

ATTITUDES OF THE CITIZENS OF THE URAL MEGALOPOLIS TOWARDS MIGRANTS OF DIFFERENT ETHNICITIES

Irina Britvina – Elena Mogilchak – Galina Savchuk

Abstract

In the modern world, external migration processes have become commonplace. The interaction between the host community and migrants of foreign ethnicities significantly influences the development of human capital in a territory. According to expert evaluations, about 30 million external migrants today live in Russia. Readiness to interact with them in a constructive way on the part of the host community is formed as a result of the influence of various factors, including the attitudes of the host territory's citizens. The article is based on materials from representative sample research carried out in 2016 (surveys of 485 Ekaterinburg citizens). First, the results of the study demonstrate the instrumental capabilities of factor analysis in discovering attitudes towards migrants from Central Asia. Second, the results of factor analysis allowed us to expose principally different attitudes and present them in the form of three latent variables. Third, the analysis has demonstrated the existence of an interrelation between the variables (cultural and national orientations and the actual practices of interaction between the members of the host community and external migrants of foreign ethnicities).

Key words: attitude, human capital, migrants of foreign ethnicities, host community, factor analysis.

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Introduction

It is our opinion that a relevant direction for studying the social component of the quality of a territory's human capital is the analysis of the interactions between the host community and migrants of different ethnicities. This phenomenon is related to the global character of the migration flows in the territories of a number of developed countries, including Russia. Both the social characteristics of the migrants and the attitude of the host society towards them define the level of migrant integration with the new social environment. This article is aimed

at defining the principal characteristics of the attitudes of citizens of a large city in the Urals towards migrants of different ethnicities and the main factors influencing this attitude.

Literature review

According to the estimates of the World Bank, in developed countries such as Germany, Japan, and Sweden, the share of human capital in the overall structure of national wealth is 80%. In the Russian Federation, this share is only 14 % (Leonidova et al., 2013). Many authors have studied the relations between human capital and the level of a country's welfare. Khan (2016) points out that the importance of human capital is generally recognized as one of the most important factors for economic growth. In the structure of human capital, its social aspect is of the same importance as its economic one.

The way in which the interaction between a host society and migrants of different ethnicities develops influences to a large extent the social aspect of human capital's development: this is due to the influx of high-quality external migrants. The analysis of the formation of the host community's attitudes towards migrants is based, first and foremost, on the social characteristics of the former. Mieriņa & Koroļeva (2015) tried to ascertain the difference between the positions of the youth in West European and post-socialist countries. They suppose that, as a rule, in Western Europe young people are not predisposed to a negative attitude towards immigrants. Some researchers mention the ambiguous influence of the population's social characteristics on their attitude towards external migrants (Kim et al., 2015). Following the example of Western authors, Russian researchers note the inconsistent influence of the host community's social and demographic characteristics on their attitude towards migrants (Drobizheva, 2017).

Other factors influencing attitudes towards migrants are reflected in the literature. Russian authors have come to the conclusion that there is a close connection between the civil (citizenship) identity of the local population and attitudes towards migrants (Drobizheva, 2017; Mukomel, 2017). They also study the influence of interethnic attitudes on the position taken towards migrants (Drobizheva, 2017). Researchers note that in Russian society there exists a selective attitude towards different ethnic groups determined by the measure of their integration with local society. Ponizovskiy (2016) points out that social and demographic factors explain only 6% of the attitudes, with education being the most influential.

An important direction in the context of the given problematic is the analysis of the complex structure of attitudes (LaPiere, 1934; Thomas & Znaniecki, 1996; Yadov, 2013) and

the discrepancy between attitudes and behavior (Ajzen, 1993; Saris, 1993; Sparks, 2000; Manstead, 2000). Researchers note that attitude presupposes some kind of position towards something (Thomas & Znaniecki, 1996). Attitude (or a socially fixed position) is characterized by a complex structure and contains evaluative, cognitive, and behavioral (also referred to as behavioral readiness) aspects (Yadov, 2013). We can agree with a number of foreign and Russian researchers that the value and cultural aspects of the formation of attitudes towards migrants are the most relevant (Grigoriev, 2016; Ponizovskiy, 2016).

Methodology

In May 2016, the authors of this article conducted a survey of a representative sample of 485 Ekaterinburg citizens who have lived in the city for more than 5 years. The selection of respondents was carried out in accordance with a quota sample, taking into account age, gender, and city district. The authors were interested in the attitude of the respondents towards migrants of different ethnicities from Central Asian countries (Kazakhs, Kirghiz, Tajiks, Uzbeks, and Turkmens), as these are the largest migrant groups in the city under study. Correlation and factor analysis were applied to the empirical material. From the viewpoint of the classical approach, attitude (or a socially fixed position) contains evaluative, cognitive and behavioral aspects. The authors consider attitude as a predisposition resulting in positive or negative reactions, which allows us to present it as a factor, F, and the reaction of respondents as parameters or observable variables (Saris, 1993).

Results

Let us list the indicators related to different aspects of attitude (cognitive, behavioral, and evaluative) underlying the data analysis.

The cognitive aspect: availability of negative or positive information about the migrants; awareness of the cultural peculiarities of the migrants.

The behavioral aspect: readiness to 1) change under the influence of the new cultural norms of the migrants; 2) give assistance to migrants; and 3) establish contact with migrants as partners or managers in business matters.

The evaluative aspect:

- the attitude towards the increasing number of migrants;
- the number of requirements set for migrants;

– evaluation of: 1) the level of habituation to a large number of migrants; 2) the culture of migrant behavior; and 3) increasing resemblance between migrants and the local population.

– acceptability of: 1) marital relationships with migrants; 2) being friends with migrants; 3) being colleagues with migrants; 4) being citizens of the same city; and 5) being citizens of the same country.

Having analyzed the linear distribution of the characteristics reflecting the attitude of Ekaterinburg citizens towards migrants of different ethnicities, we detected a number of conditions which may influence the interaction between the host community and migrants.

Among the conditions impeding the interaction of the local population with the migrants from Central Asia, one can name:

- unreadiness to change existing cultural habits under the influence of new cultural norms (74 % of respondents);
- poor awareness of the cultural specifics of the migrants (71 %);
- negative attitude towards the increasing number of migrants in Ekaterinburg (60 %);
- possession of rather negative, rather than positive, information about migrants (56 %).

Among the conditions contributing to the interactions between the local population and migrants from Central Asia, one can note:

- orientation to the conferment of Russian citizenship upon migrants provided that particular conditions are met (66 %);
- positive attitude towards the possibility of becoming citizens of the same state with at least one representative of the groups under discussion (59 %);
- positive attitude towards the possibility of becoming citizens of the same city with at least one representative of the groups under discussion (56 %);
- consent that it is acceptable to be colleagues with at least one representative of the groups under discussion (47 %);
- assessing being friends with at least one representative of the groups under discussion as acceptable (39 %);
- consent that it is acceptable to be neighbors with at least one representative of the groups under discussion (44 %);
- orientation on the maintenance of migrant culture (41 %);
- assessing the presence of migrants in the city as customary (30 %);

- existing experience of rendering assistance to migrants (27 %);
- assessing marital status with at least one representative of the groups under discussion as acceptable (20 %).

Thus, the citizens of Ekaterinburg are apprehensive about the increase in the number of migrants from Central Asia, are not ready to change their cultural habits under the influence of new cultural norms, and are not aware of the specifics of migrants' culture. However, they are not against the conferment of Russian citizenship upon migrants and living in the same city as them.

In the course of defining the variables influencing the development of attitudes, we found that the variables are statistically linked to cultural and national attitudes and real practices related to migrants. It should be noted that people objecting to some nationalities more often obtain negative information and more rarely get used to the presence of a large number of migrants in the city. The described dislike negatively affects their attitude towards the increasing number of migrants. Increasing the significance of the local population's nationality also has a negative impact on the attitude towards the increasing number of migrants and reduces the level of habituation. It should be noted that there is a direct dependence between the significance of local population's national identity and low estimates of the behavior of migrants from Central Asia. Increased contact with migrants has a positive impact on indicators of the behavioral aspect of attitude, such as the readiness to render assistance to migrants and to come into contact with them as partners or managers.

As a result of the factor analysis of empirical indicators of attitude towards the migrants, we have defined three multi-dimensional latent positions (factors).

Factor 1. Recognition of the acceptability of belonging to the same social community with the migrants.

The high values of this factor presuppose that it is common to view relations with migrants such as being married, close friends, colleagues, and citizens of the same city or the same country as acceptable. All parameters within this factor are related to the evaluative aspect of attitudes.

Factor 2. The degree of benevolence to migrants living in the city.

The high values of the second factor presuppose that citizens possess more positive, rather than negative, information about migrants, have a positive attitude towards the increasing number of migrants in the city and conferring Russian citizenship upon them, are ready to change under the influence of new cultural norms, are getting used to the large numbers of migrants in the city, and evaluate the behavior of migrants as cultured. These

parameters reflect the evaluative, cognitive, and behavioral aspects of attitude. In this case, we can suggest that attitudes are based on understanding the reasonability of the influx of migrants into the city. Thus, we witness the aspiration to see the positive sides of migrants and their presence in city life, as well as the recognition of the fact that citizens will themselves have to change. At the same time, this position is characterized by a certain degree of passivity in relation to migrants; there is no readiness for direct interaction.

Factor 3. Orientation on the optimization of interactions between the local population and migrants.

The high values of the third factor presuppose awareness of the cultural specifics of the migrants, readiness to render assistance to them, readiness to come into contact with them as partners in business relations, marking the increasing similarity between migrants and the local population, and setting more requirements for them. As with the second factor, the parameters reflect the evaluative, cognitive, and behavioral aspects of attitude. The given attitude demonstrates high requirements from the migrants and an understanding of the conditions that may objectively contribute to increasing similarity between the local population and migrants. On the basis of an awareness of the cultural peculiarities of migrants, Ekaterinburg citizens are ready to build business relations with them.

Conclusion

The common characteristics of Ekaterinburg citizens are that they are not ready to change their cultural habits under the influence of new cultural norms and are not aware of the cultural traditions of the migrants; at the same time, however, they do not object to the conferment of Russian citizenship upon migrants if a set of particular requirements is met. We can see the ideological split with regards to the acceptability of relations with migrants as colleagues and neighbors. During the study, it was found that the social and demographic characteristics of the respondents do not influence their attitudes towards migrants of different ethnicities. The attitude of Ekaterinburg citizens to their own nationality and culture and the experience of interacting with migrants have a more significant impact on this. As a result of factor analysis, we defined three latent multi-dimensional positions reflecting different aspects of attitudes towards migrants that may influence the readiness of Ekaterinburg citizens to interact with migrants in a constructive manner.

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Contact

Irina Britvina

Ural Federal University

Ekaterinburg, Mira St. 19, Russia, 620002

irina.britvina@urfu.ru

Elena Mogilchak

Ural Federal University

Ekaterinburg, Mira St. 19, Russia, 620002

e.l.mogilchak@urfu.ru

Galina Savchuk

Ural Federal University

Ekaterinburg, Mira St. 19, Russia, 620002

galina.savchuk@urfu.ru