



PERSONALITY PSYCHOLOGY

Muraviova O.I., Matsuta V.V., Erlykova J.N.

Personality characteristics of entrepreneurs of small towns

The problem of psychological preconditions for the development of entrepreneurship in small towns of Russia is raised in the paper. Data about personality characteristics of small towns' entrepreneurs are presented. The results of a comparative study of values, hardiness, and ambiguity tolerance, which are inherent to the entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs of urban community Shira (Russia, Khakass Republic), are presented. Differences in hardiness, ambiguity tolerance, and value orientations of small towns' entrepreneurs (Shira) and big cities' entrepreneurs (Tomsk) are revealed. The hypothesis about the destruction of traditional value system as a condition for development of entrepreneurial personality qualities.

Keywords: *entrepreneurs, small towns and big cities, hardiness, ambiguity tolerance, values.*

At present in Russia, the problem of entrepreneurship takes on a special social and practical significance in connection with the goal assigned at the state level. This goal is the development of a small and medium business [23]. The problem of entrepreneurship has always been an interdisciplinary branch of knowledge and has actively developed by various sciences such as economics, sociology and psychology [1, 2, 4, 8, 15, and others]. However, the characteristic feature of these studies is that they are mainly devoted to the study of various aspects of entrepreneurship in big cities. Suffice it to cite the following fact: at the V Congress of Russian Psychological Society, which was taking place in Moscow on 14–18 February 2012, many reports about the psychology of entrepreneurship were presented [12]. These reports concerned with the psychology of big cities' residents and psychological characteristics of big cities' entrepreneurs, and problems they face in the course of its activities. However, phenomenon of entrepreneurship in small towns hardly paid any attention. However, today this problem is extremely topical because according to sociologists and economists small towns are in a deep crisis [7, 19]. This crisis manifests in the fact that small towns are substantially behind in socioeconomic development of big cities [1].

Economists and sociologists see the solution of a problem of small towns in the development of entrepreneurship [7, 19]. They offer various socioeconomic measures to improve the situation, but it seems to us essential that the realization of these measures can meet with difficulty in the form of psychological unreadiness of population to entrepreneurial activity. In this connection, this problem must be considered from a psychological point of view.



What are psychological conditions of enterprise development? Since the first papers about entrepreneurship economists and sociologists say about the so-called «personality syndrome of entrepreneurship». In fact, they say that entrepreneurship is not so much an economic category as a psychological category. Entrepreneur's personal characteristics provide the entrepreneurship. R. Cantillon and A. Smith called the willingness to take risks an important characteristic of entrepreneur [16]. A.R.J. Turgot added to it organizational and creative skills [18]. According to one of the first creators of entrepreneur's psychological portrait W. Zombart [5], an entrepreneur should possess the following qualities: spiritual freedom, will and energy, perseverance and persistence, leadership and organizational skills. D. McClelland [11] believes that the distinctive psychological characteristic of entrepreneur is a high level of achievement motivation. J. Rotter [21] asserts that entrepreneurs are characterized by a higher level of internality than non-entrepreneurs are. R. Brockhause [20] suggests that successful entrepreneurs are characterized by a preference for moderate risk. V.N. Druzhinin [3] focuses on motivation (first of all, self-actualization need, which directs at realizing of personality potential), self-esteem, and level of aspirations, decision-making ability and take risks.

Because of this, the goal of our paper is a determination of psychological potential of development of entrepreneurship in small towns. The content of psychological potential reveals through entrepreneurs' personality. In our paper, we present results of a comparative empirical study of entrepreneurs' personality characteristics as values, hardiness and ambiguity tolerance. The study took place in two stages. In the first stage (August – October 2011) identified features of hardiness and ambiguity tolerance by persons, who are engaged in entrepreneurial activity and persons, whose activity are not related to entrepreneurship. The study involved residents of urban community Shira (Russia, Khakass Republic). Shira has the status of small town. Participants of the study are 60 entrepreneurs (owners of small shops, cafes and hotels at the age of 22 years to 57 years) and 60 public servants (police officers, doctors and teachers at the age of 22 years to 55 years). In the second stage (January – March 2012) identified features of values in the same sample of urban community Shira, and features of hardiness, ambiguity tolerance and values by 60 entrepreneurs of Tomsk (Russia, Tomsk region) (at the age of 22 years to 56 years).

We conducted primary data collection using questionnaire methods. We used S. Maddi's «Hardiness questionnaire», adapted by D.A. Leontiev and E.I. Rasskazova to determine features of hardiness [9]. We used D. McLain's «Multiple Stimulus Types Ambiguity Tolerance» (MSTAT-I), adapted by E.G. Lukovitskaya to study ambiguity tolerance [10]. We used S.H. Schwartz's «Value Inventory», adapted by V.N. Karandashev to identify values [6].

Consider the results of a comparative analysis of hardiness and ambiguity tolerance of Shira's entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs. As follows from Table 1, in the group of entrepreneurs mean values of these parameters of hardiness as involvement, control and risk-taking significantly higher mean values of similar parameters in the group of non-entrepreneurs.



Table 1

**Results of a comparative analysis of hardiness
and ambiguity tolerance in the groups of entrepreneurs (n = 60)
and non-entrepreneurs (n = 60)**

Scales of S. Maddi's «Hardiness questionnaire» and D. McLain's «MSTAT-I»	Mean values in the group of entrepreneurs	Mean values in the group of non-entrepreneurs	Value of Student's test (t-value)	Significance level (p)
Involvement	42,09	23,57	10,19	0,00
Control	32,15	17,20	9,52	0,00
Risk-taking	18,29	10,18	7,61	0,00
Cumulative index of hardiness	92,53	50,95	11,15	0,00
Ambiguity tolerance	97,07	55,60	10,27	0,00

Based on the interpretation of such scales of questionnaires as «involvement» and «control» [see 9], it is arguable that Shira's entrepreneurs some more than non-entrepreneurs are convinced that involvement in activity and fight give a chance to find something worthwhile in life and to affect the result of what is going on. Even though this effect is not an absolute and the success is not guaranteed. The greater intensity of parameters of such scales as «risk-taking» and «ambiguity tolerance» [see 9, 10] refers to the fact that entrepreneurs have a higher level of readiness to act at their own risk, in the absence of reliable guarantees of success. Entrepreneurs less inclined to consider the undefined situation as potentially threatening and, on the contrary, consider them more like the opportunities to learn something. They are less inclined to be afraid of difficulties, which may be associated with risk and ambiguity.

Our findings about the personality characteristics of small towns' entrepreneurs confirm ideas, which already given above. These ideas are about the fact that entrepreneurs in general have a higher level of internality, willingness to take risks and achievement motivation, and they are more persistent and energetic. It is clear that these qualities acquire the special importance in our country because it requires additional and very important efforts to overcome obstacles faced by entrepreneurs: bureaucratic barriers, corruption, political engagement of legal areas, situation of total economic uncertainty, and social instability, etc.

If we now try to answer the main question of our study: «Whether there are psychological reasons of development of entrepreneurship in our country?», on the face of it, this question can be answered in the affirmative. However, it is only on the face of it. Comparing these data with normative indexes of techniques, which we use [9, 10], can be seen (see Table 2) that they do not transcend of average normative meanings in the group of entrepreneurs, and they essentially below of average normative meanings in the group of non-entrepreneurs.



Table 2

Results of a comparative analysis of average normative meanings and mean values of scales of S. Maddi's «Hardiness questionnaire» and D. McLain's «Multiple Stimulus Types Ambiguity Tolerance» in the groups of entrepreneurs (n = 60) and non-entrepreneurs (n = 60)

Scales of S. Maddi's «Hardiness questionnaire» and D. McLain's «MSTAT-I»	Average normative meanings	Standard deviation	Mean values in the group of entrepreneurs	Mean values in the group of non-entrepreneurs
Involvement	37,64	8,08	41,90	23,56
Control	29,17	8,43	31,80	17,20
Risk-taking	13,91	4,39	18,30	10,18
Cumulative index of hardiness	80,72	18,53	92,03	50,94
Ambiguity tolerance	98,00	19,10	97,11	55,60

Therefore, our tentative optimistic conclusion about the existence of psychological conditions for development of effective entrepreneurship in small towns seems quite doubtful. Based on findings we can talk rather about the fact that non-entrepreneurs of small towns have extremely low parameters of hardiness and ambiguity tolerance than the fact that entrepreneurs have high similar parameters.

This fact was the basis for the second stage of our study. The goal of it was the comparison of personality characteristics of small towns' entrepreneurs and big cities' entrepreneurs. Consider the results of a comparative analysis of the hardiness and ambiguity tolerance of Shira's entrepreneurs with the same parameters of Tomsk's entrepreneurs. It should be noted that Tomsk has a status of «big city». Differences on all scales of used methods were statistically significant (see Table 3). In the group of Tomsk's entrepreneurs, they are significantly higher than in the group of Shira's entrepreneurs.

Table 3

Results of a comparative analysis of characteristics of hardiness and the ambiguity tolerance in the groups of Shira's entrepreneurs (n = 60) and Tomsk's entrepreneurs (n = 60) by Student's test

Scales of S. Maddi's «Hardiness questionnaire» and D. McLain's «MSTAT-I»	Mean values in the group of Shira's entrepreneurs	Mean values in the group of Tomsk's entrepreneurs	Value of Student's test (t-value)	Significance level (p)
Involvement	41,93	46,13	-2,28	0,03
Control	31,80	37,40	-3,58	0,00
Risk-taking	18,30	21,13	-2,80	0,01
Cumulative index of hardiness	92,03	104,67	-3,40	0,00
Ambiguity tolerance	97,12	111,02	-3,65	0,00



The received differences may be, of course, due to socioeconomic conditions of development of big cities and small towns. Economists and sociologists distinguish among the negative factors of small towns the following factors: depopulation, mass migration to cities, high rate of unemployment, low-income of population, and poverty [19]. Social problems entail psychological problems. Small towns' residents experience a high level of stress [14], have a low self-esteem, and worry about their own competence. This leads to a decrease of adaptive capacity and social passivity of the small towns' population [17]. However, in our opinion, deeper psychological characteristics of small towns' residents may be reasons for these differences. We base on the D.A. Leontiev's concept of personality potential [8]. D.A. Leontiev, on the one hand, considers parameters of hardiness and ambiguity tolerance most important characteristics of personality potential. On the other hand, he argues that values mediate the personality potential. We assume that differences in value orientations may be deep psychological bases, which determine differences in hardiness and ambiguity tolerance of entrepreneurs in big cities and small towns.

We conducted a comparative analysis of values to test this hypothesis (see Table 4).

S. Schwartz [see 6], author of «Value Inventory», which we use, identifies two levels of values: the culture-level (or the level of normative ideals) and the individual level (or the level of individual priorities). The culture-level includes internal guidelines, ideals and beliefs. These values are analogous of M. Rokeach's terminal values. The individual level includes values, which manifest in actual behavior. These values are analogous of M. Rokeach's instrumental values. The first level is more stable and it reflects person's views how to act. It defines his life's code of behavior. The second level is more dependent on the external environment, such as group pressure. The first level relates to specific human actions.

As follows from Table 4, such values as conformity, tradition, benevolence, universalism, and security are more evaluated at the two levels in the group of Shira's entrepreneurs as compared with the group of Tomsk's entrepreneurs. Moreover, such values as self-direction, achievement, power, and stimulation are less evaluated.

According to S. Schwartz [see 6], values are organized into two bipolar axis of dimension. The first is «openness to change – conservatism». The pole «openness to change» includes such values as self-direction and stimulation. The pole «conservatism» includes such values as security, conformity, and tradition. The second axis is «self-enhancement – self-transcendence». The pole «self-enhancement» includes such values as power and achievement. The pole «self-transcendence» includes such values as universalism and benevolence.

Based on this concept, it is arguable that values of Shira's entrepreneurs and values of Tomsk's entrepreneurs are at opposite poles. Values of Shira's entrepreneurs apply to poles «conservatism» and «self-transcendence». Values of Tomsk's entrepreneurs apply to poles «openness to change» and «self-enhancement». Hereby the main feature of value structure of entrepreneurs from big cities and small towns is a difference in values of Shira's entrepreneurs and Tomsk's entrepreneurs.



Table 4

Results of a comparative analysis of values on culture-level and on individual level in the groups of Shira's entrepreneurs (n = 60) and Tomsk's entrepreneurs (n = 60) by Student's test

Scales of S.H. Schwartz's «Value Inventory»	Mean values in the group of Shira's entrepreneurs	Mean values in the group of Tomsk's entrepreneurs	Value of Student's test (t-value)	Significance level (p)
<i>Culture-level of values</i>				
Conformity	3,69	2,28	4,61	0,00
Tradition	3,57	2,03	5,64	0,00
Benevolence	4,88	2,99	5,74	0,00
Universalism	4,55	2,21	8,38	0,00
Self-direction	5,36	7,71	-6,61	0,00
Stimulation	3,12	4,56	-4,69	0,00
Hedonism	3,58	2,90	1,94	0,06
Achievement	4,48	6,23	-4,31	0,00
Power	4,53	5,78	-2,33	0,02
Security	5,66	2,90	8,72	0,00
<i>Individual level of values</i>				
Conformity	6,63	2,03	19,38	0,00
Tradition	6,37	2,18	17,97	0,00
Benevolence	6,16	2,62	14,16	0,00
Universalism	5,18	2,40	11,28	0,00
Self-direction	3,25	7,71	-16,45	0,00
Stimulation	2,77	5,28	-10,63	0,00
Hedonism	2,97	2,76	0,84	0,40
Achievement	3,42	5,75	-7,93	0,00
Power	3,49	6,06	-8,76	0,00
Security	7,95	2,40	21,98	0,00
<i>Note. Statistically significant differences are highlighted in bold type.</i>				

Our results confirm the results of sociological researches, which were received earlier and were devoted to study of mentality of small town's residents. M.V. Nikitsky concludes that small town's residents are characterized by strong social control of life and human communication, elements of traditional neighborly community, almost complete impossibility of anonymous existence. Therefore, most of reasoning and experiences of small town's residents are based on traditional national beliefs and values, which are pro-social [13, P. 63]. J.D. Ephremova in her study [4] identified the following



features of mentality of small town's residents: permanent going from one extreme to the other, propensity to absolute values and associated with it utopianism of consciousness, affectivity, prevalence of feeling perception over rational perception, priority of spiritual and moral values over practical results, and undeveloped of individuality.

Of course, on the basis of findings, we cannot definitely assert that value characteristics exactly determine actualization of personality characteristics, which are needed for realization of entrepreneurial activity, but there is every reason to assert that these qualities are quite closely related to each other.

Responding the main question of our study: «Whether there are psychological preconditions for development of entrepreneurship in small towns?», we can say that our data do not positively answer this question.

In addition to positive results, which are state above, our study actualizes, at least, two questions, which determine future study of formulated problem. Destruction of traditional value system is an obligatory condition for the development of entrepreneurial personality qualities or not? Development of psychological characteristics, which provide efficiency of entrepreneurial activity, are achieved at the expense of what positive or negative transformations of value-semantic structure, and of what kind of personality price? Are these transformations natural and harmonious process or they are unnatural forcing, which destroys integrity of personality with all the ensuing consequences? These questions we leave open until the next publication.

References

1. Animits E.G., Medvedev I.A., Suhikh V.A. Small and medium towns of the region: tendencies and the strategy of the socioeconomic development: Monograph. – Yekaterinburg: Ural State Economic University Press, 2004. – 208 p.
2. Bogomaz S.A., Karakulova O.V. Personal and communicative potentials of the innovation and business-oriented persons // Siberian Psychological Magazine. – 2010. – # 37. – P. 48-51.
3. Druzhinin V.N. Psychology: A Textbook for economic institutions. – St. Petersburg: Piter Publishing House, 2002. – 672 p.
4. Ephremova J.D. The forming and the functioning of the mentality of the population of a small provincial town: The thesis abstract for awarding the degree of candidate of science (social science). – Moscow, 2006. – 24 p.
5. Zombart W. Bourgeois: Studies on the History of the spiritual development of the modern economic man. – Moscow, 1994. – 442 p.
6. Karandashev V.N. S.H. Schwartz's «Value Inventory» for studying the values of the personality: the concept and the methodical guidance. – St. Petersburg: Speech, 2004. – 70 p.
7. Kuznetsova T.E. Small towns of Russia: the economic aspect // Where is Russia going? The social transformation of the post-Soviet space / edited (by) T.I. Zaslavskaya. – Moscow, 1996. – P. 384-388.
8. Leontiev D.A. The personality potential: the structure and the diagnostics / edited (by) D.A. Leontiev. – Moscow, 2011. – 680 p.



9. Leontiev D.A., Rasskazova E.I. The test of the hardiness. – Moscow, 2006. – 63 p.
10. Lukovitskaya E.G. A psychosocial meaning of the ambiguity tolerance: The thesis for awarding the degree of candidate of science (psychological science). – St. Petersburg, 1998. – 173 p.
11. McClelland D. Human Motivation. – St. Petersburg: Piter Publishing House, 2007. – 669 p.
12. Scientific supplies of V Congress of Russian Psychological Society. Volume II. – Moscow, 2012. – 464 p.
13. Nikitsky M.V. A social climate of Russia's small towns (features for the socio-pedagogical aspect of Russian backwoods) // Herald of the St. Tikhon's Orthodox Humanitarian University IV: Pedagogy. Psychology. – 2010 – # 2 (17). – P. 57 – 67.
14. Peltsman L. Stress of dislocated workers // The Journal of Psychology. – 1992. – # 1. – P. 126-130.
15. Smetanova J.V. Personality potential as a resource component of innovation and entrepreneurial orientation: The thesis abstract for awarding the degree of candidate of science (psychological science). – Tomsk, 2012. – 24 p.
16. Smith A. An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations. – Moscow, 2007. – 960 p.
17. Suchkova E.L. A psychosocial description of women, living below the poverty line: The thesis abstract for awarding the degree of candidate of science (psychological science). – St. Petersburg, 1999. – 164 p.
18. Turgot A.R.J., Quesnay F., du Pont de Nemours P.S. Physiocrats. Selected works of economic. – Moscow, 2008. – 1200 p.
19. Yumaeva O.V. An increasing the investment attractiveness of Russian small towns is an effective way to improve the socioeconomic status of Russian regions and Russia in general // Regions of Russia: problems and prospects for economic development. The Sourcebook of All-Russian theoretical and practical conference (Moscow, March 22-29, 2010) / edited (by) O.N. Melnikov. – Moscow, 2010. – 188 p. – P. 51–55.
20. Brockhause R.H. The psychology of the entrepreneur // Encyclopedia of entrepreneurship / C.A. Kent, D.L. Sexton, K.H. Vesper. – NJ: Prentice Hall, 1982. – P. 39–56.
21. Rotter J. Generalized expectation for internal versus external control of reinforcement // Psychological Monographs. – 1966. – # 80 (608). – P. 1–27.
22. On general principles of the Organization of local self-government in the Russian Federation: federal law of Russian Federation № 131, October 6, 2003 // The Russian Gazette – 2003. – October 8.
23. On the Development of small and medium entrepreneurship: federal law of Russian Federation № 209, July 24, 2007 // The Russian Gazette – 2003. – July 31.