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DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS AFFECTING THE PENSION SYSTEM AND SOCIAL PROTECTION OF SENIOR CITIZENS IN THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN

Abstract: Demographic changes in Kazakhstan, particularly the aging of the population, are putting increased pressure on the pension system and social protection mechanisms for older citizens, which require not only addressing current socio-economic challenges but also integrating long-term strategic planning to ensure the sustainability of pension provision and social services. The purpose of this study is to examine the demographic changes affecting the pension system and social protection of older citizens in Kazakhstan, identify the main factors influencing their quality of life, and analyze the role of healthcare and social services in ensuring a sustainable standard of living for older individuals. It is expected that demographic shifts towards an aging population will continue to increase the burden on Kazakhstan's pension system, making the modernization of social protection mechanisms and the integration of medical and social services necessary for sustainable socio-economic development. The study uses data extrapolation, statistical analysis, and comparative analysis of numerical data to assess trends in the number of elderly citizens, pension recipients, and the dynamics of social protection measures. The results of the study confirm the hypothesis and highlight the need to modernize pension and social protection mechanisms by implementing innovative approaches, improving the efficiency of medical and social services, and adopting best international practices to ensure the financial sustainability of the pension system and improve the quality of life for elderly citizens.

Keywords: social support, social protection, quality of services, pension system, number of pension recipients, number of elderly population, employment of elderly population.

INTRODUCTION

Social protection of senior citizens is important to ensure a decent quality of life and is becoming more relevant due to demographic changes in Kazakhstan. The introduction of such practices in Kazakhstan requires a thorough assessment of the current situation and the development of recommendations for the integration of best international practices.

Future funded pensions of Kazakhstani citizens largely depend on the results of investment activities of pension funds. The investment risks that arise in the course of work are borne by the employees themselves. The prolonged economic downturn, which leads to lower investment returns, has a negative impact on retirement savings, which are vital for those approaching retirement. A decrease in profitability increases the cost of a retirement annuity, leading to a decrease in the standard of living during retirement. These risks can be partially reduced by maintaining the state guarantee of ensuring the safety of pension savings, taking into account the level of

inflation. A dependable social protection system should encompass financial support, access to healthcare services, and social programs designed to enhance living conditions. This includes initiatives to extend active longevity and promote the social integration of older adults.

This mechanism is necessary to adapt social programs to demographic challenges and identify areas for improving the social security system. The effectiveness of the mechanism for assessing the social security of elderly people in Kazakhstan is due to several key factors:

1 The country has an aging population trend, creating an additional burden on the social and medical systems, therefore ensuring a decent standard of living and support for the elderly is becoming especially important.

2 Changing socio-economic conditions require the adaptation of social protection mechanisms to new challenges, contributing to improving the lives of older citizens and overall social stability in the country.

3 An assessment of the effectiveness of the social protection mechanism is necessary to identify problem areas and develop measures to eliminate them, including an analysis of the adequacy of pensions, the availability of medical and social services, as well as the effectiveness of active longevity support programs. An integrated assessment approach allows us to identify successful practices and areas that require improvement.

The hypothesis of the study. In this study, the authors put forward the following hypotheses. Firstly, with unchanged amounts of social and pension payments in real terms, social security costs are expected to increase due to the growth of the contingent of pensioners in Kazakhstan. Secondly, the trend towards an increase in the number of employed people among the elderly will continue.

The study examines current achievements and problems, as well as offers recommendations for improving the effectiveness of social protection in the context of modern challenges and international experience. An effective social protection system for senior citizens plays a crucial role in strengthening the social stability and well-being of the country, contributing to the creation of conditions for active and decent aging of the population.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Methods of social protection of the elderly include not only financial assistance, but also a wide range of social services. The rapid growth of the elderly population worldwide, caused by an increase in life expectancy and a decrease in fertility, highlights the phenomenon of global aging. It is predicted that in the period from 2015 to 2050, the number of elderly aged 60 years and older will increase by 56% and amount to more than 1.4 billion people, or 22% of the world's population [1]. Researchers consider social welfare institutions for the elderly as part of the health care system to often become the starting point for the development of long-term care facilities [2].

Social assistance programs are actively developing in developing countries, reaching about 2.5 billion people. More than 120 countries have money transfer programs for poor families, and more than 70 of them have social pension programs [3]. These programs are increasingly replacing large-scale subsidies for basic goods, promising to increase efficiency and expand income redistribution in favor of the poor. As a result of the coronavirus pandemic, these programs have expanded further, confirming their role [4]. In her research, O. Anikeeva emphasizes the socio-economic aspects of creating a new framework to address challenges encountered by working retirees, elderly health, training for social work and protection, and the development and the application of technologies to enhance the engagement and quality of life of older adults [5]. The problems of the elderly are multifaceted and include social, cultural, economic and health aspects [6, 7]. An effective social policy is based on economic growth, since its effectiveness directly depends on the economic potential of the country [8], the relationship of which is expressed in:

1. Economic growth creates the basis for improving the well-being of citizens by creating employment opportunities.

2. Economic growth is driven by the development of human resources, which directly depends on the well-being of citizens.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

To analyze the relationship between the growth in the number of pension recipients aged 60 and older and the volume of health services provided in the Republic of Kazakhstan, an integrated approach was applied, including quantitative and qualitative research methods.

1 Comparative analysis is a comparison of strategies of economic behavior of the population of different regions or countries.

2 Quantitative methods (statistical analysis):

- processing of macro- and microeconomic indicators (poverty level, income structure, regional differences);

- correlation analysis - determining the strength and direction of relationships between indicators

3 Economic and mathematical modeling:

- the time series analysis method was used to identify patterns and trends in the volume of healthcare services provided during the study period;

- modeling based on polynomial regression - approximation of the time series is carried out using a polynomial of the second degree;

- the least squares method (OLS), which minimizes the sum of the squares of the deviations of the actual values from the calculated ones;

- extrapolation forecasting.

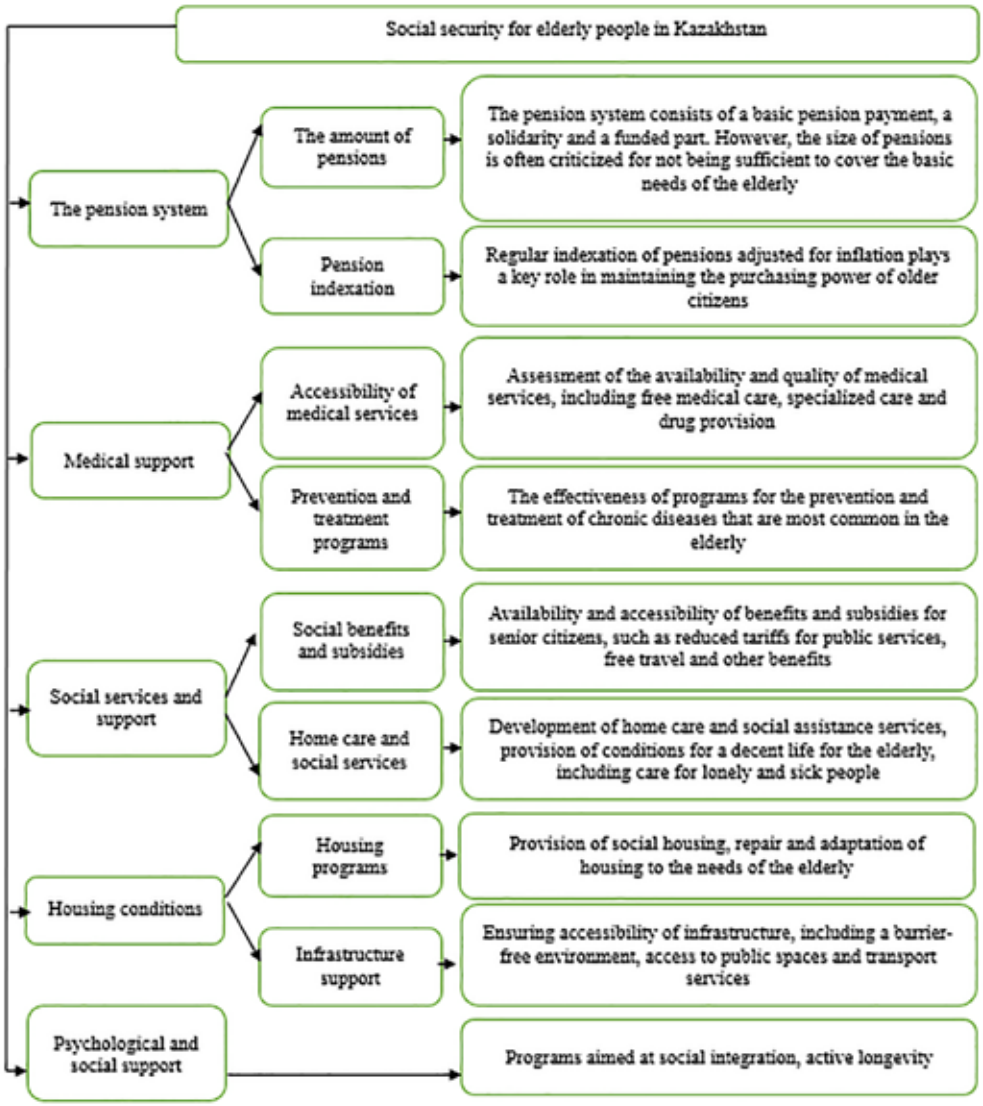
4 Factor analysis is an assessment of the external and internal determinants that determine the growth of the number of elderly citizens and the burden on social protection.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Based on extrapolation methods, the volume of health services provided for 2023-2025 was forecasted, indicating the need to increase investments in health care and social programs to maintain sustainable demographic growth and improve socio-economic indicators, as well as identify other factors affecting the pension system and social protection of senior citizens in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The social protection mechanism for senior citizens in Kazakhstan is an important task related to the need to adapt social programs to current and future demographic challenges, helping to identify existing approaches, determine the degree of satisfaction of older people with the services provided and outline areas for further improvement. Social security for elderly people in Kazakhstan includes various measures and mechanisms aimed at ensuring a decent standard of living, medical care and social support. Evaluating the effectiveness of these mechanisms involves analyzing the following aspects (Figure 1).

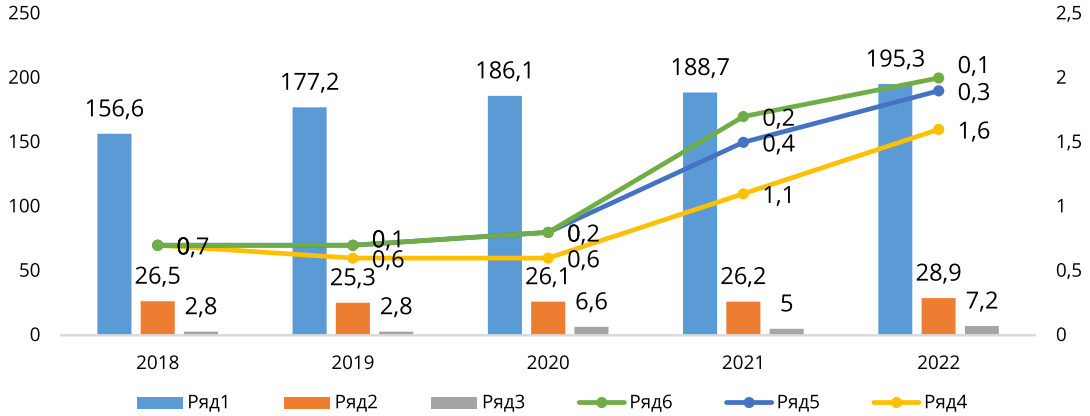
Figure 1. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the social protection mechanism for senior citizens



Note: Compiled by the author

The social protection system for senior citizens in Kazakhstan comprises various components designed to ensure a dignified standard of living (Figure 2).

Figure 2 - Men aged 60 years and older, belonging to the category of the employed population of thousands of people



Note: Compiled by the author based on the source [9]

However, it faces serious challenges and its effectiveness depends on financing, regular revision and indexation of pensions, acceptable quality of medical services and social programs. It is necessary to implement comprehensive support measures and take into account the special needs of elderly people. Kazakhstan is no exception, and as in many other countries, people over the age of 60 make up a significant part of the labor force, especially in an aging population. An analysis of population data for individuals aged 60 and older from 2018 to 2022 shows a steady increase in the elderly population. The number of people aged 60-64 years increased from 156.6 thousand in 2018 to 195.3 thousand in 2022.There was significant growth in the 70-74 age group, with an increase from 2.8 thousand people in 2018 to 7.2 thousand people in 2022.

2) The gender composition of the elderly population:

- at the beginning of 2023, the population aged 60 years and over reached 2,616,515 people;
- Among the elderly population, there are 1,031,051 men (39.4%) and 1,585,064 women (60.6%), highlighting a notable predominance of women in older age groups.

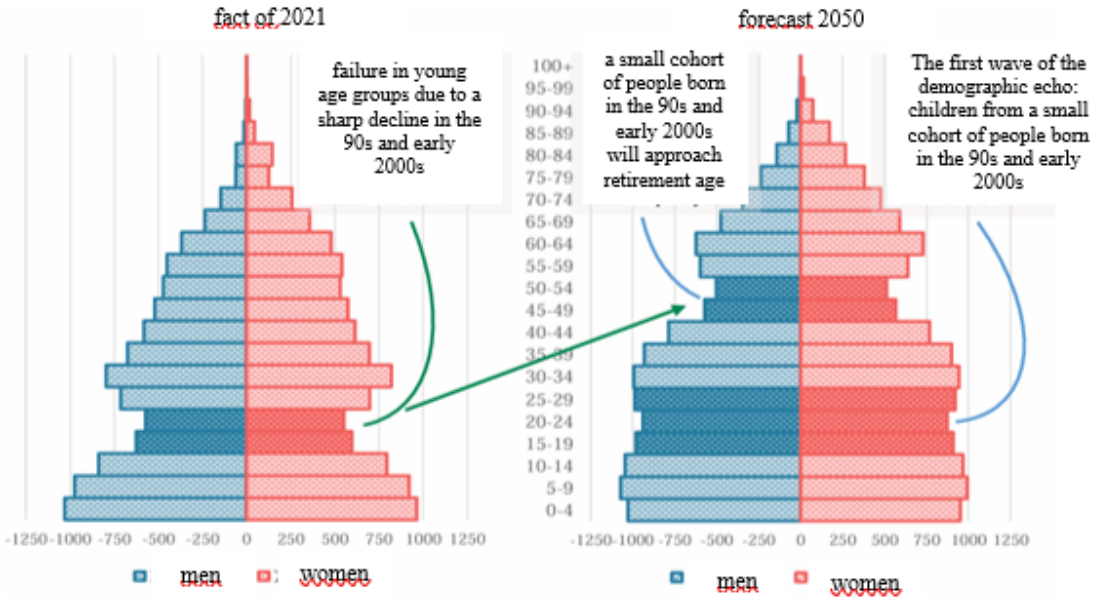
3) Geographically, the distribution of the elderly population is as follows:

- the highest number of elderly individuals is in the city of Almaty, with 288,922 people;
- in the Karaganda region, there are 200,186 elderly people; in the Turkestan region, 190,160; and in the Almaty region, 177,685.

These data indicate a trend towards an aging population, requiring attention from social and medical services to ensure appropriate living conditions for the elderly. The significant predominance of women among the older age groups requires increased efforts in the field of social support and medical care.

The distributive pension system (from the state budget) and the funded pension system are influenced by the aging of the population (from the UAPF). According to the EPPF, by the end of 2050, the country's population will reach 25 million people, and the growth rate will slow down. The proportion of people over the age of 60 will increase from the current 12.5% to 16.9% by 2050, explaining this with an increase in average life expectancy in Kazakhstan. The UN forecasts also suggest a decrease in the total fertility rate from the current 3.32 to 2.42 children per woman by 2050. These demographic shifts accelerate the aging of the population and require a reassessment of social and economic policy, confirmed by the analysis of the age-gender pyramid of Kazakhstan (Figure 3).

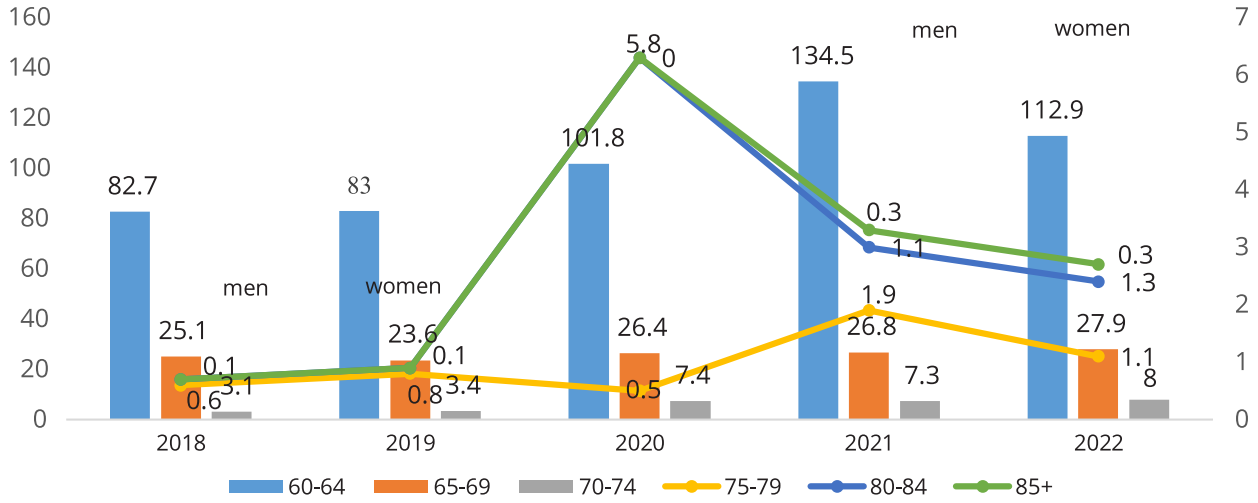
Figure 3 - Comparison of the actual and projected age-gender pyramid



Note: Compiled by the author based on the source [10]

In 2022, 308.3 thousand people aged 60 and over were employed, among them 63.4% were men and 36.6% were women. Compared to 2021, employment among seniors aged 60-64 years fell by 4.6%, with a notable 16.1% decrease specifically among women in this age group (Figure 4).

Figure 4 - Women aged 60 years and older, belonging to the category of employed, thousands of people

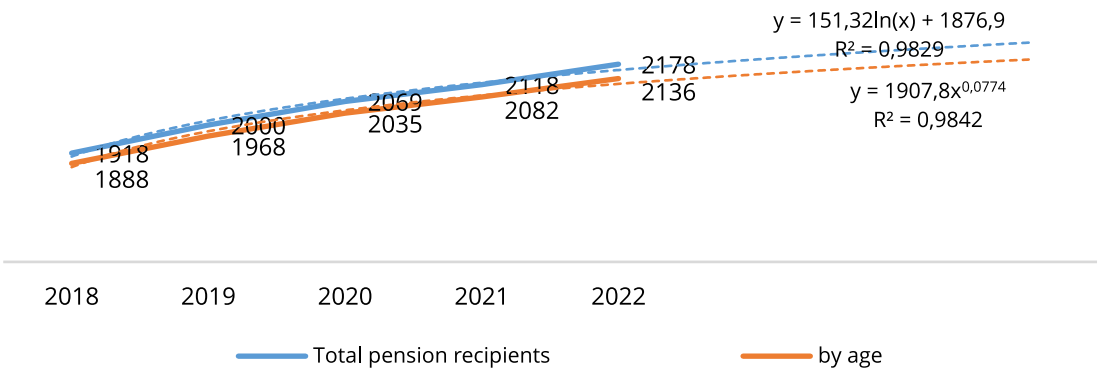


Note: Compiled by the author based on the source [9]

By 2050, the ratio of working-age individuals (25-64 years old) to pensioners (65 years and older) is anticipated to approach parity, decreasing from 6.33 to 4.03. These demographic changes will increase the financial pressure on the state budget aimed at financing pensions. Currently, there are approximately 6.3 taxpayers per pensioner, but this ratio is projected to decrease to 4 taxpayers per pensioner by 2050. In order to maintain an adequate level of pensions, the government may have to consider raising taxes [8].

In the context of population aging, the accumulative pension system becomes significant, where future pensioners form their retirement savings through regular mandatory contributions to accumulative pension funds. The number of recipients of pensions and State social benefits aged 60 and over depends on various factors such as demographic, economic and social conditions. Rising life expectancy combined with a declining birth rate results in a growing proportion of individuals aged 60 and older, allowing the state to develop and adapt social security policies to develop the sustainability of the pension system and sufficient support for elderly people (Figure 5).

Figure 5 - The number of pension recipients aged 60 years and older, thousands of people



Note: Compiled by the author based on the source [9]

The rise in the number of pensioners aged 60 and older in Kazakhstan from 2018 to 2022 can be attributed to several factors, such as an aging population, an increase in life expectancy, a stable economic situation and government policy. Statistical forecasts suggest that this trend is likely to continue in the coming years, supported by data and calculations (Table 1).

Table 1. Trend forecasting

Indicator	2023	2024	2025
Total pension recipients, thousands of people			
The trend	2248	2311,8	2375,6
Height	2255,895	2327,289	2400,943
by age, thousands of people			
The trend	2204,8	2265,8	2326,8
Height	2212,233	2280,323	2350,508

Note: Compiled by the author based on the calculations made

The fluctuation in the number of pensioners aged 60 and over in Kazakhstan is closely related to the growth in medical services. Improvements in the quality and accessibility of healthcare, along with effective prevention and treatment of chronic diseases, lead to increased life expectancy among the elderly. These factors underline the importance of investments in healthcare to ensure sustainable demographic and socio-economic development of the country. As part of this study, an extrapolation forecast of the volume of services provided for 2023-2025 was carried out, consisting of the following stages:

1) Using the series criterion based on the median, the presence of a trend component in the analyzed time series was revealed (Table 2).

Table 2. Trend analysis

To identify a trend, it is enough to detect at least one violation in the inequalities used in the series analysis criteria	Calculated values with probability of error $0,05 < \alpha < 0.0975$
$\nu(n) > \left[\frac{1}{2}\left(n+2-1{,}96\sqrt{n-1}\right)\right]$	2<3
$K_{\max} < [3{,}3(\lg n+1)]$	5 <6

Note: Compiled by the author

2) To approximate the initial data, a second-order polynomial function is used as a growth curve:

$$y_t = a_0 + a_1 t + a_2 t^2 + \varepsilon_t,$$

To determine the parameters of the selected curve, the least squares method was used, which minimizes deviations between the graph of the function and the initial data, which allowed us to obtain the following trend data model:

$$y_t = 414{,}244 + 12{,}701t + 9{,}934t^2$$

3) The quality of the resulting model was checked in two aspects: adequacy and accuracy.

To evaluate the model's adequacy, a test was conducted by comparing the predicted values with actual observations. Key aspects of the analysis include the average value, randomness, and adherence to a normal distribution, with the results detailed in the table 3.

Table 3. Evaluating the model's adequacy

The property being checked	Statistics used		Border	Conclusion
	Name, calculation formula	The resulting value		
An accident	The criterion of «peaks» (turning points) $p > \left[\frac{2}{3}(n-2) - 1{,}96\sqrt{\frac{16n-29}{90}}\right]$	4 > 2	2	Accordingly
Normality	RS- criteria $RS = \frac{e_{max} - e_{min}}{S}$	3,37	2,67-3,69	Accordingly
The equality of the expected value of several residuals to zero	t- Student statistics $t_{набл.} = \frac{\lvert \bar{e} \rvert}{S}\sqrt{n}$	0	2,26	Accordingly

Note: Compiled by the author based on the calculations made

4) To evaluate the model's accuracy, the average relative approximation error was computed:

$$E_{отн.} = \frac{1}{n}\sum_{i=1}^{n}\frac{|e_t|}{y_t}\cdot 100\% = 2{,}948\%,$$

The resulting value indicates that the model is highly accurate and suitable for reliable forecasting.

5) To produce the point forecast, the appropriate coefficients were input into the model, and confidence intervals were calculated at a designated significance level to create the interval forecast (Table 4).

Table 4. Forecast of the volume of medical services for 2023-2025

Год	n + k	U(k)	Point forecast, billion tenge	Interval forecast, billion tenge	
				Upper bound	Lower bound
2023	12	149,300	1997,146	1847,846	2146,445
2024	13	195,080	2258,196	2063,116	2453,276
2025	14	252,599	2539,114	2286,515	2791,713

Note: Compiled by the author based on the calculations made

In addition to the volume of medical services provided, demographic changes in Kazakhstan depend on other factors affecting pension provision and social protection of the elderly:

- high birth rate and low mortality contribute to population growth, increasing the number of elderly people in need of social protection and pension payments;
- migration processes, such as the emigration of able-bodied youth and the immigration of older people from other countries, affect the structure of the population, creating an additional burden on the pension system;
- economic factors such as economic growth or recession, unemployment and inflation also influence demographic trends and personal decisions related to childbearing, migration, and other variables;
- improvements in healthcare and technological advancements boost life expectancy and quality of life for older adults, impacting pension systems and social protection;
- changes in the socio-cultural environment, such as evolving values, family dynamics, and lifestyles, also influence demographic patterns.

CONCLUSION

The study results validated the proposed hypotheses, highlighting the correlation between rising life expectancy and the growing number of pension recipients in Kazakhstan. This indicates an increase in social security expenses, irrespective of changes in pension amounts. In addition, there is a noticeable increase in the employment of older people.

Demographic shifts impacting pension provision and social protection for the elderly in Kazakhstan are closely tied to the projected volume of medical services for the period 2023-2025. The growing number of pension recipients aged 60 and over is increasing the need for medical care and social support, emphasizing the need for more effective planning and allocation of resources for social programs and health care to ensure a decent standard of living in the future. Improving the quality of medical services, enhancing the prevention and treatment of chronic diseases, and expanding access to healthcare contribute to increased life expectancy and, consequently, a rise in the number of pensioners.

The study incorporates a forecast extrapolation of medical services for 2023-2025, emphasizing the need to account for the continuing interplay between healthcare and the number of pensioners.

Based on the conducted research, the following recommendations were proposed to improve the situation:

- development and implementation of uniform quality standards for social services throughout the country;
- strengthening interagency cooperation and coordination between different levels of government and non-governmental organizations.
- increased funding for social protection and health care programs, especially in remote and rural areas;
- active involvement of the private sector and international organizations to jointly solve the problems of social protection of senior citizens.

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ҚАЗАҚСТАН РЕСПУБЛИКАСЫНДАҒЫ ЕГДЕ ЖАСТАҒЫ АЗАМАТТАРДЫҢ ЗЕЙНЕТАҚЫ ЖҮЙЕСІ МЕН ӘЛЕУМЕТТІК ҚОРҒАЛУЫНА ӘСЕР ЕТЕТІН ДЕМОГРАФИЯЛЫҚ ТРЕНДТЕР

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Андатпа. Қазақстандағы демографиялық өзгерістер, әсіресе халықтың қартаюы зейнетақы жүйесіне және егде жастағы азаматтарды әлеуметтік қорғау тетіктеріне жоғары қысым көрсетеді. Олардың қайта құрылуы ағымдағы әлеуметтік-экономикалық проблемаларды шешуді ғана емес, сонымен қатар зейнетақымен қамсыздандыру мен әлеуметтік қызметтердің тұрақтылығын қамтамасыз ету үшін ұзақ мерзімді стратегиялық жоспарлауды біріктіруді талап етеді. Зерттеудің мақсаты – Қазақстандағы егде жастағы азаматтардың зейнетақы жүйесі мен әлеуметтік қорғалуына әсер ететін демографиялық өзгерістерді зерделеу, олардың өмір сүру сапасына әсер ететін негізгі факторларды анықтау және егде жастағы адамдардың тұрақты өмір сүру деңгейін

қамтамасыз етудегі медициналық және әлеуметтік қызметтердің рөлін талдау. Халықтың қартаюына қарай демографиялық өзгерістер Қазақстанның зейнетақы жүйесіне жүктемені арттыруды жалғастырып, әлеуметтік қорғау тетіктерін жаңғырту және медициналық-әлеуметтік қызметтерді интеграциялауды орнықты әлеуметтік-экономикалық даму үшін қажетті етеді деп болжануда. Зерттеу егде жастағы азаматтардың, зейнетақы алушылардың және әлеуметтік қорғау шараларының динамикасының тенденцияларын бағалау үшін деректерді экстраполяциялауды, статистикалық талдауды және сандық деректерді салыстырмалы талдауды пайдаланады. Зерттеу нәтижелері гипотезаны растайды және инновациялық тәсілдерді енгізу, медициналық және әлеуметтік қызметтердің тиімділігін арттыру және зейнетақы жүйесінің қаржылық тұрақтылығын қамтамасыз етуге және егде жастағы азаматтардың өмір сүру сапасын жақсартуға ықпал ете отырып, үздік халықаралық тәжірибелерді енгізу арқылы зейнетақымен қамсыздандыру және әлеуметтік қорғау тетіктерін жаңғырту қажеттігін атап көрсетеді.
Түйін сөздер: әлеуметтік қолдау, әлеуметтік қорғау, қызмет көрсету сапасы, зейнетақы жүйесі, зейнетақы алушылар саны, егде жастағы халық саны, егде жастағы халықтың жұмыспен қамтылуы.

ДЕМОГРАФИЧЕСКИЕ ТРЕНДЫ, ВЛИЯЮЩИЕ НА ПЕНСИОННУЮ СИСТЕМУ И СОЦИАЛЬНУЮ ЗАЩИТУ ПОЖИЛЫХ ГРАЖДАН В РЕСПУБЛИКЕ КАЗАХСТАН

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Аннотация. Демографические изменения в Казахстане, особенно старение населения, оказывают повышенное давление на пенсионную систему и механизмы социальной защиты граждан старшего возраста, преобразования которых требуют не только решения текущих социально-экономических проблем, но и интеграции долгосрочного стратегического планирования для обеспечения устойчивости пенсионного обеспечения и социальных услуг. Целью исследования является изучение демографических изменений, влияющих на пенсионную систему и социальную защиту граждан старшего возраста в Казахстане, выявление основных факторов, влияющих на качество их жизни, и анализ роли медицинских и социальных услуг в обеспечении устойчивого уровня жизни населения старшего возраста. Предполагается, что демографические сдвиги в сторону старения населения продолжат увеличивать нагрузку на пенсионную систему Казахстана, делая модернизацию механизмов социальной защиты и интеграцию медико-социальных услуг необходимыми для устойчивого социально-экономического развития. В исследовании используются экстраполяция данных, статистический анализ и сравнительный анализ численных данных для оценки тенденций в численности граждан старшего возраста, получателей пенсий и динамики мер социальной защиты. Результаты исследования подтверждают гипотезу и подчеркивают необходимость модернизации механизмов пенсионного обеспечения и социальной защиты путем внедрения инновационных подходов, повышения эффективности медицинских и социальных услуг и внедрения лучших международных практик, способствуя обеспечению финансовой устойчивости пенсионной системы и улучшения качества жизни населения старшего возраста.
Ключевые слова: социальная поддержка, социальная защита, качество услуг, пенсионная система, количество получателей пенсий, численность населения старшего возраста, занятость населения старшего возраста.