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**SOCIO-ECONOMIC SITUATION IN KABARDINO-BALKAR
REPUBLIC AT MODERN STAGE**

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Abstract

The paper implements sociological investigation to reveal basic problems of socio-economic development in the Kabardino-Balkar Republic in the context of globalization from the perspective of Russian people. The work determines the complexity of solution for problems connected with economic state of Russian population in the Kabardino-Balkar Republic in terms of improvement of their material security and employment. It is shown that more than half of the respondents from Russia believe that the living standard in the republic is low and decreases further. The Russian people unanimously believe that the high level of education is unrivalled on the job market and enable easy adaptation to ever changing demands of the economy. The education is one of the key factors promoting the living standard and serves as a mechanism of vertical social mobility. The study demonstrates the controversy in the conception of the Russian people in terms of high level of life dissatisfaction and unwillingness and unreadiness to sacrifice anything to improve their life. People in general need self-expression that is expressed as career progress or stable material status. Although, the population of the Kabardino-Balkar Republic dwells under life insecurity and limited social norms. This causes the lowest level of self-fulfilment of respondents of Russian settlements in the Kabardino-Balkar Republic. The paper concludes that to improve the morale of Russian people in the Republic and create conditions for new inflow of Russian specialists, the authorities should provide clear description of their interests and goals.

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Keywords: Social, economic, Russian, migration, standard, employment.



1. Introduction

The government always plays the role of the organizing center. The destruction of single power vertical today lead to the dichotomy between Caucasus and Russian people. It is the model of Russian society functioning that was destroyed by democratic reforms (Gugova, 2005) This gave no chance to self-organization of the Russian people in the Kabardino-Balkar Republic. However, it preserved the mechanism of social adaptation of the Kabardians and Balkarian working primarily in the agricultural sector of economy. Moreover, the Russian people (especially in cities) turned out to be completely inadaptable to market conditions. This is mainly due to the economical role of the Russian population which was to reorient the redistribution economy to production activities. The supply of labor force during Soviet period from other regions lead to the reorientation of republic economy without relying on local population. The creation of industrial sector by the Russians (in 1960s-1970s) promoted the expansion of communication, interaction and interrelation between Russian and autochthonous population of the republic that was mainly oriented towards agricultural production.

Over the recent years, the Russian population have been decreasing in the Kabardino-Balkar Republic, which disturbs the social and economic stability. The negative migration of Russians poses possible risks to national and regional security.

2. Problem Statement

The decrease of Russian population migration from the Kabardino-Balkar Republic is a strategic task of the region. First, the Russians are the source of highly qualified employees, which for the policy of region sustainable development is one of the key factors, since their absence disables the short-term resume to the development of the industrial economy segment of the republic. Second, in particular for Mayskiy and Prokhladnenskiy districts that are the most densely populated in the republic, the land problem was and remains economically and politically important in terms of international relations in Kabardino-Balkaria. This problem is the source of tension, and the absence of cautious, professional and comprehensive approach with due regard to the national and regional geographic specificity also promotes the migration of the Russians from the Kabardino-Balkar Republic, because with time, the severity of the land problem in the republic (which is a crucial one, for instance, for Cossacks) will grow, and it is Cossacks that can be used as an instrument for political opposition for the stated problem (Shaozheva, 2016). Third, low level of income of the majority of Russians in the republic denotes social and economical discrepancy in the spheres of production, distribution and consumption.

Regarding the social sphere, here we can distinguish the following key moments: low level of education level and healthcare, underdeveloped system of housing (absence of municipal housing or too high cost of new housing) that are the factors triggering discontent of Russians (and other folks as well).

3. Research Questions

The subject of the study is the evaluation by the Russian people of the socio-economic situation in the Kabardino-Balkar Republic in the conditions of contemporary development of the society.

4. Purpose of the Study

The work is destined to study and evaluate the key social and economical problems in the Kabardino-Balkar Republic at current time from the perspective of Russian population on the basis of theoretical and empirical data.

5. Research Methods

To study the public attitude of the Russian population and Cossacks in the Kabardino-Balkar Republic in relation to interethnic interactions in the regions of their compact living in the republic at current state in the frame of common project of the Center of social-politic research in Kabardino-Balkar scientific center of RAS entitled as Transformation of the value system of Kabardino-Balkaria population in modern conditions, a mass survey of Russian population and Cossacks was done in 5 settlements: 3 urban settlements (Nalchik, Prokhladnyi, Maiskiy) and 2 rural settlements (Kotlyarevskaya, Ekaterinogradskaya). The sample size is 155 adult respondents. The selection implemented territorial strategy connected with the selection and survey of respondents at their places of residence. The subjects of the study are permanent residents of the republic older than 18 y.o. In urban settlement Prokhladnyi, 40 persons were surveyed. In urban settlement Maiskiy, 15 persons were surveyed. In rural settlements 35 persons were surveyed, including 15 persons in Kotlyarevskaya and 20 persons in Ekaterinogradskaya. In Nalchik, 30 persons were surveyed. The survey was performed at the places of residence and work of the respondents. The selection of respondents was made by quota selection with according to the republic quota in terms of gender, age, national, social and professional pertinence. The combination of empirical data in the Kabardino-Balkar Republic allows typifying the main trends in the sphere of international relations in the region community.

The theoretical basis of this study includes the works of Russian and regional economists and sociologists dealing with the problems of social and economical development of Russia and the Kabardino-Balkar Republic: Amosov, (2004), Yasin, (2003), Buzgalin, (2002), Lebedeva, (2004), Kazancheva, (2014, 2009), Dikinov, Aguzarova & Gubashieva, (2010), Kuyantsev, Kilchukova & Kanametova, (2014), Kesheva, (2016), Ivanov, (2016) and others.

6. Findings

To confirm the stated above, we have studied the attitude of the Russian community of the Kabardino-Balkar Republic in terms of socio-economic situation on the contemporary stage.

Answering the question “How in general do you characterize the socio-economic situation in the Kabardino-Balkar Republic?” 15% of respondents of Prokhladnenskiy district evaluated its as good, 55% of respondents answered that it is good rather than bad, 20% have noted that it is bad rather than good. The economic situation in the Kabardino-Balkar Republic was evaluated as bad only by 8% of respondents. Only 1.6% of the total number of respondents characterized the socio-economic situation in the Kabardino-Balkar Republic as very good.

In Maiskiy district, the picture is absolutely controversial. The socio-economic situation in the Kabardino-Balkar Republic was evaluated as bad by 32% of respondents. The same number of them believe that it is more bad than good. A quarter of respondents said that the republic is in extremely bad crisis state. And 4% in each case think that the situation is good or rather good than bad.

In Nalchik, the results were similar to Maiskiy district. Very bad socio-economic situation was noted by 23% of the respondents. Bad state was named by 38% of the respondents. Bad rather than good was mentioned by 31% of surveyed people. Only 8% believe that the socio-economic situation in the republic is good rather than bad.

To determine the complexity of solution for problems connected with economic state of Russian population in the Kabardino-Balkar Republic in terms of improvement of their material security and employment, a range of questions were asked. The first one is: "How did the economic state of the Russian population change in the Kabardino-Balkar Republic over the recent time?" The opinions of the Russians in Nalchik and in the district of compact living were identical. Of all respondents 70% think that the Russians' life worsened. And 30% believe that the situation has not changed. Nobody told that it improved.

The Russian population deems that the reason for such situation is market system of economy combined with high level of unemployment in the republic connected, among other factors, with national factor (for title nations it is easier to find a job), too limited job market and generally accepted state policy in terms of wages that does not satisfy the demand of people.

Regarding the employment, an indicative is gender factor. Respondents among women have more difficulties at work than men. This is explained, first, by paternalistic orientation of North-Caucasus society as a whole and second, by the traditional role of women that deal more with household and parenting than men, though the education level of women often supersedes that of men.

Indeed, those problems that were distinguished by the Russians also relate to Kabardians and Balkarians. To the similar question regarding title nations, the Russians answered as follows (we give general figures for residential settlements of Russians in the Kabardino-Balkar Republic). Regarding the Balkarians, small percentage of respondents (13%) noted that their living conditions improved; 16% said that the life of the Kabardians got better. Regarding the answers "life got worse" and "no changes", the Balkarians are almost unanimous, 42% and 45%, respectively. As for the Kabardians, 17% answered that their life improved, 37% told that it worsened and 47% said that their economic situation did not change over the recent time.

In general the analysis of the answers has shown that more than half of the respondents from Russia believe that the living standard in the republic is low and further decreases.

More detailed analysis of answers to the question "How can you explain low living standard in the Kabardino-Balkar Republic?" has shown that, according to the respondents of Porkhladnenskiy district, the level is caused by the iniquity of the officials (43%) and 33% believe that the emigration of capable young people promotes the economic slack of the region. More than quarter of respondents (28%) consider the policy of the federal center unsatisfactory. The unsatisfactory work of republic authorities was noted by 5% of respondents, who connected it with the fact that the Kabardino-Balkar Republic belongs to the range of depressive beneficiary republics of North Caucasian Federal District depending on the federal center. 13% believe that the population of Kabardino-Balkaria are generally passive.

For Maiskiy district we received the following data. 75% of respondent think that low living standard of the Kabardino-Balkar Republic population is conditioned by unsatisfactory work of republic authorities. 62% noted the iniquity of officials. Those, who believe that the policy of federal authorities leads to reduced living standard amounted to 12% of total number of respondents. Another 12% are confident that they

should themselves do everything possible to increase their material status, while their inactivity is the factor that finally causes low living standard. 8% noted the lack of working force due to massive labor migration of youth from Kabardino-Balkaria, which leads to reduction of production.

The respondents from Nalchik think that the living standard depends on the activity of people themselves that strive to live better. As for the Russian people in Kabardino-Balkaria, they note high level of inertness and inactivity, which determines their low living standard (18%). Equal number of respondents (32%) have connected low living standard in the republic with ineffective work of both federal and republic authorities. The iniquity of officials was noted by 44% of the respondents. Nobody correlated the massive labor migration with low living standard. It was more defined as a consequence.

Thus, according to the respondent, the key factors that explain the reasons of low living standard in Kabardino-Balkaria are unsatisfactory work of the federal center and regional authorities and iniquity of officials. This does not take into account the peculiarities of the ethnostructure of the population of the Kabardino-Balkar Republic on the basis of different management types, complexity of migration situation, conditioned by socio-political and economic situation. In other words, the authorities cannot provide the profitability of various branches of republic economy by economical and political mechanisms, thus solving the social problems connected with employment, level of salaries, regional indexation of various social compensations, etc.

Under the conditions of technological progress, it becomes evident that the high level of education is a distinctive advantage on the job market that allows easily adapting to ever changing demands of the economy. In addition, the education is one of the key factors promoting the living standard and, hence, a mechanism of vertical social mobility. In other words, education today is a real economical prerequisite, because without high education one cannot embody themselves in labor, which ultimately affects their living style and standard, while for the society this leads to a number of economic and social losses.

The presence of high level of education does not guarantee employment. This is conditioned by the absence of social partnership between education and employer.

From this perspective the survey results have revealed the following. The respondents think that higher education, which major part is possessed by women of the Kabardino-Balkar Republic, is not a guarantee of employment. It is obvious. As of today, the majority of republic population have higher education. Moreover, it suffers too strict requirements, such as possession of skills of advanced technologies and foreign languages. Besides, nobody excludes the clan protection in employment and corruption. Only 27% of respondents in Mayskiy and Prokhladnenskiy districts answered that it only somewhat guarantees employment; 67% say that higher education does not ensure employment.

Nalchik inhabitants are more optimistic in this regard. They believe that city dwellers are in a more strong position in terms of employment versus rural people, because they are the stratum which suffers higher requirements in terms of qualification. In this connection, 46% of respondents gave preference to the education level as a key factor of vertical mobility. Nevertheless, the percentage of those thinking that education does not guarantee employment is fairly high. A quarter believe that it is a guarantee of employment to some extent.

The respondents several times noted that it is hard to find work in the republic even for young specialists, and they have to seek further, accept highly paid proposals not following their profession or

search for work beyond the region. Indeed, many of them have found highly paid work in other regions. In general, the respondents believe that the chances to find work by profession with higher education is extremely hard, and sometimes impossible. Again, the reasons are oversaturation of the regional job market, clan protection and corruption.

Regarding the work that possesses the largest value for the respondents, some respondents (15%) answered that their interest is in highly paid and interesting work. But it is impossible in current conditions. The actual situation is that 63% of respondents would agree to have highly paid but not interesting work, 13% would take a poorly paid but interesting job and 8.3% would take hard and dangerous, but highly paid job.

In terms of main requirement to the job, to the question “What is the most important in your job for you?” the respondents answered the following. The first place is held by salary. On the second place is work by profession, and on the third is status.

Thus, the striving to earn more and live better is in direct controversy with social status and will of people. In reality, they have no choice. They abide by the reality of the present day when talent and education level do not play any substantial role.

In his connection, several questions were asked that discover the readiness of the respondents to radically change their life to earn well. To the question “Where would you like to live and work?” 67% of respondents answered that in their home town or village. Only 8% without hesitation said that are ready to move to and work in Moscow and 12% are ready to move abroad. We think it can be explained both by the fact that the majority of Russians are patriots of Kabardino-Balkaria (this is confirmed by the positive answer of 78% of respondents to the question, if they consider themselves patriots of the Kabardino-Balkar Republic) and by the fact that taking into account the ethnocultural component, for them it is very hard to adapt to the conditions of other regions; they feel themselves aliens.

To determine the material security, the respondents were proposed to choose one of the replies to the question “What is your material status?”:

- Living beyond poverty line, cannot buy food
- Living beyond poverty line, can buy food
- Living not bad, can buy only absolutely necessary goods
- Living fairly well, can buy the majority of goods
- Living without material problems

70% of respondents noted that they live not bad, they have enough money for absolutely necessary goods. 13% of respondents chose “living beyond poverty line, can buy food”. On the third place is answer “living fairly well, can buy the majority of goods”. Beyond the poverty line live 5% of respondents that cannot buy even food. Only 1.6% live without material problems. Among the afore given data, indicative is that the majority of respondents that consider their material status as really far from perfect are youth. This age group of Russian community told that they spend 80% of the whole income for primary needs, such as food and clothes.

In other words, according to the estimations of economic and social situation in Kabardino-Balkar Republic by Russian people, the regional economy is in depressed state. The economy of the republic demonstrates no growth. However, a part of Russian population suffers no material complications. They

either initially lived well, or achieved material security afterwards. Although, achieving this was through illegal shady operations. Only about 2% of the respondents live in absolute prosperity. This absolutely forms a particular remonstrating attitude (even if latent one) caused by obvious mismatch of education level, qualification and income. The degree of remonstrating of the Russian people, expressed as understanding and possibility of illegal earning of money, can be followed from the replies to the question “What do you think about people that made a fortune illegally?”. 70% of respondents expressed negative attitude, 18% demonstrated indifference. Those with indifferent and positive attitude (4%) reasoned their answers by the fact that if authorities, both federal and regional, know about real situation in the sphere of labor, employment and wages, know that the republic is in depressed state and do nothing about that, then (according to the respondents) there is nothing bad in earning money illegally (“innocent till proven guilty”).

In compliance with the study results, it is obvious that both federal and local authorities must correct their collaborative efforts and reconsider such social policy that could balance out possible conflictogenic situations caused by growing social and material differentiation.

Positively, the socio-economic situation of the region leaves its mark on the manifestation of social values connected with individual understanding. People in general need self-expression that expresses as career progress or stable material status. Although, the population of Kabardino-Balkar Republic dwells under life insecurity and limited social norms. This causes the lowest level of self-fulfillment of respondents of Russian settlements in Kabardino-Balkar Republic. In the survey they explicitly voice high level of dissatisfaction by their lives, but at the same time they are not ready to sacrifice anything for better life. To the question “What are you ready to sacrifice for opportunity to earn more money?” about 85% of respondents noted that they are not ready to sacrifice anything for earning good money.

In the survey that allows unveiling the economic potential of Russian people in Kabardino-Balkar Republic, we asked the question on the opinion of the respondents regarding possible conditions of vertical mobility in the regional society.

After summing up the replies, the first positions are held by the following: possession of necessary contacts (Nalchik – 84%, Maiskiy district – 76%, Prokhladnenskiy district – 53%); good education (Nalchik – 65%, Maiskiy district – 68%, Prokhladnenskiy district – 28%); professionalism (Nalchik – 73%, Maiskiy district – 52%, Prokhladnenskiy district – 40%); responsibility (Nalchik – 44%, Maiskiy district – 24%, Prokhladnenskiy district – 20%).

Indeed, the material component, necessary connections became the main conditions and advantage for those who decided to make a career. But ideally, the striving to take over high social niche should be accessible for any striving person. And in this regards, the state and local authorities should give such policy which would not impede, but promoted the creation of equal possibilities for everybody in terms of career progress, especially in modern conditions of open economy. This requires adequate taxation policy, control the monopolization of authorities by clans that make this sphere absolutely inaccessible. For the Russian people in Kabardino-Balkar Republic, the access to the bodies of government is limited; the possibility to build a career is zero.

In general, all Russian respondents, regardless of the territorial pertinence, have no doubt that in the republic, there is scarce possibility for population to obtain high level of education, become successful,

earn decent money, build a career, etc. In addition, there is an opinion that the initiative in earning more and good career is low. Many people, especially in rural settlements are content with what they have at the moment. Indeed, achieving success in business and career is possible with effective socio-economic regional development.

The effective socio-economic development of Kabardino-Balkaria can be facilitated by technological development of the agricultural and industrial sector of economy, balanced social policy reflecting the interests of all social strata and aimed at the formation of the middle class in the republic, regular and systematic struggle with corruption that is the most important factor of conflicts between the society and authorities forming the trend of social disorganization.

In this connection, to study the social and legal health of the Russian people in the Kabardino-Balkar Republic, we assessed the most topical issues in the republic and what are the perspectives of their solution in the nearest time.

The first questions was “Which of the problems is most urgent for the population of Kabardino-Balkar Republic?”. About 60% of the respondents replied about low income level of the population. 53% of surveyed people believe that the most urgent topic for the republic is corruption and only 10% noted that terrorism is the most dangerous factor for regional society.

This question also covered the issue of international relations. In this question, the indicative is that nobody noted it as the key problem. This testifies that there is no crisis situation connected with international relations in the republic, at least from the perspective of Russian community in the Kabardino-Balkar Republic.

7. Conclusion

Thus, the most important factor of institutionalization of Russian population in the Kabardino-Balkar Republic at current stage is the necessity to find key direction of implementation of the forms of socio-economic life. They express the primary importance of preventing the migration of Russian people from the republic and creating the conditions for their return, safe and comfortable living on the territory of Kabardino-Balkaria, since the dynamic economical development of the whole North Caucasus, and Kabardino-Balkaria in particular, requires today the inrush of Russian people. Without them, the region will be at the risk of impeded development (Varivoda, 2011)

In this regard, the general economic crisis does not allow the governors of certain republics of North Caucasus, social-political and their national social movements seeing the perspective of negative consequences of forced migration of the Russians and, naturally, other non-title nations. In this relation, it is working migration policy can, if not stop, decrease the extent of forced migration of Russian people from Kabardino-Balkar Republic. In this connection, the federal center together with regional power should take on the task of attracting Russians into the region. To improve the morale of Russian people in the Republic and create conditions for new inflow of Russian specialists, the authorities should provide clear description of their interests and goals, determine the place of the Russians in the geopolitics of Russia on Caucasus and ensure its consequent implementation.

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