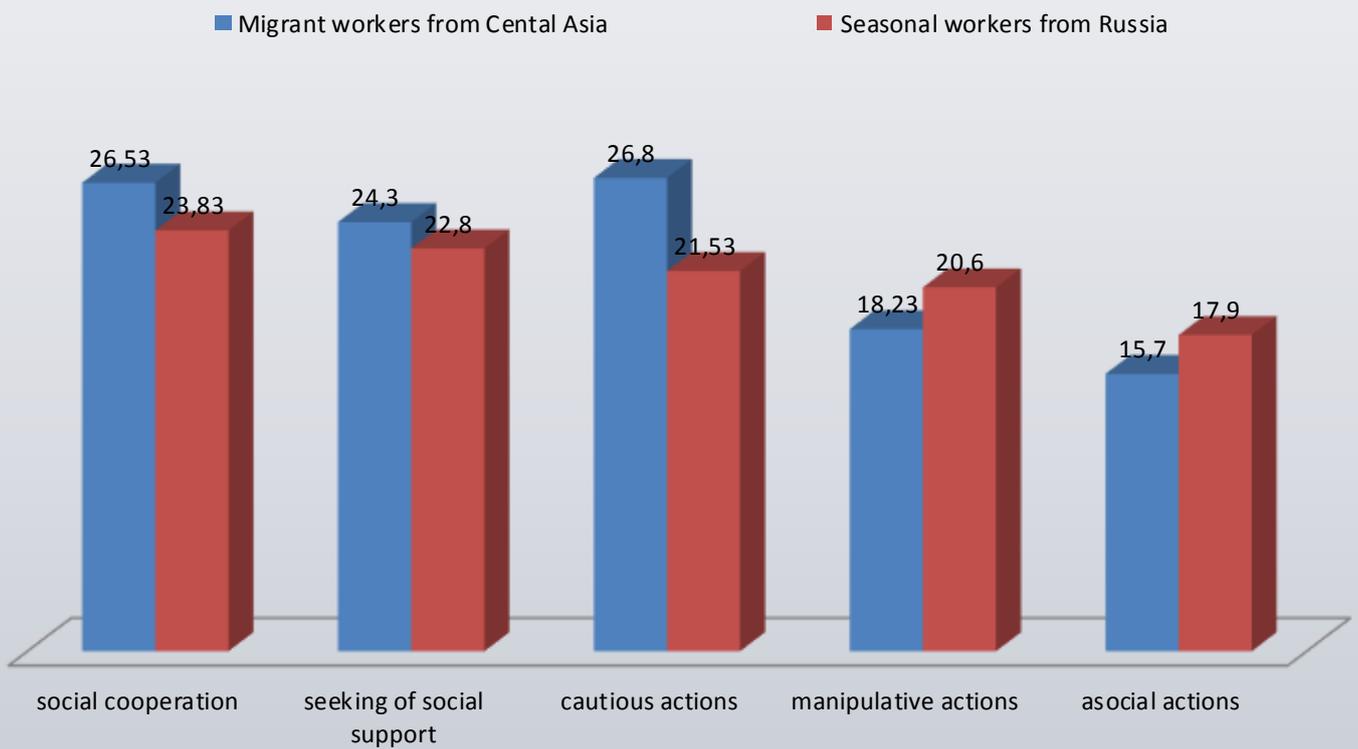
Migrant workers from Central Asia take cautious actions more often that Russian seasonal workers do. This indicates that the migrant workers seek to avoid the risk of failure and are inclined to overcaution. The given behaviour serves more as psychological defence rather than a coping strategy. Besides, migrant workers from Central Asia exhibit a significantly higher degree of social cooperation and seeking of social support by comparison with seasonal workers from Russia. It demonstrates that the migrant workers seek cooperation, are highly motivated to contact other people and foster interpersonal relations, and make an effort to find support from surrounding people (family and colleagues) in a problematic situation. Thus, they are distinguished by a sense of community and inclination to practical interaction (cooperation).
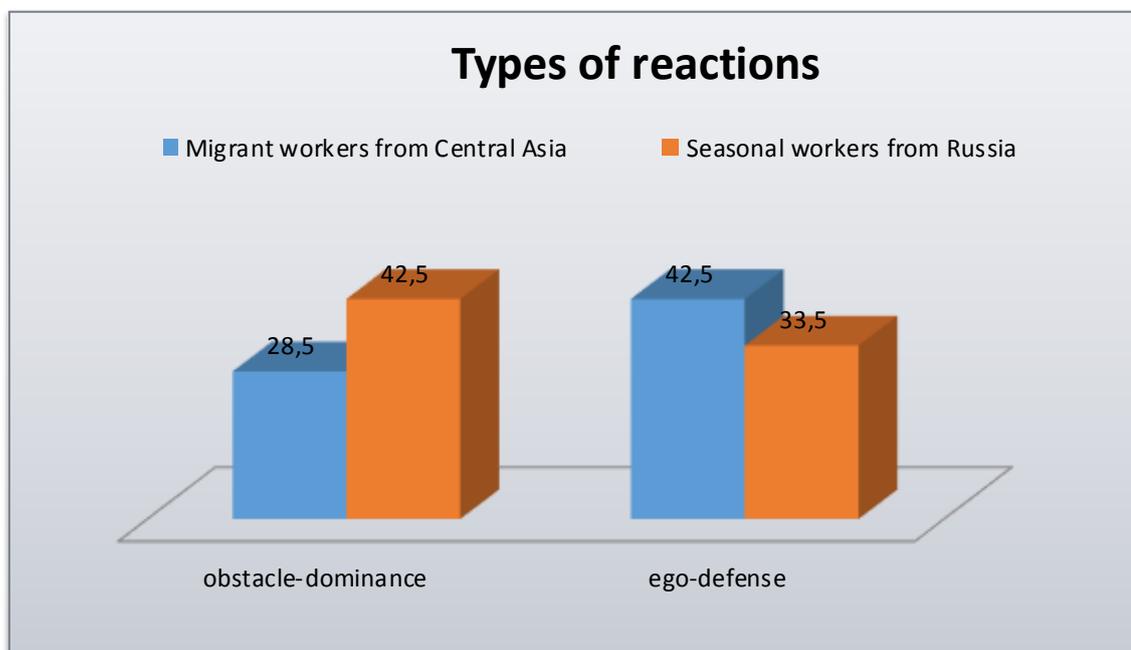
Meanwhile, the seasonal workers take manipulative and asocial actions more often than the migrant workers do.

The results given by the comparative analysis of types of response to failure and methods for resolving situations hindering a person's activity or satisfaction of needs are presented in Table 3 and Figures 3 and 4 (based on Rosenzweig test).

Table 3

Comparative analysis based on Rosenzweig test

Scale	Migrant workers from Central Asia		Seasonal workers from Russia		t	p
	M	σ	M	σ		
Types of reactions:						
Obstacle-dominance	28.5	2.84	41.5	3.00	3.93	p<0.0.01
Ego-defence	42.5	2.22	33.5	2.08	2.9	p<0.05
Continued Need	29	5.3	25	4.2	2.87	NS
Degree of social adaptation	45	4.2	37	3.8	1.49	NS
Directions of reactions						
Extra-punitive	40.2	1.68	40.8	1.82	-0.19	NS
Intra-punitive	25.1	9.3	14.4	8.8	4.55	p<0.01
Non-punitive	34.6	1.7	44.9	2.1	-3.8	p<0.01

Types of reactions

■ Migrant workers from Central Asia ■ Seasonal workers from Russia

obstacle-dominance: 28,5 / 42,5
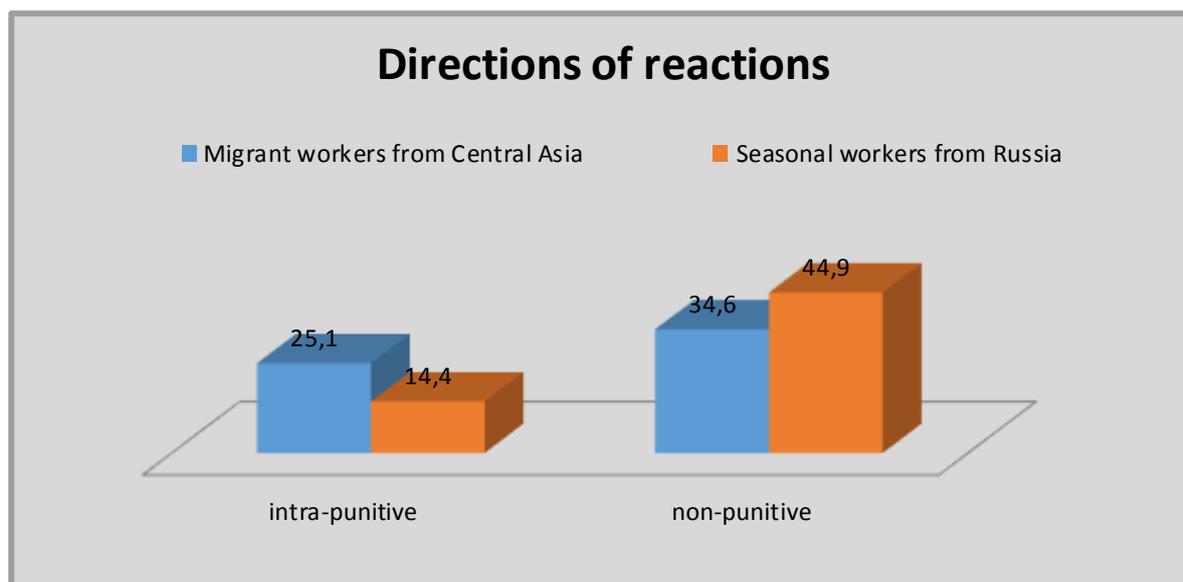ego-defense: 42,5 / 33,5

Figure 3.

The seasonal workers statistically more often display obstacle-dominance in conflicts. This indicates a stronger degree of frustration. At the same time, ego-defence has a statistically significant prevalence among the migrant workers. This fact may testify to a weaker, more vulnerable personality forced to primarily focus on protection of one's own self in difficult situations.

The migrant workers also show higher values of intra-punitive aggression (response). Consequently, in stressful situations they are more inclined to self-accusation than the seasonal workers. As compared to the migrant workers, the high value of non-punitive response displayed by the seasonal workers may signify an inclination to underestimate the traumatising and adverse aspects of frustrating situations.

Results of the in-depth interview

The qualitative analysis of the in-depth interview led to the following conclusions. On average, both groups of workers turned out to require two months for adaptation. The interview showed that they activate internal resources to cope with a stressful situation, such as 'character' and 'personal qualities or strengths'. Strong motives to 'earn money for children's education, or for a wedding celebration', and to increase one's own financial standing also proved helpful. Besides, both groups of workers took advantage of external resources, such as friends, phone talks with family, and outdoor recreation. In addition, the interview revealed their plans for the future, a desire to further stay in Russia, and their emotional state with regard to stress.

The results of the in-depth interview are presented in Table 4.

Table 4.

The results given by the comparative analysis of the in-depth interview

	Migrant workers from Central Asia		Seasonal workers from Russia		Chi-squared distribution	p
	%		%			
Internal resources	26.7		40		1.2	NS
External resources	73.3		60		1.2	NS
The desire to stay in Russia	43.3		86.7		12.38	p<0.01
Exposure to stress	50		53.3			NS

Table 4 demonstrates, there are no statistically significant differences between the groups of workers regarding internal and external resources. There are also no statistically significant differences between the groups with regard to emotional stress during their residence in the new country. Significant differences lie only in the plans for the future: among the seasonal workers from Russia there were a considerably larger number of people who wanted to stay at the place of their work for permanent residence. The in-depth interview identified the basic problems encountered by research participants during their adaptation period. The corresponding data are provided in Table 5.

Table 5.

The results given by the comparative analysis of the in-depth interview

	Migrant workers from Central Asia	Seasonal workers from Russia	Chi-squared distribution	p
	%	%		
Accommodation difficulties	6.7	23.3	3.268	NS
Employment difficulties	6.7	26.7	4.320	NS
Shortage of money	3.3	40	11.882	p<0.01
Feeling deprived of any rights	10	6.7	0.218	NS
Problems at work	26.7	6.7	4.320	NS
Language barrier	30	0	10.588	p<0.01
Homesickness	56.7	33.3	3.300	NS

The seasonal workers more often refer to shortage of money as the most significant problem. At the same time, the migrant workers find this issue the least important and consider the language barrier to be their primary difficulty.

The results of the comparative analysis, obtained using the 'Man under the Rain' projective drawing test, are presented in Table 6.
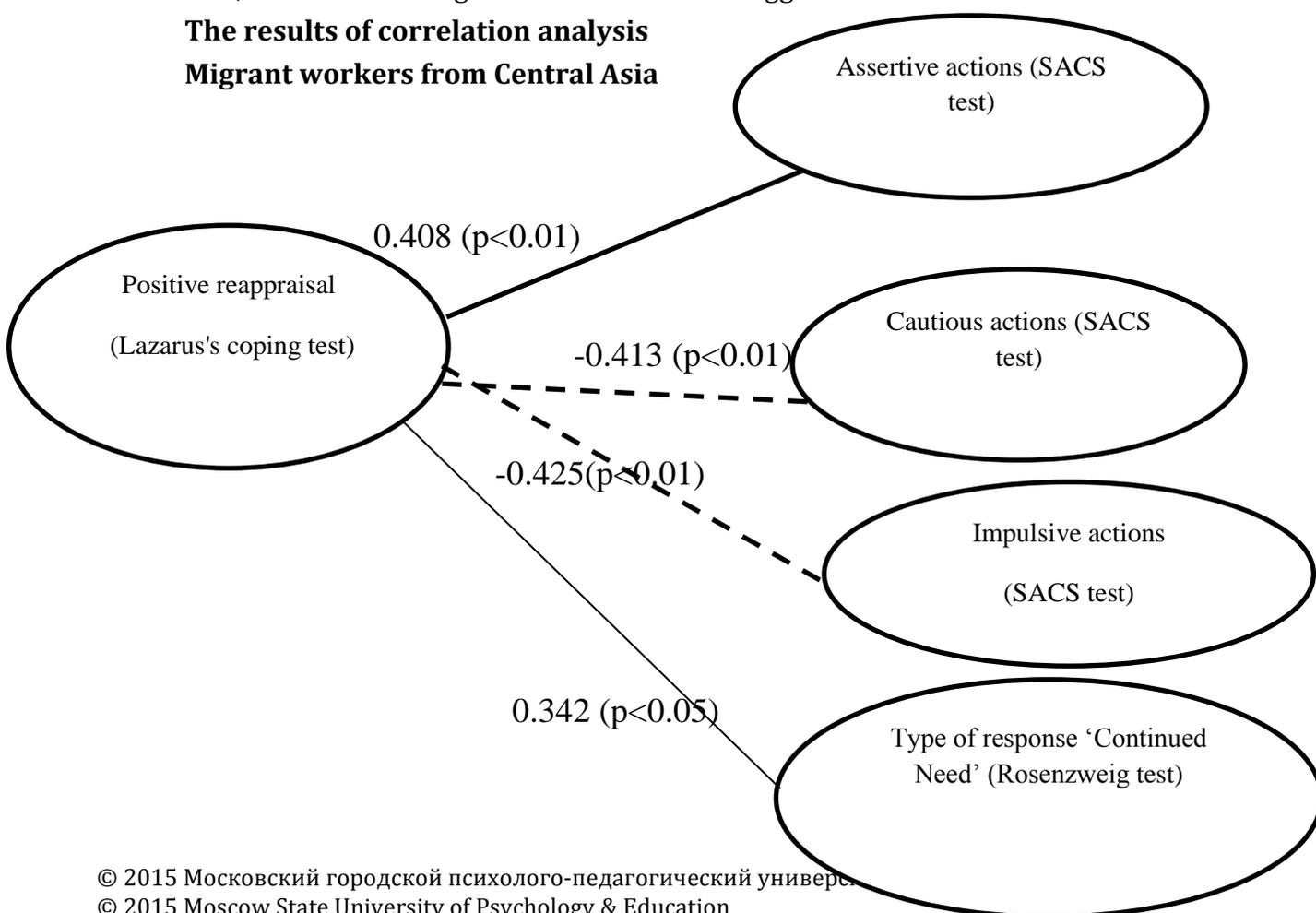
Table 6.

The results of the comparative analysis based on the 'Man under the Rain' projective test.

	Migrant workers from Central Asia	Seasonal workers from Russia	Mann-Whitney	p
	M	M		
Anxiety	37.1	23.9	-3	p<0.05
Adaptation ability	24.67	36.33	-2.7	NS
Self-esteem	34.2	26.8	-1.3	NS
Aggressiveness	27.8	33.12	-1.2	NS
Stress resistance	32.95	28.5	-1.1	NS

The migrant workers show a significantly higher anxiety level than the seasonal workers do. Meanwhile, there were no significant differences in aggressiveness.

The results of correlation analysis

Migrant workers from Central Asia

Assertive actions (SACS test)

Positive reappraisal (Lazarus's coping test)

0.408 (p<0.01)

-0.413 (p<0.01)

Cautious actions (SACS test)

-0.425(p<0.01)

Impulsive actions (SACS test)

0.342 (p<0.05)

Type of response 'Continued Need' (Rosenzweig test)

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The coping strategy of positive reappraisal is negatively interconnected with cautious (r=-0.413, p<0.01) and impulsive actions (r=-0.425, p<0.01); meanwhile, it positively correlates with assertive actions (r=0.408, p<0.01) and the type of response 'continued need' (r=0.342, p<0.05), i.e. the more often the migrant workers use positive reappraisal, the more confidently they cope with stressful situations.
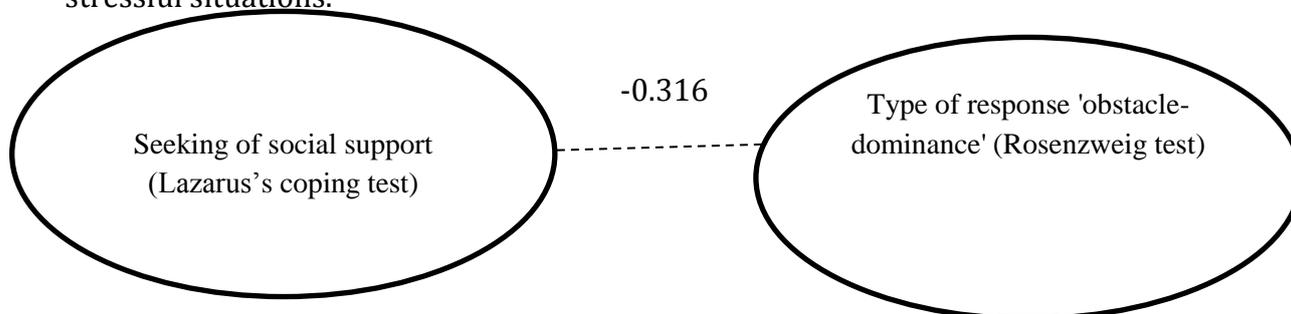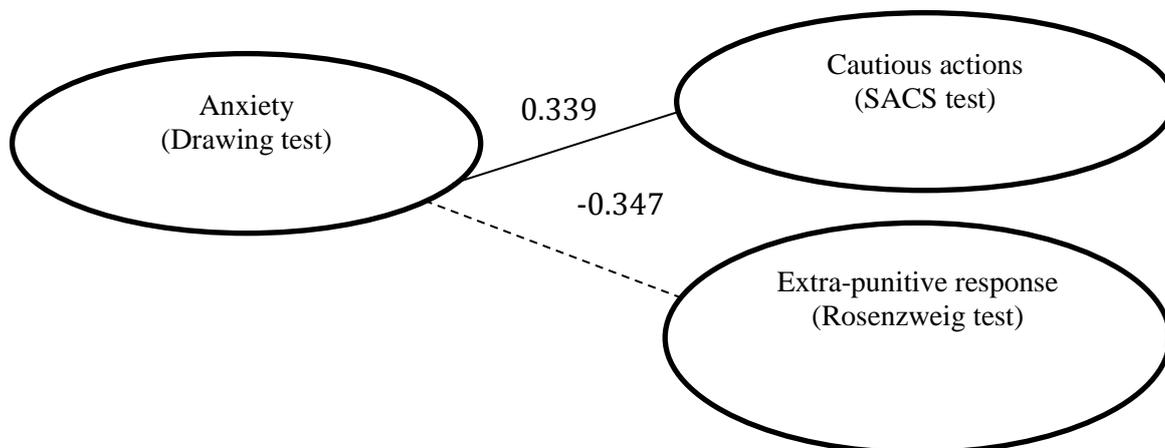

The coping strategy 'seeking social support' negatively correlates with the obstacle-dominance response to frustration (r=-0.316, p<0.05), i.e. the more migrant workers try to solve problems on account of external (social) resources, informational and active support, the less the focus on the cause of frustration.
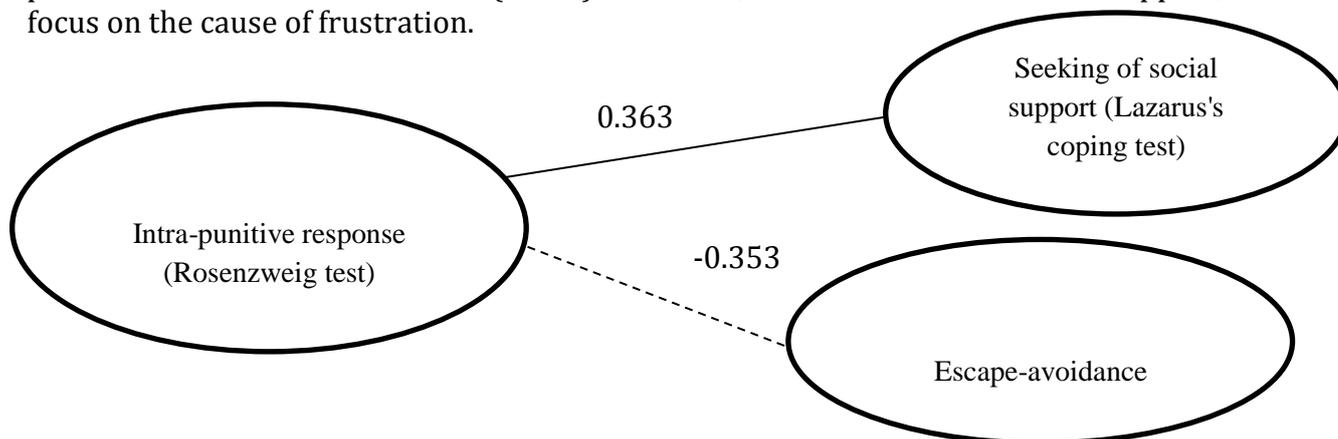
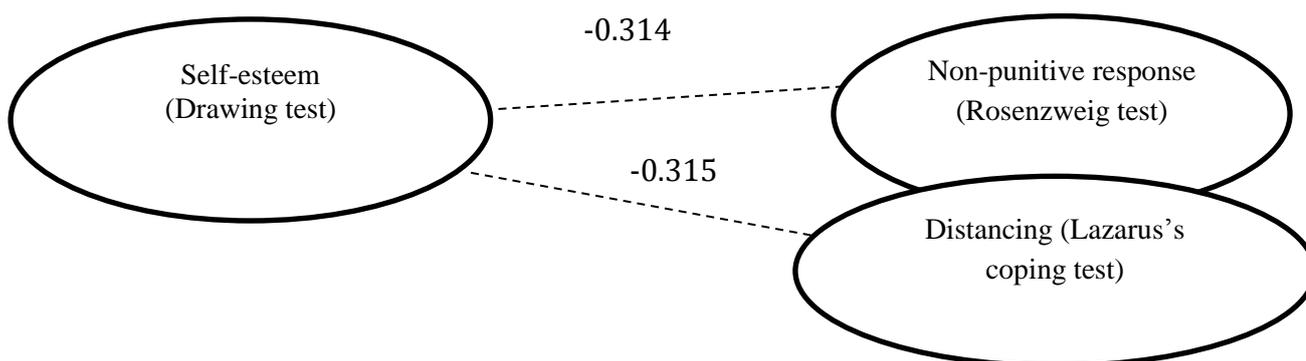
Intra-punitive response is interconnected negatively with escape-avoidance (r=-0.353, p<0.05) and positively with seeking of social support (r=0.363, p<0.05). The stronger inclination to self-accusation the migrant workers have, the less often they seek to avoid and deny problems and the more often they need support from other people.
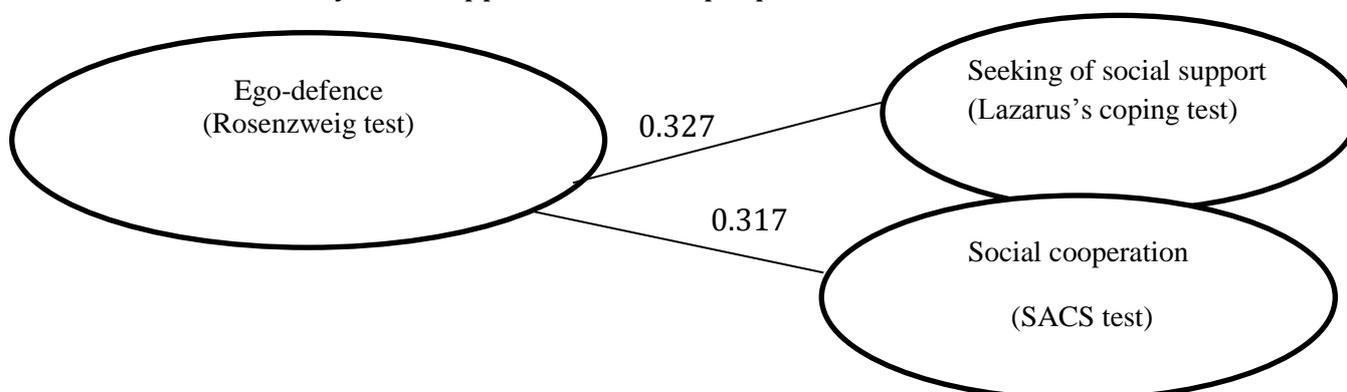
Ego-defence positively correlates with such coping strategies as social cooperation (r=0.317, p<0.05) and seeking of social support (r=0.327, p<0.05)

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┌─────────────────┐              ┌─────────────────┐
│     Anxiety     │    0.339     │ Cautious actions│
│  (Drawing test) │──────────────│   (SACS test)   │
└─────────────────┘      \       └─────────────────┘
                  -0.347  \
                           \     ┌──────────────────┐
                            \    │Extra-punitive     │
                             \   │response           │
                                 │(Rosenzweig test)  │
                                 └──────────────────┘
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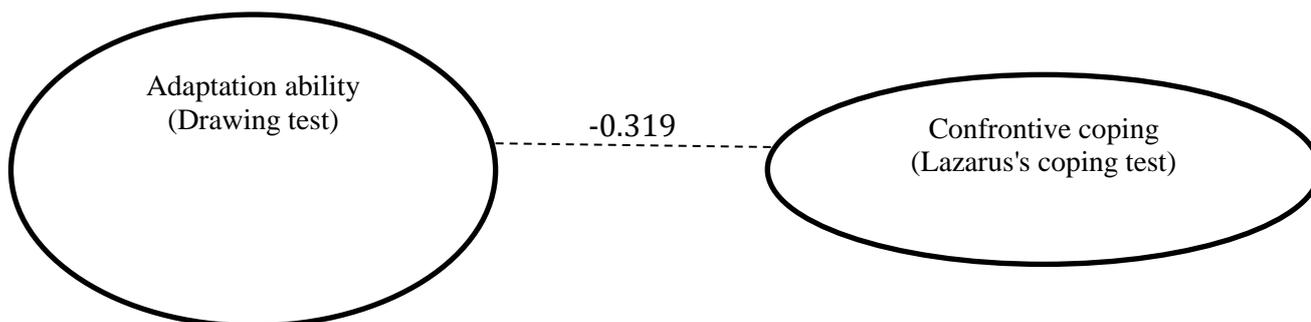
Anxiety has a positive correlation with cautious actions (r=0.339, p<0.05) and a negative correlation with extra-punitive response (r=-0.347, p<0.05). Obviously, the more anxious a person is, the more cautious he will be, and the less he will blame other people and participate in conflicts.

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┌─────────────────┐   -0.314     ┌──────────────────┐
│   Self-esteem   │- - - - - - - │Non-punitive      │
│  (Drawing test) │              │response          │
└─────────────────┘    -0.315    │(Rosenzweig test) │
                   \              └──────────────────┘
                    \            ┌──────────────────┐
                     - - - - - - │Distancing        │
                                 │(Lazarus's        │
                                 │coping test)      │
                                 └──────────────────┘
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Self-esteem negatively correlates with non-punitive response (r=-0.314, p<0.05) and the distancing coping strategy (r=-0.315, p<0.05), i.e. the higher self-esteem the migrant workers have, the less they are inclined to treat a stressful situation as unavoidable and underplay importance of a problem.

Seasonal workers from Russia

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┌─────────────────┐   -0.319     ┌──────────────────┐
│Adaptation ability│- - - - - - -│Confrontive coping│
│  (Drawing test) │              │(Lazarus's coping │
└─────────────────┘              │      test)       │
                                 └──────────────────┘
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The adaptation ability of the seasonal workers negatively correlates with confrontive coping (r=-0.319, p<0.05), i.e. the more adapted a person feels, the less often he uses confrontation.
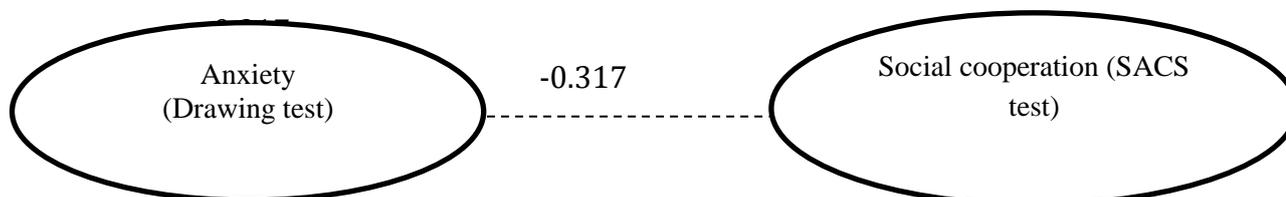
In the group of seasonal workers, anxiety shows a negative correlation with social cooperation (r=-0.317, p<0.05), i.e. a high anxiety level leads to a weaker desire for social cooperation with other people.
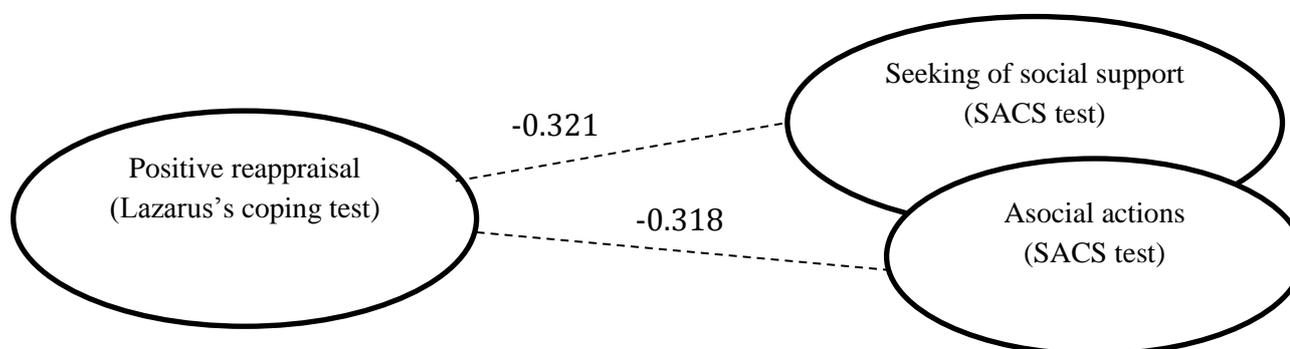
Among the seasonal workers, positive reappraisal negatively correlates with seeking of social support (r=-0.321, p<0.05) and asocial actions (r=-0.318, p<0.05). In other words, a person who has an optimistic view of life is less dependent on family support and less inclined to take actions aimed destroying existing standards of behaviour.

Self-esteem also negatively correlates with asocial actions (r=-0.320, p<0.05), i.e. the higher self-esteem seasonal workers have, the less inclined to asocial actions they are. Hence, the people who are dissatisfied with themselves tend to more often take asocial actions.

Conclusion

The migrant workers from Central Asia tend to use the coping strategy 'seeking of social support', so they try to resolve problems on account of external (social) resources. The also look for informational, emotional, and active support. Meanwhile, the seasonal workers from Russia are accustomed to more frequent use of such coping strategies as planful problem-solving, positive reappraisal, and self-controlling.

The migrant workers are more willing to take advantage of social cooperation. However, they frequently take more cautious actions, trying to avoid failure and displaying overcaution. At the same time, the seasonal workers may resort to manipulation and asocial actions.

The research revealed that the groups examined have different response to a frustrating situation. In particular, ego-defence, as a type of response, prevails among the migrant workers from Central Asia. This fact points to a weak and vulnerable personality forced to focus primarily on protection of one's own self in problematic situations. In addition, the migrant workers are typically distinguished by intra-punitive response (or aggression) directed at themselves; they accept guilt or responsibility for resolving a stressful situation. The seasonal workers, however, more frequently show such type of response as obstacle-dominance, with the focus on the obstacle causing frustration; and they are mainly characterised by non-punitive response, which underplays the importance of frustrating situations.

The research once again confirmed that the migrant workers encounter numerous difficulties during their adaptation period. The language barrier and homesickness are two primary difficulties for the migrant workers. Meanwhile, the seasonal workers find shortage of money their main problem. The research proved that it is the seasonal workers who more often seek to stay at the place of their work for permanent residence.

In the group of migrant workers, seeking of social support was directly connected with the inclination to self-accusation, while positive reappraisal gave more confidence.

Among the seasonal workers, positive reappraisal diminished the need to seek social support and resort to asocial actions. The more adapted a person felt, the less he resorted to confrontation. Self-esteem is also connected with asocial actions: the lower it is, the more people show hostility and mistrust, and the more they take illegal actions. The study did not reveal any significant differences in aggressive coping behaviour between the migrant workers and the seasonal workers.

The results of the study demonstrate that the migrant workers are more restrained, more cautious, and more anxious as compared with the seasonal workers. The migrant workers turned out to take asocial actions less frequently. This finding breaks the current stereotype that migrant workers from Central Asia pose a great threat. Thus, the research demonstrates that legal migrant workers do not present any danger: they appreciate their opportunity to work and disincline to commit the crimes.

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