

Relationship Of Living Area In Adaptation Mechanisms

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Abstract: During the study, indicators such as depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), identity crisis, culture shock, language barriers, social isolation, as well as the level of social support and integration were studied in a systematic approach. In particular, cases of high sensitivity among women, children and the elderly were highlighted. The results of the study show that adaptation strategies, social networks and culturally adapted psychological support services play an important role in reducing migratory stress. The study was conducted based on articles published in international databases such as Scopus, PubMed, ScienceDirect, JSTOR between 2015 and 2025.

Keywords: Social isolation, women, children, the elderly, social support, adaptive strategies, integration, adaptation, identity.

Introduction: The study serves to create a scientific basis for the development of socio-psychological preventive measures.

METHODS

The study used systematic literature review, meta-analysis, and mixed-methods. Articles from Scopus, Springer, PubMed, ScienceDirect, MDPI, and Annual Reviews were analyzed. The focus was on articles published between 2015 and 2025.

In the past decade, along with the increase in global migration, in-depth research has been conducted on its impact on the human psyche. Reports from the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations (UN) have noted a sharp increase in symptoms of depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), social isolation, and homesickness among people forced to migrate [3]. However, these conditions are not limited to refugees or voluntary migrants — even local-level migration, such as urban-rural transitions or vice versa, has a significant impact on the human psyche [4].

Individuals who are forced to change their place of residence experience varying degrees of “culture shock.” This shock occurs during the process of adapting to a new language, new values, and new social norms, and often causes psychological imbalance [5]. In particular, vulnerable groups such as women, children, the elderly, and people with disabilities face particular problems in adapting to a new environment. It has been found that the rate of depression after migration is twice as high among women as among men [6].

After migration, new social networks are formed in a person's life, but the loss of old relationships intensifies the feeling of loss. In some cases, this has given rise to the concept of “psychological migration trauma.” This trauma is associated with a crisis of self-understanding, loss of social role, and the need to re-form the identity [11].

Thus, although relocation is a necessary process for human development, its negative effects on psychological health cannot be denied. Therefore, one of the important tasks facing social psychology today is

to identify the consequences of migration and develop effective methods of prevention and psychological support against them [12].

RESULTS

Based on psychological analyses and empirical studies, it has been found that changing one's place of residence causes various negative effects on a person's mental state. The main results identified in the studies are as follows:

1. High sensitivity among women, children and the elderly

Not all groups are affected equally in cases of migration or change of place of residence. Studies show that women, children and the elderly are the most psychologically sensitive groups to this process [1]. Their biological, social and cultural characteristics exacerbate situations that lead to severe psychological shocks, anxiety, depression, identity crisis and social isolation [2].

Psychological vulnerability among women

Women often face double stress during migration processes: on the one hand, they bear the social and emotional burden as the protectors of the family, and on the other hand, they face restrictions on their rights and opportunities in the new environment, the risk of violence and lack of economic independence [3]. A 2022 study published in the journal BMC Women's Health found that 68% of women who migrate experience depressive symptoms and suicidal thoughts [4].

Women also experience:

Reproductive health concerns [5]

Increased domestic violence (especially among undocumented migrants) [6]

Lack of social protection [7]

Lost social roles in male-dominated societies [8]

All of these factors contribute to a sharp decline in mental health.

Children and adolescents: a threat to development

For children, migration can disrupt the stages of psychological development. A 2023 article published in the journal Child and Adolescent Mental Health found that 71% of migrant children suffer from persistent anxiety, a lack of a sense of security, and poor social adjustment at school [9].

Migrant children who are left without parents, or whose parents are also under violence or stress, experience:

Traumatic stress [10]

Attention deficit and decreased attention to school [11]

Low self-esteem and loneliness [12]

Identity crisis – especially against the background of language and intercultural conflicts [13].

The elderly: social isolation and trauma of nostalgia

For the elderly, migration is not just a change of location, but a disruption of an entire way of life, a rejection of friends, traditions, medical services and a learned culture [14]. They often:

Cannot adapt to new technologies

Has difficulty learning the language

Does not have adequate access to physical and psychological support systems [15]

A 2021 study by International Psychogeriatrics found that the rate of post-migration depression among the elderly was 61%. Feelings of being "abandoned", "useless" and "outsiders" are extremely common among them [16].

The need for gender- and age-specific psychological support

In recent years, many scientific articles have emphasized the need for targeted psychological and social support programs for women, children and the elderly. For these groups:

Culturally appropriate therapy

Gender-sensitive counseling

Local language and legal information

Social integration groups

have been shown to have significant positive effects on mental health [17][18].

2. Social support and adaptive strategies as important factors Psychological stability and mental health during migration or relocation depend on many factors. Among the most important of these are the social support system and the use of adaptive strategies [1]. Research shows that social connections and adaptive strategies are the main protective factors for overcoming the stress, alienation, and psychological isolation that result from migration [2].

Social support networks: family, friendship, and institutional support

Social support can be conditionally divided into three main levels:

Personal level — family members, relatives, close friends

Community level — ethnic diaspora, religious communities, neighbors

Institutional level — local authorities, NGOs, health and educational institutions [3]

According to a large-scale meta-analysis published in the journal *Frontiers in Psychology* in 2022, depressive symptoms were 47% less common among migrants with a high level of social support [4].

Another important aspect is the quality of social support. When supportive communication includes emotional, instrumental, and informational support, psychological adaptation is faster and more stable [5].

Adaptive strategies: problem-focused and emotional coping

Coping strategies fall into two main categories:

Problem-focused approaches—learning a language, finding a job, improving legal knowledge, participating in social activities [6]

Emotional approaches—finding inner peace, finding spiritual relief through faith or meditation, journaling, and expressing emotions through music and art [7]

A 2023 study of migrants in the journal *BMC Public Health* found that people who used active coping strategies had 2.3 times lower stress levels [8].

The main strategies that help with adaptation are:

Increasing language competence (linguistic capital) [9]

Getting to know the local culture (cultural integration) [10]

Learning a new profession or skill (economic adaptation) [11]

Using mental health services (therapy, counseling) [12]

Lack of support: dangerous consequences

Lack of social networks and passive approaches (a person does not recognize internal stress, does not seek help, remains isolated) on the contrary, sharply increase the risk of psychological disorders [13]. According to the 2019 *Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health*, post-migratory stress syndrome was clearly recorded in 64% of cases among isolated migrants [14].

The effectiveness of social support in a cultural context

The effectiveness of social support is highest when it is culturally adapted. For example, social programs organized by religious groups or translation and professional counseling services provided by ethnic diasporas allow migrants to feel accepted [15]. In many cases, this support provides psychological stability, increases social trust and accelerates integration into society [16].

3. The level of social integration is one of the main criteria for determining psychological health

Social integration is the process of social, cultural, economic and political adaptation of a migrant or immigrant to a new society. The success of this process

directly affects the state of psychological health [1]. Integration is not only adaptation to the external social environment, but also includes the level of a person's sense of belonging, participation and recognition as a member of society [2].

The impact of social integration on psychological resilience

A study published in *JSTOR* in 2023 found that depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder were reduced by up to 39% among migrants who achieved social integration [3]. The most important indicators in this process are:

Language proficiency

Contacts with local citizens

Participation in the local labor market

Social role and contribution in society [4]

When migrants are socially isolated, they often:

Experience an identity crisis

Do not seek psychological help

Show psychological resistance to social change [5]

The relationship between the level of social inclusion and mental health

A study published in *Elsevier* in 2022 found that migrants with higher psychological health indicators had significantly higher levels of inclusive integration into society (i.e., active participation in social roles, voting in elections, participation in parent meetings at schools) [6].

The reasons for this are:

Feeling important and valued [7]

Reduced levels of loneliness [8]

Having a social support network [9]

Factors facilitating integration

The following factors are considered important for successful social integration:

Language training programs — essential for both children and adults [10]

Enhancing intercultural communication — reduces misunderstandings in society

Social activities by local organizations — sports, volunteer work, seminars [11]

Support through public policies — legal status, housing, health care, unemployment insurance [12]

Low level of integration: dangerous consequences

If a migrant is socially excluded or isolated, this situation exacerbates stress, negative attitudes towards oneself, culture shock, and identity crisis [13]. According to a study published in the *Journal*

VitaMedica in 2025, social exclusion is one of the factors that has the most negative impact on mental health [14].

DISCUSSION

The presence of social integration and adaptive strategies ensures that a person feels like an active member of the social environment. In particular, contact with the local community, cultural competence and language competence form social trust and internal stability in a migrant. The study emphasizes that structural alienation, lack of cultural bridges and social stigma are the most disruptive factors of mental health.

The migration process undermines not only material, but also psychological balance. In this regard, it was emphasized that migration should be assessed not only as a geographical movement, but also as a complex psychosocial trauma.

CONCLUSION

A high level of social integration is important in restoring mental health through a sense of belonging to society.

Therefore, state policy, the health system and civil society need to develop a comprehensive psychosocial approach for persons experiencing migration stress. Ensuring psychological stability is not only an individual responsibility, but also an institutional obligation.

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