



# FORMATION OF INTER-ETHNIC TOLERANCE OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS AS A MECHANISM OF SUCCESSFUL INTER-CULTURAL EDUCATION

## FORMACIÓN DE TOLERANCIA INTERÉTNICA DE ESTUDIANTES UNIVERSITARIOS COMO MECANISMO DE EXITOSA EDUCACIÓN INTERCULTURAL

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### abstract

The purpose of the article is to clarify the conceptual apparatus of the phenomenon "inter-ethnic tolerance" and analyze if there is a connection between intercultural education and the development of students' personal qualities, necessary for the realization of inter-cultural communication, first of all, and they have to be correlated to the formation of inter-ethnic tolerance as well. From the point of view of pedagogical science, a comprehensive analysis of this phenomenon gave the authors an opportunity to find out the essential characteristics of the studied phenomenon and trace the conditions of its formation in the multi-cultural educational environment of the university as a comprehensive analysis has become an integral part of the authors' research. On the basis of empirical approach (questionnaire, tests and interviewing), the authors of the article came to the conclusion about the levels of inter-ethnic tolerance' formation as a key, individually important personal quality. The research results have shown that the formation of more thoughtful and serious attitude of teachers towards this problem through the implementation of different students' activity that allows to involve them in the process of inter-ethnic communication is considered to be, to the authors' mind, the solution of the problem. To sum up, the upbringing of inter-ethnic tolerance enhances the students' learning opportunities due to the development of the inter-ethnic students' activity as well as the stimulation of the individual growth and enlargement of individual's potential in the process of the inter-ethnic communication.

**Keywords:** inter-ethnic tolerance, inter-ethnic interaction, intercultural education, multi-cultural educational environment.

El propósito del artículo es aclarar el aparato conceptual del fenómeno "tolerancia interétnica" y analizar si existe una conexión entre la educación intercultural y el desarrollo de las cualidades personales de los estudiantes, necesarias para la realización de la comunicación intercultural, primero de todos, y tienen que estar correlacionados con la formación de tolerancia interétnica también. Desde el punto de vista de la ciencia pedagógica, un análisis exhaustivo de este fenómeno dio a los autores la oportunidad de descubrir las características esenciales del fenómeno estudiado y rastrear las condiciones de su formación en el entorno educativo multicultural de la universidad como El análisis se ha convertido en una parte integral de la investigación de los autores. Sobre la base del enfoque empírico (cuestionario, pruebas y entrevistas), los autores del artículo llegaron a la conclusión sobre los niveles de formación de tolerancia interétnica como una calidad personal clave e individualmente importante. Los resultados de la investigación han demostrado que la formación de una actitud más reflexiva y seria de los docentes hacia este problema a través de la implementación de diferentes actividades de los estudiantes que les permita involucrarlos en el proceso de comunicación interétnica se considera, en opinión de los autores, la solución del problema. En resumen, la formación de la tolerancia interétnica mejora las oportunidades de aprendizaje de los estudiantes debido al desarrollo de la actividad de los estudiantes interétnicos, así como a la estimulación del crecimiento individual y la ampliación del potencial del individuo en el proceso de la interrelación comunicativa étnica.

**Palabras clave:** tolerancia interétnica, interacción interétnica, educación intercultural, ambiente educativo multicultural.



## Introduction

The need for the study of actual questions on the formation of inter-ethnic tolerance is determined by the presence of integrative processes in the post-industrial society and by the influence of destabilizing factors as well, which are slowing down the progressive development of public relations. The rapid growth of international contacts has led to the more intensive communication of the representatives of different cultures. The appearance of a new cohort of pedagogues who are tolerant to their students has resulted in the appearance of modern, innovative guidelines which meet the requirements and needs of multi-cultural society, based on the diversity of cultures and the necessity of their active and constructive co-operation. In the following conditions, interethnic tolerance is an answer to the challenges of the globalizing world, reflecting social (the need for communication and socialization) and moral (the need for personal growth and self-actualization) necessities and interests (Lafraya, 2011; Mckinney, 2017; Vieira et al, 2016; Bakhshandeh et al, 2015).

In accordance with widening of the sphere of inter-ethnic cooperation and establishment of international contacts, one can't but admit the need of upbringing youth tolerance, especially of university students. Moreover, upbringing of inter-ethnic tolerance in the multi-cultural society is becoming a "pedagogical imperative" because of the multi-cultural educational environment, where students live, study and work. Inter-ethnic tolerance is treated in two main aspects: in the context of peaceful co-living of different nations and ethnos, and as a means of prevention of the destructive ideology (Toffler, 2008).

## Methodological Framework

Methodological framework of this research rests on the competence approach, which allows to achieve personal and professional growth and self-development due to the formation of cultural and professionally-valuable competences. Competence approach in education helps a personality to socialize due to acquiring vital competences, while the society uses constructively the results of personal self-actualization. The leading competence for realization of importance of culture and ethnos inter-action is considered to be the inter-cultural competence, which treats a personality as a representative of definite culture, as an actor of cultural and vital values, and as an active participant of the process of inter-ethnic and inter-cultural interaction. Comprehensive analysis of inter-ethnic tolerance as a pedagogical

phenomenon which reflects integration processes in the modern Russian society is considered to be an integral part of our research.

The international experience in the sphere of upbringing and formation inter-ethnic tolerance was thoroughly analyzed; that experience was reflected in the works of foreign (Maddi et al, 1965) as well as in papers of modern Russian (Blumkin, 1990; Khuziakhmetov, 2017; Hildayanti & Alie, 2016) researchers. We also analyzed works, which are connected with studying the bases of tolerance formation (Wahyudi, 2012); and papers, which consider inter-cultural education as an instrument of the achievement the inter-ethnic tolerance (Nasibullova et al, 2016). We also made an attempt to clarify the conceptual apparatus of the research, because nowadays, one can observe the lack of common terminology due to the multi-faced structure of the phenomenon "inter-ethnic tolerance". On the stating phase of our experimental work, the level of formation of inter-ethnic tolerance was analyzed, then during the forming phase of an experiment, we organized a regular, goal-oriented work with the students of KFU (Kazan Federal University) and ASE (Academy of Social Education), after that we conducted several testing measurements. The goal of our questionnaire was to determine the main tendencies and dynamics of the development of youth's inter - ethnic tolerance, and also distinguished their attitude towards other participants of the communication process: a family, friends, a students' body, and to the conditions of realization of communication (multi-cultural educational environment, created by the university teachers).

To sum up, in our research, the essence characteristics of that pedagogical phenomenon were reflected, considered in two aspects: from the point of view of a researcher (theoretical aspect) and in practical aspects - from the point of view of a modern teacher. The conducted comparative analysis of Russian and foreign literature allowed us to make an attempt to systemize theoretical and practice-oriented materials. During our research, we revealed the type of inter-ethnic relations in the students' community and in the family, their attitude to their culture, and presence/absence of their inter-ethnic communicative experience.

## Results

The analysis of scientific-research literature on the problem (Kutuev et al, 2016; Mukhametzyanova & Tregubova, 2017; Zakirova et al, 2017) as well as this particular research let us make several conclusions:

- 1) Inter-ethnic tolerance is considered to be a key instrument in the activity of a pedagogue, who



is teaching his/her students in the multi-cultural society. Our opinion is supported by the research position of R. Kutuev on this question: "...forms for upbringing of tolerant behavior of students are to provide real assistance in specific situations and continuous support throughout the study at the University" (Kutuev et al, 2016).

- 2) Formation of inter-ethnic tolerance is also considered to be a condition of stability and peace in the civic society, that leads to the spiritual and moral Renaissance of the nation and symbolizes the return to its historical and cultural roots. Tareva E. proves our position, saying: "in the process of communication the interlocutors do not lose their national identity and recognize each other as bearers of different cultural concepts" (Tareva & Tarev, 2017).

We have conducted experimental work, concerning the determination of the level of inter-ethnic students' tolerance in two universities - in KFU and in ASE (Kazan). One hundred and one respondents from KFU and one hundred and one respondents from ASE took part in the questionnaire. Experimental work included conducting questionnaire on the stating and forming phases of experiment on the adapted methodic, and also it was realizing the activities, oriented on the development of students' moral qualities. Main results of experimental work were reflected in the author's educational programme "Inter-ethnic tolerance is the way to harmony and inter-ethnic solidarity: theoretical and practical aspects".

The questionnaire "Index of tolerance" is structurally divided into three main parts, which reflect the formation of cognitive, affective, and behavioural components of tolerance of the university students. The results of the analysis of the diagnostics showed that 87% of respondents from KFU (eighty students) and 90% of respondents from ASE (eighty-six students) possess a developed cognitive component. The students have a desire to learn about new culture, they accept all-human values, such as kindness, mutual respect and solidarity, they are open-hearted and mercy, and they can also identify oneself as a part of a definite ethnic group. 86% of respondents from KFU (seventy-eight students) and 89% of respondents from ASE (eighty-eight students), in equal degree, regard specific national features positively, that is a basis of an affective component. Eighty-four percent of respondents from KFU (seventy-six students) and ninety percent of respondents (ninety-one students) from ASE possess a highly-developed behavioral component, which determines the direction of a tolerant behavior and forms an active and positive attitude towards different people, belonging to different cultures and ethnic groups. There were some questions that arose some negative attitude

from the students' part, e.g.:

- 1) "I wouldn't like to have the "better half", being another nationality;
- 2) "I suppose that national separation is a leading characteristics of the modern world": 57% of respondents from KFU (seventy-seven students) and 82% of respondents from ASE (eighty-five students) proved that fact;
- 3) "Talks about tolerance in the university do not lead to the increase of the tolerance level: 51% of respondents from KFU (sixty-nine students) and 19% of respondents from ASE supported that opinion.

Adapted methodic of Dominic De Sent Marc regards three types of inter-relationships: tolerance towards/among friends, tolerance in the university, and tolerance within the family. Students are allowed to choose one of two variants, which reflects tolerant or intolerant model of behavior according to their personal life experience, while the choice is not always obvious as it seems to be.

The analysis of the first series of questions "tolerance towards/among friends" showed that 90% of respondents from KFU (ninety-one students) and 96% of respondents of ASE (ninety-seven people) are tolerant towards their friends' "circle". 86% of respondents from KFU (eighty-seven students) and 92% of respondents from ASE (ninety-four students) evaluate the students' community and their pedagogues warmly and positively. The little least flexibility in relationships was observed in the students' family, because in their families, students are very often facing with ambiguous situations, underestimation, and non-understanding because of the generation gap and they behave subsequently. 80% of respondents from KFU (eighty-one students) and 86% percent of respondents from ASE treat the members of their family in a tolerant manner, showing much understanding in the family relationship. The greatest interest to us was being revealed in the students' answers to the questions in the series "Tolerance at the university", because they reflected the character and dynamics of the relationships in the students' community and with their pedagogues as well.

Let us state the most "burning", contradictory and intolerant issues within the students' answers:

- 1) "University teacher for me is a strange person": 19% of respondents both in KFU and ASE (all in all, forty students from two hundred and two) agreed with that statement.
- 2) "When conflict situations appear among students, I'm taking an active part in the conflict": 80% of respondents from KFU and ASE (one hundred, fifty and nine from two hundred students) had that point of view.
- 3) "My relationships with the university teacher may be characterized as complex and



unfriendly": 15% of respondents from KFU (seventeen students) and 9% from ASE (ten students) were being solidary with that statement.

Based on the results of the empirical research (questionnaire, interviewing, inquiry, and observation), we have come to the following conclusions:

- 1) Students of ASE, which is a private educational institution, are showing more flexibility and tolerance in the questions connected with their inter-ethnic relationships than students from KFU. Being students of extra-mural department, students of ASE are mature and, respectively, possess more extensive cultural experience and practice of inter-ethnic relationships and have an experience in the formation of inter-ethnic marriages.
- 2) In general, modern students are featured by the communicative orientation, have a motivation to inter-ethnic communication, but they do not possess necessary formed skills of communication.
- 3) However, alongside with the positive dynamics of inter-ethnic relationships, there sometimes occur cases of intolerant students' behavior within their families and with friends, caused by mis-understanding, the lack of indulgence and respect in the conflict situations of communication.

### Discussions

The problem of tolerance formation has actualized at the end of 20<sup>th</sup> century; that has been caused by important social and cultural transformations, occurring in the country and in the globalizing world. The choice of tolerance as a key instrument of communication is actualized by the need to solve cultural, inter-confessional, inter-ethnic and other kinds of contradictions, that appear in the modern Russian society, in a peaceful way.

In the "Declaration of "Principles of tolerance", adopted by the international organization "United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization" (UNESCO) in 1996, the following definition of this phenomenon is given: Tolerance is a respect, acceptance (recognition) and understanding of the rich variety of cultures in our world, their forms of self-representation and manifestation of human's individuality" (UNESCO, 1996). This definition is multi-faceted, the most important aspect of which is a necessity of a person in his/her self-identification, i.e. a strong wish to realize oneself in the inter-cultural communication, which becomes possible because of co-operation of the representatives of different cultures and ethnic groups.

To sum up, inter-ethnic tolerance implies the recognition of other ethnoses with its national and

cultural features and is manifested in the readiness of a person to co-operate with representatives of other nations, that will lead to the mutual cultural exchange and cultural enrichment. Inter-ethnic tolerance is also seen in the strive to mutual empathy and in realization of constructive dialogue of cultures for the purpose of better mutual understanding and cultural informational exchange.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

The majority of researchers and pedagogues-practitioners realize the need of inter-ethnic tolerance formation for the development of modern social relationships, and they underline the huge potential, concluded in the human resource. Tolerance helps to overcome conflict situations in the process of inter-personal communication of the representatives of different ethnic groups, and it is the instrument of prevention of destructive ideology in the students' community, as well as the mechanism of stability and harmony in the civic the society.

However, the main goal of inter-ethnic tolerance usage as a key instrument of communication is the creation of conditions for comfortable inter-personal communication of the representatives of different cultures and ethnic groups, during which a positive exchange of socio-cultural information, learning traditions, customs and values of other cultures take place.

Inter-cultural education is obtaining a special value in multi-cultural society. The source of inter-cultural education is the centuries-old traditions of peaceful co-existence of representatives of different cultures on the common territory, characterizing by inter-influence, complimentary character of cultures and their inter-enrichment as well as a positive cultural experience' exchange. In accordance with this, the significance of inter-cultural education, oriented on the formation of the person of culture, and a creative, socially oriented personality, who effectively and productively is functioning in the multi-cultural space, is actualized.

The formation and development of multi-cultural personality is a key strategic task of a modern competent pedagogue of an educational organization.

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