

# IDENTIFICATION OF PARENTAL LABOUR MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS BY FUTURE PARENTS

Anzhelika Voroshilova

---

## Abstract

Threat of depopulation is one of the main challenges for the countries with low birth rates. Researchers are still uncertain about effectiveness of demographic policies in respect of human capital reproduction. Study of parenting and parental labour motivation is an attempt to find out significant determinants of youth reproductive behaviour. We have interviewed 400 childless students and graduates of the Ural Federal University getting engineering and humanities degrees aged from 17 to 37. The questionnaire included questions concerning assessment of various factors somehow influencing formation of future parents and their attitude to parenting. As a result of processing quantitative data, we have found out that the respondents prioritize general cultural and personal mental and psychological factors in formation of youth's attitude to parenting. They form a basis for parental labour motivation along with financial conditions. In addition, some distinctions in the factor assessment depending on age of the respondents have been revealed. All this indicates the need of differentiation and improvement of population policy measures.

**Key words:** parental labour, parental labour motivation, motivational factors.

**JEL Code:** J11, J12, J13

---

## Introduction

Demographic scenario in the countries with low birth rates in many respects depends on sensible policy of the state.

There is no consensus on effectiveness of particular demographic measures among scientists. For example, investigations within different countries show that financial incentives do not directly affect birth rates (Bagirova and Shubat, 2014; Cohen et al. 2013; Laroque and Salanie, 2014). Studying reproductive strategies of population groups depending on their social and economic status has not revealed any interrelations as well (Dribe et al. 2014; Esping-Andersen and Billari, 2015). The theories explaining decline in birth rate with

"natural" mechanisms of population self-regulation in reaction to the external environment are very debatable nowadays (Burger and DeLong, 2016; Nolin and Ziker, 2016). Therefore, a cautious hypotheses prevailing in the scientific community at the moment implies that reproductive behaviour is regulated by multilevel civilizational and cultural dynamics in conjunction with other social processes (Colleran, 2016; Colleran et al. 2014).

Meanwhile, pro-natalist policies should be developed taking into account the factors which influence motivation for parenting (Bagirova and Shubat, 2015). Therefore, studying parenting and parental labour motivational factors as well as identification of these factors by future parents may become a baseline for increasing effectiveness of the state support measures for families.

## **1 Data and Methods**

We have interviewed 400 students and graduates of the Ural Federal University getting engineering and humanities degrees aged from 17 to 37 to study parental labour motivational factors identified by future parents. All the respondents are childless. At the time when the poll was held, the majority of the interviewed young men and women had never been married (64 %), according to their answers, 31 % of the respondents were in a relationship (unregistered marriage), and only 5 % had officially been married. Reproductive plans of the respondents are distributed over time as follows: 5 % of the respondents (generally, among those who are officially married) actively plan child's birth within the next 12 months, 18 % of the respondents - in 2 or 3 years, more than a half of the interviewed young people plan to become parents in 5 years (51 %), 15 % - in 10 years. Only 3 % of the respondents stated that they were not going to become parents at all, another 8 % were undecided.

The survey was aimed at finding out youth's attitude to parental labour (Bagirova et al. 2014). Therefore, the questionnaire was arranged according to parental labour motivational factor classification:

1. With respect to levels of public life organization: macro-, meso- and micro-level.
2. With respect to areas of society: political, economic, cultural.
3. With respect to labour conditions: material, psychological, social.

The respondents were offered to estimate the degree of each factor group's impact on formation of parental labour motivation on a three-point scale where 1 point meant "of little influence", 2 points – "medium influence", 3 points – "substantial influence".

The obtained quantitative data have been processed in the SPSS Statistics program.

## 2 Results

The analysis of the poll data has shown the following results. First of all, 90 % of the respondents consider parenting as a special kind of labour.

Specific factors, which influence this kind of labour, were distributed according to their degree of impact as follows.

### 2.1 Assessment of parental labour motivational factors with respect to levels of public life organization

First of all, the respondents gave an assessment to influence exerted by factors of different public life levels (see Tab. 1).

**Tab. 1: Indicators of assessment of parental labour motivational factors' influence on forming a parent with respect to public life levels**

Level of impact factors	Empirical indicators	Mean score
Macro-level	The respondents' assessment of degree of public influence including cultural, political and economic influence on formation of a parent in our country	2,23
Meso-level	The respondents' assessment of degree of family, social environment and teachers' influence on formation of a parent in our country	2,72
Micro-level	The respondents' assessment of degree of influence exerted by personality, individual's nature and values on formation of a parent in our country	2,78

Source: author's calculation

According to the respondents' opinion, such micro-level factors as personality, individual's nature and values have the greatest impact on formation of a parent in our country (mean score is 2,78 points on a three-point scale). Meso-level as an environment for parent formation (due to family, social environment and teachers' influence) received a medium score (2,72 points on a three-point scale) that is very close the micro-level factors' mean score. Thus, the respondents are sure that, first of all, a person along with their close social environment are responsible for the formation of qualities a parent should possess. Macro-level was considered as the least influential among others in formation of parental labour motivation (mean score is 2,23 points on a three-point scale) what is still a rather significant result.

## 2.2 Assessment of parental labour motivational factors with respect to areas of society

Then the respondents were offered to estimate the importance of only macro-level factors with respect to institutions and areas of society (see Tab. 2).

**Tab. 2: Indicators of assessment of macro-level factors' influence on formation of parental labour motivation with respect to areas of society**

Area of impact factors	Empirical indicators	Mean score
Political	Family policy of the state, demographic measures, laws	2,18
Economic	Economic conditions: material security, housing, infrastructure, social stability	2,84
Cultural	Culture, traditions, media, Internet	2,07

Source: author's calculation

The results of mean score calculation revealed that economic factors had been assessed as the most important in formation of parental labour motivation (2,84 points). The role of political and cultural spheres and institutes in formation of parental labour motivation was estimated as moderate (2,18 and 2,07 points respectively).

## 2.3 Assessment of direct parental labour motivational factors with respect to parental labour conditions

After that, the respondents were supposed to give an assessment to direct meso-level factors which imply parental labour conditions (see Tab. 3).

**Tab. 3: Indicators of assessment of direct parental labour factors' (parental labour conditions') significance for having a baby in a household**

Type of direct factors	Empirical indicators	Mean score
Material	Material security, housing	2,79
Psychological	Psychological maturity and mental readiness	2,82
Social	Social status, social support networks	1,98

Source: author's calculation

Mean score calculation concerning the importance of conditions for having a baby in a household as direct factors for formation of parental labour motivation has shown the following. Similar to macro-level factors, the respondents marked material conditions (2,79 points) as very essential. However, such factors as psychological maturity and mental

readiness to become parents were estimated even a bit higher (2,82 points). Meanwhile, social status and social support networks as conditions for having a baby in a household were estimated only as fairly important (1,98 points).

In addition, it has been noted that the older the respondent was, the less popular alternative for the question "What conditions for having a baby in a household do you consider as the most important?" was "Social status, social support networks" (see Tab. 4). However, taking into account a small age difference within the groups of respondents, this distinction was detected only with median test while Kruskal-Wallis test didn't confirm it.

**Tab. 4: Statistical indicators of the respondents' answer distribution concerning the impact which meso-level social conditions have on a decision of having a baby in a household (groups according to the respondents' age), number of years**

Statistical indicator		Has little influence	Has medium influence	Has substantial influence
Average		20,95	20,39	20,14
95 % confidence interval for the average	Lower confidence bound	20,16	19,97	19,55
	Upper confidence bound	21,74	20,80	20,73
Average for 5 %-reduced sample		20,45	20,08	19,77
Average deviation		3,664	2,910	2,632
Minimum		17	17	17
Maximum		37	35	31

Source: author's calculation

Thus, it has been noted that the importance of social status and social support networks as one of the conditions of becoming parents decreases as people grow older.

### 3 Discussions

1. According to the respondents' opinion, such micro- and meso-level factors as personality, individual's nature and values, close social environment influence the formation of a parent the most. Nevertheless, macro-level factors were largely estimated highly enough, so future parents are sure that society in general (including cultural, political and economic spheres) has rather considerable impact on formation of a person as parent. It broadly corresponds to modern researchers' conclusions regarding cultural macro-environment's influence on reproductive behaviour (Colleran, 2016; Colleran et al. 2014).

2. The analysis of respondents' estimation of parenting motivational factors concerning different spheres has shown that at both macro- and meso-levels economic factors play the most significant part in formation of parental labour motivation. It means that, according to the respondents, safe development of a family is influenced, first of all, by the economic conditions created in the country (at macro level). Probably, it is connected with opportunities for infrastructure development (hospitals, kindergartens, schools, playgrounds, etc.) as well as with parents' confidence in the future. Thus, it is possible to assume that despite low effectiveness of direct financial incentives for fertility, general state of socioeconomic conditions plays an essential part in family planning.

3. Conversely, taking into account high marks the respondents gave to macro-level cultural factors, at meso level the respondents have also estimated psychological maturity and mental readiness to become parents even a bit higher than material conditions (housing, financial security and so forth). It leads one to think that along with financial incentive measures for parenting, attention should also be paid to non-economic aspect of a matter – information training and psychological preparation to future parenting for young people what has also been mentioned earlier by Russian scientists (Bagirova and Shubat, 2015).

4. The analysis of answers given by the respondents of different groups has shown that independence of decision-making concerning parenting increases as people grow older. Consequently, the structure of motivation for parenting changes as well. It means that assessment of certain parental labour motivational factors is connected with social and demographic characteristics of respondents (Dribe et al. 2014). However, the structure of these interconnections has yet to be specified.

## **Conclusion**

According to the analysis of the obtained data, sociocultural factors forming parental labour motivation are as important for future parents as economic ones. Nevertheless, existing support measures for family and parenting in our country are basically limited to economic incentives what is not always effective. In addition, assessment of certain parental labour motivational factors is connected with social and demographic characteristics of the respondents. It means the need to differentiate measures of population policy taking into account specifics of certain groups. Further study of parenting and parental labour motivational factors can help to develop more effective measures of decreasing threat of depopulation nationwide.

## Acknowledgement

The work was supported by Act 211 Government of the Russian Federation, contract № 02.A03.21.0006.

## References

- Bagirova, A., & Shubat, O. (2014). Parenthood image and its development in conception of parents work. *Sotsiologicheskie Issledovaniya*, 4, 103-110.
- Bagirova, A., & Shubat, O. (2015). The role of the education system in regulating reproductive behaviours: the case of the Russian Federation. *The 9th International Days of Statistics and Economics Conference Proceedings*, 89-90.
- Bagirova, A., Shubat, O., & Dorman, V. (2014). Employees' parental labor stimulation in russian companies: socioeconomic view. *The 8th International Days of Statistics and Economics Conference Proceedings*, 53-62.
- Burger, O., & DeLong, J. P. (2016). What if fertility decline is not permanent? The need for an evolutionarily informed approach to understanding low fertility. *Philosophical Transactions Of The Royal Society B-Biological Sciences*, 371(1692), 20150157. doi: 10.1098/rstb.2015.0157.
- Cohen, A., Dehejia, R., & Romanov, D. (2013). Financial incentives and fertility. *Review Of Economics And Statistics*, 95(1), 1-20.
- Colleran, H. (2016). The cultural evolution of fertility decline. *Philosophical Transactions Of The Royal Society B-Biological Sciences*, 371(1692), 20150152. doi:10.1098/rstb.2015.0152.
- Colleran, H., Jasienska, G., Nenko, I., Galbarczyk, A., & Mace, R. (2014). Community-level education accelerates the cultural evolution of fertility decline. *Philosophical Transactions Of The Royal Society B-Biological Sciences*, 281(1779), 20132732. doi:10.1098/rspb.2013.2732
- Dribe, M., Oris, M., & Pozzi, L. (2014). Socioeconomic status and fertility before, during, and after the demographic transition: An introduction . *Demographic Research*, 31, 161-182. doi:10.4054/DemRes.2014.31.7.
- Esping-Andersen, G., & Billari, F. C. (2015). Re-theorizing Family Demographics. *Population And Development Review*, 41(1), 1-31. doi:10.1111/j.1728-4457.2015.00024.x.

Laroque, G., & Salanie, B. (2014). Identifying the response of fertility to financial incentives. *Journal Of Applied Econometrics*, 29(2), 314-332. doi:10.1002/jae.2332.

Nolin, D. A., & Ziker, J. P. (2016). Reproductive responses to economic uncertainty fertility decline in Post-Soviet Ust'-Avam, Siberia. *Human Nature-An Interdisciplinary Biosocial Perspective*, 27(4), SI, 351-371. doi:10.1007/s12110-016-9267-6.

**Contact**

Anzhelika Voroshilova

Ural Federal University

The Institute of Public Administration and Entrepreneurship

620002, Ekaterinburg, Mira st., 19

a.i.voroshilova@urfu.ru