

Секция «Принятие решений: коммуникативные стратегии и социальные практики»

**Social Policies, Social Practices and Poverty Prevention in Contemporary  
Moscow (the Russian Federation)**

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In the contemporary world, government regulation of social relations is important. Meanwhile, the government aims to promote a social solidarity and a social justice since the opposition between the different social strata and their satisfaction will inevitably arise and fade. Public management should ensure the optimal agreements within the legacy of the state when making decisions. Poverty prevention is one of the major government's issues within the social development. In addition, it assures the stability and economic growth.

Public management in the social sphere in Russia is carried out by the federal authorities and by regions and republics of the Russian Federation, as well as by structural territorial divisions. The regulation of labor issues and related relations (employment and social protection of the population, payment of social unemployment benefits, etc.) is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Labor and Social Development, which also heads the collective labor dispute settlement service. This article provides an analytical analysis of the social practices in poverty prevention in Moscow. Particularly, the paper considers the group who cannot benefit from the policies provided for the poor but still seek protection from the Ministry of Labor and Social Development or other departments.

The practice shows that there are households with incomes above the poverty line who are struggling with life circumstances and pursue themselves as vulnerable or in need. The paper has applied and adjusted the USA's concept of 'near poor' (El Nasser, 2014; Hokayem & Heggeness, 2014), i.e. the households with a monthly income in the range of 100 percent-125 percent (100 percent-150 percent for Moscow case) of the poverty line are considered as living in 'near poverty'. A current analysis of social practices applied for the 'near poor' in Moscow is a step towards improving public services in the face of the changing situations of near poverty populations and overall poverty rates. Consequently, the paper attempts to solve the following problems:

- to identify the major pitfalls for the near-poor people;
- to evaluate the support provided by the social organizations in fighting poverty;
- to analyze the role of social practices in poverty prevention in Moscow context.

The primary research question is what social practices aim to prevent the expansion of poor people and what role social practices play in poverty prevention in Moscow. The sub-questions are: how the public service organizations work with the near-poor people; what social practices can prevent the people's risks to fall under the poverty line. The paper outcomes are based on the 15 interviews with the near poor people and the experts in the anti-poverty field in Moscow.

This article findings' show a tiny picture of the life circumstances of the near-poor population in Moscow from the angle of availability and advisability of social policies for Moscow citizens. It argues that the structure and the methods of providing social support have not been sufficiently developed. In particular, there is criticism about the criteria for obtaining social assistance. In addition, in-depth interviews show that the characteristics of low-income citizens in the city are understated and assistance does not always reach those in need. The main conclusion is that

the Moscow social support and protection need to be more addressed and reach not only poor but near poor people either. The article also identifies a mixture of factors which lead people to feel poor, despite the fact that the income of a citizen is higher than the subsistence minimum. In particular, this is justified by the fact that when calculating the subsistence minimum, the state does not study expenditures for housing and communal services. However, in depth-interviews with the near poor people confirm that housing and public utilities expenditures are the most priority and the main ones in the monthly budget for these group of people and their immediate circle. However, there are few positive trends arise at the beginning of 2018 on a social policy practices field. For instance, there are two new initiatives for young families raised by the government in late 2017. The schemes include the audience of people with an income between 100-150 percent of poverty line, which can benefit extra in several directions of social policy support.

In addition, the article's investigation shows the theoretical gap in the exploration of people living in near poverty and provides a description of 'near poor' phenomenon in Moscow. While the environment proves the need to address this problem, the main paper outcomes are a theoretical justification of value of this problem and empirical contributions to the field of anti-poverty.

### References

- 1) El Nasser, H. (2014). Census: U.S. has fewer 'near poor' as many slip into true poverty. Al Jazeera. Retrieved 7 July 2014: <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/5/1/census-bureau-reportonlivinginnearpoverty.html> ;
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