

MIGRATION INTENTIONS OF YOUNG PROFESSIONALS IN OMSK REGION IN THE CONTEXT OF LABOR MARKET RELATIONSHIPS¹

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Abstract

Large government-owned corporations, holding companies and companies headquartered in Moscow, Saint Petersburg and administrative centers of federal districts play more and more critical part in the modern Russian economy. New job opportunities and high-paid jobs stimulate the movement of high-skilled employees from Russian regions to these centers. Workforce movement of that kind is a problem for donor regions and has negative social and economic consequences such as lack of qualified workforce on the labor market. This article is aimed to investigate migration preferences and intentions of young people in Omsk region, using the sociological methodology of measuring factors that affect migration attitudes. The main hypothesis of the study states that the most critical factors of migration intentions of young people are high salary, better career and educational opportunities available in other regions of the country. We used random quota sample that represents the percentage of young people in the general population of Omsk region proportionally. As a result of the study, the most common migration attitudes of young professionals are identified and described; factors affecting migration intentions are classified and described; conditions stimulating rise of migration intentions are identified.

Key words: migration preferences, migration intentions, migration attitudes, young professionals

JEL Code: J61, J68, J40

Introduction

The article focuses on research on interregional labor migration in Russia, specifically on the process of migration of high school students from Omsk region to the regions of Central Russia. Since migration is a one from the most complex and influential economic and social

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processes that affect many parameters of social and economic development of a region, research in this area is of the growing significance and utmost importance. The economic role of large companies and government-owned corporations headquartered in Moscow, Saint Petersburg or in Central Russia is still increasing. These organizations shape labor policy in many Russian regions and influence processes of human mobility. New job opportunities and higher salaries in these organizations stimulate migration intentions among young professionals in Russian regions. For instance, last transformations in the education system such as Universal State Exam, creating new national research universities, etc., have created better opportunities for high school students moving from regions to these educational, scientific or industrial centers.

As a result, the problem of lack of skilled human resources emerges in many Siberian regions, including Omsk region. Development of an effective model of management of labor migration is a final goal of many political and academic approaches to the problem. Since migration is a basic demographic process influencing dynamics of populations (McFalls, 2003), it has many sides and is of interest to researchers in social, political and psychological sciences.

There are many studies aimed to describe and analyze human mobility in the socio-economic context in Russia (Zaionchkovskaya et al, 2008; Karachurina, 2007; Dolgova, 2006). The problem of migration intentions is developed in the following works (Florinskaya, 2006; Kuznetsova, 2006; Fedorets, 2006). Regional aspects of labor migration are discussed in studies, conducted by Rybakovsky (2009), Tichomirova (2008), Mukomel (2009), Chen and Barnett (2000), Barnett and Wu (1998), Findlay (2002), Osadchaya (2015), Morosanu (2016). To summarize, the complexity of the interregional migration process as well as the interdisciplinary nature of major factors shaping its intensity and direction of human mobility in Russia provide a fascinating and very specific context to study migration intentions of high school students in Siberian regions of Russia. This study of migration intentions and attitudes in Omsk region necessarily examines the specificity and nature of human mobility from the region to central Russia and the most developed cities of the country.

The present study focuses on formulating and describing the dominating strategies of migration among high school students from the Omsk region to central regions of the country. The goal here was to analyze migration attitudes and factors affecting decisions to stay or leave. In order to achieve this goal, the following tasks were formulated. First, the overall satisfaction by living in Omsk regional was measured by sociological instruments. Second, migration intentions and migration expectations of high school students were examined and

described. Finally, based on these findings, some possible factors of positive transformations of migration intentions were proposed and described.

1 Sample and Method

The data used for this study were collected in January and February of 2016. We used self-administrated questionnaire in order to collect responses from high school students in Omsk. A total of two hundred completed questionnaires were included into the analysis. Our subjects were high school students living in households, located in all five administrative districts of the city. We divided our sample into three groups according to the academic majors (concentrations) to which a high school student formally commits. According to this separation, students majoring in (a) chemistry and biological sciences, (b) math and physics and (c) social sciences were included into the sample. Additionally, sub-quotas based on gender, age group, and concentrations were identified in order to increase reliability of the results. The size of each quota group is proportionally related to the group size in the general population in order to meet the strict criteria of representativeness of the sample.

Tab. 1: Sample model

Sample size total (respondents)	200											
Gender	Male						Female					
	96 (47.8%)						104 (52.2%)					
Age group	11 th year students			10 th year students			11 th year students			10 th year students		
	47 (48.8%)			49 (51.2%)			51 (48.8%)			53 (51.2%)		
concentrations	life sciences concentrations	math and physics concentrations	social sciences concentrations	life sciences concentrations	math and physics concentrations	social sciences concentrations	life sciences concentrations	math and physics concentrations	social sciences concentrations	life sciences concentrations	math and physics concentrations	social sciences concentrations
	11 (23%)	21 (45%)	15 (32%)	11 (23%)	22 (45%)	16 (32%)	12 (23%)	23 (45%)	16 (32%)	12 (23%)	24 (45%)	17 (32%)

Source: authors

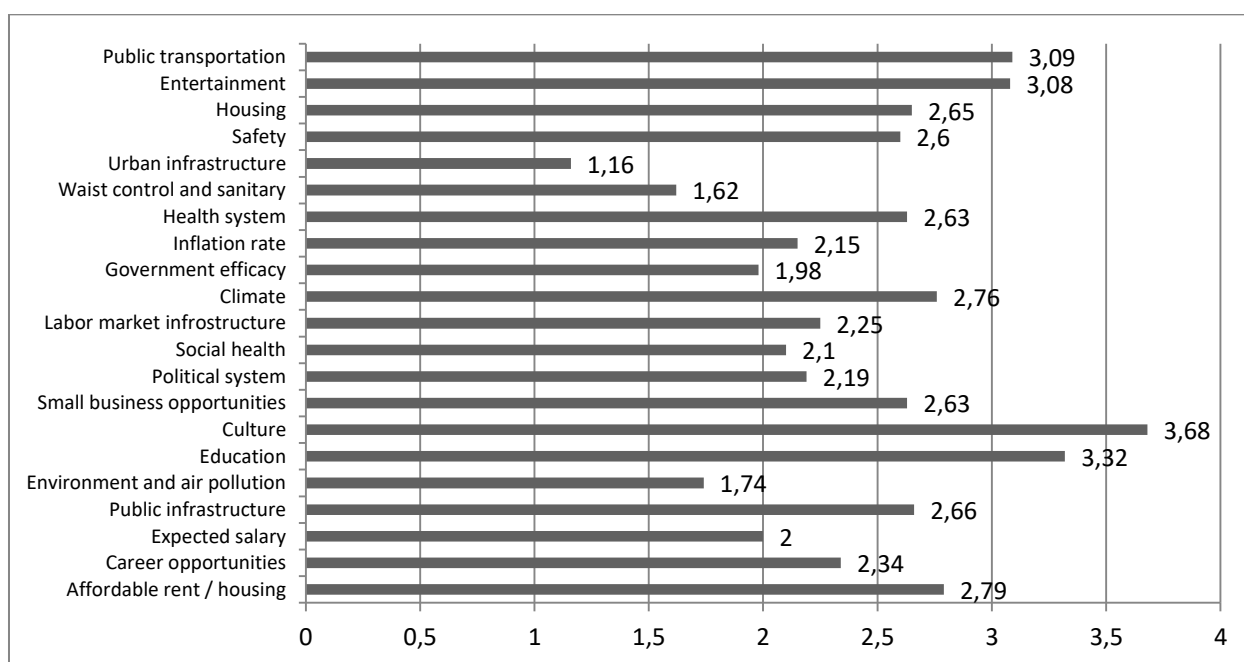
2 Results

The present paper was aimed to analyze migration intentions and its properties of young people in Omsk region and. In doing so, the analysis takes into account the measured level of

satisfaction by living in the city. We used 5-item Likert's scale ranging from 1 (absolutely dissatisfied) to 5 (absolutely satisfied). According to the distribution of received responses, 40% of respondents are not satisfied by living in the Omsk region; 25% are not satisfied at all; 24% of respondents reported that they are mostly satisfied; more than 10% of participants have chosen the neutral option. Interestingly, there were no respondents who are absolutely satisfied by living in the city. This result is remarkable because Omsk is one of the industrial centers of Russia, having developed petroleum and chemical industries, with a population of more than one billion inhabitants. It has a quite developed and spread urban infrastructure, transportation system and educational system as well. But, following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Omsk is still experiencing a period of social and economic instability, mostly caused by formal relocation of major industries to Moscow and Saint Petersburg. To date, the average wage in Omsk is significantly lower than national average. All these negative factors promote migration intentions of young people in Omsk.

The variable used to measure community satisfaction (satisfaction by living in Omsk) consisted of respondents' evaluations of 19 attributes. Figure 1 presents means of satisfaction levels by specific sides of living in Omsk, including infrastructure, public transportation system, inflation rate, climate, labor market, political and career opportunities. We decomposed the overall satisfaction to 19 separate factors that affect migration intentions and attitudes through satisfaction level.

Fig. 1: Mean rates of community satisfaction attributes



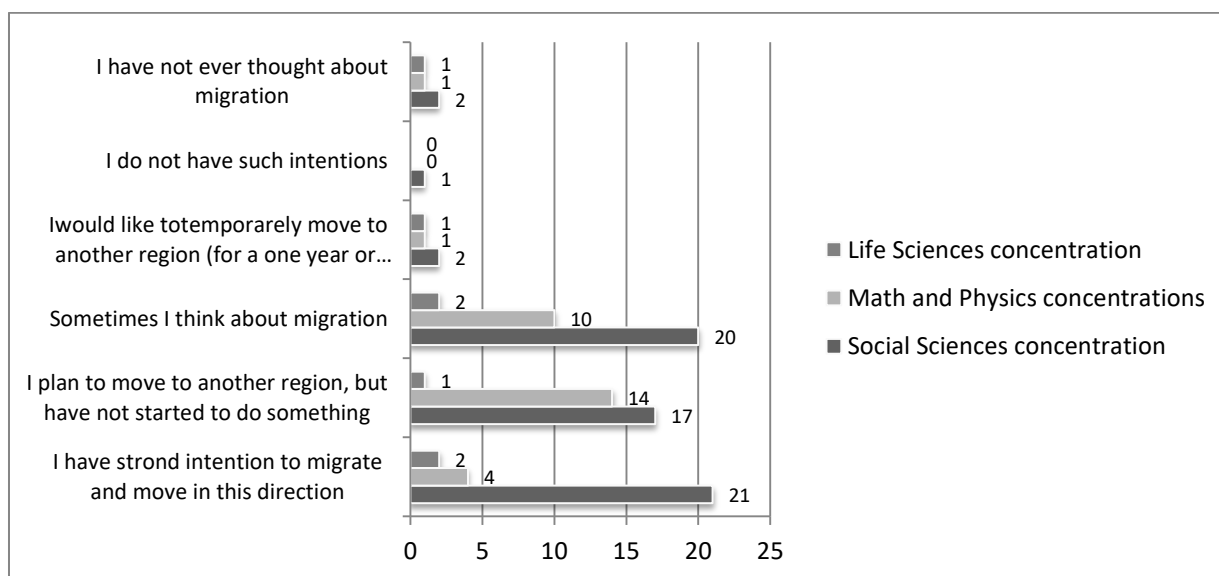
Source: authors

The possible range of these assessments presented above is between 1 (absolute dissatisfaction) to 5 (satisfied at all). There is no single attribute with mean rate of 4 or above. The distribution of the mean rates ranges from the lowest average rate of urban infrastructure (1.16) to the highest one – satisfaction by the cultural life in the city (3.68). We can conclude that in average high school students in Omsk are quite satisfied by the following attributes: education system (3.32), public transportation system (3.09) and entertainments (3.08). These results are quite predictable since Omsk is one of the largest and diverse cultural centers in Russia and Western Siberia. The educational system is also may be characterized by stability, diversity and high level of organization of scientific and academic life.

The attributes with the lowest mean assessments were urban infrastructure (1.16), waist control and sanitary (1.74), regional government efficacy (1.98) and expected wage (2.0). The data shows that there is relevantly high level of dissatisfaction by ecological, social and political factors of living in the city, while most of the respondents demonstrate moderately positive or neutral levels of satisfaction by cultural, educational and environmental attributes.

Second, the self-reported intensity of migration intentions of high school students was analyzed. Respondents were asked to assess their intention to move to another region or state using the scale from 1 (no migration intentions) to 5 (strong intention combined with targeted activity). The general results of this analysis are presented in Figure 2.

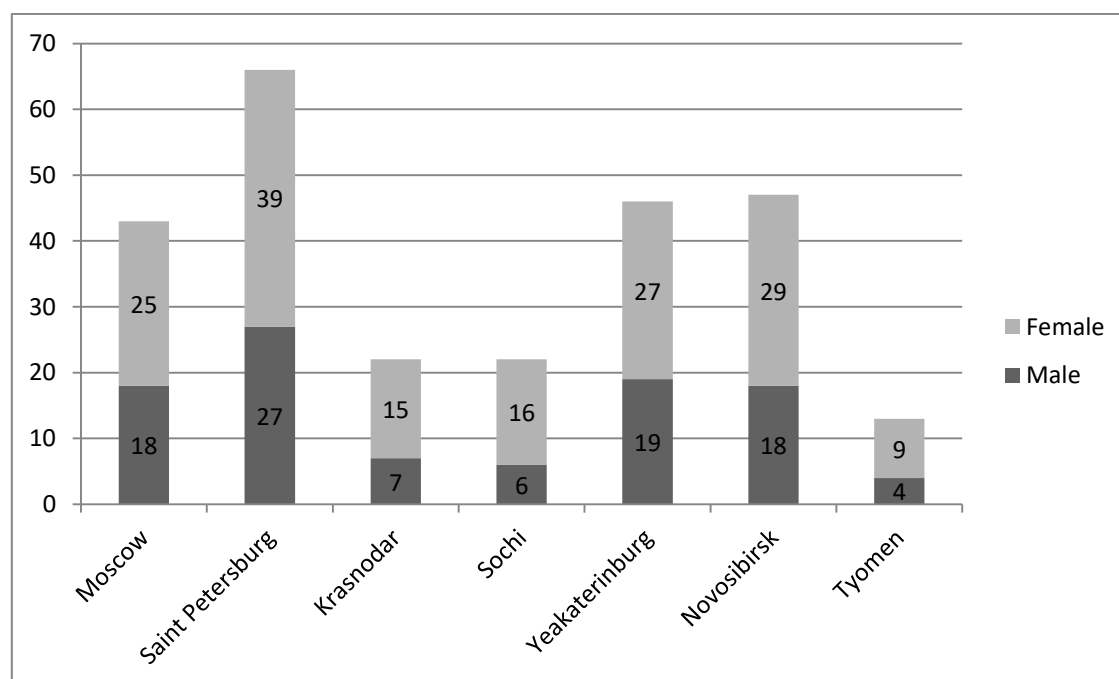
Fig. 2: Distribution of self-reported intensity of migration intentions of high school students in Omsk (% of respondents)



Source: authors

The analysis was done in two stages. First, the overall distribution was examined. As presented above, the majority of the respondents have reported about moderate to high intensity of their migration intentions. More than 27% of the respondents have decided to relocate; additionally, 34% of high school students have strong, but passive intentions to migrate (4th option), while only 10% of the participants do not have such intentions. Second, we analyzed migration intentions for students, majoring in life sciences, math and physics and social sciences. This analysis was used to gain a more thorough and detailed information about migration intentions of different professional and social groups, which will act on regional or national labor market in the next four or five years after graduation. The analysis has shown, that students concentrating on life sciences and math and physics have significantly less intense intentions to relocate if compared to students majoring in social sciences (Fig. 2). This tendency may be explained by existing differences on regional labor market – for instance, students of chemical and biological departments have prominent career opportunities in regional petroleum industry, while average wages of economists, psychologists or managers are more than twice lower than salaries in the central regions of Russia, especially Moscow and Saint Petersburg.

Fig. 3: Most popular destinations of interregional migration (number of respondents)

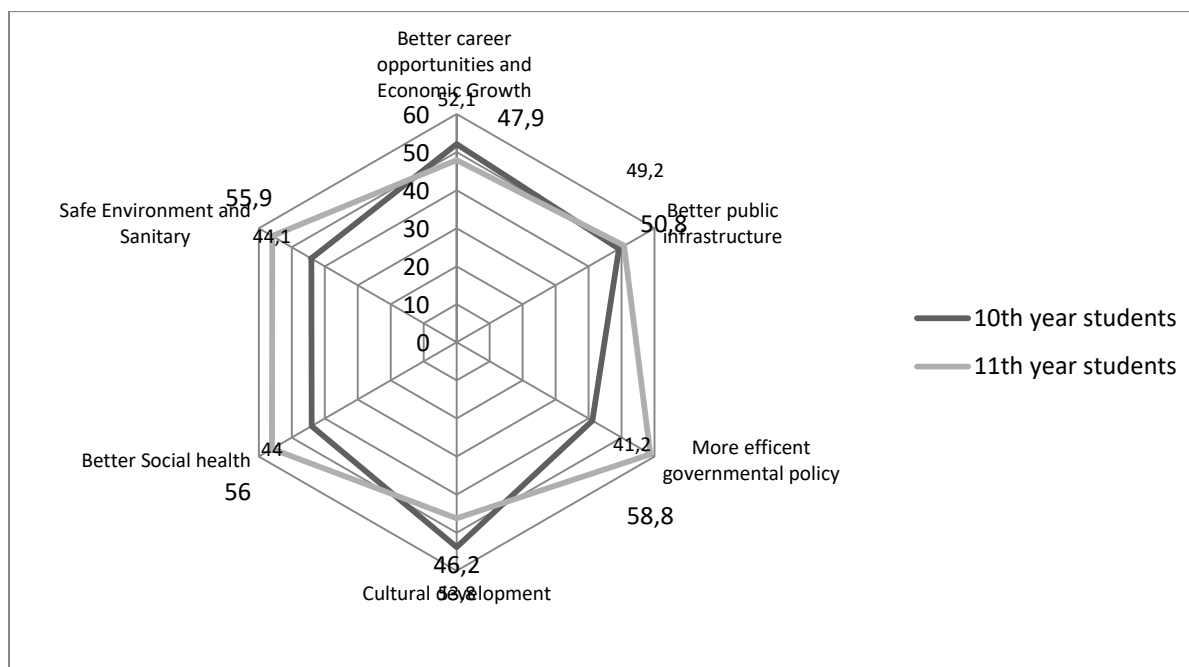


Source: authors

Next, we analyzed the most popular destinations of interregional migration from Omsk (Fig. 3). Saint Petersburg is the most popular destination city for those considering a move (33%); the second destination is Moscow (22%); Novosibirsk (22%) and Yekaterinburg (24%), the centers of neighboring regions and administrative centers of Siberian and Ural Federal districts respectively. Additionally, such destinations as Sochi and Krasnodar are emerging centers of interregional migration in Russia because of new infrastructure, constructed for the last Olympic games in Sochi. The minor destinations are Kaliningrad, Nizhni Novgorod, some European capitals.

Finally, factors, suppressing migration intentions were also analyzed. Respondents were asked to indicate possible reasons that may change their intention to move, make it less strong or more ambiguous. The most popular reason to stay for both age groups (last and pre-last year students) were better career opportunities and economic growth and development of the region. Students reported that they could change their decision to move in the case of significant growth of wages and expected benefits for young professionals on the regional labor market. Limited career opportunities are important negative factor for 52% of the last-year students and for 48% of pre-last year students in Omsk. Overall efficacy of governmental policy is also important factor (59%); better social health (56%) and public infrastructure (51%) could make students change their decision to relocate.

Fig. 4: Factors, suppressing migration intentions (% of respondents)



Source: authors

Conclusion

Migration intentions are clearly an important determinant of human mobility and shifts on national or regional labor markets. The overall level of community satisfaction is a strong predictor of intensity of desire to move or relocate. In this study, we analyzed specific migration intentions of high school students in Omsk region. The first finding is that most of the young people have strong or moderately strong migration intentions. The average intensity depends on academic concentration because students have different expectations concerning their future career perspectives on regional labor market. Hence, students majoring in social sciences have the strongest intentions to move, while others majoring in life sciences or math have much more moderate intentions to migrate. Based, on these findings, the following problematic area may be formulated: (a) new trends in shaping and transforming of migration attitudes and intentions should be taken into account by the government of the region, (b) public and social policy should be transformed according to actual situation on labor market, and (c) there are differences in official and private assessments of attributes of life satisfaction in the region.

There are some directions for future research in this area. First, the structure of migration policy may be developed based on this data. Second, the model including social and governmental institutions participating in migration processes may be developed in order to optimize actual migration trends and problems.

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