

Moral Dimensions of Youth's World View in Multi-Ethnic Environment

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ABSTRACT

Relevance of the study: Relevance of the investigated problem is determined by enhancement of the globalization processes and lack of adequate preparedness of teachers to prevent conflicts arising due to poor awareness and inapprehension of ethnic and cultural characteristics of students. Objective of the study: The aim of the paper is to study general and specific ethical dimension characteristics of world view of students who belong to the main ethnic groups of the Russian Federation (the Russians and the Tatars), different religions (Islam and Christianity) and cultures. Methods of the study: The leading method of the problem research is a standardized survey questionnaire which provides cultural differences monitoring in the sphere of ethnicity. Results of the study: The paper substantiates the view that the Tatar ethnic group has more specific features peculiar to collectivist cultures in comparison with the Russian ethnic group. Practical significance: Paper content might be useful in training on the development of a tolerant person in educational institutions.

KEYWORDS

World view; ethnic group;
Morality; culture; personal values

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Introduction

Significance of the issue

The first use of the term "World view" (in German - "Weltanschauung") can be found in the writings of a German Philosopher I. Kant (2008), in his work "Critique of Judgment". It was published more than two hundred years ago, in 1790. In English for the same meaning there can be used such terms as «world view», «world outlook» as well as «ideology», which greatly complicates the understanding between Russian and English-speaking authors. The fact is that the world is not limited to political and ideological aspects. It includes all forms of social consciousness. Thus, human world view contains economic, political, legal, aesthetic, ethical, religious and scientific understanding of the world. However, the leading component is the moral aspect of the world view, since it determines the answer to a basic ideological

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question "What is my place in this world, what is my attitude to the world?" (Nekhoroshkov, 2014; Nekhoroshkov, 2015).

Currently, due to globalization, social and economic transformations, and a large flow of migrants, different cultures are forced to exist in close connection with each other. Inevitably, conflicts arise because of ignorance and lack of understanding of ethnic and cultural characteristics of neighboring nations. A well-known specialist in the field of intercultural education S. Nieto (2003) writes: "Culture can be defined as a set of constantly changing value orientations, traditions, social and political relations, and, finally, the world view created and shared by a group of people who are linked by a complex of factors, including general history, geography, language, social class, and/or religion» (Nieto, 2003). Therefore you must take into account the multicultural aspect in mentality analysis and construction of an educational process (Shishova, 2014).

Study hypothesis

The Russian Federation is a multinational state. The two main ethnic groups are the Russians and the Tatars. Representatives of different cultures have common basis of the world view moral component enshrined in the basic religious documents, such as the sacred books of the Bible and the Koran. But there are still some specific features due to peculiar historical path of these peoples. With a significant similarity with the Tatar ethnic group in matters of moral attitude to social issues, Russian ethnicity mostly reflects features which are common for the culture of Western civilization, and the Tatars present the features characterizing the civilizations of the East.

Methodological Framework

Each civilizations in the history of mankind presented relationship of the individual and society in its own way. In the Western history states emerged as a collection of human individuals, united by specific agreements. This is illustrated, for example, by the theory of social contract (Locke, 1980), by the works of T. Hobbes (1985), D.C. North & R.P. Thomas (1973) and others. A Western State was originally aimed at protection of freedom and property of individuals and social groups. The East with its harsh natural conditions stimulated collaboration of people to deal with natural difficulties. The moral basis of Eastern civilizations, in our opinion, was the absolute ideal of human unity, encouraging neither individuality, no personal freedom. It served as the basis for the development of despotic forms of government. In ancient China the answer to the question of relationship between personal and social was given by Confucius (2000), who lived in the VI century BC. One of the main theses of Confucianism was the will to combine nationhood and human being on the foundation of a "big family" concept. This meant the spread of family relations regulations at a state level. Having these rules as internal content, an individual becomes a man, attains humanity and humanism. In Western civilization the term "humanism" is respect and love for an individual as a person, his dignity and freedom. In China a similar in meaning term "jen" means the duty to family, respect for the person as a carrier of patrimonial and ramage ties, subordination corporate debt. Another Chinese influential philosophical and religious tradition "Taoism" claimed: "Fame and fortune, sweet moment of triumph and success have no intrinsic value as all things are the same» (Chuang Tzu, 1972). "However, there is difficulty with the concepts of "I", "mine". Such a fundamental phenomenon in Western philosophy, which determines the identity of a man, was not given great importance

by ancient Chinese, indicating it as a meaningless set of lines, or depicting a child's nose. With regard to the category of "personality", in the Chinese language there does not exist a special sign for it" - writes L.M. Stepanova (2010) in her PhD thesis "Personality in Chinese philosophical traditions". Thus, conditions that surrounded an Eastern man did not allow him to rise to the realization of his personal freedom. At the same time in writings of philosophers of Eastern civilizations there can be found evidence of intensive and in deep search of man's inbeing.

Based on the above, we have attempted to explore the moral dimension of the world view of the two ethnic student groups belonging to different civilizational types (Easter and the Western).

Materials and Methods

For the study of moral components of students' world view we have developed a questionnaire. It is designed on the basis of expert assessments (Paderin, 2012; Vilkeev, 2006; Bayanova, 2011) and includes the following questions:

1. It is necessary to be moral (decent): (only with family and friends, with everyone, depends on the situation).
2. Morality is something religious: (yes, no).
3. Moral can only be a religious person: (yes, no).
4. I have to treat all people as I treat myself (yes, no).
5. Man is to Man: (arbitrary response).
6. Life of people is the same as life in wild nature – it is the strongest who survives: (yes, no).
7. Decency, honesty, conscience are illusion: (yes, no).
8. Seniors should always be treated with respect (yes, no).
9. It is difficult to meet a decent person nowadays: (yes, no).
10. Decency and morality are not urgent and not mandatory concepts (there are more important problems in society): (yes, no).
11. There are still more decent than indecent people: (yes, no).
12. "The end justifies the means" (to achieve an important goal it is possible not to comply with the norms of morality): (yes, no, difficult to answer).
13. If I am a witness of an indecent act, I will ... (intervene, not intervene, depends on the situation).
14. The university lacks disputes and other forms of discussion on moral problems: (yes, no).
15. Previously there were more moral (decent) people: (yes, no).
16. I think that after all morality and decency will be valued more in the future: (yes, no).

We surveyed 627 students (307 representatives of the Russian ethnic group and 320 representatives of the Tatar ethnic group) of different gender, different specialties (biological and engineering sciences, humanities) from two Kazan universities (university of architecture and engineering and pedagogical university), the Republic of Tatarstan.

It was also studied the perception of social reality of 142 students (68 Russian and 74 Tatar) by the adapted in Russia method «World Assumptions Scale» (Padun

& Kotel'nikova, 2008) of R. Janoff-Bulman, N.C. Carnes & S. Sheikh (2014). Differences validity was tested using Student's t-test.

For a more detailed study of the Tatar ethnic group there was conducted a questionnaire survey of students of the Department of Tatar Philology of Kazan Tatar Pedagogical University, where all students are Tatar (Vilkeev, 2006). Students of the second and third years with the total number of 227 people were invited to answer three questions in writing: 1. What qualities should a Tatar family develop in their children? 2. What qualities did your parents develop in you? 3. What personal characteristics should be developed in a true cultured Tatar (educated and moral person)?

Results

The data obtained in the survey shows that the students of Russian nationality demonstrate the prevailing view of the need to adhere to morality and decency when dealing with anyone (83% of Russian respondents). At the same time, the Tatar students in the majority (76%) believe that decency is needed according to the situation, but primarily with family and friends. 74.6% of students, both Russian and Tatar, note that morality is not just religious, it also exists in other areas of life. This fact also confirms the opinion of all the students being surveyed - Tatars (76.9%) and Russian (100%), that moral can not only be a religious person. As we can see, the number of respondents who share this point of view is greater than 50% for both ethnic groups. However, there is still difference and it is quite considerable - 23.1%. We can assume it is due to the fact that religion (Islam) plays a more significant role in lives of Tatar people than in lives of Russians. We believe that this can be explained by the fact that religion plays a consolidating role for the representatives of the Tatar ethnic group in a residence surrounded by a prevailing ethnic group (Russian). Almost all respondents (both Russian (98%) and Tatar (94%)) define the concepts of ethics and morality mostly as secular than religious. These findings are consistent with a recent study in six countries (Canada, China, Jordan, Turkey, the USA, and South Africa) with children from 6 to 12 years. The researchers write: «Thus, it is generally admitted that religion shapes people's moral judgments and prosocial behavior, but the relation between religiosity and morality is actually a contentious one, and not always positive» (Decety et al., 2015)

Analysis of the data leads to the conclusion that not in every case students identify morality with the fact that other people should be treated as well as oneself. The principle of "treat the others as yourself" is followed by only 23% of Tatar respondents and 30% - of Russian respondents. At the same time the opinion of absolute respect for older people is prevailing among the students - 92.3% of the Tatar students, and 76.4% of Russian respondents.

92.3% of the Tatar surveyed students and 84.6% of the Russian surveyed students admit that Decency, honesty, conscience are not illusion. 53% of Tatars and 70% of Russians believe that there are more decent people than indecent. However, the majority of students believe that life of people is the same as life in wild nature – it is the strongest who survives - the same number of Russians and Tatars - 92.3%. At the same time, the Tatar students (61.5%) tend to believe that decency and morality are essential concepts to mankind. A positive answer for the question "decency and morality are not urgent and not mandatory concepts (there are more important problems in society)" was given by 53.8% of Russian students. In this regard, Tatar students are more committed to the principles of morality.

However, among the number of students, there is a prevailing number (53.8% - Tatars, 61.7% - Russians) of those, who follow the principle of Machiavelli - "the end justifies the means."

Unfortunately, most students will react depending on the situation if they witness an indecent act. According to the results of the survey only 7.7% of students (Russian) will intervene. The majority of our respondents demonstrate the opinion that the loss of morality is happening in our time. They believe that morality was more valued in the past (54% of Tatars, 100% of Russians), but at the same time express hope that it will be valued more in the future. 61% of students indicated a lack of debates and other forms of discussion on moral problems at universities.

Thus, most students perceive morality as an ideal quality of a person rather than needed. Distributed life principle "man is a friend, but I am the only one for myself".

Discussions

A modern man is supposed to be tolerant, non-judgmental, respecting other cultures, able to build a conflict-free relationship with people of other nations and capable to build mutually beneficial relations. According to this fact, a vector of modern education and personal development requires a change in the direction of multicultural education (Palatkina, 2006). Multicultural education can be defined as training of the younger generation to live in a multinational (multiethnic) and multicultural environment. The Republic of Tatarstan, a part of the Russian Federation, has accumulated a lot of successful practice of peaceful co-existence, friendship and mutually beneficial cooperation between two ethnic groups belonging to different types of civilizations (Eastern and Western). These two ethnic groups are – the Russians (Indo-European language family) - their main religion is Christianity, and the Tartars (Altai language family) - main religion Islam (Elkin, 2009).

The Strategy of Education Development in the Republic of Tatarstan (2012) determines the main goal of education at the state level. This goal is to create a child-friendly educational environment for the harmonious development and the acquisition of the basic knowledge of the native language and culture. Also it reveals the following objectives:

- introduction to the national culture origins of Tatarstan nations, and development of children's moral standards on the basis of national culture, customs and traditions;
- providing children with the opportunity of training and getting education in mother-tongue; studying Russian and Tatar languages as a means of interethnic communication;
- setting the stage of multicultural identity, developing children's knowledge about their native land, about Russia and the world.

Thus, the development of a young person in the Republic of Tatarstan is determined by the influence of two ethnic cultures, traditions, two systems of ethics standards of verbal and non-verbal behavior. Consequently, in regards to educational process, it is necessary to take into account national peculiarities of

moral stereotypes and moral dimensions of the ongoing events, which belong to young people of different ethnicities and cultures.

There are a lot of scientific researches in the field of psychology describing respondents' system of values from the perspectives of ethnocultural affiliation. Classification and importance ranking of the life events made by people of different ethnic groups reveal a lot of similarities in between, but at the same time allow paying attention to some differences between them. For instance, H.C. Triandis (2007) selected twenty basic terms and asked respondents from Japan, India, Greece and the United States, to define what characteristics can be defined as prerequisites for a particular event to happen and its consequences (among these twenty). In addition, H.C. Triandis, C. McCusker & C.H. Hui (1990) conducted a significant amount of researches on issues related to individualism and collectivism. He proposed theoretical understanding of this concept.

G. Hofstede (1980), explaining the difference between collectivism and individualism, confirms that "in an individualistic culture people prefer to act as individuals but not as members of a group. The high level of individualism implies that the person, being in free social ties in a community, takes care of himself and is fully responsible for his own actions. For instance, employees show unwillingness of company's invasion to their private lives, avoid its patronage, rely on themselves, and defend their interests. A company has little effect on health of its employees. Its functioning depends on an individual effort of each member; promotion is carried out inside or outside the organization on the basis of competence and "market value" of the employee; management keeps abreast of the latest developments, ideas and techniques, trying to implement them, stimulates the activity of employees; social networks within an organization can be characterized by lack of engagement; relations between management and employees are based on personal contribution of each employee".

In contrast, according to G. Hofstede (1980), collectivist society "requires a lot of person's emotional dependence on a company, and underlines company's responsibility for its employees. Since childhood kids are taught to have respect for the groups to which they belong to in collectivist societies. There is no difference between members of a group and those who do not belong to it. In collectivist cultures employees expect that a company will be engaged in their personal affairs and protect their interests; cooperation in a company is based on the sense of duty and loyalty; promotion is carried out in accordance with employees' length of employment; management has a traditional view on the form of maintaining of workers' activity; social networks within a company are characterized by unity; relations between management and workers are usually based on the moral basis and personal relationships. According to the G. Hofstede's investigation (1980-1984), there are two types of cultures - individualistic and collectivistic. Countries with individualistic type of culture are the following: the USA, Australia, Britain, Canada, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, Belgium, Denmark, France, Italy, Ireland, Germany, and others. There are also countries with the collectivist type of culture: Korea, Pakistan, Peru, Taiwan, Colombia, Venezuela, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Ecuador, Indonesia, Portugal, Japan, China and others. G. Hofstede (1980) classifies the Russian culture as a culture of collectivist type.

In general, we accept G. Hofstede's (1980) point of view (Nekhoroshkov & Akhmetzyanova, 2014) on socio-psychological issues of the Russian culture, however, according to our reckoning, it would be wrong to attribute the same cultural code to all the peoples living in the Russian Federation. Thus, the investigation of social reality perception using the method «World Assumptions Scale» (Padun & Kotel'nikova, 2008) by R. Janoff-Bulman, N.C. Carnes & S. Sheikh (2014), analyzed with the t-Student's test, showed no statistically significant differences between the core beliefs of Russian and Tatar students upon all indications, except the "world justice". We made the following conclusion, based on the outcome of our survey sample – Russian students evaluated the criterion «world justice» lower. In our opinion, this is due to the fact that, in collectivist Eastern cultures (the Tatar ethnicity belongs to it) people preferably adapt to a situation, than change it themselves and hereof, they have less sharp reaction on the criterion "just-unjust". This fact can be confirmed with the survey of A.F. Habibrahmanovov & L.F. Bayanova (2012). The authors educed the values of the Tatars living in the Republic of Tatarstan in mono-ethnic environment using S.H. Schwartz (1999) procedure. The result is the following: among dominated values there can be named such values as traditions (modesty and loyalty), universalism (understanding, tolerance) and conformity (obedience).

The important components of national identity are: the ideal image of nationality in the conciseness of a person, the need to identify with this image and the desire to implement national ideas and ideals. We have tried to reveal the components of the ideal image, analyzing the answers to the following questions: 1. What qualities should a Tatar family develop in their children? 2. What qualities did your parents develop in you? 3. What personal characteristics should be developed in a true cultured Tatar (educated and moral person)? The survey was conducted only among the students of the Tatar nationality.

Our observations and diagnosing experiments reveal that national consciousness of the Tatar students contains several contradictions. The majority of questioned students identify themselves with their ethnic group, expressing their belongingness to the Tatars, they think in Tatar and speak it, and they are interested in modern Tatar art. However, some of the essential components of national identity were not revealed during the examination of the students. Firstly, the majority of students had an unformed image of the ideal Tatar person - the ideal "I".

They also had no overview about the ideal image of a modern true cultured Tatar (educated and moral person), and what kind of personal qualities he is supposed to have. Consequently, students didn't have a perfect representation of the collective "We." Perhaps, it can be explained with the country's socio-economic transformations, the growing influence of achievement-oriented economy the mentality of the nation and with the diffusion of traditional attitudes and perceptions foundations. (Nekhoroshkov, 2014; Nekhoroshkov, 2016). Secondly, students described national ideas of Tatars only as an idea of national independence. Many students could say nothing about other aspects of national ideas of Tatars. Thirdly, the students' interests for national culture were mostly

limited with their interests for the modern Tatar pop-music and mass entertainment programs.

The first question response analysis has shown that most of students grew up and were brought up with Tatar families in rural areas, teens do not see any significant difference between the personal qualities that were cultivated in their own families and qualities that should a Tatar family develop in their children. However, the importance ranking of these qualities revealed some differences. (Table 1)

Table 1. The importance ranking of students' answers (questions 1 and 2).

What qualities should a Tatar family develop in their children?	What qualities did your parents develop in you?
1. Speak mother-tongue	1. Be hard-working
2. Know history, customs and traditions of your ethnic group, follow these customs and traditions	2. Show respect and honor to parents and older people
3. Show respect to the elderly, and honor to older people	3. Be an intelligent and well brought-up man
4. Love your people and your homeland	4. Have hunger for knowledge and education
5. Be an intelligent and well brought-up man	5. Love your people and your homeland
6. Have hunger for knowledge and education	6. Speak mother-tongue well
7. Be modest and patient	7. Know customs and traditions of your ethnic group, follow them
8. Be religious	8. Be religious
9. Be honest	9. Be honest
10. Be hard-working	10. Be modest and patient

As we can see, the students of the Tatar philology department indicated the same personal qualities, answering the questions about personal qualities that were cultivated in their own families and qualities that are supposed to be taught in a Tatar family. However, answering the second question, students pointed out the qualities that were mostly respected in Tatar families. Answering the first question, most of students missed some personal qualities that parents were supposed to develop in the process of upbringing of their child (important ones from the point of view of traditional culture), specifically, having human decency and national identity. Students mentioned a few personal qualities describing their awareness of belonging to a particular nationality, their national identification, vision of national human ideals, unity with their ethnicity, empathy for the nation's destiny and challenges, the pursuit of national ideas implementation, a sense of duty and responsibility, the national aesthetic culture development, the faith in the future of their nation.

Answering the third question: «What personal characteristics should be developed in a true cultured Tatar (educated and moral person)?», the majority of students pointed out the same qualities as they had chosen upon answer the first question of the questionnaire.

Table 2. The importance ranking of students' answers (questions 1 and 3).

What qualities should a Tatar family develop in their children?	What personal characteristics should be developed in a true cultured Tatar (educated and moral person)?»
1. Know your mother-tongue	1. Be well - educated
2. Know history, customs and traditions of your ethnic group, follow these customs and traditions	2. Show respect and honor to parents and older people
3. Show respect to the elderly, and honor older people	3. Speak mother-tongue well
4. Love your people and their homeland	4. Know history, customs and traditions of your ethnic group
5. Be an intelligent and well brought-up man	5. Show respect and honor to parents and older people
6. Have hunger for knowledge and education	6. Have and develop spiritual requirements
7. Be modest and patient	7. Know and to love national literature and art
8. Be religious	8. Respect religion
9. Be honest	9. Be modest and well-conducted
10. Be hard-working	10. Be honest and have pure upright character

The students' answers for to the first and third questions analyses (Table 2) reveals the fact that the majority of students identified personal qualities, that are supposed to be brought up in Tatar families, with those personal characteristics that an intelligent, well-cultured man is supposed to obtain. This survey confirmed the fact of idealization parents by Tatar students. As it was mentioned above, this feature was typical for Eastern civilizations and collectivist type of culture.

Conclusion

Exploring the subject of moral, prosocial behavior formation, it is necessary to consider the biological and cultural factors interaction. (Chudek & Henrich, 2011). But culture does not come out from nowhere. Everyone has a certain cultural code, forming on the early stage of development (House et al., 2013; Jensen, Vaish & Schmidt, 2014). Probably, this cultural code is connected with the C. G. Jung's (2008) archetypes, and includes collective unconscious of the ethnic group which the person belongs to. It includes historical, geographical, religious and other conditions of ethnic group formation.

This reflects in peculiarities of person's behavior and in his social reality perception. Study data shows that the Russian and the Tatar ethnic groups share many common cultural features. At the same time, the Tatar ethnic group, despite the long-term (more than a thousand years) living in Europe (from the geographical point of view) has more specific features of collectivist cultures than the Russian ethnos. It is necessary to consider these features while making the content of curriculum and academic programs. Also it's important to pay attention to these features when choosing the forms and methods of class assignment, because it's necessary to create equal educational opportunities for all the trainees. Those

students who respect their cultural identity are becoming more tolerant and loyal citizens of their country.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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