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Axiological Preferences of Residents of the Karelian Arctic in the Modern Sociocultural Situation *

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Abstract. The study aims to identify the hierarchy of value dominants in the axiosphere of the Karelian Arctic residents, which has developed under the influence of natural, social, economic, and cultural-historical factors. The methodology used is complex and includes sociological, economic questionnaires, focus groups, and in-depth interviews. The study's cameral stage is based on an analysis of the empirical stage results conducted during a comprehensive scientific expedition of scientists of Petrozavodsk State University to two Arctic regions of Karelia in the summer of 2019. The most important in the study is the cross-cultural approach, based on comparing the results of a survey of respondents - the Karelian Arctic residents with the "general cultural profile" of S. Schwartz and identifying the level of validity of the applied psychological methodology. During the study, the author's hypothesis about features in the axiological preferences of the inhabitants of the Arctic zone at the level of dominant indicators is confirmed. At the stage of analysis and synthesis of the empirical stage results, the relationship of preserving human capital in the Arctic regions of Karelia with the identified value dominants of residents' health and safety is established. Special attention is paid to the influence of the current socio-cultural situation on the formation of the axiosphere of the inhabitants of the Arctic zone, and the conclusion is also made about the need for an integrated scientific approach in determining the prospects for the development of society in the Arctic regions.

Keywords: *Arctic, Karelia, value, axiosphere, cross-cultural approach, socio-cultural situation, human capital.*

Introduction

The study of the value preferences of contemporaries has become an urgent scientific topic in the humanities of the 20th century. The famous methods of studying the values of M. Rokich, A. Maslou, R. Inglehart, S. Schwartz and others were tested on a large scale [1, Schwartz S., p. 23–47] by the end of the last century. These axiological studies were applied to individual societies, countries and cultures, covering large territories and communities of people. Some researchers, such as R. Inglehart [2], built a kind of axiological chronotope with respect to a specific society (for example, Russian before and after perestroika revolution), which made it possible to trace the dynamics of value preferences over a certain period of time. However, there is very little axiological research on the inhabitants of such sparsely populated areas as the Arctic (in particular the Russian Arctic), both at the turn of the century and in modern science.

Nevertheless, both in the Russian and in the international scientific community it is now recognized that sustainable development of the Arctic region is impossible without ensuring the social well-being of residents, as evidenced by the "Fundamentals of State Policy of the Russian

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Federation in the Arctic Zone up to 2035”¹ adopted in 2020. In the “Fundamentals”, as well as in many modern concepts (for example, in V.P. Fedorov's megaproject “Give the Arctic!” [3]), the task of increasing the population of the Russian Arctic (including through labor migration) and improving living conditions of the inhabitants of the region is updated. However, the implementation of this large-scale and complex task requires not only knowledge of the natural, climatic and economic characteristics of the territory, but also understanding of the psychological characteristics of local residents, which are reflected in their value priorities. The author of this study assumes that the value sphere of the Arctic inhabitants, as a special natural-climatic and socio-economic zone, has its own specific characteristics, which can be analyzed on the basis of obtaining empirical data. An interdisciplinary analysis of the empirical data obtained on the identified axiological preferences of the inhabitants of the Arctic can be practically used in the preparation of specific programs for the regions on economic, medical, educational and socio-cultural development.

Research interest in this topic in modern humanities is relevant from the point of view of political science, conflictology, economics, sociology. Thus, individual economic studies on the territory of the Russian Arctic were associated with axiological topics. For example, Maksimov A.M., Ukhanov A.V. considered the socio-cultural component of entrepreneurial potential in the Arctic regions of Russia (Arkhangelsk Oblast and Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug), linking it with the personal value dominants. “The authors of the article formulated a hypothesis that there is a specific set of values characteristic of individuals with a high propensity for entrepreneurship and distinguishing them from the rest of the population of a certain territory” [4, Maksimov A.M., Ukhanova A.V., p. 736]. However, the hypothesis put forward, according to the authors, was not confirmed in the course of the study, and it turned out that entrepreneurs “do not differ from the rest of the population in terms of value orientations” [4, p. 739]. The reasons for the negative verification of their hypothesis, according to scientists, are the universal human significance of terminal and instrumental values for all respondents, probably the weak sensitivity of the Rokeach method to cultural differences, as well as the influence of globalization processes on contemporaries. This experience shows how closely economic research can be connected with the study of the value orientations of respondents and how difficult the analysis of empirical data is.

However, the culturological approach to the study of value preferences assumes a complex character, as it is due to a number of interrelated problems. Firstly, it is the problem of the influence of topos (literally: places) on the formation of the axio-sphere (value sphere) of the respondents. Secondly, it is the problem of preserving human capital on the territory of the Russian Arctic in the conditions of the Far North. Thirdly, it is the problem of the influence of the modern socio-cultural situation on the formation of people's value orientations in the context of globalization. The set of personal value orientations can be represented in the form of an axiosphere as a com-

¹ Ob Osnovakh gosudarstvennoy politiki Rossiyskoy Federatsii v Arktike na period do 2035 goda. Ukaz Prezidenta Rossiyskoy Federatsii ot 5 marta 2020 g. № 164 [Basic Principles of Russian Federation State Policy in the Arctic to 2035. Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of March 5, 2020 No. 164]. URL: <http://static.kremlin.ru/media/events/files/ru/f8ZpjhpaAaQ0WB1zjywN04OgKil1mAvaM.pdf> (accessed 17 July 2020).

plex structured system of a hierarchical type, which, despite its constant variability, is a stable motivator of human activity. Thus, the value dominants in the axiosphere of the personality direct individual's activity into an active channel, forming his way of life and his own human capital. The analysis of the axiosphere of the Karelian Arctic inhabitants, taking into account the stated problems, was possible thanks to the comprehensive scientific expedition of the Humanitarian Park of the leading university of the Republic of Karelia — Petrozavodsk State University — in July 2019 to Loukhskiy and Kemskiy municipal districts belonging to the territory of the Arctic zone.

Research methodology

The scientific research was carried out in two stages in 2019–2020. The first stage of collecting empirical material for a comprehensive study was carried out among the full-aged residents of the two indicated areas. The comprehensive methodology used the Schwartz questionnaire, in-depth interviews, focus groups and questionnaires. Since the cross-cultural approach presupposes a comprehensive study of the socio-cultural situation [5, Suvorova I.M.], the study included the tools of sociology, economics, history (factor analysis, self-education questionnaire, “Labor motivation” questionnaire and others).

The second stage of cameral processing of the obtained empirical data included generalization and analysis of a complex nature, taking into account the influence of the sociocultural situation on the personal value preferences of the respondents, as well as the use of a cross-cultural approach in assessing the validity of the “general cultural profile” according to the method of Sh. Schwartz.

The respondents included 130 residents of cities and villages of Loukhskiy and Kemskiy districts, aged 18 to 68, of which 97% were workers. The number of selected respondents corresponds to a representative ratio of 100 respondents per 20.000 inhabitants. Since the project of the Humanitarian Park “Ways of preserving human capital as an urgent problem of the Republic of Karelia” assumed the study of working citizens, the overwhelming majority of respondents were from among those employed in various social spheres and industries.

The influence of the Arctic specifics on the value dominants of its inhabitants

Despite the fact that the Arctic, as one of the most climatically vulnerable regions of the world, has become the subject of active scientific research, it is still “the focus of numerous and not fully understood processes and feedbacks operating in the climate system with participation of air masses, sea ice, specific stratification of the Arctic Ocean, cryosphere and terrestrial biota” [6, Zaikov K.S., Kondratov N.A., Kudryashova E.V., Lipina S.A., Chistobaev A.I., p. 7]. The specific natural characteristics of the region also include “a long period with negative air temperatures, a short growing season, specific photoperiodicity. The consequence of these natural features is a whole range of economic problems, for example: increase in the cost of the industry and infrastructure development, energy costs increase, imposition of special requirements for the communal systems of settlements, the mono-resource nature of the economy. Natural extremeness is

enhanced by the peripherality of the Russian Arctic region, the dispersed and poorly studied raw material and fuel deposits on land and in the waters of the Arctic Ocean, the remoteness of industrial centers from coastal supply bases, national and foreign sales markets, insufficient development of transport, energy and information and communication infrastructure” [6, p. 10].

The territory of the Karelian Arctic, where a comprehensive axiological study was carried out, includes three regions: Loukhskiy, Kemskiy and Belomorskiy. Loukhskiy municipal district is the largest in terms of territory in the Republic of Karelia and the most northern, while the Kemskiy and Belomorskiy municipal districts have the longest sea coastline. Natural-climatic and socio-economic conditions in these areas are fully consistent with the above description. The scientific study found that the awareness of being in extreme natural conditions is directly reflected in the axiosphere of the respondents. Analysis of the questionnaire results on labor motivation (the author is Candidate of Economic Sciences, Associate Professor of PetrSU Konev I.P.) showed that respondents put the value of health in first place among all the value orientations presented for choice. Among the factors influencing the state of health, respondents indicated nutrition (62%), healthy lifestyle (52%), absence of stress (47%), ecological situation (37%). Scientists from the Institute of High Biomedical Technologies of PetrSU have found that the decisive factors that reduce life expectancy and aggravate the quality of life are the length of northern daylight hours and the lack of a number of minerals in the body. “Scientists of PetrSU carried out a study in which they studied the content of macro- and microelements in the body of the inhabitants of Karelia, having analyzed the composition of their hair. Then they compared the results obtained with those of the residents of the middle zone of the Russian Federation. It turned out that the majority of young people (20–25 years old) who took part in the study had a deficiency of calcium, magnesium, sodium, as well as the vital microelements cobalt and iodine. People over 60 years old had excess toxic mercury and lead in their hair and a deficiency of more than 10 elements, including calcium, magnesium, zinc, iron, and so on.”²

Consequently, residents of the Arctic region are more susceptible to the adverse impact of natural and climatic conditions on their health than residents of neighboring regions of central Russia, which means that the priority of the value of health for them is unconditional. This conclusion correlates with the result of the analysis of the axiological research according to the method of Sh. Schwartz. The same respondents identified security, which in this methodology includes reliability, harmony and stability of society, relationships and oneself, family and state security, public order, cleanliness, mutual utility as an unconditional dominant value at the level of normative ideals and at the level of individual preferences. It can be assumed in this case that the respondents' sense of danger from natural and climatic conditions is intensified by instability associated with socio-economic risks, therefore, preserving health and increasing their own safety are valued by the inhabitants of the Karelian Arctic most of all. In turn, health and safety are part of human capital, the preservation of which is an urgent problem for the entire Russian Arctic.

² PetrSU website. URL: <https://petrsu.ru/news/2019/52559/utchenye-petrgu-sozd#t20c> (accessed 12 July 2019).

The problem of human capital preservation on the territory of Russian and Karelian Arctic

Human capital issues, explored in the works of foreign scientists of the 20th century T. Schultz, G. Becker, L. Turou, J. Kendrick, entered the national humanities in the post-perestroika period. But even today this issue has not lost its relevance in various fields of science: in sociology — Krutiy I.A. and Krasina O.V. [7, p. 127–130], in economic psychology — Roshchina Ya.M. [8], Avey J.B. and Luthans F. [9, p. 677–693], Elliot A.J. and Covington M.V. [10, p. 73–92], in political psychology — Yuriev A.I., Selezneva A.V., Dobrynin E.P., Burikova I.S. [11]. Each scientific interpretation of the concept of human capital takes into account its multifactorial nature. But first of all, the concept of human capital is directly related to the demographic factor. Actually, on the territory of the entire Russian Arctic “as of January 1, 2018, the total resident population of the Arctic regions of the Russian Federation was 7.800 thousand people, which is 23% less than in 1989. The following should be noted among the leading ethnosocial trends: negative migration balance, the intensity of migration exchange, due to the widespread use of the rotational work method” [12, Sokolova F.Kh., Zolotarev O.V., Maksimova L.A., Sibiryakov I.V., p. 138]. A similar trend is observed in the territory of the Karelian Arctic. In particular, in the Loukhskiy municipal district, the northernmost in Karelia, according to the local administration, there were 11.459 residents in January 2019, which is 10.5% less than in 2014 and 45% less than in 1989. In the Kemskiy municipal district; according to the local administration, the number of inhabitants in January 2019 was 14.561 residents, which is 12.1% less than in 2014 and 25.3% less than in 2007.

Such a negative demographic trend is complicated by the ethnographic component, because “there is a significant representation of autochthonous ethnic groups in the Arctic zone, as evidenced by the constitutional and legal status of territorial entities. Note that 6 of the 9 Arctic regions of Russia were created taking into account the national component: the Republic of Karelia, Komi and Sakha (Yakutia), the Nenets, Yamalo-Nenets and Chukotka Autonomous Districts. The Arctic is the territory of the original habitat of the Karelians, Komi, Yakuts, 18 out of 47 indigenous small-numbered peoples of Russia live there” [12, p. 135]. According to local administrations, representatives of the small peoples of Russia live together on the territory of the Loukhskiy and Kemskiy municipal districts (in the Kemskiy district — 5.8% of the Karelians and 0.9% of the Finns of the total number; in the Loukhskiy district — 12.8% of the Karelians of the total number residents). Moreover, in terms of demographics, the negative trend in the number of small peoples in the territory of the Karelian Arctic has also persisted over the past 20 years.

Of course, the preservation of human capital is directly related to investments in education and self-education [13, Armstrong M.], healthcare [14, Vidal-Salazar M., Hurtado-Torres N., Matias-Reche F. p. 2680–2697], safety [15, Zacharatos A., Barling J., Iverson R.D., p. 77–93], consumer needs, career guidance and culture. All of these are components of the general sociocultural situation in the study area.

The problem of the modern socio-cultural situation influence on the formation of value orientations of the inhabitants of the Karelian Arctic

The socio-cultural situation in the Karelian Arctic has significant differences from other regions of the republic. Economic trends in the two neighboring Arctic regions (Kemskiy and Loukhskiy) are also multidirectional: according to local authorities, the number of enterprises in the Kemskiy region has grown from 317 to 335 over the past 5 years, while it has decreased from 249 to 183 in Loukhskiy region during the same time, considering the fact that the status of the Arctic territory implies preferential taxation and conditions for investment in development, as well as a number of privileges in the socio-economic sphere. Business entities in such industries as logging, woodworking and mining, annually lose professionals due to labor migration. Of course, in addition to the harsh natural and climatic conditions, this negative trend is influenced by socio-cultural reality. The current socio-cultural situation on the territory of the Karelian Arctic is significantly conditioned by historical aspects, the analysis of which reveals the peculiarities of culture, in the context of which the formation of our contemporaries took place.

Thus, the history of the Kemskiy district, located on the shores of the White Sea, is associated with the Pomor culture and the Solovetskiy Monastery, which was territorially subordinate to Kem until 1930. According to Konkka A.P., “the ancient Baltic-Finnish ethno-cultural basis, as well as the influx of population from the western volosts that continued for centuries and the processes of acculturation and assimilation associated with this, could not fail to be reflected in the anthropological composition, language and traditional culture of local residents, created under the specific for Slavic population orientation towards sea crafts and the dissidence, which was especially strong here, have their own, in many respects unique cultural environment, which makes it possible to single out the Pomors as a separate ethnic group” [16, Konkka A.P., p. 43]. The tourist attraction of Kem today is due to the status of a historical city with its architectural landmark — the restored Assumption Cathedral of the 18th century and the possibility of relatively fast and convenient transportation to the Solovetskiy Monastery.

The history of Loukhskiy district is associated with the Sami and Karelian tribes living on its territory in the deep past, and since the XII century — Russians, who were traditionally for these latitudes engaged in hunting, fishing, and since the 16th century — in salt production. Most of the cultural heritage sites in Loukhskiy municipal district (103 out of 141) have archaeological status and are presented in open spaces. Loukhskiy district is also famous for its ethnocultural traditions associated with local storytellers, whose art is reproduced in numerous folklore festivals. The greatest tourist attraction of this area is presented by its natural reserves and parks, which are remarkable for their scale and originality. However, the flow of tourists is not very large due to the underdeveloped infrastructure.

According to local administrations, the decrease in the socio-cultural infrastructure over the past decades in the Karelian Arctic is evidenced by the fact that the number of secondary schools and kindergartens, sports schools, centers of culture and creativity has decreased. An

analysis of the questionnaire on labor motivation revealed that only 6% of the population are satisfied with the sports infrastructure of their area, only 12% of respondents can realize their talents and abilities, and only 21% of respondents attend local cultural events. Consequently, despite the rich historical and cultural traditions, the modern inhabitants of the Karelian Arctic do not find self-realization in the cultural life of their region. A similar state of affairs in the sociocultural sphere found its expression in the axiological preferences of the respondents.

An analysis of results of the empirical study of Sh. Schwartz method revealed that one of the most unclaimed values at the level of individual preferences among the inhabitants of the Karelian Arctic is the value of tradition, which in this context is interpreted as acceptance and observance of customs and ideas of traditional culture and religion, modesty, piety, moderation. A similar trend was noted in 2016 by colleagues from Arkhangelsk: "Some (12%) of the respondents suggest a selective approach to traditions. A minority of the respondents (14%) believe that rituals and traditions are not necessary, and at the same time, a significant part of this minority is young people. Although the respondents aged 18 to 44 are mostly in the position of preserving traditions" [17, Tamitskiy A.M., Zaikov K.S., p. 1409].

This tendency shows the discrepancy between the axiosphere of the inhabitants of the Russian Arctic and the so-called "general cultural profile" of Sh. Schwartz, which was revealed in the course of testing his methodology in 83 countries. This fact allows us to apply a cross-cultural approach in the overall assessment of the axiosphere of the inhabitants of the Karelian Arctic in this study. The purpose of this approach is to validate the study based on a comparison of the "universal set of values" of Sh. Schwartz and the value sphere of the inhabitants of a particular region, in this case — the Karelian Arctic. This study reveals the degree of validity, that is, the measure of the axiosphere conformity of the Arctic zone respondents to the "general cultural profile" of Sh. Schwartz.

Values in the "universal set of values" of Sh. Schwartz are distributed according to the principle of decreasing as follows: "kindness, independence, universalism (understanding of the other person, high appreciation of the other person, concern for the well-being of all people and nature, wisdom, breadth of thinking, social justice, equality, universal peace, a world of beauty, unity with nature), safety, conformity (refraining from actions that could harm other people, public order or accepted social norms, politeness, obedience, self-discipline, respect for parents and elders), achievements, hedonism, stimulation (excitement, novelty, striving for deep experiences), traditions and power" [18, p. 48]. According to the author of the methodology, the ranking of values in the axiosphere of the respondents is constant, despite religious, ethnic, political and other cultural differences.

The thirty years' research experience of Sh. Schwartz showed that the top three priority values include kindness, independence and universalism, and the last three positions are taken by hedonism, stimulation and power, which, according to the author, fully contributes to the best functioning of society. "Sh. Schwartz postulated that all individual values are based on the basic

conditions of human existence (one or more): a) the needs of the organism, b) the desire for social interactions, and c) the need to belong to a group” [18, p. 47].

The analysis of results of Sh. Schwartz's questionnaire among the inhabitants of the Karelian Arctic is presented, as the methodology implies, at two levels: at the level of normative ideals and at the level of individual preferences. The results at both levels of the methodology are similar for the residents of the Kemskiy and Loukhskiy districts in terms of the absolute value of security (which has already been discussed) and the most unclaimed value of power, which in this context involves achieving social status or prestige, control over people and resources, social power, wealth, image maintenance. This result shows a certain personal and social infantilism against the background of active political and economic processes in the Arctic as a whole. The accompanying factors of this situation were noted by the Arkhangelsk scientists: “The presence of an ideological and spiritual vacuum, the decline of spiritual life, negative socio-economic conditions of the population, which lead to fears and phobias, disappointment in life” [17, Tamitskiy A.M., Zaikov K.S., p. 1409] can hardly be motivators for power realization. However, the result of this value reveals the coincidence of the axiosphere of the inhabitants of the two Karelian districts with the “general cultural profile” of Schwartz; therefore, it is not an exception and confirms the validity of the method.

The same confirmation of the questionnaire's validity was found at the level of normative ideals among respondents from both Arctic regions in a set of less-demanded values (power, stimulation and hedonism). However, power, hedonism and the already mentioned traditions were among the three most unclaimed values at the level of individual preferences, which confirms the validity of the questionnaire by 66%.

In the choice of the most preferable values at both levels of the respondents of the two districts, the already mentioned security is leading, which distinguishes the axiosphere of the inhabitants of the Karelian Arctic from the “general cultural profile” of Sh. Schwartz and which is a consequence of natural and socio-economic factors. The other two values differ in both areas and levels. Thus, kindness and conformity were in demand in the Kemskiy district, both at the level of normative ideals and at the level of individual preferences, which coincides with the Schwartz profile by 33%. According to The All-Russian Public Opinion Research Center, “Three quarters of our compatriots (76%) consider themselves kind with varying degrees of confidence. Our compatriots also characterize their surroundings as kind people — this is the opinion of three quarters of Russians (75%), more often this opinion is held by Russians aged 18–24 (83%) and over 60 (62%).” In this respect, Russians as a whole do not differ from other macro- and micro-ethnic groups and cultures, confirming the validity of Sh. Schwartz's method.

In Loukhskiy district, among the values in demand at both levels, respondents also indicated universalism in addition to kindness and safety, which, according to Sh. Schwartz's method, presupposes harmony with people and nature, and universal well-being. It can be assumed that, living far from all urbanized centers, the inhabitants of this Arctic region value their harmony with the harsh northern nature, feeling this direct connection every day. This assumption is confirmed

by the analysis of the questionnaire on work motivation, where 71% of respondents indicated that they spend their free time fishing, hunting and relaxing in nature with their family.

Conclusion

Thus, the comparison of the axiosphere of the Karelian Arctic inhabitants with the “general cultural profile” of Sh. Schwartz confirmed the validity of this method in the Kemskiy district by 66%, and in the Loukhskiy district by 83%. This result shows that the value preferences of the Arctic region inhabitants have significant differences from the “general cultural profile”, which, according to the author of the methodology, is characteristic of all modern ethnic groups and cultures. This axiological difference is due to a number of natural-climatic and socio-economic problems. Consequently, it confirmed the idea that a person feels unprotected, at the same time feeling danger and adapting to this danger (47% of respondents indicated the absence of stress as the main factor affecting health) in the conditions of the Arctic zone and even today, in conditions of developed technologies. It becomes clear that in the era of globalization processes, the Arctic zone requires a special attitude both in the ecological, economic, political and social directions. In practical terms, the results of this study show that health-preserving programs are especially relevant in the Arctic, which will involve not only modern medical technologies, but also a developed physical culture and sports infrastructure. In the long term, the satisfied need for preserving health can increase the level of personal safety of the Arctic inhabitants, which will qualitatively affect the behavior model and lifestyle of people. In general, the conducted cross-cultural study showed that the problem of preserving human capital in the territory of the Karelian Arctic is essentially reflected in the axiological preferences of its inhabitants, and the solution to this problem is possible only with an integrated scientific approach taken into account.

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