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**Global Challenges and Prospects of the Modern Economic
Development**
ATTITUDE TO THE FAMILY: GENERATIONAL ASPECT

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Abstract

The problem of the relationship of people and society to the family reflects the objectively existing struggle of opposite trends in the development of marriage and the family – conservative and liberal. Practical social policy also depends on the support of society and the state for a particular trend in the development of marriage and the family (conservative or liberal). In modern society, individuals are forced to be included in a variety of complexes of relationships, but these complexes of relationships do not cancel or replace family-related relationships. At the same time, the family and family-related relations (and ideas about the family) change over time, the meaning of the family in personal relationships changes, and various forms of family appear. Individualistic values and the weakening of traditional family values are increasingly visible. The purpose of this study is to identify the sociological parameters of conservative and liberal tendencies in the development of marriage and family in modern Russian conditions. For this purpose, the data of the sociological survey is analysed in relation to three age-generational groups (junior, middle and senior). Data from a sociological survey indicate that in Russia, the conservative tendency towards family is more common among representatives of the middle and older age-generational groups. A liberal tendency in relation to the family is more inherent in representatives of the younger age-generational group. However, the vast majority of respondents from all age and generational groups show a conservative tendency in their attitude to family.

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1. Introduction

The problem of attitude to the family and assessment of family development prospects is multidimensional. But in any case, this problem reflects the objectively existing struggle of opposite trends in the development of marriage and the family – conservative and liberal. The conservative trend in the development of the family implies the preservation of traditional institutional forms of marriage and family in modern society. The liberal trend in the development of the family implies the deinstitutionalization (to a large extent) of marriage and the emergence of non-traditional forms of marriage and family. These opposite trends in the development of marriage and family (conservative and liberal) affect not only the preservation or change of forms of marriage and family. They also affect the preservation of stability or destabilization of the existing social system (society and the state) as a whole, including causing political struggle. Practical social policy also depends on the support in society and the state of a particular trend in the development of marriage and the family (conservative or liberal), in particular, the decision on the extent and forms of possible and necessary support for the family.

2. Problem Statement

In different countries, trends of a conservative and liberal nature in the development of marriage and family manifest themselves in different ways. In many countries (for example, in Western Europe), the liberal trend associated with the process of individualization is becoming more pronounced (Bauman, 2005; Genov, 2018). In Russia, the conservative trend remains relatively strong. But some manifestations of a liberal nature (for example, "arranged marriage") have become very widespread (Kapoguzov et al., 2020; Klupt, 2019; Lebedeva, 2020). There are also "marriage-like unions" (for example, according to the concubinate type), which, however, do not receive a legal status (so in Russia); but, for example, in France and Germany they received their legal status (Kapoguzov et al., 2020). The most important problems of family and marriage are reflected in social statistics (Table 1).

Table 1. Dynamics of the number of marriages and births (per 1000 people) and the total birth rate (number of children per 1 woman) in Russia in 1960-2019

Years	Number of marriages per 1000 population	Years	Number of births per 1000 population	Years	Number of children per 1 woman
1960	12,5	1960	23,2	1960–1961	2,540
1970	10,1	1970	14,6	1970–1971	2,007
1980	10,6	1980	15,9	1980–1981	1,895
1990	8,9	1990	13,4	1990	1,892
1995	7,3	1995	9,3	1995	1,337
2000	6,2	2000	8,7	2000	1,195
2005	7,4	2005	10,2	2005	1,294
2010	8,5	2010	12,5	2010	1,567
2015	7,9	2015	13,3	2015	1,777
2019	6,5	2019	10,1	2019	1,504

Source: author based on (Rosstat, 2020).

The lowest birth rate was in the mid-1990s and early 2000s (about 9.0 births per 1000 population), then the birth rate increased slightly. But in the most recent years, the birth rate has fallen to almost the

same value (10.1 births per 1000 population). The change in the total birth rate (the number of children per 1 woman) is similar to the dynamics of the birth rate in Russia in 1960-2019. A slight increase in these indicators in the 2010s indicates certain opportunities for social policy (and family policy). In this regard, we can mention the positive role of "maternity capital" payments. However, the General trend is still towards a lower birth rate, especially during periods of prolonged economic recessions (for example, in the period 1991-2000). Statistics show that a significant number of people do not have an official marriage and children. This is largely due to a change in the attitude of many people towards the family as a whole, which is also reflected in the decline in the number of officially concluded marriages.

3. Research Questions

In modern society, individuals are forced to enter into a variety of complex relationships in industrial and labour organizations, firms, educational institutions, friendly companies, social networks in Internet, groups of neighbours in their place of residence, socio-political organizations and parties. But all these systems of relations do not cancel and do not substitute for family relationships. At the same time, the family as a social institution and family relations (and ideas about the family) undergo certain changes over time. First of all, an important change is the emergence of various forms of family and marriage. Studies such as Camarero (2014) suggest six "ideal types" of marriage based on two criteria: the nature and function of relationships between partners. According to the first criterion, there are three marriage models: Alliance, merger, and Association. The second criterion distinguishes two types of marriage: necessary or accidental. Some studies also show that in traditional families (a married couple of the opposite sex, most often with children), the views of the spouses on the family are very different (Luotonen & Castrén, 2018). There is also no doubt that the share of family-kinship relations is noticeably narrowed in comparison with the expanding field (circle) of various social relations of the individual. We can even talk about a change in the meaning of family in personal relationships, as evidenced by some researchers (Wall & Gouveia, 2014). All this confirms the theses about changing the meaning of the family in personal relationships and the emergence of various forms of family. However, even in this case, kinship relations retain their importance as the core of all social relations of the individual.

4. Purpose of the Study

Social life is not something that simply exists out there, but is made (Marres et al., 2018). The basic social institution through which social life exists and is created is the family. In turn, the family is subject to socio-historical changes. Various studies show that the consciousness and behaviour of Russian youth are increasingly marked by manifestations of individualistic values (Lebedeva, 2020). We are also talking about the weakening of the values of the traditional family (a manifestation of the liberal trend). But what is the scale of this problem (the weakening of traditional family values)? And how significant are the differences between different generational groups in their attitude to the family? The purpose of this study is to identify the sociological parameters of conservative and liberal tendencies in the development of marriage and family in modern Russian conditions. For this purpose, the data of the sociological survey is analysed in relation to three age-generational groups (junior, middle and senior).

5. Research Methods

As a factual basis, this paper uses the materials of the sociological survey "FATHERS and CHILDREN: conflict and cooperation, continuity of generations", conducted in early 2020 under the guidance of the author of the article. The survey was conducted in the Samara region of Russia. The number of respondents (*N*) was 620 people aged 16-69 years. The sampling error is within 5%. The sample set of respondents was determined taking into account the social characteristics of age-generational groups, gender, and territorial settlement structure of the population. For the analysis, approximately the same size groups were selected from the total number of respondents (Table 2).

Table 2. Distribution of respondents by age-generational groups

Indicators	Age groups (full years)			Total
	16–24 years	25–44 years	45–69 years	
Number of respondents	202	205	213	620
The percentage of respondents	32,6	33,1	34,3	100,0

Source: author.

The main social characteristics of the selected age-generational groups:

16-24 years-this is the period of study, obtaining a profession and beginning to enter the working life, for some young people - the period of entering family life;

25-44 years is the period of the most active working life and childbearing period, the period of the greatest family concerns-concerns for both children and the older generation;

45-69 years is the period of completion of working life, pre-retirement and retirement age, the period of caring for grandchildren, the increasing need for care and assistance from other people.

6. Findings

What is the attitude towards the family of representatives of different age and generational groups, especially young people? To a certain extent, this can be judged by respondents' assessments of the positive and negative characteristics of people of their generation (Table 3).

Table 3. Distribution of responses to questions about positive and negative traits of people of their generation in the whole sample (*N*=620)

What more or less positive properties are most characteristic, in Your opinion, of the behavior of people of Your generation? (several options)			What more or less negative properties are most characteristic, in Your opinion, of the behavior of people of Your generation? (several options)		
Place (rank)	Possible answers	Percent-ages	Place (rank)	Possible answers	Percent-ages
1	1. A large circle of communication	42,1	1	5. Passion for alcoholic beverages	41,3
2	5. Orientation on a healthy lifestyle	41,6	2	2. Indifference to people around you	33,9
3	4. Focusing on career growth	39,8	3	1. Frivolity, careless attitude to life	32,7

4	8. Serious attitude to family	39,7	4	4. Lack of interest in events taking place in the country, the world	27,6
5	9. The desire to be diversified	37,3	5	3. Unwillingness to work	26,1
6	2. The desire to help people in need	25,8	6	6. The use of dishonest methods to achieve the objectives	21,5
7	11. The desire to honestly earn money	24,2	7	7. The desire to earn a lot of money at any price	18,9
8	10. The desire to get an education	22,9	8	9. Frivolous attitude to family	16,8
9	7. Patriotism	18,5	9	10. A large number of sexual relations	13,9
10	3. The desire to participate in the life of the country, to benefit Homeland	17,7	10	8. Drug craze	12,9
11	6. Responsibility to society	17,3	11	11. Careerism	8,1

Source: author.

Among the positive traits of people of their generation in the leading group (in 4th place)-"Serious attitude to family" (noted 39.7% of all respondents). Among the negative traits of people of their generation in one of the last places (in 8th place) – "Frivolous attitude to the family" (noted 16.8% of all respondents). Is the same attitude to the family (serious or frivolous) among representatives of different age-generational groups? (Table 4).

Table 4. Distribution of answers to questions about the positive and negative traits of people of their generation by age-generational groups

	What more or less positive properties are most characteristic, in Your opinion, of the behavior of people of Your generation? (several options)						What more or less negative properties are most characteristic, in Your opinion, of the behavior of people of Your generation? (several options)						
	16-24 years		25-44 years		45-69 years		16-24 years		25-44 years		45-69 years		
Possible answers	Percentage	Place (rank)	Percentage	Place (rank)	Percentage	Place (rank)	Possible answers	Percentage	Place (rank)	Percentage	Place (rank)	Percentage	Place (rank)
...
Serious attitude to family	24,8	6	44,4	1	49,3	1
...
...	Frivolous attitude to family	26,7	6-7	14,1	9	9,9	8
...

Source: author.

Among the positive traits of people in the middle and older age-generational groups of respondents, "Serious attitude to family" is on the 1st place (more than 40% of respondents in these groups noted this answer). And in the younger group, this answer was only in 6th place (24.8% of respondents in this group noted). Among the negative traits of people in the middle and older age-generational groups of respondents, "Frivolous attitude to family" came out, respectively, in 9th place (14.1%) and 8th place (9.9%). And in the younger group, this answer was in 6-7 places (26.7%). Thus, the respondents' responses about the positive and negative characteristics inherent, in their opinion, in people of their generation, indicate a significant difference between the younger group (youth) and representatives of the middle and older age-generational groups. This applies to both the "serious attitude to family" and the "frivolous attitude to family" characteristics. But in all age-generational groups, the vast majority of respondents do not recognize that "frivolous attitude to family" is inherent in people of their generation.

7. Conclusion

Many changes concerning the family and marriage (and, consequently, the attitude of society towards family and marriage) are caused by objective processes in society as a whole. First of all, we have to talk about large-scale technological changes that have contributed to the establishment of a "mass consumption society", mass culture, digitalization of the main spheres of society and mediocracy. One of the most important trends of changes in modern society is individualization. The process of individualization is contradictory. Researchers try to see different (negative and positive) aspects of individualization. The meaning of "individualization", according to Bauman, it consists in freeing a person from the prescribed, inherited and innate predestination of his social role (Bauman, 2005). Thus, individualization is quite consistent with the liberal concept of the development of society, including the family and marriage. In an individualized society, the inner urge of the individual to control his own destiny at his own discretion belittles the importance of social causes and collective actions (Bauman, 2005). As a result, society moves "from community to isolation", including the declining importance of family traditions and values (Bauman, 2005).

Genov (2018) puts in the first place the positive aspects of individualization, which reflects the General process of increasing freedom in society. But at the same time, he emphasizes that there can be both constructive and destructive consequences of individualization (Genov, 2018). Indeed, on the one hand, individualization is combined with an increase in the ability of a person to solve life's problems effectively and autonomously. On the other hand, individualization leads to the atomization of society, to the weakening of solidarity ties of members of society, including even at the family level. Putnam (2000) noted that functional communities (in the United States) are being destroyed because both the Church and the family have lost strength and cohesion. At the same time, Putnam expressed hope for the revival of American society (Revival of American Community), including through high social capital (the development and improvement of which must be taken care of, first of all, through education). At the same time, Putnam (2000) pays tribute to the conservative concept (especially in relation to the younger generation), expressing the idea that traditional family structures and situations are most likely to protect children and set them up for success.

It can be recognized that Russian society has not lost a healthy conservative principle (traditional values) in relation to the family. Thanks to this, there is also hope for further successful development of society (traditional family structures and situations are most likely to protect children and set them up for success – as Putnam said). At the same time, the possibility of adapting society and the family to socio-historical challenges through certain transformations, including in a liberal spirit, is not denied. There is already and will continue to be more and more diverse "social construction of family ties, in particular through friendship (Wall & Gouveia, 2014, pp. 352-353).

The modern family undoubtedly suffers from a number of dysfunctions; however, the family institution is a social organism with a powerful potential for transformation and self-healing (Klupt, 2019). At the same time, we should agree with the opinion that it is necessary to create a system of psychological and pedagogical measures for the formation of socio-cultural needs in the family among young people (Strunkina et al., 2016). The given data of the sociological survey indicate that in Russia, the conservative trend in the attitude of society to the family ("serious attitude to the family") is more typical for representatives of middle and older age-generational groups. The liberal tendency towards the family ("frivolous attitude to the family") is more typical for representatives of the younger age-generational group. At the same time, the vast majority of representatives of all age-generational groups (and young people) still have a conservative tendency towards to the family.

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