

ICPE 2018
International Conference on Psychology and Education

**ETHNIC IDENTITY OF TEENAGERS AND THE NEED FOR
SECURITY**

O. Yu. Zotova (a)*, L. V. Tarasova (a), E. B. Perelygina (a), S. V. Mostikov (a)

*Corresponding author

(a) Liberal Arts University-University for Humanities, Yekaterinburg, Russia, oiambusheva@mail.ru

Abstract

Ethnic identity is one of the variants of personality social identification and entails cognitive, affective and behavior components. Identity is restlessly on the way changing and transforming in historical, social and cultural context under the influence of diverse factors. The study into young people identity is of great importance since they generate their own interpretations of the world and explore it. Adolescents form their identity under the impact of multiple factors, partly, as a defense mechanism in the constantly changing world they are living in, or as a way of self-assertiveness but the level of psychological security always acts as an integrating indicator of identity.

The study was aimed at examining specifics of ethnic identity in teenagers with different degree of the need for security satisfaction. The respondents represented 17-18 olds from comprehensive schools. The sample number was 223.

The study of ethnic self-awareness in the context of personality psychological security, the degree of the need for security satisfaction typical of an individual made it possible to single out a number of specific features. Moderate pronouncement of ethnic belonging was characteristic of the group with high degree of the need for security satisfaction and the group with low values of this need. Distinctions in dominating types of ethnic identity were found in adolescents with different degree of the need for security satisfaction. The results empirically confirm the link between personality psychological security, the individual's assessment of the degree of the need for security satisfaction and ethnic identity.

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Keywords: Ethnic identity, psychological security, adolescents, need for security.



1. Introduction

One of challenges facing modern societies is inter-ethnic interaction, which strongly impacts people's psychological security.

The threat of inter-ethnic conflicts and “us-them” polarization of the society increases in mono-ethnic regions where the great number of indigenous population perceive new-comers as a jeopardy to integrity and the dominating position of their own group. The traditional culture of every region has a limited capacity to absorb new ethnic and migration flows. If this limit is exceeded, there emerges the threat to ethnic identity and the possibility of inter-ethnic confrontations. In traditional “migration-friendly”, poly-ethnic countries and regions (Australia, the USA, etc.) ethnic tensions as a result of “ethnic mix of cultures” are less frequent than in mono-ethnic territories.

The level of psychological security acts as an integrating indicator of ethnic processes. According to A. I. Dontsov and E. B. Pereylygina, “in modern world the line of irrationality amplifies, the world increasingly splits up not only into those who think like you but into those who think differently; it is divided between those who sense like you and those who live in the system of new sensations, which hinder the dialogue of culture-bearers” (Dontsov & Pereylygina, 2014).

Ethnic identity is one of the variants of personality social identification and consists of three components:

1. Cognitive – a set of perceptions about one's own group, traditions, beliefs, knowledge of history, etc. From the perspective of personality psychological security it is an intricate conglomerate of perceptions of personality security, ethnic threats and national traumas. In the course of its development each ethnos acquires its own set of “threats and dangers”. The lack of security takes the lead, starts to determine motives for an individual's social behavior through rebuilding and rearranging this motivation and specifically transforming other groups of his basic needs, psychic characteristics and personal traits (Dontsov & Zotova, 2013). For instance, Jews perceptions of basic ethnic jeopardies differ from these characteristic of the Crimean Tatars owing to their ethnos historic evolution.

2. Affective – emotional attitude of the subject to his ethnic group. Affect can be positive, negative and neutral. In case of positive attitude the individual strives to evince his ethnic experience to others. This component is connected with the feeling of security: social translation of positive attitude to one's ethnic identity is easier in case of neutral or positive attitude of the group majority. In the event of xenophobia open demonstration of one's identity decreases.

3. Behavior component is an integrative indicator of the former two: actions reflect relationships and settings. Through ethnic self-identification the position in the structure of social relationships is set; specific features of communication with others and value-meaning-based set of personality are formed.

Each of these components answers different questions of ethnic identification:

- What do I know as the ethnos representative?
- What do I feel towards my ethnic group?
- What do I do as a representative of a certain group?

Answers to these questions shape semantic space of identity. Nationality (social notion, formal characteristic) should not be confused with ethnic identity (psychological characteristic, the result of the

individual's self-definition). Thanks to psychological identification with representatives of a certain group their community is maintained, and one's sense of belonging to a group helps feel secure.

Ethnic identity as a complex socio-psychological phenomenon involves a lot of components: gender, religious, communication one and other aspects. Depending on individual context changes in each of the components can take place with different velocity.

Identity is restlessly on the way changing and transforming in historical, social and cultural context under the influence of diverse factors. M. Castells argues (Castells, 1997) that identity acts as a source of knowledge and experience especially on the basis of cultural attributes.

The formation of one's belonging to a particular ethnos begins in the course of primary socialization within the family in pre-school age. A relatively sustainable, informed choice and reinforcement of a role model are made at the age of about 20, thus, one can mark out two stages in the formation of ethnic identity: an unaware one in childhood and the informed one in adulthood.

The study of ethnic identity shared by young people living and growing in the world of risk and uncertainty arouse great scientific interest (Beck, 1992; Beck, 2000). This uncertainty varies due to cultural and social context, which leads to the question, whether many young people have enough resources to compensate risks associated with these changes (Harvey, 2003). One can say that "the problem of security is one of constant constituent of human everyday life" (Zotova, 2016).

So, L. Ray (Ray, 2007) points out that life in a globalized world does not create homogeneities and polarizations but rather creative and eclectic combinations of identities. In the context of this rapidly changing world it is a true challenge for the youth to build social identity (Furlong & Cartmel, 2007) as they lack the feeling of security.

Young people are less immune than other social groups to uncertainty and risks associated with economic and cultural globalization. They are also at the leading edge of technological and cultural changes. It is no surprise that they use a wide range of opportunities for self-expression.

The study and insight into young people identity is of great importance since they generate their own interpretations of the world and explore it (Ajegbo et al, 2007). They, in the first place, should feel a part of a wider multi-ethnic society.

The youth cannot be reduced to a number of identity types which are defined at the local, cultural, economic, or social level. Young people form their identity under the impact of multiple factors, partly, as a defense mechanism in the constantly changing world they are living in, or as a way of self-assertiveness but the level of psychological security always acts as an integrating indicator of identity. Security/insecurity of the surrounding reality facilitates the formation of everyone's own sets of opinions, views and settings (Zinchenko & Zotova, 2013).

2. Problem Statement

Despite massive research on the youth ethnic identity, specific features of ethnic identity in teenagers with different degree of the need for security satisfaction have not been dealt with so far.

3. Research Questions

1. Are there any differences in ethnic self-awareness of teenagers with different degree of the need for security satisfaction?

2. What nature does the link between ethnic self-awareness and the level of teenagers' tolerance have?

4. Purpose of the Study

The study was aimed at examining specifics of ethnic identity in teenagers with different degree of the need for security satisfaction.

The realization of this aim supposed solving the following objectives:

1. To assess a sense of belonging to ethnic group and significance of this belonging for groups of teenagers with different degree of the need for security satisfaction.

2. To identify the type of ethnic identity typical of the groups of teenagers with different degree of the need for security satisfaction.

3. To balance specifics of ethnic self-awareness of teenagers with different degree of the need for security satisfaction against general level of tolerance.

5. Research Methods

5.1. Subjects

According to the aim and the objectives set the sample was formed. The respondents represented 17-18 olds (average age – 17.63) from comprehensive schools of Yekaterinburg. The sample number was 223, 99 males and 124 females.

5.2. Measures and tools

The following methods were used:

– Questionnaire “Assessment of Need for Security Satisfaction” by O. Yu. Zotova;

– Scale-questionnaire by O. L. Romanova for investigating ethnic identity of children and teenagers;

– Questionnaire “Types of Ethnic Identity” by G. U. Soldatova and S. V. Ryzhova;

– Express-questionnaire “Index of Tolerance” by G. U. Soldatova, O. A. Krabtsova, O. E. Khukhlaeva, L. A. Shigerova.

In the course of the results processing methods of descriptive statistics, Mann-Whitney U Test, the regression analysis were exploited. The data obtained were processed with the use of SPSS 20.0 package.

6. Findings

The results obtained during data collection allowed for dividing the sample into two comparison groups which further were equalized by number. The groups were organized on the basis of the data obtained from answering “Assessment of Need for Security Satisfaction” questionnaire by O. Yu. Zotova. The respondents with high indicators of the need for security satisfaction entered group 1 ($X_{\text{mean}}=27.4$), group 2 consisted of the respondents with low indicators of the need for security satisfaction ($X_{\text{mean}}=11.2$). Each group included 57 subjects.

When matching the pronouncement of a sense of belonging to an ethnic group, significance of this belonging collected with the help of scale-questionnaire by O. L. Romanova no statistically significant differences were found (Table 01).

Table 01. Comparative analysis of Ethnic Identity Elements (n1=57, n2=57)

Elements of Ethnic Identity	Group 1	Group 2	Mann-Whitney U Test value; p
Sense of belonging to one's own ethnic group	M=17.84; SD=4.88	M=18.79; SD=2.99	U=1570.500; p=0.758
Significance of ethnic belonging	M=25.16; SD=4.19	M=24.68; SD=4.37	U=1566.000; p=0.738
Estimate of relationships between majority and minority	M=19.68; SD=4.11	M=20.74; SD=4.99	U=1354.500; p=0.124

However, significant differences were found in answers to particular items of the questionnaire. The respondents with high level of the need for security satisfaction, by large, share the opinion that “representatives of one nationality should communicate with one another using their native language” (item 3). In addition, the subjects of group 1 are likely to think that “people have the right to live where they like irrespective of their nationality” (item 11), and “representatives of indigenous population should not have any advantages over other peoples” (item 17). At the same time the respondents of group 1 are less sure than the respondents of group 2 that they would prefer the nationality they have if they had the opportunity to choose (item 21). The statistical differences described are shown below.

Table 02. Assessment of Group 1 and 2 Answers with Regard to Difference in Significance (n1=57, n2=57)

Comparison criterion	Items of scale-questionnaire by O. L. Romanova			
	3	11	17	21
Mann-Whitney U Test	U=1206.000; p=0.014	U=999.000; p=0.000	U=1165.500; p=0.006	U=1071.000; p=0.001

Therefore, statements received statistically significant different estimates in 2 comparison groups reflect the aspect of interaction (with the exception of item 21).

Further analysis of ethnic identity types characteristic of each comparison groups made it possible to clarify the respondents' attitude towards their own and outsider-groups.

Table 03. Comparative Analysis of Ethnic Identity Types (n1=57, n2=57)

Type of ethnic identity	Group1	Group 2	Mann-Whitney U Test value	Level of Significance
Ethno nihilism	M=6.42; SD=4.84	M=5.63; SD=3.25	1617.000	0.966
Ethnic indifference	M=11.105; SD=3.35	M=10.79; SD=3.55	1530.000	0.590
Positive ethnic identity	M=15.74; SD=2.82	M=11.42; SD=2.63	418.500	0.000
Ethno egoism	M=5.53; SD=3.84	M=8.42; SD=3.78	918.000	0.000
Ethno isolationism	M=5.58; SD=4.36	M=6.42; SD=3.34	1420.500	0.243
Ethno fanaticism	M=6.37; SD=4.37	M=11.93; SD=3.91	769.500	0.000

The analysis showed significant distinctions between the respondents of the two groups compared with respect to identity types – Positive ethnic identity, Ethno egoism, Ethno fanaticism.

Besides, significant differences in the degree of the respondents' agreement with particular items of the questionnaire which were not included into the load of the indicated differentiating scales were found. The respondents with high level of the need for security satisfaction, to a greater extent, demonstrated “the feeling of superiority over other nationals” (item 3; $U=990.00$ where $p=0.000$). The respondents of group 2 (low level of the need for security satisfaction) agree with the statement that they “do not get on well with their own nationals” (item 15) to a greater extent than the respondents of group 1 ($U=1296.00$ where $p=0.042$).

At the next stage of the analysis specific features of teenagers' ethnic self-awareness were balanced against the general level of their tolerance. This comparison of the general level of tolerance in groups 1 and 2 indicated statistically significant differences. The mean value of general tolerance in the group of adolescents with high level of the need for security satisfaction ($X_{mean}=95.63$) is significantly higher ($U=615.000$ where $p=0.000$) than the mean value of general tolerance in the group of adolescents with low level of the need for security satisfaction ($X_{mean}=62.33$). Both values are found within the interval of average level of tolerance, but on the given interval' boundaries (average level matches the interval from 61 to 99 points). The group with high level of the need for security satisfaction tends to high values of general tolerance while the group with low level of the need for security satisfaction tends to low values of general tolerance level.

The analysis of general tolerance level components (ethnic, social tolerance and tolerance as a personal trait) showed statistically significant differences on the scale tolerance as a personal trait ($U=894.500$ where $p=0.000$). The pronouncement of this trait is statistically higher in the respondents of group 1 than in the respondents of group 2 ($X_{mean}=35.26$ and $X_{mean}=23.74$ correspondingly).

In order to reveal the nature of the link between the teenagers' ethnic self-awareness and the general level of their tolerance the regression analysis was exploited. “Positive ethnic identity” reflecting the combination of positive attitude to both the subjects' own and outsiders' ethnic groups acted as a regressand. The results obtained testify to a linear dependence of the indicated regressands with high degree of statistical significance (adjusted $R^2=0.297$, $p=0.001$). The diagram clearly shows the nature between the regressands.

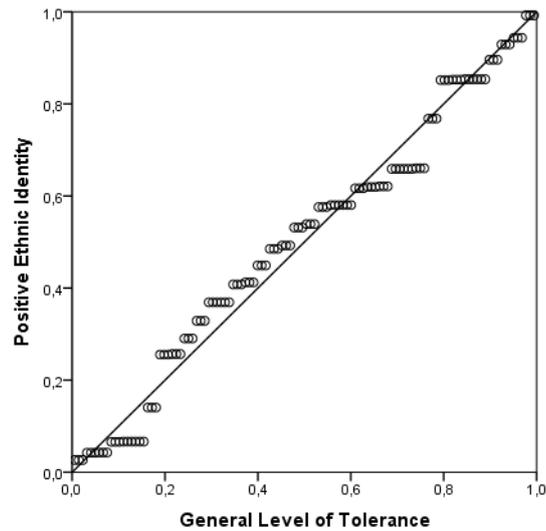


Figure 01. Scatter plot Showing Linear Dependence between “General Level of Tolerance” and “Positive Ethnic Identity”

To identify the nature of the link between “General level of tolerance” and “Satisfaction of the need for security” the regression analysis was also made. The results demonstrate that the variable “Satisfaction of the need for security” determines 55.9% variance of the variable “General level of tolerance” (adjusted $R^2=0.559$, $p=0.000$).

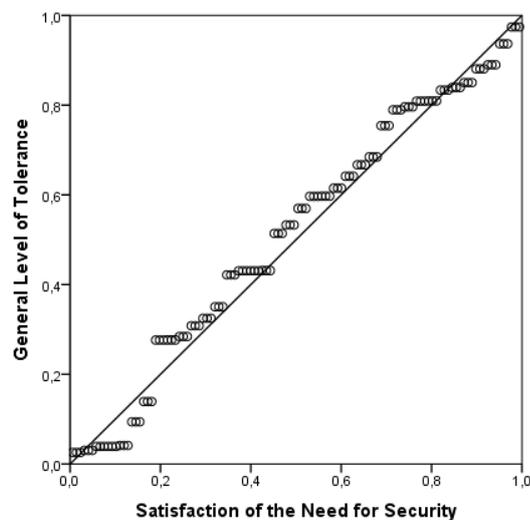


Figure 02. Scatter plot Showing Linear Dependence between “Satisfaction of the Need for Security” and “General Level of Tolerance”

The scatter plot testifies to the fact that the degree of the need for security satisfaction specifies the individual’s general level of tolerance in a linear fashion while the general level of tolerance determines the teenagers’ self-awareness in the same fashion.

7. Conclusion

The study of ethnic self-awareness in the context of personality psychological security, the degree of the need for security satisfaction characteristic of personality gave the opportunity to reveal a number of specific features.

First, it was found that the subjects' awareness of their belonging to this or that ethnic group and peculiarities of their own ethnic group lacks the link with the level of the need for security satisfaction. Both groups of teenagers exhibit moderate pronouncement of their sense of ethnic belonging.

Second, differences in dominating types of ethnic identity in the teenagers with different degree of the need for security satisfaction were revealed. The teenagers with high degree of the need for security satisfaction increasingly exhibit positive ethnic identity directed to positive awareness of their ethnic belonging and positive acceptance of other ethnic groups while the teenagers with low degree of the need for security satisfaction demonstrate ethno egoism and ethno fanaticism more intensely. The given identity type resides in negative attitudes towards other nationals and recognition of their own ethnic group' superiority over others.

Third, significant differences in the level of tolerance found in teenagers with high and low degree of the need for security satisfaction were revealed. For the teenagers with high degree of the need for security satisfaction a more pronounced tolerance than for the teenagers with low degree of the need for security satisfaction is typical. Tolerance as an attitude involving respect for and acceptance of other ethnic groups, norms, opinions implies mental flexibility, ability to manifest resilience with regard to frustrating situations and effects. The need for security reflected in the degree of tension of personality inner mental space results in higher anxiety, higher mental rigidity, which makes shaping of tolerance sets impossible.

Therefore, personality tolerance represents operationally resulting variable of the degree of the need for security satisfaction, which is confirmed by the revealed statistically significant linear dependence between the variables "Satisfaction of the Need for Security" and "General Level of Tolerance".

Fourth, the results testifying to great importance of personality tolerance level in identifying dominating type of identity were obtained. The growth of personality tolerance level strengthens positive ethnic identity: linear fashion of the link between these variables was statistically confirmed. Thus, the group of teenagers with high degree of the need for security satisfaction is characterized by higher tolerance, and they also exhibit positive ethnic identity to a greater extent. The group of adolescents with low degree of the need for security satisfaction demonstrates lower tolerance and negativism towards outsider-ethnic groups.

The results of the study empirically confirm the link between personality psychological security, personality evaluation of the degree of the need for security satisfaction and ethnic self-awareness. In the light of this, the data obtained can be used for developing effective forms and means of teenagers' ethnic awareness formation with due account of personality psychological security.

Acknowledgments

The article was supported with a grant from the Russian Science Foundation (project № 18-18-00112).

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