

**Some results of a pilot study of the problem of child abuse in Germany and
Russia**

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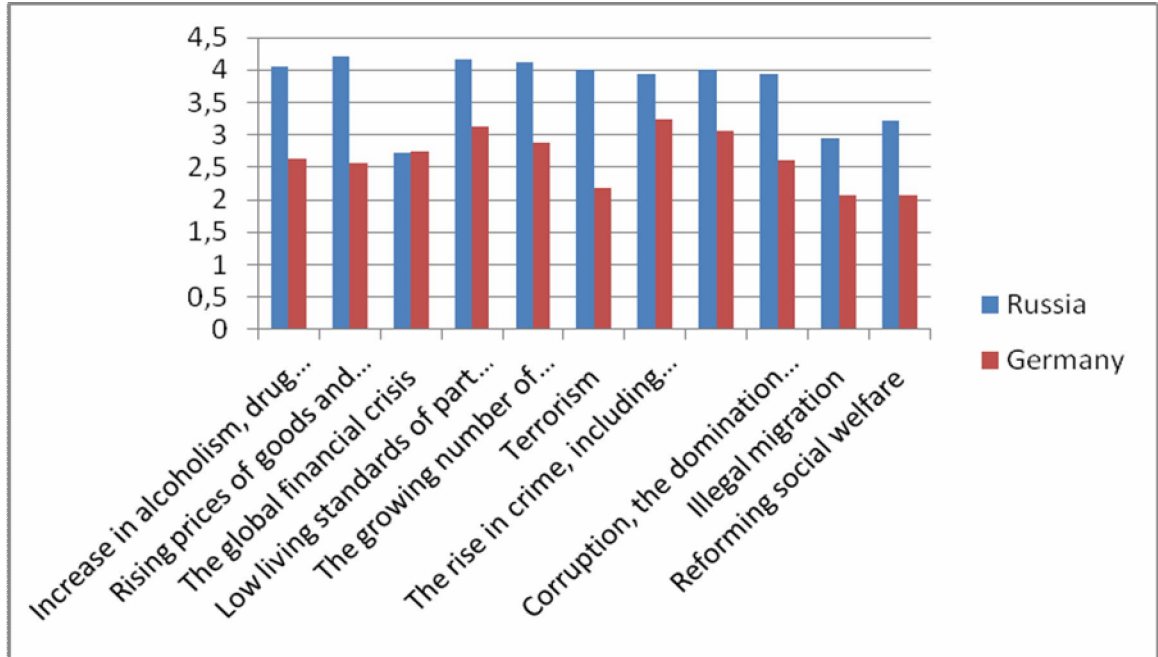
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In order to study public opinion on the issue of child abuse in Germany and Russia, we conducted a pilot sociological study. 200 people were interviewed in total: 100 respondents in Germany and 100 respondents in Russia. In both cases, we questioned the adult population aged 18 and older (average age in both countries was 35 years old) who have different education, social and family statuses.

To determine the importance of the stated problems of respondents in Russia and Germany, the responses were weighted on a scale of 1-5 (1 absolutely not important, 5 very important). The responses covered social events and processes occurring recently in the countries, causes of concern and anxiety. According to the information received, the most worrying problems for the residents of Russia are the rising prices of goods and services (mean value. 4.22), as well as low levels of a large part of the population (mean value. 4.16). Russians also indicated about child abuse concerns (4.11), as well as widespread of society alcohol and drug abuse (4.05).

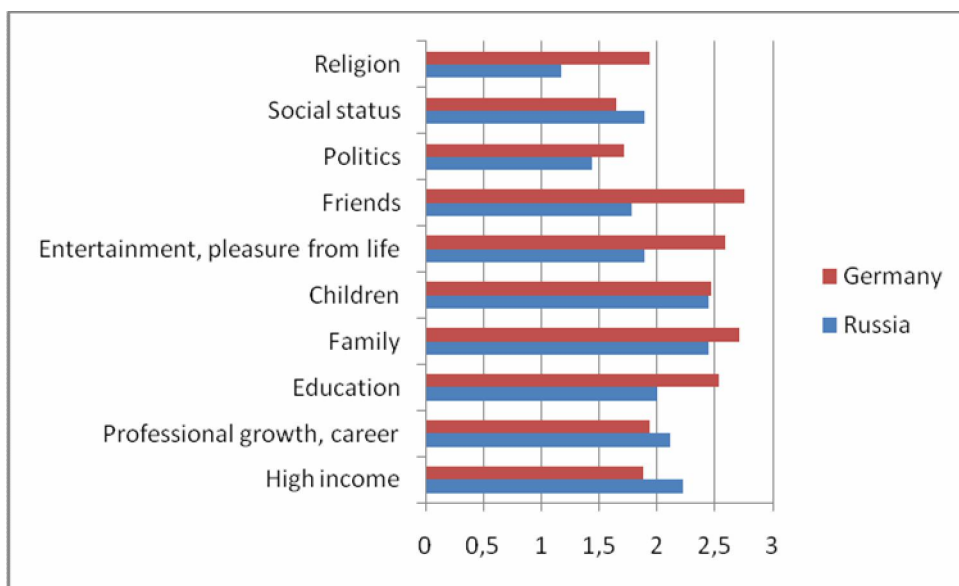
In Germany, none of the problems have been evaluated by the respondents above average degree of significance. The most acute of the proposed residents of Germany feel the increase in crime, including among children and adolescents (3.25) low living standards much of the population (3.13), reduction of morality, the decline of family values (3.06). The problem of child abuse ranks fourth position. However, the average value of 2.88 - corresponds to the scale of the average degree of importance.

Figure 1



One of the working hypotheses of our study was as follows: the higher the value of children, the less admissible is the use of physical punishment as a measure of upbringing of children. We assumed that the value of children for the Russian respondents would be lower than those surveyed in Germany. However, our data refute this statement (figure2).

Figure 2



Value of children to the population in both countries was very close to the absolute value, however, if we compare the ranking value of these indicators, the results obtained by others (Table 1).

Table 1

	rank Russia	rank Germany
High income	3	8
Professional growth, career	4	6-7
Education	5	4
Family	1-2	3
Children	1-2	5
Entertainment, pleasure from life	6-7	2
Friends	8	1
Politics	9	9
Social status	6-7	10
Religion	10	6-7

In other words, children and family are leaders in value orientations of Russians ahead of the value of a high level of income and professional growth. Respondents in Germany, according to our data, give a value priority to friends, fun, and the pleasure. A family value in the ranking of German is in the third position and the children fifth.

Further, analysis of empirical data showed that 81.25% of the respondents surveyed in Russia, against 47.05% of respondents in Germany have been abused as children. Il-treatment of children in terms of physical beating, psychological, sexual abuse, and improper care of the child exist both in Russia and Germany.

The majority of Russians do not refer to the types of abuse spanking, hitting a child by the buttocks.

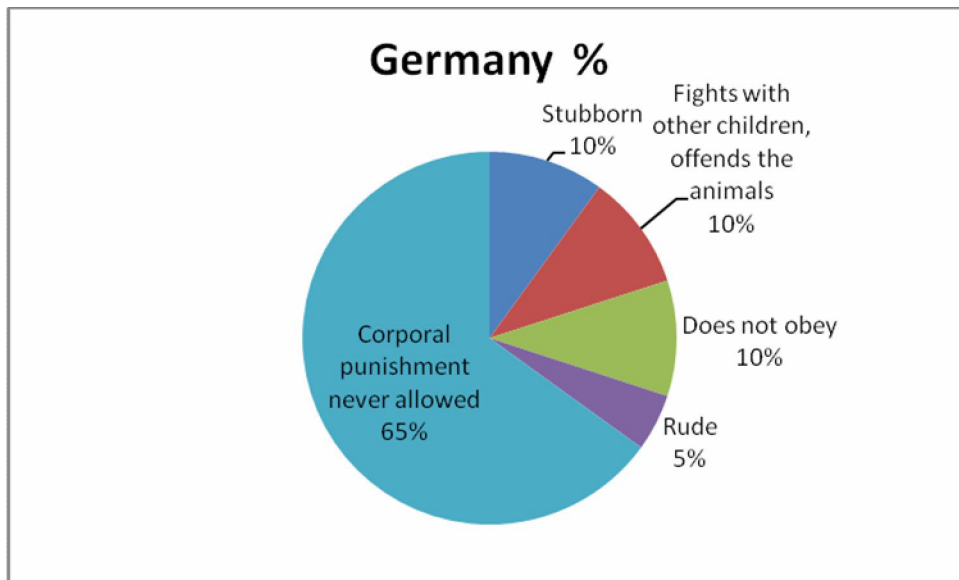
However, it should be noted that the boundary between slapping and whipping children as a measure of child education and child abuse is very thin. Normally, most parents who use physical punishment are not cruel parents. Parents may not have the intention to cause serious injury; however, the child can get seriously injured as a result of physical punishment or excessive disciplinary measures on child-rearing. Naturally in

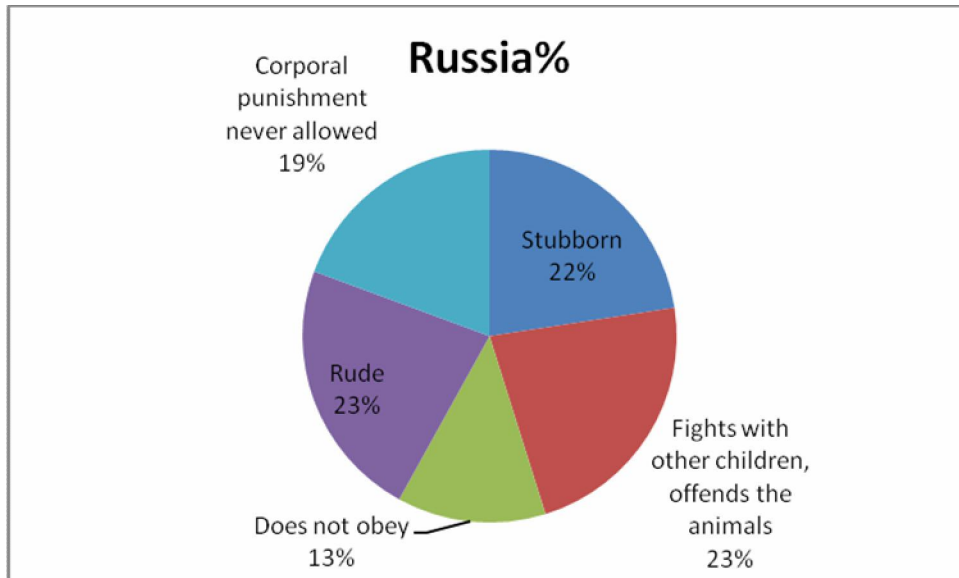
families in which physical punishment is unacceptable in principle, the risk of a child becoming a victim of domestic abuse is much lower than in families that administer corporal punishment of children. In addition, at the discretion of parents receiving corporal punishment as a method of education remains the question of whether some degree of physical impact on the child remains reasonable.

Unfortunately, most parents who use physical punishment do not know about other methods of child rearing and discipline, or do not use them at all. In our opinion, child abuse, to some extent is due to a lack of knowledge about raising children, as well as due to the existence of cultural practices, approving the use of physical force as a disciplinary measure.

In Germany the vast majority of respondents - 76.47% disapproved o the use of corporal punishment whilst in Russia, only 33, 3% of citizens disapproved of the total number interviewed.

Figure 3. When is it permissible to use corporal punishment as a measure of upbringing of children?





Russians believe that corporal punishment can be used in cases where a child wants to spite, stubborn (38,8%), rude (38,8%), fights with the children, hurting animals (38,8%), not obedient. It should be noted that in answering this question, the respondents were entitled to choose several answers, as a result, many respondents admitted the use of physical punishment considering it acceptable to use in all the cases mentioned above. This observation holds true both for Russia and for Germany.

Thus, our study reveals a more tolerance of corporal punishment in the Russian society as compared to the German society. In order to protect children from abuse there should be to change in the culture of education and attitudes of society.

Limitations:

1. We have pilot study and although the undoubted importance of empirical research is a random sample (we tried to select the respondents of different age, sex, education level, marital status), all the same answers as 100 people can only partially reflect the opinions of society as a whole.

2. It should be noted that in Germany in recent years there has been some shift in emphasis, the transformation of parenting style, liberal style of the newly completed radical measures.