

MIGRANT WOMEN IN THE REPUBLIC OF TATARSTAN: INTEGRATION STRATEGIES AND PRACTICES

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Abstract

Purpose: The relevance of the studied problem is due to the need for a comprehensive study of the adaptation of migrants to a foreign cultural environment in the regions of the Russian Federation. The aim of the article is to analyze the strategies and practices of the integration of migrant women in the Republic of Tatarstan for 2017-2018.

Methodology: The leading approach to the study of this problem is the polyparadigmatic methodology. The article describes the economic status of migrant women, their linguistic competences and the level of language proficiency in the host population languages and religious practices.

Result: It is concluded that migrant women have a fairly high level of intra-group cohesion and dependence on family and kinship ties. This, combined with a fixed low level of proficiency in the host population languages, makes it difficult for migrant women to integrate into the host community. The materials of the article can be useful for ethnologists, social and cultural anthropologists, political scientists, as well as representatives of bodies and structures responsible for interethnic interaction.

Applications: This research can be used for universities, teachers, and students.

Novelty/Originality: In this research, the model of Migrant Women in the Republic of Tatarstan: integration strategies and practices are presented in a comprehensive and complete manner.

Keywords: *ethnicity, migration, linguistic orientations, confessional orientations, ethnic networks.*

INTRODUCTION

The Republic of Tatarstan is historically one of the economically stable regions of the Russian Federation. At present, migration processes have a significant impact on the economic, social and economic development of the Republic. There are also growing trends in the feminization of migration flows in the Republic. The relevance of the study of indicators of adaptation of migrant women to a foreign cultural environment is determined by the needs of a multi-ethnic and multi-religious society of the Republic of Tatarstan. Strategies and practices of integration of migrant women have an impact on inter-ethnic interaction in the industrial, cultural and leisure spheres, the nature of interpersonal communication, as well as the general state of inter-ethnic and inter-religious relations in the Republic.

Interethnic and interreligious relations in society are realized at two levels: institutional and inter-group. The first is studied mainly by ethnopolitologists ([Tishkov & Shabaev, 2011](#)), the second – by ethnosociologists ([Drobizheva, etc., 2016](#)).

In ethnosociology interethnic interaction is studied through opinions, attitudes, orientations, values of people in different spheres of life – business, industrial, leisure, and family.

The integration of migrant women into the polyethnic environment of the Republic of Tatarstan, being a part of the daily and professional life of people, simultaneously forms a wide range of problems, the study, and the solution of which is promising and relevant. [Titova, T., Frolova, E., & Yakovlev, V. \(2015\).](#)

METHODS

The study is based on the methodological principles of the polyparadigm approach. In the context of our research two provisions of the theory of F. Bart are basic: first, the conclusion that the determinants of membership in the group are socially-defined factors, which are based on the phenomenon of categorical attribution, and not "objectively" existing cultural differences. Secondly, ethnic categories, both in the identification itself and in the process of classifying others to certain ethnic groups, take into account not just the sum of objective differences, but only those that are perceived as significant by individuals themselves ([Barth, 1989](#)).

Representatives of the most numerous groups of migrants of the Republic of Tatarstan – Uzbek women, Tajik women, Kyrgyz women living in Kazan participated in research. The total amount of the sample is 300 people. The study was conducted in 2017-2018 in Kazan. [Titova, T., Frolova, E., & Yakovlev, V. \(2015\).](#)

A significant proportion of respondents indicated that they have lived in Kazan relatively recently - from 1 to 3 years (65% of the surveyed Uzbeks, 49% of Tajiks, 49% of Kyrgyz women). A fifth of Kyrgyz women (21%), a quarter of Uzbeks (26%) and almost a third of Tajiks (32%) indicated that they have lived in Kazan for less than 1 year.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondents are mainly engaged in public catering ("I work in a cafe" - 12.7% of respondents, "baker" - 18.7%, "chef" - 19.7%); as well as in the service sector ("cleaner" - 19%, "cleaning woman" - 7.7%, "nanny" - 6%, "waitress" - 6%).

At the same time, the vast majority of respondents note that their economic situation has been improved over the past year (see table 1).

Table 1: How has your economic situation changed over the past year? , %

	Uzbek women	Tajik women	Kyrgyz women
Get better	95	91	84
Remained at the same level	2	4	10
Difficult to answer	3	5	6

Thus, the respondents demonstrate the stability of their socio-economic status.

For most of the interviewed women in the decision about moving to Tatarstan, the main information channel was ethnic networks, first of all, their relatives and family members. So, 49.4% of Uzbek women, 35.4% of Tajik women and 12.7% of Kyrgyz women in the answer to the question "What was the reason of moving to Tatarstan," noted the position that "relatives lived here"; another 34.6% of Uzbeks and 32.3% of Tajiks and 41.7% of Kyrgyz answered: "I moved because my husband (father, brother ...) decided so". [Titova, T., Frolova, E., & Yakovlev, V. \(2015\).](#)

Also, the results of the answer to the question "Do you keep in touch with people of your nationality in the city?" testify to high degree of focus of respondents on ethnic networks (see table 2).

Table 2: Do you keep in touch with people of your nationality, %

	Uzbek women	Tajik women	Kyrgyz women
I'm in close contact	58	65	77
Sometimes I communicate	39	32	13
No, I'm not in close contact	2	1	1
Difficult to answer	1	2	9

Respondents note that in critical situations, first of all, they will ask relatives for help, in the second turn – friends, in the third – community.

The significant role of ethnic networks in the daily lives of migrant women is illustrated by the results of the answers to the questions: "Who is your closest girlfriend by nationality?" and "Representatives of what nationality are more among your friends?" (see table 3,4).

Table 3: What is your closest friend by nationality?, %

	Uzbek women	Tajik women	Kyrgyz women
My nationality	93	94	91
Other nationality	7	6	9

Table 4: Which nationality is more among your friends?, %

	Uzbek women	Tajik women	Kyrgyz women
Tatars	2	2	0
Russians	3	2	2
Tatars and Russians equally	10	17	20
People of my nationality	83	70	61
Another	0	1	2
Difficult to answer	2	8	15

The results of the study show that migrant women are characterized by a high level of focus on ethnic networks and family ties, which is manifested in the preferred social contacts with people of their nationality, treatment in difficult life situations, primarily to relatives.

In General, the vast majority of respondents note that they have no difficulties in communicating with the local population.

44% of Uzbek women, 26% of Tajik women and 15% of Kyrgyz women say that they have girlfriends (friends) among the local population (usually these are the people who are working together with the respondents) (see table 5). [Titova, T., Frolova, E., & Yakovlev, V. \(2015\).](#)

Thus, among Kyrgyz women, there are more those who demonstrate involvement in a wider range of social contacts with representatives of the local population (not just working together, but "spend their free time together").

Thus, for migrant women, communication with the local population is mainly limited to working contacts. Kyrgyz women are characterized by a somewhat wider sphere of interaction with representatives of the local population.

Table 5: Why can you say that these people are your friends?, %

	Uzbek women	Tajik women	Kyrgyz women
I appeal to them in a critical situation	4,5	7,7	6,7
We spend our free time together	11,4	7,7	40
We work together	75	76,9	40
We congratulate each other on holidays	9,1	7,7	13,3

The vast majority of respondents consider their native language to be the national language. [Titova, T., Frolova, E., & Yakovlev, V. \(2015\).](#)

The level of Russian language proficiency varies among different nationalities (see table 6).

Степень владения русским языком различается у представителей разных национальностей (см. табл.6).

Table 6: What languages do you speak (Russian)?, %

	Uzbek women	Tajik women	Kyrgyz women
I speak Russian	45	70	81
I do not speak Russian	55	30	19

Thus, Kyrgyz women declare a better level of proficiency in Russian than representatives of other ethnic groups who participated in the study. [Guschina, E. G., Titova, T. A., & Frolova, E. V. \(2016\).](#)

However, the level of Russian language proficiency of the majority of respondents is low (see table7).

Table 7: To what extent do you speak Russian?, %

	Uzbek women	Tajik women	Kyrgyz women
I speak fluently, read and write	8	2	2
I speak fluently, read and write a little	12	6	6
I only speak	47	57	42
I understand but don't speak	29	35	47
Neither understand nor speak	4	0	3

A significant part of the respondents does not speak Tatar (see table 8).

Table 8: To what extent do you speak Tatar?, %

	Uzbek women	Tajik women	Kyrgyz women
I speak fluently, read and write	3	0	0
I speak fluently, read and write a little	3	0	4
I only speak	2	3	2
I understand but don't speak	43	21	20
Neither understand nor speak	49	76	74

40% of Uzbeks and more than 20% of Tajiks and Kyrgyz women note that they would like to improve their knowledge of Russian and Tatar languages and are ready to take all necessary measures. [Guschina, E. G., Titova, T. A., & Frolova, E. V. \(2016\).](#)

About half of Uzbeks, 60% of Tajiks and 40% of Kyrgyz women say that they would like to increase the level of proficiency in Russian and Tatar languages, but do not have such an opportunity. Thus, the level of language proficiency in the host population languages among the respondents is low (at the level of "only speak" or "understand, but do not speak"). [Titova, T., Frolova, E., & Yakovlev, V. \(2015\).](#)

The results of the study indicate the high role of religion in the lives of interviewed migrant women. 92% of the surveyed Uzbeks, 99% of Tajiks and 93% of Kyrgyz women consider themselves to be religious people.

The respondents note that there were no obstacles to the implementation of their religious activities in the territory of the Republic. [Guschina, E. G., Titova, T. A., & Frolova, E. V. \(2016\).](#)

At the same time, the respondents agree with the statement: "My religion is the most correct."

However, in the question of to what extent the life of society should be regulated by religious norms and to what extent the state system of the Russian Federation should comply with the principles of a religious state, the majority of migrant women chose average positions, which indicates that the respondents consider religion as a sphere of their private life and do not seek to broadcast their religious beliefs in public space.

Studies of migration processes in the Russian Federation are relevant for representatives of various scientific fields. Sociologists study ethnosocial and ethno-confessional aspects of migration in modern society (Tishkov, 2003; Drobizheva, 2009; Antúnez, 2016; Parrot & Leong, 2018). Political scientists are interested in the problems of the influence of interethnic relations on state policy and social processes in society (Abdulatipov, 2004; Ameen et al, 2018). A special place is given to the study of the psychological aspects of interethnic interaction (Stefanenko, 2003; Singh & Singha, 2016). Researchers are interested in the size of the inter-group distance between the host population and migrant groups, the level of xenophobia, peculiarities of social contacts between representatives of different nationalities. Anthropologists and ethnologists are interested in the study of everyday practices of interethnic and interreligious interactions. The focus of the analysis is, in particular, the study of social intergroup distance in a polyethnic society (Eisvandi et al, 2015; Titova et al, 2016; Araújo et al, 2018). At the same time, the study of the features of the integration of migrant women in the regions of the Russian Federation requires a closer study. In this study, the team of authors studied the strategies and practices of migrant women in the Republic of Tatarstan (on the example of Kazan).

SUMMARY

The migrant women who have participated in the research are mainly engaged in the sphere of public catering and service.

The respondents are characterized by a high level of focus on ethnic networks and family ties, which is manifested in the preferred social contacts with people of their nationality, and treatment in difficult life situations, primarily to relatives.

Communication with representatives of the local population is reduced primarily to working contacts. Kyrgyz women are characterized by a somewhat wider sphere of interaction with representatives of the local population.

The level of language proficiency in the host population languages among the respondents is low ("I can only speak", "I understand, but I do not speak").

Religion plays an important role in the life of respondents; the majority of respondents consider themselves religious people. However, migrant women viewed religion as a private sphere and did not seek to broadcast their religious beliefs in public.

The research has recorded quite a high level of intragroup unity and dependence of migrant women on family and kinship ties. This, combined with a fixed low level of proficiency in the host population languages, makes it difficult for migrant women to integrate into the host community.

CONCLUSIONS

The materials presented in the article may have scientific, humanitarian and practical significance. The materials of the article can be useful for specialists in the field of Social Sciences: ethnologists, social and cultural anthropologists, political scientists, as well as representatives of bodies and structures in charge of migration policy and interethnic interaction.

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