

ISCKMC 2020**International Scientific Congress «KNOWLEDGE, MAN AND CIVILIZATION»****PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOR OF RUSSIAN YOUTH AS AN OBJECT
OF INSTITUTIONALIZATION**

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Abstract

The article analyzes pro-social activities of Russian youth in terms of social structures, social institutions and processes. Prosocial behavior is a purposeful behavior aimed at social development and solution of social problems. The purpose of the study is to identify and substantiate the prerequisites for pro-social activities of Russian youth as an object of institutionalization. The study is based on a secondary analysis of data of the European Social Survey – 2018 (ESS9) (n = 325 Russians aged 17-25 (M = 21.3); 58.2 % of women, 41.8 % of men) and the all-Russian survey conducted by VTsIOM-Sputnik. The results were interpreted using qualitative and quantitative methods in SPSS 22. The analysis showed that young people perceive people as willing to help each other (more than half of the respondents gave medium scores, a fifth gave high scores); only 7.1 % of young people assessed the importance of assistance to other people as low, the remaining 45.8 % – as medium and 47.1 % – as high. Young people are more inclined to act prosocially together with friends, via the Internet, charitable organizations and government agencies. The norms of helping other people and society are assimilated as social norms that contribute to the creation of a favorable platform that makes it possible to carry out pro-social activities. The modern understanding of antecedents influencing the involvement of young people in pro-social activities and contributing to their institutionalization has been updated.

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Keywords: Youth, pro-social activity, assistance, social institutions, volunteering



1. Introduction

The study of pro-social activities of Russian youth meets the public demand for selfless service to society. In the development of social policy, this area is a priority: The Concept for the Development of Volunteering has been adopted, social charity organizations have been created, competitions of grants of the President of the Russian Federation for non-profit organizations, volunteer forums and rallies have been held. Increasingly, the government helps volunteers in solving national problems and emerging global challenges (Constitution Volunteers, Victory Volunteers, Medical Volunteers, #We are together, etc.).

The basis of a prosocial behavior is its prosocial activity – an activity aimed at solving social problems. Fostering pro-social activity is becoming one of the important social tasks. Prosocially active youth is turning into a significant human resource that creates conditions for further institutional development of such organizations.

2. Problem Statement

Behavior and sources of pro-social activity based on selfless service to society and altruistic motives are an urgent social need. What are conditions (external / internal) and tools (needs, motives, incentives, etc.) of prosocial activity? What is the Russian system of social norms and social institutions aimed at satisfying the most important social needs in charitable assistance? These problems require a holistic and systematic study aimed at the institutional regulation of prosocial activities of young people in terms of social structures, social institutions and processes.

3. Research Questions

The strategy of scientific and technological development of the Russian Federation includes tasks related to the effective response of the Russian society to major challenges, taking into account the interaction of a person and social institutions at the present stage of global development. Prosocial activity of young people influences their involvement in socio-political processes. In this regard, the subject of the article is to analyze the modern understanding of antecedents that affect the involvement of young people in pro-social activities and contribute to their institutionalization.

Prosocial behavior as an assistance to other people positively assessed by society and carried out in accordance with cultural standards characterizes the relationship between the subjects, when one party voluntarily gives some benefits (money, time, knowledge, etc.), and the other one accepts them (Kislyakov et al., 2019). The forms of pro-social behavior are volunteering, charity, philanthropy, etc.

According to Batson (1998), the term *prosocial behavior* was coined by sociologists as an antonym for antisocial. The concept of prosocial behavior is semantically associated with the concept of supernormal behavior. The highest manifestation of supernormal behavior is activities in which social benefits for society are selflessly produced – deeds of mercy, charity, volunteering, etc. The World Giving Index, developed by the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF), takes into account three main aspects: frequency of helping to strangers, donations to charities, and volunteering.

Altruistic motivation or concern for the well-being of others has long been considered the primary cause of pro-social activity in the form of volunteering (Boz & Palaz, 2007). Young people as a social stratum are involved in volunteering activities.

Institutional theories of volunteering are based on the results of cross-country research and an idea that the behavior of volunteers as citizens is governed by social institutions (governments, administrative bodies, organizations), as well as the rules that allow them to function (Rotolo & Wilson, 2011). Being a stable form of organization of social life and joint activities of people, volunteering is a social institution.

Foreign researchers have analyzed various aspects of volunteering motivation (sports, medicine, etc.), as well as the relationship between volunteering motivation and time perspectives and life satisfaction (Bidee et al., 2017; Cady et al., 2018; Kim, 2018; Kee et al., 2018; Meneghini et al., 2018). There are “traditional volunteering” as “additional hands” (Mirvis et al., 2014) and volunteering based on “professional experience, knowledge and skills”, which is sometimes called “professional support” (Lee et al., 2014). The pro bono volunteer is a “skillful individual” who offers his professional help to others free of charge, and such help can be done independently, individually, or through a group or organization (Frank et al., 2003; Kirkland, 2010).

Pozdeeva (2016) believes that in modern conditions of accelerated transformations, the prevalence of situational frustrations due to the spread of singular processes in the social space, unorganized volunteering is in demand, since it helps subjects to cope with unexpected difficulties and maintain the spirit of the community. Organized volunteering takes place in the non-profit, public and private sectors, and tends to be more systematic and regular.

Caspersz and Olaru (2013) have built a conceptual model to analyze the motivation of pro-social activities of students. Students evaluated different pro-social activities, and those involved in them.

Other studies emphasized the importance of situational factors of prosocial activities. Students' prosocial behavior correlates with positive attitudes towards their group and family. Participation in social actions differs (Morrissey & Werner-Wilson, 2005) by regions, depending on the ideology of countries (Allik & Realo, 2004) and their institutions. Citizens' assistance supports the tradition of their participation in public organizations and voluntary associations (Curtis et al., 2001; Flanagan et al., 1998; Omoto et al., 2010).

The research also supports a link between social engagement and stronger motivation to engage in pro-social activities (Boz & Palaz, 2007; Omoto et al., 2010). Through the engagement, participants develop an understanding of citizenship (Obradović & Masten, 2007), belonging to their community (Boz & Palaz, 2007; Pavey et al., 2011; Zeldin, 2004), and strive to participate as citizens (Youniss, 2011). Participation in organized activities has been found to influence an individual's prosocial activity (Albanesi et al., 2007; Eccles et al., 2003; Morrissey & Werner-Wilson, 2005), with participation in religious activities having a positive effect on future prosocial activities (Eccles et al., 2003; Hustinx et al., 2005; Perry et al., 2008).

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the article is to identify and substantiate prerequisites for pro-social activities of Russian youth as an object of institutionalization.

5. Research Methods

Features of pro-social activities carried out by Russian youth were identified using a secondary analysis of data from the sociological survey "European Social Research – 2018" (ESS9) (https://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/about/country/russian_federation). Residents of Russia aged 17–25 were selected as a social unit.

For each variable, scores were reversed such that higher scores indicated higher levels of the construction. To assess pro-social activity, the following indicators were selected from the Schwartz value model: the value of helping others (the question code – HL) (from 1 – not important to 6 – very important) and perception of people willing to help each other (the question code – A6) (from 0 – people often care only about themselves, to 10 – people try to help each other). The second indicator is indirectly related. Prosocial behavior is focused on compliance with norms (rules of behavior), one of which is the norm of reciprocity (assistance is provided with the expectation of reciprocity). Thus, if people perceive those around them as prosocial, they will be more prosocially active (Aronson et al., 1997). Only those respondents were selected who gave affirmative answers to the questions. The sample size was 325 people. As a result, a sample of 325 respondents aged 17–25 was created (M = 21.3, SD = 2.5); 51.4 % were women, 48.6 % were men. The results of the all-Russian survey “VTsIOM-Sputnik” “Corporate Volunteering: Realities and Growth Potential,” in which Russians aged 18 and older took part, were subjected to a secondary data analysis. (<https://wciom.ru/index.php?id=236&uid=9031>). The data were interpreted and processed using qualitative and quantitative methods, including: an analysis of percentages performed using the SPSS 22 statistical software package.

6. Findings

Descriptive statistics on the perception of people as willing to help each other, and the value of assistance to others (according to the 2018 European Social Survey for a sample of Russian youth aged 17 to 25) is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of indicators of pro-social activity according to the data of the European Social Survey 2018 (ESS9) (n = 325, age – 17–25 years)

Question code	Minimum	Maximum	Mean value (M)	Standard deviation (SD)
A6	0.00	10.00	5.2892	2.60034
H.L	1.00	6.00	4.3323	1.18127

Table 2 presents the statistics distribution by the level of perception of people as willing to help each other (A6), and the value of assistance to others (H.L) according to the 2018 European Social Survey.

Table 2. Percentage distribution of statistics by the level of perception of pro-social activity according to the European Social Survey 2018 (ESS9) (n = 325, age – 17-25 years)

Question code	‘Low’, %	‘Medium’, %	‘High’, %
A6	23.6	55.7	20.7
H.L	7.1	45.8	47.1

According to the secondary analysis of results of the all-Russian survey conducted by "VTsIOM-Sputnik" (Corporate volunteering: realities and growth potential, 2018), the preferred areas for the development of corporate volunteering are as follows (Fig. 1).

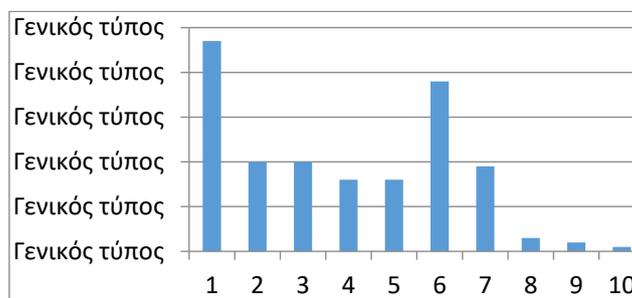


Figure 1. Areas of the corporate volunteering according to the respondents aged 18-24 (% of all respondents)

Note 1: support for socially vulnerable groups (orphans, the elderly, the disabled, etc.); 2 – environmental protection, environmental safety; 3 – helping people in difficult life situations (refugees, homeless, etc.); 4 – support for a healthy lifestyle; 5 – participation in the development of the urban environment, landscaping; 6- helping stray animals; 7 – blood donation; 8 – support for cultural events, protection of monuments; 9 – other; 10- I find it difficult to answer.

7. Conclusion

The secondary analysis of sociological research data made it possible to specify the prerequisites for pro-social activities of Russian youth and outline trends for the future. An analysis of the data of the sociological survey ESS9 showed that on the scale of "expectation of mutual help from others", the majority of Russian respondents aged 17 to 25 gave medium (4-7) scores. On the scale of "value of helping others," respondents gave medium (3 and 4) and high (5 and 6) scores. Modern Russian youth perceives people as ready to help each other (more than half of the respondents gave medium scores, a fifth of them gave high scores). Only 7.1 % of young people rated the importance of helping people around them at a low level, the remaining 45.8 % – at a medium level and 47.1 % – at a high level.

The most preferred forms of pro-social activity in the form of corporate volunteering is support for socially vulnerable groups (orphans, the elderly, the disabled, etc.), assistance to homeless animals, environmental protection, environmental safety, and helping people in difficult life situations. This conclusion is fully consistent with early results (Kislyakov et al., 2019).

As part of gratuitous assistance to other people, 36 % of young people aged 18–24 participated in charity events, concerts, exhibitions, charity lotteries, marathons to support socially vulnerable groups. 33 % of respondents took part in educational programs (conducting school classes, master classes, etc.). 11 % of young people took part in protest actions to draw attention to social problems.

Among the 18-24-year-olds who committed acts of gratuitous assistance, 43 % did it alone, 28 % – together with acquaintances, 7 % – through the companies for which they work, 23 % – through the Internet, social networks, forums, Internet resources for donations, 16 % – through charitable organizations, 20 % – through government agencies or municipal organizations, 12 % – through religious, church organizations, parish communities, etc. Young people are more inclined to act with friends, via the

Internet (23 % among 18–24-year-olds versus 6 % among 60-year-olds and older), as well as through charitable organizations and government agencies.

It can be argued that the norms of helping other people and society are assimilated as social norms that contribute to the creation of a favorable platform that makes it possible to carry out pro-social actions. The lack of subjects of institutionalization of pro-social activity, capable of managing projects, is evident. In this article, we tried to change the modern understanding of antecedents that affect the involvement of young people in pro-social activities and contribute to their institutionalization. In the light of research results showing that awareness of the appropriateness of prosocial activity affects motivation, we have identified the path to sustainable prosocial intentions of young people. Further research is needed to form the basis for the institutionalization of prosocial activities of young people in Russian society in order to develop their natural need to help other people.

Acknowledgments

The reported study was funded by RFBR and EISR according to the research project № 20-011-31302.

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