

Sociocultural Potential of Modern Youth in Russian Cities

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Abstract—Young people have large personal and social potential due to their socio-demographic and psychological characteristics. In modern societies, younger generations live in the conditions of constant socio-economic crises and instability, which leads to the emergence of social uncertainty and contributes to the instability of normative and value structures. The authors conducted a large-scale research "Sociocultural features of the adolescents' social potential" among the youth of Russian regions (the regions of Russia – Penza, Saratov regions, the Republic of Mordovia, n=754; the Republic of Crimea, n=400). The article deals with the analysis of the value components of Russian adolescents' social potential; basic youth values; political, labour and educational values, as well as the impact of the current socio-economic situation on them.

Keywords— values, value orientations, Russian adolescents

I. INTRODUCTION

Since the 1990s, given the ongoing socio-economic changes in Russia, the research of youth's social adaptation, social well-being, youth labour markets, unemployment, youth social protection, etc., has acquired particular importance. This period is characterized by the introduction of the concept of "social potential of adolescents". The social potential of adolescents is defined as the opportunities inherent in the young generation to ensure the progressive development of society and self-development [1].

The key regulatory role in the process of formation and implementation of the social potential of young people is played by the normative values. By having a regulatory impact on the adolescents' social behaviour, such values form young people's attitude to the socio-political, educational, innovation, socio-economic initiatives as well as the ability and the readiness to be included in the process of social change.

In the modern international scientific literature, the concept of "social values" is analyzed, individual value components of the social potential of different social groups, including adolescents, are studied. Political potential, political values, political activism is studied by Erik Andersson [2], Catherine M. Reidy [3], Mathew Y. H. Wong [4] and others. Educational potential, values and the role of education, educational strategies in the process of transition from education to work are analyzed by Viejo Carmen [5], Johnson M. K. [6], Clemens M. Lechner [7] and others. Numerous works of international researchers, including the works of Clemens M. Lechner [8], Jonas Masdonati [9], Chow A. [10], Johnson, M. K. [11], Loscocco, K. A. [12] are devoted to the study of the adolescents' work potential, the evolution of work values, work strategies. It should be emphasized that in the conditions of the ongoing socio-economic transformations in societies, the study of the dynamics of changes in the values of modern youth is of particular importance. In this regard, the works of Sortheix Florencia M. [13] is of considerable interest in studying the impact of the global financial crisis on the young people in European countries and their personal values.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS (MODEL)

In 2018, the authors conducted a large-scale research "Sociocultural features of the adolescents' social potential" among the youth of Russian regions (the regions of Russia – Penza, Saratov regions, the Republic of Mordovia, n=754; the Republic of Crimea, n=400) using a single sociological tool, which made it possible to undertake a comparative analysis. An original computer software "Sociology" was developed to process sociological data, which allowed to automate all processes: from the preparation of the questionnaire to its processing; the software is based on the scanning of questionnaires and automatic recognition of

respondents' answers, makes it possible to use primary and secondary sociological information through the creation of databases, allows for both univariate and multivariate analysis.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Basic Values of Russian Adolescents

The materials of the authors' sociological research of 2018 revealed the tendencies in values of the modern Russian youth. The research has shown that the basic values of Russian adolescents are (in descending order): family (65.34 per cent), health (43.97 per cent), material well-being (36.21 per cent), interesting work (32.76 per cent), good education (30.52 per cent), and prestigious work (28.79 per cent). We emphasize that health is the most important vital value; longevity, preservation of youth, and a person's self-fulfillment largely depend on it. For older adolescents family becomes more valuable, and it is more important for girls than for boys.

There are significantly more young men having hedonistic orientations in the Republic of Crimea than in the Volga Region (43.66 per cent of the youth chose the variant "to enjoy life's pleasures", which is almost two times less than the indicator for the youth in the Volga Region, which was 26.9 per cent).

According to the materials of the authors' research of 2018, the main life success factors of the modern youth are own efforts (64.31 per cent), good health (42.59 per cent), good education (37.59 per cent), useful connections and acquaintances (35.86 per cent) (Table I).

The conditions for achieving success among the Crimean youth are "own efforts" (86.62 per cent), "clear plans for the future" (42.25 per cent) and "good education" (38.73 per cent). We emphasize that the importance of useful connections and acquaintances as a vital factor was chosen by the Volga Region adolescents more often than by the Crimean youth (35.86 per cent versus 31.69 per cent), although the indicator is quite high among the Crimean youth as well. The perception of success is interrelated with age, sex, material well-being and depends on the type of activity of the respondents.

TABLE I. LIFE SUCCESS FACTORS OF RUSSIAN ADOLESCENTS (PER CENT OF THE NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS FOR EACH SAMPLE, 2018)

What conditions are best for you to succeed? (multiple-choice answers)	The regions of Russia, n=754	The Republic of Crimea, n=400
Own efforts, perseverance and diligence	64.31	86.62
Good education	37.59	38.73
Good health	42.59	33.80
Material security of the family	25.17	19.01
Good and useful connections	35.86	31.69
Clear plans for the future	32.59	42.25
They vary from case to case, depends on the set of circumstances (luck)	19.66	19.72

B. Socio-political Potential of Modern Adolescents

Political potential as a component of the youth's social potential includes beliefs, ideals, political views, youth orientation, civic position, as well as participation in the

political and civil life of society. In a broad sense, political potential can be defined as a set of reserves, abilities, qualities and opportunities of the youth in the political sphere. The active and successful integration of modern youth into social and political relations, as well as the effective use of its potential, is an important condition for the country's political development. Political values are the opinions, assessments, judgments, orientation of the individual on the state of political being; ideas about the significant and important things in politics [14]. They are closely connected to the political culture and determine the nature of participation in political activities.

Our research shows that quite a large number of young Russians are interested in politics. Thus, 19.93 per cent of respondents (one fifth of adolescents) are seriously interested in politics and political information, and 36.38 per cent are interested in it from time to time. About a quarter of the youth, (23.99 per cent) have a certain political position. These data show the growing interest of the youth in politics and their readiness to integrate into the political life of society. The Crimean adolescents assess the political situation in Russia to be complex, but not dangerous (33.1 per cent; this indicator for the Volga Region youth was 37.93 per cent). About a third of the youth in the Republic of Crimea (28.87 per cent) are interested in political information from time to time, and 12.68 per cent are constantly interested. In addition, one third of adolescents have a certain political orientation and position. The higher the level of material well-being (very good and good), the more often young respondents have a constant interest in political information. Assessing the attitude to politics of different youth's groups in the course of their activity, it turned out that young public officials and entrepreneurs are more often interested in politics. The young unemployed are the least interested in politics.

Data on the interconnection between the attitude of Russian adolescents to politics and their assessment of the crisis impact on their situation are interesting (Fig. 1). The data show that young Russian respondents, who assess the impact on themselves of crisis phenomena more, more often, show an interest in political information and more often have certain political orientations, which can be probably explained by the fact that respondents regard their participation as an opportunity to influence negative crisis phenomena in society.

Regarding electoral activity, it should be said that 41.21 per cent of the respondents participate in elections, and 13.79 per cent of the respondents are activists of political parties and movements.

The older the respondents, the more often they are politically active. The electoral activity of the Russian youth varies according to their type of activity. Young public officials, entrepreneurs and students participate in elections as voters more often. The students of specialized secondary schools vote in elections less often than the rest, which may be due to their age.

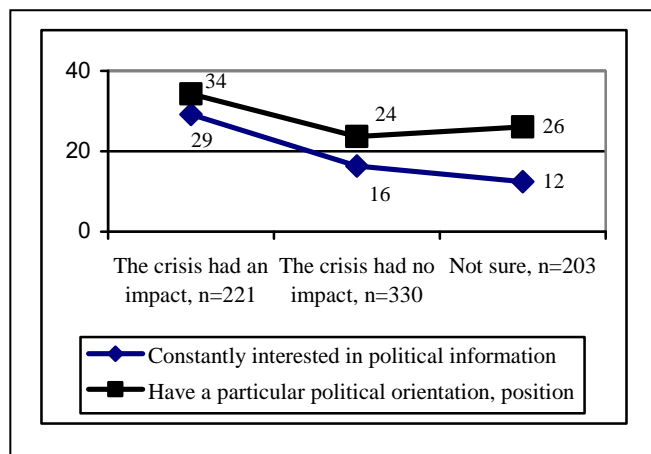


Fig. 1. Distribution of respondents' answers to the question, "What is your attitude to political activity?" Moreover, to the question, "Has the crisis and instability in the country had an impact on your political and social activity?" (Research among Russian adolescents, 2018, n=754)

Because of the political, socio-economic and cultural changes, that have taken place in the Russian society, there has been a radical reorientation of the attitude of the Russians and the youth to the world around them and to themselves, the system of values has changed. These processes have led to a decrease in spiritual culture and moral compasses. Presidential Address to the Federal Assembly of 2018 notes the importance of the formation of citizenship and patriotism among our citizens: «...It is the involvement of people in the affairs of the country and civic activism, as well as cultural, moral, spiritual values that make us one people» [15].

According to the results of the authors' research of 2018, the majority of respondents understand citizenship in a political and legal sense. "To be a citizen," means for them (in descending order): to have civil rights and obligations (40.86 per cent), live in Russia (34.83 per cent) and be a citizen of Russia (31.55 per cent) – Table II. A territorial and legal understanding of citizenship is also typical for the Crimean youth. Thus, 49.3 per cent of young Crimeans answered that to be a citizen of Russia means to hold citizenship, 45.77 per cent answered that to be a citizen means to have civil rights and obligations.

TABLE II. DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS' ANSWERS TO THE QUESTION, "WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR YOU "TO BE A CITIZEN OF RUSSIA"?" (PER CENT OF THE NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS FOR EACH SAMPLE)

Citizenship is...(multiple-choice answers)	Regions of Russia, n=754	Republic of Crimea, n=400
To be a citizen of Russia on the passport	31.55	49.30
To live in Russia	34.83	35.92
To have civil rights and obligations	40.86	45.77
To be a patriot, love Russia	29.31	27.46
To defend your country	18.97	14.08
To implement legislation of Russia	26.38	25.35
To know the history of Russia, remember its heroes, be proud of its achievements and victories	25	32.39
To be responsible for the fate of the country	10.52	11.97

27.46 per cent of young respondents mentioned patriotism, 14.08 per cent talked about the defense of the fatherland, 11.97 per cent mentioned the responsibility for the fate of the country.

Boys more often than girls talk about legal and territorial aspects of citizenship, protection of the state and responsibility for the fate of the country, girls talk more often about patriotism, civil rights and achievements of Russia. The level of patriotism and responsibility for the country's security correlate with the material situation of the respondents: the lower it is, the less young people share patriotic orientations.

C. Education in the Structure of Social Potential of Russian Adolescents

Educational potential can be defined as "...a set of properties, abilities, orientations, motivations of an individual, as well as the possibility of using this set of qualities and properties under existing conditions and social resources" [16].

Education occupies the fifth place in the structure of basic values of modern Russian adolescents. About half of young people (50.86 per cent) do not consider education as a guarantee of success in life. These data show that today's Russian adolescents have less trust in the value of higher education.

At the same time, Russian working youth of older age often consider education as an important component of success. It is established that the value of education is more important for students of higher and secondary educational institutions and less important for the unemployed; at the same time, it is of particular importance for entrepreneurs.

Despite this, 60.86 per cent of the respondents believe that education is the main asset of the person, while 39.14 per cent claim that "you can do without education if you have money". The issue of self-education among young people is very important. According to the study, 61.3 per cent of Russian youth are engaged in self-education. Generally, it is older Russian adolescents with a decent standard of living [17].

According to Russian adolescents, the main conditions for obtaining a "good" education are the following (in descending order): perseverance in learning (81.08 per cent), inborn aptitudes (57.14 per cent), communication and Dating.

According to Crimean adolescents, the conditions are perseverance in learning, own efforts (84.51 per cent), inborn aptitudes (67.61 per cent) – Table III.

TABLE III. MAIN CONDITIONS FOR RECEIVING "GOOD EDUCATION" (PER CENT OF THE NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS FOR EACH STUDY)

What are the basic conditions for a good education? (multiple answers)	Regions of Russia, n=754	Republic of Crimea, n=400
Perseverance in studying, own efforts	71.21	84.51
Inborn aptitudes	42.24	67.61
Material security of the family	31.90	28.17
Good connections, necessary acquaintances	36.55	29.58
Not sure	10	3.52

One-third of respondents chose such conditions as "useful connections and acquaintances" (29.58 per cent).

Younger respondents noted the importance of own efforts and inborn aptitudes, and older respondents noted the importance of useful connections. Girls are more likely to point out own efforts and inborn aptitudes, boys – financial security of the family and necessary acquaintances.

Entrepreneurs, university students, unemployed youth, and young civil servants are most willing to continue their education. Employees of private and state enterprises are less likely to do that. Young entrepreneurs are also most active in terms of self-education. The majority of Crimean youth have plans to continue their education; the majority of young people are engaged in self-education (72.54 per cent).

According to the survey of 2018, the ongoing socio-economic transformations in Russia have a significant impact on improving the educational potential of modern Russian youth: 40.15 per cent of adolescents indicate the impact of the crisis, instability in the country and the region on their educational plans (continued education, self-education). Approximately the same number of Crimean youth (42.96 per cent) noted the impact of crisis phenomena, instability in the country and the region on their educational plans.

D. Work in the Structure of Social Potential of Russian Youth

In modern Russian sociology, labour values are considered as "...emotionally coloured ideas and judgements of people about the importance of labour for them in general and the importance of certain aspects of labour" [18]. Labour values are a set of values, orientations, attitudes, motives in the sphere of labour, work, profession; they determine labour needs, goals, content, and the type of labour behaviour of individuals. In times of crisis and instability, work is transformed becomes a means of survival, a job that brings income. Young people are considered to be in a very precarious position with regard to employment, especially young people entering the labour market for the first time.

According to the research conducted in 2018, about half of young people (44.09 per cent) indicated the impact of the crisis, instability in the country and the region on their work. Among respondents who believe that the crisis in Russian society has had an impact on their labour values, about a third of young people would like a stable wage (31.88 per cent), as well as "work hard and earn good money" (28.99 per cent). Similar results were obtained when assessing the socio-economic situation in the country and preferences in choosing a job. Thus, in a crisis, 28 per cent of young people would like to have a stable salary and 27 per cent would like to have a higher wage without guarantees for the future.

The conditions for obtaining a "good job" for young Russians (in descending order): high qualification and professional skills (50.86 per cent), hard work (49.14 per cent), connections and acquaintances (40.17 per cent), leadership (39.31 per cent), responsibility and discipline (36.55 per cent). Table IV shows the assessment of the impact of different conditions on obtaining the "good job".

TABLE IV. MAIN CONDITIONS FOR OBTAINING "GOOD JOB" (PER CENT OF THE NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS FOR EACH STUDY)

What is most important to get a good job? (<i>multiple answers</i>)	Regions of Russia, n=754	Republic of Crimea, n=400
High qualification and knowledge	50.86	52.11
Capacity for work	49.14	64.79
Leadership	39.31	36.62
Speciality demanded in the labour market	27.24	24.65
Discipline and responsibility	36.55	49.30
Useful connections and acquaintances	40.17	40.85
Not sure	11.03	0.70

The importance of useful connections and acquaintances for getting a good job was noted by 40.85 per cent of respondents. Only 27.24 per cent of young respondents consider the speciality demanded in the labour market as a condition of getting a good job. Young Crimeans reckon that in order to get a "good job" one needs to have: capacity for work (64.79 per cent), high qualification, knowledge (52.11 per cent), diligence, responsibility (49.3 per cent).

The older the Russian adolescents, the more often they are ready to work with full dedication, to show diligence and responsibility, to receive demanded qualifications and to use necessary connections. Girls more often than boys note such conditions for getting a good job as deep professional knowledge, capacity for work and useful connections and acquaintances.

The lower the respondents assess their financial situation, the more important discipline, diligence, responsibility and the system of necessary connections and acquaintances are for them. The more often respondents assess the situation as difficult, the more important are factors such as leadership. There is also an increase in the importance of useful connections and acquaintances.

According to the study of 2018, the most important thing for modern Russian youth is high wage (48.62 per cent), the second place is occupied by interesting work (46.03 per cent), work with career and professional growth (33.97 per cent). About a fifth of young people (18.62 per cent) would choose jobs that benefit people, society.

For the Crimean youth the main preferences in the choice of work are the following: interesting and creative work (59.86 per cent), highly paid work (52.11 per cent), possibility of career and professional growth (41.55 per cent). It should be emphasized that Crimean youth attach great importance to socially important work. One third of Crimean youth (31.69 per cent) would choose work that benefits people and society– Table V.

Preferences of young people in the choice of work among Russian adolescents depend on age, sex and financial situation of the respondents. Adolescents in a worse material situation dream about a high-paying job more often. Older respondents show interest in creative and worthwhile work that provides social stability. High-paying work is most important for young Russian entrepreneurs and employees of state-owned enterprises.

TABLE V. MAIN CONDITIONS FOR OBTAINING A JOB (PER CENT OF THE NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS FOR EACH STUDY)

If you could choose, which job would you prefer? (<i>multiple answers</i>)	Regions of Russia, n=754	Republic of Crimea, n=400
Interesting, creative work	46.03	59.86
Prestigious job	24.14	30.28
Work that benefits people and society	18.62	31.69
Work that is not physically and mentally demanding	9.31	3.52
Work with good working conditions	27.07	16.20
Work with the possibility of a career and professional growth	33.97	41.55
High-paying job	48.62	52.11
Work providing social benefits	12.93	4.93
Work with good relationship in the team	19.14	16.20
Work that provides a lot of free time for other activities (leisure, family, study)	17.07	17.61

E. The Impact of Crisis and Instability on Social Potential of Russian Adolescents

Generally, adolescents note that the current crisis and instability in Russian society have a great impact on their political, educational and labour potential (Table VI). It should be stated that crisis, instability affect adolescents' labour and education strategies more than their political activity.

Crisis affects all spheres of life of the Russian society today: political, social, economic, as well as the field of value orientations. Studies clearly show the close relationship of values and value orientations of modern Russian adolescents and the crisis phenomena occurring in modern Russian society. More than 50 per cent of respondents assess the current socio-economic situation in the country as acute. However, the more negative such assessments are, the more significant the values of material well-being for young people become. Studies have shown that the crisis and instability in the country and the region have a greater impact on the employment and educational plans of adolescents than on their political orientation and political activity.

TABLE VI. IMPACT OF CRISIS AND INSTABILITY ON THE SOCIAL POTENTIAL OF RUSSIAN ADOLESCENTS (ACCORDING TO SELF-ASSESSMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE; PER CENT OF THE NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS FOR EACH STUDY)

Question and possible answers	Regions of Russia, n=754	Republic of Crimea, n=400
<i>Do crisis phenomena, instability in the country and the region have an impact on your educational plans (continuing education, self-education)?</i>		
Yes	41.03	42.96
No	37.76	26.76
Not sure	21.21	29.58
<i>Do crisis phenomena, instability in the country and the region have an impact on your work or may have an impact in the future?</i>		
Yes	47.59	50
No	28.10	13.38
Not sure	24.31	35.92
<i>Did the crisis and instability in the country have an impact on your political and social activity?</i>		
Yes	28.97	30.28
No	42.93	38.03
Not sure	28.1	31.69

IV. CONCLUSION

The materials of the authors' sociological research of 2018 revealed the tendencies in values of the modern Russian youth. Our research has shown that the basic values of Russian adolescents are (in descending order): family, health, material well-being, interesting work, good education and prestigious work. As for socio-political potential of modern adolescents the research shows that quite a large number of young Russians are interested in politics. Thus, one fifth of adolescents are seriously interested in politics and political information. Studying education in the structure of the social potential of Russian adolescents we found that it occupies the fifth place in the structure of basic values of modern Russian adolescents. About half of young people do not consider education as a guarantee of success in their life. Considering work in the structure of the social potential it is necessary to point out that according to our research the most important thing for modern Russian youth is (in descending order) high wage, interesting work, work with career and professional growth. During our research we also study the impact of crisis and instability on the social potential of Russian adolescents. Generally, adolescents note that the current crisis and instability in Russian society have a great impact on their political, educational and labour potential.

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