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RESEARCH OF RISK BEHAVIOR FEATURES JUVENILE DELINQUENTS

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Abstract

The article focuses on the issue of prevention of juvenile delinquency and their behavioral identification. The risky behavior issues have been one of the main subjects to study since ancient times. Risky behavior is any consciously, or non-consciously controlled behavior with a perceived uncertainty about its outcome, usually carries the voluntary acceptance of elements of risk. The risky behavior leading to the suicides are still being studied by most philosophers, sociologists, educators, and psychologists. The widespread prevalence of risk behavior among adolescents bears the question of the age-related regularity of risky behaviors. The individual psychological factors of self-destructive behavior include temperament, self-esteem, features of the self-concept. The suggested material was based on the analysis of psychological, pedagogical and special literature. The article describes the features of identifying adolescent risk behavior with their subsequent description. The results of our study thus confirmed our assumption that there are a number of disturbances in the emotional sphere as predictors of risky suicidal behavior of adolescent offenders.

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Keywords: Maladaptive behavior, asocial behavior, subjective feeling, existential crisis, suicidal behavior, offenders.



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1. Introduction

Risky behavior is any consciously, or non-consciously controlled behavior with a perceived uncertainty about its outcome, usually carries the voluntary acceptance of elements of risk to the health or life of the person (Abramova & Tikhonenko, 1980a).

A longitudinal study in health-hazardous behavior among adolescents in 35 countries conducted by WHO showed the 23 % of adolescents smoking, 29 % using alcohol and 22 % have tried drugs at the age of 15 (Schneider, 2005). In addition, it has been empirically revealed that participation in one of the types of risk behavior with a high degree of probability leads to inclusion in other models of risk behavior (Ipatov, 2017; Masagutov, 2003; Myagkov, 2003).

The risky behavior issues have been one of the main subjects to study since ancient times. The risky behavior leading to the suicides are still being studied by most philosophers, sociologists, educators, and psychologists in order to work out the preventions since this issue nowadays remains still relevant (Guryev, 2014; Grebennikov, 2013; Kleiberg et al., 2016).

There is a range of sources presenting the fact that every year from 1 to 4 million suicides are committed in the world and about 19 million make unsuccessful attempts. At the same time, Russia is one of the countries with a very high suicide rate (over 20 people per 100 thousand of the population). And people who attempted suicide usually repeat it, often with a fatal outcome (Banshchikova, 2011).

The widespread prevalence of risk behavior among adolescents bears the question of the age-related regularity of risky behaviors. Such foreign scientists as D. Elkind, R. Jessor, L. Ponton, J. Dennison, B. Donovan emphasize in the problematic behavior aspects of the development and formation of the identity of adolescents (as cited in Guryev, 2014; Grebennikov, 2013; Kleiberg et al., 2016; Myagkov, 2003).

2. Problem Statement

Adolescents find the image of adulthood mostly unusual with extraordinary actions associated with extreme situations identified with risky behavior, heroism, sometimes reaching recklessness. When describing the “image of the Self,” the teenager idealizes the future trying to realize this future in extraordinary actions that can (in his opinion) bring adults closer.

Modern sociological research considers suicide as “self-destructive” and “deviant” behavior (Banshchikova, 2011). The deviant behavior or social deviation mean stable behavior of the individual, deviating from social, psychological and mental norms, causing real damage to society or the individual. Suicide is self-destructive in nature, although it can carry externally destructive goals (for example, suicide is “out of spite”) (Banshchikova, 2011; Kleiberg et al., 2016; Malkina-Pykh, 2002).

Suicide is an extreme form of self-destructive behavior, in addition to this type of behavior include chemical and non-chemical dependencies, extreme workload, unwillingness to communicate, love of risky sports. People prone to various types of self-destructive behavior are usually classified as at risk of committing a suicidal act (Banshchikova, 2011; Grebennikov, 2013).

According to Amrumova, suicide is the result of socio-psychological maladaptation of the individual (as cited in Abramova & Tikhonenko, 1980a, 1980b). The scientist proposed the structure of

suicidal behavior used today, which in its essence reflects the dynamics of its development: suicidal thoughts, perceptions, experiences, as well as suicidal tendencies, which are divided into intentions and intentions.

During his research Tikhonenko concluded that people of a young and old age are more prone to suicidal behavior, which is associated with a review and assessment of life and the meaning of life in these periods (as cited in Abramova & Tikhonenko, 1980a, 1980b).

Thus, there is every reason to believe that suicidal behavior, especially in adolescence, can be attributed simultaneously to manifestations of risky behavior (Gilinsky, 2000; Kleiberg et al., 2016; Orlova et al., 2017).

3. Research Questions

The study of auto-aggressive behavior as an independent phenomenon becomes one of the modern approaches to study human behavior. The study is interdisciplinary: there are prerequisites for self-destructive behavior in education considered in pedagogy. A medical approach to this problem is to identify the mental and physical disorders that cause auto-aggression. Sociologists see in auto-destruction the problem of adaptation to the world and the problems of interaction between people. Psychology focuses on the consideration of personality characteristics that determine the propensity for auto-aggression.

The individual psychological factors of self-destructive behavior include temperament, self-esteem, features of the self-concept. There is a particular attention paid to the analysis of the emotional premises of auto-aggression.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the empirical phenomenon is to identify violations of the emotional sphere as predictors of risky (suicidal) behavior of adolescent offenders.

The hypothesis was the assumption that adolescent offenders with risky behavior have such emotional disturbances as a high level of subjective feelings of loneliness, dissatisfaction with certain aspects of their life and life in general, low self-esteem, a high level of fear of society, fate and active activity, experiencing an existential crisis, a tendency to depreciate one's own and others' lives, one's past and future.

The psychodiagnostic methods used in the work are the following:

- Experiencing the Existential Crisis (L.V. Senkevich);
- Life Satisfaction Scale (E. Diener, R.A. Emmons, R.J. Lausen and S. Griffin, in adaptation D.A. Leontiev, E.N. Osina);
- Scale of Solitude (D. Russell, M. Ferguson in the adaptation of N.E. Vodopyanova);
- Fears (V.L. Levy).

The methods of mathematical processing of data used in the study are the following:

- the Mann-Whitney U-test and the Kruskal-Wallis H-test.

The study was conducted on the basis of the Federal state institution "Detention Unit No. 1 of the Office of the Federal Penitentiary Service in Moscow. The number of respondents took part in the study is 104 (54 females, 50 male), 52 of 104 (27 females, 25 male) attempted suicide – they made up the main group (adolescents with risky behavior), the remaining 52 people (27 females, 25 male) made up the control group.

5. Research Methods

The methodology of the subjective feeling of loneliness of D. Russell and M. Ferguson revealed the 55 % of the respondents who attempted suicide (the main group) feel lonely, the control group revealed a high level of loneliness in 3.8 % (Fig. 1).

The significant differences between the main and control groups suggest that teenage suicides experience an all-encompassing feeling of self-absorption, which can be expressed as an alienation of a person from their true feelings in a desire for recognition and love. This kind of behavior is usually accompanied by such emotional conditions as vulnerability, depression, boredom, estrangement, emptiness, self-abasement, longing, depression, etc.

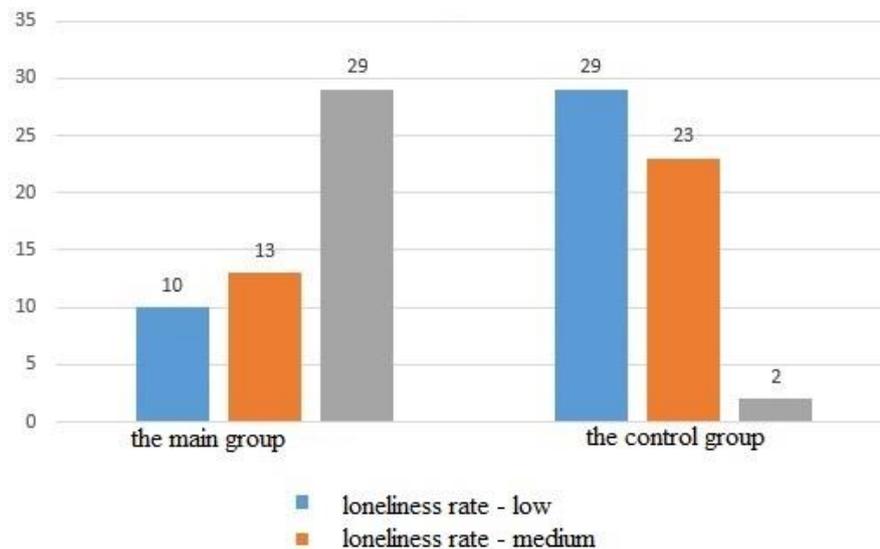


Figure 01. The indicators of the scale "Loneliness" of the main and control groups

There is a significant difference between the main and control groups in the test of satisfaction with life (Fig. 2), the average value in the group of suicides is significantly lower than in the main group, and falls into the zone of a low degree of satisfaction with life.

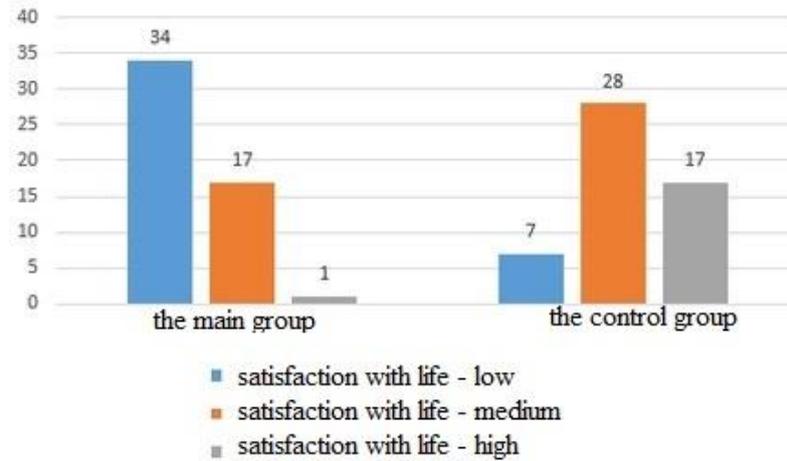


Figure 02. Satisfaction with life Scale of the main and control groups

6. Findings

A quantitative analysis of the data revealed 65 % of respondents in the main group (34 people) have a low rate of satisfaction with life, and 32 % have an average (28 people), while in the control group only 13 % have a low rate, an average level is observed in 53 %, and a high 32 % (7, 28 and 17 people, respectively) versus 1.9 % (1 person) in the group of suicides.

This study allows us to conclude that teenage suicides are caused by the low rate of satisfaction with life. They feel unhappy, dissatisfied with their actions and the reality surrounding them, they can often have a depressed mood, feel incapable of achieving their goals, most probably have low self-esteem.

It is necessary to summarize the result of two methods (methods of subjective feelings of loneliness and a scale of satisfaction with life) and note that adolescents with risky behavior who have attempted suicide are lonelier and less satisfied with their lives.

Fears test by V.L. Levy assessed the general level of personal fears and the severity of some of them. Statistically significant differences between the main and control groups were obtained on the scales of sociophobia, panphobia, fortunophobia and the total indicator. At the same time, the average values of the main group are higher than in the control group, which suggests that suicides are more likely to experience socially evaluative fears, common fears and fears of fate.

Differences in the total indicator of the level of fear describe the group of suicides as more alarming. In both groups, a rather large number of subjects belonged to Theta Anxious (Fig. 3), i.e. with external calm, the level of anxiety is above the normal rate, there is a predisposition to fears, especially in a real threat situation. At the same time, in the main group, the percentage of Omega Trembling is higher, i.e. people experiencing fear even in the absence of threatening objects, which significantly affects behavior, are up to obsessive states.

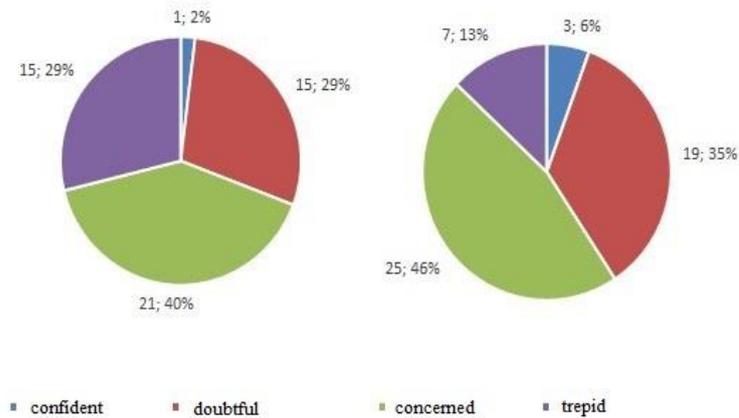


Figure 03. The general indicator of fears of the main and control groups

The methodology for experiencing an existential crisis showed that a group of teenagers who attempted suicide are more likely to experience existential crises than a control group. On all scales, these methods mean values of the control group have negative indicators, while average values of the main group for all scales are positive (Fig. 4).

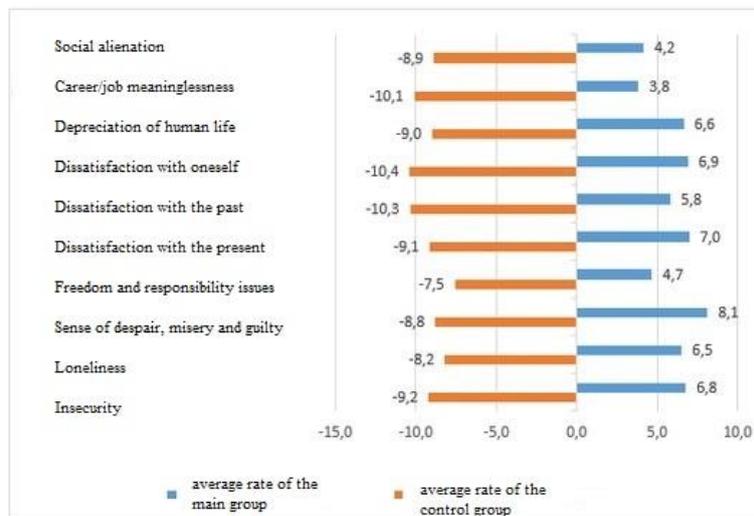


Figure 04. Group-average indicators of the existence of an existential crisis

There is a more pronounced tendency towards existential crises seen that in the main group, teenage suicides are negatively disposed towards people around them, and they see no sense in their professional and everyday activities. They are not satisfied with the lived part of their life, with their present, and with themselves, they feel fear of independent choice, guilt, loneliness, their own helplessness and uselessness.

7. Conclusion

The results of our study thus confirmed our assumption that there are a number of disturbances in the emotional sphere as predictors of risky (suicidal) behavior of adolescent offenders.

In addition, the study allows us to outline a number of recommendations.

1. For the timely prevention of suicidal behavior, it is necessary to conduct a regular assessment of the mental state of adolescent offenders using a complex of psychodiagnostic tests and techniques; in this case, it is necessary to take into account the period during which the diagnosis is carried out.

2. Young men with a feeling of loneliness and dissatisfaction with their lives, fears or those in an existential crisis need full support in the family. Individual or group work with a psychologist is also recommended.

3. Help for young people who attempted suicide should be aimed at creating effective (active) coping strategies based on internal and external resources.

4. Help for young men experiencing an existential crisis should be carried out by professional psychologists who organize personality-developing interaction, relying on creative abilities and social intelligence, in the conditions of unconditional acceptance and invaluable judgments, incentives for initiative and activity.

5. The program of psychological support for adolescents – offenders with risky behavior can be more effective when psychological training is included in it. Group support, involvement in what is happening here and now, development of skills that can be useful in real life, are likely to help improve the psycho-emotional state of teenage suicides.

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