

Social Youth Capital Formation and Implementation

Valentin P. Babintsev

Belgorod State University, 85 Pobedy Street, Belgorod, the Belgorod region, 308015, Russia

Viktor A. Sapryka*

Belgorod State University, 85 Pobedy Street, Belgorod, the Belgorod region, 308015, Russia

Oleg N. Polukhin

Belgorod State University, 85 Pobedy Street, Belgorod, the Belgorod region, 308015, Russia

Aleksei E. Ushamirskiy

Belgorod State University, 85 Pobedy Street, Belgorod, the Belgorod region, 308015, Russia

Galina F. Ushamirskaya

Belgorod State University, 85 Pobedy Street, Belgorod, the Belgorod region, 308015, Russia

Abstract

The present paper investigated the formation and implementation of the social youth capital. The social youth capital is defined as a set of “resources of a human, group or society that is in general formed and reproduced subject to the entity's acceptance of values integrating with the reference environment, observance of norms relevant to interacting individuals that ensure the establishment of mutual trust and convertible in forms of institutions and practices (methods and technologies) and ensuring the attainment of life goals”. It is substantiated that the social capital of youth is mainly formed on the basis of relationships in four fields: family; neighbors; labor (including educational) groups; and virtual social networks. Similarly, it is contradictory and ambiguous in terms of consequences in each field. Family is the most important location for the formation of social capital, but social networks play increasingly important role in the development of youth. Young people consider participation therein as a kind of compensation for costs of direct inter-personal communication.

Keywords: Youth; social capital; Trust; social institution; Culture of distrust; Atomization of personality; Actor; Youth subjectivity.



CC BY: [Creative Commons Attribution License 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

1. Introduction

The intensification of competition among subjects of social action at all levels of social self-organization is a consequence of the globalization of society. Subjects include young people as a socio-demographic group in a transitional state, counting on one side to transform itself into a sovereign subject of social development, and on the other hand, more or less realizing clearly the shortage of necessary individual resources for this issue (Arrow, 1999).

Their shortage can be potentially compensated by appealing to social institutions. However, the appeal to institutionalized (formal) structures does not always find an adequate response due to a number of circumstances (Babintsev *et al.*, 2015). First, most of social institutions, especially those functioning at the macro-social levels, are bureaucratized and focused primarily on protecting their corporate interests (Bridger and Alter, 2006). Secondly, interests of young people change only dynamically, while social institutions have high inertial potential, and thus do not always have time to respond to challenges of the younger generation (Bespartochnyy, 2012).

Due to these circumstances, the growth of resources of young people is possible at the expense of interpersonal ties as the social capital of individuals. However, the process of formation, increase and use of social capital in the youth environment is characterized by the internal discrepancy and inconsistency. This paper sought to identify specifics of this process (Bourdieu, 1985).

It is found that the importance of social ties for successful educational activity was proved (Coleman, 1988) in 1916 in the analysis of activities of school centers of rural communities (Durlauf and Fafchamps, 2004). Furthermore, the social capital concept was developed by a large number of researchers. In particular, P. Bourdieu defined it as a benefit “which is accumulated through the group membership”, and “the basis of possible solidarity” (Fukuyama, 2004). P. Bourdieu paid special attention to the consolidating component of social capital. However, its function is just as important as the function of resource support that was emphasized by J. Coleman. In his interpretation, the social capital, as a kind of public good, is created by individuals to achieve his/her own benefits and provides a subject with advantages in comparison with counterparts (Giddens, 2005).

We believe it possible to accept the definition of social capital as a set of “resources of a human, a group or a society in a general formed and reproduced subject for the entity's acceptance of values integrating with the

reference environment, observance of relevant norms for interacting individuals that ensure the establishment of mutual trust that is convertible in the form of institutions and practices (methods and technologies) ensuring the attainment of life goals" (Jiménez and García, 2017).

The above-mentioned definition, first, focuses on the fact that the social capital is maximally functional. It is concentrated on achieving personal and group goals ensuring the life success. Despite this function, the social capital becomes an abstract definition and, in fact, reduces to a certain typical characteristic of individual capabilities, that is, its potential (Kastells, 2004). Secondly, the definition emphasizes that the social capital phenomenon arises from changes in individual dispositions consisting in achieving a value-normative consensus with others. Beyond such a consensus, sustainable social ties cannot be formed or used (Lin, 2001).

In this regard, the interpersonal trust becomes especially important and can be fully considered as a "living fabric" of social capital, its basis. Trust, as T. Parsons believed, is the expectation of reciprocity in the implementation of any action; and the reproduction of social relations is possible only when the interaction between individual members does not require guarantees as an obligatory condition for this exchange (Luca and Asimina, 2016). Fukuyama believed that the "trust is an expectation that members of a community expect that other members behave more or less predictably, honestly and with attention to needs of others in accordance with certain general norms" (Morozova, 2013). According to P. Sztompka, the "trust is a bet on other people's future unforeseen actions" (Mollaei *et al.*, 2018).

That is why the importance of social capital for the individual multiplies in complex social situations where it is difficult to foresee consequences of their own their fellow citizens' actions (Parsons, 1998). According to E. Giddens, having both reflective and socially symbolic dimensions, the social capital is a factor which helps people to minimize unpredictable consequences of their actions (Portes, 1998).

2. Material and Method

The research was based on results of a conducted sociological study under the leadership of Reutov (2017): "Problems of youth participation in regional social conflicts" conducted in the Belgorod and Volgograd regions using the questionnaire survey of the population (n= 1500) and employees of state and municipal government, media, leaders of public organizations, deputies of various levels (n= 500); "Youth conflicts in a risk society"- carried out using the questionnaire survey (n = 502) in Volgograd region; "Interests of modern youth" - conducted by questioning in the Volgograd region (n= 501); and in-depth interview of young people (n= 30) and employees of public authorities (n = 25) in 2016.

After the collection and study of the above-mentioned statistical data from different sociological studies, the leading methodology of this paper – comparative analysis – allows identifying similarities and differences between them. Comparative interpretation based on parallel learning allowing us to detect the common and specific features of compared issues. To formulate conclusions, a secondary analysis of results of I. Morozova's sociological research "Self-organization and atomization of youth as a form of socio-cultural reflection" was conducted in Belgorod, Voronezh and Kursk regions in two phases during 2008 and 2012 (Sazhina, 2011).

3. Results and Discussion

The social capital of youth is a synergy of personal ties that mainly consist of relationships in four locations-fragments of the social space, characterized by specific subcultures and a system of relationships between included subjects.

Family is the first location. Our studies confirm the thesis that the family remains an institution where the most solid interpersonal connections of young people are formed. The young people's feeling of satisfaction with relations of trust within the family and a relatively high level of mutual understanding is its basis. In particular, in the study entitled "Problems of youth participation in regional social conflicts", 62.32% of respondents had full satisfaction with mutual trust in the family and 32.14% had partial satisfaction (rather satisfied than not).

The youth trust level in their relatives remained quite high in Russian families. According to our studies, 73.33% of young people aged 18-29 years completely trust them, and 18.50% only partially trust (Sztompka, 1999). However, a rather high level of satisfaction and trust in relatives is not embodied in minds of young people in the notion that a family is an institution capable of providing help and support in difficult situations. In the case of threats to interests of relatives, only 7.40% of young people intended to apply for help (the study entitled "Youth conflicts in a risk society", 2016). In fact, the same result was confirmed during the in-depth interview of young people (the study entitled "The interests of modern youth"). Therefore, only six out of thirty participants suggested that: in conflict situations, one should count on family and relatives. The following answers are typical: "You can only hope for parents, they will support their children in any case. We should not hope for outsiders" (a young man, student, 20 years old). "You can only rely on your parents. You should not rely on friends, because they may not support your point of view" (a schoolgirl, 15 years old). "You have to count on your parents or close family members, rarely on friends, because the family is the first line of defense" (Villalobos Antúnez, 2002) (Zubok, 2005).

Neighbor is the second location for the formation of social youth capital (territorially limited) in a community where it is the result of establishing interactions with friends and just acquaintances among whom peers are quite naturally dominant. The ties that arise in the environment, as a rule, are converted into the social capital in the future,

but they can be also used to solve actual problems. The process of forming the social capital in this case is much more difficult than the family due to an increase in the social distance between people in the modern society.

One should not ignore the fact that young people in most cases are deprived of not only a common cause, but have lost the need for unification on the basis of the inclusion in the traditional children and youth games in modern territorial communities.

Due to these circumstances, young people show a significantly lower satisfaction (compared with the family) in the level of mutual trust between people in their place of residence in our studies. 37.40% of respondents are completely satisfied with it; 48.93% are rather satisfied than not; and 12.87% are not satisfied. Comparison of the average weighted coefficients of satisfaction with the level of trust in relatives and "neighbors" shows that it is 0.73 in the first case (1 at the highest possible); 0.49 in the second case (the study entitled "Youth conflicts in a risk society", 2016).

Relatively low (in relation to the family) satisfaction with the mutual trust level within the neighborhood is supplemented by the lack of mutual understanding. Only 43.27% of young people always find it, 47.60% sometimes, and 7.87% do not find. It should be noted that only 3.33% of young people referred to a complete lack of mutual understanding in the family (the study entitled "Strategies for student youth behavior in conflicts").

It is often not found by young people aged 20- 24 years (10.24%). In the youngest and oldest age cohorts, this index is 5.83% and 5.72%, respectively.

Therefore, within the neighborhood of location, opportunities for the formation of social capital, which promotes the protection of interests, are much lower than the family.

The third location of formation of the social youth capital is the location of labor (including educational) groups. They vary in scale, scope, organizational principles. There are represented groups only by young people (student groups, classes) (except for leaders and mentors) and they interact with adults (the absolute majority of labor associations). Obviously, conditions of youth's activities differ significantly according to these circumstances. Conditions for the formation and reproduction of the social capital are also differentiated. Our studies allow us to identify only certain general trends in this process that cannot be extrapolated to the whole variety of labor associations without appropriate adjustments.

The study revealed that young people are mostly satisfied with the level of trust in their teams. However, respondents most often chose the answer "rather satisfied than not" (44.53%). The overall satisfaction was noted by 43.73%. 11.00% chose negative answers. In this case, the weighted average coefficient was 0.54 and lower than the family, but higher than the neighbor locations (a study in 2014).

In our opinion, there are two main reasons for this situation. First, in conditions when the territorial "street" separates, the collective offers certain common goals, values and norms of behavior. Secondly, we cannot ignore the heterogeneity of above-mentioned groups. Satisfaction with the level of trust in them is highest among representatives of the younger age cohort who main study at schools and vocational education institutions. In particular, 50.28% of respondents were fully satisfied with the level of confidence in the younger cohort. Indices were 45.23% and 35.93% respectively in the middle and senior cohorts.

Despite the relative confidence of "intra-collective" relations, only 5.93% of young people prefer to turn to colleagues in cases when they themselves cannot resist threats to their interests. In our opinion, the reason for the paradox is that corporate trust and solidarity, as a rule, are updated within a limited professionally organized space. Their influence beyond its borders is insignificant just like the influence of modern labor associations on a wide range of social processes, in which young people are included.

The fourth location of formation of the social youth capital refers to virtual social networks where young people expect to find the mutual understanding and get real support. Networks are increasingly considered by young people as structures allowing them to compensate for costs of interconnections that are formed in a real social space. First of all, they are institutional. Social networks are also seen as the compensation for costs of interpersonal communication. Consciously or unconsciously, their participants on a new information-on-technological basis reproduce the situation of the social capital formation, and characteristics of the village community. Its typical characteristics are as follows:

- Voluntary participation not related to the need for complying with the formally prescribed rules, but requiring the implementation of conventional agreements;
- A high level of confidence in the dialogue;
- A combination of emotional compatibility with rationally perceived common interests as the basis for communication;
- The publicity of interpersonal dialogue, maximum in open groups, and limited by the inner circle in private ones.

As a result, the social capital, which is acquired and reproduced in social networks, has several important features:

- A weak dependence on changes in the social situation, social networks function according to their own rules, are oriented to the event series, which is not closely related to events in the public space;
- The possibility, in practice, of instantaneous updating through turning on computers or only mobile phones;
- An internally contradictory combination of anonymity and personification creating a sort of protective mechanism against the external pressure and administrative regulation;
- Openness, which is expressed in the fact that the virtual interpersonal communication cannot be hidden; however, as a rule, there is no need in it.

As our study entitled "Problems of youth participation in regional social conflicts" [23] indicated, the network community is quite satisfied with the trust level. 53.41% of young people are fully satisfied with it, and 35.60% are rather yes than not. As a result, the average weighted coefficient is 0.71 and is the second most important after the family location. Similarly, the highest level of satisfaction is demonstrated by representatives of the youngest age group as 60.22%. It is 47.24% and 50.15% respectively for the senior and average levels.

Young people are characterized by a high degree of mutual understanding in networked communities. 53.08% of young people found full understanding here; 49.46% of them partial; 5.66% did not find; and 5.33% did not answer questions. In this case, the highest level of mutual understanding among representatives of the youngest age cohort was 58.12%; the average and senior levels had 47.12% and 46.38% respectively.

At the same time, the perception of ties in networked communities by young people partially differs from their perception in a family-related location. Young people are much more likely to appeal to networks in cases where they themselves cannot resist threats to their own interests. 17.80% of young people intend to do it. This index is 24.12% among the younger age group.

Based on the obtained data, it can be argued that the youth consciousness gradually approves the notion of significant resource opportunities of the Internet communities, and it is probably formed not so much as a result of their real social activity, but as a result of the acquaintance with information on the role of social networks in political processes in other countries. Obviously, such confidence will only increase in the future, and the created social capital in network locations will be in demand.

4. Conclusion

The social capital is a significant resource for young people in implementing their life plans and protecting their interests as a set of "resources of a human, a group or society in general formed and reproduced subject to the entity's acceptance of values integrating with the reference environment, observance of norms relevant for interacting individuals that ensure the establishment of mutual trust and convertible in institutions and practices (methods, technologies) ensuring the attainment of life goals". In this field, its significance is determined by a number of circumstances: The lack of individual (intrapersonal) grounds in the youth for its self-determination and institutional trust; desire to be in demand; integration into small groups with low levels of internal competition.

The social capital of youth is mainly formed on the basis of relationships in four fields: family; neighbors; labor (including educational) groups; and virtual social networks. Similarly, it is contradictory and ambiguous in terms of consequences in each field. Family ties are the most popular in this regard, but in practice, they are usually ineffective enough in the space of public discourse. Social networks reveal significant prospects for the formation of social capital. Although possibilities of this resource are not being used in the actual plan, it will play a significant role in determining strategies of young people and mastering technologies of building their positions in the future.

References

- Arrow, K. (1999). *Observations on social capital*. In *social capital, a multifaceted perspective*, edited by Partha Dasgupta, and Ismail Serageldin. World Bank: Washington, DC. 3-5.
- Babintsev, V. P., Brazhnik, G. V. and Shevchenko, N. V. (2015). *Formation and reproduction of the social capital of the rural population*. Monograph: Belgorod. 24-32.
- Bespartochnyy, D. B. (2012). Trust in the system of social relations of the population of the region: Author's abstract. *Candidate of Sociological Sciences*: 3.
- Bourdieu, P. (1985). *The forms of capital*, In *Handbook of theory and research in the sociology of education* Nice, R. and Richardson, J. G New York: Greenwood. (Original work published 1983). 241-58.
- Bridger, J. C. and Alter, T. R. (2006). Place, community development, and social capital. *Journal Journal of the Community Development Society (CDS)*, 37: 5-18.
- Coleman, J. S. (1988). Social capital in the creation of human capital. *American Journal of Sociology*, 94: 95-120.
- Durlauf, S. and Fafchamps, M. (2004). Social capital, Paper provided by national bureau of economic research. Available: <https://web.stanford.edu/fafchamp.soccaphandbook.pdf>
- Fukuyama, F. (2004). *Trust, The social virtues and the creation of prosperity*. Moscow: 52.
- Giddens, A. (2005). *The constitution of society. Outline of the theory of structuration*. Moscow.
- Jiménez, E. G. and García, R. L. (2017). Passive receiver to active protagonist of the teaching-learning process, redefining the role of students in. *Higher Education*, 33(84): 12.
- Kastells, M. (2004). *The internet galaxy, Reflections on the internet, business and society U-Faktoriya*. Yekaterinburg. 153.
- Lin, N. (2001). *Social capital, A theory of social structure and action*. Cambridge University Press: New York.
- Luca, A. and Asimina, C. (2016). *Social Capital, A Roadmap of Theoretical and Empirical Contributions and Limitations*, 50(1): 4-22.
- Mollaei, F., Abbaszadeh, A., Lohmani, L., Khabazkhob, M. and Borhani, F. (2018). Moral courage of nursing students: a descriptive study in Iran 2017. *Astra Salvensis*, 1: 39-44.
- Morozova, T. I. (2013). Regulation of the processes of self-organization of youth in the socio-cultural space of the region. Author's abstract. *Doctor of Sociological Sciences*, (23).
- Parsons, T. (1998). *The system of modern societies*. Moscow. 21-26.
- Portes, A. (1998). Social capital, Its origins and applications in modern sociology. *Annual Review of Sociology*: 1-24.

- Reutov, E. V. (2017). Patriotism, regional and local identity (experience of sociological diagnostics). *Cooperation and Integration*, (2).
- Sazhina, V. A. (2011). Social capital of small communities: Author's abstract. *Candidate of Sociological Sciences*.
- Sztompka, P. (1999). *Trust: a sociological theory*. Cambridge. 25.
- Villalobos Antúnez, J. V. (2002). Ética, gobernabilidad y estado de derecho en América Latina, en tiempos de globalización. *Cuestiones Políticas*. 11-44.
- Zubok, Y. U. A. (2005). Problem of risks in the sociology of youth. M. 267.