

**NININS 2020****International Scientific Forum “National Interest, National Identity and National Security”****INNOVATIVE ACTIVITY OF YOUTH VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATIONS IN CONTEXT OF RUSSIAN NATIONAL INTERESTS**

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**Abstract**

In this paper, the author provides a systematic characterization of the innovative activity of youth volunteer organizations and attempts to estimate the degree of importance of the national interests and national security to the Russian state. The author conducts a comparative analysis of all aspects of the activity of volunteer associations and youth public structures while emphasizing the importance of scientific rationale of this problem and the role of youth organizations both in countries taken separately and at the level of the global community. The study allows concluding that the wide-scale activity of youth volunteer organizations will result in the formation of a structure of the state and society novel in various aspects, which is of paramount importance to the Russian state. In the context of the systemic crisis caused by the global pandemic, it is the youth volunteering which serves as a civil society consolidation technique and which is a way to form more constructive dialogue between the government and the society, and an instrument of socialization of the young. The summing up of the acquired experience and search for new opportunities for volunteering will facilitate formation of moral qualities in the new generation in Russia, which will be able to solve problems of overcoming new challenges and threats and invariably take responsibility for outcomes of their activity.

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## **1. Introduction**

The national identity, national idea and cultural identity are becoming extremely important for every country and society, including Russia in the context of global human diversity. The context of current scientific discussions reveals that many (if not all) ideological projects related to the search for an optimal option for overcoming the cultural identity crisis imply rather well-defined measures aimed at consolidation of communities by pro-active mutual aid (Vodopetov & Kolobov, 2013). It is a matter of effectiveness of various youth volunteer organizations both within countries and on the world stage (Vodopetov & Kolobov, 2013).

## **2. Problem Statement**

In order to get an insight into Russian public and social affairs, it is essential to provide a comparative characterization of various aspects of the Russian identity with the ever-changing role of youth organizations factored into it. In the context of the national identity crisis and substitution of the “national idea” with the large-scale ideological projects implemented both at the national and social level, there are impetuous innovative changes which may well be used for the large-scale modernization of any country, including Russia (Vodopetov & Kolobov, 2013). Various volunteering and other youth organizations play a unique role in this sophisticated process. The role of these essential social structures is growing exponentially (Vovenda, 2013).

## **3. Research Questions**

In international relations, youth organizations have become especially important. This fact is directly attributable to the growth in political pro-activeness of the young in the entire globally organized world. At the same time, it provides the young with more promising opportunities for promoting of their goals and interests in multiple aspects. All endeavours of the young are aimed at defining their legal status both at the national and global levels.

At the global level, active development of youth politics started at the turn of the 20th century only, and it was in line with the global growth of this social and political force’s political potential (Vovenda, 2013).

In the current context of global uncertainty, the young have turned out to be notably represented at the level of interaction between various public and international institutions. The young are attracting more and more attention of many decision-makers.

Youth organizations are successfully functioning in various domains of the global policy, diplomacy and international relations (Vovenda, 2013). On the whole, they act independently defending their own interests. Furthermore, youth organizations are often functioning as some structural elements in various powerful public structures (Vovenda, 2013). More and more countries start adequately perceiving the international youth policy. On the whole, close attention to various youth association is characteristic of the world elite. At the same time, they clearly highlight the variability of approaches to development of

every possible procedure and strategic scheme representing the young globally and at the regional and local levels (Vovenda, 2013).

It is no coincidence that the number of international youth centers around the world is growing exponentially. At the same time, a rather significant variability in approaches of states to these centers is obvious. In terms of definition of the international youth policy, the latter is becoming more clearly represented by direct collaboration between all sorts of youth associations and commercial, public, charity and private companies, which are able to collaborate pro-actively within the framework of implementation of various joint projects and programs (Vovenda, 2013).

Thus, youth policy is becoming an integrator of multiple collective actions of the entire world community. Youth associations are capable of much more than just defending interests of the young at the national and interstate levels – they are effectively acting on the world stage, since they possess considerable resources required to overcome every possible crisis (Vovenda, 2013). However, this fact fails to resolve multiple internal organizational controversies, which are pending to be promptly solved in the interests of the entire humanity (Vovenda, 2013).

Various youth organizations, which actively participate in the world policy, often demonstrate liberal trends in their actions (Vovenda, 2013).

Anticipating prompt re-targeting in their strategic paradigm and enhancement of institutional opportunities, they have many unifying advantages and a clear strategy in their activity. Thus, the world youth policy is becoming an integral part of the complex mechanism of interstate and international activity all around the world (Vovenda, 2013).

However, despite the abovementioned advantages, youth organizations in their activity often encounter some challenges and controversies caused both by objective and subjective factors. Strengthening of the position of youth organizations as current actors of the global policy entails changes in the strategy of their development, the transformation of their institutional structure, the evolution of legislative and regulatory frameworks, and the emergence of new and prospective lines of activity. Youth organizations transform into sophisticated structures with several levels of management, regional or national representation offices or branches, clearly defined goals and development objectives, and strong support from other global policy actors, i.e., sovereign states, international organizations, transnational corporations. Youth politics is becoming an integral part of political mechanisms of contemporary states or current integration since it has enough resources to advocate interests of the young as one of the core elements of today's society both at the national and international level (Vovenda, 2013; Perfilyeva, 2008).

Youth organizations are under widespread and continuous influence of ruling elites, various governmental and non-governmental organizations, business communities and the society overall. Some youth organizations turn out to be unequal to such influence and, therefore, experience crisis and stagnation. In addition to external influences, youth organizations have to face some internal controversies. Changes in youth organizations' nature of the activity and their transformation into global policy actors increase the responsibility of their managers for any decisions made, and the process of political decision-making requires mental strength and managerial experience. Since in most case young people head such organizations, they sometimes fail to cope with their responsibilities and such failure, in turn, disrupts the integrity of the structure of youth associations. Ambitions of young managers often

interfere with their ability to assess the political context objectively, and some actors of the global policy are quick to use this to their advantage using youth organizations as an instrument for the promotion of their own goals and interests. At this stage, the issue related to personnel of youth organizations is one of the topical problems of their development (Vovenda, 2013).

Increasing employee potential remains the most challenging issue for any and all international youth associations. Timely and prompt resolution of the abovementioned issue would maximize effectiveness of their activity both on the world stage and in regions, taking into account the high priority of projects appealing to the “national dream”, “national interests” and “national security”. In the first instance, such projects are important to the young in today’s Russia in terms of the process correlation, which can ensure high quality of life in our country, at least, in the foreseeable future (Bochanov & Chernukhina, 2015).

According to approaches used in international practice, this movement can be defined as follows: Volunteering is a form of social service provided voluntarily and aimed at disinterested provision of socially essential services at the local, national or international level which facilitates personal growth and development of citizens (volunteers) conducting such activity (Bochanov & Chernukhina, 2015).

Today volunteers of more than 1000 countries have united into a global movement, which is gaining influence on a global scale (Bochanov & Chernukhina, 2015). In practice, young people experienced in volunteering tend to have a well-developed civil stand, work in good faith and be proactive and goal-oriented. Participation of students in social movements provides opportunities for gaining insights, experience in social project management, skills in teamwork, and awareness of responsibility for results of their actions (Bochanov & Chernukhina, 2015).

Bochanov and Chernukhina (2015), Russian researchers, emphasize that at this point some challenges can be defined in organization of activity of youth associations. On the whole, in order to effectively solve the major problems of youth policy, it is crucial to resolve legal, social, psychological and process issues, since:

1. Legal issues are related to lack of appropriate regulations, procedures, and mechanisms for the protection of volunteers, resolution of conflicts between volunteers, their associations and the government; absence of mechanisms for support of volunteering, such as national programs promoting volunteer activity, tax relief, preferential rent; and ambiguity of their status.

2. Social and psychological issues include psychology of dependence, atrophy of moral sense in young people, such as unselfishness and mercy, and their conformism and fear of inadequate assessment by public opinion.

3. Process issues include poor integral experience and inadequate systematic understanding of such experience, lack of volunteering customs and traditions and well-coordinated interaction between all interested social subjects, and insufficient training of volunteers in simple actions (Chernukhina & Martynova, 2008).

A comprehensive solution to such sophisticated issues which account for the factors of the national idea, national dream and national security, would have a positive impact on the entire national youth politics (Sokolov, 2009).

At the same time, governmental support of the most influential youth organizations is a crucial element of this process (Vovenda, 2013).

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

This study is aimed to provide a systematic characterization of innovative activity of volunteer youth organizations and estimating the degree of importance of the national interests and national security in the Russian state.

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

In this paper, the author conducts a comparative analysis of all aspect of the activity of volunteer associations and youth social structures. Scientific rationale of various aspects of the previous is of paramount importance to decision-makers both in Russia and in various quarters of the youth community.

#### **6. Findings**

Volunteer movements are a constructive force which helps to build a more humane and fair society by universal cooperation. In our opinion, the state benefits from volunteering since, regardless their social position, office, place of residence and political and religious beliefs, volunteers take an active part in public affairs helping in resolution of tasks set by the government more effectively. Moreover, the young also benefit from volunteering as it is an efficient way to gain insights and skills, to develop strong spiritual and moral values, and to cultivate a proper attitude towards the labour (Bochanov & Chernukhina, 2015).

Youth volunteering should become an alternative to socially deviant behaviour and provide opportunities for the young to fulfil their potential. Foreign deviation theories state that the cause of alcohol and drug abuse is the blocking of inner personal potential and impossibility to fulfil inner potential in socially significant fields of activity. The mission of the society is to form the adaptive and creative potential of youngsters and to make them ready to fulfil their capabilities and powers. It is volunteering that should form the ground for socially significant and positive self-fulfillment of the young (Bochanov & Chernukhina, 2015).

#### **7. Conclusion**

Today various youth organizations and associations are actively functioning at the national, interstate, regional and global levels (Vovenda, 2013).

The structure of youth communities is sophisticated. It correlates with activity of various associations representing international relations between countries and peoples. International youth organizations have considerable material resources enabling them to act independently of various assets of the world policy. In the foreseeable future they are bound to gain an even greater potential all around the world (Vovenda, 2013).

Moreover, such organizations will play the key role in the development of an innovative understanding of the national identity issues and the clear conceptual rationale of the essence of national interests, national security and national identity of many countries, including Russia.

In general, the wide-scale activity of volunteer youth associations eventually and inevitably results in the formation of a structure of the state and society, which will be novel in many aspects. That is what matters, and for our state, especially.

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