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TRANSFORMATION OF CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CAPITAL IN RURAL AREAS UNDER CONDITIONS OF LABOR MIGRATION

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Annotation. This article provides a theoretical analysis of how children's social capital is transformed under labor migration in rural areas. It examines how the family, extended family and mahalla, peer and educational institution, and transnational forms of social capital are weakened, redistributed or expanded under the influence of parents' prolonged stay abroad. Showing that migration is at the same time a source of financial opportunity and of social and emotional deprivation for children, the article proposes directions for micro-, meso- and macro-level interventions for social work professionals. The article is of practical relevance to social workers, teachers, psychologists and members of the mahalla seven.
Keywords: labor migration, social capital, rural family, children of migrant parents, social work, case management.

QISHLOQ HUDUDLARIDA MEHNAT MIGRATSIYASI SHAROITIDA BOLALARNING IJTIMOIY KAPITALI TRANSFORMATSIYASI

Annotatsiya. Ushbu maqolada qishloq hududlarida mehnat migratsiyasi sharoitida bolalarning ijtimoiy kapitali qanday o'zgarishi (transformatsiyasi) nazariy jihatdan tahlil qilinadi. Ijtimoiy kapitalning oilaviy, kengaytirilgan oila va mahalla, tengdoshlar va ta'lim muassasasi hamda transmilliy aloqalar shakllari ota-onaning uzoq muddat chet elda bo'lishi ta'sirida qanday zaiflashishi, qayta taqsimlanishi yoki kengayishi yoritiladi. Migratsiya bolalar uchun bir vaqtning o'zida moliyaviy imkoniyat va ijtimoiy-hissiy tanqislik manbai ekani ko'rsatilib, ijtimoiy ish mutaxassislari uchun mikro, mezo va makro darajadagi aralashuv yo'nalishlari taklif etiladi. Maqola ijtimoiy ish mutaxassislari, pedagoglar, psixologlar va mahalla yettiligi a'zolari uchun amaliy ahamiyatga ega.
Kalit so'zlar: mehnat migratsiyasi, ijtimoiy kapital, qishloq oilasi, ota-onasi migrant bolalar, ijtimoiy ish, keys-menejment.

TRANSFORMATION OF CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CAPITAL IN RURAL AREAS UNDER LABOR MIGRATION

Abstract. The article analyzes how children's social capital is transformed in rural areas when parents engage in labor migration. It shows that family capital weakens, extended-family and

mahalla capital is redistributed, while transnational and financial capital expands. Directions for social work interventions at the micro, meso and macro levels are proposed.

Key words: labor migration, social capital, rural family, children of migrants, social work.

Introduction. Over the past thirty years, labor migration has become one of the most important sources of income for rural families in Uzbekistan. Limited employment opportunities in rural areas, scarcity of land and water resources, and employment problems among young people lead one parent, or in many cases both, to go abroad for several months or even years. Remittances help families cover housing, education and health care costs, but at the same time the child is separated from his or her parents in everyday life. In the international literature, such children are referred to as "children left behind" [4; 5].

The economic effects of labor migration have been widely studied; however, its impact on the child's social environment, network of trusting relationships and supportive ties, that is, on children's social capital, has not been sufficiently systematically addressed from a social work perspective. Yet for a child, social capital is not merely a theoretical concept: it determines whom the child can talk to, whom to turn to when a problem occurs, who supports the child at school, and what ties the child will be able to rely on in the future.

Uzbekistan's social protection system is being developed consistently: under the "From Poverty to Prosperity" program, a procedure has been introduced for identifying and supporting low-income families through the mahalla seven (mahalla yettiligi), while the "Inson" social service centers envisage the use of case management technology in working with families in difficult social situations. Guarantees of children's rights are enshrined in the relevant law adopted in 2008 and in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child [9; 10]. At the same time, children of migrant parents often remain outside the "risk group" because their families are financially secure. The aim of this article is to conceptually substantiate how children's social capital changes under labor migration in rural areas and to define directions for social work practice.

Literature review. The concept of social capital was interpreted by P. Bourdieu as the sum of actual and potential resources available to an individual through a durable network of relationships [1]. J. Coleman studied it in the context of a child's education and development: in his view, a child's social capital is formed primarily through relationships within the family (parents' time, attention and supervision) and through community ties outside the family (school, mahalla, neighbors) [2]. A. Portes emphasized that social capital can have not only positive but in some cases also constraining consequences [12], while R. Putnam revealed the importance of collective trust and networks of mutual assistance [3]. U. Bronfenbrenner's ecological approach proposes viewing child development as the interaction of micro (family), meso (school, mahalla) and macro (state policy, culture) systems [8]. This approach is especially convenient for social work, because it makes it possible to clearly define the levels of intervention.

In migration research, the concept of the "transnational family" occupies a special place: even when parents and children live in different countries, family ties continue through telephone, video calls and remittances [4]. Accordingly, under migration the child's social capital should be regarded not as a simple "loss" but as a change in its form, carriers and quality, that is, as a transformation.

Research methodology. The article is theoretical and conceptual in nature. Foreign scholarly sources on social capital and migration, as well as Uzbekistan's regulatory and legal documents in the field of social protection, were studied using the content analysis method. Through comparative analysis, the ways in which different forms of social capital (family, community, peer and

transnational) change under the influence of migration were compared. The conclusions obtained on the basis of a systemic approach were grouped into micro, meso and macro levels. The propositions presented in the article should be empirically tested in the future through surveys and in-depth interviews in rural mahallas.

Analysis and results. The literature review shows that parental migration does not affect all forms of a child's social capital equally. The changes in the main forms are considered below; the generalized results are presented in Table 1 and Figure 1.

1. Family capital weakens. According to Coleman, the physical absence of parents undermines the "structural" conditions necessary for mutual trust, supervision and regular conversation with the child [2]. Contact with migrant parents is mostly remote, and this cannot fully replace everyday emotional support, attention to schoolwork and control over behavior. Parreñas's studies note the gender aspects of a mother's departure, which is especially difficult for children and is associated with a lack of emotional closeness [4]. In rural settings, because the "family without a mother" model breaks traditional gender roles, such families are often judged by the community as well, which increases the child's risk of stigmatization.

2. Extended family and mahalla capital is redistributed. In Uzbek villages, when parents leave, the child is usually entrusted to the care of grandparents, an uncle, an aunt or close relatives. This reflects the protective potential of the traditional kinship and mahalla network; however, the older generation performing the caregiving role may lack sufficient preparation in information technology, modern educational requirements and adolescent psychology. In addition, because the caregiving family is busy with its own children, the opportunity to give special attention to the "left-behind" child is limited. In this way, capital does not disappear, but its quality and orientation change.

3. Peer and school capital is under a twofold influence. Remittances can improve a child's school attendance, access to learning materials and supplementary education; studies conducted in rural El Salvador and Pakistan showed a positive effect of remittances on continued schooling [7; 13]. However, other studies have noted that the absence of parental involvement, especially the departure of the mother, can negatively affect children's academic performance and attendance [5; 6]. Failure to attend parent meetings at school, weakening contact with the teacher, and the risk of being singled out among peers as a "migrant child" weaken an important link in the child's social capital.

4. Transnational and financial capital expands. Digital communication tools, networks of relatives and acquaintances abroad, as well as remittances, open new opportunities for the child: an idea of foreign languages and the labor market, knowledge of future migration pathways, and connections outside the community. However, part of this capital is "mediated" for the child, that is, it is accessed through the parents. In many cases, an early orientation toward material values and a tendency to accept migration as the only path to the future develop in the child.

Table 1. Transformation of the forms of a child's social capital under migration (theoretical generalization)

Form of capital	In a traditional rural family	Change under migration	Main risk / opportunity
Family	Daily contact with parents, supervision, emotional closeness	Contact is remote; supervision and emotional support weaken	Risk: emotional deprivation, behavioral problems
Extended family and mahalla	Grandparents, relatives and neighbors provide additional support	The caregiving function passes to relatives; responsibility is redistributed	Risk: lack of attention. Opportunity: broad protection network
Peers and school	Parents' contact with the school, peer environment	Parental involvement decreases; "migrant child" stigma is possible	Risk: decline in academic performance. Opportunity: resources from remittances
Transnational and financial	Limited; mostly local	Remittances, digital communication and networks abroad expand	Opportunity: resources and new connections. Risk: early orientation toward migration

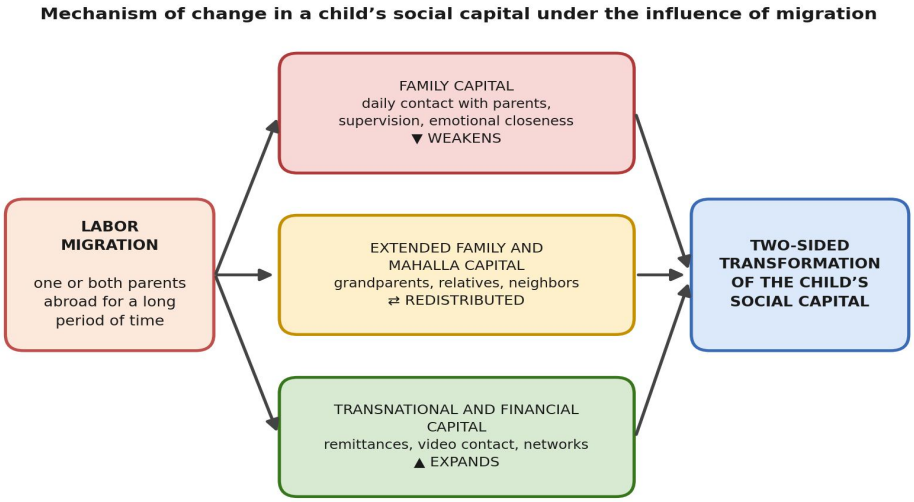


Figure 1. Conceptual scheme of the transformation of a child's social capital under labor migration (author's own development)

5. Factors determining the transformation. Based on the results of international studies, it can be assumed that the direction in which a child's social capital changes depends on several factors: (a) the type of parent who left (father, mother or both); (b) the duration and continuity of migration; (c) the age, education and attitude of the person caring for the child; (d) the child's age and gender; (e) the quality of remote communication; (f) the active participation of the mahalla and

school [4; 5; 6]. Taking these factors into account allows the social worker to identify the "risk group" on the basis of real needs rather than formal criteria.

6. Directions of social work intervention. Drawing on Bronfenbrenner's model, it is advisable to organize work with children of migrant parents at three levels (Table 2). At the micro level, the main task is individual work with each child and the caregiving family; at the meso level, combining school and mahalla resources; and at the macro level, forming a policy and monitoring system that takes into account the children of migrant families.

Table 2. Directions of social work with children of migrant parents by level

Level	Actors	Main measures	Expected result
Micro (child and family)	Social worker, caregiver, child	Needs assessment, case management, counseling with caregivers, a plan for regular video contact with parents	Restoration of emotional support, child's safety
Meso (school and mahalla)	School psychologist, class teacher, mahalla seven, "Inson" centers	Keeping a register of children from migrant families, a mentor system, clubs and peer groups	Strengthening of school and community capital, reduction of stigma
Macro (policy and monitoring)	District and city administration (hokimlik), education and labor authorities, migration agencies	Informing parents before migration, training of caregivers, a social monitoring system	Guaranteeing children's rights, early identification of problems

Conclusion and recommendations. The results of the analysis show that labor migration in rural areas does not destroy a child's social capital but transforms it: family capital weakens, extended family and mahalla capital is redistributed, and transnational and financial capital expands. The child's well-being depends on how these three directions combine. Therefore, it is necessary to include in the risk group also children who are financially secure but emotionally and socially unprotected. The following proposals are put forward:

– keeping a separate record of children of migrant parents by the mahalla seven and the "Inson" centers, and developing an individual support plan for each child;

– strengthening psychological and pedagogical services in schools, and introducing mentoring and peer-work programs for children from migrant families;

– organizing short training courses on upbringing, digital literacy and adolescent psychology for grandparents and relatives who have taken over the care of children;

– holding mandatory counseling sessions with parents before departure for migration on the child's social protection and the caregiver and communication plan;

– empirically testing the conceptual model presented in this article through surveys and interviews in rural mahallas.

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