

Analysis of migration processes in russian education in the context of the ongoing social and cultural transformation

Análisis de los procesos migratorios en la educación rusa en el contexto de la transformación social y cultural en curso

Alexey Tarasov¹

Dmitry Belyaev²

Nina Fedina³

Dmitry Kataev⁴

Anatoly Komkov⁵

Elena Naydenova⁶

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¹ Lipetsk State Pedagogical P. Semenov-Tyan-Shansky University, Lipetsk, Russia. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5281-8777>. E-mail: alexeytarasov-researcher@yandex.ru.

² Lipetsk State Pedagogical P. Semenov-Tyan-Shansky University, Lipetsk, Russia. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8062-1039>. E-mail: dmitrybelyaev@list.ru

³ Lipetsk State Pedagogical P. Semenov-Tyan-Shansky University, Lipetsk, Russia. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9026-1161>. E-mail: ninafedina@ro.ru

⁴ Lipetsk State Pedagogical P. Semenov-Tyan-Shansky University, Lipetsk, Russia. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4391-8949>. E-mail: dmitrykataev@rambler.ru.

⁵ Lipetsk State Pedagogical P. Semenov-Tyan-Shansky University, Lipetsk, Russia. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2273-8108>. E-mail: anatolykomkov-researcher@yandex.ru.

⁶ Lipetsk State Pedagogical P. Semenov-Tyan-Shansky University, Lipetsk, Russia. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1363-8914>. E-mail: naydenova.lena@internet.ru.

Abstract

The article explores labor migration processes in modern Russian school education. The relevance of this research is due to the current shortage of teachers in Russian schools, especially young specialists. The main method was qualitative content analysis of documents, statistical data, and available resources on this issue presented in the scientific articles on this issue. This paper shows that the transitional state of modern Russian society – social and cultural transformation – has a significant impact on the processes of professional migration. The article reveals the connection between the ongoing social and cultural transformation and the processes of labor migration of Russian teachers and graduates of pedagogical universities, which is a new perspective for considering this issue, since the problem of labor migration has not been examined from this angle.

Keywords: Professional migration, social and cultural transformation, russian schools, teachers, graduates of pedagogical universities.

Resumen

El artículo explora los procesos de migración laboral en la educación escolar rusa moderna. La relevancia de esta investigación se debe a la escasez actual de profesores en las escuelas rusas, especialmente jóvenes especialistas. El método principal fue el análisis del contenido cualitativo de documentos, datos estadísticos y recursos disponibles sobre el tema presentados en los artículos científicos sobre el tema. Este artículo muestra que el estado transitorio de la sociedad rusa moderna, la transformación social y cultural, tiene un impacto significativo en los procesos de migración profesional. El artículo revela la conexión entre la transformación social y cultural en curso y los procesos de migración del trabajo de docentes y egresados de universidades pedagógicas, lo cual es una nueva perspectiva para considerar este tema, ya que el problema de la migración laboral no fue examinado desde este ángulo.

Palabras-clave: Migración profesional, transformación social y cultural, escuela rusa, maestros, egresados de universidades pedagógicas.

Introduction

Many researchers claim that at present, Russian society is developing and undergoing transformation (Buzgalin, Kolganov, 2019, p. 50; Dianova, 2016, p. 11; Evlampiev, 2019, p. 45; Kogay, 2017, p. 88; Rozin, 2019, p. 46). On the one hand, this is due to internal reasons – changes in the social and economic structure in Russia of the late 1980s and early 1990s. The country has not completely overcome the consequences of these transformations (Romakh, 2016, p. 4; Sachkova, 2016, p. 47; Sidorina, 2018, p. 3). On the other hand, Russia joined the global trends of the external transition, typical for the European and Atlantic countries, leaders of the global social and economic development, as evidenced by many scientific and practical conferences,^{7,8,9} as well as papers of some researchers (Leontyeva, 2003, p. 7; Ursul, 2019, p. 104; Shevchenko, 2016, p. 121; Atkin, 2017, p. 514; Belyaeva, 2019, p. 172).

Along with the factors mentioned above, Russia should undertake some current tasks to ensure its sustainable social and economic development. One of them is digitalization of the economy, which the Russian government sees as one of key priorities. Under these conditions, all spheres of life in Russian society are undergoing systemic transformation. Education is one of these areas: for example, the ongoing digitalization, recently accelerated by the coronavirus pandemic, had a strong impact on education, which we can clearly see.

One of the markers of the systemic transition, which we define as “social and cultural transformation” (Tarasov, 2018, p. 2569), is the process of professional migration occurring in Russian school education. In general, migration processes accurately reflect the development trends of any state. Moreover, this refers to

⁷ Humanities in the Context of Modern Socio-Cultural Transformation: Materials of the 9th All-Russian Scientific and Practical Conference: Collection of Scientific Papers. (2020). Lipetsk: Lipetsk State Pedagogical University named after P.P. Semenov-Tyan-Shansky.

⁸ Risks and Vulnerabilities of Modern Social and Cultural Transformation: Materials of the 2nd All-Russian Scientific and Practical Conference. (2021). Lipetsk: Lipetsk State Pedagogical University named after P.P. Semenov-Tyan-Shansky.

⁹ Traditions and Innovations in the Dimension of Modern Culture: Materials of the 3rd All-Russian Scientific and Practical Conference (April 15-16, 2021, Lipetsk): Collection of Scientific Papers. (2021). Lipetsk: Lipetsk State Pedagogical University named after P.P. Semenov-Tyan-Shansky.

the issues of professional migration, since professional mobility is always a qualitative indicator of not only socio-economic, but also socio-cultural processes taking place in a given society (Vyzhimova et al., 2020, p. 204; Kovanova, 2017, p. 294; Kogay, 2020, p. 51). Therefore, at present, one of the most significant factors in reaching this goal and the development of Russian education system is training mobile specialists capable of continuous self-learning, self-development, personal and professional growth in the digital high-tech society. To achieve this goal, the country should ensure professional mobility and migration of teachers and graduates of pedagogical universities.

In this article, we examine the specifics of professional migration processes in modern Russian school education. For this purpose, we met the following objectives: identifying the specifics of the current state of Russian society as a transitional one (social and cultural transformation); examining the reasons for the professional migration of teachers and graduates of pedagogical universities; analyzing the consequences of labor migration in modern Russian school education; classifying migration flows characteristic of the professional migration of teachers and graduates of pedagogical universities in the changing Russian society (social and cultural transformation).

Methods

In this paper, we selected research methods required for examining professional migration in Russian education that reflected the specifics of social and cultural transformation, in which professional migration occurs (Tarasov, 2016, p. 11993). The main method was an interdisciplinary approach to study the professional migration of Russian teachers and graduates of pedagogical universities during the ongoing transformation. We used the available statistical data on the processes of labor migration in Russian education as the experimental base of the research.

The methods applied in the research come from such branches of science as sociology, philosophy, history, and psychology.

The main method was the qualitative content analysis of documents, statistical data, and available scientific publications on this issue.

In addition to this, we used the methods of abstraction, classification, ascent from the abstract to the concrete, analysis and synthesis to explore the essence of the processes that took place at a certain chronological period. The same methods enabled us to identify prospects for the development of the research issue.

We applied the temporal method to identify causal relationships. When analyzing the professional migration of teachers and graduates of pedagogical universities, we had to study the essence of professional migration and its development trends in the context of the ongoing social and cultural transformation (Vidunas, 2019, p. 81; Zaslowski, 2018, p. 42). For this purpose, we established the reasons for professional migration in Russian education and the approaches to the classification of professional migration in Russian school education. We also identified risks and consequences of professional migration of teachers and graduates of pedagogical universities in the changing Russian society.

Results

Technological development, characteristic of modern social and cultural transformation, requires redistribution of labor resources and, consequently, promotes professional migration and mobility (Benítez-Burraco, Theofanopoulou, Boeckx, 2018, p. 265; Carlsson, 2018, p. 1169; Chen et al., 2018, p. 70; Gasiukova, Shkaratan, 2019, p. 116). This was especially relevant in the spring of 2020, when telecommuting and work from home became so widespread. There is a direct link between professional migration and the ongoing social and cultural transformation. All social spheres are changing during this transitional state, and new technologies that transform the role of the worker emerge (Kasavin, 2019, p. 453; Kates, Tucker, 2019, p. 494; Lewis, J., Lewis, B., 2018, p. 225; Mckinnon, 2017, p. 395; Moss, 2016, p. 487). For example, teachers can record a lesson or a lecture and share it with many students many times. This leads to the situation when a lot of teachers may lose their jobs, and instead of staff shortage, the opposite problem could arise. This, in turn, allows hiring highly qualified specialists due to the increasing competition.

Thus, there is a direct relationship between the ongoing social and cultural transformation and professional migration. The former creates conditions for the

latter, enhancing migration in the corresponding professional field, as indicated by some researchers (Ryan, 2018, p. 65; Samostienko, 2019, p. 473; Vasudevan, 2018, p. 32).

In this regard, let us identify the reasons for the professional migration of teachers and graduates of pedagogical universities. Having analyzed the publications on this issue (Meshkova, 2019, p. 251; Pestereva, Yanina, 2019, p. 90), as well as the findings of sociological surveys, we established that there are many specific reasons for the migration of this category of workers, which can be divided into several groups. The first reason is the same for both teachers and graduates of pedagogical universities: low salaries. Indeed, despite all the efforts made by federal and local governments, teachers' salaries are not high enough. For example, on April 1, 2021, there was another indexation of teachers' wages in the Lipetsk region. However, even the basic salary of a teacher with the highest qualification (and this is a kind of ceiling for this position) does not reach the minimum wage established in the Lipetsk region and amounts to RUB 12,218 when working full-time (about USD 165).

Definitely, to provide for the family, the teacher has to conduct more lessons than one person is supposed to, to work as a homeroom teacher (often in several classes), and to run various clubs, electives, and other extracurricular activities. Under these conditions, to obtain a decent salary, teachers leave for large cities such as Moscow or St. Petersburg, where wages are much higher. For instance, according to the official data, the average teacher salary in Moscow is three times higher than in Lipetsk. This is also the reason for another type of professional migration when teachers move from education to other fields.

Another reason for migration in education is the search for better working conditions. It is no secret that teachers can conduct much better lessons if they use modern information technologies. However, despite the development of various multimedia programs, not every school provides a teacher with access to these, even if they know how to use such resources. Many schools still lack the required equipment. Large schools are much better equipped today due to the existing principle of "per capita funding." In addition to this, it is easier for large schools to compete for various grants. Thus, it is natural that a teacher who has

won a professional competition or has been certified with the highest qualification is immediately noticed by a far-sighted school principal, who strives to attract the most talented and efficient staff. In this case, workers can choose for themselves: whether to stay in their school with worse equipment or migrate to another one that provides more opportunities for professional growth.

In our classification, the third group of reasons is connected with career opportunities. This reason for the migration of teachers and graduates of pedagogical institutions is not dominant, since not all of them have these ambitions. Therefore, this motivational component ranks second in the general migration of teachers. At the same time, this motivation is key if we are talking about the movement of rural teachers to work in cities. In rural schools, teachers tend to work for quite a long period (up to 10-15 years) after retirement or seniority pension. In contrast, in an urban school, a young teacher has much greater career prospects, since there are a priori more administrative and managerial positions than in a rural one.

The fourth reason for the migration of teachers and graduates of pedagogical colleges is associated with the living conditions in the countryside and in the city. Much has been said about this before and a lot is being said today, but the gap between life in the city and the country has not been eliminated. For example, poor transportation and housing conditions prevent mass migration of young city dwellers to the countryside (whereas the opposite process is quite active). Very often, after working in a rural school for two or three years, a young teacher tries to get a job in a city school. The living conditions in the countryside play an important role in this decision.

The next reason for migration in Russian school education is family matters. A young family should have clear prospects and confidence in the future to move to a new place and to look for a job there. This reason has recently become more relevant due to some programs implemented by the federal and local governments that aim to attract specialists in various fields, including education. We may conclude that, in general, the reasons for professional migration in Russian school education are similar to those characteristic of professional migration in general.

Another problem we analyzed are the consequences of labor migration for the Russian education system. This issue has certain specifics. Firstly, it has already occurred. Secondly, the consequences of migration are not purely negative. Moreover, in the most typical case of migration, when a teacher moves from one settlement to another, we can say that one locality has lost an efficient or inefficient teacher, while some other has acquired them. It is a completely different matter when the teacher changes their professional field. In this case, one should assess the efficiency of this worker in the educational system to draw a conclusion about the consequences of this action.

In school education, the consequences of migration are directly linked with the causes of this phenomenon. Ideally, the teaching staff of the school does not change and works as a well-coordinated team. This ensures continuity, preservation of traditions, and effective work. In contrast, active professional migration brings about negative consequences, both for education and character building. However, if new people come to this team, they may not only introduce new trends, but also increase work quality. In this regard, one should remember that in case of migration within the educational system, there might be opposite effects for these two schools.

Having analyzed the publications (Pronchev, 2019, p. 53; Romakh, 2007, p. 69; Pashkova, Pashkov, 2018, p. 447) and the data of sociological surveys, we classified the specific consequences of the migration of teachers and graduates of pedagogical colleges into the following groups.

Active migration, i.e. the massive transfer of teachers to other educational institutions, undoubtedly breaks the continuity of the accumulated educational potential. After getting used to one teacher, students have to switch and adapt to the requirements of a new one. This undermines the integrity of the learning process, and hence its effectiveness. Practice shows that the migration of teachers and graduates of pedagogical colleges negatively affects student knowledge of the subject matter. This is due to the psychological characteristics of students, who get used to the requirements of their teacher. A child taught by the same person throughout the years of schooling is much better prepared for the final exams than one whose teachers changed all the time. Moreover, if we consider this example

from a different perspective, i.e. the arrival of an effective teacher to a new place, even in this case we cannot accurately assess their work there. The reasons for this again lie in the psychological characteristics of children who need time to adjust to the requirements and personality of a new teacher.

The next obvious consequence of the migration of teachers and graduates of pedagogical universities is staff shortage. We can clearly see this in modern schools. There is a lack of teachers of foreign languages, physical education, and IT. These professionals tend to move to other industries. For instance, education graduates – future teachers of foreign languages – may not go to school, but immediately start to work, for example, as translators. Highly qualified IT teachers quite often seek employment in the IT sphere. The ever-present shortage of the teachers of these subjects confirms this trend. On the other hand, a massive migration of teachers to the same area may result in the excessive number of them there, which may be called inefficient migration.

Another consequence of migration, closely connected with the previous example, is the potential arrival of more effective teachers in schools. However, this may only result from competition among teachers. Therefore, as a negative consequence, in this case teachers may leave education for another sphere.

Thus, during the ongoing transformation of Russian society, professional migration flows increase significantly, and due to the regularly changing demand of the labor market, teachers have to not only move within the educational system, but also drop out of it, trying to apply their skills in other sectors of the economy.

Next, let us consider several possible typologies of the migration in Russian school education in the context of the ongoing social and cultural transformation. There are many approaches to classifying migration (Ter-akopov, Maksimova, 2018, p. 177; Eldyaeva, Kovanova, 2018, p. 81). Regarding professional migration, and, in particular, the migration of teachers and graduates of pedagogical universities, the following typologies are the most appropriate (as they reflect the transitional state of Russian society):

1. External and internal;
2. Urbanization and reruralization;
3. Pendulum migration.

The first typology focuses on the movement of teaching staff within the country (internal) and outside (external). The migration in Russian school education is mainly internal, although we found some examples of external migration, which implies teachers moving to another country. However, this happens when teachers from Russia temporarily move to work abroad in schools at the country's embassies. On the other hand, in the 1990s and the very beginning of the 2000s, there was immigration: teachers from the CIS countries moved to Russia (mainly teachers of the Russian language and Literature). At present, this trend has almost vanished, and it is not as significant as in the first decade after the collapse of the USSR.

As for the next typology (urbanization and reruralization), we may observe both processes today. At the same time, as shown by the analysis, most teachers moving from villages to cities (urbanization) have some work experience (as a rule, at least 10-15 years). In contrast, young teachers and graduates of pedagogical universities usually start working in rural schools, and therefore have to move back from the city to the countryside. The latter is due to many reasons. Firstly, rural schools offer special measures of support for teachers, for example, a bonus for working in rural areas, which currently amounts to 25% of the salary. This turns out to be a significant support measure for young teachers.

The next reason stems from the recent trend – support for young specialists moving to live permanently in the countryside (for example, the program “Zemsky Teacher”). In our opinion, another reason is professional growth: many young teachers perceive the rural school as a springboard for future career growth. What is more, it is well known that due to the social and cultural specifics of the area, rural schools usually have fewer students in classes, so it may be easier for a young teacher to work there. On the other hand, as they gain experience and professional reputation and undergo formal and informal professional development, a motivated teacher realizes there are wide opportunities for applying their skills outside the rural school.

The third identified type of professional migration of teachers and graduates of pedagogical universities is pendulum migration. It implies teachers commuting to their workplace and back. This type of migration involves regular movements,

depending on the work schedule of the teacher. We could not identify the age pattern for this typology, that is, the category of teachers for whom this kind of migration was most typical. Such migration can be temporary, when another employee is usually hired for one to three school years in place of the absent one (sabbatical or maternity leave). The analysis performed also showed that quite many teachers in this typology have been working in the same rural school for a long time, but have to commute due to their place of residence.

Discussion

In this study, we attempted to determine the reasons for and consequences of labor migration in Russian school education. The findings obtained demonstrate that the reasons for the migration of teachers and graduates of pedagogical universities are similar to the reasons for these processes in other sectors. At the same time, the consequences of labor migration of teachers and graduates of pedagogical universities may lead to more serious social changes than the migration in other areas.

In this study, we proposed an original typology of labor migration in Russian school education, which, on the one hand, relies on the existing publications on this issue, and, on the other hand, considers the specifics of the modern education system in Russia affected by the ongoing social and cultural transformation.

Conclusion

The ongoing social and cultural transformation of Russian society is a factor that significantly affects the professional migration of teachers and graduates of pedagogical universities. This is primarily due to the instability of the labor market. This implies that workers in all sectors of the economy have to master new competencies regularly, and the requirements for qualifications of specialists in all sectors of the economy are rapidly changing. These are the features of the transitional state of society.

Having performed the analysis, we found out that the reasons for professional migration in general and the migration of teachers and graduates of pedagogical

universities in particular are largely similar and are connected with the following factors:

1. Different salary levels in different Russian regions;
2. Different working conditions in schools, including those in the same region;
3. Different career opportunities in educational institutions;
4. Different standards of living and social security in Russian regions and within one region ("the city and the country");
5. Availability of regional or municipal programs aimed at attracting teachers to the region.

Considering the consequences of the migration of teachers and graduates of pedagogical universities, one should keep in mind that, as a rule, they are of dual nature if these processes occur within the education system (the transition from one school to another, regardless of its location). In this case, one school loses teachers, and the other acquires them. In addition to this, there are different consequences when the teacher leaves the education system and applies their skills in a completely different area. In this case, everything depends on the professional competences of the teacher who the education system has lost. Occasionally, such professional migration of teachers can be viewed as a positive phenomenon, if the former teacher can work more effectively in a new area.

Having conducted the research, we identified the following three main typologies of professional migration in the contemporary Russian school system: 1) external and internal; 2) urbanization and reruralization; 3) pendulum migration.

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