FORMATION OF STUDENTS' ETHNIC TOLERANCE IN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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Ethnic tolerance is one of key issues of global and national order and is considered to be one of the necessary conditions for effective professional training. The aim of our research was to determine the background factors of students' ethnic tolerance, its components and levels. Using two methods – Tolerance Index by Soldatova and our own questionnaire – allowed us to determine tolerance level in students of pedagogical specialties of Lviv region universities in Ukraine. We identified some fundamental factors of the effective formation of tolerance: the acceptance of cultural and national features of an individual, the ability to constructive cooperation and dialogue regardless of ethnicity, the ability and desire to listen to the interlocutor and understand his point of view. In the process of learning, students acquire the initial skills of professional and social communication and master the foundations of tolerant behaviour. The formation of ethnic tolerance is facilitated by the following factors: family upbringing, positive communication with representatives of other nationalities, knowledge of cross-cultural differences, travelling to other countries, studying at a higher education institution.

Keywords: tolerance; ethnic tolerance; intolerance; nationality; national culture.

Introduction

Integration of Ukraine into the European educational space implies a qualitatively new organisation of higher education which offers enormous opportunities for a young person. Preservation of national culture, traditions and customs, their popularisation is a priority task of modern education. The factor of ethnoculture in higher education which prompts the creation of conditions for learning the cultures of other people, the formation of tolerant attitude towards representatives of all nationalities and ethnic groups are of primary importance. International cooperation in education, implementation of double diploma programmes, students exchange programmes lead to the increase in number of foreign students at universities in many countries and actualises the necessity to develop tolerance, interpersonal skills, emotional stability in students. Tolerant / intolerant behaviour is characteristic of both groups of people and individuals and as evidence suggests a decisive role in tolerant communication between students is played by social environment, location, behaviour models of teachers. Preparation of students for tolerant communication is possible in a team or group, in which the atmosphere of benevolence and respect is dominant. The acceptance or non-acceptance of representatives of other nationalities by young people, tolerant attitude to differences between people, the willingness to respect these differences depends on many factors, such as: the influence of the immediate environment, the moral values of the individual and society, education, the mentality of the country, in which the individual grows, the nature of the specific socio-political situation in society, the history of inter-ethnic relations, etc. The dynamics of inter-ethnic communication in the Ukrainian society, particularly, in the student environment, actualises the importance of the problem of ethnic tolerance.

The aim of the article is to study the components and levels of ethnic tolerance of students, to analyse factors of tolerance formation. The basis of our study relies on the following hypothesis: the level of tolerance is largely determined by the personal qualities of an individual and increases with their motivation to achieve success.

Theoretical background

In their understanding of tolerance different scientists usually focus on different aspects of this phenomenon. Dejaeghere, Hooghe and Claes (2012) define tolerance as favorable and inclusive attitude towards different minority groups which are often marginalised and/or discriminated. It implies that hostility, prejudice and exclusivity are considered as its opposites (p. 109). It is also viewed as the respect for people, the adoption of various cultures of our multicultural world, ways of self-presentation and self-expression of a person. Ethnic tolerance is tolerance to any manifestations of the mentality of the representatives of other ethnic groups (norms of behaviour, way of life, features of character, etc) (Kyrylenko, 2008, p. 131). Students' ethnic tolerance manifests itself as the ability not to project the negative experience on the whole nation because of faults and negative actions of some of its representatives (Kholodova, 2003, p. 3).

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Borgonovi (2012) identifies the relationship between education and levels of trust and tolerance. More specifically, the scholar determines whether the relationship between the quality of study and the degree of individuals' trust to others in their groups or communities and tolerance to immigrants varies in different European countries and tries to identify the possible cuases of the correlations. The results based on the data of the first three rounds of the European Social Survey conducted by the scholar have shown that the correlation between education and levels of trust and tolerance varies considerably in different countries (p. 147).

A number of studies (Borgonovi, 2012; Rifkin, 2004; Hooghe, Marien, & Vroome, 2012) also show that there is a strong positive relationship between level of education and level of trust, though there is less agreement on the factors of this correlation. Hooghe (2012) points out that education is related to generalised and political trust. The results of the representative survey of Netherlands Longitudinal Lifecourse Study (NELLS) confirm that "education is strongly associated with trust, but most of this association can be explained by the mediating mechanisms of cognitive abilities and professional prestige associated with the level of educational attainment" (Hooghe, Marien & Vroome, 2012).

The education of a tolerant young person is especially relevant in the context of multicultural society and growing migration in Ukraine. Approximately 40 thousand students from almost 130 countries study in Ukrainian higher education institutions (Hurieva, 2013), mostly in large cities (Kyiv, Kharkiv, Odessa, Lviv, etc.). At the same time, a large number of Ukrainian students study the Bachellor's, Master's and PhD programmes at universities worldwide within academic mobility programmes.

Formation of ethnic tolerance of a student is connected with ethnic identity (the realisation of himself/herself as a representative of a particular nation with its characteristic features). The basis of the ethnic tolerance of students is the adoption of cultural and national features of a person, the ability, regardless of ethnic affiliation, to constructive cooperation and dialogue, the ability and desire to listen to interlocutor, look at a situation through the eyes of another person (Chepil, 2016). The effective formation of tolerance is based on the acceptance of cultural and national features of an individual, the ability to constructive cooperation and dialogue regardless of ethnicity, the ability and desire to listen to the interlocutor and understand his/her point of view.

Methods

300 students of pedagogical specialties of universities of Lviv region (Ukraine) participated in the study. The selection was heterogeneous. The age ranged from 18 to 22 years. All participants were Ukrainians. The study was conducted in October, 2018. We used two different methods to define the levels and types of students' tolerance as well as levels of formation of cognitive, affective and conative components of an ethnically tolerant personality

In order to verify the results of our research, we applied such tools as the Tolerance Index which is a standardised methodology designed by Soldatova (2006) and Ethnically Tolerant Personality questionnaire designed by the authors of the research. The Tolerance Index methodology contains 22 statements evaluated on the 6-point scale in which 1 indicates "totally disagree", and 6 – "totally agree". 7 statements are related to ethnic tolerance (maximum score is 42). In addition to ethnic tolerance, the method diagnoses the social tolerance (maximum score is 48) and tolerance as a personality trait (maximum score is 42 points). Statements reflect the general attitude towards the outside world and other people, as well as social settings in various spheres of interaction, in which tolerance and intolerance are manifested. The method includes statements that show the attitude towards some social groups (minorities, marginised people, beggars), communicative settings (respect for the opponents' opinion, readiness for constructive conflict resolution and productive cooperation). Special attention is paid to ethnic tolerance/intolerance (attitudes towards people of other races and ethnic groups, to their own ethnic group, assessment of cultural distance). Three subscales of the questionnaire are aimed at the diagnosis of types of tolerance, such as ethnic tolerance, social tolerance, tolerance as a personality trait. The use of the methodology made it possible to study the levels of tolerance (low, medium, high) and its types (ethnic tolerance, social tolerance, tolerance as a personality trait).

Ethnically Tolerant Personality questionnaire consists of 10 questions, each containing three multiple-choice answers. This questionnaire aims at determining the level of formation of cognitive, affective and conative components of an ethnically tolerant personality.

The results of the Tolerance Index methodology and the authors' questionnaire were compared. The study relies on statistical methods of mathematical processing of information: comparative, correlation and factor analysis. Comparative analysis was based on Student's t-test. The method of statistical processing of data allowed comparing the results of the study in two or more groups. Correlation analysis allowed identifying the relationships

between the investigated features. By means of factor analysis we identified groups of features that interact with each other and defined the most significant variables. The analysis was conducted using SPSS 13.0. for Windows.

Results and discussion

The results of the comparative analysis of ethnic tolerance and personality characteristics showed positive correlation between levels of ethnic tolerance and motivation to achieve success, communicability, and conceptual thinking. Negative correlation was established between levels of ethnic tolerance and depression, shyness, motivation to avoid failures.

An important aspect of ethnic tolerance study is its interrelation with positive ethnic personality. Therefore self-awareness of a personality as a member of a particular ethnic group leads to respectful attitude to representatives of other ethnicities. Despite the fact that to a large extent ethnic tolerance is conditioned by the personal characteristics, the factors of social macro- and micro-environment, which regulate the tolerant attitude to others, are of great importance.

The use of *Tolerance Index* methodology gives the possiblity to distinguish levels of tolerance (low, medium, high) and its types (ethnic tolerance, social tolerance, tolerance as a personality trait). A low level of tolerance (22-60 scores) indicates high intolerance to the outside world and people.The medium level (61-99 scores) implies the combination of both tolerant and intolerant traits. In some social situations, people behave tolerantly and in others – intolerantly. Respondents with a high level of tolerance (100-132 scores) have expressed features of tolerant personality.

In our study, a high level of ethnic tolerance was demonstrated by 52% of the respondents, average level – by 34%, low level – by 14% (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Levels of students' tolerance

Despite the fact that most respondents consider themselves tolerant people, when answering the question about their attitude to representatives of other nationalities only 23% chose the option 'Positive', 28% – 'Rather positive', 24% – 'Neutral'. The answers 'rather negative' and 'negative' were chosen by 15 and 10% of the respondents, respectively (see Figure2).

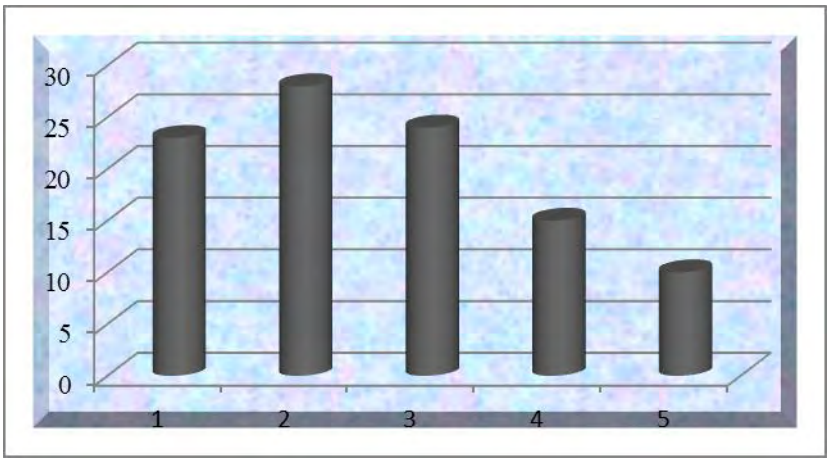

Figure 2. Students' attitude to representatives of other nationalities

Note: 1. – positive attitude, 2. – rather positive, 3. – neutral, 4. – rather negative, 5. – negative

The analysis of students' answers shows the factors of the formation of ethnic tolerance: family upbringing, positive experience of communication with representatives of other nationalities, cross-cultural knowledge, travelling to foregn countries, studying at college or university (see Table 2.).

Table 2. Factors of ethnic tolerance formation

№	Factors of ethnic tolerance formation	%
1	Family upbringing	46
2	Experience of communication with representatives of other nationalities	20
3	Cross-cultural knowledge	18
4	Travelling	12
5	Education at college or university	4

When choosing the features by which representatives of different nationalities can be distinguished most students choose mentality (30%) which is viewed as a set of values, a system of beliefs, representations and attitudes of representatives of a certain nationality. The anthropological features such as colour of skin and eyes, shape of head are significant from the point of view of 23% of students. Another factor of differentiation of representatives of different nationalities is culture which was considered important by 20% of respondents. For 15% of students this factor is religion. 12% of respondents could not indicate any features of ethnic differentiation (see Figure3).

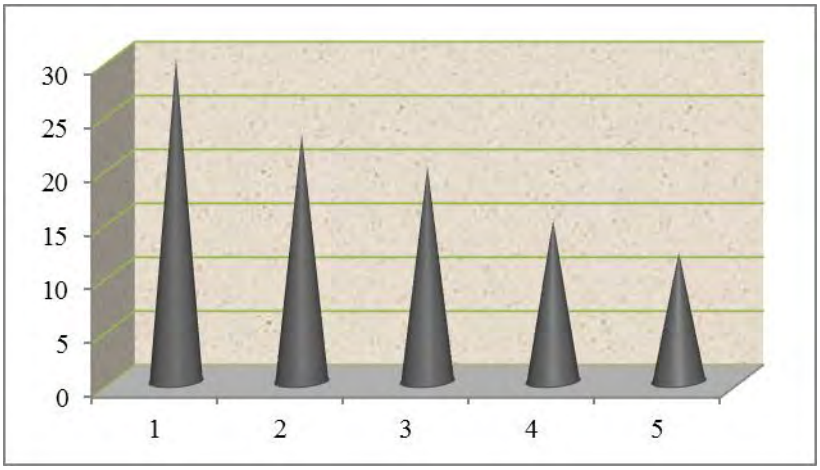

Figure 3. Distinctive features of representatives of different nationalities

Note: 1. – mentality, 2. - anthropological differences, 3. - culture, 4. - religion, 5. - difficult to differentiate

In our study, it was also important to find out if the respondents considered the presence of different nationalities as factor of conflicts in a team of people. 17 % of students answered "Rather yes", 41 % – "Rather no", 27 % – "It all depends on the person and the situation", 15 % could not answer.

We were also interested to find out the attitude of our respondents to the possibility of increasing the number of representatives of various nationalities in their educational institutions. The results show that 40% of the respondents want more representatives of different nationalities in their educational institution, 16% have a negative attitude to this idea, 31% are indifferent, 13% could not answer this question (see Figure 3.4.).

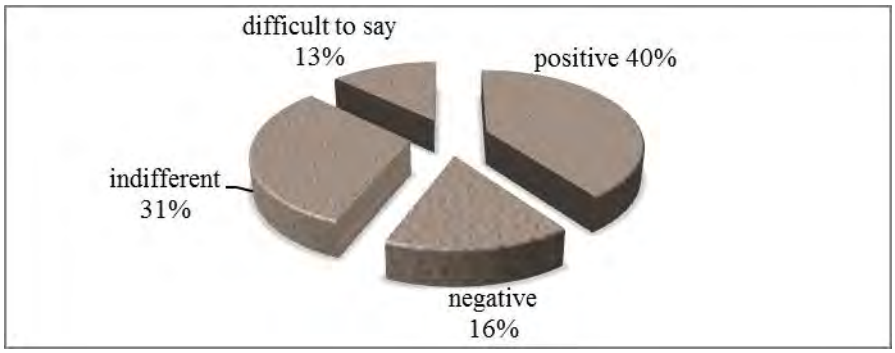

Figure 4. Students' attitude to increase in number of representatives of other nationalities in their educational institution

High level of interethnic conflicts in modern world leads to tension in communication between representatives of different nationalities, especially in the youth environment. To the question 'Would you advocate a representative of another nationality if there is a threat to his/her honor and dignity?' 56% of the respondents answered positively, 14% – negatively, and 30% could not answer.

The results of the study of the indicators of ethnic tolerance according to the permanent place of residence (urban / rural) with the help of the Student's t-test for two independent samples indicate that they have no significant differences (t1 = 23.32, t2 = 23.81, respectively), while t <t cr.

The current study confirms the results of a number of other studies (Krylenko, & Borhonov, 2008; Borgonovi, 2012; Rifkin, 2004; Hooghe, Marien, & Vroome, 2012; Hooghe, Marien & Vroome, 2012) which show a strong positive relationship between the educational background and the level of trust and tolerance.

In this context we also found that the development of students' curiosity and cognitive needs facilitates their understanding and acceptance of cultural differences, promotes ethnic tolerance, which is particularly important in the university environment with its close intercultural communication and interaction.

Cross-cultural knowledge is another factor which we found significant in the development of ethnic tolerance. This is in line with Berggren and Nilsson (2016) who find it a precondition for social integration and unity.

The results obtained by us are also in agreement with the study of Chepil (2017) on the phenomenon of ethnic intolerance which, in her opinion, may be caused by the lack of experience in interethnic interaction, stereotypes about other nationalities, aggravation of the socio-political situation in a country. We suppose that the negative attitude of some of our respondents to representatives of other nationalities can be explained by these factors. We agree with Komalasari and Saripudin (2015) that the provision of interaction opportunities can lead to elimination of prejudices between students of different ethnic groups and increase their tolerance levels.

In our study we highlighted the need for the development of students' ethnic tolerance in institutions of higher education, as tolerance and acceptance are key factors which help to prevent ethnic conflicts (Forester, 1999) and are an important channel in establishing tolerant behaviour (Rabushka, 1973).

Conclusions

Ethnic tolerance is a key issue of global and national order and a necessary condition for effective professional training. In our research we determined the background of students' ethnic tolerance, its components and level. Using two different methods of tolerance level determination (Tolerance Index by Soldatova and our own questionnarie) allowed us to determine the students' attitude towards tolerance. Some fundamental factors of the effective development of tolerance were identified: the acceptance of cultural and national features of an individual, the ability to constructive cooperation and dialogue regardless of ethnicity, the ability and desire to listen to the interlocutor and understand his point of view. We found that the formation of ethnic tolerance is facilitated by the following factors: family upbringing, positive communication with representatives of other nationalities, cross-cultural knowledge, travelling to other countries, studying at a higher education institution.

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