

РАЗДЕЛ IV.

УГОЛОВНОЕ ПРАВО И КРИМИНОЛОГИЯ; УГОЛОВНО-ИСПОЛНИТЕЛЬНОЕ ПРАВО

УДК 343

DOI: 10.18384/2310-6794-2019-3-141-148

SELF-CONTROL AND PARENTING AS THE MOST IMPORTANT PREDICTORS OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

O. Siegmunt

University of Vechta, Germany

22, Driverstraße, Vechta, 49377, Deutschland

Abstract. Self-control is a most important personality characteristic to explain human behavior. The family is the most important social institution to develop self-control of children and juveniles. The parental supervision and the attachment to the parents are the basic factors of family socialization, which affect self-control. The main assumption of this paper is to describe these predictors for the future research on the example of Russian sample. The theoretical background is framed by the Gottfredson and Hirschi's general theory of crime.

Keywords: juvenile delinquency, self-control, parenting, general theory of crime, Russia

САМОКОНТРОЛЬ И СЕМЕЙНОЕ ВОСПИТАНИЕ КАК ВАЖНЕЙШИЕ ФАКТОРЫ, ОБЪЯСНЯЮЩИЕ ПРЕСТУПНОСТЬ НЕСОВЕРШЕННОЛЕТНИХ

Зигмунт О. А.

Университет Фехта

49377, Фехта, Driverstraße, д. 22, Германия

Аннотация. Самоконтроль является наиболее важной характеристикой личности, объясняющей поведение человека. Семья является социальным институтом для развития самоконтроля детей и подростков. Родительский контроль и эмоциональная привязанность детей к своим родителям являются основными факторами социализации семьи, которые также формируют самоконтроль. Основная цель данной статьи – описать

эти факторы на примере исследований подростковой преступности в России. В основу данного анализа положена теория самоконтроля Готтфредсона и Хирши.

Ключевые слова: преступность несовершеннолетних, самоконтроль, семейное воспитание, теория самоконтроля, Россия

The General Theory of Crime

In 1990, Michael R. Gottfredson and Travis Hirschi published the general theory of crime – a universal theory of crime that claims to be able to explain «all crime, at all times» [8, p. 117]. The central constructs of this theory are self-control and delinquent behavior. The family is the most important institution for the development of self-control. The parental supervision and the attachment to the parents are the basic factors of family socialization, which affect self-control. Gottfredson and Hirschi supposed that a reciprocal attachment between parents and children is important, but it alone cannot produce self-control. For this, parental supervision and control are necessary.

The general theory of crime is one of the most empirically tested criminological theories. But only a few studies have explicitly examined whether the relationship between parental rearing behavior and self-control corresponds to the theoretical Gottfredson and Hirschi assumptions. Few studies investigated whether the effect of parenting is limited on the childhood. This research question results in the stability assumption that parenting does not influence the self-control of children after the age of 8 years because it is stable thenceforth.

The stability assumption was tested within five studies. Against the theoretical expectations, they showed that self-control is only moderately stable after the age of 8 years [10, p. 744]. A «strong evidence

of absolute stability in self-control» was founded in 84% of the cases [10, p. 761]. The parenting affects self-control also in the young age «even after accounting for both prior self-control and exposure to parental socialization» [10, pp. 739–740].

Another important question is which factor of family socialization – parental supervision or attachment to the parents affects self-control essentially. Some studies showed that not only observation, control, and punishment but also care and attachment crucially affect the development of self-control [7; 12; 16; 34]. In a few of these studies, parental supervision has stronger effects compared to attachment to the parents. However, one of these studies gave an account of the nonsignificant effects of parental supervision but a significant effect of attachment to the parents [3].

Parenting and Self-Control in Russia

Russia has a transformation of values. A few studies showed that liberal values increased between 1990 and 2002 although not continuously. However, the majority of Russian populations prefer traditional values in terms of Milton Rokeach [19] such as tradition and family as well as readiness to make sacrifices and highhandedness [14; 15]. The same tendencies were reported in a study in the Russian provinces: traditional values are preferred, but modern values increase slowly [17; 18]. A high homogeneity of the population related to social orientations was typical for Russia in the 1990s

to 2000s [1, p. 94; 13]. A new nationwide representative study conducted by the Institute of Sociology of the Russian Academy of Sciences shows that only 15% to 20% of the population prefers a liberal way of modernization; the majority of the citizens favor conservative values and means [2].

Collectivistic values, which were propagated in the former Soviet Union, imply hierarchy and subordination. Collectivistic attitudes are reflected in Russian families and schools as an authoritarian parenting style, which is still typical for many Russian families. Thus, 51% ($n = 1,600$) of the respondents of a representative nationwide survey in 2004 said that a child has to be beaten off and on for educational goals. An authoritarian parenting style is also reflected in the kind of parental supervision: 54% of the respondents think that they are free to restrain contacts of their adolescent child from their friends and 35% of the respondents think that it is right to use the money earned by juveniles for family aims. Furthermore, 46% of the 13- to 14-year-old youth cannot debate with their parents and 53% with their teachers. In addition, 77% of the respondents think that young people have to attend parent's orders without contradictions [6].

Another study conducted with ninth-grade students in Volgograd showed that 55.4% of youth experienced corporal punishment during childhood and 4.8% did experience parental violence such as kicking or hitting with an object or a fist [21]. In the same study, in comparison to German juveniles, Russian youth reported more frequently never been hit by parents and simultaneously a higher percentage of juveniles who were heavily abused during childhood.

The living standard of most families in Russia declined to the national poverty level after the collapse of the old Soviet system. Young people were able to acclimatize in the new living conditions much faster. The social roles become ambiguous: old people were not more necessary seasoned and competent persons. Parents were not anymore the authority person in most situations. If parents behaved in an authoritarian manner in such situations, it could activate large conflicts between parents and children. Such conflicts weaken the attachment between children and parents and make parental supervision ineffective. An authoritarian parenting style does not facilitate the self-worth of children; it is essential when it affects the attachment between children and parents: «excessive punishments would destroy the relationship and vitiate their effectiveness» [11, p. 157].

Few international comparative studies investigated the self-control of youth. A study with a sample of students in the Russian city of Volgograd and four German cities showed that Russian youth have the same self-control as the Germans [21, p. 109]. Another study investigated the self-control of youth in 30 countries. It found a relatively low self-control by Russian youth [16, p. 299]. The self-control of youth in Russia stands in the middle of the group of the other postsocialistic countries [16, p. 299]. The youth from postsocialistic countries have low self-control especially for risk-seeking and impulsivity; the values for self-centeredness stay in the middle of all 30 countries [16; p. 302].

Methods

Three cities that lie in different parts of Russia were chosen for this

study: Volgograd, St. Petersburg, and Krasnoyarsk. The data collection took place between the end of November 2008 and April 2009¹. The ninth-grade students were questioned. The questioning was realized by interviewers and it took place in classrooms during school lessons. The final sample was $n=1,602$ in Volgograd, $n=1,546$ in Krasnoyarsk, and $n=1,712$ in St. Petersburg. More girls than boys were questioned in all cities: 51.0% in Volgograd, 51.8% in Krasnoyarsk, and 52.3% in St. Petersburg. The age of participants ranged between 13 and 18; the average age was 15 years. The majority of the students attended general secondary schools: 75.5% in Volgograd, 75.4% in Krasnoyarsk, and 77.2% in St. Petersburg.

RESULTS

Parental Supervision

«Parental supervision» includes two factors: the first factor measures the interest that parents have in the leisure activities of their children (sympathy and interest), and the second factor measures the parents' knowledge of how their children spend their leisure time. Parental supervision is a measure of six items of a four-stage Likert scale with the answer categories range from 1=«not correct at all» to 4=«totally correct». The values were transformed to the scale from 0 to 100. The average value of parental supervision is 62.7. The juveniles agreed to the items of the factor «sympathy and

interest» rather than to the items of the factor «knowledge about leisure time». The average for knowledge about leisure time is higher than for sympathy and interest (72.6 vs. 52.8). The students means also, the parents were interested in what their children do in their leisure time, but they did not really know much about it.

Attachment to the Parents

«Attachment to the parents» was measured based on two items that also include two facets of attachment: the subjective quality of the attachment to their fathers and mothers from the students' point of view and the importance of parental opinion on the students themselves. In each case, both questions were expressed for the father and the mother. The subjective quality of the attachment to the parents was measured by the question «How good are you getting along with your father/stepfather (your mother/stepmother)?» There are four possible answers who ranged from 1=«not good at all» to 4=«really good». The importance of parental opinion on the students was measured by the question «How important to you is your parents' opinion about you?» The possible answers range from 1=«totally unimportant» to 6=«really important». The answers to these questions were transformed on a scale from 0 to 100. The attachment to the mother is stronger than the attachment to the father. The average value of attachment to the parents achieves 76.5. The attachment to the mother is 81.5 and the attachment to the father is 72.1.

Self-Control

«Self-control» was measured with a short version of the self-control scale by Grasmick et al. [9]. Three subdimensions

¹ Data were collected in a project funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG) and realized at the Institute of Criminal Sciences of the University of Hamburg (Germany): DFG-Project «Juvenile delinquency in Germany and Russia: culturally comparative self-report study to investigate of anomie and control theoretical approaches» (#WE 3833/1-1).

based on nine four-stage items were used: «risk-seeking», «impulsivity», and «self-centeredness». The answers to these questions were transformed on a scale from 0 to 100. The average value for impulsivity was 50.7, for risk-seeking 44.9, and for self-centeredness 41.0.

Juvenile delinquency

Juvenile delinquency was measured as versatility. It was built from the prevalence of 12 delinquency variables (damage to property, graffiti spraying, shoplifting, theft from persons, burglary, theft from vehicles, vehicle theft, assault with and without a weapon, threat with a weapon, robbery, and extortion) [24]. A 13-step versatility variable with values from 0 to 12 was built and afterwards dichotomized as follows: Juveniles who did not commit any offences or did a maximum of 2 of these 12 offences in the last 12 months are defined as not versatile; the juveniles who did commit three or more different offences are classified as versatile. The

overall percentage of versatile juveniles is 5% of the sample.

Conclusion

The current generation of youth has parents who are socialized in the former Soviet Union and internalize old Soviet values and norms. Russia is a country with distinctive traditional culture with rather collectivistic values, which implies hierarchy and subordination as well as an authoritarian parenting style [26]. Our previous studies show the importance of the family socialisation and self-control for the development of social conform behaviour of juveniles [20; 24; 27; 29; 32; 33]. Some of these studies explored the juvenile delinquency at the international perspective [5] and especially between German and Russian juveniles [4; 20; 21; 22; 23; 25; 28; 29; 30; 31]. This paper pointed out the theoretical and methodological aspects of the empirical testing of some important crime predictors, which will be used within the new research.

REFERENCES

1. Byzov L. G. [Social and cultural transformation of the Russian society and perspectives of the development of the neo-conservative subject]. In: *Bazovye cennosti rossijan: Social'nye ustanovki. Zhiznennye strategii. Simvoly. Mify* [Fundamental values of Russians: Social attitudes, life strategies, symbols, and myths]. Moscow, 2003. P. 45–96.
2. Byzov L. G. [Viewings and dreams of Russians about structure of Russian society through the prism of the social value and ideological conflicts]. In: *Rossija formirujushhajasja* [Developed Russia], 2012, no. 11, pp. 142–168.
3. Cochran J. K., Wood P. B., Sellers C. S., Wilkerson W., Chamlin M. B. [Academic dishonesty and low self-control: An empirical test of a general theory of crime]. In: *Deviant Behavior*, 1998, no. 19, pp. 227–255.
4. Enzmann D., Kammigan I., Siegmunt O., Wetzels P. Was scheren mich die anderen? Marktmoral als kriminogener Faktor: Eine Studie zu Jugendkriminalität in Russland und Deutschland. Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Berlin: Berlin, 2016.
5. Enzmann D., Siegmunt O., Seyboth-Teßmer F., Wetzels P. Ergebnisse der zweiten International Self-Reported Delinquency (ISR2) Studie in Deutschland. Abschlussbericht an das Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend (BMFSFJ). Hamburg: Universität Hamburg, 2008. 169 p.

6. Gesellschaftliche Meinung – 2004. Ein Jahrbuch. Moskau: Levada-Center, 2004. 172 p.
7. Gibson C. L., Sullivan C. J., Jones S., Piquero A. R. «Does it take a village?» Assessing neighbourhood influences on children's self-control. In: Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency, 2010, no. 47 (1), pp. 31–62.
8. Gottfredson M. R., Hirschi T. A General Theory of Crime. Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1990. 316 p.
9. Grasmick H. G., Tittle C. R., Bursik R. J., Arneklev B. J. Testing the core empirical implications of Gottfredson and Hirschi's General Theory of Crime. In: Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency, 1993, no. 30, pp. 5–29.
10. Hay, C. & Forrest, W. (2006). The development of self-control: Examining Self-Control Theory's stability thesis. *Criminology*, 44(4), 739–774.
11. Hirschi T., Gottfredson M. R. Punishment of children from the perspective of control theory. In: Britt C. L., Gottfredson M. R. Control Theories of Crime and Delinquency. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2003. P. 151–160.
12. Hope T. L., Grasmick H. G., Pointon L. J. The family in Gottfredson and Hirschi's general theory of crime: Structure, parenting and self-control. In: Sociological Focus, 2003, no. 36 (4), pp. 291–311.
13. Lapin N. I. [Social values and reforms in crisis Russia]. In: *Sociologicheskie issledovaniya* [Sociological studies], 1993, no. 9, pp. 17–28.
14. Lapin N. I. [Social and value functions of intelligentsia]. In: *Znanie. Ponimanie. Umenie* [Knowledge. Understanding. Skill], 2007, no. 1, pp. 38–43.
15. Lapin N. I., Beljaeva L. A. *Krizisnyj socium. Nashe obshchestvo v treh izmerenijah* [Crisis society. Our society in three measurings]. Moscow: IFRAN. 1994. 245 c.
16. Marshall I. H., Enzmann D. The generalizability of Self-Control Theory. In Junger-Tas J., Marshall I. H., Enzmann D., Killias M., Steketee M., Gruszczynska B. *The Many Faces of Youth Crime: Contrasting Theoretical Perspectives on Juvenile Delinquency across Countries and Cultures*. Dordrecht: Springer, 2012. P. 285–325.
17. Rassadina T. A. [Moral attitudes of the inhabitants of Russian provinces]. In: *Sociologicheskie issledovaniya* [Sociological studies], 2004, no. 7, pp. 52–61.
18. Rassadina T. A. [Transformation of the traditional values of Russians in the period after perestroika]. In: *Sociologicheskie issledovaniya* [Sociological studies], 2006, no. 9, pp. 95–102.
19. Rokeach M. The nature of human values. New York: The Free Press, 1973. 438 p.
20. Siegmunt O. Selbstkontrolle: Einflüsse von Familie, Schule und Nachbarschaften. Eine kontrolltheoretische Studie in drei russischen Städten. Berlin: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Berlin, 2012. 301 p.
21. Siegmunt O. Kriminelle Russen, kriminelle Deutsche: Zur Jugendkriminalität im Hell- und Dunkelfeld. Berlin: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Berlin, 2013.
22. Siegmunt O. Mit Vorsicht zu genießen! Zur Aussagekraft von Kriminalstatistiken und zum Anzeigeverhalten Jugendlicher in Deutschland und Russland. In: Monatsschrift für Kriminologie und Strafrechtsreform, 2013, no. 96 (6), pp. 461–476.
23. Siegmunt O. Offenders and Victims of Violent Crime: Study to Unreported Crime of Juveniles. In: Legal Science and Law Enforcement, 2013, Practice 23 (1), pp. 106–116.
24. Siegmunt O. Neighborhood Disorganization and Social Control: Case Studies from Three Russian Cities (SpringerBriefs in Criminology). Springer. 2016. 96 p.
25. Siegmunt O. Eine Gleichung mit mehreren Unbekannten oder was erklärt die Landesunterschiede in der Jugendgewalt? Eine Analyse mit deutschen und russischen Daten. In: Neue Kriminalpolitik, 2016, no. 28 (4), pp. 408–425.

26. Siegmunt O. Soziale Werte in der soziologischen und kriminologischen Forschung: Überlegungen zum Begriff und Operationalisierung. In: *Juridica International*, 2017, no. 25, pp. 22–31.
27. Siegmunt O. [Juvenile delinquency in Russia and Germany: the role of the modern family]. In: *Vestnik Moskovskogo gosudarstvennogo oblastnogo universiteta. Seriya: Iurisprudentsiya* [Bulletin of Moscow Region State University. Series: Jurisprudence], 2018, no. 4, pp. 173–182.
28. Siegmunt O. Migration, Integration and Crime: Global Research Experience. In: *Proceedings of the Academy of Management of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia*, 2018, no. 1 (45), pp. 133–137.
29. Siegmunt O., Belousow K. Jugend in St. Petersburg: Erste Ergebnisse einer Schülerbefragung. Bericht an die Bildungsbehörde der Stadt St. Petersburg. Hamburg und St. Petersburg: Universität Hamburg, 2009. 25 p.
30. Siegmunt O., Wetzels P. [Institutional Anomie Theory – Empirical Testing. In: *Sociologicheskie issledovaniya* [Sociological Studies], 2015, no. 42(4), pp. 78–87.
31. Siegmunt O., Wetzels P. Social Values and Delinquency of Russian Youth. In: *Mezhdunarodnyy zhurnal sravnitel'nogo i prikladnogo ugolovnogo pravosudiya* [International Journal of Comparative and Applied Criminal Justice], 2017, no. 41 (3), pp. 211–230.
32. Siegmunt O., Wetzels P., Enzmann D. Familie, Nachbarschaften, Selbstkontrolle und Jugenddelinquenz in Russland. Ergebnisse der Schülerbefragungen in Krasnojarsk, St. Petersburg und Wolgograd im Rahmen des DFG-Projektes «Jugendkriminalität in Deutschland und Russland: Kulturvergleichende Dunkelfeldstudie zur Prüfung anomie- und kontrolltheoretischer Ansätze». Hamburg: Universität Hamburg, 2010. 46 p.
33. Siegmunt O., Wetzels P., Enzmann D. Methodische Vorgehensweise, das Erhebungsinstrument und die Durchführung der Schülerbefragung 2008–2009 in drei russischen Städten. Bericht über die Feldphase in Krasnojarsk, St. Petersburg und Wolgograd im Rahmen des DFG-Projektes «Jugendkriminalität in Deutschland und Russland: Kulturvergleichende Dunkelfeldstudie zur Prüfung anomie- und kontrolltheoretischer Ansätze». Hamburg: Universität Hamburg, 2010. 32 p.
34. Wilmers N., Enzmann D., Schaefer D., Herbers K., Greve W., Wetzels P. Jugendliche in Deutschland zur Jahrtausendwende: Gefährlich oder gefährdet? Ergebnisse wiederholter, repräsentativer Dunkelfelduntersuchungen zu Gewalt und Kriminalität im Leben junger Menschen 1998–2000, Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2002. 369 p.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Olga A. Siegmunt – PhD in Philosophical sciences, associate professor at the Department of Educational and Social Sciences, University of Vechta, Germany;
e-mail: olga.siegmunt@uni-hamburg.de

ИНФОРМАЦИЯ ОБ АВТОРЕ

Сигмунт Ольга Александровна – кандидат философских наук, доцент, доцент факультета образовательных и общественных наук Университета Фехта (Германия);
e-mail: olga.siegmunt@uni-hamburg.de

FOR CITATION

Siegmunt O. A. Self-control and parenting as the most important predictors of juvenile delinquency. In: *Bulletin of Moscow Region State University. Series: Jurisprudence*, 2019, no. 3, pp 141–148.

DOI: 10.18384/2310-6794-2019-3-141-148

ПРАВИЛЬНАЯ ССЫЛКА

Зигмунт О. А. Самоконтроль и семейное воспитание как важнейшие факторы, объясняющие преступность несовершеннолетних // Вестник Московского государственного областного университета. Серия: Юриспруденция. 2019. № 3. С. 141–148.

DOI: 10.18384/2310-6794-2019-3-141-148