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Otilia STAMATIN, Viorica ADASCALITA

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Forming up Tolerance to Personality at High School Pupils

Otilia STAMATIN¹, Viorica ADASCALITA^{2*}

Abstract

This work is authors' expression on essence of tolerance as a moral quality of a personality, reflecting the attitude of people to the multidimensionality of the world, diversity of cultures and uniqueness of the individual as supreme value and most important condition for the coexistence of people and self-realization of everyone, manifested in understanding the unity of the world and the interdependence of people, in recognizing the principle of complementarity, in recognizing the equality of individuals in society and their right to self-expression, the desire and ability to understand and accept the other, implementing the principles of partnership. We ground the idea that preadolescence is the sensitive age for forming this feature. We introduce outcomes of the tolerance development level study at high-school adolescents and tolerant and non-tolerant psychological profile of people. We demonstrate that the central element of tolerance is the understanding and recognition of the value of the diversity of the world and people in all their manifestations, the value of different opinion, view, position and culture. A decisive role in tolerance manifestations is played by subject's attitude to something or someone. Tolerance manifestations also depend on subject's skills, primarily communicative ones. It was revealed that increasing tolerance level is facilitated by the ability to control own emotions, to dose them; flexibility, development, expressiveness of emotions; domination of positive emotions; desire to approach people on an emotional basis; positive self-perception and self-attitude; developed intellect, strong "I", diplomacy, self-sufficiency; moral-business orientation of personality. The work briefly introduces the formative program aimed at a comprehensive impact on students' personality and the outcomes of its implementation, witnessing a significant increase of adolescents' tolerance level, enabling to

¹ Ph.D State Pedagogical University "Ion Creanga", Chisinau, Moldova, stamatino@gmail.com.

² Ph.D State Pedagogical University "Ion Creanga", Chisinau, Moldova, magicflicker@gmail.com.

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Corresponding Author: Viorica ADASCALITA

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reach positive changes in the emotional, motivational and value spheres and in the personality of senior pupils in general, contributing to the effective formation of tolerance.

Keywords: *tolerance, personality, high school pupils, emotional features, self-attitude, motivation, formative experiment.*

1. Introduction

The relevance of the study of tolerance is conditioned by the need to create conditions for the harmonious coexistence of people, cultures, communities, which will ensure the higher efficiency of society development as a whole. At the same time, as practice shows, position of cooperation and mutual understanding, willingness to accept other people, their views and values, constituting the essence of a tolerant attitude is manifested insufficiently, hampering interpersonal relations.

In the modern world, along the processes of economic globalization and increasing mobility, fast development of the communication, urbanization and transformation of the social structures, which envisage mutual acceptance, collaboration and joint fulfillment of tasks, which assure the well being of people, we still witness the growth of aggression, expansion of conflict and tension areas, dissemination of extremism and intolerance ideas. The social globalization objectively requires from people mutual patience, recognition of diversity as a value, however, in reality, the opposite happens. Tolerance can serve as foundation for social relation harmonization and formation of the position of collaboration and mutual understanding, readiness to accept other people, their visions and values; however it cannot be formed without special efforts on behalf of the state, scholars, community; without specially developed intervention programs, which, in their turn, contribute to creating an objective reflection of the reality.

2. Problem Statement

Analysis of special literature proved this problem to be the subject of research since antique philosophy, then in the XVII-XIX century tolerance turns into a clearer scientific matter. In the XX century, the scientific study of such phenomenon as tolerance is multifaceted: in the evolutionary and biological context, ethical, political, social, psychological and socio-psychological contexts. Tishkov [6] is interpreted tolerance as "a complex personal or social characteristic, expressed in comprehension of the

multidimensionality of the world". Soldatova, Shaigerova and Sharova [4] interpret tolerance as "perception of mankind unity, the interdependence of people, respect for the rights of other people", Brodsky [2] interprets tolerance as something that is realized as an active setup, Rojkov, Baiborodova and Covalciuk [3] state that tolerance represents the readiness to take conscious personal actions, Asmolov [1] is interpreted tolerance as often requiring inner force. However, such a tolerant person feels at ease inside, has a good personal insight and therefore accepts the others. Soldatova. Shaigerova and Sharova [4] affirm that good attitude to oneself co-exists with a positive attitude towards the others and a friendly attitude towards the world.

The analysis of the special literature revealed that there are cultural, social, scientific-methodological differences in the understanding of tolerance and, respectively, in identifying its various forms and levels, as well as its ways of development. In spite of numerous researches in this field, the problem of tolerance formation, in our opinion, is underdeveloped; the majority of research programs have an unilateral approach to this issue. Moreover, many authors resume tolerance to bearing people, which, in our opinion, diminishes the importance of tolerance, without fully revealing its essence.

On the basis of the literature studied, we have formulated the following operational definition of tolerance. By tolerance we mean the *moral quality of a person, expressing a person's relation to the multidimensionality of the world, the diversity of cultures and the uniqueness of an individual as to a supreme value and the most important condition for the co-existence of people and self-realization of everyone, which is manifested in understanding the unity of the world and the interdependence of people, in recognizing the principle of complementarity, in recognizing the equal rights of individuals in society and their right to self-expression, in aspiration and ability to understand and accept another person, to implement the principles of partnership communication.*

3. Research Questions/Aims of the research

The experimental research was conducted in three stages.

- at first stage of the experimental research of the problem, we conducted the concretization and approval of methodologies, which are meant for the certifying experiment; we also conducted the pilot research, exploring the perception of tolerance by students, of its importance and possibilities of formation.. In our research we turned to study of understanding of tolerance by schoolchildren of juvenile and adolescence

age. For this purpose we interviewed 894 students aged 12-18 years old from 12 educational institutions of the republic in both urban and rural areas. The selection criteria for subjects were as follows: age, place of domicile, their voluntary consent for the research.

- during the second stage of the research we conducted the primary analysis of students and teachers, with the purpose of identifying their level of tolerance development and its interconnection with a series of psychological features of high school students. A further experimental study with participation of 191 high school pupils showed their lack of ability to be tolerant. The selection criteria for subjects were as follows: age, place of domicile, their voluntary consent for the research.

- during the third stage of the research we conducted the tolerance formation program, as well as a repeated diagnosis of the analysis in order to check the efficiency of the forming experiment. Based on the foregoing, we have formulated the **goal** of formative experiment - development and experimental testing program that ensures the formation of tolerance at adolescents as a moral quality of an individual expressing the attitude of human being to multidimensionality of the world, cultural diversity and uniqueness of personality as to the highest value and the most important conditions of human coexistence and self-realization of each person, that is manifested in understanding the unity of the world and interdependence of people, in recognition of complementarity principle, in recognition of individuals' equal rights in society and their right to freedom of self-expression, in aspiration and ability to understand and accept other people, to implement the principle of partnership communication.

The training group was made up of 12 students who were examined within the ascertaining experiment, 5 of them were girls and 7 were boys, the average age is 16.5 years old. The main principle of students' selection was their low, in comparison with the entire experimental sample, the overall indicator of tolerance.

At all stages of the research, the subjects were informed about all the aspects related to their right to participate in or withdraw from the research.

4. Research Methods

Questionnaire "Tolerance profile" by Magun V.S., Magura M.M, Self-evaluation of communicative tolerance by Boico V.V., Method of diagnosing emotional barriers in interpersonal communications Boico V.V., Morphological test of life values Sopov V.F., Carpushina L.V., Test-

questionnaire of self-relationship Stolin V.V., 16PF Questionnaire by R.B. Cattell.

The formative experiment within our work with the pupils was carried out by us in several stages.

The first stage is adjustment. The **goal** of the first stage was to create conditions for the pupils to form up their motivation to personal self-development. At this stage, we implemented a lecture-educational type of activity, which allows gaining experience of tolerant communication in a group of high school students. In the framework of this activity we used such methods as discussion, brainstorming, solving specific situations, role play, lectures and exercises. proper formative

The second stage is properly the formative one. This stage provided organization and conduct of a socio-psychological training called "School of Tolerance", the **goal** of which was form up their tolerance as a personal quality. The program of socio-psychological training includes three blocks of lessons, each of which is aimed at solving a number of particular problems: block I - Tolerance: the new and unknown; block II – Discover yourself; block III - Tolerance to the others. Altogether there were held 16 lessons of 2 hours each with a regularity of 2 lessons per week.

The work of the training group, the work of the trainer with the group was based on a number of specific principles: the principle of the unity of diagnosis and correction, the principle of behavior objectification (awareness), the principle of activity, the principle of systemacity, the principle of age and individual characteristics consideration, the principle of a synthetic approach to the choice of methods and techniques of formative work, the principle of research (creative) position, the principle of partner (subject-subject) communication, the principle of orientation to put the results of the training in practice, the principle of active participation of the nearest social environment.

In the course of training work various techniques and modes were used to solve the tasks set, as well as various training forms based on the principle of expanding the participants' social contacts (from individual work, deep personal introspection in pair work, work in small groups to mass forms).

The work with teachers included a cycle of seminars under the general title "Tolerance in Educational Process". The **goal** of this work was to form up an attitude of tolerance and non-violence in the professional activity of teachers. Achievement of the goal set provided solution of the following *tasks*: to reveal the essence and content of tolerance and tolerant attitude within interaction, association of tolerance with the attitude of non-violence; to identify certain mechanisms for non-violent interaction; to

create conditions for the formation of a non-violence and tolerance attitude at the level of motivational and value-based, cognitive, emotional and behavioral components; to create conditions for mastering and training methods of tolerant, non-violent interaction with students.

We conducted 5 seminars with teachers lasting 1.5 hour each. The seminars were attended by 26 teachers working at the senior segment of high school.

5. Findings

The study of the level of understanding of tolerance phenomenon demonstrated that our interviewees are mostly characterized by an insufficient level of understanding of tolerance essence, its meaning, necessity and possibility, and namely, 68% of the interviewed have a broad understanding of tolerance in which they include different characteristics indirectly related to tolerance, but not being a full part of its structure; 6% of all respondents showed an incorrect understanding of tolerance as a negative feature, and only 26% of students reflected the proper essence of the category of tolerance in their answers. 95% of all interviewed schoolchildren recognize the need for tolerance in modern society and only 5% have a different opinion; 74.7% of students believe that modern people dispose of possibility to form up tolerance, 24.1% of respondents reject this possibility and 1.2% of schoolchildren found it difficult to answer.

Only in the answers of rural schoolchildren there is a mention of such an important quality as the recognition of equality of people. Perhaps, this is due to the fact that in the urban environment social and other inequalities are more accentuated and therefore perceived by youth as something inevitable that cannot be eliminated. In general, the visions the tolerance of schoolchildren from different regions do not differ much. [5]

78% of senior students are characterized by an average and below average level of their tolerance ability. The main difficulties in tolerant behavior faced by schoolchildren are that while interacting with the others they often display excessive categoricity, cannot hold control over negative emotional manifestations, tend to offence and revenge, have some narrowness of perception of the world around, etc.

A repeated diagnostic examination of the experimental program participants and the senior schoolboys of the control group revealed that:

✓ The formative experiment carried out by us allowed the schoolchildren from the experimental group to accept the idea of the significance of the multidimensionality of the world, intercomplementarity

and interdependence of people and cultures, the idea that an opinion, a view, an attitude different from one's own, allows us to amplify our self-concept, visions about other people, about the world in general, that influenced their attitude to representatives of other ethnic groups living in Moldova, as well as their attitude to the views and opinions of other people.

✓ Subjects from the experimental group significantly increased their level of ability to accept the individuality of another person, tolerate uncomfortable conditions of others. They have increased their level of adaptive abilities within interaction with people. Students began to resort more often to cooperation while interacting and to show willingness to understand the partner's position. In addition, the tendency to assess people on the basis of their own "I", tendency to alter and re-educate the partners, to customize them fit, make them more convenient has become notably less apparent at these students. They became less categorical and rigid in their assessments regarding those around them, got offended more rarely and began to understand and forgive each other more often. These facts are confirmed not only experimentally, but also by the results of observation over the students in the course of educational process, as well as by the teachers' statements on this issue.

✓ Subjects from the experimental group learned to have a better command of their own emotional manifestations, became more resistant to the impact of common stressful situations and developed the ability to master their emotions in a flexible manner and to express their emotional state in a constructive way as compared with the students in control group.

✓ The level of their integral sense of "for" or "against" their own "self", the level of self-esteem, self-sympathy, expectations of a positive attitude from the others, self-interest, self-confidence, self-acceptance and self-understanding have been significantly increased.

✓ Recognition of own individual characteristics, ongoing development of own abilities and other personal characteristics definitely became more significant for the students from the experimental group, as well as guidance by moral and ethical principles; realization of their creative abilities; aspiration to change the surrounding reality; setting favorable relations in various spheres of social interaction, widening their interpersonal communication, realization of their social role.

✓ Emotional stability, self-possession, the level of self-control of participants in the experimental group has been increased. They proved to have a more responsible approach to moral standards and rules, learned to act according to a conscious plan. When interacting with the others, high

school students became reliably more sensitive, responsive, perceptive, reasonable and cautious.

The re-examination of the teachers showed that their participation in the seminars helped them to acquire a deeper understanding of tolerance concept by including into it such significant traces as accepting individuality of the students, recognizing their right to self-expression, understanding the need for cooperation as the most effective way of interaction in educational process. Teachers' indicators on such professional competencies as pedagogical communication, professionally significant qualities and the level of pedagogical cooperation have increased. However, the changes obtained are not statistically reliable.

6. Discussions

The results of the ascertaining experiment allowed us to formulate psychological profile of a tolerant personality. A tolerant person is characterized by comprehension of the essence and necessity of tolerance as well as of the limits of its realization. Such person recognizes the equality and freedom of citizens, displays respect towards other persons and their rights and is disposed to cooperate. A tolerant person is characterized by tolerance, including uncomfortable condition of the others, the ability to understand, accept and forgive. In the individual and personal plan, he wields the power of "I", self-sufficiency, awareness of action, discernment, sensitivity, manners, diplomacy, independence, self-determination in decision-making process. We have also experimentally discovered that the intolerant attitude is manifested in inability to accept the individuality of the other person, in inflexibility of one's own assessments and positions, in inability to get adapted to the situation, to cooperate and recognize the right of other people to make a mistake. At the same time, manifestation of tolerance is hampered by the categorical nature of the assessments in respect of the people around, peculiar to young people, the tendency to consider oneself a benchmark for assessing objects and phenomena of the world around them and not to recognize the rules, insufficient development of the ability to take control of one's own emotions and show them adequately.

7. Conclusions

The study referring to the understanding of tolerance by schoolchildren of juvenile and adolescence age, the tolerance development level study at high-school adolescents and tolerant and non-tolerant

psychological profile of people, revealed that the central element of tolerance is the understanding and recognition of the value of the diversity of the world and people in all their manifestations, the value of different opinion, view, position and culture. Even if young people are involved the formative program aimed at a comprehensive impact on students' personality and the outcomes of its implementation, witnessing a significant increase of adolescents' tolerance level, enabling to reach positive changes in the emotional, motivational and value spheres and in the personality of senior pupils in general, contributing to the effective formation of tolerance.

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