

Determinants of Hardiness among Representatives of Three Generations in Modern Russia

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Abstract

Introduction. Generational differences have been scarcely investigated. The factors that help individuals to cope with stressful factors and increasing tension are worth consideration in the context of present-day reality. This study addresses the predictors of hardiness in different generations of Russians.

Methods. A sample of respondents from various regions of the Russian Federation, aged from 18 to 75 years, took part in the empirical study of values, subjective economic well-being, and hardiness factors. The study used the following techniques: (a) the PVQ-R technique for measuring individual values, (b) the Test of Hardiness by D. A. Leont'ev, (c) the Subjective Economic Well-being technique by V. A. Khashchenko, and (d) the Meaning-in-Life Orientations test (MOL) by D. A. Leont'ev, the modified version of the Purpose-in-Life test (PIL).

Results. Representatives of generation Y have a higher overall level of hardiness. The external locus of control influences hardiness in all the three examined generations. This influence is positive for generations X and Y, and negative for baby boomers. Economic anxiety has a negative impact on hardiness in representatives of generations X, Y, and baby boomers. The values of individualism – 'independence: thinking' and 'achievement' – influence hardiness in representatives of generations X and Y.

Discussion. Increased dissatisfaction with financial situation, the inability to save money, and increased economic anxiety decrease the level of hardiness in Russians. The increase in financial well-being can contribute to an increase in hardiness across all the groups of respondents. Independence in the choice of actions, ambitious goals in life, the desire to be successful, and the need for feeling safe and secure increase the ability to withstand stress among representatives of generations X and Y.

Keywords

hardiness, individual values, meaning-in-life orientations, economic attitudes, intergenerational differences, generation X, generation Y, baby boomers

Highlights

► Generational differences should be considered in terms of basic socio-psychological characteristics, including the hardiness of generations, values, meaning-in-life orientations, and economic attitudes.

- An individual's ability to cope with life difficulties depend on value-meaning guidelines and on satisfaction with his/her financial situation.
- Hardiness includes involvement, risk taking, and control.
- Hardiness models differ among representatives of three generations in modern Russia.

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Introduction

It is of prime importance to study the factors that help individuals to cope with stress and increasing tension in present-day reality. Previous studies indicate that faster adaptation to new living conditions, less pronounced cultural shock and a subjective level of stress are associated with increasing level of hardiness (Vanakova, 2014; Kabanchenko, 2017; Klimov, 2011a, 2011b, 2010; Postnikova, 2016). Given the rate of social development, economic instability and instability of political relations, it is extremely important to identify factors and personality characteristics that contribute to the development of hardiness among representatives of different generations of Russians. It is worth noting that this psychological construct have been studied actively as a separate phenomenon and in its association with other psychological categories. However, concern over this problem was only recently brought into a focus of Russian studies.

In a broad sense, hardiness is a reflection of life energy that enables individuals to interact with the environment and contributes to the 'subjective feeling of vitality and energy' that determines, in R. Emmons's opinion, the subjective feeling of personal well-being (Bogomaz & Balanev, 2009). D. A. Leont'ev notes that it is hardiness that enables individuals to endure permanent anxiety that accompanies the choice of the future (uncertainty) rather than the past (immutability) in a situation of existential dilemma (Kuzmina & Moroz, 2010; Leont'ev, 2011). S. Muddy argues that high-hardiness individuals learn to see more and more opportunities and ways to solve life problems in constant changes (Bogomaz & Balanev, 2009; Kobasa, Maddi, & Kahn, 1982).

Hardiness is a personality trait that enables individuals to transform stressful life events into new opportunities; it is associated with the desire to preserve personal values that constitute the core of personality. Such aspects of hardiness as psychological survivability and enhanced efficiency are associated with the ability to change less stable personal values depending on situations (Khromov, 2012). In 2010, a study was conducted aimed at investigating associations between hardiness and frustration (Kuzmina & Moroz, 2010). The authors confirmed the hypothesis that individuals with high-level hardiness are characterized by a search for a constructive way out of a frustration situation; they also observed the following patterns:

1. Individuals with high-level hardiness are characterized by an impunitive type of way out of a frustration situation.

2. The higher the level of hardiness is, the higher the level of social adaptation is.

Additionally, the authors empirically established associations between hardiness and self-appraisal.

This suggests that the more confident in themselves individuals are, the higher the level of hardiness is. The analysis of associations between hardiness and communication skills suggested the following patterns: (a) There is a positive association between hardiness and competent communication. (b) There is a negative association between hardiness and aggressive and protective ways of communication. This means that life-resistant individuals are characterized by competent behavior in a communication situation; aggressive and protective ways of communication are not inherent in them.

The associations between hardiness and human self-regulation were also investigated. Direct significant associations indicate that the higher the level of hardiness is, the higher the level of self-regulation is. In other words, individuals show independence, flexibly and adequately responds to changes in external conditions. The study of associations between meaning-in-life orientations and hardiness showed direct correlations. This suggests that hardiness is also associated with a high level of meaningfulness, effectiveness, and emotional intensity of an individual's life (Khromov, 2012).

Despite a number of works on associations among hardiness and different psychological constructs, the studies of the factors that shape hardiness, especially in the intergenerational perspective, are still lacking. It is worth noting that the events of recent years (the economic crisis, terrorist threats, technological disasters, unstable political relations, etc.) are powerful factors influencing individuals. These events have led to the fact that there is a general decrease in the sense of protectiveness and security. Science needs to understand the psychological characteristics and prerequisites that determine an individual's successful adaptation to a rapidly changing world. The ability to cope with life difficulties depends on personal potential, the degree of personal maturity, subjective economic well-being, and value-meaning guidelines. Thus, this study aims at identifying predictors of hardiness in different generations of Russians. The determinants are individual values, meaning-in-life orientations and factors of subjective economic well-being.

The typology of generations in modern science

Representatives of each generation are people united according to a certain age range and significant life events that they experienced at their critical stage of development, or, in other words, at the age of personality formation (Khomyakova, 2011; Shamis & Antipov, n.d.; Haeberle, Herzber, & Hobbs, 2009; Macky, Gardner, & Forsyth, 2008; Mannheim, 1952; Rudolph, Rauvola, & Zacher, 2018; Yusoff & Kian, 2013). Representatives of generations are characterized by similar history, personality type, and their behaviors influenced by this history (Murphy, Gibson, & Greenwood, 2010; Ozkan & Solmaz, 2015; Yang & Guy, 2006).

In most contexts, current scholarly works consider the concept of generation in terms of the theory of W. Strauss and N. Howe (Astashova, 2014; Strauss & Howe, 1991), which combines the basic approaches of sociology, social psychology, and developmental psychology. This approach argues that the time period for each generation is determined by the category of values, instead of the dates of birth.

Differences among generations in modern Russia

Representatives of generation Y are individualists who want to stand out for their individualities and are aimed at achieving their own goals. They focus on themselves slightly less than representatives of generation Z (Artsimovich, 2017; Ozkan & Solmaz, 2015). They are ready for

changes, willing to take risks, and have flexible thinking. However, they are influenced by brands and fashion (Volkova & Chiker, 2016; Gurova & Evdokimova, 2016). Similar to representatives of generation X, representatives of generation Y appreciate the balance between work and personal life. However, intense leisure is important for them (Anderson, Baur, Griffith, & Buckley, 2017; Wong, Wan, & Gao, 2017; Yusoff & Kian, 2013).

Representatives of generation X, as well as representatives of generation Y, are ready for changes, willing to take risks to achieve goals; they manifest themselves as individualists (Volkova & Chiker, 2016; Gurova & Evdokimova, 2016; Yusoff & Kian, 2013). Family values are important for them. Thus, they are not ready to sacrifice their leisure hours (Williams, Page, Petrosky, & Hernandez, 2010; Yusoff & Kian, 2013).

Baby boomers are characterized by such traits as collectivism, optimism, and independence. They appreciate traditions and are sympathetic to other people. They grew up in an era of prosperity and optimistic views and were inspired by the feeling that they represent a special generation that can change the world (Yusoff & Kian, 2013). In addition, baby boomers are characterized by the cult of youth and health, as well as religiosity (Chernikov, 2014; Volkova & Chiker, 2016).

Methods

The aim of this study is to determine the factors that have the greatest impact on hardiness in different generations of Russians. The subject of the study includes values, meaning-in-life orientations, and subjective economic well-being as predictors of hardiness in different generations of Russians. The study used the following techniques:

1. **The Subjective Economic Well-being technique** (Postnikova, 2016; Khashchenko, 2005, 2011). This technique represents a questionnaire consisting of 26 statements with five possible responses, for which 1 corresponds to 'I do not agree with the statement' and 5 corresponds to 'I completely agree'. Further, in accordance with the answer key, the values were calculated for such factors as optimism/pessimism, economic anxiety, subjective income adequacy, financial deprivation, and current family welfare. We have chosen this questionnaire because it provides ample opportunities in the analysis of rich and diverse empirical experience in the field of relationships, objective living conditions and human well-being, the 'economy' of well-being and happiness, subjective indicators of well-being, value and meaning aspects of material achievements. The Subjective Economic Well-being questionnaire provides an opportunity to study the fundamental problem of the ratio between objective and subjective assessments of economic living conditions on the basis of new methodology.

2. **The Hardiness Test** (Kuzmina & Moroz, 2010; Leont'ev & Rasskazova, 2006) by D. A. Leont'ev is a modified Hardiness Survey developed by the American psychologist S. Muddy (Anderson et al., 2017). This technique is a questionnaire consisting of 45 statements with four possible responses, for which 1 corresponds to 'I do not agree with the statement' and 4 corresponds to 'I completely agree'. Further, in accordance with the answer key, values were calculated for such factors as involvement, control, and risk taking.

3. **The PVQ-R technique** for measuring individual values (Khomyakova, 2011; Schwartz, Butenko, Sedova, & Lipatova, 2012). Schwartz's theory of basic values underlay hundreds of studies over the past few years. Initially, this technique examined associations among 10 basic values (power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation, independence, universalism, caring, traditions, conformism, security), or 4 meta-values, and various attitudes, ideas, opinions, behaviors, personality traits

and etc. In 2011, Schwartz developed a new technique, which already contained 19 values. The refined theory is compatible with the initial structure of 10 wider constructs, since these 19 values cover the same motivational continuum. The study used the format of the PVQ questionnaire for which each of the items was limited to a single sentence. The items describe the individual goals, aspirations or desires, which implicitly indicate the importance of a particular value. The values of respondents are derived from the implicit values of those whom they consider to resemble themselves. The response scale contains the following 6 alternatives: 0 corresponds to 'he/she doesn't resemble me at all', 1 – 'he/she doesn't resemble me', 2 – 'he/she doesn't resemble me too much', 3 – 'he/she resembles me a little', 4 – 'he/she resembles me', 5 – 'he/she resembles me very much'. In the article entitled A Refined Theory of Basic Individual Values: Application in Russia S. Schwartz et al. provided evidence for the refined theory. The findings were obtained from a survey of 15 samples of students (N = 3909) and adults (N = 2150) in Finland, Germany, Israel, Italy, New Zealand, Poland, Portugal, Switzerland, Turkey, and the USA.

4. **The Meaning-in-Life Orientations test (MOL)** (Klimov, 2010; Leont'ev, 2011). This technique is a questionnaire consisting of 20 pairs of opposite statements. The respondent's task is to choose one of two statements and to assign it one of three marks (1, 2, 3), depending on the level of his/her confidence in this choice (or '0' if both statements are equally true). Further, in accordance with the answer key, values were calculated for five scales: goals in life, life process, life effectiveness, internal locus of control, and external locus of control.

Respondents

Data collection was carried out from 2018 to 2019. The sample consisted of 621 representatives of generation Y (born in 1984–2000), 418 representatives of generations X (born in 1963–1984), and 291 respondents born in 1943–1963, the so-called baby boomers. The sociological approaches of Yu. A. Levada, V. V. Gavriilyuk, and N. A. Trikoz and the psychological approaches of E. M. Shamis and A. Antipov (Artsimovich, 2017; Shamis & Antipov, n.d.) underlay our classification of generations.

Results

Hardiness factors

Table 1 shows descriptive statistics and intergenerational differences in hardiness factors by the Kruskal–Wallis test.

We observed significant differences among generations by two components of hardiness. The levels of involvement and risk taking are higher among the representatives of generation Y. Young Russians with a developed component of involvement enjoy their own activities; they are constantly busy, try to keep abreast of everything that happens, and like to meet new people. The level of risk taking is higher among Russians aged 35 to 55 years. Representatives of generation X are annoyed by events due to which they are forced to change their daily routine; they believe that a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, live a full life, and almost always can affect the result of what is happening around.

The overall level of hardiness is higher among representatives of generation Y – Russians aged 19 to 34 years. Young respondents are confident in their decisions, like to be constantly busy, prefer to set difficult goals and achieve them, can easily get close to new people; their own lives seem meaningful and interesting to them.

Table 1

Intergenerational differences in hardiness factors (the Kruskal–Wallis test)

<u>Scale</u>	<u>Representatives of generations Y</u>		<u>Representatives of generations X</u>		<u>Baby boomers</u>	
	Mean value	Standard deviation	Mean value	Standard deviation	Mean value	Standard deviation
Involvement	33,7*	0,99	29,1*	0,63	31,4*	0,95
Control	27,9	1,24	26,4	1,12	23,3	1,05
Risk taking	11,4**	0,86	12,8**	0,08	9,7**	0,52
Overall hardiness	73,0	0,94	68,3	0,88	64,4	0,73

Determinants of hardiness among representatives of different generations of Russians

The multiple regression analysis enabled us to determine factors that influenced the formation of hardiness among representatives of different generations of Russians. Tables 2, 3, 4 demonstrate a model of hardiness, and factors (values, economic attitudes, meaning-in-life orientations) that determine hardiness among representatives of generation Y.

Table 2

Meaning-in-life orientations and hardiness: the regression analysis (generation Y)

<u>Independent variables</u>	<u>Dependent variables</u>		
	Goals in life	Internal locus of control	External locus of control
Involvement β	0,47**	0,07	0,33
Control β	0,62*	0,35*	0,26
Risk taking β	0,22	-0,39	0,27*

Table 2
Meaning-in-life orientations and hardiness: the regression analysis (generation Y)

<u>Independent variables</u>	<u>Dependent variables</u>		
	Goals in life	Internal locus of control	External locus of control
Hardiness β	0,48	0,39*	0,36**
R ²	0,67	0,13	0,23
F	11***	5,4*	8,3**

Note: *** – $p < 0.001$, ** – $p < 0.01$, * – $p < 0.05$.

Such meaning-in-life orientations as internal locus of control and external locus of control had an impact on shaping hardiness among representatives of generation Y. An individual's freedom of choice, the ability to shape his/her own life in accordance with his/her own goals and objectives, the ability to control his/her life, and the understanding that individuals should control their own lives by themselves affect the ability to withstand stress, while maintaining internal balance.

Table 3
Economic attitudes and hardiness: the regression analysis (generation Y)

<u>Independent variables</u>	<u>Dependent variables</u>				
	Economic optimism/pessimism	Current family welfare	Financial deprivation	Subjective income adequacy	Economic anxiety (financial stress)
Involvement β	0,09	0,18	-0,53**	0,94	0,37
Control β	-0,17	-0,09	0,20	0,22	0,09
Risk taking β	0,15	0,27	0,05	0,09	-0,64*

Hardiness β	0,24	0,39	-0,33*	-0,05	-0,72**
R ²	0,19	0,04	0,32	0,11	0,23
F	9,7*	11*	21,8**	6*	9,2**

Note: *** – $p < 0.001$, ** – $p < 0.01$, * – $p < 0.05$.

The findings indicate negative regression associations with such economic attitudes as financial deprivation and financial stress. The higher the level of hardiness of young Russians is, the lower financial deprivation and the level of financial stress are. Lack of cash facilities, worries about the financial position in the future, and situations when cash facilities does not meet basic needs negatively affect hardiness among young Russians aged 18 to 34 years.

Table 4

Values and hardiness: the regression analysis (generation Y)

Independent variables	Dependent variables				
	Independence: thinking	Hedonism	Achievement	Power: dominance	Personal security
Involvement β	0,21	0,62*	0,09	0,25	0,63
Control β	0,71**	0,17	0,23	0,60**	-0,57
Risk taking β	0,55*	0,23	0,37	0,38	-0,22*
Hardiness β	0,34*	0,47	0,25*	0,78**	0,05
R ²	0,42	0,13	0,12	0,31	0,15
F	13,07**	5,5*	6,7*	25**	7,4**

Note: *** – $p < 0.001$, ** – $p < 0.01$, * – $p < 0.05$.

The regression analysis indicates that such individual values as independence in decision-making, planning activities independently of others and external circumstances, freedom of choice, ambitious goals in life, and the desire to be successful and authoritative make impact on hardiness of young Russians.

Tables 5, 6, 7 show the hardiness factors for representatives of generation X.

<u>Independent variables</u>	<u>Dependent variables</u>					
	Independence: actions	Independence: thinking	Achievement	Reputation	Personal security	Benevolence: care
Involvement β	0,08	0,27	0,70	0,28	0,06	0,13
Control β	0,24	0,39*	0,05	0,12	0,18	0,76**
Risk taking β	0,68**	0,56	0,12	-0,33*	0,21	0,35
Hardiness β	0,21*	0,18	0,24*	0,23	0,87**	0,24
R ²	0,5	0,13	0,12	0,09	0,15	0,9
F	16**	5,5*	6,7*	8*	7,4**	15,7**

Note: *** – $p < 0.001$, ** – $p < 0.01$, * – $p < 0.05$.

An individual's independence in the choice of actions, his/her ambitious goals in life, the desire to be successful, and the need for feeling safe and secure increase his/her ability to withstand stress.

Table 6

Meaning-in-life orientations and hardiness: the regression analysis (generation X)

<u>Independent variables</u>	<u>Dependent variables</u>				
	Goals in life	Life process	Life effectiveness	Internal locus of control	External locus of control
Involvement β	0,39*	0,38	0,29	0,33	0,48
Control β	0,13	0,43*	0,76**	0,78	0,09
Risk taking β	0,46	0,17	0,05	0,05	0,74
Hardiness β	0,58**	-0,25	0,17	0,45	0,44*
R ²	0,31	0,11	0,17	0,14	0,39
F	10**	7,8**	8,4**	7,2*	6*

Note: *** – $p < 0.001$, ** – $p < 0.01$, * – $p < 0.05$.

External locus of control (positive impact) and financial stress (negative impact) influence hardiness among representatives of generation X – Russians aged 35–55 years. Additionally, such meaning-in-life orientations as goals in life increase the level of hardiness among the respondents. Goals in life and representation about self as a strong personality with sufficient freedom of choice, which enables individuals to live in accordance with their goals, objectives, and meanings, affect hardiness of representatives of generation X, their ability to cope with stressful situations and shape adaptive defense mechanisms.

Table 7			
<i>Economic attitudes and hardiness: the regression analysis (generation X)</i>			
Independent variables	Dependent variables		
	Current family welfare	Financial deprivation	Economic anxiety (financial stress)
Involvement β	0,23	-0,34*	0,08
Control β	0,69*	0,57	0,22
Risk taking β	-0,78	-0,37**	0,14
Hardiness β	0,09	0,18	-0,59**
R ²	0,13	0,12	0,15
F	5,5*	6,7*	7,4**

Note: *** – $p < 0.001$, ** – $p < 0.01$, * – $p < 0.05$.

High-level financial deprivation and economic anxiety reduce the level of hardiness among representatives of generation X, and more precisely, has a negative impact on such hardiness factors as 'involvement' and 'risk taking'.

Hardiness factors among representatives of the baby boomer generation

Table 8

Meaning-in-life orientations and hardiness: the regression analysis (baby boomer generation)

Independent variables	Dependent variables				
	Goals in life	Life process	Life effectiveness	Internal locus of control	External locus of control
Involvement β	0,07	0,22*	0,28	0,19	0,08
Control β	0,46	0,05	0,49*	0,48	0,29
Risk taking β	0,09	0,48	-0,33	0,87**	0,18
Hardiness β	0,35	0,46	0,38**	0,62*	-0,55*
R ²	0,04	0,13	0,14	0,24	0,31
F	9,3	17,9*	8,9**	15,9**	12,04*

Note: *** – $p < 0.001$, ** – $p < 0.01$, * – $p < 0.05$.

A highly emotional meaningful life, freedom of choice, and the desire to live in accordance with one's own values and attitudes contribute to the development of hardiness. At the same time, low-level external locus of control or, in other words, lack of confidence in the ability to control the events of one's own life negatively affect hardiness.

Table 9
Economic attitudes and hardiness: the regression analysis (baby boomer generation)

<u>Independent variables</u>	<u>Dependent variables</u>		
	Economic optimism / pessimism	Financial deprivation	Economic anxiety (financial stress)
Involvement β	0,05	-0,82***	-0,25
Control β	0,12	0,04	0,38
Risk taking β	0,17	-0,28	-0,04
Hardiness β	-0,34*	0,60	-0,52**
R ²	0,41	-0,71**	0,16
F	12,08*	16,3*	21,4**

Note: *** – $p < 0.001$, ** – $p < 0.01$, * – $p < 0.05$.

Table 10

Values and hardiness: the regression analysis (baby boomer generation)

<u>Independent variables</u>	<u>Dependent variables</u>				
	Independence: actions	Social security	Personal security	Traditions	Benevolence: care
Involvement β	0,76**	0,04	0,22	0,68*	0,16
Control β	0,39*	0,13	0,59**		0,42
Risk taking β	0,22	0,09	0,41		-0,43*
Hardiness β	0,64**	0,37*	0,18		0,68**
R ²	0,7	0,14	0,11	0,18	0,15
F	12**	7,1*	8,3*	13,3**	7,2**

Note: *** – $p < 0.001$, ** – $p < 0.01$, * – $p < 0.05$.

Economic pessimism and financial deprivation negatively affect the development of hardiness among the representatives of the baby boomer generation. Growth in well-being leads to increased hardiness.

The order in society, confidence in the strength of the country, the desire to take care of beloved ones, help others, independence in choosing actions and actions increase the level of hardiness in respondents aged 56 to 75 years.

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that the overall level of hardiness is higher among representatives of generation Y – Russians aged 19 to 34 years. Young respondents are confident in their decisions, like to be constantly busy, prefer to set difficult goals and achieve them, can easily get close to new people; their own lives seem meaningful and interesting to them. The study of determinants of hardiness in three generations of modern Russia has shown that external locus of control influences hardiness in all the three generations of modern Russia. However, it has a positive impact on generations X and Y and a negative one on baby boomers. Moreover, such values of individualism as ‘independence: thinking’ and ‘achievement’ influence hardiness in generations X and Y. The level of economic anxiety has a negative impact on hardiness among representatives of generations X, Y and baby boomers. Dissatisfaction with their financial situation and the growth of economic anxiety reduce the level of hardiness of all three generations of Russians. The growth of material well-being can increase the level of hardiness of all groups of respondents.

Studying human hardiness and its factors in various age groups is extremely important today, because society becomes increasingly stressful, with its rapid socio-economic changes, instability, and loss of value guidelines. As a unity of attitudes towards influences, challenges, and engagement, hardiness provides the motivation necessary for health-saving behavior. In this study determinants of hardiness were individual values, meaning-in-life orientations, and subjective economic well-being. The ability to cope with life difficulties and stressful factors depends on personal potential, value-meaning guidelines, and material well-being. Representatives of generation Y (young Russians aged 18 to 34 years) are currently characterized by the highest level of hardiness due to the dominance of the factors of ‘involvement’ and ‘control’. This study expands our theoretical and empirical knowledge about the conditioning of hardiness by the socio-psychological context and economic attitudes. More research into adaptive capabilities of representatives of various generations is still necessary.

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