

Success Factors of Social and Professional Adaptation of Senior Citizens in the Modern Labor Market

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Abstract—Elderly workers may remain in demand in the labor market. Aging is currently considered as an evolutionary process in which adaptation mechanisms are included to maintain and strengthen connectivity to the world. The article presents a study of factors contributing to the success of social and professional adaptation of senior citizens in the labor market. A sociological analysis was used with a survey of citizens at the ages from 50 to 72 (about 70% of them working). It was revealed that the role of elderly workers is gradually changing in the world of work. Nowadays there is the realization that the continuation of professional activity at this age helps to improve the financial situation, maintain social status in the family and society, gives a sense of independence and self-esteem, helps to cope with the negative manifestations of the advanced age crisis, appears as a positive component of social well-being. The study revealed that various groups of factors contribute to the continuation of a career at advanced age: socio-demographic (high level of education, vocational qualification level, professional status, fairly high income level, good health); behavioral (high self-esteem of their professional potential, motivation to continue to work, self-acceptance of their age and new social status, interest in maintaining the quality of life, desire to maintain independence and self-esteem, willingness to integrate into the professional and labor sphere, social and civic activity, willingness to study, behavioral flexibility). Not only the conditions of the social environment, but also the emotional and cognitive qualities of the elderly, determine their competitiveness in the labor market. Creating conditions for the implementation of these factors in society will help to continue successful work at advanced age and reduce negative social stereotypes regarding representatives of the third age.

Keywords—senior citizens, labor activity, human capital, labor market, social and professional adaptation.

I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, due to the changing demographic situation, keen interest of researchers has been caused by the labor activity of elderly Russians. According to forecasts, by 2023 the number of people representing the social community of the “third age” will increase to 40 million people. In the future, over the next ten years, the size of this community will become even greater and exceed one third of the country's population [1]. In recent years the number of economically active population of Russia has been declining. At the same time, in 2019 there was a decrease in the number of working

pensioners compared to January 1, 2016 by 37% [2]. In addition to that senior citizens may remain in demand due to the shortage of young specialists in the modern labor market and fill their niche. Recently, the prevailing trend in science is to avoid a one-sided view of aging as fading or regression. Aging is seen as an evolutionary process, including the formation and development of new adaptive and compensatory life support mechanisms designed to maintain, strengthen and develop active connectivity to the world [3].

Sociologists note that the structure of the community of the “third age” people is changing, which is expressed in the transformations of the employment of its members, the interest of many of them in raising the educational and cultural levels, the emergence of new layers and groups within the community itself. There is a different motivation for activity; interest in the manifestations of social and other activity is growing. Changes in the quality of life are taking place and new strategies are emerging. In other words, there are signs of modernization in the life of the social community of the “third age” [1]. The literature notes a high degree of fragmentation in the problems of research on various aspects of the life of elderly people. The authors of this article seek to make up for such fragmentation to some extent. They examine the factors that determine the success of social and professional adaptation of senior citizens in the modern labor market, while they appeal to the opinion of senior citizens themselves about their opportunities and problems of continuing to work. At the same time they use the interdisciplinary approach in the study, which is so lacking in research on this topic today.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

There is a search for opportunities to include older people in the work environment in aging societies. This is reflected in the literature in the emergence of the “third age” concept, whose representatives are people of advanced age, whose physical, psychological and professional resources allow them to lead an active lifestyle, as well as labor and educational activities [4]. The study of human capital of advanced ages and its features is an urgent problem [5]. This topic is complex and interdisciplinary; it is developed by gerontologists, physicians, economists, demographers, philosophers, psychologists and sociologists. Thus, the biomedical capabilities of active longevity are presented in the works of A. A. Dyskin and A. N. Reshetuk [6]. An active approach to

the sociological study of human capital was developed by T. I. Zaslavskaya [7]. The psychological and social-psychological aspects of aging are dedicated to the work of O. V. Krasnova [8], L. F. Obukhova [9], N. S. Glukhanyuk, T. V. Sergeeva [10], F. S. Ismagilova [11], V. G. Dobrohele [12]. A positive effect of an increase in the period of social and labor activity of the elderly was noted both in terms of economic benefits for society and for the elderly. The studies O.V. Krasnova, A.G. Lidere [13], V.D. Patrusheva [14] contain an analysis of factors contributing to overcoming the late crisis. The authors prove that continuing to work at advanced age is one way to minimize the effects of such a crisis. The studies of T. V. Smirnova [4] developed conceptual foundations for realizing the social and labor potential of retirees by age. The study of the social and labor potential of senior citizens in modern works was carried out using the concepts of human, cultural and social capital, the rationale for its types is in the works of P. Bourdieu [15], Yu.G. Bychenko [16], V.V. Radaev [17].

Most authors, noting the multilateral benefits of maintaining an active lifestyle at advanced age, indicate the desire of representatives of the third age to remain integrated into society, while analyzing factors that affect the quality of life of an elderly person. At the same time, there are not enough studies in the literature, where the links between the continuation of professional activity and the success of the social and professional adaptation of the elderly are identified, which are understood as the state of the individual and the result of its adaptation to changing conditions. Moreover, adaptation as a result is recognized as a quantitative characteristic, while adaptation as a process reflects its qualitative side [18,19].

The purpose of this research is to study the factors that contribute to the success of social and professional adaptation of the elderly in the modern labor market.

III. METHODS

The authors of the article, along with the analysis of theoretical literature, used a sociological analysis for which a questionnaire aimed at identifying the problems of preserving and developing the human capital of elderly citizens was developed. The results of a questionnaire survey made it possible to find out how elderly people assess their professional potential and their willingness to continue working; the degree to which they are ready for professional development with the aid of training; what factors, in their opinion, promote or impede employment. The study involved 418 people at the ages from 50 to 72. The characteristics of the sample are as follows: 68.4% of the respondents are employed, 60.8% of them are self-employed pensioners; 7.6% are self-employed or self-employed, 25.4% are unemployed, 1.9% of respondents are unemployed; 61.7% of the respondents are women and 38.3% are men. The vast majority of respondents (89.9%) live in Yekaterinburg and the satellite cities. These are mainly highly qualified people, almost half of the respondents (49.3%) have higher education, 31.7% have secondary vocational education. 32.7% of respondents have an income of more than 40 thousand rubles per family member, and only 5.9% have an income of less than 10 thousand rubles. Thus, representatives of this sample cannot be classified as poor. This conclusion is confirmed by the subjective assessment of the respondents of their financial situation. The highest percentage of respondents (34.8%) is those who have enough money to buy household appliances,

but cannot buy a car. In general, the respondents are active working citizens of pre-retirement and retirement age. The hypothesis of the study is the assumption that the continuation of work due to successful professional adaptation is an indicator of the implementation of a development strategy, and not survival for the elderly.

IV. RESULTS

Respondents highly appreciate their professional potential. The average assessment of professional potential by respondents on a 1-10 scale was 7.5 points (with the most common assessment being 8 points). 76.4% of respondents rated their professional potential at 7 or more points, and only 8.9% of respondents rated less than 5 points (from 1 to 4). Assessment of professional potential is higher in men than in women: 84.7% of responding men and 71.8% of women rated their potential at 7 points or higher. The most highly professional potential is estimated by people with a high level of education (Table 1).

TABLE I. RESPONDENTS' ASSESSMENT OF THEIR PROFESSIONAL POTENTIAL DEPENDING ON THE LEVEL OF EDUCATION. (% RATED PROFESSIONAL POTENTIAL OF 7 OR MORE POINTS ON A 1-10 SCALE)

Respondents' level of education	% of respondents
basic public education	50.0
secondary general education	57.4
elementary vocational education	75.0
secondary vocational education / secondary technical education	48.1
incomplete higher education	62.5
one or more higher educations	86.0
Academic degree	100.0

Thus, respondents with higher education and scholastic degree evaluate their professional potential much higher, compared with respondents with primary, secondary and secondary professional education. The dependence of the assessment of professional potential on the employment status of elderly people is interesting. The highest professional self-esteem was shown by respondents who have their own business. Working pensioners and people of pre-retirement age (in comparison with non-working ones) rate their professional potential higher. High self-esteem and acceptance of one's age as effective is the basis for maintaining human capital. Professional self-esteem is higher in people with a higher income and social status, which is quite predictable.

Attitude to oneself and one's professional potential allows one to judge how much a person was able to accept himself in the new conditions, such self-acceptance is an important step for the success of social and professional adaptation.

The opinion that the continuation of feasible work has a positive effect on the social well-being of an elderly person, helps to maintain their social status and prestige in the family, helps to overcome a late crisis, and many researchers share the idea of minimizing the consequences of such a crisis [13,14,20,21]. At the same time, in addition to recognizing the importance of socio-psychological aspects in the adaptation process, it is also recognized that in the current socioeconomic situation, continuing professional activity for Russian representatives of advanced age is practically the only way to improve their material well-being.

What do senior citizens want to continue working? Along with material motives, respondents give significant place to social and socio-psychological factors: they emphasize the importance of maintaining a sense of need and significance in the family, work team, professional communication and the possibility of transferring experience (Table 2).

TABLE II. MOTIVES FOR CONTINUING EMPLOYMENT

Motives for continuing employment	% of respondents	% of the total observations
To secure their financial situation	50.0	76.4
To maintain a sense of need and significance (in the family, workforce)	22.6	34.6
To keep professional communication	13.2	20.2
To transfer experience to younger workers	7.9	12.0
Do not plan to work	6.0	9.1
Other	0.3	0.5

Noteworthy is the fact that at advanced age there is a change in motivation to continue working. The emotional component comes to the fore. Popular wisdom says: "Where there is work, there is joy", which precisely indicates the influence of labor on the emotional state of a person. The need for labor is one of the most important needs of a reasonable person. Professional activity is a determining factor in a citizen gaining a social status in society, allowing him to feel an equal and useful member of society. Labor adaptation is considered as one of the varieties of social adaptation. And in this case, it is noted that the upbringing of a positive attitude to work and a sense of satisfaction with the work process helps not to be subjected to such feelings as despondency, sadness, which can lead to depressive states. In this case, psychologists do not reveal differences between young and mature people in relation to the loss of professional activity [10].

However, most researchers note that for retirees who continue to work professional routes are limited to enterprises with low wages or difficult and harmful conditions. So, V.V. Radaev believes that the demand for labor of elderly citizens takes place in the secondary sector of the labor market, which is characterized by the presence of low-skilled and unstable jobs [17]. According to the results of the survey, older workers seek to minimize the risks associated with job loss, for example, 58.1% of respondents work in the same work as before the retirement age. 21.2% of respondents changed their jobs, and 20.7% left the post-retirement age and no longer worked. What factors do determine the choice of various strategies for the behavior of people who have become pensioners? (Table 3).

TABLE III. DEPENDENCE ON GENDER, EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL STATUS OF CHOICE OF RETIREMENT BEHAVIOR STRATEGIES

	Quit and no longer worked after retirement	Work at the same job as before retirement age	Changed the job
<i>% who chose this answer</i>			
<i>Gender</i>			
Female	25.4	57.4	17.2
Male	12.8	61.5	25.6
<i>Education</i>			
secondary general education	30.8	38.5	30.8
secondary vocational education	26.6	53.1	20.3
higher education	14.1	65.7	20.2
<i>Vocational status</i>			
Principals of different levels	7.7	69.2	23.1
Experts	23.2	58.9	17.9
Semiskilled	28.8	53.8	17.3
Frontline trade and service workers	28.6	42.9	28.6
Qualified worker	20.8	70.8	8.3

As we see, men are more active and motivated to continue their career after retirement than women. Perhaps this is due to gender stereotypes common in Russian society. Women change their professional status to the family one "grandmother - a teacher of grandchildren" more easily. Perhaps this is a manifestation of gender discrimination at the retirement age. Nevertheless, a higher level of education has a positive effect on the longevity of work for both men and women.

Professional rigidity (meaning difficulty, the impossibility of changing the program of activities in situations requiring its restructuring) also largely depends on what kind of professional status its carrier has. The scenario of labor behavior of managers is similar to the scenario of the behavior of skilled workers with scarce professions, with the difference that workers more often retire after retirement, most likely due to difficult working conditions.

Among the preferred options for continuing work, respondents most often call work in their existing specialty, and when changing their specialty many of them want to use their existing skills (Table 4).

TABLE IV. PREFERRED EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS (% OF RESPONDENTS)

Employment Options	%
Want to get a job in their current specialty	54.3
Want to change their specialty, but use existing skills	24.9
Agree to the position, even if lower qualifications are required	16.8
Want to change their profession, as outdated experience makes it difficult to find work	4.0

It is no secret that behavioral flexibility, which could be manifested in professional mobility, is not typical for elderly people. The research data confirmed that only 4% of respondents are ready to radically change the scope of activities and learn a new specialty. Only 10.7% of respondents answered positively the following question "Are you ready to change your place of residence in order to get a job?" The ability to realize the career scenario of the second

half of life largely depends on the level of material well-being. If a person does not need to "work for food", then he can afford to do what he loves. At the same time, the willingness to lower expectations and the level of career claims is an important condition for the longevity of elderly workers. The adoption of such a strategy allows not only to save or get a job, but also to build a more flexible work schedule. What working conditions meet the expectations of older citizens? The results of the study are as follows. The ability to have a flexible work schedule and more free time is a prerequisite in the work of elderly citizens who want to devote more time to their health and relaxation than young people. Despite the fact that 29.6% of respondents chose a regular work schedule as a condition for continuing work, 27.3% prefer a free schedule, and 26.5% of respondents have a shorter working day, 9.9% are willing to work in remote access and work at home by labor. The vast majority of respondents would like to change their working conditions, i.e. make them gentler. But in practice, despite the declared social and labor equality for representatives of all ages, other attitudes towards older workers prevail in the professional business sphere: the better the working conditions, the higher the prestige of the organization and the wages, the lower the number of working pensioners among the staff.

Identification, disclosure of professional routes and difficulties experienced by older people becomes an important object of analysis of the sociopsychological well-being of this age category. What are the difficulties experienced by older workers regarding job retention? The greatest concern among the elderly is the acceleration of the pace of work, the growth of changes that are difficult to keep up with. At the same time, the analysis of the respondents' answers revealed that lack of professional knowledge and skills, as well as outdated experience, are not the main problems hindering the continuation of labor activity. The following difficulties are considered as the main respondents: "The pace of work has accelerated very much, there are many changes that you cannot keep up with" (32.1%); "Stresses (namely, the elderly are actively pushed into retirement as an inefficient work force)" (22%).

The analysis of the factors that positively affect the employment of senior citizens revealed that the five "leaders" noted material interest, a high level of qualification, good health, a desire to maintain independence and self-esteem. Along with material motives, respondents highly appreciate the presence of a high level of qualification and rare knowledge. Similar conclusions were made by foreign researchers. According to researchers Van Dalen, P. Hendrik, K. Henkens and J. Schippers [22] for employers, labor skills of employees, regardless of their age, are much more important than qualities such as reliability and determination. But as the main obstacle to employment, respondents noted the lack of the necessary vacancies, as well as the low level of knowledge of older workers in information technology.

Another obstacle to continuing employment is a certain depreciation of the experience of the older generation. Thus, L. A. Gornostaeva notes that in today's situation, the value of the life experience of older generations is significantly reduced [23]. F.S. Ismagilova expresses a similar opinion that the accelerating pace of life gives rise to a sociocultural discrepancy between the older generation and the new realities, to overcome which it is forced to assimilate the

knowledge and values that are characteristic of young people [3].

Respondents noted that employers have negative stereotypes about elderly workers. But at the same time, only 26.5% of respondents experienced age discrimination. This is probably why almost half of the respondents (44.3%) found it difficult to assess the level of discrimination against elderly citizens in the modern Russian market. In the assessment of respondents, there were no gender differences regarding the prevalence of ageism. Men are even more acutely aware of this problem; 24.4% of the women surveyed and 29.1% of men experienced age discrimination in work. This phenomenon is mainly encountered by people of pre-retirement and early retirement age. We are dealing with the so-called "early discrimination". It is possible that those who face discrimination while already retired, subjectively perceive it as a normal phenomenon, resigned to the status of a pensioner. Workers in the areas of trade and services (46.7%), managers (39%), and highly qualified specialists (28.6%) face a greater degree of discrimination. Respondents are likely to extrapolate their personal experiences to assess the overall discrimination situation. The level of discrimination is determined as high by 30.0% of respondents with the status of "managers" and 25.9% with the status of highly qualified specialists. At that time, this phenomenon did not affect skilled workers: only 4.2% of them rated discrimination as high. A significant influence on the attitude towards the elderly in the labor market both in Russia and abroad is exerted by stereotypes formed in society: the majority of elderly people have poor health; work of older workers is not effective; professional activity is characterized by low temporal indicators; mental qualities deteriorate with age, an elderly person is not capable of learning and retraining; an older worker is conservative and is a brake on any innovation. These stereotypes record a simplified image of an elderly worker, reducing it to a common cliché about helplessness, futility, passivity, intellectual degradation of the elderly [5, 20, 24].

The negative role of social stereotypes is also noted by foreign researchers. For example, Dutch scientists [25] believe that negative stereotypical images of older employees are more common in the media than in corporate ones.

The study revealed the willingness of respondents to learn. This aspect is very important for both Russian and foreign researchers. So, in recent years, various studies have been increasingly focused attention on the fact that the aging of the population in the developed countries of the world should be considered primarily as an achievement of society, and not just as a huge problem, the solution of which requires large financial injections. The concept of "Successful aging" [26] is gaining popularity in Western countries, which determines how aging should proceed best using modern advances in medicine and gerontology. In accordance with the concept elderly citizens who "age successfully" make well-known efforts to maintain brain activity, continuously learning and expanding social contacts with people of a younger age group. And one of the most important motives is the desire to remain professionally competitive.

Respondents demonstrated their readiness for various types of education: at universities of the third age (11.3%), retraining institutes (9.1%), and refresher courses (36.5%). However, almost half of the respondents (42.2%) believe that they do not need educational services. At the same time, the

vast majority of respondents are not familiar with information about organizations that provide educational services to citizens of pre-retirement and retirement age. 40.8% of respondents agreed with the statement that in modern Russia, citizens of pre-retirement and retirement age are excluded from the educational space, that universities, colleges, centers of additional professional education are not ready to train citizens of this age, and 33.8% of respondents found it difficult to answer about the degree of readiness. These answers allow us to conclude that at present in Russia such type of capital as human capital of older generations is not used enough. At the same time, this type of capital has powerful resources: labor, instructional, educational. The human capital of older generations should be of interest to those who can provide educational services. Respondents confirmed these conclusions of the authors of the article: most of them highly appreciate the creation of conditions in which the experience of the elderly can be claimed, including in such social roles as a mentor at work, an adviser in government, as an independent expert.

In the process of a sociological survey, the respondents' attitude was found to be related to professional advice, which, according to the authors of the article, is needed in order to revise the past, optimize the present state of human capital and help design a new choice, including a professional one. This aspect of the study is very significant: professional counseling and training is one of the most important conditions for successful social and professional adaptation. So, scientists at the University of Edinburgh, observing 600 thousand people, proved that a year spent at the university prolongs life by one year. One of the scientific explanations is that the reduction of brain neurogenesis characteristic of the elderly can only be fought by the constant learning of something new [27].

The willingness to attend career guidance classes was expressed by 47% of working respondents, 71% of respondents with self-employed status, 100% of respondents with the status of "entrepreneurs" and 20.8% of those with the status of "pensioners". In general, 42.2% of respondents expressed such readiness, although 30.4% consider such assistance inappropriate, the rest find it difficult to answer this question. Behavioral economics describes a model of economic behavior when people value today more than what will happen tomorrow. It is necessary to build conscious long-term scenarios of one's economic, including labor behavior when solving the problem of aging. At the same time, it should be noted that at present there are no career guidance technologies for working with older people in Russia, most of the personnel services in organizations do not have professional counseling specialists. The system of Russian vocational education is not focused on the professional needs of representatives of the "third age" yet. Organizational, sociopsychological, pedagogical, technological and other conditions for teaching of the analyzed age category are not properly formed. Many representatives of the "third age" have not yet formed sustainable educational strategies. Many of them do not seek to improve their skills and master retraining programs [1]. But at the same time, only through training can elderly citizens develop their intellect and destroy the negative stereotypes that have developed in Russian society about the "third age" generation. Elderly citizens should realize that being trained or teaching themselves is also a wealth of experience and a significant condition for successful social and professional adaptation.

V. CONCLUSION

In modern Russian society and the world of work the role of elderly citizens is gradually changing. It comes to the realization that continuing professional activity at this age helps to improve financial standing, maintain social status in the family and society, gives a sense of independence and self-esteem, helps to cope with the negative manifestations of the late crisis, is a positive component of social well-being. Continued work of the elderly is also an indicator of the success of social and professional adaptation. The factors that determine the ability to preserve the work of the elderly include not only social and demographic ones: a high level of education, a vocational qualification level, professional status, a fairly high level of income, good health, but also behavioral: motivation to continue working, self-acceptance of one's age and new social status, interest in maintaining the quality of life, high self-esteem of one's professional potential, desire to maintain independence and self-esteem commitment, willingness to integrate into the professional and labor sphere, to show labor, social, civic activity, willingness to participate in educational activities, behavioral flexibility. Not only the social environment, but also the emotional and cognitive factors determine the choice of the elderly, to go on a "well-deserved rest" or compete for a place on the labor market. Creating conditions for the implementation of these factors will undoubtedly contribute to the continuation of successful work at advanced age in society and also help to reduce negative social stereotypes regarding representatives of the third age.

Further studies of professional routes for people of the third age will contribute to a deeper understanding of the aging period, the formation of a positive image of advanced age as a "zone of multiple opportunities", the disclosure of the resources of a person's late life, as well as understanding of the conditions that must be created to implement these processes in Russia society.

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