

**NININS 2020****International Scientific Forum «National Interest, National Identity and National Security»****EDUCATION AND INTELLIGENTNOST':  
A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS**

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**Abstract**

The paper touches upon an issue of intelligentnost' and education formation in modern society which is at the moment undergoing the period when traditional Russian spiritual and moral values are being eroded. Social rationalization is one of the reasons that give rise to intelligentnost' as a personal quality. Individual's moral values strive for a greater amount of knowledge, constant self-improvement and self-development, as well as self-consciousness, are the prerequisites for intelligentnost' to originate. On the one hand, it is an ideal quality; on the other, it is a real quality of a person, it is an individual development track. Thus, there is both an ideal understanding of this quality and its practical manifestation. Education is not just an amount of knowledge, but a striving and a need for its accumulation as well as a capability to do that. An ability to reflect upon life and highly developed worldviews are indispensable attributes of education. When acquiring knowledge and skills, an educated person should establish their system of values, master a critical and creative approach to solving scientific and everyday problems, exercise self-cognition and self-observation. Education is not the only cause that entails reflection. It might be triggered by life circumstances that make people start thinking about the meaningfulness of their existence. Intelligentnost' and education are the qualities that contribute to the development of a new system of ideals that will be based on traditional Russian spiritual and moral values.

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*Keywords:* Education, intelligentnost', intelligentsia, self-education, values



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## 1. Introduction

On December 5, 2016 “Doctrine of Information Security of the Russian Federation” was approved by Decree of the President of the Russian Federation. It mentions among major information threats to Russia “a growing information pressure on the population of Russia, primarily on the Russian youth, with the aim to erode Russian traditional spiritual and moral values” (Doctrine, 2016). Thus, one of the basic tasks for Russian society is to eliminate informational and psychological influence that seeks to undermine the historical foundation and patriotic traditions closely connected with the homeland defence and the victory in the Great Patriotic War.

What is the way to solve the problems that are extremely topical for modern Russian society and have been acknowledged by the government? Since the 19th century, there have been people in Russia that are called the intelligentsia – “intellectuals considered as a group or class, especially as a cultural, social, or political elite” (Dictionary.com), “the people in a society who are most highly educated and who are most interested in new ideas, especially in art, literature, or politics” (LDOCE). This is considered to be a typically Russian phenomenon that has no analogues in the whole world. Despite a rather denunciative attitude to the intelligentsia both in the past and at present, this social layer is a carrier of traditional Russian values.

## 2. Problem Statement

The phenomenon of the intelligentsia caused heated discussions in the 19th century that turned out to be rather topical in the 20th century as well (Dimitricheva, 2004). Numerous papers, monographs, theses have been devoted to this phenomenon. Different Internet sites discuss the issue of the intelligentsia essence, try to specify the notion, to list the intelligentsia qualities as well as to define the role it plays in modern Russian society and history.

At the moment, Russian society is in a transitional state when a new ideal is required. This ideal might be based on the understanding of the intelligentsia as a significant social stratum. This fact determines a recurring interest in the phenomenon of the intelligentsia.

Education is a prerequisite for such a quality as *intelligentnost'* (quite often mistakenly and misleadingly translated as “intelligence” in English what does not reveal the essence of the phenomenon). In the 19th century, the notion “intelligentsia” was attributed to the class of people who got European-like education. Nowadays, education in Russia is available for most people; at least that opportunity is granted by law. Education is the cornerstone of *intelligentnost'*, but it does not guarantee the development of *intelligentnost'*, since the latter requires self-education and self-improvement.

## 3. Research Questions

There are numerous approaches to defining the intelligentsia. The functional approach is the most accepted one. According to it, the intelligentsia is the people whose professional sphere is connected with intellectual labour and who are academically qualified to perform that work. In this case, then what is the difference between the intelligentsia and intellectuals?

The axiological approach might be of help to answer the question. According to it, alongside with higher education and engagement in intellectual labour, the Russian understanding of the intelligentsia includes such a significant constituent as a person's moral stand. Advocates of this approach consider family upbringing and self-improvement, education and self-development, high citizenly morality and spiritual creativity to be the major criteria that characterize the intelligentsia. Among the essential qualities of the intelligentsia, they also name ethical qualities and a proactive attitude to life as it used to be in the 19th century.

The notion of intelligentnost' has been directly derived from the concept of the intelligentsia. "Intelligentnost' is an integrated manifestation of a person's intellectual, cultural, civil, moral qualities. The understanding of such phenomena as self-sacrifice, public spirit, rectitude, profound and omnifarious knowledge has been connected with the notion of intelligentnost' for a long time" (Naumova, 2018, para. 22).

Thus, intelligentnost' is self-improvement in two major directions: cognitive and axiological. It is at the same time an ideal quality and a real one what determines multiple understandings of the notion. To develop intelligentnost', one should not be only subjected to external influence (i.e., upbringing). However, on understanding the significance of this quality, a person should strive for its further reinforcement through self-improvement and self-development.

In the 20th century adherents of the axiological approach (as is the case with the representatives of the socio-ethical approach in the 19th century) believe that the paramount attribute of intelligentnost' is social activism. According to one of the most prominent figures in Russian philosophical and religious thought of the 20th century Aleksei Losev:

Intelligentnost' is personal life or an individual's function, that is regarded as a conglomeration of natural, social and historical relations. Ideologically, this individual lives for the sake of common well-being. This personality does not just muse on the imperfections of life but improves them. Moreover, that requires from a person a potential or a real act of bravery to manage those imperfections. (Losev, 1988, p. 319).

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

The purpose of the paper is to carry out a comparative analysis of two phenomena – intelligentnost' and education.

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

The following methods have been used to achieve the goal: comparative analysis, synthesis, historicism. Dialectic pairs of common and particular, possibility and reality, have been used for the analysis.

#### **6. Findings**

Intelligentnost' is a secular spirituality that is based on rationality. It is a quality of an individual that is determined by a person's morality, high level of education, strive for understanding the inner and

outer world, constant development and self-improvement. Intelligentnost' is a rational perception of life and one of the potential ways of a person's development. The two major types of intelligentnost' are the following: the first one is aimed at the improvement of the world around us; the second one pursues self-development and enrichment of the inner world of a person (Dimitricheva, 2017). Any individual can cultivate this quality, but it may also evolve under the influence of people around, their actions, social environment in general.

An ideal understanding of intelligentnost' encompasses the following aspects:

1. high moral qualities (conscience, love and respect of other people, acknowledgement of another person's uniqueness, goodwill, honesty, human decency, a strong sense of justice, politeness, tactfulness, loyalty, compassion);
2. a high level of education (the amount of specific professional knowledge, awareness of current trends in science, critical thinking and critical appreciation, including yourself, adherence to your principles);
3. an increased focus on worldview issues, a need for self-analysis, a desire to find reasonable answers to all the questions (including why and how).

Intelligentnost' is preoccupied with gradually but constantly activating the enumerated ideal features in every human being.

Before moving to the comparative analysis of intelligentnost' and education, it is necessary to take into consideration what the modern Russian state policy in the sphere of education is like. "National Doctrine of Education in the Russian Federation (till 2025)" approved by the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation in 2000 describes major directions of educational legislature improvement. It defines "the objectives of upbringing and education, the ways to pursue those goals by means of state education policy, and the results that are expected to be achieved within the period till 2025" (Doctrine, 2000).

Among the purposes and objectives enumerated in the Doctrine, the following ones are the most significant, from our perspective, for building up intelligentnost':

1. development of children's and young adults' integrated world outlook and modern scientific worldview;
2. all-rounded and timely development of children's and young adults' creative skills, capabilities for self-improvement and self-actualization;
3. lifelong learning;
4. civic and national education: true upbringing patriots of Russia, cultivating citizens of a constitutional and democratic state, who will be capable of adjusting to the civil society, who will respect human and civil rights and freedoms, who will hold high moral standards, who will exercise national and religious tolerance, who will appreciate languages, traditions and culture of other nations;
5. classroom management with current advances in science in mind and regular modernization of all aspects of education that should include up-to-date changes in culture, economics, science, engineering and technologies.

The National Doctrine of Education advocates the development of a cultured and intelligent person, though the word “intelligentnost” is not found in the document. It speaks about morality, independent worldview, lifelong learning, creativity, which are all fundamental for cultivating intelligentnost’.

Nowadays, the modern system of education is trying to integrate scientific advances in its content. At the moment modern science is at the postnonclassical stage of development. That is why a wide range of peculiarities of modern science should be taken into consideration when integrated into education.

First of all, an educated person should be knowledgeable in philosophy since the role of this subject in science and culture, in general, has grown profoundly. Scientific methods merit special attention. It is a must for a representative of the modern academic community to have knowledge of methodology, ontology, epistemology, axiology, and a capacity to shape their worldview on the basis of that knowledge.

Secondly, it is important to understand that any methodology is rather one-dimensional, including rationalist. One cannot resort to logic or dialectics or epistemology only when dealing with modern science. Nowadays, it requires intuition, inventiveness, imagination and other creative ways of perceiving and comprehending reality.

Thirdly, it is necessary to know various methods and ways of learning, to be able to test the validity and dependability of those methods. One should master the dialectic method, which is required by the subject matter of a research process due to its integrity, self-evolution, controversy and dialectic nature of the cognitive process in general. From our perspective, education consists of the amount of knowledge that a person has managed to accumulate when studying in a university or a vocational school and their awareness of the changes that take place in the sphere they are majored. Any educated person should have their own independent opinion on science development and be able to present it cogently.

Moreover, education is not just an amount of knowledge; it is a striving and a need for upgrading that knowledge as well as a capability to accumulate new one. Education implies that a person will cultivate a skill of self-analysis and a capacity to develop the world outlook. These are indispensable prerequisites for intelligentnost’.

Education enables people to acquire scientific concepts opposite to everyday ones that are moulded randomly. The purpose of education is to develop such an individual’s skills that are needed by society and a person to let the latter get fully involved in social activities. Nowadays, the traditional triad of knowledge, skills and abilities is not an end in itself anymore. Education should provide an opportunity for self-development beyond the educational system. This statement is a part of the National Doctrine of Education. An educated person should be able to give up their old beliefs and convictions in order to have the chance to learn the truth.

Getting education by acquiring knowledge, skills and abilities, a person should build their system of values, master creative and non-standard approach to solving problems, learn to assess personal qualities and deeds with detachment, be able to contemplate about life and its meaning and the significance of human culture in general.

An educated person should:

1. manage their actions, both moral and mental;

2. be able to see the unknown in the familiar, the unorthodox in the obvious (this controversy is the basis of the creative approach);
3. analyze situations from different perspectives, see the interdependence of aims, conditions and explanations;
4. use theoretical methods of cognition to analyze knowledge, its structure and content;
5. correlate the real world with the world it should be, as well as with the system of moral esthetical ideals and cognitive values.

As a rule, the later stage that is about the perception of the world and self-understanding can be provided by education, i.e., by means of purposeful exposure to instruction and practice. Though, sometimes a person comes to this realization in the course of life with the help of their individual emotional and intellectual qualities.

Let us consider the emotional constituent. Modern psychology names the following needs among the basic ones that a person craves for: they are a need for communication, a need for experiences, a need for perception, a need for excitement, a need for emotions, a need for passions, a need for sympathy, a need for love, a need for friendship, a need for loyalty, a need for valuable information. These are all moral and psychological mechanisms that reveal human moral activity and ethical development. Research shows that the loss of emotional saturation from perceiving the outer world or the loss of individual self (though, reasonable and cognitive aspects remain) causes a personality's deformation that might result in the pathological psychological condition. In such a situation, any person believes that the world has no significance anymore. Consequently, the person loses any desire to live in such a world. When the individual self loses its meaningfulness, it brings about apathy and indifference. The medicine defines this phenomenon as a psychological pathology or an emotional disorder with active cognitive skills of a person.

Philosophical literature and fiction have touched upon the issue of worldview consciousness awakening. While 'intelligentnost' is a typically Russian phenomenon, worldview consciousness awakening has been a focus of concern of both Russian and foreign literature. Existential philosophy has paid much attention to this aspect of a person's inner world. One of the key figures in the philosophy of existentialism, Jean-Paul Sartre, depicted his characters in borderline states due to which an individual worldview is shaped (Sartre, 2007). Mundanity and everyday routine, on the one hand, cause a sense of emptiness, of dead-end; on the other, they inspire a person for further self-development, make them improve themselves. World literature is replete with situations when characters reassess their life goals, needs, interests, endeavours and expectations and finally come to the realization of the senselessness of their lives, e.g., "Sunlight on Cold Water" by Sagan (2015), "Anna Karenina", especially Levin's contemplations, by Tolstoy (2017), a short story "An Incurable" by Uspensky (1984). The empty feeling, which is an emotional constituent of the human psyche, causes human consciousness awakening. This awakening and a thorough examination of life allow people to understand that those characters are cultured and intelligent people. Self-development and self-improvement give rise to 'intelligentnost'.

There is another way to awaken consciousness. It happens when a person tries to grasp the essence of their life resorting to the power of reason, not emotions. Such situations are described, for example, in

Tolstoy's "Confession" (Tolstoy, 1983), Camus's "The rebel". In these works, a character, figuratively speaking, wakes up from a spiritual dormancy. The meaning of life turns out to be beyond the mundane. Thus, a person's objective is to find their purpose, their calling, their destiny in this life.

Education facilitates a person's development; it shapes a reasonable and intelligent perception of the world. If a person makes a choice between the Good and the Evil driven by reason and their system of values, which is not connected with religious dogmas and commandments, intelligentnost' is ingrained in such a person. Such cultured people resort to their willpower to subdue their flaws and to control over their imperfection. One of the ways to cultivate that skill is to analyze personal activities, experiences and emotions as well as positive and negative deeds every day. Thus, rationality is the basis of a person's self-improvement. Reason and cognitive skills are the features that education and intelligentnost' have in common. Cognitive skills are indispensable for the analysis of a person's actions and the progress they make or otherwise as well as for self-improvement. Nevertheless, irrational aspects of a personality such as love, emotions, will, intuition, play a significant part in self-improvement. However, intelligentnost' is characterized by its respect to the reason which questions everything and tries to find answers to the most fundamental and essential questions of humankind and their existence.

## 7. Conclusion

Taking into consideration everything mentioned above, one can conclude that education and intelligentnost' can exist separately, or one can become a prerequisite for the development of the other. On the one hand, education may give birth to intelligentnost'; on the other, the latter can become an incentive to get educated. The more educated one becomes, the greater the striving for further training, self-education and self-actualization grow. A similar need might be developed based on ethical advancement, to which a person is pushed by existence itself. An individual starts speculating about the essence of life and tries to grasp it rationally. A cultured person lives for the sake of social truth and scientific verity. Intelligentnost' implies both an ideal and real quality. The intelligentsia's life is about the constant evocation of ideal qualities in every single person. Intelligentnost' and education are the qualities that will facilitate the shaping of new ideals based on traditional Russian spiritual and moral values.

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