

TIES 2020

International conference «Trends and innovations in economic studies»

INFLUENCE OF GENDER AND PLACE OF RESIDENCE ON EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT ACCESSIBILITY

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Abstract

The results of online survey of 498 young people living in the provinces of Russia are presented in the article. The age of the study participants was 14–30 years. Among the respondents, 75.3 % (375 people) are women, 24.7 % (123 people) are men. The main part of the questionnaire consisted of statement. Questionnaire items were grouped into blocks: the opportunity to get a job and access to education. The study examined the relationship of access to education and labor with the gender and place of residence of people. The analysis of contingency tables was performed using the Cramer V-test. The calculations were carried out in the IBM SPSS Statistics 23. The research results confirmed the fact that some Russian citizens living in the provinces do not have the opportunity to exercise their right to education and work. The worst situation is with the availability of work. 31.3 % of respondents do not have the opportunity to get a job on a full-time basis. Only 17.1 % are sure that they have such an opportunity. More accessible for study participants is temporary work (60 %) or work during the holidays (69.3 %). The results of the study showed that rural people are more vulnerable. They are more likely than city dwellers to indicate that they are unable to obtain the desired profession (63.3 % in the city and 47 % in the village) and work during the holidays (50.9 % in the city and 40.2 % in the village).

2357-1330 © 2020 Published by European Publisher.

Keywords: Access to work, access to education, inequality, youth, labor market.



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1. Introduction

The processes of globalization and digitalization lead to changes in the social, political, economic, family and personal life of a person. They give rise to new challenges and contradictions. In this scientific work we want to address the contradictions that young people face in the process of development and social integration. Ingellis and Esteban (2019) cite the following inconsistencies as an example: the younger generation is distinguished from its predecessors by a higher level of education, but has fewer job opportunities; it has greater access to information than ever before, but does not have access to power (Ingellis & Esteban, 2019). For our part, we can note that modern youth is forced to invest more and more resources in their education and at the same time cannot apply for work that would allow them to recover these costs. The high mobility and adaptability of young people also gives those advantages in hiring (Korchagina, 2016). But the perception of the millennial generation as few reliable workers (Sivrikova, Moiseeva, Sokolova, Ertemeva, & Zolotova, 2019) reduces this advantage.

Recent and ongoing changes in the world are contributing to a significant loss of decent work, including a rise of unemployment, underemployment, and precarious work across the globe. By failing to satisfy human needs for economic survival, social connection, and self-determination, the lack of decent work undermines individual and societal well-being, particularly for marginalized groups and those without highly marketable skills (Blustein, Kenny, Di Fabio, & Guichard, 2019).

The indicated paradoxes are reflected in the youth policy of different countries. Programs are being developed and implemented around the world aimed at reducing inequality and increasing accessibility of education and work for youth (Makumbi, 2018; Speckesser, Carreras, & Sala, 2019; Tosun, Treib, & De Francesco, 2019; Vergnat, 2019).

The implementation of these programs requires an independent and objective assessment of their effectiveness. Therefore, in our study, we turned to studying the views of young people on the accessibility of education and work for them. The situation in these areas has significant gender and regional aspects. Therefore, the aim of this work was to study the influence of factors of gender and place of residence on youth access to education and work.

2. Problem Statement

Young people compose a quarter of the world's working population (Nassar, Al-Qimlass, Karacan-Ozdemir, & Tovar, 2019). But the position of youth in the labor market is unstable. Youth unemployment and poverty are growing at an alarming rate in both developing and developed countries. Moreover, almost 43 % of young people in the world who have entered the labor market either have no work or work, but still live in poverty. The lack of decent work opportunities affects approximately one in three young people aged 15 to 24 years old (Nassar, Al-Qimlass, Karacan-Ozdemir, & Tovar, 2019; Nikiporets-Takigawa, 2018).

Decent and sustainable work contributes to both physical health and psychological well-being of a person (Blustein, Kenny, Di Fabio, & Guichard, 2019). Researchers note that youth's lack of employment opportunities drags out, makes the transition to adulthood unstable and differentiated by gender and socio-economic status (Abekah-Nkrumah, Asuming, & Yusif, 2019; McClintock, 2020; O'Reilly,

Leschke, Ortlieb, Seeleib-Kaiser, & Villa, 2018). Economic dependence is becoming a significant obstacle to achieving maturity. It affects the personal and public life of young people.

The improvement of the position of many millions of young Europeans who cannot find paid work and generally suffer from hardship and social exclusion is a clear priority for youth policy both at the national level of EU member states and for pan-European initiatives (Speckesser, Carreras, & Sala, 2019). As measures to overcome this problem, different labor market regimes are proposed, that is, labor market flexibility (underemployment, temporary employment) and a wage setting system (coordination of negotiations and government intervention in wage negotiations). In recent years, Hong Kong has been promoting a “vacation leave” scheme. This is a new international policy and program that directly encourages cross-border flows among the younger generation. Through this program, young people aged 18 to 30 can live and work in Hong Kong's partner countries for a relatively long period of time (Ho, 2019).

The concept of long-term economic development of the Russian Federation for the period until 2020 included the section "Youth Policy", which provides for the development of effective models and forms of involving young people in labor and economic activities, the implementation of youth entrepreneurship support programs, etc. (Komarova, Agarkova, & Matveeva, 2016). There comes a time when it is important to evaluate the results of the efforts.

3. Research Questions

The subject of the study was the idea of youth about the accessibility of work and education for them. These questions are of interest to researchers around the world. Scientists note that in Europe, youth unemployment is high. This leads to a growing number of unemployed (status of inactivity among young people) who do not enter the labor market but live on benefits (Odoardi, 2019). Researchers from Kazakhstan say that the problem of employment is an acute problem for university graduates from the countries of the former Soviet Union (Fursova, Syzdykova, & Bimakhanov, 2019). Other scholars talk about employment problems for foster children (Häggman-Laitila, Saloekkilä, & Karki, 2019) or for people with disabilities (Carter, Blustein, Bumble, Harvey, Henderson, & McMillan, 2019). Third researchers note that the recent economic crisis has intensified the problem of job creation for young people (López, Ytarte, & Ramiro, 2020).

The analysis of the youth labor market in Russia shows that disproportionate distribution of production resources, cultural centers and vocational education institutions per capita is observed in different regions of the country (Korchagina, 2016). Researchers point to the relationship between education and job accessibility. Persons with primary vocational education are the most vulnerable to unemployment. Education in secondary vocational education provides some protection against unemployment, which increases among people with higher education. The low educational resources of young people entering the labor market early are responsible for entering the secondary labor market, which is characterized by instability, low-skilled, low-paying jobs (Komarova, Agarkova, & Matveeva, 2016; Korchagina, 2016; Nikiporets-Takigawa, 2018). The described factors contribute to increasing age inequality in access to education and work. Analysis of the labor market shows that it concerns not only the education and place of residence of a person, but also his gender. In particular, it is noted that the

unemployment rate among young women in Russia is higher than for men. Younger female workers are characterized by lower wages, which many analysts explain by gender segregation of jobs and choice of specialty (Komarova, Agarkova, & Matveeva, 2016). Khokhlova (2019) argues that, unlike official statistics, youth perception of their relevance is important.

Researchers are also interested in issues of youth access to education. First of all, this problem is considered in the context of equal access for refugees or persons with disabilities (Braun & Naami, 2019). They note the dependence of the availability of quality education on the place of residence.

Thus, the research results suggest that there is an inequality in access to education and the labor market regarding gender, age and place of residence. However, most studies rely on official statistics and economic indicators. Few studies examine people's opinions on the availability of educational services and decent work. However, these ideas are an indicator of the quality of youth policy in these areas. Therefore, the focus of our study was the opinion of young people living in the provinces of Russia about the availability of work and education. We also analyzed the dependence of the studied variables on the gender and place of residence (city or village) of the study participants.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to research the role of gender and place of residence factors in assessing the accessibility of work and education for young people.

5. Research Methods

The study was conducted in the form of an online survey. A Google form was used to collect the data. The main part of the questionnaire consisted of statements, respondents were asked to rate on the Likert scale the consent or disagreement (from 1 – completely disagree, up to 5 – completely agree). Questionnaire items were grouped into blocks: the opportunity to get a job; access to education.

498 residents of the Chelyabinsk region aged 14 to 30 years participated in the survey. The average age of the respondents was 20.5 years. Among the study participants, 75.3 % (375 people) were women, 24.7 % (123 people) were men. 19.5 % of the respondents at the time of the study had the status of a student, 54 % – a student of a university, 10.3 % of a specialist, 10.1 % – a worker, 4.7 % – a student of a secondary school, 1.7 % – unemployed. 52.3 % have complete secondary education; 21.1 % – higher professional education; 17.8 % – incomplete secondary education (9 classes); 7.1 % – secondary vocational education; 1.8 % – academic degree.

The study examined the relationship of access to education and labor with the gender and place of residence of people. The analysis of contingency tables was performed using the Cramer V-test. The calculations were carried out in the IBM SPSS Statistics 23 program.

6. Findings

Youth rights in employment were the most infringed (table 1).

Table 01. Availability of work

| Availability degree | Sex | | Cramér's V | p-value | place of residence | | Cramér's V | p-value |
|--|--------|--------|------------|---------|--------------------|---------|------------|---------|
| | female | male | | | city | village | | |
| | n=375 | n=123 | | | n=381 | n=117 | | |
| Full-time employment opportunities | | | | | | | | |
| Completely does not agree | 32.0 % | 31.7 % | 0.095 | 0.348 | 33.3 % | 27.4 % | 0.086 | 0.446 |
| Does not agree rather | 20.5 % | 16.3 % | | | 20.2 % | 17.1 % | | |
| Find it difficult to answer | 18.1 % | 19.5 % | | | 18.4 % | 18.8 % | | |
| Agree rather | 11.5 % | 17.9 % | | | 12.1 % | 16.2 % | | |
| Completely agree | 17.9 % | 14.6 % | | | 16.0 % | 20.5 % | | |
| Temporary employment opportunities | | | | | | | | |
| Completely does not agree | 4.5 % | 6.5 % | 0.074 | 0.609 | 3.7 % | 9.4 % | 0.125 | 0.098 |
| Does not agree rather | 14.1 % | 9.8 % | | | 13.9 % | 10.3 % | | |
| Find it difficult to answer | 21.3 % | 23.6 % | | | 22.3 % | 20.5 % | | |
| Agree rather | 29.3 % | 26.8 % | | | 27.8 % | 31.6 % | | |
| Completely agree | 30.7 % | 33.3 % | | | 32.3 % | 28.2 % | | |
| Possibility to work during holidays | | | | | | | | |
| Completely does not agree | 9.6 % | 11.4 % | 0.128 | 0.088 | 7.9 % | 17.1 % | 0.194 | 0.001 |
| Does not agree rather | 6.9 % | 6.5 % | | | 5.0 % | 12.8 % | | |
| Find it difficult to answer | 15.5 % | 8.9 % | | | 14.4 % | 12.0 % | | |
| Agree rather | 18.4 % | 28.5 % | | | 21.8 % | 17.9 % | | |
| Completely agree | 49.6 % | 44.7 % | | | 50.9 % | 40.2 % | | |

The participants note some limitations in opportunities to get a job on a full-time basis. 31.9 % completely disagree with the assertion of the existence of such an opportunity (19.5 % partially disagree; 19.5 % find it difficult to answer; 13.1 % partially agree and 17.1 % completely agree). Respondents agree that they have the opportunity to apply for temporary employment (31.3 % fully agree and 28.7 % partially agree) or work during the holidays (48.4 % fully agree and 20.9 % partially agree). The data obtained are consistent with data on the state of the labor market in the Russian Federation. In particular, with the fact that the majority of young people aged 15 to 24 are studying and are not its active participants in the labor market (Komarova, Agarkova, & Matveeva, 2016).

During the study, a relationship was found between the place of residence and the ability to work during the holidays ($V = 0.194$; $p = 0.001$). The results of the study show that for rural residents this opportunity is less accessible. The results can be explained by the fact that in the village there are a small number of jobs oriented to temporary employment. Students living in the village prefer to go home on vacation. This reduces their employment opportunities during the holidays.

The results reflecting the availability of educational services for young people are presented in table 2.

Table 02. Access to education

| Availability degree | sex | | Cramér's V | p-value | place of residence | | Cramér's V | p-value |
|--|--------|--------|------------|---------|--------------------|---------|------------|---------|
| | female | male | | | city | village | | |
| | n=375 | n=123 | | | n=381 | n=117 | | |
| Availability of free general secondary education | | | | | | | | |
| Completely does not agree | 4.5 % | 6.5 % | 0.1 | 0.292 | 4.5 % | 6.8 % | 0.101 | 0.277 |
| Does not agree rather | 1.9 % | 3.3 % | | | 2.1 % | 2.6 % | | |
| Find it difficult to answer | 8.8 % | 5.7 % | | | 9.2 % | 4.3 % | | |
| Agree rather | 14.7 % | 20.3 % | | | 15.0 % | 19.7 % | | |
| Completely agree | 70.1 % | 64.2 % | | | 69.3 % | 66.7 % | | |
| Accessibility of special education | | | | | | | | |
| Completely does not agree | 3.7 % | 1.6 % | 0.115 | 0.162 | 1.8 % | 7.7 % | 0.22 | 0.0001 |
| Does not agree rather | 4.3 % | 3.3 % | | | 2.6 % | 8.5 % | | |
| Find it difficult to answer | 9.3 % | 16.3 % | | | 9.7 % | 15.4 % | | |
| Agree rather | 21.6 % | 24.4 % | | | 22.6 % | 21.4 % | | |
| Completely agree | 61.1 % | 54.5 % | | | 63.3 % | 47.0 % | | |
| Availability of online training | | | | | | | | |
| Completely does not agree | 17.1 % | 21.1 % | 0.103 | 0.256 | 18.1 % | 17.9 % | 0.105 | 0.241 |
| Does not agree rather | 14.9 % | 9.8 % | | | 12.3 % | 17.9 % | | |
| Find it difficult to answer | 22.1 % | 17.1 % | | | 21.5 % | 18.8 % | | |
| Agree rather | 22.9 % | 29.3 % | | | 23.4 % | 28.2 % | | |
| Completely agree | 22.9 % | 22.8 % | | | 24.7 % | 17.1 % | | |

68.7 % of respondents say that there are opportunities to get free general and secondary education, another 16.1 % more likely agree that they have such an opportunity. Only 5 % said that they were not able to get free secondary education. A similar picture is observed in assessments of the accessibility of vocational education. 59.4 % and 22.3 % partially agree (3.2 % completely disagree and 4 % more likely disagree) that they have the opportunity to get a professional education in their chosen specialty. The study found differences in the availability of special vocational education in groups of young people living in the city and in the village. The desired professions were more accessible for residents of the city than for residents of the village ($V = 0.22$; $p = 0.0001$). This may be an indirect evidence of the difference in the quality of general secondary education in the city and in the village. The fact that the majority of

career guidance events take place in cities could have contributed to the differences. In rural schools such events are rare.

7. Conclusion

The survey shows that not all Russian citizens living in the provinces have the opportunity to exercise their right to education and work. The worst situation is with the availability of work. The results indicate that rural people are more vulnerable. They more often than city dwellers indicate that they are not able to get the desired profession and work during the holidays. There were no differences in the availability of education and work for people of different sexes during the study.

It should be noted that the study has several limitations. Data collection via the Internet did not allow regulating the volume of the compared groups; as a result, groups were formed that differed greatly in the number of respondents. This could lead to a distortion of the research results. Also, the study reflects only the subjective opinion of young people and requires correlation of the obtained data with economic indicators.

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