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PATRIOTIC ATTITUDES IMPACT ON INTERETHNIC CONTACTS OF NATIONAL IDENTITY AND SELF-ASSESSMENT

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Abstract

In the paper, the authors share some data of the study carried out by the staff of the laboratory of psycho-economic and cross-cultural studies of ISU. The paper raises the question of the need to recognize the influence of Patriotic positions of citizens, their self-esteem on the success of interethnic interaction in the context of globalization, it also emphasizes the need to respect the sense of national dignity of a modern person.

The study found that the young respondents with low self-esteem often spoke about little experience and little desire to communicate with the representatives of other nationalities and their preference to communicate only with the representatives of their people, answering the questions about the degree of their willingness to interact with other nations. High self-esteem, on the contrary, stimulated the desire to contact with “others”.

People with adequate patriotic attitudes can trace the corresponding trends: the study revealed that people who love their homeland and believe in it, seek to share their values with others, while seeing them as interesting and full partners. The main purpose of the study is to find ways, which improve interethnic relations and intercultural interaction.

The paper uses the data of several studies on several scientific funds' projects in the Russian cities of Abakan, Vladivostok, Irkutsk, Kemerovo, Kyzyl, Tomsk, Ulan-Ude, Chita, and Yakutsk. The total number of respondents was about 2000 people.

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Keywords: Intercultural interaction, patriotism, national dignity and self-esteem.



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1. Introduction

The paper is performed under the grant of the Russian Foundation for Basic Research “Economic patriotism as an object of cross-disciplinary study in psychology and resources of its formation among urban and rural youth (on the example of the population of Eastern Siberia)” (2018-2020).

The radical globalism more and more seeking the influence of people in the long term perspective implies the merger of all nations into one, formation of common unified needs and demands, uniform cultural and religious values and tastes (Gadzhiyev, 2017; Beloveshkin, 2009). The common sources of information (mainly, the Internet), etc. serve the most important means to achieve this objective. Meanwhile, any nation respecting and appreciating its history and traditions cannot agree with such prospects (Nizovtseva & Govorina, 2016; Galkin, 2015, Zhuravlev &, Yurevich, 2016; identity, in psychology and sociology). It is typical for the sovereign peoples to escape from the commonality killing everyone and everything, denial of identity of different nations. The understanding of the universal value of ethnic diversity and variety, recognition of priorities and advantages of other nations, cultures and civilizations is increasing these days like never before. In this particular case the potentials of interethnic consent operate against the globalist ideas and make different people allies in one common pursuit. It is only possible to counteract radical globalism based on peaceful, “neighborhood” development of the peoples. The “golden mean” (“Middle Way” in Buddhist religion) is in the positive combination of some globalist trends (especially in economic, social, and political spheres) with preservation and development of uniqueness and identity of the peoples (Karnyshev et al., 2016).

In this respect it is especially critical to track the influence of such phenomena as patriotism, national dignity and a self-assessment on the nature of interethnic relations. The recognition of self-assessment and self-esteem of “others” in general ensures the important condition, without which the success of interethnic cooperation is impossible: careful attitude to the feeling of national dignity of a person (Karnyshev et al., 2016; Chernobay, 2017; John et al., 2002). Any individual that loves and is proud of nation as a spokesman of ethnic mentality will never reconcile to understatement or even disregard of its national importance and will try by all means to obtain the trampled justice. A personality raised on such “archetypes” and having normal national dignity will “better die standing than live kneeling” (Karnyshev et al., 2016;).

2. Problem Statement

Our longitudinal study Karnyshev et al., 2016 demonstrated the relation of civic stands with patriotic, and, at the same time, with some characteristics of international relations. This moment can be shown on the example of the attitude of respondents with different judgments on patriotism to their international contacts. We believe that the features of such contacts characterize real beliefs of citizens within a multicultural society. During the study we directly analyzed the interrelation of positions of respondents with different judgments on patriotism with assessments of the attitudes to contacts with representatives of other nationalities and cultures (Table 1).

Table 01. Relation of people with different judgments on patriotism to contacts with representatives of other cultures

No.	Relation to contacts with representatives of other cultures	Responses in groups with various opinion regarding patriotism		
		Patriotism – one of the mandatory conditions and factors of normal life	Patriotism – means nothing, abstract notion	Adhere to the principle – the homeland is where you feel good
1	Positive, I have many friends of different nationalities	56.1*	39.3*	24.2**
2	I am not against such contacts, but it is difficult for me to be in contact with people of other nationalities	23.5	33.0*	24.2
3	I don't have enough experience and desire to contact people of other nationalities	8.7*	16.1	30.3**
4	I prefer to contact people of my nationality and culture	9.2	8.9	21.2**
5	Others	1.5	2.7	0.0

Note: p<0.05*; p<0.01**

Noticeable and statistically significant differences of real and opportunistic patriots in their assessment of contacts with the representatives of other nationalities can hardly be considered “strained”. A person loving and trusting his homeland seeks to convert “others” into his faith, perceives them as interesting and equal partners. This causes the adequate response of others. People who do not value and feel indifferent to their homeland are not characterized by originality and sincerity in their contacts with “others”. Respectively, they have to protect their incompetence with the lack of experience and desire to communicate.

3. Research Questions

Most likely the interconnected trends can be traced depending on the level of self-assessments of a person – personal and ethnic. To start, let us consider the low self-assessment. It becomes a significant barrier to real interethnic interaction, and it is necessary to teach such people to overcome this weakness. The “action” of low self-assessment is connected with self-distrust and fear to contact others. In fact, the relations on equal terms when a person can express himself, reveal, demonstrate his unique internal potentials, and finally, if necessary, express to others or himself hope for sympathy and empathy is a fundamental need of every person. There is no cooperation and no true communication without parity and consent, they arise only when you recognize the advantage and uniqueness of another person (others), especially, if the latter ones have different skin, mentality, beliefs, etc.

4. Purpose of the Study

This was indicated by the results of our study conducted in 2016 among students of different universities in Irkutsk. In particular, it was revealed that half of respondents with high self-assessment “are

honestly proud of their nationality and culture". While among students with low self-assessment only one third of all respondents answered this way (Table 2).

Table 02. Results of the survey

Respondents	Self-assessment level		
	High	Medium	Low
Those who are honestly proud of their nationality and culture	49.7	40.6*	33.3**
Believe that Russian has many things to be proud of, while there are enough reasons for criticism	30.1	36.5	46.7*
Haven't decided yet	15.0	13.5	13.3
Believe that there are more reasons for negative assessment and self-assessment	4.6	5.9	6.7
Those who feel negative assessment of their nationality	0.7	3.5*	0.0

Note: p<0.05*; p<0.01**

Respondents with low self-assessment expressed to a more critical attitude towards their ethnos, it was expressed in the following phrase: "there are many things to be proud of, while there are enough reasons for criticism". The data demonstrate the correlation at respondents of the level of self-assessment to the level of ethnic dignity.

Let us briefly describe the trends of changing the ethnic self-assessment revealed in our latest study. It shall be noted here that non-Russian respondents are more often proud of their nationality and culture (in the survey they are presented by such categories as "Buryats" and "other nationalities"). Russian students more often gave the following answer: "there are many things to be proud of, while there are enough reasons for criticism". These data reflect a recent trend when under the influence of various sanctions and Russophobia in particular, the level of pride of its nation among Russian students gradually decreases. At present, it can safely be assumed that the level of national dignity among the "natives" is higher than among the Russians. Possibly, this is the reason why there are more students with middle or low self-assessment among the Russians than among the representatives of Buryat and other nationalities.

5. Research Methods

Low self-assessment affects not only the feelings of a person, but also his relations with other people. Such person feels less confident in contacts, often even tends to avoid them. It was possible to trace these moments in our study. Thus, students gave the following answers (Table 3) to the question of the relation of self-assessment and nature of ethnic contacts.

Table 03. Ratio of the level of self-assessment of respondents and the degree of their inclusiveness in cross-cultural interaction

Degree of inclusiveness in cross-cultural interaction	Self-assessment		
	High	Medium	Low
Successfully included into cross-cultural interaction, have many friends of different nationalities	52.3	45.9	26.7**
Are not against intercultural contacts, but it is difficult to be in contact with people of other nationalities	24.2	26.5	26.7
Don't have enough experience and desire to contact people of other nationalities	11.8	14.7	20.0*

Note: p<0.05*; p<0.01**

It shall be noted that students with high self-assessment have more contacts than respondents with low self-assessment. Besides, it includes the representatives of other nationalities. At the same time there are more people among students with low self-assessment that refer to the lack of experience and desire to interact with others, and in general emphasize that they prefer to communicate and interact only with persons of their nationality. This again proves the influence of the level of self-assessment on the readiness of a person for any social contacts. Regarding the question on the degree of their readiness to interact with other people the young respondents with low self-assessment more often said that they do not have enough experience and desire to communicate with the representatives of other nationalities and that they prefer to communicate only with the representatives of their nation. Lack of experience of communication and interaction can cause some problems related to the image of representatives of other nationalities, negative stereotypes when a person literally takes complaints of others on the representative of some nation and starts being be in awe of them thus transferring a specific isolated negative case to the entire nation.

Such state of affairs inevitably leads to the increase in uneasiness, tension, fear of contacts with other people thus violating interethnic relationship.

6. Findings

The analysis of responses to other questions revealed that more than a half of respondents with high self-assessment positively evaluate the interaction of representatives of different cultures. At the same time such opinion is twice less often among respondents with low self-assessment. In turn we understand that there can be other trends here: a person with slightly high self-assessment and self-esteem is not always able to adequately estimate the representatives of other nations and can treat them as an inferior. But truly high self-esteem and pride help to be active in various contacts, establish relationship with different people, thereby expanding personal experience and developing a more adequate image of representatives of other ethnos, removing interpersonal, interethnic uneasiness, and increasing readiness for such contacts.

Reflecting on patriotism and national dignity, there is no getting away from the fact that the respect for others, as well as respect for yourself is more likely the “personal” rather than the “general” quality, which is confirmed by many results of our study depending on the level of self-assessment. Especially these levels of self-assessment affect the respect for the representatives of another nationality. It is impossible to demonstrate true respect for others if you do not respect yourself – it is psychologically proved regularity. In the same way, one can snobbishly talk about democratic character and equality in relations, about the rights of native ethnic groups and their representatives, about tolerance, patience and other “lofty matters” in the field of international contacts. But due to personal ethnic ambitions the complacency and neglect to gentiles and “national minorities” will fight their way through the mask of goodwill and integrity (Karnyshev, Ivanova, 2017). In this respect, the ideas of C. Rogers on naturalness and spontaneity of personal reactions are particularly important: it is impossible to show genuine respect for a person of another nationality, to another nation if internally you feel hostility and alienation in relation to them.

7. Conclusion

The results of the given study lead to the understanding that both patriotism of a person and his national dignity possess the following resources (Lebedev, 2014; Lykova, 2013; Kotlyarova & Rudenko, 2017; Karnaukhova & Donina, 2017; Pochebu & Beznosov, 2017):

- sense of natural equality with the representatives of different nationalities;
- lack of arrogance and haughtiness in relation to others;
- acceptance of dignity of people irrespective of their ethnic, confessional and social background;
- strive to raise the level of self-assessment of “others” if needed;
- rejection of national superiority and radical ethnocentrism;
- attention in daily contacts to those nuances which are sensitive (may be sensitive) to interlocutors and opponents of other nationalities, etc.

The main tool to form the considered resources include development technologies of cross-cultural competence (Karnyshev et al., 2016; Lebedev, 2014; Lykova, 2013; Kotlyarova & Rudenko, 2017; Karnaukhova & Donina, 2017; Pochebu & Beznosov, 2017).

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