

SCTCMG 2018
**International Scientific Conference «Social and Cultural
Transformations in the Context of Modern Globalism»**

**FORMING CIVIC IDENTITY OF PUPILS IN POLYCULTURAL
REGION OF NORTH CAUCASUS**

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Abstract

The paper considers peculiarities of formation of civic identity of the younger generation in conditions of modern social and cultural transformations in the polycultural region of North Caucasus. The modern socio-cultural educational environment is characterized by complex and unpredictable human behavior in various undetermined and unstable situations of life. The process of informatization and globalization changes people themselves, their spheres of perception, consciousness, cognition, need and motivation, emotion and will. Interest in cultural heritage reduces, as does the interest in classical music, ballet, book reading, etc. A need arises to rethink traditional provisions of the identity-formation problem.

From analysis of various works in the field of ethnic tolerance and their own research, the authors prove a great prospect of the polycultural model of polylingual education (PCPE) in the Republic of North Ossetia-Alania for forming the civic identity. The secondary education teaching materials allow teaching and educating with orientation to local spiritual values and traditions, without imposing alien identities and ideologies.

Understanding of the national identity in the context of the modern globalizing and integrating processes will allow forming a unity of nations and ethnicities of our country and prevent inter-ethnic fractionation. In development of a mechanism to form the civic identity in the polycultural educational space of the Republic North Ossetia-Alania, the authors justify the idea that the civic identity is not a goal in itself, but a necessary personal competence of learners, required for preservation of peace on Earth and civilized development of Russia as a whole.

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Keywords: Civic, identity, ethnic, tolerance, culture, relations.



1. Introduction

Processes of globalization and intensive inter-cultural relations watered down the borders between the national and supranational. Nowadays, there are no schools in the Russian Federation with a monoethnic body of learners.

North Caucasus is a multi-ethnic and multi-denominational region where ethnic, nation-wide and global trends intertwine.

According to statistics, there are 89 indigenous peoples and over 130 ethnicities living in Russia nowadays.

The Republic of North Ossetia-Alania is one of 7 federal subjects of the North Caucasus Federal district of the Russian Federation, with a population of 706,800 people as of the January 1, 2018. It is one of the most multi-ethnic subjects of the North Caucasus Federal district: there are representatives of over 95 ethnicities living in the territory of the republic.

Support for programs of forming a unified Russian civic nation, national and state identity is provided by the Concept of Longterm Social and Economic Development of the country for the period of up to 2020. The most important task within this context is the idea of formation of civic identity of student youth and school pupils.

How to build such a system within the framework of the modern educational environment to account for interests of all the ethnicities and cultures? How, on the one hand, preserve identity, and on the other hand, resolve the issues of inter-ethnic interactions, without becoming isolated from civilized ways of humanity development? How shall we prevent ethnic fractionation, intolerance and irreconcilability on the ethnic grounds in the polycultural republics of North Caucasus? How shall we keep the country together and strong? First, it is necessary to form the civic identity of underage inhabitants and youth.

In the modern society, the task of forming the civic identity is a priority. The modern civil society needs people with solid citizenship, ready to react to any demands of modernity, be they acts of terrorism or gleams of separatism in the states bordering ours; discontent of “indigenous” population with migrations within the territory of our country, aspiration of youth for emigration, etc. The civic identity serves as a support for the integrity of Russia. All the above determined timeliness of the studies of this problem.

2. Problem Statement

Scholars, public persons and political scientists are trying to create conditions for formation of civic identity to support and strengthen the national and cultural integrity of the society while preserving all the multi-facetious and individual nature of each ethnicity, its ethnic integrity, thus providing a national communality of people, serving as an efficient means of prevention of chauvinism, racism, enmity and extremism.

The issues in formation of the civic identity were studied by many scholars (T.M. Vodolazhskaya, N.A. Galaktionova, D.V. Grigorieva, L.M. Drobizheva, N.L. Ivanova, R. Yu. Shikova, M.A. Yushin) (Vodolazhskaya, 2010; Drobizheva, 2006; Yushin, 2007). While recognizing the doubtless significance of the above mentioned studies, the authors would like to note that the issue of forming the civic identity is very topical, as the unity deficiency in Russia has not been subdued yet. The younger generation of the country's population has a vague notion of the role that true citizen and patriot plays in the life of their

country. There is a remoteness and detachment of some fellow citizens from the state and society, from settlement of social issues, as a result the individual ceases to associate themselves with the people, loses the belongingness to any social group.

Thus, there is an evident contradiction between the degree of development of the civic identity of the youth and lack of pedagogical facilities for its formation.

The revealed contradiction defined the research problem: What are the conditions for forming the civic identity of the younger generation?

3. Research Questions

The subject of the study is pedagogical conditions for forming the civic identity of learners in the conditions of the multi-ethnic Republic of North Ossetia-Alania.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to reveal and justify the pedagogical conditions for forming the civic identity of learners in the conditions of the multi-ethnic Republic of North Ossetia-Alania.

5. Research Methods

The research is grounded in a set of methods: theoretical (theoretical and methodological analysis of reference texts, generalization of scientific data on the issue, systematization, modeling), empirical (surveying, observation, testing, studying the products of the learners' studies, pedagogical experiment, statistical processing of data).

6. Findings

At various stages of development of pedagogy as a science, the problem of forming civic identity was seen as an integral part of education, throughout the humanity development. It took a prominent place in scientific studies of scholars and practicing teachers. During the discussion and adoption of new Federal State Educational Standards, it has become widely discussed, as the task of forming the foundations of the civic identity of the youth was named one of the priorities.

The very concept of identity arrived to pedagogy from development psychology. There, identity means a psychological attribute, which is capable of expressing in generalized form the person's ideas of their belonging to a certain social, ethnic or other group or community. American psychologist E. Erikson, the founder of the identity theory stated, that education shall form certain qualities of personality that together create a harmonious personality. In a disharmonic personality, deliberate wishes are in opposition to the person's intentions and feelings (Erikson, 1996).

In our country, the idea of a Russia-wide civic nation was first brought up and justified in the works of a great ethnologist, Tishkov, in 1990s. He was deeply convinced that a person may have only a single civic consciousness, while they may have double, triple or even absent ethnic identity (Tishkov, 2013).

The process of forming the civic identity is implemented throughout the stages of education, at that, for each stage there are concrete goals, objectives, methods and means defined, taking into account the age peculiarities of the learners.

In this chain, the main role in defining the civic consciousness of all the participants of the educational process and bringing up mutual respect is with the secondary school. In the multicultural Russian society, pupils start studying the basics of the main rights and duties of a citizen during their primary school lessons. Thus, the federal State Educational Standard of Primary Education. (FGOS NOO pays a great deal of attention to the question of building learners' acquaintance with the culture and traditions of various ethnicities that populate the territory of the Russian Federation and the Earth as a whole. It is especially important in polyethnic countries for overcoming disunity of peoples and uniting their efforts on the way to the common progress of humanity.

The task of civic education of pupils shall become an overriding task for the school teachers, as school is the concentration of children's life in all its manifestations: intellectual, civic, spiritual, moral, cultural. Of course, school activities shall be performed in direct coordination with the child's family, as the family has a very big role in educating a true citizen and patriot. Family is the small collective where the child shall feel being an equal member, daily participating, however little, in the common family cause. From the young age, parents shall make the children familiar with the useful labor, preparation and active participation of the child in family celebrations, even to correct recreation. Just when the grown-ups trust children with performing an adequate part of the common work, care about junior or senior members of the family, aspire to share their efforts with the children, the children start feeling being competent and useful members of the family. By becoming aware of genealogy of the family, historical facts linked to the members of the family, the child usually feels a strong emotional outburst, starts paying more attention to the memories of the past, to their roots. The tandem of the family and the educational institution is the guarantee for preservation of vertical familial relations, sustainable attitude to family traditions and customs. The joint activity of the school and the parents may be founded upon the saying of A.S. Makarenko that the future citizen of a country grows up in a family, under supervision of parents and through the parents' soul, heart and thoughts the child shall have the knowledge of what's happening in the country.

During the school years, it is necessary to pay special attention to establishment and development of learner's personal traits that form the backbone of the civic culture: love to one's mother land, loyalty, national legal culture. Development of the civic identity is a complex process that brings together various components. Among them, it is possible to define the basic components:

- forming the identity of a person as a citizen of one's country, implanting patriotic feelings and love to one's motherland;
- forming the feeling of integrity with the home area, community with the ethnic group aimed at person's involvement with the ethnic culture, local history, etc.;
- forming the panhuman identity, facilitating connection to the global culture, feeling one's involvement with the history of humanity and global human values.

Implementation of this goal is impossible without special training of professional employees. Putting the concept of the civic identity to life is possible only by means of developing the civic competence of students, the future teachers. When forming the civic identity in the learners, the teacher shall have high level of patriotism themselves, both for the country as a whole and for the local region. The modern teacher shall see their main mission in implanting the love and respect to Russia and its people, representative of one's ethnicity, native language, ethnic culture, traditions and customs, local region into the pupils. With

growing social differentiation in our country, the students studying to become teachers shall realize that the Russian education system comes closer and closer to important problems in need of solution. It is necessary to ensure integrity of various strata of the civic society, reduce social tensions between members of different faiths and ethnic culture, form merits of the Russian multi-ethnic society and become ready to admit common human merits. It is against this background, that a set of pedagogical conditions was established and theoretically justified. A step-by-step introduction of these conditions into the educational process of the teacher-education university guarantees success in training the students, future teachers for forming the civic identity in learners:

- specialization of faculty in implementation of the pre-selected set of pedagogical conditions allowing formation of the civic identity of learners;
- creation and implementation in the educational process of an undergraduate course «Preparing future primary school teachers to forming the civic identity of primary pupils»;
- application of various active and interactive means, forms and methods of training in preparing the students (future secondary teachers) to developing the meta-subject competences in learners.

To train the faculty during the experimental research, we developed a number of measures. The first measure was checking the information preparedness of the instructors and included: foregrounding the issues of establishing the civic identity in primary pupils, arguments for significance of this process and acquaintance with its implementation algorithm.

The second measure looked at the prospects of including specialized modules into steering documents. Within the framework of tutorial workshops, the instructors discussed, introduced meaningful proposals for solving the issues arising while preparing the students to forming the civic identity in primary pupils.

The syllabus of the tutorial workshops for instructors included the following topics: «Essence and content of the main categories of research («civic consciousness», «citizenship», «identity», «civic identity»); «Issues in training future primary school teachers to forming civic identity in primary pupils», etc.

During the third measure, we analyzed the activities of instructors in organizing the students for developing pupils' civic identity, introduced necessary corrections. Work with the instructors was conducted in the form of individual consultations aimed at correction of their activity.

During the implementation of the pedagogical conditions, a number of issues arose, including the problem of determining and applying the potential of various school subjects in training the students to form the civic identity in the primary pupils. Having studied the requirements for determining the level of formed civic identity in primary pupils and the level of training of the future teachers, we renewed the content of the subjects by means of introduction of additional modules into the syllabuses of the studied disciplines. Content details of the modules facilitated increase in the level of both theoretical and practical preparedness of the students for forming the civic identity of the primary pupils.

Let us consider the components forming the structural model of the civic identity of the pupil:

- cognitive – aimed at students' mastering the principal information about the state, its symbols, authorities, main current social and political events, legal foundations of social organization, voting system,

political parties, their heads and programs, as well as reflecting the theoretical knowledge of the student for operating in this direction;

- emotional-evaluative (connotative) – reflecting the reflective nature of knowledge and insight, capability to present their own opinion on the events of social and political nature, present their opinion and taking an exact position, enunciate their arguments;

- value-oriented (axiological) – bringing up the tolerant attitude to people, ability to acknowledge and respect the right of each person for their own choice, self-respect, ability for adequate combination of social and personal, ability to analyze social phenomena;

- pragmatist (behavioral) – supposing participation in the social and political life of the organization and the country; ability to make independent decisions and take responsibility for them, ability to resist antisocial and illegal actions. This component assumes that the student has the necessary set of skills: Methodological, organizational, communicative, pre-emptive, etc.

Experimental work was conducted in Dialog Gymnasium, Secondary School No 13 and Secondary School No. 46 of the city of Vladikavkaz. The experiment had two stages and covered more than 250 participants. At the ascertaining phase, we studied the level of formed civic identity in the primary pupils in both traditional classes (control group) and classes that implement the polylingual model of polycultural education (experimental group). The level of formed humanistic attitudes was established by observation, surveying and interviews with children.

For example, while studying the topic “I am a citizen” at the lessons of World Around Us, the primary pupils were asked a question: «How can you explain the meaning of the words «civic consciousness», «citizen?»

It turned out, that many pupils do not understand the meaning behind these concepts. Usually, the pupils utilized two definitives: «kind» and «good». When reasoning about a good person, they put the concept of «kind» to the first position. Then, they named such attributes as ability to be a friend, being always in a good mood, not being greedy, not bully. 20% of pupils were unable to expand the meaning of the «fair minded person» collocation. Most often, children were undecided, and all the positive qualities blended in a single definitive – «good».

The content of the textbooks developed by the authors includes topics aimed at forming the ethnic identity. These textbooks include «Mathematics» (Zembatova & Kirguyeva 2011), «World around Us» (Kokayeva, 2010), «English Language» (Zangiyeva, 2010). The conducted lessons covered the topics «My Family», «My republic is Ossetia», «Ossetia is proud of them», «Professions»; out-of-class events «Ossetian celebration of Dzheorghyba», ethnic customs of inhabitants of the Republic of North Ossetia-Alania» and others. They sparked some interest in the pupils.

Gradual and systematic understanding of other cultures facilitate child's understanding of themselves as a representative of humanity and this ethnicity in particular, induces pride for one's country, understanding the value of life not for oneself but for the common social good.

There are a number of means, forms and methodological approaches facilitating productive development of the civic identity in pupils. One of the most efficient is using the ethnic traditions in the educational activity, as they allow understanding the cultural space of the country and the region, provide possibility to familiarize oneself with the culture and the way of life of various ethnicities, opening

distinctive nature of the cultures. At all times and in all ethnicities of the North Caucasus, the main objective of education was in imprinting the care for preservation, strengthening and extension of good popular customs and traditions, passing the experience of the previous centuries down to the next generation.

The control stage of the experiment was conducted on the same pupils in the beginning of the next school year. The objective of this stage was to study the level of formed civic identity in pupils having being taught following the federal and the regional (experimental) syllabus.

The development level of the civic consciousness was determined from the following indicators: Patriotism, knowledge of state symbols, loyalty, tolerance, emotional generosity to others, compassion, readiness to help a companion, responsibility with respect to entrusted task; collectivism; kindness and soulfulness, readiness to share the necessities with those around; care of the family members.

Several surveys were developed to assess the knowledge pertaining to the civic identity. For example, the survey for primary school pupils included the following questions:

1. Do you know what ethnicity you belong to?
2. What other ethnicities do you know?
3. Do you know the hymn of the Republic North Ossetia-Alania?
4. What are the three colors in the flag of Ossetia? What do they mean?
5. Name Ossetian fairy tales that you know.
6. What Ossetian folk heroes do you know and respect?
7. Do you like the customs and traditions of your ethnicity? Which ones?

Evaluation of the level of formed culture of inter-ethnic relations usually uses low, average and high levels.

The results of the ascertaining experiment witness to a low level of inter-ethnic culture, low level of ethnic values significance.

As formation of the civic identity assumes forming certain structural components, the analysis of the results is given in several units.

The civic identity of learners was evaluated with two diagnostic procedures: Survey of learners and survey of their parents. Then, the results of the surveys underwent comparative analysis.

This procedure allows determining the structure of the children's identity as per the model: ethnic norms and values – Russia-wide norms and values – global norms and values, through three levels: cognitive, emotional-evaluative, motivational (behavioral). The results are presented in the form of the diagrams.

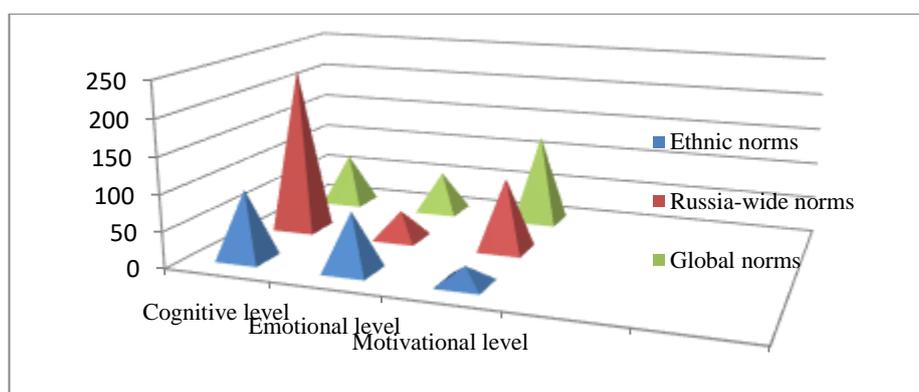


Figure 01. Diagram of evaluating the socio-cultural identity of children through the whole sample

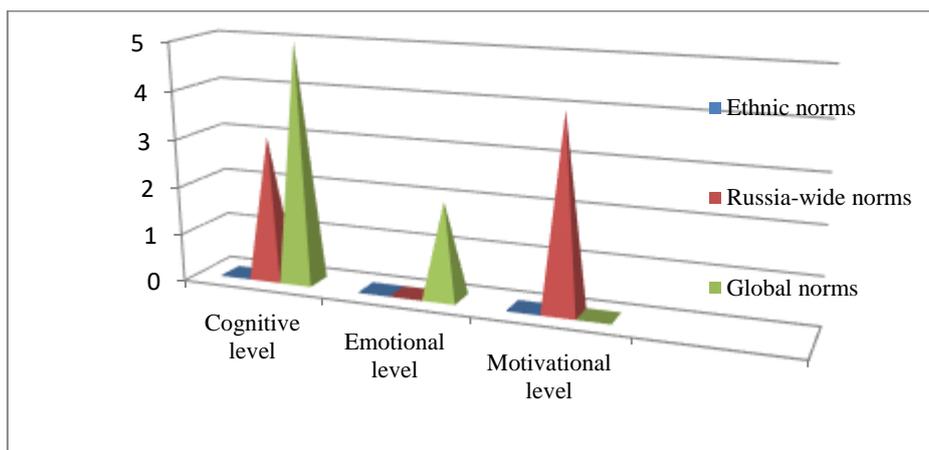


Figure 02. Diagram of parental evaluation for socio-cultural identity of children in the sample of the titular ethnicity

Evaluation of the formed level of the civic identity in the graduates of secondary education in the Republic North Ossetia-Alania may be represented in the form of the following table and accompanying diagram:

Table 01. Evaluation of the formed level of civic identity among the secondary school graduates in the Republic of North Ossetia-Alania

	In the sample as a whole		Boys	Girls	Titular ethnicity (Ossetians)	Non-titular ethnicity
Low level	6	15.4%	10.5%	20%	17.1%	0%
Average level	20	51.3%	63.2%	40%	48.6	75%
High level	13	33.3%	26.3%	40%	34.3%	25%

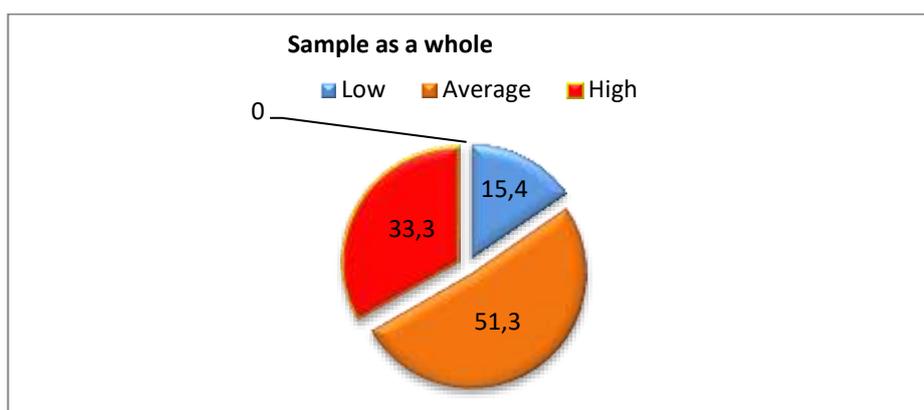


Figure 03. The level of formed civic identity in primary school children in the Republic of North Ossetia-Alania.

7. Conclusion

Data, obtained during the research supports the importance of the polylingual model of polycultural education for development of the culture of inter-ethnic relations and formation of civic identity in the younger generation. According to our observations, the learners start disputing the ideas and values, try to highlight their individuality, evince curiosity, ask questions, are interested in cultural traditions of their

classmates not belonging to the titular ethnicity, and also try to be active social reformers of human relations, try to get rid of cultural ignorance, clichés and prejudices.

The civic identity of learners is a necessary personal competence that manifests in spiritual relations, in communications between different peoples, while keeping unconditional mutual tactfulness and respect to religious views of different ethnicities, unacceptability of disregard for different languages, ethnic traditions and customs.

So, identity is perceived as personal selection of one's belonging to a certain ethnic group, or a human community different from one's.

At that, the person may compare oneself with another person as an equal representative of significant Others, thus causing scholars to identify such significant Others and establish what social roles they play in the process of determining the identity on behalf of the person. Words of the modern Russian writer S.T. Alekseyev come to mind, where he states that everything that may happen to us in the future largely depends on how thoroughly we understand who we are in the present. If we feel as a spiritually-creative cultural civilization, this feeling will determine the development of Russia. There is no need to invent and concoct a national idea, finding the ways of progress, taking left and right from both the West and the East – all this will not result in anything decent. The idea already exists, it is the polylingual model of polycultural education.

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