

FACTORS GENERATING SOCIAL PROBLEMS OF THE RUSSIAN ARCTIC'S MONO-TOWNS

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The purpose of the research is to reveal the system and long-range problems of mono-towns in the Russian Arctic. All Russian Arctic's mono-towns are systematically at hazard areas. The growth of social problems is associated with a number of factors. Some of them are inherent in all mono-towns of the Russian Federation's Arctic Zone. We call these factors objective. The other factors are inherent only in some mono-towns and they are associated with the imperfection of municipal administration. We call these factors subjective. We have emphasized some main universal lines for resolving social problems in the Russian Arctic's mono-towns.

Keywords. Arctic, the Russian Federation's Arctic Zone, mono-town, social problems.

Introduction

The creation of mono-towns was one of the principles of the Arctic's development under Soviet rule. Currently, social problems in mono-towns in the Russian Federation's Arctic Zone are particularly large. Social problems inherent in all mono-towns (Kryukova et al, 2014; Ushakov & Chich-Jen, 2018), are burdened here with such harsh environmental conditions as: short summers, cold temperatures, lack of oxygen due to the high latitudes. In addition, geographical remoteness of hard-to-reach settlements leads to the formation of high consumer prices. Therefore, the reduction of income which affects the Russian Arctic's inhabitants is particularly negative.

The purpose of the research is to reveal the system and long-range problems of mono-towns in the Russian Arctic.

To achieve the object of the research it is necessary to solve the complex of following tasks:

- to group the factors that generate social problems of mono-towns in the Russian Arctic on the basis of subjective and objective genesis;
- to present main lines of resolving social problems in Russian Arctic's mono-towns.

In our research we have proceeded from the following hypotheses:

- firstly, all urban and rural settlements in the Russian Federation's Arctic Zone with mono-industry economy carry out activity in certain conditions, which predetermine the objective nature of social problems; the management of these factors is impossible;

- secondly, the current economic situation and prospects of its development determine the subjective nature of social problems of mono-towns in the Russian Arctic; for all that, there may be universal management principles, aimed at solving social problems.

The objects of the research are mono-towns or mono-profile municipal units of the Russian Arctic (On the development of the Arctic zone...). This category includes settlements with the following characteristics:

- location in the territory of the Russian Federation's Arctic Zone;
- status of urban settlements – towns and urban-type communities;
- population exceeds 3,000 inhabitants;
- 20% or more people are employed in the same city-forming enterprises;
- primary activity of city-forming enterprises is mining operations and manufacture or processing of industrial products as well.

Taking into account the stability of conceptual theses of the development and lack of contradictions among policy and management, most of modern studies concerning problematics of social and economic development of the North are aimed at the solution of applied problems (Black et al, 2011; Howe et al, 2014; Samarina et al, 2019b; Sinha, 2018; Skufin et al, 2019; Spence, 2014; Torre & Wallet, 2014).

The vital activity of the population in mono-towns and the production activities of main city-forming enterprises are closely related (Samarina et al, 2019a; Spence, 2014; Trippel & Otto, 2009). It's not a coincidence that in addition to the terms "mono-town" and "mono-profile municipal unit" the term "company town" is widely used in scientific literature (Agrawal et al, 2010; Dinius & Vergara, 2011; Green, 2012; Tony, 2002). As soon as major enterprises reduce production speed and cut or even stops paying wages, the vital activity of the population deteriorates (Bartik, 2009; Rodrik, 2008). Many residents of towns do not have the ability to leave and continue to live in a dying single-industry town (Gill, 2015; Rudacille, 2011; Wood & Taylor, 2004).

Only state support can help solving these systemic problems. Scientists around the world agree that mono-towns' problems cannot be solved without direct state participation (Dale, 2002; Hinderink & Titus, 2002; Shastitko & Fakhitova, 2015). Our research corroborates these conclusions as well (Samarina et al, 2018a; Skufina et al, 2015; Skufina et al, 2019a; Skufina et al, 2019b).

Key findings of the research

All Russian Arctic's mono-towns of them are systematically at hazard area. The growth of social problems is associated with certain factors. Some of them are inherent in all mono-towns of the Russian Federation's Arctic Zone. We call these factors objective. Among these are:

- dependence on global and Russian economic development trends;
- extreme climatic conditions;
- remoteness from Russia's financial and administrative center;
- low product line diversification;
- direct dependence of the population vital activity on the of city-forming enterprises;
- high environmental vulnerability.

Other factors are inherent only in some mono-towns and are associated with the imperfection of municipal administration. We call these factors subjective. Among these are:

- gap in social indicators of the center and peripheral mono-profile settlements;
- lack of necessary social institutions;
- imperfection of the relationship system “city - city-forming enterprise”;
- lack of municipal budgetary funds for municipal social policy realization;
- low quality and insufficient quantity of skilled labor force.

Thus, our research shows that mono-towns of the Russian Arctic have similar social problems of objective genesis. Among the objective factors it is impossible to manage only climatic and geographical ones because their influence only needs to be taken into account when developing social policy. Such factors as “dependence on global and Russian economic development trends”, “low production diversification”, “direct dependence of the population’s vital activity on the activities the city-forming enterprises” are changeable.

At first glance social problems of subjective genesis in mono-towns are different. But, if we analyze them more carefully, we can see they are all caused by not quite effective management. Therefore, such problems can also be resolved as well with the active state support.

We have emphasized some main universal lines for resolving social problems in the Russian Arctic’s mono-towns. The implementation of measures providing these lines will allow solving both objective and subjective social problems of mono-towns of the Russian Federation’s Arctic Zone.

Firstly, the realization of active employment policy, i.e. diversifying of labor market, the providing of the population’s employment and self-employment. The employment policy involves the following measures:

- creating of municipal bank of vacancies, seasonal and temporary jobs;
- monitoring of municipal labour market for forecasting sectoral and qualification-structure of labour demand;
- improving the system of professional orientation (formation of a system of high quality multidisciplinary specialized secondary education, organization of training on probation in order to jobless citizens, job-seekers, including graduates of educational institutions, and also workers will gain operational experience in case of any threat of their mass dismissal);
- improvement of the conditions and labour protection of employees, improvement of safety level in workplaces;
- housing provision (definition of methods and sources of financing the acquisition of housing, its construction in accordance with the map of population distribution) and guarantees of health and social services;
- providing with educational services (the provision of places in preschools and schools) and employment (including of migrants into the process of vocational guidance, vocational training, retraining and improvement of professional skills).

Secondly, improving the comfort of the living environment, creating comfortable living conditions taking into account the specifics of mono-profile municipal units of the Russian Federation’s Arctic Zone. The following measures are involved here:

- development of civil engineering infrastructure (reconstruction of heat supply, water-supply and water disposal networks, electric power supply; put apartment houses to rights according to sanitary and engineering standards);
- ensuring of transport accessibility (enforcement of road activity concerning highways of the municipal units, arrangement of conditions for providing freight services

and organization of transport service for population, providing affordable transport services, providing of transport accessibility in remote areas);

- improving the ecological situation (reduction of atmospheric emission of harmful substances, reclaiming of soils disturbed because of city-forming enterprises activities; commissioning of a solid domestic waste processing complex; construction of wastewater treatment facilities at production areas of city-forming enterprises).

Thus, one of the main problems of most mono-profile settlements in the Russian Federation's Arctic Zone is the underestimation of social development priorities, producing disparities of socio-economic development of the Arctic regions as a whole.

Therefore, the basis of development of mono-towns in the Russian Federation's Arctic Zone is a model for sustainable development. In its framework social and economic policies should be aimed at a balanced solution of socio-economic problems of the municipal development and resource environment protection taking into account specific features of the territories of the Russian Federation's Arctic Zone.

Conclusion

The carried out research have made it possible to draw the following conclusions:

1. Among the objective factors of social problems generation of the Russian Federation's Arctic Zone it is not possible to control only climatic and geographical factors. It is necessary to take into account their effect when developing social policy. Such factors as "global and Russian trends of economic development dependence, low production diversification, city-forming enterprises activities population's dependence " are changeable. This refutes the authors' first hypothesis.

2. Russian Arctic's mono-towns are differentiated according to economic characteristics and, therefore, have different social problems of subjective genesis. However, there are universal management principles, aimed at solving social problems. Among these are active employment policy and improving the comfort of the habitat. Thus, our second hypothesis is confirmed.

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