

"Pension capital" in representations of large cities residents: the experience of sociological analysis

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Abstract. The article discusses the possibility of applying the theories of human and social capital to the sociological study of "pension capital". The authors methodologically substantiate that "pension social capital" in modern Russia already has certain institutional characteristics. On the example of an applied sociological study carried out with the financial support of a grant from the Russian Foundation for Basic Research, it is revealed that the public opinion of residents of large cities is dominated by attitudes towards paternalistic, traditional ways of forming pension capital. Responsibility for the future provision of pensions is massively entrusted to state institutions by the townspeople. Alternative sources of pension savings are perceived by the population as secondary, not enjoying special trust. The team of authors comes to the conclusion that among active citizens, groups are formed that have a special potential for future active formation of social pension capital.

1 Introduction

Problems related to the study of human capital are quite popular in the mainstream of sociological research. However, no attempt was made to present pension capital as a special form of social capital in the subject field of sociological research. The authors believe that pension social capital, in addition to the widespread monetary interpretation, integrates a set of specific features. The latter include obtaining special social and professional competencies, long-term investment methods, active use of the opportunities and infrastructure of the urban environment of a large city, and etc. Social pension capital, according to the author's position, has a number of institutional properties and the potential for pro-Western institutionalization.

Purpose of the article: to consider the possibility of applying the theory of human capital to the analysis of social pension investment. The tasks facing the team of authors: to present the range of properties of social pension capital, to analyze the opinion of residents of large cities regarding their attitude to the methods of forming pension capital.

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2 Study Methods

Currently, the concepts of the neoinstitutional approach, which puts social institutions and the study of a person's model and his/her potential at the center of the analysis, are actively disseminated.

In his/her functioning, a person is connected with society and is built into the socio-cultural environment, which actualizes the question of the role of social institutions in formation and change of human behavior, since only under certain conditions can a person's ability be considered human capital.

Human capital is defined as the stock of skills, knowledge available to everyone, investments in which are such factors as education, mobility, health, work experience, information, and etc.

The founders in the study of the formation and analysis of human capital problems were such scientists as G. Becker [6], M. Blaug, P. Bourdieu [9], E. Denison, T. Schultz, J. Kendrick, R. Layard, M. Fisher. Also, M. Clarke, F. Liszt, G.D. McLeod, A. Marshall, T. Winstein, J. S. Walsh, W. Farrah and others made significant contributions to development of theories of human capital.

In Russian references, mainly economic ones, human capital was considered as the production ability of a person by such scientists as V.S. Goylo, S.A. Dyatlov [11], R.I. Kapelyushnikov [12], S.A. Kurgan [10], G.I. Novolodskaya [13], L.G. Simkina, E.D. Tsyrenova and others.

In accordance with the works of F. Liszt, the main wealth of the nation is "mental capital", which is understood as achievements and discoveries in science and art.

According to G. Becker [8] and I. Thomson [5], when investing certain forces and material resources in one of the factors in the formation of human capital, the subjects expect the corresponding return from it.

Other scientists J. S. Walsh, J. S. Mill, B. Fine [2] understood human capital as the ability of an individual to education, work, his/her qualifications, skills, and etc. R. Dornbusch, S. Fischer, K. Shmanlezi attributed the spiritual and worldview characteristics of a person, his/her labor abilities and moral and ethical attitudes to human capital. The leading role of the personality traits of the individual, the willingness to take responsibility in difficult situations and the orientation towards the social environment of a person is indicated.

Human capital has become widespread in the theories of the neoinstitutional approach, among such authors as V. Hamilton, R. Coase and D. North [14], G. Myrdal, O. Williamson, J. Hodgson, T. Eggertson V.V. Volchik, R.I. Kapelyushnikov [12], Ya.I. Kuzminov, D.S. Lvov, R.M. Nureyev, V.V. Radaev [15], A.E. Shastitko, since it is in it that it is possible to more accurately determine the range of components that have a major impact on the reproduction of human capital.

There is no generally accepted classification of the components of human potential, but G. Becker [7] singles out the leading components of education, health, professional qualifications, motivation, and the possession of information. I. Ilyinsky emphasizes education, culture and health. V. Martinkevich identifies more difficult parameters: responsibility, sociability, honesty, collectivism and others. L. Thurow includes respect for political and social processes in the components of human potential. Therefore, the components of human capital are difficult to measure separately, but together they can reflect the social and economic potential of a person and society.

The views of such authors as A. Smith, J. St. Mill, T. Malthus, and A. Marshall, who studied the influence of social institutions of education, upbringing, family on formation of human capital deserve attention. They believed that with rational use of a person's capital in the social plan, it can lead to an increase in material well-being. The concepts of the

neoclassical approach have shown that when describing human behavior and human capital, it is impossible to ignore the role of the social sphere.

Within the framework of the concepts of human capital, social capital acquires the greatest importance, which is a set of social institutions and norms adopted in a particular community, the return on which is mostly intangible.

Social capital is formed at three levels with the help of social institutions. So, at the micro level, such institutions are the family and the immediate social environment, at the meso level – the institutions of local government, corporate culture, social groups, at the macro level – the institutions of upbringing, education, religion, health care, entrepreneurship and others.

The study of social capital is an urgent direction in the social sciences, but the current state of study in this direction is still characterized by a variety of methodological approaches and the absence of a single concept. Conventionally, two directions in the study of social capital can be distinguished: economic and sociological, within the framework of which a certain systematization of concepts takes place and the following classification of approaches to the analysis of social capital is highlighted in sociology.

a) the communitarian approach – social capital is considered as a set of social communities and classes, organizations characterized by their own norms, trust, social ties (authors R. Putnam, F. Fukuyama [3]);

b) the network approach – the main component of the source of social capital is the social network (authors R. Barth, N. Lin [4], J. Field [1]);

c) institutional approach – social capital includes social communities, social networks that are dependent on the state of the institutional environment (authors F. Kiefer, T. Skokpol, J. V. Gunning, P. Collier)

d) synergetic approach – includes the provisions of the institutional and network approaches, but with the proviso that the study of social capital shall be carried out at several levels: macro and micro levels (authors M. Woolcock, D. Narayan, P. Evans).

Therefore, the basis of social capital is belonging to a social group and intragroup trust, which contributes to increased productivity, production activity and achievement of intragroup goals. In addition, the more developed social networks of personal relationships, the higher the chances of reproduction of economic capital. Therefore, social capital influences other forms of capital and contributes to development of the welfare and social responsibility of the nation.

One of the varieties of social capital will be pension capital, the characteristics of which are reflected in economic, legal and political scientific concepts as a financial mechanism, a source of investment in human capital, an instrument for implementation of citizens' rights and guarantees.

3 Study Results

Sociological study was carried out by the team of authors in 2020 by the method of polling able-bodied citizens. The study used quota selection (N-1050), gender and age were used as quota features.

The data of a quantitative survey of residents of large cities indicate the prevalence of traditional views on the institution of pension (old age), which is perceived by citizens as a result guaranteed by the state upon reaching certain indicators (age and length of service). Wherein, 60.1 % of respondents plan to receive a pension and continue to work, and every fourth (24.4 %) plans to immediately retire and stop working.

Pension provision is perceived by the townspeople as a given by the state and its obligation (86.5 % of townspeople agree with this statement), and the size of the pension itself shall be close to the average wage (83.0 %). Undoubtedly, this paternalistic position is

facilitated by the existing system of pension provision in Russia (old-age pension is solidary, accumulative, accrued by the pension fund of Russia).

In the opinion of the townspeople, the role of the state in pension provision is great. The reasons for this situation are the difficulties with accumulation of the necessary amounts for a decent pension by an ordinary person, the formed state social institutions of pension provision (for old age), as well as the conditions that must be created by the state so that people can form their pension savings on their own (Table 1).

Table 1. The consent of the townspeople with some statements about pensions (*in % of the respondents line by line*).

Statements	Agreeing with the statement		
	agree	it is hard to say	disagree
Pension is a necessary and compulsory social security from the state	86.5	11.5	2.0
The state shall provide citizens with a pension at a level close to the average wage in the country	83.0	9.8	7.2
It is unrealistic for an ordinary person to save up for a decent pension	60.9	24.4	14.7
In retirement, you shall rely on government agencies and social institutions	56.0	28.7	15.2
The state must provide opportunities for self-accumulation of pensions	52.3	32.5	15.2
It is better to continue working as long as you have the strength and desire, and only then retire.	51.4	25.9	22.7
Better to retire early and decide for yourself what to do	51.1	37.4	11.5
The size of the pension shall depend on the activity of the person himself/herself	43.4	27.3	29.3
Pensions are everyone's personal business, and the current pension system is a relic of the old system.	40.5	36.8	22.7
The retirement age must be fixed	39.7	32.8	27.6

Continuation of table 1.

In retirement, you shall rely only on yourself and your savings	29.9	23.3	46.8
Creating retirement savings is a job for young people	24.4	43.1	32.5
The retirement age is a restriction for those who want to keep working	21.3	28.7	50.0
In retirement, you need to rely on your children and other relatives	12.1	17.5	70.4
Pensions shall be awarded only to groups in particular need: disabled people, orphans, and etc.	5.5	10.6	83.9

Refusal of state pensions, shifting care of pensioners onto children and other relatives, as well as the appointment of pensions only for groups in particularly needy are perceived by the townspeople in a negative way.

At the same time, some guidelines regarding old-age pensions have ceased to be unambiguous. For example, the townspeople are not ready to categorically assert that with the appointment of a pension and reaching the retirement age, labor activity ceases, and the size of the pension is a value that is not related to the activity of the employee himself/herself, and is only a matter for young people.

Citizens understand that retirement savings are the result of many factors. Some of them have a connection with the activity of the workers themselves (length of service, level of earnings, activity in formation and management of pension savings), however, and the role of the state is still significant. Only 29.9 % of townspeople are ready to rely only on themselves for retirement.

There is no doubt that the current pension system in Russia requires a revision towards greater activity and awareness of the workers themselves. This is evidenced by the demographic agenda, which promises a shortage of working-age workers, at whose expense pension payments are now provided to current pensioners. The socio-economic processes of stratification and mobility in the Russian labor market, associated with the growing requirements for the quality of the workforce, the professionalism of workers, which implies active participation in their professional destiny of the employee himself/herself. He/she is ready not only to give the accumulated skills and knowledge in exchange for salary, but also to invest part of the earned funds for his/her future, including retirement.

The practice of independent, purposeful, long-term formation of pension capital has not yet become a routine for most Russians, which, unfortunately, only contributes to the postponement of solving the problem of the quality of life of pensioners, and also contributes to accumulation of certain social tension in society.

That is why the townspeople traditionally trust the well-established methods of forming pension capital - work in state institutions, civil service, which allows them to receive preferential pensions, additional payments and benefits. Official employment with white wages and regular contributions to the pension fund by the employer (Table 2).

Table 2: Citizens' confidence in the existing methods of forming pension capital (*in % to the respondents, by rows*)

Ways to form pension capital	Trust level		
	I trust	50/50	I do not trust
Work in the civil service/in the law enforcement system/service in the army, and etc., giving, upon reaching length of service, the right to a preferential pension, additional payments, departmental benefits	62.4	29.6	8.0
Work at an official place of work, with a white wage, registration of a work book and/or employment contract and regular contributions to the pension fund by the employer	59.5	29.9	10.6
White tax reporting (in the case of individual entrepreneurs, LLCs and other forms of doing business)	42.8	42.0	15.2
Transfer of maternity capital in connection with the birth of a child to the mother's retirement account	39.1	34.2	26.7
Corporate pension capital (contributions are made and paid by the employer)	27.6	47.1	25.3
Conclusion of an investment life insurance contract	22.4	50.3	27.3
Participation in the program of state co-financing of pensions	19.0	50.9	30.2
Independent contributions to a non-state pension fund	15.8	45.7	38.5

Wherein, other methods of forming pension capital (such as, for example, transferring maternity capital to the mother's retirement account or corporate programs for forming pension capital) are of limited use, which, perhaps, determines the lack of trust (associated, rather, with a lack of experience) to the practice of using them.

Already 13.2 % of city dwellers create their own pension capital, 39.1 % plan to create it in the future. Therefore, just over half of the survey participants have intentions related to purposeful concern for the retirement future. A third of the townspeople (35.1 %) did not think about pension savings, and 12.6 % do not intend to create pension savings. Most often, a more specific position (I create - I do not plan to create pension capital) is shown by men, women more often either plan to start creating their own pension capital or have not thought about it. Probably, it is women who need more thorough information about the ways and means of taking care of their retirement future.

The desire to feel more confident and secure (58.5 %), as well as to be able to travel and spend time in interesting places (51.6 %), is leading as the goal of creating pension capital. Probably, this somewhat idealized picture of life in retirement "like in Europe" will be somewhat corrected by more prosaic tasks, which, however, are also mentioned by the townspeople. These are such goals as the ability to maintain their housing and pay for it (47.3 %), as well as be able to take care of their health in retirement (44.1 %).

In general, the idea of creating your own pension capital meets with moderately positive responses. The average mark on a 5-point scale (where 1 is the most negative assessment, and 5 is the most positive assessment of the idea) is 3.43 points.

Most often, a decrease in confidence in existing methods of forming pension capital is associated with the actions of the authorities (in particular, the "freezing" of pension savings and an increase in the retirement age), which is noted by 72.1 % of citizens, as well as corruption in the financial sector and government bodies (64.4 %), the lack of clear control over the activities of the Russian pension fund and the lack of transparency in its activities in the field of pension savings (57.5 % and 52.6 %, respectively).

The majority (64.2 % of city dwellers) fear that their savings will simply "burn out" and all efforts will be in vain. Inflation is worse for the townspeople than fraudsters, deception by the state and a change in the rules of the game, as well as their own insufficiently effective actions to manage their savings.

State guarantees of the safety of savings (50.4 % of respondents), stability of the conditions for formation of pension savings for a long time (49.9 %), confidence that the accumulated pension funds can be used independently and on their own could definitely help to overcome negative attitudes. discretion (47.0 %), clear "rules of the game" and the creation of pension savings (46.1 %) and an increase in the amount of information from government organizations on formation of pension savings (45.8 %).

4 Discussion of Results

At the theoretical level, pension capital for the first time is supposed to be considered within the framework of sociological theories as a kind of social capital, since the issues of the retirement future, pension investment and formation of pension capital seem to be a relevant area of study in modern social processes.

Institutional and neoinstitutional approaches make it possible to prove the hypothesis that modern pension investment and formation of pension capital is either a social institution, or there are significant institutional features that make it possible to become such in the future.

Based on the heuristic potential of the institutional approach, it is substantiated that the institutional field of the institutions of the social sphere is currently undergoing transformation. Among the new, established institutions of the social sphere is the institution of pension investment, defined as a social institution that presupposes voluntary (personally initiated investment) or external (initiated by the employer) investment of financial resources in a future pension, regulated by a set of certain legal and social norms.

The authors of the article believe that the key features of the institution of pension investment are:

- the financial nature of investment (investment of funds, not human capital);
- a character imposed from above (mainly by the state).

The financial nature of investment is mainly associated with the lack of opportunities in the minds of Russians to invest in a future pension by accumulating human capital (obtaining a new set of competencies and using it after retirement; reproduction of resource opportunities through relatives; engaging in entrepreneurial activity, and etc.).

The nature imposed from above, on the one hand, is due to the mandatory nature of investment arising from the current pension legislation and legal norms, on the other hand, imposed by political will in the absence of investment traditions, social solidarity of generations in terms of the pension issue, and low public confidence in financial institutions.

The functions of the institution of pension investment include: economic – investing in one's own future pension; reproductive – ensuring the smooth functioning and development of the institution; the function of solidarity and continuity of generations is to ensure the

retirement present of current pensioners; human-creative – formation of financial and human capital, ensuring a decent standard of living in retirement.

Recently, at the level of applied studies, similar subject issues have been published on the pages of leading sociological magazines [16, 17]. It can be assumed that a separate area of sociological knowledge related to “pension problems” is beginning to form and stand apart, however, it is still premature to talk about its full institutionalization.

5 Conclusion

Theoretical consideration of the concept of "pension capital" allows to significantly expand the categorical apparatus of individual branches of sociological knowledge. Based on the current state of the study on the topic presented, the authors define social pension capital as special social and investment practices for formation of a future pension that have institutional characteristics.

Modern city dwellers are beginning to develop potential ways of forming future pension capital, however, social practices are limited to traditional forms: “white” salary, corporate concern on the part of the employer, employment in the public sector.

The main limiting mechanisms for formation of pension capital are the low level of confidence in investment financial instruments, the lack of a deep understanding of the state's pension policy, and insufficient awareness of the potential capitalization of resources.

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