

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

**MULTICULTURALISM AND EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE:  
PROBLEMS OF SOCIO-CULTURAL IDENTITY PRESERVATION**

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***Abstract***

The article touches upon the actual problem of our time, related to the influence of the policy of multiculturalism on educational sphere of specific countries. The authors explore the factors that contributed to the formation of this policy in educational system. The positive and negative effects of multiculturalism, which are manifested in educational institutions, are analyzed. The signs of transformation of traditional value system under the influence of multiculturalism are revealed. The authors outline new trends, which bears in itself multiculturalism, being introduced into the educational space of Russia. Particular attention is paid to the subject-object relations in educational process.

The authors draw attention to the role of information technology in the spread of multiculturalism in the educational sphere of any society. The article proves that the newest information technologies guarantee the subjects of globalization a priority not only in economy, but also in culture. Global education involves the distribution of the world according to the subject-object attribute. The nations that nowadays play the role of the object of globalization rely on the appropriate educational level.

Particular attention is paid to the analysis of the prospects for the implementation of the policy of multiculturalism in education as a social institution. The authors conclude that under modern conditions of development of society, an education development strategy should help solve problems of the regional level, optimally fitting into the global context.

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**Keywords:** Policy, multiculturalism, tolerance, Muslims, migration.



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## **1. Introduction**

The relevance of the article is reasoned by a number of factors. First, multiculturalism is a form of social mobility characteristic of the era of globalization, which fundamentally transformed the entire social structure of society, including educational system. Secondly, the euphoria of the beginning of the millennium, due to the practice of multiculturalism, was replaced by the recognition of the collapse of such policies in specific regions of the world. Thirdly, the national educational sphere has not yet been able to determine the strategic vector of its development, which would be a synthesis between traditional values and world practice. The fact is that in addition to “... obvious, historically familiar risks in the problems of identity and value orientation, many new, previously non-existent risks generated by our era are hidden. It is about a number of global social processes that fundamentally changed the pictures of social existence of modernity” (Illarionov, 2014).

## **2. Problem Statement**

Sociological studies show that in the modern world, a full-fledged form of the information society implies a clear definition of the goals and objectives of world education, which is still seriously lagging behind the leading global trends, manifested in the fact that education has become, according to market laws, a service that has received a specific value. For the last decades, a pragmatic approach to education is characteristic, which is manifested in the fact that the tendency orienting subjects and objects of the educational process to the solution of practical problems becomes the leading one. However, education has always been aimed at the formation of a generation consisting of specialists, successful not only in narrow professional fields, but also capable of “solving very complex, diverse tasks that require not only vocational training, but also high-quality fundamental and humanitarian education” (Gabinskaya, 2007). The problem of multiculturalism is also largely determined by the fact that in the modern world the problem of overcoming the crisis of education, which is most pronounced in the humanitarian sphere, is put in the forefront, which is possible only in changing the consumer paradigm in education to a humanistic one. The basis of the new humanistic paradigm should be presented by solid humanitarian component that can fundamentally change the worldview of a young person, which will manifest itself in the system of established values, stable moral attitudes, as well as in the appropriate level of intelligence and education.

## **3. Research Questions**

One of the most acute social problems that characterize the present time is the problem of alienation, which is often laid at the level of the educational system. This is due to the fact that nowadays the observed gradual alienation of young people from their social roots, which is associated with the separation of the younger generation from social practices already at the local level. The basis for the formation of identity has always been a tradition, because the source of value orientation of a person is the system of transmission and reproduction, which in public life is a certain form of social existence. Such social communications have an objective component, which includes the transfer of socio-cultural content. This is the core of the culture, which is reproduced by subsequent generations, where the subjective factor is the reflection of an individual over the inheritance of his ancestors. The educational system of a particular society has always

relied on a number of such constructs as the “image of the “past”, “the heritage of the ancestors”, and “historical fate”, which implies “social communities” formed on the basis of “national identity”.

In the context of global communications, the educational system of society becomes a field of dynamic movement, where elements of various social systems intertwine in various combinations. However, such a policy in the educational sphere has great risks, since potentially conflicting forms of socialization are born in such a dynamic information environment. That is why one of the leading directions in the modern educational system is the understanding that the condition for the realization of an individual lies in unity with society.

The dominant model of the functioning of national educational system is a strong paradigm, which is implemented in the form of the implicit rules of social existence. However, as shown by Karpov (2014), a stable paradigm can be formed on the path of movement of the phenomenon to reality, which is the “relation of the realized substance to the social coalition involved in the production of the phenomenon, it is a reality that shapes, structures, organizes phenomenal existence and, moreover, determines the conditions of incorporation and exceptions of local complexes of ideas” (Karpov, 2014). At the same time, it is necessary to distinguish the definition of “implicit paradigm” from the definition of “meta-paradigm”, which, according to Dugin (2002), is an unrevealed until a certain time reality, where direct structuring reflection is hardly possible. That is why Dugin (2002) uses such notions as “sphere”, “ray” and “segment” as “super-generalizing” paradigms, since each of them “can be the basis of philosophy, science, mythology, theology, gnoseology, etc.”.

Multiculturalism in global world can act as a specific socialization of a young person, because in the educational system “... there is an acquisition of literally cosmic fullness of sociality, when the community of humanity and its fate visibly speak, there is an urgent need for self-reflection, self-organization and self-socialization as a single collective subject” (Kirillov, 2014). However, the aggressive, violent nature of modern globalization causes the concern of the world community, because “... a discriminatory process causes resistance from peoples and states feeling threatened with loss of national identity, dissolving their unitary cultures in the globalized American-type superculture” (Nalyvayko & Kosenko, 2015).

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

The purpose of the study is to highlight the leading paths of constructive educational practices aimed at preserving socio-cultural identity of students in the context of the introduction of multiculturalism.

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

Multiculturalism presents a central topic of scientific, political and public discussions that have been going on for several decades in developed countries, mainly in Western Europe, since the formation of a multi-ethnic society based on a stable basis is a major task for all modern social sciences. Analyzing the manifestations of multiculturalism in educational system, it is important to take into account the fact that history is the process of idealizing a person in practice. It refers to the fact that the common human traits typical for various historical generations are exclusively positive; therefore the historical process reflected in the textbooks represents a consistent weakening of the negative traits of humanity and an increase in its positive characteristics.

A distinctive feature of the educational sphere of the West is the parallel existence and development of the cultural tradition of indigenous European nations and new sociocultural influences of resettling immigrants who dictate new principles for the formation of societies. The main element of multiculturalism is tolerance, which is designed to create a new geopolitical space, the leading characteristic of which is the peaceful coexistence of all the diversity of cultures. However, these processes are developing rather controversially, which former British Prime Minister D. Cameron was forced to admit, speaking at the 47th Security Conference in Munich in February 2011, noting the failure of the “state multiculturalism” policy. As a way out of this controversial situation that threatens with potential conflicts, this politician proposed to abandon the tolerance of the past decades, which was characterized by passivity in favor of liberalism, which is active in protecting national identity, the rule of law and freedom of speech. All these aspects are fully reflected in the development of education, since it is under strong liberal pressure.

The problem of introducing multiculturalism into the educational system of Russia is reasoned by the fact that the similarity of the hierarchy of value orientations of young people of different acculturation strategies indicates common mental features for citizens. For the Russian education system in the context of globalization pressure, the preservation of certain values, which necessarily include conscience, a sense of justice, family values, and the presence of nationwide social projects, are of particular importance. In the context of educational practice, it is important to emphasize that group cultural traditions, which include ethnic and religious differences, in most cases are not voluntary, since they are given to an individual from birth.

It can be argued that ambivalent tendencies characterizing the processes of integration of ethnic groups, civilizations and cultures into an integral social organism, which are distinguished by a particular political and legal organization, as well as by certain structures of education and upbringing, characterize not only global social processes, but also global education. The description of the methods used in the performance of the study.

## **6. Findings**

Multiculturalism is a policy aimed at the development and preservation of cultural differences not only in a single state, but also in the world community. Multiculturalism recognizes the rights of ethnic and cultural groups that are trying to preserve their identity, not being a kind of “melting pot”, which suggested the fusion all cultures into one. This is the fundamental difference between multiculturalism and the ideas of political liberalism (Kuropyatnik, 2000). The rights of ethnic minorities are manifested primarily in enabling them to maintain their national identity at the level of educational system.

In the modern world, media are aimed at the formation of a consumer-type personality, which actualizes the problem of “the unreliability of the commercialization of media; low ethical level with the use and destruction of moral and cultural forms of behavior and vocabulary. Such a state of media and media space requires appropriate control from both the state and pedagogical structures” (Avdeeva, 2015).

For the optimal development of educational system, liberal criticism of multiculturalism is important, including more than a number of arguments. Such a policy guarantees state support both to individual cultures and to social groups that do not always reasonably represent the interests of the entire ethnic group. Sponsoring communities through government structures creates an incentive for the

development of a collective identity while suppressing individual identity, which forms the power of community over an individual in educational space. It can be argued that multiculturalism creates the conditions for the artificial conservation of traditional community relations, which results in the creation of obstacles to the integration of people of different cultures into an integral social organism in the form of civil society.

The disadvantage of multiculturalism is the resulted segregation of social groups, which leads to the emergence of artificial boundaries between different communities. Education suffers from a similar policy to a greater extent than other social institutions, since in many countries enclosed mono-ethnic educational institutions have emerged. The paradox is that multiculturalism at the state level becomes unconditional monoculturalism and segregation at the local level. Similar paradoxical transformations also occur with other values that were the basis of the idea of multiculturalism several decades ago, since this policy is designed to protect the freedom of cultural expression, humanism and democracy. The fact is that the policy of multiculturalism in practice has led to the emergence of special educational institutions that arise in closed settlements and neighborhoods where it is difficult to guarantee the protection of human rights. For example, young Turks who migrated to Germany do not tend much to integrate than they differ from the representatives of their nation of the older generation. Such trends are fully manifested in national education, confirming the inconsistency of the policy of multiculturalism, manifested in the policy of cultural disintegration.

In the modern world the search for new alternatives to the policy of multiculturalism does not stop. In particular, the optimal educational strategy implies a mandatory study of the culture and language of the host state by migrants. One of the most promising areas is the model of “individual freedom and cultural choice,” the basic principles of which were outlined by Nobel Prize winner Amartya Sen. He emphasized that “the multitude of injustices existing in the world persists and flourishes just because they turn their victims into allies, depriving them of the opportunity to choose another life and even preventing them from learning about the existence of this other life” (Sen, 2004). Naturally, such tendencies manifest themselves already at the level of educational system, discrediting the leading principles of multiculturalism.

In order to characterize the peculiarities of multiculturalism in educational system, it is important to take into account the fact that globalization differs from internationalization, since it implies the systemic orderliness of all elements. At the same time, the merging of the production and economic structures of the leading states results in complete loss of their socio-cultural, political, and also educational sovereignty. Gradually, globalization trends are invading spiritual sphere (Kirvel & Strelchenko, 2007). Such dialectic accompanies the complex dynamics of the development of the spiritual world of a person, which consists in climbing to a conscious level, passing through all stages of unawareness.

Unfortunately, the introduction of multiculturalism into educational structures implies an exceptional, often even hypertrophied interest, which is attached to the experience of others. This feature is reasoned by the peculiarities of social psychology, which makes it impossible to objectively evaluate the positive experience of their ancestors. In addition, a positive attitude towards own experience of a person does not always fully manifest itself, because the state in which the subject is at the moment of choice presents the result of a previous evolution. The presence of historical experience of other nations, which is appropriately interpreted, greatly facilitates the decision-making elite to transmit such decisions to the

masses. In this situation, it is sometimes sufficient to refer to the common sense of the whole society, which reduces the need for a theoretical substantiation of the path chosen by this society in order to preserve its socio-cultural identity.

The interaction between multiculturalism and education is primarily determined by the fact that the modern world order is in the process of a civilization transition. The past reality is on the verge of decay, and the other, post-industrial, can arise in such forms that the names have not yet invented. "It is in this form that, according to F. Nietzsche, we have been virtually unchanged for the last twenty-five centuries of the domination of unnatural values" (Mironov, 2005).

This situation is reasoned by the fact that as a result of the transition from the theoretical level to the level of everyday consciousness, a noticeable transformation of deep meanings is manifested. This is largely determined by shortcomings that are laid at the level of educational system and then manifest in the process of socialization of a particular person. The fact is that modern educational practice often forms an egocentric approach, when students pay more attention to claims about their rights than to understanding the degree of responsibility for their actions. That is why it is so important to include in educational process topics related to the dialectic of rights and duties, freedoms and responsibility of students for their actions. It is necessary to show different solutions to the problem of human rights in different socio-cultural traditions, as well as to train future specialists in integration approaches in the solution of complex issues.

The introduction of multiculturalism presupposes the enrichment of educational practice with new psychological research on aspects of the problem of learning interaction that previously were not in the field of view of teachers and psychologists. Multiculturalism allows a different look at the system of didactic communication. The achievement of such result, regardless of the communication tools used, sometimes alienating the student from the subject and the mentor, is coming to the forefront, but building the meaningful, targeted, and flexible communication of the trainers and trainees towards achieving a common goal - personal developing cognitive result (Arpentieva, 2016).

Despite the generally accepted perceptions of special importance of social sciences, the humanitarian component remains in the shadow of not only the university system, where more attention is paid to technical education, but also at the level of secondary school education. In our opinion, the problem is connected not only with the modes of humanitarian component representation in educational standards, which can be estimated in the number of training hours allocated to the humanitarian block of disciplines. For a harmoniously developing personality, humanitarian education acts as an important component of his worldview, and this did not depend on professional orientation, since everyone understood the importance of humanitarian content in natural science, precise and technical academic disciplines. Any teacher understood the need to develop leading competencies: respect for work, cooperation, recognition of the successes of his colleagues, etc., which made it possible to objectively assess the role of the humanities in the implementation of pedagogic and educational areas in the activities of university. "The role of the humanitarian component of higher professional education should be adjusted in accordance with changes in the structure and objectives of educational process. The growth of the share of project educational activities, distance and e-education implies the formulation of the following problems solved by humanitarian departments: the identification of social and other consequences of project; the determination of the prerequisites and consequences of the implementation of innovations for specific conditions; the

study and use (including within the framework of cooperation) of international experience” (Rakhimova & Galmagova, 2017).

Multiculturalism presupposes a value component, since “the axiologization of the world educational space in the context of globalization will require a transition from a “lagging” education model, an appropriate stage of unstable civilization development to a system model of advanced education, adequate to the goals of sustainable development and embodying its principles” (Vlasuyk, 2014). The inevitable involving of national education systems in economic and political globality brings to the forefront the effect of the cultural factor of globalization, which the authors revealed through understanding the term “global culture” in its relationship with education. In the approach to globalization as a cultural process, several approaches can be distinguished. The first approach is clearly manifested in the concept of P. Berger, S. Huntington, where global culture was viewed as American, although the paradox is that it is not related to US history, but is the fruit of the “Hellenistic stage of the development of Anglo-American civilization” (Berger & Huntington, 2004), and its influence will become the prevailing trend in the future.

It means that multiculturalism must take on other forms in order to fit organically into global education, which should reflect the leading modern trends, which show that fundamental changes are taking place in the humanitarian sphere. Such transformations will mostly influence the fate of modern civilization. Therefore the modern world community is reaching the level of a new humanitarian revolution, which is directly connected with the revolution in educational sphere. In such a world, the opportunities for the formation of a new systemic thinking appear. In addition the conditions for the development of a global innovative educational project, when education is called upon to guarantee the principles of the sustainable development of society, aimed at preserving the sociocultural identity of each society are created. “Criticizing the limited thinking, brought up on specialization, A.A. Bogdanov made an attempt to lay the universal, generalized methodological foundations of science that unites the experience of mankind” (Komova, Gusarenko, & Nozdrin, 2015).

The problem of multiculturalism in educational sphere is largely determined by the processes of accelerated communications, which is associated with the influence of information technology on the moral foundations of the modern Russian school. Such a policy leads to the degradation of individual societies that have fallen under Western standards of globalization (Kudashov, Chernykh, Yatsenko, Rakhinsky, & 2016).

At the present stage of convergence, such an interpenetration of educational systems occurs, which greatly complicates the categorical description of education. The interaction of education systems is manifested in their openness to each other, the ability to influence each other. The development of any educational system is due to both internal causes and the external nature of interaction with another educational system. Mastering the external influence in the process of their interaction turns into the internal elements of the system. Before the start of the interaction, each education system appears as a whole. In the process of interaction, it is differentiated and, in addition to the elements peculiar only to it (“own”), there appear elements inherent in both systems (other, “alien”, which has become its own). The first is specific, unique, and inherent only in this educational system, the second is common, existing in this and in another (alien) system. The categorical oppositions already described above are insufficient when characterizing the integration trends in the world education system. It can be explained by the dynamics of global

sociocultural processes are multidirectional in nature and lead the researcher beyond the usual socio-philosophical concepts by introducing new alternative definitions.

Nowadays, against the background of modern global changes, the need to recognize own development path of a particular person, which fully reflects the national model of education modernization with regard to local socio-cultural traditions, is recognized. Collision with a technogenic civilization transforms some societies into a state of “transitivity”, “borderlands”, “hybridity”, which puts them before the choice of many alternatives, forms new models of education in these societies. Multiculturalism can fit into such educational models, provided that the future of national education system will be concentrated around the maximum possibility of its identity in the modern global world. At the same time, an appropriate level of identity is achieved through its openness. Removing the boundaries while expanding the communication space leads to the creation of conditions for coexistence with other national education systems. Such education systems actively interact with others on the basis of the interchange of ideas, experiences; they are open to contacts, create an atmosphere of readiness for dialogue between cultures. The impossibility of manifestation of identity is carried out in the form of closeness of the education system and protection from external interactions, opposing their values to someone else. The orientation of national education system as a “project identity of identity directed towards the future” (Castells, 1999), which creates a basis for openness, cultural pluralism, meaning not confusion, but holistic coexistence, is seen as the “middle way” of perspective cooperation. From this thesis, it follows that the openness of education systems does not necessarily imply the erasing of differences, as well as mutual absorption of one another, because it allows “keeping the situation of cultural pluralism and ethno-cultural diversity by creating fields of value interaction” (Astafyeva, 2012).

## **7. Conclusion**

The influence of multiculturalism on educational policy and practice in the modern world is reasoned by the problems of sociocultural identity. In many societies, the modernization of education originally meant “Westernization”, the division into “our own” and “alien”, gave rise to universalistic and particularistic tendencies in the philosophical views of researchers from different countries and continents. Borrowing “Western” experience in the field of labor organization and education, these communities perceived it through the prism of their mentality, the historical tradition of internal and regional interests. As a result, in different cultural and civilization contexts there is the manifestation of traditionalism, revived on a new basis and taking into account the ongoing civilization changes. It can become a powerful basis factor of innovation and modernization of higher education and its harmonious integration into global process. Due to the objectivity of the formation of a unified interconnected and interdependent world, non-Western educational traditions offer ways to harmonize the relationship between a person and the world, its survival, “understanding education”, intercultural dialogue as a way to “make conversation” with Western culture. Under the influence of the globalization of education, the integration processes of various intellectual traditions have intensified.

The comparative analysis showed that, on the one hand, the origin of the universal worldview comes from the foundations of the cultural and historical traditions of this or that society, and on the other, the search for universal common foundations moves from the regional to the general levels. That is why, in the



context of the introduction of multiculturalism, the constructive educational practice should be aimed at the preservation of socio-cultural identity of students. The question of education strategy is an issue of building a common space, setting the order of future cultural and civilization interactions in the field of education.

Under the modern conditions of the development of society, the strategy for the improvement of education should contribute as much as possible to the solution of problems at the global, regional and national levels, and fit optimally in this context. This does not mean that it is necessary to abandon own national education strategy; it is necessary to choose the most optimal way of embedding it in an international context without repercussions. The influence of the newest information technologies in educational process on the formation and development of a personality should be not only technogenic, but also humanitarian in nature, which implies changing not only the world around a person, but also a person himself.

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