

SCTCMG 2021
International Scientific Conference “Social and Cultural Transformations in the Context of
Modern Globalism”

“SMOKES OF THE FATHERLAND...”: EMIGRATIONAL
ATTITUDES OF STUDENT YOUTH

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Abstract

The article presents some of the results of a questionnaire survey of students in the South of Russia conducted by employees of the Southern Federal University in collaboration with scientists from the Southern Scientific Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences in 2019. The theoretical and methodological basis of the research work was the author's concept of cognitive-ideological matrices, which implies the study of the pre-reflexive level of individual and group consciousness in order to identify proto-ideological elements (ideologemes and concepts) that form an individual's predisposition toward a particular ideology. Based thereon, the article reveals deep motives in the emigration attitudes of student consciousness and solves the problem of determining the strength of the connection between socio-economic and value-based and ideology-based factors in the formation of these attitudes. As a result of the analysis, it is shown that value-based factors prevail over socio-economic ones. It was revealed that the ideologically determined attitude towards emigration from the country was formed in the context of the values of the liberal and social democratic ideologies, which, in turn, turned out to be consonant with those proto-ideological concepts of self-identification that had been formed in the process of early socialization of student youth. The general conclusion of the study: ideological values and attitudes are derivatives of the deep mechanisms of cognitive-value matrices, at the level of which proto-ideological elements are formed, which, in turn, form an individual's tendency to perceive certain ideological values.

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Keywords: Migration, political ideology, questionnaire survey, student consciousness, South of Russia



1. Introduction

At the end of 2019, the results of a study of emigration attitudes in Russian society conducted by sociologists from the Levada Center (Goncharov & Volkov, 2019) were published. Scientists have revealed a steady increase in emigrational sentiment among young people aged 18–24 (from 22 % in 2014 to 53 % in September 2019). This study was widely disseminated in the media and caused a strong resonance both in the journalistic and in the scientific community (Tadtaev, 2019), since this scandalous news appeared against the backdrop of a growing number of reports about the growth of protest sentiments in the Russian society as a whole and among youth, in particular (see, for example: Galanina, 2019; Monitoring changes ..., 2019). While in earlier studies by sociologists, political apathy and absenteeism characteristic of Russian youth have been recorded (Gorshkov & Sheregi, 2010; Gudkov et al., 2011), at the end of the second decade of the 21st century, the protest potential of youth is estimated to be much higher (Protest activity, 2019; Protest potential, 2019).

2. Problem Statement

In this context, the main problem is to identify the motivational connection between the growth of protest sentiments, emigration attitudes and political crises. One of the most widespread concepts here is the explanation of crisis trends by deteriorating socio-economic conditions, which leads to progressive inefficiency of institutions and results in the delegitimization of power. Thus, in accordance with one of the authoritative concepts of delegitimization of stagnating or degrading institutions, Hirschman, criticism (voice) within the framework of dwindling loyalty sooner or later is replaced by a break (exit) from the ineffective state or economic institutions (Hirschman, 1970). In the social sciences, it has long been a commonplace idea that deteriorating social and economic conditions sooner or later lead to an increase in protest moods with the prospect of a "breakup" (i. e. emigration) with a poor and politically ineffective state in favor of richer and better developed societies (Goldstone, 2013; Skocpol, 1979). However, such concepts do not explain why a very large part of society in deteriorating socio-economic conditions not only does not seek to express protest, but even becomes more loyal to the authorities.

Hirschman proposed a much more convincing concept linking two opposing preferences: the "gap" in his interpretation is a consequence of the ineffectiveness of the channels for expressing one's own opinion, "voice" that is. However, within the framework of this article, an even more important thought by Hirschman is that the atrophy of cheap and efficient channels for expressing discontent increases the likelihood of choosing the "exit" option (Hirschman, 1970). This entails the key problem of explaining the motives for the growth of emigration sentiments among the youth: should this growth be explained by deteriorating socio-economic conditions, or rather by political reasons – the increasing repressiveness of the political regime, diminishing opportunities for free criticism of the government, the desire of those in power to control the Internet, etc.

3. Research Questions

In connection with the above problem, questions arise not only abstract-theoretical but also practical questions arise: if, as Russian sociologists assume (Goncharov & Volkov, 2019), the growth of emigration attitudes is due to socio-economic reasons (“The desire to provide children with a decent future abroad” and “The Economic Situation in Russia”), such growth will continue in the foreseeable future, since all economic forecasts for Russia are very pessimistic. As a result, we will get a “lost generation” of young people who virtually do not associate themselves with Russia in any way. If the reasons are political, ideological, symbolic, etc., then it will be enough to make some adjustments to the policies pursued by those in power in order to reduce emigrational attitudes among the youth. Accordingly, the main issue is the motivation of not only those young people who would like to emigrate, but also those who, despite the deteriorating economic situation, refuse to “break up” (Hirschman) from their country.

4. Purpose of the Study

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to identify the deep motives of emigration attitudes in the student mind, as well as establish the strength of the connection between the perception of the deterioration of the socio-economic situation, the value-based and ideological context of this perception and the emigrational attitudes.

5. Research Methods

The theoretical and methodological basis of the research is the author's concept of cognitive-ideological matrices (Potseluev et al., 2020), which involves the study of the pre-reflexive level of individual and group consciousness. At this level proto-ideological elements (ideologemes and concepts) arise, which, in turn, become conceptual material for the crystallization of ideological consciousness. In particular, on this theoretical and methodological basis, a connection has been previously established between the attitudes of civic identity, language and religious values (Lukichev et al., 2019). Methodologically, the study relies on the results of a questionnaire survey conducted among student youth in the fall of 2019 in the South of Russia (in the Krasnodar and Stavropol Territories, in the Rostov and Astrakhan Regions, in the Kabardino-Balkarian Republic). The total sample consisted of 2551 respondents, of which: – Krasnodar Territory: 459; – Stavropol Territory: 500; – Astrakhan region: 281; – Kabardino-Balkarian Republic (hereinafter "KBR"): 499; – Rostov region: 812. The standard deviation for the whole sample was ± 3.4 %.

6. Findings

As a result of the survey, it was revealed that there is no direct connection between the socio-economic situation of the region and the emigrational attitudes of the students.

Table 1. Emigrational attitudes of student youth in the South of Russia

No.	How do you feel about the prospect of emigrating from the country?	Krasnodar Territory	Stavropol Territory	Astrakhan region	KBR	Rostov region	Overall
1	I'm not going to leave Russia, and I consider all the talk about the country's catastrophic future to be nonsense.	11.1 % (51)	13.6 % (68)	6.4 % (18)	18.6 % (93)	10.1 % (82)	12.2 % (312)
2	There is no point in leaving: nowhere in the world is safe now, and it is more fun to meet the apocalypse at home	10.5 % (48)	12.6 % (63)	11.0 % (31)	15.0 % (75)	13.1 % (106)	12.7 % (323)
3	I will look at the developments, I have no particular desire to emigrate, although I do not exclude such a possibility	46.4 % (213)	41.2 % (206)	36.3 % (102)	27.9 % (139)	41.7 % (339)	39.2 % (999)
4	As soon as the opportunity arises, I will leave for permanent residence in another country, because I do not see a decent and safe future for myself and my children in Russia	20.9 % (96)	16.8 % (84)	25.6 % (72)	14.2 % (71)	20.3 % (164)	19.1 % (487)
5	I plan to leave Russia, as other countries have a better quality of life and more opportunities for personal development and career growth	0.7 % (3)	0.2 % (1)	1.4 % (4)	2.0 % (10)	0.5 % (6)	0.9 % (24)
6	Other	0.9 % (4)	0.6 % (3)	1.1 % (3)	1.2 % (6)	1.8 % (15)	1.2 % (31)
7	I find it difficult to answer	9.6 % (44)	15.0 % (75)	18.1 % (51)	21.0 % (105)	12.4 % (100)	14.7 % (375)

From the data shown in Table 01, it can be seen that young people in the South are much more patriotic than in Russia as a whole: only 20 % of young people in the South are leaning towards emigration, in contrast to 53.0 % obtained by the sociologists of Levada Center. However, the regional differences within these 20 % cannot but seem striking. The ideas of emigration are most popular in the Astrakhan region (27.0 % in aggregate for questions 4 and 5), and the least popular, in the Stavropol Territory and KBR (17.0 and 16.2 %, respectively). The Rostov Region and Krasnodar Territory are closest to the average statistical indicator (20.8 and 21.6 %, respectively). If you try to identify the reasons for these differences, then first of all, you can refer to the statistical data of Rosstat by region (Table 02).

Table 2. Some socio-economic indicators of the regions of the South of Russia (according to Rosstat, a summary table)

No.	Socio-economic indicators of the region	Krasnodar Territory	Stavropol Territory	Astrakhan region	KBR	Rostov region
1	Unemployment rate (2019; percent; ▼ and ▲ indicate the increase or decrease in the level as compared to previous years)	4.8 (▼)	4.8 (▼)	7.6 (▲)	10.7 (▲)	4.8 (▼)
2	Living standards (2019; ▼ and ▲ indicate the increase or decrease in the level compared to previous years)	99.9 (▼)	99.6 (▼)	100.7 (▲)	98.6 (▼)	100.9 (▲)
3	Real monetary incomes of the population (2019, in rubles; the place of the region in terms of RMI in Russia as a whole is indicated in parentheses)	35 673 (17)	24 366 (66)	24 971 (62)	21 474 (76)	30 752 (29)
4	Population with cash incomes below the subsistence level (2019; percent)	10.7	14.0	15.5	24.2	13.4
5	Gross Regional Product (2019; RUB million)	2 344 620.7	715 511.4	553 395.7	145 658.2	1 446 226.6
6	Gross regional product per capita (2018; in rubles)	416 760.2	255 726.3	544 793.4	168 192.1	343 408.7

As seen from the data in Table 02, according to socio-economic indicators, the five regions under consideration are clearly divided into three groups:

- Krasnodar Territory and Rostov Region that are relatively wealthy and prosperous against the all-Russian background;
- relatively poor Astrakhan region and KBR, in which the economic situation is either deteriorating or stagnating;
- the relatively poor Stavropol Territory, in the economy of which, nevertheless, there has been a positive trend.

If we follow the logic of the economic motivation of emigrational attitudes (the so-called "sausage emigration"), then the statistical distribution of youth attitudes towards emigration should more or less correlate with the socio-economic data by region. However, this is not the case. If the youth of the Astrakhan region form their attitudes in accordance with the "economic" logic, then the values of the youth of the Stavropol Territory and the KBR have been formed in clear contradiction with this logic. What explains this scatter in the data? In order to answer this question, it is necessary to look at the linking of the emigrational attitudes of young people with the value-based structure of their consciousness. For example, it can be assumed that adherents of liberal ideology are more inclined to value the best socio-economic conditions over the traditional values of family, language, community, etc (Table 03). However, in this case, one should distinguish between ideological self-representations of students (their answers to the direct question: "How would you characterize their ideological and political convictions?"), and real ideological attitudes, which can only be revealed through attitudes towards certain ideological values.

Table 3. Linking of the attitude towards emigration with ideological self-representations (in percent)

No.	As soon as the opportunity arises, I will leave for permanent residence in another country ... How would you characterize your ideological and political convictions?	Krasnodar Territory	Stavropol Territory	Astrakhan region	KBR	Rostov region	Overall
1	Conservative	2.1	3.6	2.8	1.4	6.1	3.7
2	Liberal	30.2	38.1	25.0	15.5	30.3	28.7
3	(National) -Bolshevik	2.1	1.2	1.4	1.4	0.0	1.0
4	National patriotic	0.0	2.4	0.0	1.4	1.2	1.0
5	Fascist	1.0	1.2	1.4	4.2	1.8	1.8
6	National Socialist	2.1	1.2	1.4	0.0	2.4	1.6
7	Communist	5.2	3.6	2.8	4.2	5.5	4.5
8	Social Democratic	7.3	7.1	15.3	12.7	8.5	9.7
9	Anarchist	5.2	2.4	5.6	0.0	4.8	3.9
10	Monarchist	0.0	0.0	5.6	7.0	1.2	2.3
11	Environmental	5.2	8.3	11.1	14.1	7.3	8.6
12	Feminist	8.3	6.0	9.7	9.9	3.0	6.6
13	Other	0.0	1.2	1.4	5.6	2.4	1.6
14	I find it difficult to answer	31.3	23.8	16.7	22.5	25.5	24.8

An analysis of the data presented already reveals some connections between ideological preferences and emigrational attitudes. Indeed, linking these variables shows a fairly tight connection between these attitudes and liberal values. However, the views of Astrakhan students are more leftist.

And in the KBR, the environmental agenda is most pronounced (as compared to other regions), while the liberal ideology is the least popular. Here, however, monarchist views are the strongest and the social democratic ideology is quite popular. However, ideological self-representation does not always coincide with real ideological preferences. Therefore, it is necessary to identify the presence of a connection between emigrational attitudes and attitudes towards ideological slogans (Table 04).

Table 4. Linking the attitude towards emigration with positive attitude ("I completely agree" and "There is something in this," in aggregate) to political slogans (in percent)

No.	As soon as the opportunity arises, I will leave for permanent residence in another country ... Define your attitude to the following slogans:	Krasnodar Territory	Stavropol Territory	Astrakhan region	KBR	Rostov region	Overall
1	Personal freedom and human rights are inviolable!	97.9	94.0	94.4	93.0	94.6	90.9
2	Yankee go home!	23.9	39.3	37.5	63.4	35.2	38.0
3	All people are equal by nature!	91.7	79.8	90.3	85.9	83.0	85.6
4	Give our pensions back!	88.6	82.2	81.9	85.9	83.0	84.2
5	Ivan, shut your soul!	39.6	39.2	38.9	64.8	39.4	43.1
6	For gender equality!	71.9	67.9	79.2	77.5	70.9	72.7
7	"Our hearts demand changes! .."	82.3	85.7	80.6	90.1	82.5	83.8
8	All the troubles of Russia are the result of a Judeo-Masonic conspiracy	27.1	34.6	37.5	52.1	40.6	38.0
9	Stop feeding other nations!	78.1	76.2	72.2	67.6	77.0	74.9
10	Freedom to the Internet!	91.7	88.1	88.9	81.7	90.9	88.9
11	Let's save nature for our children!	93.7	91.7	95.8	87.3	92.7	92.4
12	Russia is only for Russians!	29.1	22.6	15.2	29.6	32.2	27.1
13	Whether it is right or not, this is my Fatherland!	35.5	38.1	40.3	40.8	32.2	36.3
14	Eat pineapples, chew grouse, your last day is coming, bourgeois!	42.7	35.8	41.7	55.0	45.5	44.0
15	Slavs of all countries, unite!	37.5	33.4	32.0	40.9	38.2	36.5
16	Feelings of atheists can be insulted too!	67.7	75.0	66.6	80.3	70.9	71.7

The data in Table 04 show all the contradictory ideological ideas of students, which combine liberal values of personal freedom and human rights with xenophobic and even racist slogans "Yankee go home!", "Stop feeding other peoples!" and "All the troubles of Russia are the result of a Judeo-Masonic conspiracy." It is the comprehension of this contradiction in previous studies that has led to the development of the concept of cognitive-ideological matrices. The concept implies appeal to more fundamental values of individual and group consciousness in explaining the formation of ideological concepts. In the case of the ideological context of emigration attitudes, it makes sense to turn to the analysis of deep values of identity, as well as basic everyday values (Tables 05 and 06).

Table 5. Linking the attitude towards emigration with self-identification (in percent)

No.	As soon as the opportunity arises, I will leave for permanent residence in another country ... To what extent do you feel a sense of unity with other people? For me, "we" is ...:	Krasnodar Territory	Stavropol Territory	Astrakhan region	KBR	Rostov region	Overall
1	People who share my views on life	66.7	63.1	59.7	54.9	62.4	62.0
2	People close to me in their political views	32.3	20.2	25.0	29.6	27.9	27.3
3	The inhabitants of my city	18.8	21.4	23.6	23.9	12.7	18.7

4	Russian citizens	21.9	21.4	19.4	21.1	15.8	19.1
5	People of my nationality	20.8	26.2	18.1	35.2	17.0	22.2
6	People of the same religion with me	22.9	14.3	13.9	29.6	12.1	17.5
7	People who speak the same language as I	25.0	26.2	23.6	39.6	20.0	25.1
8	Inhabitants of the whole Earth	39.6	39.3	41.7	33.8	37.0	38.0
9	People close to me in terms of culture	37.5	38.1	38.9	35.2	31.5	35.3

As can be seen from the data given in Table 05, students of the Kabardino-Balkarian Republic are distinguished by the way of self-identification: they are less inclined to identify themselves with the inhabitants of the whole Earth, but their national, religious and linguistic identities are much more significant for them. It is also interesting to note that the students of the Krasnodar Territory and the Rostov Region turned out to be the least attached to the inhabitants of their own cities. While in the case with Krasnodar this can somehow be explained by migration processes (since the beginning of the 2000s, the city has actually doubled the number of residents via immigration), the lack of urban patriotism among Rostovites needs additional research.

Table 6. Linking the attitude towards emigration with everyday values (in percent, a multiple choice question – no more than three answer options)

No.	As soon as the opportunity arises, I will leave for permanent residence in another country ... Which of the following do you consider the most significant for yourself personally?	Krasnodar Territory	Stavropol Territory	Astrakhan region	KBR	Rostov region	Overall
1	Nice, friendly family	72.9	77.4	68.1	76.1	66.7	71.4
2.	Interesting job	64.6	53.6	51.4	52.1	63.0	58.4
3	Material wealth	75.0	73.8	77.8	67.6	73.9	74.1
4	Civil peace within the country	11.5	16.7	15.3	7.0	9.1	11.5
5	World peace	25.0	25.0	34.7	31.0	26.7	28.0
6	Ecological well-being	27.1	20.2	31.9	12.7	28.5	24.9
7	Social activity (for example, participation in a volunteer effort, etc.)	2.1	7.1	4.2	2.8	2.4	3.5
8	Other	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.4	3.6	1.4

Comparing the emigration attitudes with the basic values in Table 06, it can be seen that the students of the KBR and the Stavropol Territory give the most preference to family values. But at the same time, for KBR students, unlike all others, the values of material wealth and environmental well-being are of the least importance. This is due to the above-mentioned specificity of self-identification of these students. And in turn, it can explain the extremely low level of positive attitude towards emigration as revealed among students of the Stavropol Territory and KBR. However, while in the further case socio-economic factors are also of some importance (growth of the regional economy, increasing living standards, etc.), in the case of the KBR, the value-based factors clearly outweigh the socio-economic ones.

7. Conclusion

We see that ideological values and attitudes are themselves a consequence of the action of a much deeper mechanisms of cognitive-value matrices, at the level of which proto-ideological elements are

formed, which, in turn, form the individual's tendency to perceive certain ideological values. In the example considered, the ideologically conditioned attitude towards emigration from the country has been formed in the context of the values of the liberal and social democratic ideologies, which, in turn, turned out to be consonant with those proto-ideological concepts of self-identification that had been formed in the process of early socialization of student youth.

Acknowledgments

The study was performed with financial support of Russian Foundation for basic research under the scientific project No. 18-011-00906 a.

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