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Integration of Latvian Immigrants in Germany Through Psychological Well-being and Engagement with the Cultural Community

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Integration of Latvian Immigrants in Germany Through Psychological Well-being and Engagement with the Cultural Community

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Abstract

To raise and/ or increase a psychological well-being of Latvian immigrants in Germany and facilitate their integration, the Latvian Association where Latvian immigrants have an opportunity to come together, mark holidays, cherish traditions, as well as get involved in amateur art groups, has been founded. Some quantitative studies on immigrants' satisfaction with life in Germany are available, but studies on the Latvian immigrants in Germany have not been conducted so far. The aim of the study is to research the psychological well-being of Latvian immigrants and their engagement with their cultural community in Germany. To define 6 dimensions of well-being in a sample of the Latvian immigrants in Germany, survey on psychological well-being, and a survey developed by the authors on attracting immigrants to the community were used as data collection methods. Findings of the research showed that, the most important dimensions of the psychological well-being of the Latvian immigrants are described by articles of the Life Purpose scale. It means that the Latvian immigrants in Germany strive to fulfil their goals and make their lives better with purpose to integrate into the German environment. Respondents rated high also the Environmental Mastery dimension, meaning that Latvian immigrants are able to provide for their daily needs abroad. Articles of the Personal Growth scale were rated low. It shows the fact that the Latvian immigrants are unable to facilitate their personal growth, though in Germany they receive higher salary than in Latvia, as this salary is still in the low-wage segment of Germany. The Autonomy scale resonating with the status of immigrants and their dependence on various authorities is also evaluated very low. Articles related to the Affiliation scale showed that the most important engagement factors for the Latvian immigrants in Germany were emotions, Latvian traditions, and Latvianness. The Inspiring People scale received the lowest evaluation among the engagement factors. In addition, the Distance factor was evaluated with low scores, what can be explained in two ways – either the Association is too far from the place of residence or the distance is insignificant, and some Latvians will visit the Association, regardless of it.

KEYWORDS: immigrants, psychological well-being, integration, immigrants' engagement, Latvian Association.

Introduction



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During recent years, Latvia has been experiencing emigration and forming the Latvian diaspora abroad. In 2020, 36,730 immigrants from Latvia were counted to be residing in Germany (Urmersbach, 2020). Although those people live in Germany, many of them are not assimilated into the German environment, perform low-skill jobs and their psychological well-being is low as well. Issues on cultural differences and cultural identity are topical in Western countries. However, there are politically and socially well-integrated immigrants also in an ethnically and culturally heterogeneous societies. (Algan, Bisin, Manning, & Verdier, 2013), (Sutton, 2022). In this context, a phenomenon of multiculturalism, running counter to the theory of assimilation, according to

which immigrants are brought together within their own culture to promote their integration, can be pointed out. These issues have already been studied in America in the past. (Glazer & Moynihan, 1970), (Lorenzo-Blanco, et al., 2019). Activities, such as coming together, celebrating holidays, cherishing traditions and involvement in amateur art groups improve life quality of the Latvian immigrants in Germany, thus helping them to overcome psychological barriers to their integration in the country, however a problematic aspect exists business wise, and it is related to finding factors that would help to attract immigrants to Latvian diaspora organizations. In addition to the integration of immigrants, their well-being, including such aspects as self-affirmation, quality of life, life satisfaction, mental health, and others, is also important. (Huppert, 2017). Recently, well-being has been associated with leisure, as it has a potential to increase the former. Thus, certain correlation between the concepts brings satisfaction and happiness; quality of life improves, and other positive experiences occur (Teo, Bentley, & Nguyen, 2020). Gibson has studied how well-being is related to spending free time. However, studies on the Latvian immigrants in Germany have not yet been conducted. Although these people live in Germany, many of them perform low-skilled jobs and their psychological well-being is poor. To raise and/ or increase psychological well-being of the Latvian immigrants in Germany and to facilitate their integration, Latvian communities and associations where the Latvian immigrants have an opportunity of coming together, marking holidays, cherishing traditions, as well as getting involved in amateur art groups, have been opened. These activities improve quality of life of the Latvian immigrants in Germany, thus helping them to overcome psychological barriers to integration in the country. However, a problematic aspect exists business wise, and it is related to finding factors which may help to attract immigrants to Latvian diaspora organizations as to the place, where success stories of other immigrants living in Germany for longer time can be found, that can be source of inspiration and support to newcomers who have just arrived and still looking for their ways to settle down. Therefore, attracting immigrants to the cultural community is crucial (Tartakovsky, Patrakov, & Nikulina, 2021). The Latvian Cultural Association mentioned in this study is the one of the Westphalia region of North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany, and it operates as a non-governmental public benefit organization receiving tax benefits from the German tax authorities. At the same time, funds from the European Union, the Society Integration Foundation, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Culture, the World Association of Free Latvians, and the Latvian National Cultural Centre are being acquired within the framework of various projects.

In psychological well-being, an emphasis is put on personal growth, development, self-realization, and it is defined as an extent to which a person is fully capable to function. It also includes the use of inner potential and fulfilment of person's "true nature". High level of psychological well-being is related to a person's ability to act autonomously in his/ her life; ability to overcome challenges of the environment; ability to experience personal growth and cultivate good relationships with other people; ability to see the meaning of life and accept him/ herself (Ryff & Keyes, 1995), (Şafak-Ayvazoğlu, Kunuroglu, & Yağmur, 2021). Positive relationships are placed among the most important aspects of life, and people are actively looking for emotional and psychic interaction with others. Strong bonds can give a sense of stability in difficult times and be a source of joy for the person. Achievements include attempts to reach certain goals, moving forward in life and feeling that a person is able to perform daily activities (Anglim, Horwood, Smillie, Marerro, & Wood, 2020), (Madi, Bobowik, Verkuyten, & Basabe, 2022). Such aspects as success, power and competence are being sought deliberately and are part of well-being. Seligman's theory of well-being (2011) is a complement to his Authentic Happiness Theory (2002), and it was revising three different paths to take to happiness: entertainment and positive emotion, engagement and purport. Leisure activities can also affect an individual's well-being. Therefore, research on how a person feels during various leisure activities has been carried out. (Bragina & Voelcker-Rehge,

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well-being
among
immigrants

2018). The Covid-19 pandemic and isolation connected to human isolation had a negative impact on psychological well-being (Brooks, u.c., 2020). Relatively little is known about the well-being of immigrants in Germany, especially the Latvian ones. Some qualitative studies on how differently migrants interpret their new life in Germany exist: part of them is very satisfied, but some – very dissatisfied. Quantitative research works show that immigrants are generally satisfied with their lives in Germany and that differences between the well-being of Germans and immigrants are small (Kämpfer, 2014). An average level of well-being among immigrants from different places does not differ significantly, it is approximately the same. Therefore, the authors assume that the research on all immigrants can be attributed to the group of Latvian immigrants as well (European Social Survey, 2021). Subjective well-being is largely based on life satisfaction. Its author compared the available data of the ESS (European Social Survey) collected by interviewing people at different times with a purpose to find out a level of well-being of immigrants and the local population (European Social Survey, 2021). It should be noted that always, except during the economic crisis, the level of well-being of Germans was higher than that of the immigrants, as the latter are often not given an opportunity of the best jobs or education due to various deficiencies (language, culture). The authors explain high level of immigrants' well-being during the 2008 economic crisis by the fact that Germany enjoyed economic stability also during the crisis, unlike immigrants' home countries. So, living in Germany, they had a higher level of subjective well-being. This phenomenon can be explained by quoting Böhnke and Kohler: "If a person is allowed to choose between two countries where to live, he or she will choose the one with the highest possible level of well-being". (Böhnke & Kohler, 2010). Well-being is a precondition for successful engagement into the society and integration. People with a high level of well-being can better see opportunities in different aspects of life (education, labour market, partnerships) and thus shape their lives better. Persons with a low level of well-being keep a distance and are fearful (Hadj Abdou, 2019). The one who is not involved in social relationships outside the family, does not rely on others and does not talk about his/ her feelings with others, and consequently has worse chances to shape his/ her life (Kämpfer, 2014). Several authors have been concerned with a question of why the well-being level of immigrants and local Germans differs. Immigrants are in a relatively worse situation because Germany is not their homeland, and their dimension of well-being is not on the same level as it would be there. First of all, it should be noted that immigrants' potential in working life, as well as in terms of language skills, education and work experience, is not seen equivalent to the one of the local population (Chiswick & Miller, 2007). In the scientific literature, this phenomenon is being called "brain abuse", because, unfortunately, skilful persons are unable to compete with locals in the labour market (Liversage, 2009). It might be a cause of the unemployed status, worse working conditions, and lower income (Honkaniemi, Juárez, Katikireddi, & Rostila, 2020). The authors note that migration is often caused by a wish to raise living standards, that can lead to frustration and low level of well-being in case of a failure. Similarly, immigrants are unable to realize also the second dimension, because they have narrower social networks and less human contacts that are close – in most cases immigrants leave social contacts in their native countries and due to incomplete language or culture knowledge, age or different value systems, they cannot be established in their new home country (Hans, 2010), (Wimark, Haandrikman, & Nielsen, 2019). Migration is like a critical turning point in life which brings up various situations, including conflicts of identity, experiences of discrimination, insecurity, assimilation pressure, and cultural shock that negatively affect well-being (Kämpfer, Migration und Lebenszufriedenheit, 2014). Therefore, reaching out to the community representing their homeland is especially important for immigrants – it becomes the first contact point in their new home country Germany, where they can share experiences and get advice on how

to settle down better. During recent years several scientists have studied this phenomenon and found out that meeting religious and spiritual needs of immigrants strengthens human development potential and helps to overcome various challenges (Acquaye, 2018). Migration is largely a step towards improving life quality and well-being. However, a few studies show that people possess very high levels of stress during these transitions, which can have a negative impact not only on their well-being, but also on mental health (Carlsson & Sonne, 2018). Upon arrival to their new home country, immigrants face such experiences as long distance from relatives and families, social isolation, loss of identity and roles, barrier of language and cultural differences, and discrimination (Bekteshi & Kang, 2018), (Ghergina, Plopeanu, & Necula, 2020).

The most important marketing tool to attract visitors to a cultural institution is communication through social media. Digital environment is an alternative way for a business to communicate with its consumers (Heinemann, 2008). Lately, consumers want everything to be available quickly, conveniently and no matter where they are, so digital channels are being used more and more, as they allow people to be present at all concerts and events from a sofa while being at home. The pandemic also contributed to the spread of digital activities among consumers. Distance as an attraction factor was chosen to find out how far migrants are willing to go for reaching their cultural community and meeting other Latvians, as it is one of the demographic attraction criteria. It has been proved that people belonging to a certain homogeneous group may have similar interpretations. If this technique is being applied successfully, it can cause emotions in the person and facilitate the attraction process (Bekk, Spörrle, & Felser, 2009). To attract visitors emotionally, a company's goals should be set with purpose to increase consumers' satisfaction, awareness, as well as to gain and retain trust (Hein, 2021). A popular person in a video-clip or advertisement can evoke positive emotions in consumers, because if a consumer associates him/ herself with that person and finds it likeable, the former is more likely to choose a product or service advertised by that person (Bruhn, 2016). In terms of quality, it is one of the attraction criteria when it comes to specifics of the services – consumer satisfaction is proportional to the quality of performance (Sauerwein, 2000). It means, – the higher is the quality of classes and events in the cultural association, the more visitors it will manage to attract. According to experts' viewpoint and with reference to affiliation, Latvianness, traditions and emotions as factors of attraction, one of the needs and characteristic traits Latvians possess, is a need to be together, sing and dance, thus reflecting one of the most important motives to participate in activities. Another crucial factor facilitating engagement of the population in folk arts is related to moral values and needs. The family also plays an important role – children whose parents are engaged in amateur groups often get involved in them later (Zobena & Tisenkopfs, 2005) (Tisenkopfs & Pisarenko, 2008). It is also known that processing of advertisements requires human energy, and it is proved that 0.0004% of advertising impulses penetrate the human subconscious, even though this information has not been intentionally processed, however perceived by the brain, thus causing a purchase of a product or service, and this decision is determined by senses (Hörn-schemeyer, 2016). Therefore, it is important to present the advertisement or information about the company in such a way that it is also perceived unconsciously, for example, with colours, sounds – in ways that facilitate emotional belonging.

Since 1998, the Cultural Association has been operating as a meeting house for Latvians living in the North Rhine-Westphalia region. The Association facilitates activities of the diaspora not only for the purpose of preserving Latvian identity, but also to promote transcultural identity. The Association also supports the newspaper *Lettische Presseschau* – an informative portal about what is happening in Latvia, thus providing an opportunity to find out about events in Latvia in

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the German language. The aim of events and activities organized by the Cultural Association is to restore full-fledged activities of the organization, independently offering compatriots and other interested people access to the Latvian environment, promoting mutual cooperation among diaspora communities, emphasizing such values as strengthening national identity, promoting civic participation and maintaining ties with Latvia, at the same time supporting newcomers and helping them to integrate into the German environment. Information about activities is disseminated on the Facebook page and home page of the Cultural Association, in latvieši.com portal; informative e-mails are being sent to the members of the Association on regular basis, as well as event posters are made and placed in the Association catalogues. The Cultural Association operates as a non-profit non-governmental organization that acquires investments from the European Union, the Society Integration Foundation, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Culture, the World Association of Free Latvians, the Latvian National Cultural Centre, while the German financial authorities have granted tax reliefs as the association operates for the benefit of the society.

Research instruments and results

The aim of the study is to research psychological well-being of the Latvian immigrants and their engagement into the cultural community in Germany. Tasks of the research: to analyse the scientific literature on psychological well-being and engagement; to characterize the cultural community as a factor promoting integration; to carry out an empirical study on the psychological well-being and engagement of Latvian immigrants; to draw conclusions and develop proposals for the Latvian culture community regarding integration of the Latvian immigrants in Germany.

Research questions are the following: What is an assessment of the psychological well-being of Latvian immigrants; What are the key factors attracting immigrants to the cultural community; Are there statistically significant correlations between immigrants' psychological well-being and attraction factors? Two surveys were used to obtain the data: C. Ryff's (Ryff, 1989) survey of psychological well-being, which has been adapted in Latvia (Voitkāne, Miežīte, 2001). This survey is a theory-based tool for measuring all aspects of psychological well-being and consists of six scales: Self-Acceptance; Positive Relationships; Autonomy; Environmental Mastery; Life Purpose; and Personal Growth (OECD, 2013). The second part of the survey is about attracting immigrants to the cultural association as members, participants of the groups and visitors while they come to events. The survey is designed and developed by the authors in 2021, and it is based on the attraction factors and aspects identified through analysis of the theory. 564 Latvians live in Münster (Wiens, 2021). An invitation to participate in the study was sent to 125 Latvians, who were the visitors of the Latvian Cultural Association. The sample of the study consists of 78 persons (Latvian immigrants) who responded to the invitation to participate in the study. The respondents of the research are visitors and potential visitors of the Latvian Cultural Association in Germany, in the city of Münster and its area. Due to the constraints of the Covid pandemic, questionnaires were sent to respondents by mail and returned in the same way. Gender distribution of respondents was as follows: 81% or 63 out of them were women and 19% or 15 – men. Most respondents (41%) belonged to the age group 31-40. The next group (24%) consisted of visitors aged 41-50, followed by respondents (21%) aged 51-60, whereas respondents aged 21-30 and 61-70 compiled 5% of visitors, but 71-80 years old respondents – 4%. If taking into consideration the level of education of the respondents, most of them or 61% had higher education, 31% – vocational education, but 8% – secondary education. Respondents were asked to indicate how long they have been living in Germany. 4 respondents fell in the category up to one year, which made up 5% of the respondents, 6 respondents or 8% have lived in Germany for 1-5 years, 28 respondents or 36% – for 6-10 years, 27 respondents or 35% – for 11-20 years and 13 respondents or

17% – over 21 years. Current tendencies show that the majority out of those visiting the Cultural Association belong to so-called new exile – the diaspora. However, the institution has been also visited by people of an old exile or their descendants. According to the results of the survey, authors have found out that in the first year after arriving to Germany from Latvia, people are not yet looking for contacts with Latvian organizations.

Respondents were asked how far their place of residence was located from the Cultural Association. Most respondents or 42% indicated the distance of 10 km; 20% – of 10-50 km; 18% of respondents – 51-100 km, but 19% – 100 km or more to reach the Cultural Association.

Summing up the results of the Psychological Well-Being Survey, it was found out that the following scales received the highest evaluations: Environmental Mastery and Life Purpose. The lowest rated scales were as follows: Autonomy and Personal Growth. High score in the Environmental Mastery scale means that the Latvian immigrants can meet their daily needs even when they are abroad. Articles of the scale Life Purpose received high evaluations, meaning that Latvian immigrants in Germany strive to fulfil their goals and make their lives better. The lowest rated scale is Autonomy, meaning that life of Latvians in Germany is not autonomous, and they often shall obey someone else's rules and regulations. Low evaluations were given to the articles of the Personal Growth scale. It shows that Latvian immigrants are often unable to facilitate their personal growth though in Germany they receive relatively higher salary than in Latvia.

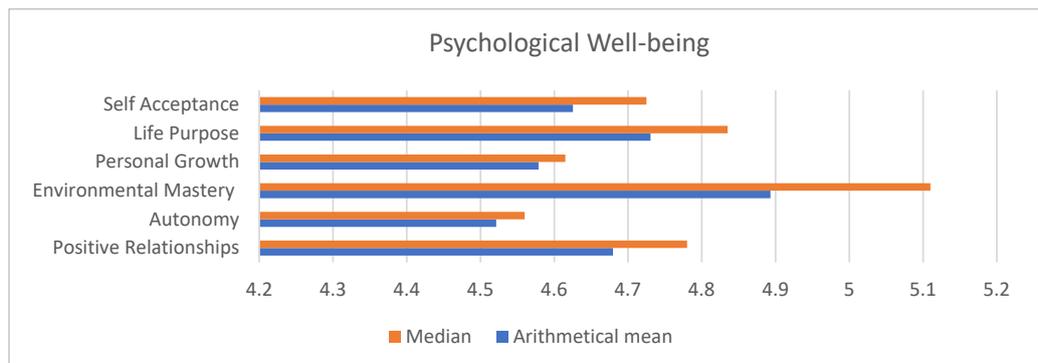


Figure 1

Median and arithmetical mean of the Psychological Well-Being survey results according to the scales

The authors evaluated median and arithmetic mean of the survey on engagement. The following scales received high evaluations: Traditions, Latvianness and Emotions. The lowest rated scales were People and Distance. Traditions, Emotions and Latvianness were highly evaluated, meaning that the Latvian values are important to Latvians in Germany, and they gain positive emotions by cherishing Latvian traditions and socializing. Thus, integration in Germany has been facilitated by discussing success at work, improvement of language skills, as well as other important everyday life spheres. The scale Inspiring People convincingly occupies the lowest position in the percentage analysis, meaning that people involved in the Latvian Association do not inspire visitors. The low rating of the Distance scale can be interpreted in two ways: either distance is important for people, so this scale received low evaluations, because the Association is far from home and not easy to reach, or distance is not important for respondents, they still go to events and therefore these articles are evaluated as irrelevant.

12 scales of the engagement survey are positive and 3 – negative. Statistically significant correlations have been found. The authors have made also correlation analysis using the Spearman correlation coefficient. Fifteen statistically significant positive and negative correlations between the Psychological Well-Being Survey and Consumer Attraction Survey scales have been found and shown in [Table No. 1](#).

Table 1

Spearman correlation coefficient of the Psychological Well-Being survey and Consumer Attraction survey scales

		Positive Relationships	Autonomy	Environmental Mastery	Personal Growth	Life Purpose	Self-Acceptance	
Spearman correlation coefficient	Distance	Correlation coefficient	-,015	-,107	,214	-,009	-,069	,187
		Two tailed level of significance	,894	,351	,060	,935	,550	,102
	Emotions	Correlation coefficient	,172	-,023	,345**	,055	,076	,309**
		Two tailed level of significance	,132	,839	,002	,631	,507	,006
	Quality	Correlation coefficient	,199	-,042	,369**	,060	,091	,351**
		Two tailed level of significance	,081	,712	,001	,602	,429	,002
	Affiliation	Correlation coefficient	,144	-,111	,316**	-,066	,042	,273*
		Two tailed level of significance	,209	,334	,005	,568	,713	,016
	Inspirational People	Correlation coefficient	,031	-,285*	-,013	-,239*	-,228*	-,042
		Two tailed level of significance	,786	,012	,912	,035	,044	,713
	Latvianness	Correlation coefficient	,122	-,051	,253*	-,030	-,006	,229*
		Two tailed level of significance	,289	,658	,025	,794	,962	,043
	Senses	Correlation coefficient	,097	-,013	,286*	-,012	,019	,303**
		Two tailed level of significance	,400	,910	,011	,917	,866	,007
	Traditions	Correlation coefficient	,165	-,064	,302**	,121	,077	,269*
		Two tailed level of significance	,148	,579	,007	,292	,500	,017

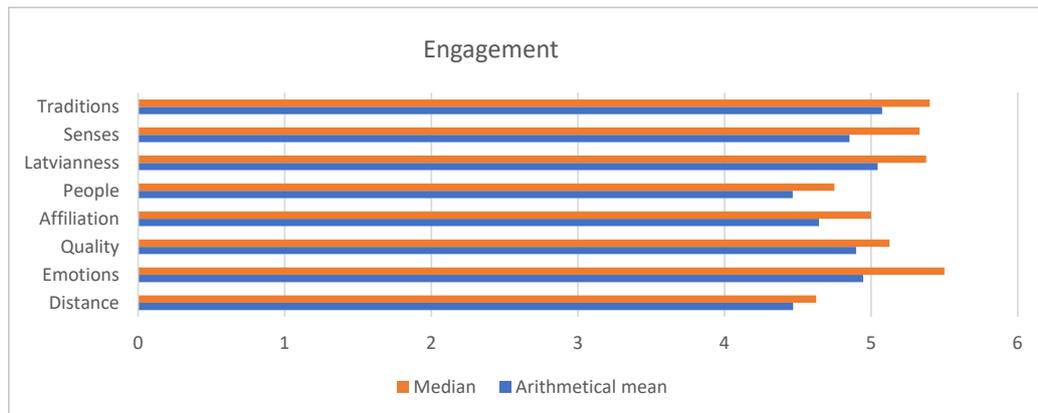


Figure 2

Median and arithmetical mean of the Engagement survey results according to the scales

Some quantitative studies on immigrants' satisfaction with life in Germany and other countries are available, but studies on the Latvian immigrants in Germany have not been conducted so far. Laura Sūna has carried out a qualitative research on the Cultural and Media Identity Among Latvian Immigrants in Germany, trying to respond to the objectives close to the above mentioned research work (Sūna, 2019). In its turn, this quantitative study on the integration of Latvians through cultural associations and well-being of Latvians is a novelty, because so far there are no studies that have examined correlations through the indicators of integration related to the care of the respective culture and psychological well-being.

- » The findings of the survey reveal that among crucial factors for the Latvian Cultural Association in Germany, supporting the integration process, traditions, emotions and Latvianness have been noted. The above-mentioned results prove the fact that the Latvian values are important for Latvians in Germany and facilitate their integration in the country, as coming together evokes discussions on one's success at work, improvement of language skills, and other important spheres of everyday life.
- » The lowest rated scale is Inspiring People with convincingly lowest position according to the percentage analysis, which means that people engaged into the Latvian Association do not inspire visitors. To improve visitors' attitude towards people involved in the Cultural Association, communication and/ or marketing courses could be offered to the staff and group leaders so that they can learn to present themselves better and treat visitors more kindly and inspiringly.
- » The Distance scale received low evaluation that can be interpreted in two ways – either distance is important for people, so this scale was given low values as the location of the Association is far from home and not easy to reach, or distance is not important for respondents, as they still go there and, therefore, consider these articles irrelevant. Due to the fact that many respondents evaluate the distance from the Cultural Association to their place of residence with low scores, the authors of the article suggest opening a “Fellow Travellers Centre” on the Association's website, offering cooperation opportunities. Thus, people planning to go to the Association would be enabled to enter an information of their city and planned travel date in the form of advertisement, offering to share the road with others.
- » According to the results of the survey, Latvians in Germany have highly evaluated the Environmental Mastery scale, meaning that Latvian immigrants are able to meet their daily needs even when they are abroad. Articles of the Life Purpose scale are also highly valued. It means

Conclusions

that Latvian immigrants in Germany strive to fulfil their goals and improve their lives. In this context, the authors recommend introducing, so called, help meetings for those Latvians who have just arrived to Germany, where knowledge of how to look for a job, write a job application, find language courses, and solve everyday problems would be shared. That would help attracting new visitors (the survey shows that very few Latvians visit the Cultural Association), as the Association would be a place providing support and positive emotions and helping newcomers to integrate into the society. As an alternative, also cooperation with the German employment agency providing respective counselling services could be established.

- » The lowest evaluations were given to the Autonomy scale, which means that life of Latvians in Germany is not autonomous and they often have to comply with regulations set by others. To improve the autonomy of Latvians living in Germany, they should be encouraged to attend integrative classes, such as language and further education courses. Regular advisory meetings should be set up to find solutions. Articles of the Personal Growth scale were given low evaluations. It shows that Latvian immigrants are often unable to facilitate their personal growth though in Germany they receive relatively higher salary than in Latvia.
- » Correlation between the scales of Environmental Mastery and Emotions shows that those Germany based Latvians, who have evaluated highly their skills to meet daily needs, consider emotions as a crucial factor and look for them in the Cultural Association and *vice versa*.
- » The correlation between the scales Emotions and Self-Acceptance indicates that positive emotions gained in the Cultural Association help accepting oneself and one's life and *vice versa*.
- » In turn, the correlation between highly evaluated quality of services at the Latvian Centre in Munster and highly evaluated Environmental Mastery scale indicates that services provided by the Cultural Association are highly valued, if respondents have given high values to the articles of the Environmental Mastery scale.
- » The correlation between inspirational people and personality growth is negative. It means, that the Latvians who have reached certain achievements in their lives and given the highest evaluation to growth, evaluate the people of the Cultural Association lower than people who have evaluated their growth less positive. The authors, responding to the above mentioned, suggest persons who work at the Association to take part in the courses of psychology or sales thus finding ways how to become more charismatic and open and gain more sympathies among visitors of the Association.
- » The study showed that the higher value is given to Inspiring People in the Cultural Association, the lower is respondents' control over their lives and the more they are influenced by others and *vice versa*. Respondents who evaluated people in the Cultural Association with high scores, evaluated their personal growth as low, respectively when people in the Association were given low values, the personal growth was highly valued. Respondents would like to attend personal growth activities in the Cultural Association. Visitors of the Cultural Association can facilitate their own psychological well-being by improving aspects that affect it, such as setting small goals for life, self-acceptance, and increasing their individual autonomy. Visitors should set goals for self-development and integration – initially it takes only time contribution to sort out free online resources and video lectures to implement this proposal. Each visitor of the Association, taking into account his/ her own wishes and time possibilities, can start the above-mentioned activity immediately. It should be done on regular basis and preferably introduced to a person's weekly routine. As the next step for raising the psychological

well-being of visitors, the authors suggest visitors to set a career or further education goal. It may help to achieve greater autonomy in life, which, in turn, allows an individual to become more independent. It might include either an acquisition of the driving license to reach a place of work or leisure facilities without being tied to the schedule of the public transport or the next level of a language course, thus improving communication skills and increasing one's autonomy, or a new education or further training to achieve career goals in long term perspective. Visitors should set a goal immediately after receiving the recommendation and start activities to improve their psychological well-being within 6 months. The budget is individual and everyone has to decide how much he/ she can afford to invest in personal development.

- » The research carried out is of great significance, as it is an attempt to tackle and understand real problems in the Latvian immigrant lives, because their conditions related to psychological well-being are not equal to the German ones. This is a sociological problem, which should be researched, in order to get a better understanding about it and find possible solutions. The limitation of this research is a limited number of the study participants and a limited region in Germany. Results of the study cannot be generalized to the entire immigrant population of Germany.

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