

Child Abuse in Russia as a Cause of Social Orphanhood

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Abstract: The article analyzes child abuse and neglect and its impact on the social orphanhood in modern Russian society. The article includes the results of the survey, conducted in Saratov region, based on a questionnaire and interviews with schoolchildren aged 10-17 (N=250) and parents who have minor children (N=182). Findings indicate that more than 50% of parents feel necessarily to punish children in order to control their behavior, using psychological or physical violence. Despite the prevalence of punishment in the family 82.6% of Russian children do not consider themselves as victims of violence, which indicates the high level of its latency in the society.

Key words: Child maltreatment • Abuse • Neglect • Family • Social orphanhood • Russia • United States of America • Research.

INTRODUCTION

Child maltreatment is a serious problem in the entire world resulting in substantial morbidity and mortality. Child abuse and neglect consists of any act of commission or omission that result in harm, potential for harm, or the threat of harm to a child (0-18 years of age) even if harm was unintentional [1]. There are four major types of child maltreatment: physical abuse, sexual abuse, psychological abuse and neglect.

Widespread violence and abuse in the family is one of the main reasons that encourage the emergence and spread of child abandonment in modern Russian society. This phenomenon is due to a number of factors that must be considered in the context of specific social and cultural conditions, the degree of socio-economic and legal protection of the individual in society. According to the comparative case studies, the level of violence in Russian families is 45-70 times higher than in France and in the UK and 7 times higher than in Pakistan [2].

Child abuse and neglect exists almost in every country, without reference to its development. For example, in fiscal year 2008, there were 3.3 million reports of children being abused or neglected and an estimated 772,000 children were classified by Child Protective service's authorities as being maltreated in the United States [3]. The USA has the worst record in the

industrialized nation - losing five children every day due to abuse-related deaths. During 2011, the scale of the country's estimated 1,570 children died from abuse and neglect in the U.S. [4].

Child abuse occurs at every socioeconomic level, across ethnic and cultural lines, within all religions and at all levels of education. About 30% of abused and neglected children will later abuse their own children, continuing the horrible cycle of abuse. Children who experience child abuse and neglect are 59% more likely to be arrested as a juvenile, 28% more likely to be arrested as an adult and 30% more likely to commit violent crimes [5].

A study sponsored by the National Institute of Justice followed cases from childhood through adulthood and compared arrest records of a group of substantiated cases of maltreatment with a comparison group composed of individuals who were not officially recorded as maltreated. While most members of both groups had no juvenile or adult criminal records, being abused or neglected as a child increased the likelihood of arrest as a juvenile by 53% and as a young adult by 38% [6]. Physically abused children were the most likely of maltreated children to be arrested later for violent crime, followed closely by neglected children.

Studies conducted by Kelley, Thornberry and Smith (1997) also have found maltreated children to be at increased risk (at least 25% more likely) for a variety of

adolescent problem behaviors, including delinquency, teen pregnancy, drug use, low academic achievement and mental health problems [7]. Research made by Dembo, Dertke, LaVoie, Borders, Washburn and Schmeidler (1997) also suggests a relationship between child maltreatment and later substance abuse [8]. Runyon and Kenny (2002) pay attention to the depression and posttraumatic distress among children who suffered from physical or sexual abuse [9].

Child maltreatment has lifelong adverse health, social and economic consequences for survivors, including behavioral problems; mental health conditions such as posttraumatic stress disorder; increased risk for delinquency, adult criminality and violent behavior; poor health and risk of chronic diseases; lasting impacts or disability from physical injury; lower levels of economic well-being in adulthood.

Graham-Bermann and Perkins (2010) estimated that children exposed to overwhelming and potentially traumatic events early in their lives are considered at-risk for problems in adjustment. During their studies they have found, that from a sample of 190 children ages 6 to 12, 64% were first exposed to family violence as infants and only 12% when school-aged [10]. The trauma experiencing in childhood made a significantly negative effect on children's behavior. In regression analyses controlling for child sex, ethnicity, age and family environment variables, cumulative violence exposure accounted for greater variance in adjustment than did the age of the first exposure.

The estimated average lifetime cost per victim of nonfatal child maltreatment is \$210,012 in 2010 dollars, including \$32,648 in childhood health care costs; \$10,530 in adult medical costs; \$144,360 in productivity losses; \$7,728 in child welfare costs; \$6,747 in criminal justice costs; and \$7,999 in special education costs. The estimated average lifetime cost per death is \$1,272,900, including \$14,100 in medical costs and \$1,258,800 in productivity losses. The total lifetime economic burden resulting from new cases of fatal and nonfatal child maltreatment in the United States in 2008 is approximately \$124 billion. In sensitivity analysis, the total burden is estimated to be as large as \$585 billion [11].

Despite the fact that over the last few years there have been significant steps to improve the legal framework for the protection of the rights and interests of children in the Russian Federation, in particular, the adoption of the "National Strategy of Action for Children 2012-2017 biennium" from June 1, 2012; Council of Europe Convention "On Protection of children against sexual

exploitation and sexual assault" from October 1, 2012; greater criminal liability for serious and very serious crimes against children, including sexual assault (Article 131-135 of the Criminal Code), the solution of the child abuse problem is still unsatisfactory. The main reasons are the lack of adequate accounting and control for the detection of cases of abuse in families; underdevelopment of the system of institutions to provide various services to victims; the weakness of legal framework for the protection of victims of violence, the lack of qualified individuals in Child protection services to prevent family violence.

However, the data of the Federal Statistical observation (RIC - 103) for the years 2006-2011 show a gradual decline in the number of identified cases of child abuse in Russia: in 2006 there was 3881 case, in 2008 - 3012 cases, in 2009 - 3211 cases, in 2011 - 2495 cases [12].

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The empirical study carried out in 2012. The purpose of this study was two-fold. The first goal was to explore the children's opinion about violence and/or violent behavior of their parents. The second goal was to interview parents who have minor children about their discipline methods and their attitude to the punishment of children and make a comparative analysis of both studies.

The eligibility requirements for children were: (a) the child was between the ages of 10 and 17 years (according to the Russian legislation, the child's opinion is taken into account in the court since he is 10 year old; also 18 is the age of emancipation); (b) the child was not considered "medically fragile" (i.e. not severely physical or mentally handicapped); (c) children, who live with their biological parents. The children were asked to complete a survey that assessed: (a) parent-child relationships in the family attitude toward violence; (b) types, reasons and frequency of punishment; (c) parents' discipline methods. The survey was completed by 250 participants (83% of the original 300).

The eligibility requirements for parents were: (a) married couples with minor children; (b) the parents were between the ages of 20 and 60 years; (c) the family had no prior involvement with child welfare system.

Parents received a brief overview of the research by phone. Of those contacted, 78% agreed to participate (N=182) and 22% declined (N=51). Reasons for declining were too busy, too much work, small children, health problems, were not interested. Parents received a home interview and were asked to complete the survey.

Participation in the research was voluntary. No solicitation or incentives were provided by the social service agencies for families to participate in the study. The interviews were conducted by five interviewers and lasted 40-50 minutes. Interviewers made two attempts to reach each participant; if the person couldn't be reached, he/she was no longer in the study.

The Main Part: In order to find the most common types of family violence in modern Russian family, their underlying causes and consequences, the sociological study based on the survey was conducted in Saratov region in 2006. The research was carried out in three stages.

At the first stage, the survey of schoolchildren aged 10 to 17 (N = 250), living in Saratov region, particularly in rural areas. The survey results were supplemented with data obtained from the analysis of schoolchildren's personal files, interviews with teachers and headmasters. In the second stage surveys of parents with minor children (N = 182) was conducted on the basis of random sampling. The third phase of the study included the processing of the results, data analysis and making conclusions.

The sample included 52% girls and 48% boys. The age structure of the respondents ranked in the following ranges: 10 years - 9.2%, 11 years - 4.6%, 12 years - 30.4%, 13 years - 14.6% 14 years - 12%, 15 years - 17.3%, 16 years - 11.3%, 17 years - 0.6%.

At the time of the survey 71.3% of children were living with both parents, 25% were from single-parent families and 3.7% were orphans living temporarily in out-of-home care.

Among 182 parents, who participated in the survey, 74% of women and 26% men, age range: up to 20 years - 0.5%, 21-30 years - 19.8%, 31-40 years - 44.1%; 41-50 years - 32%, 51-60 years - 2.2%. According to the ethnicity 93.6% of Russian, 2.8% Ukrainians, 0.5% of Latvians, Moldovans, Belarusians, Tatars and Germans.

By social status and occupation we divided all respondents into several categories: administrative/business - 10.4%, science/ culture/ education area - 20.6%; trade/public services - 13.8%, health care - 13.2%, private business - 8.8%; housewives - 12%, workers - 10.3%; representatives of the service sector - 9.2% unemployed - 1.7%.

The respondent's education was represented by a wide range of levels: primary education have 1.1% of respondents, completed high school - 15.4%, college education - 45.7%, university education - 35.3%.

Table 1: The amount of time given by parents to their children

How many hours a day do you spend with your minor children?"	Female	Male
Less than an hour	1%	3%
One hour	1%	8%
Two hours	7%	16%
Three hours	10%	15%
Four hours	7%	9%
Five hours	13%	8%
More than 6 hours	48%	17%
No answer	13%	24%

The majority of respondents - 75.6% - at the time of the survey were married, 18.2% divorced 4.5% unmarried /not married, 1.7% are widowed. More than a third or 34.3% had one child, 65.7% of respondents had two or more children.

Answering the question: "Who in the family spends with you most of the time, engaged in your education?" the children stated the following: mother - 50%, the older brother / sister - 31.2%, father -18.7%, grandmother - 18.7%, aunt - 12.5%.

Responses of parents to a similar question were: mother - 74%, grandmother - 17.1%, father - 14.3%, grandfather - 4%; brother - 3.4%; sister - 0.5%. On weekends, the child spends the majority of his/her time - 75.1% - with mothers, 34.8% with fathers, 11.6% with grandmothers, 2.2% with grandfathers, 3.4% with siblings, 3.3% with acquaintances and parent's friends.

From the survey it is clear that mothers spend with their children are five times more time on weekdays and twice as much time on the weekend compared with fathers and other relatives. According to the national survey, answering the question: "How many hours a day do you spend with your minor children?" there were the results that could be seen in the Table 1 [13].

Thus, 48% of women (mothers) spend with their children more than 6 hours per day, while the men (fathers) are only 17%, almost three times less. This fact, in our opinion, shows that half of the respondents have traditionally assigns the care of children of mother playing the role of "homemaker".

The survey results indicate the lack involvement of fathers in the communication and interaction with their children, both inside the family structure, as well as outside of it, because they rarely show interest in solving their problems, do not know the preferences of their children's food, clothing and television programs, are not familiar with their friends.

The most common causes are the spouses divorce; father's inability to adequately fulfill their parental roles; work associated with prolonged and frequent business trips; conscious sharing of family responsibilities by type of patriarchal family.

More than a half or 62% of respondents indicated emotionally close, friendly, frank relationship in the dyad "child - mother", in the dyad "child - father" - 21.3%, the relationship with a grandmother/grandfather - 14%, with other relatives - 8.6%; with friends - 8%, with none - 14% and 2.6% could not answer the question.

The survey shows that children report the presence of a distant emotional relationship with their fathers three times more likely than mothers, which indirectly confirms the lack of involvement of fathers in the full socialization of children in modern Russian family.

From authors' point of view it is important to pay attention to the fact that 14% of children discuss their affairs neither with their parents/relatives nor with friends. This silence indicates their social isolation and loneliness as a major risk factor for the parent-child conflicts, suicide, having deviations or behavior problems of children due to a lack of positive role example and the reduction or loss of parental authority.

Analysis of the survey results of children is confirmed by the parents' answers, 64.6% of which indicate a friendly and trusting relationship with their child/children; 34.8% report the presence of tight parental control; 33.9% consider the parent-child relationship in different ways, depending on the situation; 1.1% of respondents characterize their relationships with children as conflicts. For 52.4% of respondents it is important to communicate with a child on the "equal" bases, however, 40.8% of parents estimate that the attitude to a child can vary depending on the situation, 4% absolutely deny the possibility of the dialogue and 2.8% are undecided.

In the survey, schoolchildren has been set a fairly high level of their communication skills: 58.6% have more than three friends, 19.3% have 2 or 3 friends, 11.3 % have "many", "a lot of friends" and 4.6% have only one friend. According to the children's' answers, 75.3% of their parents know their friends well, 15.3% have never seen them, 7.9% know them badly and 1.3% are undecided. Respondents characterize parents' attitudes to their friends as friendly - 66.6%, neutral ("they do not care") - 12.6%, negative - 1.2%; "refer to different friends in different ways" - 18.6% and 1% are undecided.

The findings of the survey reveals that less than a third of parents (23.2%), according to respondents, are not well or not at all aware of their children's friends, which can lead in some cases to irreparable

consequences: the involvement of children in the criminal structures, totalitarian sects, to alcohol and drugs using. In this case it is important to provide social services to families and children on a wide range of issues in order to support and help parents to face the difficulties of growing up.

The term "abuse" parents, participating in the survey, determine the following ways as a "cruel treatment" - 36.2%, "physical action, assault and battery" - 29.3%, "personal injury" - 20%, "moral harm, humiliation, insults" - 20%, "coercion of a human being, encroachment to freedom" - 13.2%; "psychological, emotional pressure" - 12.6%, "all of the above" - 8.6%, 1.7% are undecided.

The data obtained from the survey suggest that the overwhelming numbers of respondents are more likely to associate violence with the use of physical force, assault, infliction of harm and injury and less likely to see a scream abuse, restriction of freedom, the humiliation of human dignity respondents as a manifestation of maltreatment. First of all, this fact is one of the reasons of the hidden authorization psychological/emotional violence in society, secondly, the difficulty of diagnosing and correcting it and thirdly, difficulty understanding this behavior as violent and unacceptable to interact with children.

The research confirms the prevalence of punishment in modern Russian family. Thus, 86% of schoolchildren who participated in the survey, answered positively to the question: "Do older members of your family punish you?", 4% gave a negative response, 10% give no answer. In the survey of parents, answering the question: "Do you punish your child/children?" 69.8% of parents gave a positive answer, 28% answered "no" and 2.2% are undecided.

The comparative analysis of the children's and parents' responses regarding the types and frequency of punishment has significant differences. Schoolchildren suggest that the most common types of punishments are "scold, chastise, shouting" - 27.3%, "deprived of pleasure, entertainment, temporarily restricted freedom" - 24.6%, "using talks or other types of verbal communications" - 20.6%, "a little slap, give the cuffs" - 12.6%; "severely punished physically" - 7.3%; "boycott, stop to talk" - 6%, "forced to do some work around the house" - 6%, "put in a corner", "scolded with using foul language" - by 4.6%, "close to the pantry, barn" - 2%, 4% are undecided.

According to parents, 41.9% of them use the verbal methods to control the behavior of their children; 30.3% deprive of pleasure, entertainment, temporarily restrict freedom; 13.7% are forced to do some work around the house and 6.8% provided "psychological" effects; 3.4%

of respondents boycotted, stopped to talk with the children; 15.4% slightly spank, give cuffs, 1.7% hit a belt and other items used physical force, 0.5% put in the corner, 1.7% are undecided.

The authors' conclusions are confirmed by the results of the study, carried out in the framework of the "Needs of children who are victims of violence" and "Pro-active approach to solve the problem of violence against children: an analysis of the situation and the formation of intersectoral policies interaction" undertaken with the support of programs Tacis Institution Building Partnership Program (IBPP) and "Dialogue" (IREX, CAF, USAID).

The studies were conducted with the following methods: a rapid survey of citizens, questioning schoolchildren and parents, an expert survey of specialists in Saratov, Izhevsk, Samara, Kazan (170 respondents in each city) The results of the survey showed that the main methods of parenting are "heart-to-heart talk" - 84.3%, "punishment suggestion" - 48%, the deprivation of a pleasure - 39.7%, as you see, the vast majority of parents do not consider physical punishment of a normal way of influence on the child. However, further studies show the real situation in Russian families. The question: "How do you feel about parents who use physical punishment?", more than half of parents (61.4%) consider them a method of education rather than cruelty, 34.7% of them believe corporal punishment of children is a form of education and only 3.3% of respondents consider them as child abuse [14]. Thus, there is a paradox when parents hypothetically consider it necessary to correct the behavior of children with verbal methods, in practice, there is a high level of tolerance to physical punishment of children in the family, rastsenivanm them as "normal", disciplinary measures, but not cruelty. The majority of parents (78.6%) stated that they have punished the child/children and only 18.9% answer "no".

In most cases, the mother carries punishment of children (38%), a father in 20% cases, a grandmother - 4%, other relatives - 1.3% and 36.7% are undecided.

As can be seen from the authors' research, more than half of parents say the need to punish children in the family to prevent a particular child's behavior or imparting to him/her the accepted norms and rules. Analysis of the data indicates that, usually parents use a fairly aggressive disciplinary forms and methods of correcting the behavior of children. In our view, a relatively small percentage of corporal punishment of children in the survey indicated by parents, says that many of them want to hide their inappropriate activities in order to show their best side, even in anonymous surveys.

According to the words of children, the most common causes of punishment are: "disobedience" - 32.6%, "bad grades in school, academic failure, truancy" - 18.6%; "mischief" - 12%, "non-compliance of instructions of parents" - 10%; "delinquency" - 9.3%, "smoking, cheating, lies" - by 8.6%; "delays" - 5.3%; "fights" - 4.6%, "the mistreatment of siblings" - 3.3%, "for any reasons" - 1.3% and 10.6% are unwilling to answer. Notably, that the well-deserved punishment is considered by 34.6% of children, 13.3% believe that quite often they are punished in essence, 8.6% believe undeserved punishment; 2.6% "always undeserved", 9.3% could not answer the question.

From the parents' point of view, the most common reasons for punishment of children are "disobedient" - 51.9%, "lies" - 19.3%, "bad grades in school, truancy, poor academic performance" - 17.6%, "non-compliance of parent instructions" - 16%; "pampering, pranks" - 11.4%, "mistreatment of siblings" - 4.5%, "smoking" - 4%; "delinquency" - 3.4%; "fights" - 2.2%; "delays" - 1.1%, "spending money on mobile telephone" - 0.5%.

Analysis results of the schoolchildren survey shows that 10.6% of them are going to use the same educational methods with their own children, 38% only some of them, 18% with a sufficient degree of doubt, never will use them 32.3% and 8.6% are unwilling to give the answer.

This implies that most of children do not approve of disciplinary methods of their parents, considering them violent, aggressive and not matched to the offense. As a result, half of the respondents denied the appropriateness of their use in the process of socialization of their own children.

Despite the prevalence of punishment in the family in its various forms, most of the children (82.6%) do not consider themselves and the family members as victims of violence and only 5.3% of respondents give a positive answer.

The main reasons for domestic violence respondents called personal characteristics; instability, impulsivity, a demonstration of cruelty in mass media, traditions of parent-child relationships in the family of origin, a situation of hopelessness and despair, alcoholism, fighting for leadership; severe socio-economic situation in the country, the lack of education.

However, 50% of children in a case of emergency or a difficult situation to refer to "parents" (to the mother - 25%, to the father - 25%, respectively), to "other relatives" (grandmother, sister, aunt, etc.) - 18.7%, to "friends" - 25% and 6.2% give the answer "none".

Thus, abuse and neglect in childhood may also contribute to runaways, homelessness, abandonment, poor health, education and school adjustments and can be the main cause of orphanhood. In addition to that, research conducted by Kwong, Bartholomew, Henderson and Trinke (2003) suggests that adults who are abused or neglected in their childhood are more likely to abuse or neglect their own children [15]. Pears and Capaldi (2001) in their study have found that parents who had experienced physical abuse in childhood were significantly more likely to engage in abusive behaviors toward their own children or children in their care [16].

CONCLUSION

To summarize, it should be noted that the findings of the research show the high level of physical and verbal aggression presented in Russian families, the existence of conflict between parents and children, the use of abusive, illegal methods of up-bringing children that only exacerbate the aggressive response reactions of children and provoke them to offenses, runaways; contribute to vagrancy, homelessness, deviant behavior; prevent learning of positively oriented values, norms and social roles by children and youth in the society.

The most common types of child abuse are psychological, physical, sexual violence and neglect. In a survey, the significant differences between parents and children's answer have been found regarding types, reasons, frequency of punishment. More than 50% of parents feel the need to punish children in order to control their behavior, using psychological or physical violence.

However, despite the use of aggressive forms of interaction in the parent-child relationship, most children do not consider themselves as victims of violence, which indicates the high level of its latency, as opposed to corporal punishment, psychological violence is not perceived either children or parents, as it is and continue to persist in stereotypes, culture and traditions for a long time.

However, international experience shows that the use of punitive methods only in the prevention and correction of abused and neglected children is not effective. It is necessary to move to the measures of social support, therapeutic intervention, improving literacy in legal matters, including and protection of their rights in cases of abuse in the family; to strengthen the skills of specialists of social services through professional training; to provide adequate information about child abuse and neglect in mass media.

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