

**HPEPA 2019****Humanistic Practice in Education in a Postmodern Age 2019****IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION  
MODEL IN KINDERGARTENS**

Nelly Syrtlanova (a)\*, Gulnaz Shafikova (b), Guzel Shabaeva (c), Lubov Valeeva (d)

\*Corresponding author

(a) Bashkir State Pedagogical University n. a. M. Akmulla, ul. Oktyabrskoj revoljucii, 3-a, Ufa, RB, the Russian Federation, nellic-27@mail.ru

(b) Bashkir State Pedagogical University n. a. M. Akmulla, ul. Oktyabrskoj revoljucii, 3-a, Ufa, RB, the Russian Federation, shafikova@inbox.ru

(c) Bashkir State Pedagogical University n. a. M. Akmulla, ul. Oktyabrskoj revoljucii, 3-a, Ufa, RB, the Russian Federation, artshabaev@yandex.ru

(d) Bashkir State Pedagogical University n. a. M. Akmulla, ul. Oktyabrskoj revoljucii, 3-a, Ufa, RB, the Russian Federation, ratmir282006@mail.ru

***Abstract***

The article deals with the discrepancies and problems of the research activity on organization of multicultural education and introduction of the multicultural education model in kindergarten pedagogical practice. By combining cultural, personal and activity approaches we receive a special structural and functional model which helps to prepare a kindergarten teacher to work with a multicultural preschool group. The model also shows the positive dynamics in increasing the level of multicultural trend of a preschooler. The author of the study implements modern ideas on designing the preschool educational model to apply in multicultural kindergarten groups and also deals with a number of tasks, such as: to determine the level of kindergarten teacher's special competence to work with a multicultural group; to increase the multicultural trend of preschool children; to direct and control the formation of the multicultural trend of preschool children; to evaluate the efficiency of the multicultural education model applied in the educational practice of kindergartens of the Republic of Bashkortostan. The article defines the ways of involving kindergarten teachers in the program on developing special competence necessary to work with a multicultural group. Those include: a practice-oriented program; online interaction and cooperation with other kindergarten teachers at all stages of the program; enrichment of preschool education program through a multicultural aspect, i.e. social and ethnic environment of a preschool group is taken into account when creating a study program. The universality of this model makes it applicable to multicultural kindergartens of both the Republic of Bashkortostan and Russia.

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**Keywords:** Kindergarten, kindergarten teacher's special competence necessary to work with a multicultural group, multicultural education, multicultural educational space, multicultural personality trend, teacher's multicultural competence.



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## 1. Introduction

Modern changes in the world have influenced the Russian society development and contributed to the promotion of democratic values that ensure the cultural and spiritual needs of the peoples of Russia are satisfied. The objectives of education are currently being reevaluated as the cultural aspect of the pedagogical process becomes more important since it contributes to the formation of a creative person that leads an active life in a multinational environment. The diversity of the national structure of our country is reflected in multicultural nature of the educational space which is a universal educational environment that helps children of different nationalities to socialize and interact with each other. One of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation is the Republic of Bashkortostan.

The multinational composition of the Republic of Bashkortostan is a unique union of Russian, Tatar, Bashkir, Chuvash, Mari, Udmurt and other ethnic groups. This phenomenon defines the social and ethnic environment of a preschool group. Following the democratic changes in our society the system of preschool education of the Republic of Bashkortostan creates necessary conditions for children multicultural education. There are plans to develop special models, concepts, preschool education programs that will take into account social and economic, spiritual and moral, national, cultural and historical features of the region.

The relevance of the study comes from the significance of scientific and methodological justification of the peoples' desire to satisfy their cultural and spiritual needs. The studies conducted on the problems of ethnic education in preschool institutions point out the importance of introducing a child to the ethnic culture (Babunova, 2015; Chumicheva & Platonina, 2006; Kolomijchenko, 2015); peculiarities of communication between children of different nationalities (Bogomolova & Zaharova, 2016; Protasova, 2015); the role of the Bashkir national values in preschool education (Gasanova, 2011; Kashapova, 2011). The established educational tradition of kindergartens of the Republic of Bashkortostan is mainly based on the monocultural principle which complicates the process of preschooler's socialization in multicultural educational space and is badly suited for the real educational practice.

A comprehensive analysis on the organization of educational process in multinational kindergartens of the Republic of Bashkortostan, as well as modern studies devoted to this issue identify a number of discrepancies between:

- the desire to preserve the cultural heritage of each ethnic group of our multinational country, their traditions and customs and the ill-developed educational strategy on cultural interaction in the educational process of kindergartens;
- plans to apply the multicultural education concepts in the educational practice of multinational kindergartens and ill-developed theoretical approaches on their implementation;
- lack of kindergarten educational practice in methodology and scientific approaches on multicultural personality trend formation and ill-developed strategy on how to improve the kindergarten educational practice to accommodate the needs of the multicultural preschool group.

## 2. Problem Statement

The problem of multicultural education is not new. It has deep historical roots and is mainly connected to people relations as the most important aspect of people's cooperation. This problem stems

from the Human Prehistory when people were grouped into tribal, neighboring communities where they strictly observed their customs and rituals. The issue was first mentioned in the works of Ancient Greek philosophers (Herodotus, 2016), developed in the works of the thinkers of the Middle Ages (Abelard, 1995), Modern History and the Enlightenment (Herder, 1977; Komenskij, 2003), and was specified in the works of foreign (Diesterweg, 1956; More, 1978) and Russian researchers (Ushinskij, 2013).

Today the problem of multicultural education is an interdisciplinary problem and is studied in philosophical, social, psychological and pedagogical aspects. The philosophical aspect views the multicultural education as the approach which states that any person is unique and that each personality incorporates international, national and individual values (Berdyayev, 1997; Gershunskij, 1998; Rodin, 2002). According to the social aspect the multicultural education studies the conditions of co-education of people of different cultures (Arutyunyan, 2000; Tishkov, 2003). According to the psychological aspect the multicultural education studies the mental processes of the ethnic group as a community (Krysko, 2004). According to the pedagogical aspect the multicultural education studies the culture of different ethnic groups to introduce it into educational process and increase the interest in this culture (Dzhurinskij, 2008; Sinagatullin, 1998). All these aspects call for studying the problem of multicultural education in kindergartens of Russia and kindergartens of the Republic of Bashkortostan in particular.

The study of the scientific literature and research on preschool pedagogy shows that the concepts of multicultural education were partially realized in the study of speech tolerance under the dialogue of cultures program, the use of elements of Bashkir decorative and applied arts (Pilipenko, 2018); the study of the role of folk pedagogy in preschool education (Akchulpanova, 2018); the use of interactive games as a part of patriotic education (Boronilova, 2018). And although these studies were quite successful, the multicultural preschool education was not the object of a special research.

The desire to find the solution to the above listed discrepancies has defined the issue of the research. The theoretical part of the research deals with the problem of developing the structural and functional model of multicultural preschool education which helps to form the multicultural personality trend of preschool children. The practical part deals with the problem of developing a special program to aid kindergarten teachers to work with a multicultural group of preschool children and a special program to form a multicultural personality trend of preschool children.

Among many problems in studying the educational process in multicultural kindergartens a special attention should be paid to those associated with the concepts of multicultural education, multicultural environment in a preschool group, multicultural personality trend, teacher's multicultural competence; the problems on determining the level of multicultural personality trend of teachers and preschoolers, on the ways that help to form the multicultural personality trend of teachers and preschoolers.

### **3. Research Questions**

The subject of the study is to examine the ways of developing the kindergarten teacher's multicultural competence and the formation of multicultural personality trend of preschool children in kindergartens of the Republic of Bashkortostan.

To analyze the subject of the study we should focus on the key concepts and categories, such as culture, multiculturalism and multicultural education. The definitions of the above concepts need to be specified as there is still no consensus among scientists as to their content.

One of the main concepts of our study is the concept of culture. Culture is defined as upbringing, education, development, reverence, veneration; lifestyle, care, concern, occupation, cult study, honor, respect, religion; clothing, beauty, grace (Bolshoi latinsko-russkij slovar). In the Pedagogical Dictionary culture is interpreted "as a concept, a source of knowledge of nature, society, activity, person's values and emotional attitude to other people, labour and society" (Kodzhaspirova & Kodzhaspirov, 2000, p. 44). Such broad and vague understanding of this term is explained by the fact that culture reflects a certain historical level of development of the society, the cumulative material and spiritual values of mankind.

If we view the concept of education in its cultural aspect, we should take into consideration the multiplicity of cultures. The root "multi" means plurality of something. When analyzing the social and philosophical aspects of multiculturalism we use the approach that takes into account the etymology of the word "multi" which means relationship, mutual understanding, interaction, mutual influence, mutual development. This is due to the fact that "... the culture of one nation cannot exist separately and be sufficient, it permeates other cultures, enriches them and develops itself" (Baimurzina, 2008, p. 203). We believe that this interpretation of multiculturalism is most applicable to the system of preschool education.

Unlike western countries where the concepts of multicultural education have been developed for six decades, in Russia the concepts only appeared in the early 90's. Dzhurinskij (2008), Sinagatullin (1998) consider multicultural education as an alternative to international socialist influence which was seen as a condition for the ideological unification of society. In the USSR and the socialist countries there was natural process of ethnic assimilation when small ethnic groups, having overcome the economic and cultural isolation, gradually merged with larger ethnic communities.

As a result of a number of discussions the Russian researchers Dzhurinskij (2008) and Mukaeva (Mukaeva, 2004) now actively use the words "multicultural" and "polycultural" as synonyms in scientific and pedagogical literature, "for the first part of these words means the same but has a different origin – either Latin or Greek".

The Russian researchers (Dzhurinskij, 2008; Mukaeva, 2004; Palatkina, 2015; Sinagatullin, 1998) define multicultural education as a way to prevent racism, prejudice, xenophobia, bias, egocentrism, hatred based on cultural differences (Dmitriev, 1999); as an idea, process and innovative movement in education. Multicultural education seeks to provide equal educational opportunities for all racial, ethnic and social groups through a systemic change in the school environment so that it meets the interests and needs of various cultures and groups of our society and the ethnic structure of a preschool group (Kodzhaspirova, 2017); a positive attitude to various ethnic and cultural groups and voluntary adaptation of social institutions to the needs of these groups (Palatkina, 2015); education that is equal for all ethnic and cultural groups (Sinagatullin, 1998); a way to introduce a younger generation to ethnic, national (Russian) and world cultures for them to enrich spiritually, to form the global awareness and to prepare them for life in a multicultural environment (Suprunova & Sviridchenko, 2013); a way to promote democratic values, knowledge and culture of relations to provide equal educational opportunities for children of various nationalities, cultures and social groups (Okoneshnikova, 1995); a way to prepare a person for life in multi-

ethnic society; the concept and praxis of education in the context of cultural interaction designed to establish good relations, mutual understanding and cooperation between various cultures of our multinational society.

Multicultural education takes into account a person's cultural identity, helps to acquire knowledge of other cultures, forms awareness of differences and similarities between cultures, traditions, lifestyles; forms a positive attitude to the cultural diversity; views the cultural diversity as a positive condition for pedagogical activity; provides equal educational opportunities for all cultural groups.

The efficiency of multicultural education in kindergartens can be demonstrated through the formation of multicultural personality trend of a preschooler. According to Rubinstein (2012) the formation of personality takes place during activity when the person is active, motivated and expresses their attitude to the world and cultural aspects. In psychology the personality trend is viewed as a set of strong motives that define the person's behavior in the situations relatively independent from the current ones.

Psychological and pedagogical studies on personality trend served as the basis for distinguishing the multicultural personality trend of a preschooler which we see as a special quality of a person, capable of perceiving and understanding other cultures, tolerant to the people of different nations, showing interest and desire to cooperate with children around them regardless of their skin color, nationality, race and religion (Syrtlanova, 2018).

#### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of the study is to develop the multicultural education model that will help to develop kindergarten teacher's multicultural competence and multicultural personality trend of a preschooler.

The purpose of the model defines the following tasks:

- to identify the initial level of kindergarten teacher's special competence necessary to work with a multicultural group of preschoolers;
- to define the ways on promotion of multicultural personality trend of a preschooler;
- to correct and control the process of multicultural preschooler personality trend formation;
- evaluate the efficiency of the multicultural education model in kindergartens of the Republic of Bashkortostan.

#### **5. Research Methods**

To solve the research tasks and verify the initial assumptions we used a set of complementary research methods correlated with the subject of the study. These methods were used to study all the participants of educational process and were divided into two groups according to two categories: teachers and children.

Methods used in the study of kindergarten teachers: plan content analysis, questionnaires, survey.

Methods used in the study of preschool children: individual conversations, modeling of experimental situation, observation (direct, indirect, included), the method of situation modeling.

## 6. Findings

In the course of multicultural education model developing we came to the conclusion that the solution of this problem requires teacher's special training and, accordingly, the multicultural education process should be realized in two subsystems: external (formation of kindergarten teacher's multicultural competence) and internal (formation of multicultural personality trend of a preschooler). The key element of the multicultural competence of the kindergarten teacher is the knowledge of the culture of the children of multicultural group.

The structural and functional model consists of four blocks: purpose, content, technological, assessment. The theoretical basis of the model is represented by the cultural and personal and activity-oriented approaches. The culturological approach serves as the basis for updating the concepts of preschool education to take into account the ethnic structure of a preschool group and to integrate a person into the national and world culture. The personal and activity-oriented approach helps to study the formation of multicultural personality trend of the participants of educational process during various activities. In case of teachers it is an educational activity and in case of children - games, learning, cultural and leisure activities (Abulkhanova-Slavskaya, 1980; Trubajchuk, 2009).

1. The model operates the following way: the purpose of the activating function is to encourage teachers and preschoolers to learn about their own culture and the culture of the neighboring nations. The developing function is aimed at developing preschooler and teacher's skill to use the acquired knowledge in game, cultural and leisure activities. The transformative function develops teacher and preschooler's skill to use the acquired knowledge independently and creatively in various activities.

The analysis of the multicultural education model also implies the study of its principles. *The humanistic principle* is a belief in the good of each person regardless of their nationality, no dominance of one culture over the other; deep knowledge of the physical and intellectual needs of children of any ethnic group; *the multicultural principle* is based on respect for the culture of national (ethnic) groups and recognition of the cultural diversity, the implementation of social and political rights of these groups to preserve their language, culture and traditions and to provide their mutual enrichment; *the comprehensive principle* and *the integration principle* is to ensure that all aspects of ethnic culture are interconnected and studied as a single unity; *the ethno-cultural principle* is to take into account the characteristics of the region when organizing the educational process in kindergartens (national, cultural, demographic, climate, geographical, social and economic characteristics of the region). The combination of all model elements made it possible to effectively solve the problem of formation of multicultural personality trend of teachers and preschool children.

2. The specificity of the study criteria is based on the problem stated, i.e. defining the ways to prepare kindergarten teachers to work with a multicultural group of preschool children and the formation of multicultural personality trend of preschool children. Thus, we have two groups of criteria:

- criteria for assessing the kindergarten teacher's suitability to work with a multicultural group of preschool children that define the level of the teacher's multicultural competence required to work with a multicultural group of preschool children;

- criteria for assessing the level of multicultural preschooler personality trend formation.

To assess the kindergarten teacher's suitability to work with a multicultural group of preschool children the following criteria were used:

*Emotional and motivational criteria* - the emotional perception of the works of ethnic culture, the desire to preserve it, positive motivation to work with a multicultural group of preschool children.

*Cognitive criterion* - scientific knowledge of multicultural education, child psychology and methodology on how to work with a multicultural group of preschool children.

*Communicative criterion* - the ability to apply the knowledge of pedagogy and psychology, methodological methods of working with children, teacher-children communication competence in working with children of different nationalities.

*Emotional and expressive criterion* - the ability to empathize, to love children of any nationality, pedagogical tact, tolerance towards the child, the ability to settle conflict situations without losing one's temper.

*Activity and practice criterion* - the national and world culture preservation. Promotion and teaching children about moral values, introducing the child to ethnic cultures through various activities.

*Evaluation and analysis criterion* - the moral values potential of the works of ethnic culture, the analysis of moral problems, deeds, phenomena, promotion of moral values and, as a result, a child's own desire to live and act upon them.

Our special pedagogical research conducted in kindergartens of the Republic of Bashkortostan revealed that most teachers had certain difficulties in working with a multicultural group of preschool children, which is a unique environment that includes children of the ethnic groups of the Republic of Bashkortostan, countries of the near (Georgia, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Uzbekistan, etc.) and far (India, China, Turkey, etc.) abroad. The reason for this is seen in the lack of teacher's multicultural competence or inadequate level of this competence. During conversations with teachers it was revealed that they needed special trainings and seminars to teach them about the teacher-children communication in a multicultural environment, the choice of pedagogical tactics, the ways to deal with special situations when working with a multicultural group. Thus, the priority is given to the teacher's multicultural competence. The analysis of the works by Bolotov (2003), Gogoberidze (2013) helps us to define the kindergarten teacher's multicultural competence as a professionally significant, integrated personal quality that comprises the cognition motives, recognition and appreciation of the common and specific features of each culture - knowledge of the laws, life style and ways of development of the multicultural world; the ability to apply this knowledge in the multicultural preschool education process (Syrtlanova, 2018).

Multicultural competence comprises ethno-cultural, ethno-pedagogical, ethno-psychological and multicultural competence.

Ethno-cultural competence is the knowledge of the ethnic cultural values (material and spiritual) viewed as a valuable and unique component of the world culture.

Ethno-pedagogical competence is the knowledge of means, methods and principles of the ethnic pedagogy and the ability to observe, analyze, synthesize, compare and solve ethno-pedagogical problems of the educational process in preschool educational institutions.

Ethno-psychological competence is the knowledge of mental processes of people as an ethnic community: their national character, temperament, mentality.

Multicultural creative competence is the complex knowledge of various arts, individual creative activity.

Each competence implies certain knowledge and abilities and forms the multicultural competence of the kindergarten teacher.

To solve the problem of the research we must define the ways of improving kindergarten teacher's multicultural competence. Thus, a special educational "theory → practice" model has been developed which is based on a practice-oriented program with use of interactive methods. The kindergarten teacher special training program was developed in two interrelated stages.

The first stage is the study of the theory of multicultural education and enrichment of teachers' knowledge of the culture of ethnic groups represented in the social and ethnic environment of a preschool group. The kindergarten teacher special training was carried out through the following activities: discussions, situational problem solving, business games, the focal object method, the morphological black box method, case study, etc.

During the second stage teachers themselves organize the multicultural preschool education process in real kindergartens. The activities of this stage include teacher project's presentations, master classes, national culture forum, etc.

The multicultural personality trend of preschool children is assessed according to the cognitive, emotional and behavioral components. The cognitive component is child's adequate knowledge of the culture of other children and children's engagement in the cultural study process; the ways to apply the acquired knowledge in game, cultural and leisure activity. The emotional component - children of different ethnic groups are interested in one another, want to establish good, friendly relationship and to cooperate. The behavioral component is characterized by a tolerant attitude, practical skills of communication and interaction with children of other nationalities, willingness to resolve conflict situations, manifestation of positive motives to interact with the children of different nationalities.

And, accordingly, the formation of multicultural personality trend of a preschooler was realized in three main ways: informational (teaching children about the culture, customs, traditions, values, etc. of ethnic groups represented in the social and ethnic environment of the preschool group); emotional (the ability to relate to other people's actions, the ethnic poetry, music, arts and crafts); behavioral (to act upon the knowledge acquired). When working with children the following methods were used: success fixation, creating a situation of success and imaginary situations, playing techniques.

Folk art researchers (Knyazeva, 2019; Vasilenko, 2011) define the following distinctive features of folk art: its simplicity, completeness, generality of image, traditional character, association with the real world which makes it clear and easy for children to perceive. The study of the works of the above researchers helps us to define the main means of formation of multicultural personality trend: the ethnic poetry, music, arts and crafts. The algorithm of formation of multicultural personality trend in a preschooler consists of the following units: "My Family", "National Culture", "World Culture". Thus, the process of formation of multicultural personality trend is carried out in the following stages: first when the child learns about their own culture, then the culture of the ethnic group of the country and ultimately the culture of the world.

The concept of working with children was based on the “Situation” method (Peterson, Lykova, Burenina, & Abdullina, 2018)

*Introduction to the situation.* Special conditions are created to generate the child’s own need (motivation) to join other children in their activity. Children fix their "child" goal.

*Knowledge and skills actualization.* The teacher organizes the activities of children so as to actualize the knowledge and experience of children to make a new “discovery”.

*Situational difficulties (problematization of activity).* The teacher stages a situation for a child to face certain difficulties. The teacher helps children to gain experience in fixing difficulties and identifying their causes using questions, such as “Have you managed?”, “Why haven’t you managed?”.

*"Discovery" of new knowledge (mode of action).* Using various techniques and methods (provoking and motivational dialogue) the teacher forms child’s new knowledge and mode of action which children assimilate through teacher’s speech and, possibly, signs.

*The inclusion of new knowledge (mode of action) in the knowledge system (modes of intellectual and practical activity).* The teacher organizes various activities where new knowledge or a mode of action is used in new conditions.

*Understanding.* This stage is a necessary element of any activity, as it helps a child to gain essential experience, such as fixing on the goal achievement and determining the conditions that make it possible to achieve this goal (Table 01).

**Table 01.** The model of multicultural education structure and functions

Social order: personality integration into national and world culture					Functions
Goal: the formation of multicultural personality trend in kindergarten teachers and preschoolers					
Tasks:					
Principles					
Approaches					
Subsystems (type of activity)					
Teachers		Children			
Stage 1 Teachers study the system of multicultural education concepts	Stage 2 Application of the acquired knowledge in the educational process	Ethnic poetry	Arts and crafts	Music, games	
Forms, methods and means of educational process organization					
Teachers		Children			
lectures, games					
ethno-cultural, ethno-pedagogical, ethno-psychological and multicultural creative competence					
Criteria and level of multicultural personality trend formation					
Level					
Teachers		Children			
Result: well-formed multicultural personality trend of kindergarten teachers and preschoolers					

## 7. Conclusion

The analysis of the philosophical, psychological, social and pedagogical aspects of multicultural education makes us to reevaluate its principles and significance in organizing the educational process in kindergartens with a multinational social and ethnic composition. The multicultural education and multicultural preschool group concepts played an important role in developing the multicultural education model of kindergartens. The solution to this problem was found in correlation of the external (teachers) and internal (preschool children) subsystems. The analysis of the kindergarten teacher activity in the Republic of Bashkortostan showed that although the social and ethnic structure of a preschool group is represented with the numerous ethnic groups of the Republic of Bashkortostan, the countries of the near and far abroad, the multicultural education model has not yet been properly acknowledged or applied in the educational process in kindergartens. Thus, there are considerable discrepancies between the social needs and the actual educational process in kindergartens. The analysis of the teacher's activity in a multicultural group of kindergartens has revealed that these discrepancies are not always taken into account. Thus, the solution to this problem must be found in both theoretical and practical aspects.

Culturological, personal and activity approaches helped to develop the multicultural education model which consists of the following blocks: purpose, content, technology, control and assessment. Developed upon all the above approaches the model is based on humanistic, multicultural, complex, integration and ethnic principles.

The process of preparing a teacher to work with a multicultural group of preschoolers is carried out in two interrelated stages aimed at establishing the correlation of theoretical and practice-oriented components of teacher's competence; to determine the educational process components (emotional, motivational, cognitive, communicative, practical, analysis and assessment); to introduce interactive methods in the educational process. These elements promote the formation of teacher's multicultural competence necessary to work with a multicultural group of preschool children. Thus, the logical correlation of the theoretical and practice-oriented components of the teacher training was identified. The implementation of this model helps to achieve a high level of teacher's multicultural competence.

The study of the idea of multicultural education and the social and ethnic environment of a preschool group which includes representatives of ethnic groups of the Republic of Bashkortostan and the countries of near and far abroad, helps us to propose our own model on how children can enter the multicultural educational space: through learning about their own culture → the national culture → the world culture.

The study of the concepts of ethnic education (Knyazeva, 2019; Vasilenko, 2011) leads us to the conclusion that the effective formation of multicultural personality trend of a preschooler is provided by the study of poetry, music, arts and crafts of the ethnic groups represented in a multicultural kindergarten group which is a unique environment to socialize the preschooler.

The study determined the main criteria and the level of formation of teacher's multicultural competence necessary to work with a multicultural preschooler group and the level of multicultural preschooler personality trend formation.

It is proved that the effective formation of a multicultural personality trend of a preschooler is carried out through the development of cognitive, emotional and behavioral components and the use of "situation" technique.

The results of a statistical analysis (t- student criterion) of the intermediate and control stages of the study showed that there was significant difference between the level of formation of teacher multicultural competence and the level of multicultural personality trend of a preschooler. This indicates a statistically significant change in the studied parameters.

The main conclusions of this article suggest that the stated problem was solved, and the application of the multicultural educational model in kindergarten educational practice have both theoretical and practical significance. The conclusions of this article, however, are not exhaustive and can be used as the basis for further research on developing the model on formation of multicultural personality trend of parents.

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