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Research article

The role of family in the development of migration attitudes in Omsk youth

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Abstract

Introduction. For over ten years, the Omsk Region has been experiencing high out-migration. Young educated people are especially active in leaving the region, looking for more favorable living conditions and opportunities to fulfil their career potential. Purely economic measures are insufficient in terms of reducing the out-migration. That is why our study focuses on socio-psychological factors in the development of migration attitudes in youth — more specifically, on family and environmental factors, which are poorly studied. At school age, such factors include family composition (completeness, nuclearity, number of children), and at college age, the fact of living together with or separately from parents, marital status and parenthood status.

Materials and Methods. The sample included 851 people: 461 schoolchildren from 20 schools in Omsk and Omsk Region, and 390 college students from eight universities in Omsk. We used The Scale of Personality Migration Attitudes (S. A. Kuznetsova, I. Yu. Kuznetsova, A. V. Feshchenko) and statistical methods: primary descriptive statistics, Student's t-test and one-way ANOVA.

Results. It was found that schoolchildren, on average, have more pronounced and less coordinated migration attitudes than college students. The increase in migration intentions at school age is influenced by belonging to a family of the 'mother–stepfather–children' type or an incomplete family ('mother–children'). In college students, the increase in migration intentions is influenced by the absence of an officially registered marriage and children (the latter was found exclusively in females).

Conclusions. The obtained results make it possible to identify risk groups. They also provide an idea of the vectors of socio-psychological work with young people of different status and age, and with their parents, who directly and indirectly transmit migration attitudes to their children. The prospects for the study include expanding the student sample to include young people in registered marriages and having children, and introducing the gender criterion.

Keywords: migration, migration attitudes, family, schoolchildren, college students

Научная статья

Роль семьи в формировании миграционных установок омской молодежи

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Аннотация

Введение. На протяжении уже более десяти лет в Омской области присутствует проблема высокой миграционной убыли. Особенно активно покидают регион молодые образованные люди, которые уезжают в поисках более благоприятных условий для жизни и возможностей раскрыть свой потенциал в карьере. Применение сугубо экономических мер сдерживания миграционного потока оказывается недостаточным для того, чтобы нивелировать эту тенденцию, поэтому в данном исследовании фокус внимания сдвигается к социально-психологическим, конкретнее, к малоизученным семейно-средовым факторам формирования миграционных установок учащейся молодежи. В школьном возрасте к таким параметрам отнесены состав семьи (полнота, нуклеарность, количество детей), в студенческом возрасте — факт совместного или отдельного проживания от родителей, семейное положение и детность.

Материалы и методы. В выборку исследования вошли 851 человек, из них 461 школьник из 20 учебных заведений Омска и Омской области и 390 студентов из восьми образовательных организаций Омска. Применены методы анкетирования и тестирования (методика «Шкала миграционных установок личности» С. А. Кузнецовой, И. Ю. Кузнецова, А. В. Фещенко). Методы статистической обработки: первичные описательные статистики, t-критерий Стьюдента, однофакторный дисперсионный анализ. Результаты исследования. Выявлено, что у школьников миграционные установки в среднем выше и хуже согласованы, чем у студентов. На повышение миграционных намерений в школьном возрасте влияет принадлежность к составной семье (в формате «мать — отчим — дети») и неполной семье («мать — дети»), в студенчестве — отсутствие официально заключенного брака и детей (последний результат обнаружен исключительно в выборке девушек).

Заключение. Полученные результаты позволяют выделить группы риска и сформировать представление о направлениях социально-психологической работы с молодежью разного статуса и возраста, а также с родителями как прямыми и опосредованными трансляторами миграционных установок для своих детей. Перспективой исследования выступает расширение студенческой выборки за счет молодых людей, состоящих в зарегистрированном браке и имеющих детей, а также введение гендерного критерия.

Ключевые слова: миграция, миграционные установки, семья, школьники, студенты

Introduction

In contemporary psychology of youth migration behaviour, increasing attention is being paid not only to the so-called 'push factors', but also to 'retention factors' (Chernysheva, Chzhan 2022), which offer a foundation for preventing migration risk. This risk is particularly evident in regions of a 'transit type' (Gabdrakhmanov et al. 2019), which are perceived by residents as temporary places of stay and reinforce attitudes towards relocating to more

attractive areas (Saventsev et al. 2022). Among young people, the temporary nature of residence in certain localities is often associated with educational mobility, the peaks of which occur in the final years of secondary school and in early university education — periods during which individuals are expected to choose a place for professional education for the first time or continue it at a higher level (Gabdrakhmanov et al. 2019). While such choices may facilitate the self-realisation of young people, they often disadvantage regions that are

unable to offer adequate conditions for career development, resulting in an uneven population distribution within the country.

Omsk Region is one such 'transit' localities, despite having a relatively well-developed network of educational institutions as well as promising industrial and agricultural sectors. Local authorities have made repeated attempts to retain young people in their home region by mobilising a variety of resources, primarily economic. However, the situation has not changed significantly: the outflow of the young population continues and has reached critical levels for the region (*Obshchie itogi migratsii* [General Migration Summary] 2024).

It is worth noting that the trend of 'brain drain' from one region to another, along with the associated challenges of territorial development, is being discussed not only in Russia, but internationally as well — for instance, in Ethiopia (Assfaw, Minaye 2022), China (Jin et al. 2022), and Indonesia (Hidayat et al. 2023).

This situation urgently calls for the identification of alternative approaches to working with young people, in particular, through the use of sociopsychological mechanisms for managing migration behaviour. Since the decision to relocate is generally the outcome of a prolonged preparatory phase, it can be assumed that migration attitudes — understood as a readiness to exchange one place of residence for another (Zaikov et al. 2018) — begin to take shape in adolescence under the strong influence of the immediate social environment. This underscores not only their multi-object nature (relating to both the current and prospective place of residence), but also their multi-subject nature (involving other people in the decision-making process) (Kuznetsova et al. 2014). Significant adults such as parents, teachers, and mentors — play an important role in this process. Their influence continues into youth due to the infantilisation of the younger generation (Dolgova, Mitrofanova 2015), on the one hand, and the emotional closeness between generations, on the other (Miklyaeva, Postnikova 2019; Saporovskaya 2012). However, the role of the family in personality development varies across different age intervals. For adolescents, parent-child relationships are more significant, as well as the structure and composition of the parental family, whereas in youth, processes of separation and the pursuit of intimate and marital relationships become more prominent. We suggest that the role of the family in shaping migration attitudes also differs across these age periods: the family may either reinforce or weaken such attitudes, up to their complete neutralisation. Both processes are of interest, as they position the family

as a mediating factor in shaping youth migration attitudes and therefore make it a subject of attention in the prevention of migration risk.

Theoretical Overview of the Current State of the Problem

The study of migration attitudes encompasses several levels, ranging from macro-factors — such as geographical location, culture, global politics, and federal economy — to local ones associated with individual characteristics of potential migrants and their social environment. The latter is understood both as the influence of specific individuals and various groups, primarily those that are referential to the subject (Kuznetsova et al. 2014).

Variables situated at the intersection of the individual's internal world and their external relationships may be linked to how other people have experienced and evaluate specific migration-related situations. Exposure to descriptions of living conditions in alternative environments (Danilova 2010), even virtual exposure (Hidayat et al. 2023), the dissemination of positive migration experiences by acquaintances via social media (Sigareva, Sivoplyasova 2014), direct personal or group experience of relocation (Zajonchkovskaya, Nozdrina 2008), and the temporal dimensions of such experience (Rocheva, Varshaver 2020) all contribute to an overall increase in population mobility. This process fosters the development of so-called 'migration capital' (Ivlevs, King 2012), which reinforces positive attitudes towards territorial movement. Such attitudes may eventually crystallise into the perception of migration as a necessity at certain life stages (Kandel, Massey 2002). Consequently, a substantial segment of potential migrants comprises young adults who have not yet formed families of their own but are prepared to establish independence from their parental households (Malenova, Potapova 2020).

An objective migration factor linked to the social environment is household income and housing conditions (Gol'tsova 2015), particularly whether individuals co-reside with parents or live separately (Malenov 2024). Subjectively, family and social environment factors manifest as significant interpersonal ties within one's locality of residence (Bakina et al. 2018). This constitutes a distinct 'contact network' which reinforces place attachment (Assfaw, Minaye 2022), a sense of being 'settled-in' (Skripnik 2010), rootedness, and emotional bonds to one's native region (Markov et al. 2021). Concurrently, the presence of acquaintances, friends, or relatives in the desired destination functions as a 'push factor' (Zajonchkovskaya, Nozdrina 2008),

whereas the prospect of parting with close ones may activate deterrent mechanisms (Potapova et al. 2024). The inherent complexity of familial influence in migration risk assessment reflects a paradoxical dynamic: parents, often deeply attached to their native region themselves, perceive limited opportunities for their children's fulfilment within that same locality. This perception actively shapes the children's migration attitudes and establishes similar predispositions for the subsequent generation, orienting offspring towards establishing their own families and continuing kinship lines in new locations (Sigareva, Sivoplyasova 2014).

In light of this complexity, the 'poly-subjective' structure of migration attitudes proposed by S. A. Kuznetsova and colleagues appears plausible. This model comprises three interrelated components: the subject's own assessment of their potential migratory behaviour; their perception of the expectations and intentions of significant others regarding their migration; and the level of observable migration activity within their immediate social circle (Kuznetsova et al. 2014). Findings from the aforementioned study indicate that the factorial structure of these components exhibits age-related variation: among university students, each component demonstrates relative autonomy, whereas school students' migration attitudes show greater dependence on the opinions of others, particularly parents.

Materials and Methods

The present study aims to identify the characteristics of migration attitudes among student youth in Omsk, with specific focus on the influence of family circumstances. The following hypotheses were tested:

- for school-aged respondents, potential formative factors of migration attitudes are family structure and composition;
- for university students, such factors include separation status (co-residence with parents), marital status, and parenthood status.

The total sample comprised 851 participants, divided into two groups:

- School students (N = 461), aged 14–17 years (M = 15.5, SD = 1.39); 58.1% female, 41.9% male. Participants were recruited from 20 schools across Omsk and Omsk Region. Inclusion required consent from school administrations, participants, and parents/guardians.
- University students (N = 390), aged 18–22 years (M = 19.9, SD = 3.02); 69.7 % female, 30.3 % male. Participants were recruited from eight higher education institutions in Omsk.

School student sample characteristics are as follows:

- 1. Family completeness: 350 intact families (75.9%), 100 single-parent families (21.7%; predominantly mother-child households), 11 stepfamilies of the 'mother-stepfather-children' type (2.4%)
- 2. Nuclearity: 405 nuclear families (87.9%), 56 extended families (12.1%)
- 3. Number of children: 187 one-child families (40.6%), 205 two-child families (44.5%), 69 families with more than three children (15.0%). University student sample characteristics are as follows:
- 1. Separation status (co-residence with parents): 176 co-residing with parents (45.1 %); 214 living independently (54.9 %).
- 2. Relationship status: 196 single (50.3%); 179 in a relationship (45.9%), including 110 partnered but not cohabiting (28.2%); 57 cohabiting with partner (14.6%); 12 in formal marriage (3.1%); 15 declined to answer (3.8%).
- 3. Parenthood status: 368 without children (94.4%), 9 with children (2.3%), 13 declined to answer (3.3%).

Empirical data were collected using a demographic questionnaire (socio-demographic sample characteristics) and the Scale of Personality Migration Attitudes by S. A. Kuznetsova, I. Yu Kuznetsov and A. V. Feshchenko (Kuznetsova et al. 2014). Statistical methods included primary descriptive statistics, Student's t-test and one-way ANOVA / Welch's test.

Results

Initially, we analysed and compared mean scores of migration attitudes among school students and university students (Table 1).

Significant differences emerged in personal migration attitudes, with university students exhibiting lower scores. This may be attributed to a selective geographic outflow: individuals with the strongest migration attitudes are likely to leave Omsk as university applicants to other cities, thereby reducing their representation in the local student population. By choosing a local institution, remaining students demonstrate an implicit commitment (at least temporarily) to the region.

Next, various components of migration attitudes were compared within each group separately. Differences between components were observed only among school students:

 between personal attitudes and perceived relatives' attitudes toward migration (t = -10.5, p ≤ 0.001);

Table 1. Migration attitudes in schoolchildren and college students in Omsk (comparison results)

Migration attitudes	Schoo	lchild	College student		£	
Migration attitudes	M, score	SD	M, score	SD	ι	P
Respondent's migration attitudes	54.37	15.87	52.25	14.21	-2.04	0.04
Migration attitudes of family	48.58	13.09	49.58	12.22	1.13	0.26
Attitudes of family to the respondent's migration	50.90	13.87	50.33	12.44	-0.63	0.53

Табл. 1. Миграционные установки школьников и студентов г. Омска (результаты сравнения)

M	Школ	ьник	Студ	цент		
Миграционные установки	М, балл	SD	М, балл	SD	ι	P
Собственные миграционные установки	54,37	15,87	52,25	14,21	-2,04	0,04
Миграционные установки близких	48,58	13,09	49,58	12,22	1,13	0,26
Установки близких о миграции респондента	50,90	13,87	50,33	12,44	-0,63	0,53

- between personal attitudes and perceived relatives' attitudes toward respondents' migration (t = -7.5, p ≤ 0.001);
- between relatives' migration attitudes and their perceived necessity of migration for their own children (t = -5.87, p ≤ 0.001).

No such differences were found among students, possibly reflecting reduced intergenerational conflict and greater consensus on major life decisions, which is characteristic of late adolescence.

We now turn to examine subgroup differences arising from the fact that respondents within each group have different characteristics of family and social environment.

In school students, we analysed parental family's characteristics (composition, nuclearity, number of children) that could potentially influence migration attitudes of respondents. Migration attitudes were the highest in stepfamilies, somewhat lower in single-parent families, and lowest in intact fami-

lies (Table 2). Family composition in terms of extended relatives (nuclear/extended) or siblings (one child / two children / three and more children in the family) showed no significant effects on migration attitudes.

In university students, the following factors were analysed: co-residence with parents, relationship status, parenthood.

University students living independently perceived their parents' migration attitudes as significantly stronger than those co-residing (Table 3). Co-residence with parents was found to have no effect on personal migration attitudes or perceived attitudes of relatives toward respondents' migration.

Having a partner or cohabiting (without formal marriage) showed no association with respondents' migration attitudes. However, university students in formal marriages reported significantly weaker personal migration attitudes than unmarried peers (Table 4).

Table 2. Migration attitudes of schoolchildren from families with different composition

Migration attitudes	Family composition	M	SD	F	p
	Incomplete	58.16	15.19		
Respondent's migration attitudes	Complete	53.76	16.46	4.77	0.01
respondents inigration activates	Composite (mother– stepfather–children) 64.27 14.07		0.01		
	Incomplete	52.35	12.37		
Migration attitudes of family	Complete	47.80	13.51	6.10	0.00
	Composite (mother– stepfather–children)	55.91	13.32	0.10	0.00
	Incomplete	54.55	14.30		
Attitudes of family to respondent's	spondent's Complete		14.15	3.81	0.02
migration	Composite (mother– stepfather–children)	55.09	12.13	3.01	0.02

Табл. 2. Миграционные установки школьников из семей с разным составом

Миграционные установки	Состав семьи	M	SD	F	p
	Неполная	58,16	15,19		
Собственные миграционные установки	Полная	53,76	16,46	4,77	0,01
Jerunobka	Составная	64,27	14,07		
	Неполная 52,35 12,37	12,37			
Миграционные установки близких	Полная	47,80	13,51	6,10	0,00
	Составная	55,91	13,32		
	Неполная	54,55	14,30		
Установки близких о миграции респондента	Полная	50,35	14,15	3,81	0,02
	Составная	55,09	12,13		

Table 3. Migration attitudes of college students who live separately from or together with their parents

M:41	Living sepa					
Migration attitudes	Separately		Toge	ether	ι	Р
Respondent's migration attitudes	52.08	14.55	52.46	13.86	-0.26	0.80
Migration attitudes of family	50.88	12.23	48.11	12.22	2.20	0.03
Attitudes of family to respondent's migration	50.99	12.59	49.51	12.32	1.15	0.25

Табл. 3. Миграционные установки студентов с разным сепарационным статусом

Marina			1			
Миграционные установки	Отдельно		Совм	естно	ι	P
Собственные миграционные установки	52,08	14,55	52,46	13,86	-0,26	0,80
Миграционные установки близких	50,88	12,23	48,11	12,22	2,20	0,03
Установки близких о миграции респондента	50,99	12,59	49,51	12,32	1,15	0,25

Table 4. Migration attitudes of college students with different marital status

Microstian attitudas		Marita	l status			
Migration attitudes	Mar	ried	Not m	arried	t	p
Respondent's migration attitudes	42.92	18.78	52.58	13.82	-2.35	0.02
Migration attitudes of family	41.50	17.18	49.87	11.82	-1.67	0.12
Attitudes of family to respondent's migration	42.67	18.84	50.57	11.97	-1.44	0.18

Табл. 4. Миграционные установки студентов с разным семейным положением

W		Семейное				
Миграционные установки	Состоят в браке		Не состоя	нт в браке	t	Р
Собственные миграционные установки	42,92	18,78	52,58	13,82	-2,35	0,02
Миграционные установки близких	41,50	17,18	49,87	11,82	-1,67	0,12
Установки близких о миграции респондента	42,67	18,84	50,57	11,97	-1,44	0,18

Parenthood was associated with significantly reduced migration attitudes, but only among female students (Table 5).

Discussion

When assessing the factor of family completeness, significant differences were identified among school students both in their personal migration attitudes and in their perceptions of the migration attitudes of close family members. Specifically, children from stepfamilies were more inclined to migrate than their peers from intact and singleparent families, and they also believed that their parents would like to migrate themselves and expect their children to do so. Given that neither nuclearity nor the number of children was associated with school students' migration intentions, it may be assumed that weakened intentions to migrate are more likely to be linked to the presence of a harmonious parental union (i. e., two biological parents living together in wedlock). By contrast, a change in family composition — especially the presence of a step-parent — appears to contribute to stronger migration attitudes.

It is possible that children from stepfamilies, particularly those living in households where the mother and stepfather have a child of their own, experience a range of negative emotional states (such as resentment, feeling of being unneeded, not belonging and abandoned), which may be projected onto their living environment more broadly. They may come to perceive the city they live in as an uncomfortable space — transferring attention from repressed, socially unacceptable hostile emotions directed towards the mother onto a more neutral and psychologically safe object. Such children may develop psychological defence mechanisms

such as rationalisation, constructing fantasies about a 'better elsewhere' in which they imagine opportunities for self-realisation, acceptance, and the warmth and support they currently lack. However, it is important to note that none of these needs are inherently tied to a particular place and can, in principle, be met within the child's home city. Given the relatively small number of such children, psychological support initiatives aimed at a wide audience may be of limited effectiveness; rather, individual psychological support may prove more productive. This should aim at improving subjective well-being, alleviating acute emotional distress, and restoring affective balance.

As for university students, the differences identified in their perceptions of the migration intentions of close relatives (primarily assumed to refer to their parental family) can be interpreted as follows. Parents who continue to live with their university-age children tend to be more actively involved in the 'completion' of their parental role, often remaining in the city to ensure that their child can finish his or her studies and obtain the chosen qualification. It is reasonable to assume that after graduation such families may revise their migration intentions; however, this remains a hypothesis. In contrast, university students who live separately from their parents tend to perceive them as more willing or able to relocate. Having already experienced the first stage of physical separation, such parents are seen as freer in their decisions and movements at least, this is the impression formed by the students surveved.

The presence of registered partnerships formed during student years may substantially reduce the motivation to leave the city where the marriage took place. This could be due to the fact that when making the significant decision to start a family,

W		Motherho				
Migration attitudes	Has children		No children		τ	P
Respondent's migration attitudes	38.13	16.65	53.26	14.37	-2.92	0.00
Migration attitudes of family	37.25	14.98	50.21	12.29	-2.92	0.00
Attitudes of family to respondent's migration	37.50	1/1.80	51 36	12.80	2.08	0.00

 $Table\ 5.\ Migration\ attitudes\ of\ female\ college\ students\ with\ different\ motherhood\ status$

Табл. 5. Миграционные установки детных и бездетных студенток

M		Детн				
Миграционные установки	Есть дети		Нет детей		t	Р
Собственные миграционные установки	38,13	16,65	53,26	14,37	-2,92	0,00
Миграционные установки близких	37,25	14,98	50,21	12,29	-2,92	0,00
Установки близких о миграции респондента	37,50	14,80	51,36	12,89	-2,98	0,00

prospective spouses also evaluate the environment in which they intend to live. It is likely that those who choose to marry are generally satisfied with local conditions and willing to remain in their current place of residence. Similarly, the birth of a child in a young family may contribute to the decision to stay, which is even further strengthened by the mother's assumption of a maternal role.

It is conceivable that the birth of a child alters not only the woman's personal plans, but also those of her immediate social circle. Both the women's own migration attitudes and their perceptions of their relatives' migration views were significantly lower among student mothers compared to childless women. Notably, this increase in rootedness following childbirth appears specifically among women — possibly because, while the child is still young and highly dependent on the mother, she postpones any plans to move until she is able to invest more energy into establishing a career or a household elsewhere. A further factor in the reduction of migration attitudes among women may be the presence of older family members in the city who are able to support the young family. In contrast, male students may not perceive the presence of a child as a serious obstacle to migration, either because they are less actively involved in childcare or because the small number of fathers in the male subsample limits the reliability of such conclusions. It is important to note that parenthood among students remains relatively rare, making it difficult to draw robust conclusions based on these data alone. This area therefore requires a more targeted sample and a deeper, more focused analysis. Nonetheless, the trend identified appears consistent: university students who already have a family and a child tend to lose their migration mobility. Their focus shifts to ensuring a minimum level of comfort and stability for their family members. Given the combined demands of student life and parenthood, this life situation is likely to require considerable effort — and adding the burden of relocation may be especially challenging under such circumstances.

Conclusions

- The migration attitudes of Omsk university students are significantly weaker, more balanced, and internally consistent compared to those of school students.
- 2. Among school students, family composition serves as a factor influencing migration attitudes: the strongest migration intentions are found among those from stepfamilies; students from single-parent families demonstrate somewhat weaker migration intentions, while the lowest

- levels are observed among those from intact families.
- 3. University students who live apart from their parents tend to perceive their close relatives as having stronger migration attitudes.
- 4. Factors associated with a significant decrease in university students' migration attitudes include official marriage (for both male and female students) and the birth of a child (among female students).

The findings make it possible to identify groups at risk of migration among young people in Omsk, viewed through the lens of family and social environment. At school age, this includes children raised in stepfamilies and single-parent families — groups that warrant particular attention in the context of psychological and educational support. Among university students, the most significant result lies in the observation that official marriage and parenthood appear to offer considerable protection against heightened migration attitudes. At the same time, this pattern highlights a limitation of the present study: the relatively small proportion of students who are married and/or have children, which is unsurprising given current demographic trends. A more complete understanding of this issue would require a targeted expansion of this specific subpopulation within the sample.

Given the results and the ethical complexity of the issue, it is quite difficult to envision measures that would both directly and sensitively address the prevention of migration attitudes in a family and social environment context. At present, the most appropriate approaches within educational settings might include initiatives to support young families, lecture series for student parents, and ideally, the development of university infrastructure designed to meet the needs of young parents (such as childcare rooms or on-campus nurseries available to both students and staff).

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest, either existing or potential.

Конфликт интересов

Авторы заявляют об отсутствии потенциального или явного конфликта интересов.

Ethics Approval

The authors declare that the study complies with all ethical principles applicable to human and animal research.

Соответствие принципам этики

Авторы сообщают, что при проведении исследования соблюдены этические принципы, предусмотренные для исследований с участием людей и животных

Author Contributions

A. Yu. Malenova — introduction, theoretical review; A. A. Malenov — organization and research methods, preparing the manuscript; Yu. V. Potapova — results, discussion, conclusions.

Вклад авторов

А. Ю. Маленова: введение, теоретический обзор; А. А. Маленов: организация и методы исследования, оформление статьи; Ю. В. Потапова: результаты и их обсуждение, выводы.

Data Availability Statement

The access to the reported data cannot be provided for ethical and commercial reasons.

Заявление о доступности данных

Данные недоступны по этическим причинам.

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