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# FAMILY IN THE CONTEXT OF ENSURING DEMOGRAPHIC SECURITY OF RUSSIAN SOCIETY METHODOLOGICAL RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

**Anna Vladimirovna Vereshchagina<sup>1\*</sup>, Sergey Ivanovich Samygin<sup>2</sup>  
and Pavel Vladimirovich Stanislavsky<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> *Southern Federal University, Pushkinskaya Street 160, Rostov-on-Don, 344006, Russia*

<sup>2</sup> *Rostov state Economic University (RINH), Bolshaya Sadovaya Street 69, Rostov-on-Don, 344002, Russia*

<sup>3</sup> *Southern Russian State Polytechnical University (NPI) 'M. I. Platov', Prosveshcheniya Street 132, Novocherkassk, Rostov Region, 346428, Russia*

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## **Abstract**

This paper studies the problem of demographic security of Russian society through the prism of problems of functioning of the modern family, in the space of which there are significant changes, which have a direct impact on the demographic behaviour of the family. This category - the demographic behaviour of the family - is the key in the research methodology proposed by the authors, the methodology of studying the demographic development of the society in the context of the determining influence of the family institution. The author's methodological construct allows revealing the mechanism of family evolution in the society, which is in the phase of changing such family forms as: traditional, transformational and modern. At this stage in the Russian society, the dominant family type and, consequently, the type of demographic behaviour of the family, is transformational. This acts as a source of negative trends in the development of demographic sphere of society, as well as a threat to demographic security of Russia. The authors link Russia's withdrawal from the demographic crisis to the institutionalization of the modern type of family's demographic behaviour as dominant in the society, being associated with the 'quality' of family's relationships and spiritual well-being of the family.

*Keywords:* demographic, safety, national security, behaviour, neoinstitutional

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## **1. Introduction**

The most important component of the national security of the state is the demographic security of the society, as responsible for the reproduction of the population, both in quantitative and qualitative terms. Demographic security in this study is defined as "the ability of the social system to function in a safe and

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\*E-mail: anrietta25@mail.ru

stable way on the basis of population reproduction as a process of continuous renewal of its size and structure through the generational change” [1].

An important factor of influencing the demographic security of the society is the family institution, which is transformed in modern Russia, and is rapidly losing its previous value and normative bases. Sustainable reproduction of negative phenomena in the family-demographic field of Russian society creates the need to understanding of the effects of family transformation for the demographic development of the country, and this is the social relevance of the search for adequate methodological tools for the study of this dependence. The selected angle of study based on the appropriate methodology will allow to identify the main trends in the development of the Russian family and demographic processes, to determine the mechanism of institutional dependence of family and demographic spheres of the society, as well as to identify possible ways to stabilize the institution of the family and to ensure demographic security of Russia.

## 2. Method

The article widely uses methods of comparative, comparative-historical, axiological and socio-cultural approaches. During the development of methodological guidelines for the studies of transformation of the family institution as a factor of influencing the demographic processes in the society, the authors relied on the provisions and principles of the new institutional paradigm, in which institutional-evolutionary approach of D. North was actively used [D.C. North, *The Contribution of the New Institutional Economics to an Understanding of the Transition Problem*, [http://www.wider.unu.edu/publications/annual-lectures/en\\_GB/AL1/\\_files/78091860219333220/default/annua-lecture-1997.pdf](http://www.wider.unu.edu/publications/annual-lectures/en_GB/AL1/_files/78091860219333220/default/annua-lecture-1997.pdf)], in which social institutions are considered as a set of formal rules, informal constraints and mechanisms for enforcing them [D.C. North, *Economic Performance through Time. Lecture to the memory of Alfred Nobel*, <http://nobelprize.org/economics/laureates/1993/north-lecture.html-not,09.12.1993>]. We used as well theoretical developments and concepts in line with neo-institutionalism of local researchers: S.G. Kirdina [2], M.A. Klupt [3]. This set of theoretical approaches and methods has allowed to develop a mechanism of institutional evolution of the family and to highlight the types of demographic behaviour of the family as indicators of the demographic development of the Russian society, which, in the aggregate, provided a solution to the research tasks and to obtain adequate for the modern Russian reality knowledge on the alleged problems.

## 3. Results

As a key conclusion we make the following deduction: the family institution in contemporary Russian society is going through a period of transformation, which resulted in the fact that Russian family gradually acquires

an egalitarian form. During the institutional transformation in the space of a Russian family, we can see the formation and spreading of various types of families with appropriate type of demographic behaviour. Each of the types of demographic behaviour is characterized by various degrees of influence on the development of demographic processes in Russian society. In the context of long-term demographic crisis, a deep sociological analysis of the demographic behaviour of the family will determine the most favourable type of demographic behaviour of the family for the normalization of the demographic situation in Russian society. Our analysis based on the neo-institutional approach led to the conclusion that in the institutional space of the Russian family there are three main types of family institutions, which correspond to three types of demographic behaviour of the families: traditional, transformational and modern. The transformational type has an extreme instability and destructiveness, both for the development of the family and the society in general. It needs a qualitative modernization breakthrough [4], its implementation in the process of family practices reducing the demographic indicators, both quantitative and qualitative ones [5]. To date, this type of family demographic behaviour is dominant in Russian society, but which is able to lead the country out of the demographic crisis - is the modern type of demographic behaviour of the families with an emphasis on the quality of marital and parental relationships and a high personal responsibility for any choices throughout the life cycle of the family.

#### **4. Discussion**

Demographic behaviour of the family is an important source of demographic processes, and its deep research will help to understand the course and character of the transformation process, both in the family and in the demographic areas of the society. In our methodological construct, the focus is based on the study of the transformation of the family institution, taking into account the fact that it is one of the most important factors influencing the demographic processes in the society. Accordingly, within the established methodological construct, the transformation of the family institution and the demographic processes in the Russian society are studied through the light of such important category as 'demographic behaviour of the family', which is the behaviour of family members, aimed at preserving or changing its demographic status, including such elements as: gender, number, children in the family, type of the family (officially registered/unregistered, two-parent family, lone-parent family, with few children/many children, student/not student, etc.), its socio-professional level, place of residence and status (migrants, native inhabitants), etc.

The analysis of the transformation of the family institution as a factor affecting the demographic processes through the study of demographic behaviour of the family involves the study of institutional transformations in the family sphere. To this end, we turn to the methodology of neo-institutionalism as

an optimal methodological tool for the study of the reality, in which the transformation of Russian society is going on, its major social institutions and demographic spheres.

Let us study the theory of D. North [6] and his formal and informal restrictions in the process of the formation and development of social institutions in the society. If we take the concept of D. North as a base, the mechanism of formation of the institutional structure of the family will be as follows: in a traditional society, before the conjugal sphere became a subject of state regulation and control, informal restrictions played the role of formal restrictions. Then, with the increasing complexity of social organization and the transition to the formal regulation mechanism of controlling the sphere of family relations in the form of the Family Code formal restrictions (state family policy, etc.), as a rule, corresponded to the restrictions conformed on an informal level in the field of family relationships (divorce was difficult in the society and it was censured), that characterized the traditional society.

Modern society has changed the harmonious - according to the public viewpoint - combination and coexistence of formal and informal restrictions in the field of family relationships. There is a priority of informal constraints in the form of family norms, patterns of behaviour, values, which dictate their rules of behaviour in the field of family relations. But the main feature of our time is the appearance of a third kind of restrictions, which were not considered by D. North as distinct and important in the process of institutional change. These are individual restrictions, the occurrence of which became possible with the increasing personal freedom, the legitimization of this phenomenon in the public consciousness and life.

In the past, any family behaviour of the individual was due to traditions, customs (informal restrictions) or formal rules, the violation of which led to public reprimand or sanctions, provided by the laws of the society, but today it is often due to individual choice in terms of diversity and variability of the system of family relations. The choice of a particular style of family life, of certain decisions regarding the fate of marriage, family, are dictated by personal choice of every couple, who have individual responsibility for any choice, for any decision. Social constraints, formed at the social level and associated with such categories of concepts as 'unacceptable', 'not well' subside and give place for individual constraints. They lose their power, which can lead to different consequences: a greater responsibility in the field of family relationships as a result of individual choices, decisions, as well as the disappearance of the family in terms of reducing the impact of formal and informal restrictions in the area of family relationships. Thus, the family sphere in modern society can be considered as a sphere, in which the concept of freedom and individual choice is realized to the fullest extent that, in turn, increasing the extent of individual responsibility.

Individual restrictions may become a cognitive tool for the study of transformational processes. In that case if along with them we will introduce in the scientific revolution the term 'social restrictions', which in itself, of course,

has been scientifically tested however, we suggest to introduce the dichotomy 'social restrictions - individual restrictions' as an addition to the institutional structure of D. North. Its formal and informal restrictions do not contain the fact of individual restrictions as an independent cognitive structure. Formal and informal constraints, which are the main components of the institutional system, can be considered as a whole of social restrictions, generated at the informal and formal level by the society itself, in the face of transformation agents. Individual restrictions, which have the same social restrictions as a source of their development, the liberalization of which led to their growth, are gradually replacing to the background, both formal and informal restrictions in the sphere of family relations.

On the basis of the above said, we suggest a slightly different approach to the study of institutional changes in the sphere of family relations of modern Russian society, which is based on the introduction of transformational approach into the scientific revolution, which can be used to justify the current state of the family in Russia and identify options for its evolution. This approach is an attempt to show the interaction of formal, informal and individual constraints in the system of family relations and the results of this interaction in the form of the emerging dominant types of families.

Depending on the kind of institutional changes taking place in the family institution in a combination of formal, informal and individual restrictions, various types of family behaviour are formed, which dominate in every society at a particular historical period. In this case, the dominant type is determined, above all, by the dominant type of family behaviour constraints, which affects the functioning of the family and the institutionalization of various types of family behaviour, including demographic behaviour.

In particular, the compliance of formal restrictions with informal or individual ones forms in society two opposite types of family behaviour - traditional and modern. A combination of formal and informal restrictions in the sphere of family relations and the absence of conflicts between them because of the support from the formal structures (government, social institutions, etc.) informal norms and rules of family behaviour form the traditional type of family behaviour, which has its own characteristics for each individual society [7]. Thus, today the traditional family in Russia is associated with the concept of the Soviet family, which was supported by the state and enjoyed its benefits in certain cases (birth, divorce, etc.). Traditional Russian society could not produce the right amount of individual restrictions of family relationships and family behaviour, because to do this there must be a certain level of freedom in the society, and thus the institutional space of the family of the Soviet period managed with social restrictions, generated at the level of social opinion, social traditions, norms and formal rules, fixed on a legislative level. For example, in a society the leading role of the mother in the upbringing of children, both in marriage and after the divorce was not disputed, and was fixed at the level of family law. Being under the patronage of the state, the family could always

count on its support and it depended on the approved at the formal level decrees and laws which restricted the sphere of family relations.

In a society, where individual restrictions dominate over the formal and informal ones, family relationships develop in a quite different scenario. It creates a situation when formal rules and regulations of family relationships are forced to adapt to the individual restrictions, which characterize modernized types of societies (Europe, USA). Public demand for free and egalitarian relationships, at different levels of social interaction, is fixed at the formal level, which manifests itself in the real equality of parental, marital relations in the family, as well as the formal consolidation of types of families that in the traditional sense are not families (same sex, for example). Thus, it forms a situation where the formal rules and regulations are relevant to the individual restrictions of family relationships, which are institutionalized in the society and are subsequently formalized. The role of formal structures is limited in its legitimizing function, but not on forming family relationships, whereas in a traditional society, the state sets certain standards and guidelines for the development of family and marital spheres.

In the era of social transformations, when formal restrictions do not correspond to the actual practices, implemented in the field of family and marriage, and the family stays with itself in the field of global transformations and unregulated social practices, including the family ones, there is a combination of informal and individual restrictions of family behaviour. It is as a result the transformational family type and family behaviour in the society, in which there is no dominant type of family behaviour.

In such a society there are different types of family behaviour that fall within the scope of the two main types of families: traditional and modern. As a rule, in the conditions of interaction and historical connection between the old and new family institutions, there is a certain type of mixing, which results in a new type of family in the family sphere of the society, which, in essence, is transformational - traditional-modern, combining the features of the traditional family and the modern one. It is necessary to bear in mind that this is only an intermediate type, which is a product of the era of transformation, although the possibilities of its institutionalization under certain circumstances are still real. To achieve a high level of social stability we must create and institutionalize a dominant type of the family.

In this situation, overcoming the intermediate transformational type of family behaviour by returning to the old traditional type or the formation of the modern family type and family behaviour will depend on many factors, among which: the position of traditional and modern family in the society (their incidence in the community); the degree of the influence of external forces, agents of transformation of family behaviour on this process (globalization, media, etc.); the focus and effectiveness of state policy at federal and regional levels, for the family in terms of the formation of programs of family and demographic development of the country, and family support; the activities of

the various political and social forces, aimed at the promotion of certain types of family behaviour in the society, etc.

In accordance with the methodological scheme that we constructed, we can define the following basic concepts in this study.

Family institution - is a set of formal rules and regulations, informal and individual restrictions which regulate the marital behaviour of individuals. Depending on the dominance in the society of informal or individual restrictions, as well as the support of one or the other by agents of transformation, forming the formal norms and rules of family behaviour, institutional changes occur, with time forming and institutionalizing new types of families, which are alternatives to traditional families.

Traditional family institution - is a set of social restrictions in the form of formal and informal restrictions, rules, which regulate the marital behaviour of individuals. In this institution there may be different types of families, and the criteria for labelling them as traditional ones is their concordance to formal and informal constraints of family behaviour with the determining the value of the last ones. If this particular type of family fits into the social frameworks of perceptions of the family and is not contrary to the prevailing traditions, it is traditional. Thus, in accordance with new institutional approach, the traditional family - is a family that is of the type and nature of family relationships, reproductive and family behaviour in general corresponds to the norms and rules of family behaviour, accepted in the society, both in the formal and informal levels. Each society at a particular historical period is characterized by its own institution of the traditional family and the corresponding types. For example, for the modern European society, the traditional is nuclear family (mother, father, child), which, as a rule, is with few children, and often childless. In it the family relationships are built on the basis of egalitarian principle, and its stability and existence in general depends on the level of satisfaction with family, in particular the spouse relationship from both spouses. Thus, the basis of such a family in Europe is the interpersonal relationships between spouses, and the size of the family and its existence depends on the direction in which they will develop.

Modern family is the family, which is of the type, nature of family relationships, family and reproductive behaviour that does not conform to traditional norms and rules of family behaviour and relationships (informal restrictions) because the marital behaviour of individuals is mainly regulated by individual norms and rules of family behaviour, not institutionalized at the level of social consciousness (i.e., have not yet become norms in the system of informal constraints). Thus, the institution of modern family should be considered as a set of formal rules and regulations and individual restrictions corresponding to each other and regulating marital behaviour of individuals.

At the same time, the traditional institution of the family does not disappear. It coexists with the modern one, until the modern does not take its place, calling into question the effectiveness of the old traditional family norms and values. The new traditional family, in spite of its qualitative differences

from the previous one, it has close historical and institutional linkage with it, and therefore it can be considered as its successor. This conclusion is based on the key position of the new institutional theory of D. North, about the institutional dependence of the historical trajectory of the society, the real choice of which is formed by the past [8].

The institutional evolution of the family and its transition from traditional to modern forms is based on the described mechanism, and in the transitional period the institute of transforming family is formed, combining the rules and regulations of the traditional family, based on informal restrictions, and on modern ones, based on individual restrictions. Formal rules and regulations under in this case act as an arbitrator, and the dynamics and course of the transformation process in the field of family relationships depend on it.

Thus, the institution of the transforming family should be considered as a set of informal and individual restrictions, which regulate the marital behaviour of individuals in the conditions of discrepancy of formal rules and regulations prevailing in the family sphere with values and relationships.

As said, in the institutional space of the modern Russian family, there are three types of families: traditional, transformational and modern. The criteria for the classification of the family into one or another type are the correspondence of the rules and regulations of family with the formal, informal and individual restrictions of family behaviour and family relations.

Thus, the analysis of the used methodological approaches in the frameworks of the sociological study of demographic processes has shown that it is necessary to establish a single methodological paradigm for the study of the variety of demographic aspects of the development of Russian society, and this paradigm is the neo-institutional paradigm, which allows us to consider the specifics of the Russian demographic development in the context of institutional transformation of Russian society in accordance with its historically formed institutional system, which affects the modern progress and development of demographic processes.

The new institutional methodology allows linking together family and demographic changes in a transforming society, to explain them and to determine the mechanism of transformation of family and demographic sphere. To this end we propose a methodological construct for the sociological study of the transformation of the family as a factor of influencing the demographic processes through the study of demographic behaviour of the family.

Thus, the traditional family in Russia is being destroyed, and modern types of families are being formed now, testing their functionality and efficiency. The speed and result of transformation and institutionalization of new social institutions of the family depends on the agents of transformation, which at the formal level can support traditional institutions or contribute to the consolidation of new ones. Each of the types of social institutions of the family (traditional, modern and transformational) correspond to a different type of demographic behaviour, which is the source and measure of demographic processes in the society.



Those peoples of Russia, who largely saved the elements of traditional culture, are largely characterized by the traditional type of demographic behaviour, which is characterized by the following features and indicators: the birth of the first child occurs in the first years after marriage (except these cases where there are obstacles of a medical nature); an orientation to a large family regardless of the material and social status of the family; negative attitude towards the childless families, especially voluntarily childless; relatively high stability of family relationships (a minimum number of divorces); the socio-professional status of the family is, as a rule, determined by the position of the man in the society; one career type of the family, in which the social and professional mobility and career growth is formed by the head of the family - the man; advanced type of the family, as one of the children is necessarily live with his parents after the creation of his own family (i.e. 'Empty nest' is rare in this type of demographic behaviour of the family); parenting is based on the continuity of the values and norms of traditional culture through generational structure; the norm is officially registered marriage or adopted in the society as such under customary law (e.g. the Ossetians).

In the Russian society within the frameworks of the transformation process we see the formation of the modern type of demographic behaviour of the family, typical features of which are the following: the birth of the first child takes place, as a rule, not immediately after the start of family relationships, its postponed to a later date (the reasons may be the desire to test the strength of the feelings and relationship, or the factor of social and professional development); focus on having a small family; deliberate childlessness is a quite common and socially acceptable; a relatively high divorce rate and, accordingly, single-parent families and remarriage; socio-professional status of the family does not have a clear gender colour, and is defined by the position of man in the society, as well as the woman; two career type of the family dominates, in which the social and professional mobility and career development is carried out by both spouses; the nuclear family type, which is reproduced in the next generation; which in a certain stage of life leads the family to the 'empty nest', after the children grow up.

However, the most popular in Russian society is the transformational type of demographic behaviour of the family. This type of demographic behaviour of the family is characterized by a lack of clear criteria, indicators, features, because it is formed on the ruins of the traditional type of demographic behaviour of the family with elements of the modern type, which is just beginning to appear. In general, it is characterized by the fact that, while maintaining the same structure of family and marital relations, typical for the traditional type, there is a decrease in the number of children in the family and a violation of educational functions, as the old values of education are destroyed or are not recognized as correct, and the new ones has not yet become norms in the society, and socialization becomes spontaneous, in a state of rejection of everything that happened before.

This type of demographic behaviour of the family is extremely unstable, it has destructive consequences, both for the family and for the society, it has poor adaptability, it reduces demographic indicators, both in quantity and quality of human resources. Being the most common type of demographic behaviour of families in Russia, which is clearly evidenced by the numerous empirical data, which reflect the transformation of the role of family structure, marital relations, the foundations of education and socialization of children, their reduction, increased divorces, etc, as well as numerical advantage of families of transformational type, it determines the demographic situation in the country: reduced birth rate, increased mortality as a consequence of reducing of the physical and social well-being of the population, a high level of marriage as a reflection of the mental attitudes on officially registered marriage as a norm of family life, but also a high divorce rate as a reflection of the destruction of the foundations of family stability and the search for its new forms.

Taking into account the fact that ethnic basis (in quantitative terms) of Russian state is the Russian ethnic group, which is not notable for the preservation of traditional culture, the level of Russian families who adhere to the traditional type of demographic behaviour is relatively small, although this type is notable for sufficiently high resistance to the influence of external factors. Therefore, its implementation in the traditional people of Russia does not characterize the demographic situation in the country as a whole and it is not its indicator, but its factor of further deepening the differences between the people of Russia and their differentiation in lifestyle, outlook, social adaptation as a result of differences in family culture and family values.

## **5. Conclusions**

Despite the demographic threat of depopulation of the Russian population, we believe that for Russia the modern type of demographic behaviour, which is based on the egalitarian principles of the organization of family relations, is the most appropriate in the current conditions for several reasons.

Firstly, Russia, cultural space of which is represented by the eastern and western culture, by its type and the numerical composition of the population (Russians constitute the overwhelming majority of Russians ethnic structure) tends to Western culture, which explains the more rapid spread of Western egalitarian family values in the Russian family environment, and the collapse of the Soviet (mostly Russian) traditional family, while the traditional family, which is based on ethnic and cultural traditions, is still functioning effectively in the national regions of Russia. So, the spread of this type of demographic behaviour of the family it is a natural process that conforms to the trajectory of the historical transformation and evolution of Russian society in the mainstream of European modernization, though having its own institutional matrix that is different from European society. Egalitarian family in Russia and the corresponding type of demographic behaviour will not be identical to the European one, if we do not change the socio-cultural code of Russians, but,

according to the theory of institutional matrices [[http://www.wider.unu.edu/publications/annual-lectures/en\\_GB/AL1/\\_files/78091860219333220/default/annua-lecture-1997.pdf](http://www.wider.unu.edu/publications/annual-lectures/en_GB/AL1/_files/78091860219333220/default/annua-lecture-1997.pdf)], selecting the necessary for it and adapting elements of a different institutional matrix, the Russian institutional matrix will get a different appearance, maintaining its basic elements, and will differ it from its 'donor'.

Secondly, in terms of destruction of the traditional family and the massive growth of the families of the transformation type, and, accordingly, the domination of the transformational type of demographic behaviour of the family, which is unstable, poorly predictable and unmanaged [2], only the modern type of family demographic behaviour is potentially effective, as it is stable, predictable, specified and therefore controllable. The priority of quality over quantity in its characterology structure will allow to neutralize many of the negative phenomena in the family sphere of the society (family violence, indifference, child vagrancy, reduced education, reduced training, etc.), which are spread as a result of a sheer number of families with an unstable type of demographic behaviour corresponding to the transformational. A high level of instability, uncertainty and weak predictability generates a high level of transaction costs in the institutional space of transformational family.

And, thirdly, social and economic instability associated with the transition to new economic relations, makes the modern egalitarian type of demographic behaviour of the family, which is based on individual responsibility for making family decisions and family choice, the most adaptive, which is important in conditions of the determining influence of the material conditions on the social well-being and livelihoods of families.

Thus, compliance with the civilizing way of development of the Russian society, stability, predictability and manageability, as well as a higher degree of adaptability in the socio-economic conditions of Russian society - these are the basics which make possible to allocate the modern type of demographic behaviour of the family as the most adequate for modern Russia, and potentially effective to stabilize the family and demographic spheres of the society.

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