

Social Exclusion of Socially Deprived Groups in Russia

Maria Yurievna Eflova

Kazan (Volga Region) Federal University, 18 Kremlyovskaya St. 420008 Kazan, Russia

Abstract: Illicit drug use is an urgent problem for the majority of developed countries. Scientific literature traditionally considers: causes of drug use, social and psychological effects of drug addiction and the level of drug use. This research is beyond the scope of separate factors of drug use, considering social exclusion of drug users from the society through the prism of the theory of social exclusion. The study is based on the results of the researchers social studies.

Key words: Drug addiction, social exclusion, deprivation, quality of life, drug

INTRODUCTION

Social exclusion is an extremely valuable concept that appeared in the scientific and political discourse in the last quarter of the 20th century. The social exclusion implies absence or denial of resources and rights of a number of communities, resulting in their inability to participate in the society's life which affects the quality of life of socially excluded people and negatively affects the society as a whole. Discrimination and deprivation are important conditions for the exclusion. The basis of discrimination is primarily a legal principle and the basis of deprivation is cultural.

Differentiation of the Russian society is conditioned by deep transformational changes that led to a sharp polarization of incomes and seriously affected the conditions of almost all social groups. These reasons are in particular a nutrient medium of replenishment for new risk groups. Due to the large quantity of socially deprived in Russia in the view, the problem of reintegrating them into the society is sufficiently serious. It should be a balanced social and cultural policy and of course, the desire of the society itself. Exclusive practices of socially deprived are not yet emphasized in sociology and models of social inclusion of these groups into the society are not offered. Thus, the study states a socio-legal perspective of study of socially deprived groups by the example of drug users and HIV-infected patients with the aim of formulating models directed at their incorporation into the society. The concept of social exclusion and the use of interdisciplinary approach to the analysis of social deprived groups allow to overcome the limitations of traditional approaches in sociology and other social and natural sciences, previously applied to understanding of the drug addiction.

Analysis of the practices of social exclusion was laid in the works of Weber (the concept of cultural changes),

Wittgenstein and Heidegger (the concept of practices). The theory of social exclusion was formed in France in the early 1970's. The authorship of the concept of "social exclusion" is attributed to Lenoir (1989). An important contribution to the understanding of the concept and to the construction of the theory of social exclusion was made by the following scientists (Rodgers, 1995; De Haan and Maxwell, 1998; Power and Wilson, 2000; Gore, 1995; De Haan and Nayak, 1995; De Haan, 1997). Category of social exclusion has European and continental genesis in contrast to its Anglo-American equivalent, i.e., social marginality. This is a category with French roots, going from classic French thought, the idea of social solidarity of Emile Durkheim. This is evidenced by the close connection of the problem of social exclusion with the issues of integration and social cohesion.

A certain tradition of considering communities from the perspective of social exclusion can also be noted in Russian sociology. For example, the theses of Mohova, Astoyants, researches by Tikhonova (2002), Mokhov (2006) and Astoyants (2009). Astoyants examined in the context of her thesis characteristics of the process of social exclusion of orphans, conditions and mechanisms of its reproduction in the socio-cultural field of the modern Russia. Russian sociologists pointed out the link between exclusion and poverty in relation to the conditions in Russia (Balabanov, 2003; Vavilina, 2000; Davydova, 2003; Ovcharova, 2008).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Astoyants emphasizes three types of resources, presence or absence of which is essential for the assignment of an individual (group) to the category of excluded:

- Economic resources possession of material goods which include money and commodities
- Cultural resources education and cultural level of an individual which is expressed through language, behaviors, etc. as a result of socialization
- Social resources associated with belonging to a group of people, the degree of involvement in it, the opportunity and the ability to use its resources (family, friendship, neighborhood, community) (Astoyants, 2009)

Thus, the social exclusion is due to an individual's or group's lack of social, economic and cultural capital which can become a resource to overcome it.

Borodkin (2000) distinguishes two approaches to the understanding of exclusion the French and the Anglo-Saxon. The French approach focuses on social solidarity, integration (inclusion) of citizens into the public life. On the one hand, this approach implies recognition of preemptive rights of communities to protect their integrity on the other requires respect for the rights of all minorities, that do not encroach on the integrity of the community. The exclusion is considered mainly as a consequence of group monopoly, enforced social order that serves the interests of the included ones. Individual freedom and equal rights for all citizens are emphasized in the Anglo-Saxon tradition. Social integration is primarily treated as a result of a free choice of relations between individuals and between individuals and the society, the state. In the Anglo-American liberalism the exclusion is considered as a consequence of specialization: social differentiation, division of labor and structural dissection of public spheres. This suggests that the individual differences are the basis of specialization in the market and among social groups.

In addition to the lack of resources, the scope and depth of social exclusion of socially deprived groups are largely determined by two key vectors discrimination of these groups by the state which lies in the legal field of the research. And also deprivation which is defined by the socio-cultural characteristics of a society that has a special level of tolerance to these groups. Therefore, overcoming of the social exclusion requires a change in the law as well as a transformation of the socio-political discourse in relation to the excluded.

From the point of view of the theory and methodology, it is important to ascertain the position of researchers, treating social exclusion in the broad and in the narrow sense. The first approach examines the phenomenon of the exclusion from the standpoint of the whole society and focuses on the very fact of the lack of access of certain groups of population to the mechanisms

of integration. The key notion in this approach is "discrimination" or infringement of certain rights of citizens. The second approach (exclusion in the narrow sense) analyses the situation of the carriers the social exclusion themselves on the micro-level and focuses on the study of the specificity of a particular social group or separate individuals who find themselves in a difficult life situation. Such approaches are mainly developed in the Western sociological thought. The problem is that if they are applicable in Russian conditions where the extent of the social exclusion is totally different. Hence, the mechanical imposition of these methods on the Russian society is hardly justified.

Let's consider the exclusion at the macro level and its main cause in the Western countries discrimination. With respect to certain groups and individuals, this approach is quite appropriate but it does not affect major social groups, constitutional rights of the members of society and therefore has as a rule, a local, transient character. Such a situation is followed up strictly in the Western countries and society's response is instantaneous. Suffice it to recall the recent events in France and England when a number of workers' rights was tried to be undermined passing over the labor unions. Hundreds of thousands of protesters went to the streets, massive riots developed. Requiring a raise of salaries air traffic controllers' protests in the United States paralyzed a number of airports in the country and the authorities were forced to make concessions to the strikers. Russian airports can stand still only because of lack of the aviation fuel. In Russian society where the number of the socially excluded goes into tens of millions, the term "discrimination" is not quite accurate. There is a massive violation of fundamental constitutional rights in Russia the right to research, education, health and other fundamental rights and freedoms. These rights are not comparable in terms of their content (adequate food, decent old age, comfortable housing) in developed countries and in Russia.

The concept of social exclusion was developed in the Western sociology for the description and study of specific population minorities, the so-called marginalized groups. In the context of Russian society some typical indicators of the social exclusion (inadequate nutrition, uncomfortable housing, other living standards) are applicable to the majority of the population. Therefore, differences in the social exclusion between the Western and Russian society are really strong just as poverty for example in Germany compared to poverty in Russia. However, it should be noted that among the actual poor in Russia there are many of those who for various reasons

are the culprits of their position and prefer to be engaged in criminal activities or because of certain circumstances do not want to change the existing situation.

We understand that it is difficult to compare the social contrasts in the post-communist countries with the Western countries. First of all, the consumption rates, wages, pensions, benefits, housing are not comparable and the gap keeps widening. In the early 50's of the last century the concept of "welfare state" was proclaimed in the Western Europe. Within the state of this type a decent standard of living and a wide range of social benefits such as employment, housing, health care, education, pensions, etc. were guaranteed to every citizen. A constituent part of this same policy was the elimination of poverty which of course has not disappeared but the state assumed maintenance of a reserve army of labor. Unemployment benefit allowed its recipients to live pretty well which is not the case for even working millions of Russians. Regarding the state of poverty it is not restricted only to the presence of material wealth also in the West but above all describes a situation of exclusion out of what is recognized as a normal, full life of individuals and groups. In Russian society, poverty often presumes a lack of livelihood. Not accidentally, many researchers equate poverty and social exclusion.

Social exclusion at the micro level is also not comparable when it comes to condition of its carriers themselves. For example, the number and social situation of people with disabilities in the West and in Russia, the degree of social protection of people with disabilities on behalf of the employer and the state. The representatives of deprived groups such as drug users and HIV-positive are in an extremely difficult socio-economic and legal position.

Drug addiction in this research is examined as a form of deviant behavior, the consequence of which is the formation of a social problem in the society. A group of drug users is socially excluded in their society that gives the society not a reduction of harm but an increase growth of the number of crimes, an increase in the number of HIV-infected people, the growth of the hepatitis C infection, the increase in divorce rates, the growth of co-dependence of family members of the addicts and the increase in the number of drug users. The drug addiction is considered by the researcher as a social problem (Pozdnjakova, 1998; Shabanov and Shtakelberg, 2001; Reutov, 2004) based on the provisions of the constructionist approach were developed and Spektorom Dzh. Kitsyuzom in 1970. And entered into a scientific turnover in Russian sociology Yasaveevym (Yasaveev, 2004). According to Gore and Thousand, exclusion is the result of a social construction, certain compulsory social

order, aimed at the exclusion of individuals and groups out of the system of the social solidarity, that is often expressed as direct discrimination (Gore, 1995; Tausend, 1987).

Spread of HIV infection in the world is one of the major problems facing mankind at the turn of the millennium. In addition to biological and medicine, HIV has also a social component and its value can be considered in today's Russia as leading. HIV-positive people are in general one of the socially excluded groups in the world due to the practice of discrimination against them. In Russia, HIV-positive became also among the most vulnerable and deprived groups.

Most strongly the negative attitude towards HIV-positive people is influenced by two factors, reflecting the public views: idea of the relationship of HIV diagnosis to drug use and a notion of high transmissibility of the disease.

Indeed in Russia due to a specific nature of the epidemic of HIV/AIDS, the social exclusion shows itself more acute: many people even before the HIV infection already had an experience of deviant behavior in most cases this was dependence on injecting drugs. The society already "got used" to the presence of people with disabilities, homeless children and people suffering from alcoholism and demonstrates if not always a tolerant or sympathetic but at least an indifferent attitude towards them. The situation with the HIV-positive people is aggravated by fear, lack or distortion of information about the problem. Stigma that accompanies HIV/AIDS epidemic in Russia as well as throughout the world forms barriers that block the connection of an individual or a group with the rest of the society. It is worth noting that sometimes stigmatization of the HIV-infected people plays also a positive role in helping them find people with the same problem and organize a community however in this case, such community can exclude itself from participating in the life of the rest of the society.

The empirical part: A sociological study was conducted under the direction and supervision of the researcher in order to identify the level of drug abuse in the society and people's attitude to the problem of drug abuse in the Republic of Tatarstan 2012-2013. The study implemented qualitative and quantitative strategies. In the first stage a questionnaire survey of population was conducted in the Republic (a subject of the Russian Federation) aged 14 years and older in total of 3105 people. At the second stage of the study expert opinion was examined by means of in-depth interviews (40 specialists of ministries, agencies and non-governmental organizations working in the field of combating illegal drug trafficking), drug users were interviewed as well.

According to the study the nature of drug use in Russia had changed: if earlier, mainly heroin was used now the drug addicted use “legal” drugs which are stimulants. They are called “legal” because they have previously not been included in the register of drugs and new forms of psychoactive substances appear constantly. This type of drugs is a stimulant and provokes active uncontrolled behavior including sexual behavior which results in the spread of HIV, hepatitis C, sexually transmitted diseases and other infections. It is worth noting that many drug addicts today have a mixed drug and alcohol use.

It is possible to say that there are quite large groups of people who use drugs and are directly involved in drug addiction. For some environments “involvement” of a person to the drug culture is a pass into the social community. However, the majority of society perceives a drug addict as “another”, “different” and excludes this person from its everyday life. Producing discursive images of a “good citizen” and a “criminal another” the authorities give signals to the citizens about how they should behave what to do and under what circumstances. In a complex process of interpretations, institutional revisions and realization of everyday practices drug policy of the state obtains repressive features. But it would be naive to think that such a policy really works.

The results of quantitative studies showed that the problem of drug abuse is recognized by the society: for 66.1% of the respondents the problem of drug addiction is socially significant. We should note that the importance of the problem of drug addiction is marked by 41.8% of men and 58.2% of women. The image of a drug dependent person in the modern society loses its acute aggressive shade; such tolerant evaluations are also present in the interviews with experts. People are more inclined to a tolerant, sympathetic perception of the victims of such deviant behavior, rather than law enforcement officials. Thus, during the study for the question, “What association do you have with a notion “drug addict” where more than one response could be chosen those living in Tatarstan characterized a drug addict as a “sick man” in 28% (the number of responses received). Other common understandings of an addict were a “weakling” (19% of responses), a “lost person” (18.3% of responses), a “not smart person” (10% of responses). The image of a drug addict as a socially dangerous person, “criminal and a thief” was noted in 9% of cases. Characteristic “suicide bomber, kamikaze” was also given in 9% of the responses in 6% of the cases the respondents refer to a drug addict as “an ordinary person with a bad habit”. On the one hand, the society treats

drug users more tolerant and less aggressively, however, this tolerance is more likely caused by indifference rather than compassion.

This attitude is absolutely understandable in the framework of the humanist tradition but unfortunately according to the specifics of social development (as mentioned by E. Durkheim), it does not help to reduce the number of drug addicts and causes rather the opposite result. The most liberal of all positions appeals to the human rights: to use or not to use drugs is a choice of every single person. However, the unacceptability of the liberal position that existed 20 years ago in relation to drug addicts, served as a certain barrier to enrollment of people into drug environment and today public opinion is not an obstacle to this, especially among the youth.

According to the in-depth interviews, it can be concluded that the situation of users of injected drugs and HIV-positive differ significantly from what is stated in the laws. They experience harassment on the part of the society and on the part of the state institutions. Human rights are not respected, sometimes they are not even perceived as people when addressing the government agencies hospitals, labor and placement services and so on people are afraid of them. However, enclosure of one part of the society from the other does not solve the problem, it makes people disunited, weak when facing the very same issue. Drug addicts establish unlawful conduct of drug enforcement administration. Using the example of analysis of the situation of drug users in the Republic of Tatarstan, one can say that there is a legal and political exclusion at the macro-level. From the above, it can be concluded that there is a growth of drug-related crime associated with drug trafficking: transportation of drugs is not fully blocked no matter if those are natural drugs (heroin, marijuana) or synthetic; corruption exists in law enforcement agencies and even in the top echelons of power. A discourse in law enforcement structures “drug addict is always a criminal” provokes a violation of human rights in relation to drug users during their interaction with the authorities. However, drug users are sick people and need realization of their rights to protection and treatment.

A number of discourses on drug addiction can be highlighted. They differ significantly in the description of the object a drug user. The source of formation of these discourses is a legal and regulatory framework in relation to the problem of drug use, the development of medical science, representation in the media. Despite the fact that the power’s discourse is the most influential and according to the legislation a drug user and is a sick person and has a label of a “criminal”. Stigmatization of

drug users creates isolation of drug using groups and their dependent family members from the society, thereby undermining efforts aimed at prevention of complications of the drug abuse (hepatitis, HIV/AIDS). However, drug addiction, HIV/AIDS are diseases of a particular individual and at the same time an indicator of poor health of the society as a whole.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Summarizing the characteristics of the social inclusion of exclusive groups, the following can be stated. In modern democracies exists a legal and regulatory framework to overcome social exclusion. International, national and regional public formations and movements are involved into the process of elimination of social exclusion situations. From time to time in the countries with stable democratic institutions and economy, high quality of life there is a surge of social exclusion as a response to changes in political, economic and social situation which are often solved by legal means.

In general, the Russian policy on the comprehensive re-socialization and integration of socially excluded groups is in its formative stages where an important role is played by socially oriented non-profit organizations. In 2010, the program for support of socially oriented non-profit organizations was launched a consequence of the Federal Law "On amendments to certain legislative acts of the Russian Federation on the support of socially oriented non-profit organizations." One of the activities supported to date is the prevention of alcoholism and drug addiction. In fact, the content of this course is the social adaptation of these socially excluded groups of population. In many countries instead of the term "socially oriented organization" is used the term "public benefit organization". This means that they work in order to assist primarily or only third parties and not just the members of the organization. In some countries public benefit organizations obtain special conditions of functioning. In Russia the impact is still extremely low including a lack of standards for the provision of social assistance and voluntary activity. From an international perspective, the social work is defined as a profession that promotes social changes and human rights. Social integration of exclusive groups is in this context in particularly the main activity of socially oriented non-profit organizations.

Drug addiction is latent, hidden and experts can only judge by what is "above the water" according to the statistics and opinion polls. Pursuant to the results of the research the primary and partly secondary preventions

have a very low efficiency. Growth rates of users registered in health care facilities are slowing down but studies show that it is not due to decrease of their number but is a result of changes of the quality parameters of consumption transition to synthetic drugs. Young people still continue to smoke marijuana, smoking mixtures, use all sorts of funny pills.

CONCLUSION

An experience of stable existence of relatively small area communities that reproduce some of their resources was accumulated in economically developed countries, particularly the UK, Germany, the United States. In Russia such experience does not exist yet, although the emergence of informal self-help groups is noted. The process of overcoming of social exclusion involves organization of groups of mutual aid in the sphere of education and upbringing of children, creation of social enterprises, public services and improvement of the environment, organization of special settlements-colonies for those who need social rehabilitation, involvement of population into the municipal management. Special projects need to be developed in these areas with active participation of civil society.

In conclusion we emphasize once again that the economic, social and legal aspects of social exclusion are closely related, they require a comprehensive study and understanding of the ongoing in the society processes. Thus, studies of the social structure of the modern Russian society made over the past years allow to conclude that there is an occurrence and an increase of a significant layer of people that are in many ways related to the socially excluded from the active functioning of the society. This is contrary to the declared Russia's role of a social state and requires the implementation of comprehensive measures to neutralize social exclusion in all its forms as well as significant adjustments to economic and social policy of the government in order to overcome social stratification in the society, to improve the level and quality of life of individuals and groups in Russian society.

REFERENCES

- Astoyants, M.S., 2009. Social orphanhood: Conditions, mechanisms and dynamic of exclusion (socio-cultural interpretation). Azov Pechat, Azov, (In Russian).
- Balabanov, A.A., 2003. Social inequality: Deepening deprivation factors. Sociol. Stud., 7: 52-64, (In Russian).

- Borodkin, F.M., 2000. Negotiating social exclusion: New approaches. *J. Sociol.*, 3-4: 5-7, (In Russian).
- Davydova, N.M., 2003. Deprivatsionnyi podkhod v otsenkakh bednosti [The Deprivational Approach in Poverty Estimations]. *Sociologicheskie Issledovaniia*, 6: 88-96, (In Russian).
- De Haan, A. and P. Nayak, 1995. Social exclusion and South Asia. Discussion Paper No. 77, International Institute of Labour Studies, Geneva.
- De Haan, A. and S. Maxwell, 1998. Editorial: Poverty and social exclusion in North and South. *IDS. Bull.*, 29: 1-9.
- De Haan, A., 1997. Poverty and social exclusion: A comparison of debates on deprivation. Working Paper No. 2, Poverty Research Unit, University of Sussex, Brighton.
- Gore, C., 1995. Introduction: Markets, Citizenship and Social Exclusion. In: *Social Exclusion: Rhetoric, Reality, Responses*, Rodgers, G., C. Gore and J.B. Figueiredo (Eds.). International Institute for Labour Studies, Geneva, Switzerland, pp: 1-40.
- Lenoir, R., 1989. *Les Exclus: Un Francais sur Dix*. 2nd Edn., Editions du Seuil, Paris.
- Mokhov, D.B., 2006. Social exclusion of pensioners as an object of social control. Thesis of a Candidate of Sociology Science, Novosibirsk, (In Russian).
- Ovcharova, L., 2008. Poverty and economic growth in Russia. *J. Social Policy Stud.*, 6: 439-456, (In Russian).
- Power, A. and W.J. Wilson, 2000. Social exclusion and the future of cities. CASE Paper, CASE/35. February 2000, London. <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/6470/>.
- Pozdnjakova, M.E., 1998. Drug addiction as a social problem. Russia: Risks and Dangers of Transitional Society, Moscow, (In Russian).
- Reutov, E.V., 2004. Studying youth and drugs. *Sotsiologicheskie Issled.*, No. 1, 2004, (In Russian).
- Rodgers, G., 1995. What is Special about a Social Exclusion Approach. In: *Social Exclusion: Rhetoric, Reality, Responses*, Rodgers, G., C. Gore and J.B. Figueiredo (Eds.). International Institute for Labour Studies, Geneva, Switzerland, pp: 43-56.
- Shabanov, P.D. and O.Y. Shtakelberg, 2001. *Drug Addictions: Pathopsychology, Clinics and Rehabilitation*. 2nd Rev. Edn., Lan, Saint Petersburg, (In Russian).
- Tausend, P., 1987. Deprivation. *J. Social Policy*, 16: 125-146.
- Tikhonova, N.E., 2002. Social exclusion in Russian society. *Social Sci. Modernity*, 4: 5-17, (In Russian).
- Vavilina, H., 2000. Poverty in Russia as a social phenomenon and a social problem: Sociological aspects. SibAGS, Novosibirsk, (In Russian).