

The usage experience of typological analysis method in deviation research of youth subcultures

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Abstract. The article analyzes the specifics of youth subcultural differentiation in a multicultural society; shows the relationship of subcultural discourse and deviation theories; the methodology of empirical typology to identify the modal typological syndromes inside the Russian “dark-movement” is approbated; the correlation between typological characteristics of the respondents and their propensity to such type of deviant behavior, as the drug is pointed out; the importance of the methodology using in the practice of social management is proved.

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Introduction

For a long period of time in sociology and other social sciences the youth was regarded as an object of problematization, numerous interpretations of origin and socio-cultural values of the different youth groups have appeared, many of them overlap with the theories of deviance in a varying degree. In particular, the American tradition, represented by the works of the sociologists of the Chicago school (F. Thrasher, P. Cressey and others [1,2]) and representatives of structural functionalism (A. Cohen, R. Cloward, L. Ohlin [3,4]) was based on the identification of both youth subcultures and communities of persons with deviant behavior. Subsequently, this view was overcome in the works of British theorists of the Centre of Contemporary Cultural Studies (for example, M. Brake, P. Willis, D. Hebdige, S. Cohen, etc. [5,6,7,8]). According to the neo-Marxist class approach, the youth association was interpreted as a manifestation of the struggle between bourgeoisie and proletariat for cultural and social power.

In the USSR, the phenomenon of subculture until the 1990s, was used only in the framework of the criticism of the Western bourgeois sociological tradition. Such forms of youth activism were considered unacceptable and demanded immediate social intervention from the formal youth organizations (“Comsomol”) and other institutions of socialization with the goal of their complete elimination. Actually, the subcultural approach in the Russian science emerged in the late 1980s when the cultural influence of the West on the young generation was difficult to deny.

This style of life, however, was still perceived in a critical manner, was positioned as deviant and alien to the Soviet youth. Modern Russian concepts of subculture cover a wide range of the youth problems, but the trend towards problematization of youth fashion subcultures and

movements takes place. In addition, youth subcultures are treated as a single, holistic units, all members of which have similar characteristics. In accordance with this sort of logic the definite forms of social control over the youth associations are elected and implemented, the ways of influence upon the youth groups are being searched, the attempts are made to suppress deviant behavior in sub-cultural environment.

This article is devoted to the study of forms of deviant behavior in the youth movement “dark culture”, comprising the Gothic subculture orientation. It is worth to emphasize the fact that we interpret the concept of “youth movements” outside the political perspective, it is based on socio-cultural characteristics of this group and we consider this concept as a conglomerate of subcultures, united by common visual, musical or artistic style, forms and methods of leisure, with common sense and semiotic fields and also common communicative space.

In modern society, the tendency to consolidation of subcultures and creation of large youth movements is observed both in Russia and abroad. Also, an identity change of subculture youth is connected to this process. More and more young people deny their belonging to a particular subculture, but they realize their connection with larger groups, i.e. movement.

It is obvious that any youth movement, including several subcultures, i.e. the modal groups, is an inhomogeneous formation. Besides, nominally existing subcultural borders, youth movements are differentiated according to many other aspects - socio-demographic characteristics, interests, preferences, understanding the essence and specifics of the movement, values, etc. Subculture socializing influence should not be interpreted as something objectively existing, it is necessary to take into account the individual psychological features of a

personality and the collective consciousness elements that were internalized by this personality earlier.

Spiritual culture, the cultural capital of the personality and related forms of deviant behavior can also vary among members of subcultures «life style», which include the subcultures that we are interested in. Therefore, there is possible a supposition that there are certain social types that may be considered as the objects of youth policy, social control and influence and that are different from each other.

Methods

The main methodological tool for the study of various forms of existence of the individual in the youth movement is chosen typological analysis by the methodology of G.G. Tatarova [9], which gives an opportunity to look at the subject of investigation as at the space of the social types.

Based on the analysis of the Internet resources and participant observation, we have identified five main sub-cultures that constitute the unified field of «dark culture»: Gothic, industrial, freak-culture, dark metal subculture and Japanese rock (J-rock). An empirical study had an exploratory nature and was based on a method of an online survey using one of the most popular today Russian social network “In contact” (www.vk.com).

The choice of method was stipulated by the lack of knowledge about the number and structure of the universal set, as well as the necessity of approbation of the online survey method for the youth subcultures study. Accordingly, the sampled population of the survey is random, its number is 128 people. Selection of the respondents was carried out on the basis of information provided on the user's social web page and allowed to identify the individual as the representative of subcultures of Gothic orientation: external attributes, musical and other artistic preferences, interests and hobbies.

Main part

The basis for the typology serves the following statement: two respondents are close, similar and belong to the same social type, if they have the same values, and aesthetic orientation, otherwise they are of different types.

According to the target type-formative features (values and aesthetic orientation), the body of empirical objects was divided into classes. The classification was carried out in stages. At first, *the Classification 1* was received according to the dominant value units (the respondents' classes are assigned by the conditional names, in parentheses - the amount of the class is defined):

- “innovators” (48%) the dominance of the values of self-development - spiritual self-

development, creativity, self-realization, development of professional skills;

- “traditionalists” (31.5%): orientation to traditional social values - health, strong family, material wealth;

- “hedonists” (4%): the predominance of pleasure values, material values - pleasure, entertainment, strengthening of friendship, material welfare;

- “undetermined” (16.5%): basic value orientations of respondents from this group can be attributed to several classification categories.

Further, the Classification 2, according to the second type-formative feature was carried out - specific of aesthetic orientations. Classification feature had a specific character, and its value (the degree of development of artistic preferences of the person, the presence or absence of knowledge about the artistic trends, the preferred forms and directions of art) was determined on the basis of the analysis of the answers' texts of the open questionnaire. There were determined six classes of respondents (the respondents' classes are assigned by the conditional names, in parentheses - the amount of the class is defined):

- “aesthetes” (15.6%): the formed aesthetic predilections, knowledge of the art movements of the main forms of art, preference is given to the elitist art.

- “amateurs” (16.4%): current aesthetic predilections and knowledge of artistic directions are relative to one art form, the preference is given to both mass and elite art.

- “imitators” (28.1%): aesthetic predilections are poorly formed or are only in the framework of one type of art, lack of knowledge about the artistic trends are masked by imitative behavior, preference is given to products of subcultural creativity and forms of popular culture, as well as elitist works of art, having the character of subculture stereotype.

- “conservatives” (7.8%): focused on classic works of art, knowledge about the artistic trends are weak.

- “consumers” (20.3%): aesthetic preferences are not formed, knowledge about the artistic trends are absent, the consumption of the art works and products of mass culture and subcultures happen chaotically.

- “subculturers” (11.7%): aesthetic preferences are not formed, knowledge about the artistic trends are absent, communication with the art is limited by subcultural music scene, or by the products of mass literature of subcultural topics.

- At the next stage the *Classification 3* was obtained, which has served as the basis for the

transition to the meaningful typology of subculture members of Gothic orientation. Substantial typology is received by regrouping of 24 classes, it has the index level of measurements based on the intensity of the target type-formative signs (in the parentheses the percentage of respondents who carry typological syndrome is given):

The First typological syndrome (23.3%) are formed by the classes of “Innovator – aesthetes”, “Innovators – Amateurs”, “Undetermined – Aesthetes” and “Undetermined – Amateurs”: high innovative potential, combined with expertise in the field of art, culture and tendency to creative activity.

The Second typological syndrome (14%) is represented by the groups of “Traditionalists – Aesthetes”, “Traditionalists – Amateurs”, “Traditionalist – Conservatives” and “Undetermined – Conservatives”: a sufficient level of erudition in the artistic sphere, the mature tastes in art, focus on traditional values - family, material wealth and health.

The Third typological syndrome (23.3%) unites the classes of “Innovators - , imitators”, “Innovators – consumers” and “Innovators – conservatives”: the desire for action, development, creativity, combined with weak aesthetic preferences formation (the latter are of imitative nature).

The Fourth typological syndrome (21.7%) forms the classes of “Traditionalists- Imitators”, “Traditionalists – Consumers” and “Undetermined - Imitators”: the most inspired group of respondents, oriented to the imitative behavior, following certain, as they think, mandatory subcultural rituals, maintaining of the traditions and standards of behavior. This type doesn't have creative potential, but it is necessary for stable existence of a subculture, maintaining its core samples.

The Fifth typological syndrome (7%) covers the classes of “Innovators – Subculturers” and all classes of «Hedonists». It unites active and energetic people, but they are not enlightened in artistic terms. They are indifferent to the world art heritage, giving the preference to the «party» style of life and subcultural scene.

The Sixth typological syndrome (9.3%) is represented by the groups of “Traditionalist – Subculturers”, “Consumers – Subculturers” and “Undetermined – Subculturers”. This type combines the most passive in the study area representatives of subculture, indifferent to the art, and not striving for self-development.

Let's refer to the analysis of issues related with the deviant behavior of the allocated typological groups of the representatives of the investigated movement, namely to the questions, connected with the use of drugs, and sexual deviances.

Attitude to the drugs and the nature of their usage by the respondents were inquired by the questions “what do you think about drugs? From your point of view, drugs are...” and “How would you describe your attitude to the drugs?”. About a half of the respondents believe that drugs are “*the density of weak people, that destroy the personality, kill the will, deprive the goals in life*”, thereby, they demonstrate negative attitude towards them. 17% of the subcultures' members are tolerant to drugs and give them (drugs) some positive properties: antidepressant stimulant or relaxant.

64.3% of the respondents have never used the drugs and are not going to do it, 11.6% regularly use drugs on the basis of the “grass”, the others use other types of the drugs

Some researchers of youth deviant behavior problems consider the hedonistic values that are common in the youth subcultures' sphere are the most important motive of drugs' consumption [10,11]. This conclusion is partially applicable in the analysis of drug consumption nature by the representatives of different typological syndromes. The greatest spread of this form of “recreation” is received not only in the last two typological groups, possessing the above-mentioned tendency to hedonism, but also among representatives of the first two typological groups, where the most important tendency is the values of self-development.

Among the types, occupying middle positions, there is the highest percentage of people who have overcome addiction or tried once (type 4) and never having tried drugs, but ready to have this experience (type 3). Similar distribution of respondents is explained by the different objectives of drug consumption: for the types 1 and 2 drugs are one of the ways of creative expression, retreating from the real world, fight against depression; for types 5 and 6 - an opportunity to spend some fun time at the party, lose consciousness.

It is necessary to pay attention to the type 3, where among the representatives there is the greatest number of people who are ready to try the drug - 17.2% (in other groups from 3 to 11%). In addition, almost all respondents who consume self-produced or purchased in the pharmacy stimulating or psychotropic substances are also of this type. The representatives of the third typological syndrome tend to imitative behavior and, at the same time, possess «innovative» system of values, that may explain their aspirations to try all the possible forms and ways of «rest» and in the case of lack of money to purchase drugs to replace them by hazardous substitutes.

In spite of the fact that from 55 up to 80% of the respondents of each typological group have never

used drugs and do not intend to, in general, these data indicate a high degree of narcotization of the investigated movement. Although the majority of drug using respondents say only about episodic nature of these actions, the degree of popularization of narcotic substances in subcultures of Gothic orientation is becoming a major problem.

But it is not necessary, however, to associate drug consumption with the subcultural affiliation of respondents directly. According to the sociological research, in the modern realities there is an increasing proliferation of drugs in the environment of «normal» young people: a half of the current young generation tried drugs in adolescence, and about a quarter consume them regularly [12].

Conclusion

In conclusion it should be noted that the chosen method demonstrates the efficiency and allows to highlight significant differences in the manifestations of deviant behavior between different types of respondents within the youth movement that allows us to differentiate the methods of social control and influence.

Gratitude

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