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**EMPLOYMENT AS SOCIAL WELL-BEING CONDITION OF
NORTHERN INHABITANTS IN THIRD DEMOGRAPHIC AGE**

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Abstract

The article examines employment motivation of the population in third demographic age, the number of which has changed over last decades showing aging process penetration into the Sakha Republic (Yakutia) population structure. The reasons for elderly employment are low pension benefit, unsatisfied financial conditions, work enthusiasm and the habit for being useful. Based on several surveys results, it was revealed that depending on employment forms (extra- or intra-familial), the self-perception of elderly as useful society or family members changes, having a direct impact on one's social well-being. As to extra-familial employment, requested labor activities, favorite (or usual) occupations, in-team communication serve as the prerequisite to employed retirees keeping active vital attitudes. The continuing work for many survey participants was stimulated by the desire to discover new opportunities as well. Research studies have revealed that intra-familial work of northern aged inhabitants is rather saturated and demands excellent health. At present time in rural areas the efforts made by senior generation support the development of agricultural farming at private household land plots, and the food products produced at such small private farms provides not only old aged consumption but also that of family clan members often living in urban area. At the same time, it was found that traditional private attributes of intergenerational relations, real-life visions of senior generation have been changing in favor of own well-being.

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1. Introduction

Population aging is one of the global demographic challenges, unavoidable by any country. In Russia having gradually entered this process as well, demographic aging becomes a growing public problem, requiring a current corresponding response with extensive measures to be developed for the next decades (Soboleva et al., 2016; Rusanovsky, Blinova, Burmistrova, 2014). Yakutia like many other northern Russian regions has featured considerable changes in main age group ratio (Sukneva, 2010). The evolution of migratory population movements vector since the 1990-s, the decrease in birth rate and rising life expectancy have become the reasons for increasing number of aged generation. So, in the Sakha Republic (Yakutia) absolute population number over working age increased in 1.5 times, including in 1.6 – in urban and 1.4 – rural settlements between 2000 and 2015. Given actual age of old-age retirement in Yakutia (55 for males and 50- for females), this proportion made up 9.8 % in 2000 and 15.1 % in 2015 of total number of Republic inhabitants. The above figures prove indisputable development of demographic aging in the region.

We hold the opinion that the elderly people are a special group bringing a certain contribution to society development, instead of the burden, producing only public costs (Nikonova, 2007). This contribution is made by economically active individuals, enjoying a healthy old age, wishing to contribute to the positive development of the society in the form of extra- and intra-familial labor.

2. Problem Statement

The employment of individuals of third age, the use of their potential is a burning issue both for the Sakha Republic (Yakutia) and other regions of the Russian Federation. The prospects for the socioeconomic development of Yakutia, one of the largest northern region of the country, are based on megaprojects implementation, new benchmarks for economic growth, the development of rural territories and the Arctic shelf of the Laptev Sea. In this respect the implementation of such considerable plans assigns new challenges in the matter of labor resources supply to the republic. One of practical means to approach the problem is active labor market involvement of the elderly numbering over 43.5 thousands persons in 2000 and 93.7 - in 2015. Their rising proportion in the labor force looks even more impressive: 9.7 and 24.8% correspondingly.

Active involvement of the northern third age inhabitants in economic and social relations would have a positive socioeconomic effect in current economic conditions. (Sukneva & Elshina, 2015). More educated people including elderly mean better possibilities for economic growth, as taking into consideration demographic aging, senior highly educated individuals motivated towards employment represent a significant intellectual and economic force.

Rising of life expectancy is an important and indisputable reason for senior generation employment (Tatarinova, Nikitin, 2008; Sukneva, Barashkova, 2016). According to our 2015 estimates, males aged 55 can live an average of 18.9 years, while females aged 50 – 29.2 years (in 2000 – 15.9 and 24.9 years accordingly). Providing they are occupied on the labor market in those periods of time, this would benefit both the state and the elderly population.

3. Research Questions

Research suggests that a certain proportion of the persons in third demographic age keep their resource potential including health, high educational level, and considerable intellectual abilities. The important condition of their social well-being seems to depend on supporting labor activities requirement, participating in community life (Dobrochleb, 2008; Popova & Zorina, 2014). However they are regarded in an ambivalent manner in the society: from the positive side as additional labor resource contributing to economic and social development (Vladimirov, 2004). We are also inclined to consider elderly employment positively. Moreover their generation for the most part, in our view, has never learned to pretend to be busy (Toschenko, 2015), but really works. Besides nobody at an age of economic activity should be constrained or discriminated in his right in labor and good living standards guaranteed by Article 37 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation (Constitution of the Russian Federation, 2013).

Opposite to above ideas are suggestions predominantly considering senior generation to have already used up labor potential with reduced work abilities (Tchizhova, 2007). Such opinion seems to promote the discrimination cases of aged workers when reduction in force, transfers to lower paid jobs or barriers with recruitment take place (Maslova, 2012). This question area has not found adequate scientific coverage in Yakutia yet. Research studies revealing employment motivation of elderly persons as a factor of their social well-being are unavailable too.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research study is to investigate the effect of employment forms on social well-being of northern inhabitants in third demographic age.

5. Research Methods

The methods of research study include the analysis of sociological surveys results conducted in republic in different years in order to show the role which the employment of the northern inhabitants in third age plays in the their changing social well-being.

6. Findings

The dissatisfaction with material and financial conditions is rather essential reason for elderly employment. The results of the survey conducted by the Center for Social Labor Problems of the Sakha Republic (Yakutia) Academy of Sciences in 2005-2006 with the participation of the authors revealed that only in case of receiving both pension benefit and salary, in respondent opinion, they can provide a comprehensible living standard which cannot be guaranteed with old-age pension alone. The work as material welfare source gives them the chance to survive in hard current times. Based on above mentioned results, the possibility of maximum unveiling their professional potentials is more characteristic of working urban pensioners. As far as rural elderly are concerned, flexible work hours, possibility of part-time job at home would allow them “to use better their potential”. Persons of third

demographic age strongly gashed by labor market old-age discrimination, as they consider themselves to be useful team members.

The work considered as "life purpose" has appeared significant to 40% and as "mean of unveiling potential and personal development" to 11% of respondents. The attitude towards the work as «to sense of their life» is expressed by rural pensioners, where, it is known, the most intense situation on labor market is observed. The comparison of the responses provided by employed and nonworking pensioners shows that the second group rates work importance more highly. Unemployed status seems to lead to more frequent reevaluation of vital values in relation to work, and individuals start to appreciate job when they lose it. Socially significant motivation towards employment – communication (42.8%) and unwillingness to change lifestyle (39.8 %) - points to both high team solidarity of working pensioners and their remaining participation in organizational activity. The occupied pensioners pursue an active, instead of adaptive position, that is in our view more satisfactory in terms of social relations. Besides they have more chances to prolong years of active life.

The high proportion of instrumentally motivated pensioners is revealed by other sociological survey "Complex monitoring of population living conditions" conducted by Russian Statistical State Service in 2014 and covering 60 thousands households in all Russian subjects, including 486 households - in the Sakha Republic (Yakutia). The survey results provided that 47.1% of respondents express willingness to do any work for guaranteed compensation and possibility of remaining in labor process.

Focus group results conducted in 2017 by the authors (N=8) in three model districts of the republic allow to suggest that traditional private attributes of inter-generational interrelations, real-life visions of the senior generation have been changing in favor of own well-being. Traditional intra-familial work of northern inhabitant in third demographic age is unpaid but is rather saturated and demands excellent health. National values promote the views that children should take care of aged parents. And the latter make their feasible contribution in caring for grandchildren, housekeeping. In rural settlements of Yakutia as in entire Russia (Patsyorkovsky, 2010), it is senior generation that is settled and works in private landed properties. Traditional northern family include three generations (Barashkova, 2009), it features close interpersonal relations, intergenerational concert and respect to each family member interests, harmony of interests providing specific reserve measures of social adaptation in turning historical points (Kozyreva, Smirnov, 2017) that does not definitely result in social well-being.

Focus group interviews have revealed that narrowing down the elderly activities with only home duties leads to lowering material and social aspirations of senior generation, gradual decline in interest to the qualitative life aspects especially for rural respondents.

Welcoming family psychological climate and consequent social well-being of grandparents can be maintained only in case of the harmony in intergenerational relations. However modern young enough grandparents are not always ready or are unwilling to devote their time to only younger generation. They have own plans and wishes as well. The conflict arises due to different day schedules, interests, forms of activities and other real-life situations. The approaches to grandchildren upbringing and the fact that younger family members often regard homework as direct duty of older grandparents have become a frequent source of discord. In these conditions only the combination of intra- and extra-familial

occupations does not lead to a reduced personal space, strengthening of frustration, pessimistic expectations what together make social wellbeing.

7. Conclusion

Population aging process could not be somehow avoided, even due to strengthened measures to influence fertility rate. Besides, currently born will join labor force only 16-20 years later. In this respect it is necessary to find the means of using a considerable life experience of senior generation in more comprehensive and effective way. The sociological survey results of Yakutia inhabitants imply that besides direct positive influence on financial security of senior persons the employment has also some indirect consequences. The inclusion in work teams, feelings of usefulness and job satisfaction, communication, possibility of transferring their professional skills are key to prolonged active full life and social well-being accordingly. Up-to-date northern inhabitants in third demographic age often take more balanced position regarding intra-familial work, perceive it as all household members duties. They are full of own plans extending their vital space. So, current maintaining labour activities of senior generation in conditions of population aging is a positive factor promoting higher living standards and life quality, and finally growing social well-being of the northerners.

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