

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN THE YOUTH ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract: The difficulties of interethnic interaction and ensuing ethnic conflicts represent a topical research problem. At present, the problem of ethnic conflicts in the youth environment is particularly acute and serious. As in other European countries, in Russia there is a trend towards the revival of national consciousness and cultural heritage, ethnic identity, both in minorities and in large nations of a multinational country.

The ethnic paradox of our time, accompanying the unification of spiritual and material culture, leads to the emergence of various positive and negative social phenomena. This paper presents the results of a theoretical and methodological analysis of ethnic conflicts in the youth environment, the causes of their occurrence and resolution technologies. On the basis of the content analysis of sociological surveys in the

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period from 2012 to 2019, the features of the culture of conflict interaction in the youth environment were identified and determined. The conclusions have been drawn that there are causes peculiar to each conflict situation which comprise the major one - cultural differences between peoples. It has been proved that among conflict resolution technologies, the best option is to eliminate the sources of conflict situations by implementing general cultural development in educational institutions at different stages (pre-school education, moral education and educational activities in schools, colleges and universities in the form of excursions into other nationalities) and the use of effective public policy. In addition, it has been substantiated that over time, the nature of causes, technologies for resolving ethnic conflicts tend to change to more constructive ones and influence the dynamics of the level of conflict in society.

Keywords: conflict interaction, culture of conflict interaction, ethnic conflicts, youth subculture.

1. INTRODUCTION

The difficulties of interethnic interaction, and the resulting ethnic conflicts, are an urgent research problem, which is based on both subjective and objective contradictions, situations embracing either conflicting positions of the parties on a problem, or disagreement of opponents' interests.

At present, the problem of ethnic conflicts in the youth environment is particularly acute and urgent. As in other European countries, in Russia there is a tendency towards the revival of national consciousness and cultural heritage, ethnic identity, both in minorities and in large nations of a multinational country. The ethnic paradox of the present, accompanying the unification of spiritual and material culture, leads to the emergence of various positive and negative social phenomena.

The formation of culture of conflict resolution is a rather long and complex process, which takes several forms of manifestation. One of such forms is ethnic conflict, and one of the varieties of ethnic conflict which bears an acute character is ethnic conflict in the youth environment.

Being the most dynamic and active stratum of society, the intellectual

potential and the future of the whole generation, young people have an undeniable advantage, since the future of the country is in their hands. One of the essential characteristics of this group is its innovative potential. We can say that youth is a kind of phenomenon that plays the role of a lever in the development of post-industrial society [6; 11; 14; 30].

It is young people who are especially affected by various kinds of conflicting situations. Representing an inseparable part of all civil movements, associations and pickets, as well as feeling the consequences of various kinds of national crises, young people are ready to take part in ethnic conflicts in order to achieve justice.

Young people are distinguished from other social groups by their ethnocentricity - intolerance towards other nationalities and religions. This is confirmed by the fact that scientists have detected the presence of nationalist beliefs in the circle of some youth associations, the desire to look strong in spirit and successful in life, to divide others into “friends” and “strangers”. Differentiation into “friends” and “strangers” is formed already at school. Among young people, during their learning at school, an opinion is formed

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that strangers are to be blamed for all social, political and economic conflicts - representatives of a “non-native” ethnic group. This is connected with the fact that beliefs themselves have a long history and are taught as a part of a general education program at the lessons of the world and the history of the native land. Hence one can see the lack of tolerance, the presence of nationalist ideas and ethnic stereotypes [1; 13; 23; 22; 42].

That is why close attention is focused on this age group, both by state research organizations and research organizations that study the problem in educational institutions.

2. METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

A. Smith (2007) [34] was the first to study conflict as a social phenomenon [7]. The founder of political economy in his study “The Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations” suggested that the conflict is based on the division of society into classes (capitalists, landowners, hired workers) and economic rivalry between them.

E. Durkheim (1995), the bright representative of functionalism, in his

turn, influenced by aspects of the bioorganic trend in sociology, adhered to the ideas of collectivity that permeate the conflict: “Both individual conflicts can be restrained using the regulatory actions of society, and social conflicts can be regulated using the actions of one society that includes others: a force capable of reducing individual egoism is the strength of a group; a force capable of reducing individual egoism is a force of another, large-scale group, embracing several groups”. Thus, the whole concept of E. Durkheim (1995) is based on the fact that society stands above man, and all social ties and the totality of social institutions are held together by the collective consciousness, supported by the force of moral coercion [5].

T. Parsons (1967) [28] and R. Merton (2006) [20], being followers of G. Spencer (1986) [35], sought to study the specifics of maintaining order and cooperation in groups. T. Parsons (1967) believed that conflict is destructive, dysfunctional and devastating. Trying to answer the question: “How is the social order possible?”, T. Parsons (1967) revealed the desire of the system to maintain the equilibrium, balance of constituent elements and evolutionary development.

If the function is disrupted in the system, this leads to a disorganization of the institution or organization, and as a result to social conflict. To prevent the conflict from happening, Parsons proposed the idea of a “social order”, in which society is built on the dominance of consensus in the structure of relations [2].

R. Darendorf (1994), being one of the prominent developers of the concept of conflict, understood conflict as any relationship between the constituent elements, which must be characterized relying on the objective and subjective opposites [3].

G.R. Simmel (1916) [33] is known as the author of the term “sociology of conflict”. The scientist believed that conflict was inevitable and held the view that conflict between an individual and society is the main form of conflict interaction. G.R. Simmel (1916) [33] literally became the founder of the concept of conflict interaction. Over time, the conflict interaction was thought of as one of the types of social interaction. It consists in counteracting the conflicting parties and taking place against the background of pronounced negative emotions experienced in relation to each other. Studying the elements and specifics of the course of

the conflict activity, it was found that the conflict interaction has the character of a cultural phenomenon. This can happen if the conflict is subject to a number of cultural norms. That is, with the help of culture, it is possible to influence social conflict by making it cultured. Thus, the culture of conflict interaction is a way of forming and reproducing forms of conflict interaction using the generalization of functions, components and structural elements [17]. Ethnic conflict in the youth environment serves precisely as an example of the studied conflict in the aspect of the culture of conflict interaction.

Let us return to the generic concept of conflict. Domestic scientists understand the following under social conflict:

Yu.G. Zaprudsky (1992) [44] believes that “social conflict is a direct or latent confrontation of diverging interests, goals and motives for the development of social objects, a direct or indirect clash of social forces as a result of opposition to public order, a form of historical movement on the way to new social unity”.

V.I. Kurbatov (2009) means by conflict the interaction of two or more individuals with mutually exclusive

goals that are realized, harming the other (or at his expense) [16].

Ethnic conflict is a kind of social conflict. Ethnic conflict is an open clash of groups or individuals in connection with the difference in ethnic characteristics, which are expressed in the form of mutually exclusive ideas, needs, values and development trends [9].

Ethnic conflict is a clear or latent state of confrontation of diverging interests, goals of the participants of the conflict, a clash of social forces on the basis of the existing order [18].

One of the varieties of ethnic conflicts is the ethnic conflict in the youth environment.

V.A. Tishkov (1997) [47] implies by ethnic conflict in the youth environment organized political actions, social movements, riots and even civil wars in which the confrontation takes place along the lines of ethnic community [10].

V.V. Mitrofanenko (2015) [25] believes that the conflict in the youth environment on ethnic grounds is one of the forms of ethnic conflicts in the form of social movements, riots, separatist actions in which the confrontation occurs

between the dominant national group and the national minority.

Thus, sociologists consider the ethnic conflict in the youth environment as one of the forms of relations between national communities, characterized by the condition of mutual claims, which tend to rise [29; 32].

It is customary to identify the following functions of ethnic conflict in the youth environment:

- constructive (helps to more fully assess the characteristics of the participants; partially or completely eliminates the contradictions that have arisen; will partially eliminate psychological tension; can stimulate the quality of participants' activity);
- destructive (can have a negative impact on the mental state of participants, which, during the escalation, can lead to violence or war) [43].

It is worth noting that the nature of the national conflict is directly dependent on the goals, and therefore the following is identified:

- realistic conflicts (individuals have clear goals; conflict is a means of achieving their goals);
- unrealistic conflicts (participants of the conflict are not very

clearly aware of the motives; the conflict is an emotional release;

- mixed conflict (the most difficult of all conflicts, when individuals have a complete understanding of the goals, methods and functions of the conflict) [12; 21].

The Center for Sociology of Interethnic Relations revealed that the following factors influence the occurrence of ethnic conflict situations in the youth environment:

- 1) age (a higher probability of conflicts between “the old - the young”);
- 2) the level of education (a conflict situation arises among people with a low level of education);
- 3) political views;
- 4) social status (similar to the factor “the level of education”);
- 5) the national composition of the region (to a greater extent, the conflict situation arises in regions with the mixed national composition).

Not the existence of various ethnic groups underlies ethnic conflicts, but political, economic and social conditions that contribute to the recognition of the fact that ethnic groups differ. Let us consider the main causes underlying the emergence of ethnic conflicts in the youth environment:

1. Territorial causes - the struggle to change borders, which affects the sovereignty of the state and the individual.

2. Economic ones - the struggle of ethnic groups for the possession of their own material resources - land, natural resources.

3. Social causes - the struggle for civil equality in education, in remuneration, in employment.

4. Cultural and linguistic ones - the struggle for the preservation (revival) of the language, culture [2; 8; 15; 24; 31].

The purpose of this paper is to identify the characteristics of the culture of conflict interaction in the youth environment, and the formation of technologies for resolving conflict situations.

3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The paper presents the results of a study of the culture of conflict interaction, the value orientations of the contemporary generation that contribute to the emergence of conflicts on a political basis.

Research methods: content analysis method, statistical data analysis, system analysis and synthesis, as well as dialectical-logical and formal-logical

analysis of data obtained during surveys and s conducted from 2002 to 2019 by the POF, the All-Russian Public Opinion Research Center and the Levada Center.

In 2007, the Public Opinion Foundation conducted a sociological survey whose goal was to study the attitude of local residents to different nationalities and assess the probability of a conflict. The survey embraced 100 settlements in 44 regions of Russia. Through an interview, 1,500 respondents were interviewed. During the survey, it was found that a quarter of those surveyed dislike the representatives of a particular nationality and would like to protect themselves from the occurrence of a hot situation.

In 2009, a survey was conducted by the All-Russian Public Opinion Research Center. The purpose of the survey was to study the assessment by Muscovites of interethnic relations in the capital. One thousand respondents were interviewed. In the course of the questionnaire survey it was found that half of the respondents consider that the national relations in their city are tense and conflicting. Among the measures that can prevent tensions between local residents and foreigners, more than half

of the respondent's state - restricting the influx of the foreign workforce.

In 2016, the analytical center "Levada Center" conducted a survey by interviewing a representative all-Russian sample of the urban and rural population among 1,600 people aged 18 and over in 48 regions of the country. The purpose of the survey was to investigate intolerant attitudes and xenophobia, in connection with an increase in the indicator of ethnophobic attitudes among the population. As it turned out, a fifth of the respondents demonstrate a lack of ethnic prejudice against representatives of certain nationalities, while 70% of the respondents named a certain category of people whose residence in Russia they would like to limit.

A recent survey conducted by the Levada Center in 2017 and 2019 was called "Monitoring of Xenophobic Moods [36]. It is clear from the name of this survey that during the period of 2017-2019, the proportion of Russians

who want to limit the residence of foreigners in the country has reached a minimum mark. Experts linked these indicators with the right measures in the current policy and the population cohesion against the backdrop of anti-Russian sanctions.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To obtain comprehensive data on the state of conflict for today in the study of ethnic conflict situations it is necessary to use temporary criteria that will help, using the causes, the nature of the grounds and the identified dynamics of development, to determine the most likely ways of resolving it.

Figure 1 presents the results of the data analysis obtained during the study of a number of sociological surveys conducted from 2002 to 2019, the purpose of which was to identify attitudes towards people of other nationalities.

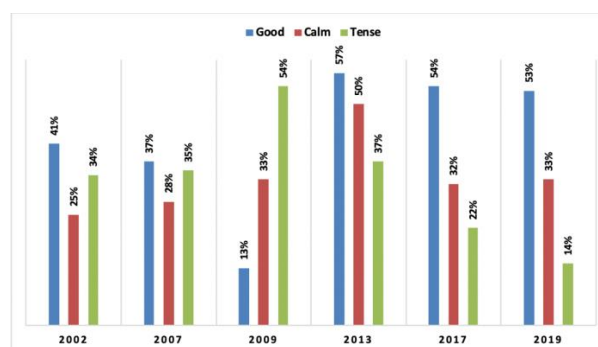


Figure 1. Assessment of conflict occurrence in 2002-2019.

We can see in the figure that from 2002 to 2007 inclusively, relations of representatives of different nationalities are at the level of “good” and “calm” However, there is a tendency of mounting tension which is going to reach its highest point soon [27]. In the course of studying the problem of ethnic conflicts, many official documents and summaries have been accessed that serve as a conclusion on the conducted sociological surveys. According to the data available in the Council on the number of conflict situations that in any way contributed to the crime commission, in 2019, compared to 2016, this share decreased by 13%. This state of affairs speaks of the right measures of the policy pursued to resolve international unrest that arose in 2013 and 2014, on a global scale

; The study of interethnic relations in the capital through the eyes of its inhabitants by the All-Russian Center for the Study of Public Opinion, 2020) [38; 39;].

The highest peak in the development of xenophobic moods falls in 2009 - 54% of respondents were of the opinion that relations are quite “tense”.

The starting point of this state of affairs is the gas conflict in the Ukraine, which just ended in January 2009, and actually opened the start of military operations around the world (attacks in the territory of the Gaza Strip by Israeli Air Force and a coup in Honduras) [26].

Nevertheless, it is worth noting that literally after 4 years the situation changed dramatically and the attitude towards representatives of other nationalities reached the level of “good” - (57%). This state of affairs did not remain fixed, and already in 2014, “tense” relations exceeded “good” and “calm” relations which, in fact, indicates an increase in the level of xenophobic sentiment, which was based on the Crimean issue and the conflict with the West. There is no big difference between the three types of relations (the difference was 7.2%), because, along with the conflicts, friendly reconciliation with the East came about [9].

During the monitoring of data on xenophobic moods of the population, it was found that 2019 was the year with the lowest level after 2009 - 53% [43]. This suggests that the attitude towards representatives of other nationalities and

ethnic organizations has improved. According to forecasts, the resulting cohesion of the population will soon lead to a decrease in conflict situations between representatives of different nationalities [36].

It is worth noting that all the studies, the purpose of which was to investigate the nature of relations with

different nationalities living in Russia were carried out with the help of the method of interviewing, which indicates the availability of reliable comprehensive information.

To a greater extent during the research, the emphasis was mainly on the causes of conflicts on ethnic grounds in the youth environment.

Figure 2, Figure 3 and Figure 4 present the main causes of conflicts on an ethnic basis in the period from 2007 to 2019 [19; 37; 40].

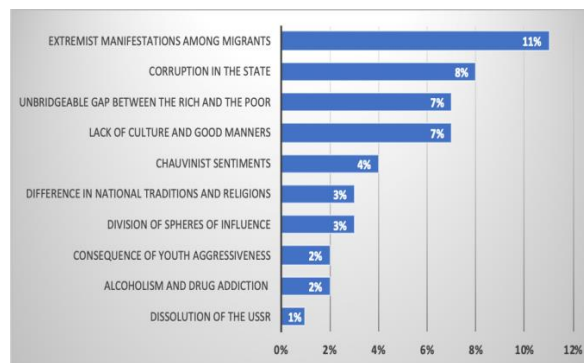


Figure 2. Causes of conflicts in 2007, %

In general, Russians do not have unity in the issue of the causes of ethnic

conflicts that have happened or possible ones.

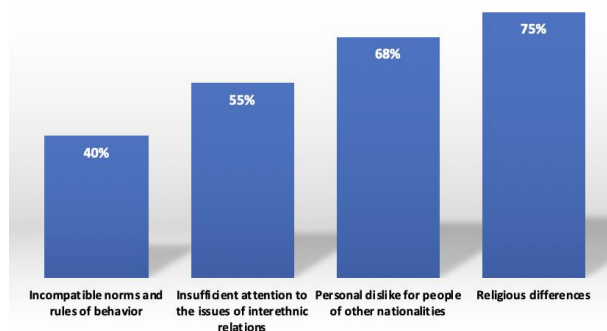


Figure 3. Causes of conflicts in 2013, %

One can state that the major causes of ethnic tensions in the period from 2007 to 2019 that were found in the course of the studies are specific features

of the young age, the desire of young people to change the world as well as ineffective activity of the local and state bodies of power.

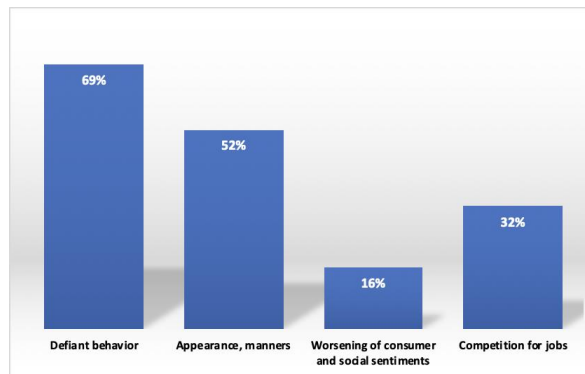


Figure 4. Causes of conflicts in 2019, %

However, to a greater extent, local residents are of the opinion that the causes are religious differences, arrogant behavior and an active increase in the number of ethnic migrants, where the latter indicated as a cause - the reluctance of the Russian population to accept other nationalities as equals. These causes are supported by the fact that, unlike the local population, which is mainly Russian and Tatars, representatives of other nationalities are more integrated, and therefore, holding together rather than being alone, they pose a greater threat.

These causes of conflicts do not lose their significance over time, but rather acquire a more significant character, which should be paid attention

to. It is also worth noting that by the end of 2019, a new internal cause appeared - the deterioration of consumer and social moods within the country, which affect the perception of visitors of other nationalities and their attitude to them. This was caused by dissatisfaction with the pension reform, and began to act as a defensive reaction - hostility to the “outsider” the period of economic ill-being, as a result of canalized irritation and hostility to everything that happens.

In a question about technologies for resolving ethnic conflicts that arise in the youth environment, the research results were studied which were provided by the centers for monitoring sociological research. Figure 5 shows conflict technologies that have passed

the test of time. They not only strengthened themselves as possible methods for regulating conflict situations, but also yielded results in predicting and resolving hot spots of any critical situations [19;].

For instance, 55% of the respondents believe that the best way to

prevent a conflict on a national basis is to strengthen the educational activities of schools and universities by teaching disciplines that allow one to get acquainted with the culture of non-indigenous nationalities and instill a sense of solidarity and respect [4].

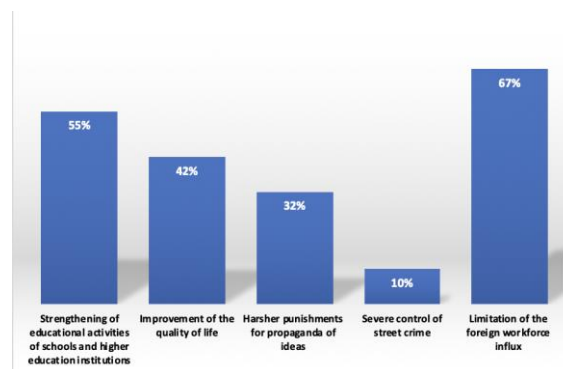


Figure 5. Conflict resolving technologies

Forty-two per cent of respondents are of the opinion that the best technology for resolving conflicts is to involve state security agencies that will be responsible for tougher penalties for propagating ideas (32% of respondents) and brutally suppressing unauthorized street crimes (10%). Forty-two per cent of respondents are of the opinion that it is necessary for the state to intervene and improve living standards and quality of life. This question applies not only to the

indigenous inhabitants of the country, but also to representatives of other nationalities. Equality of rights and improving the quality of life will contribute to the observance of constitutional laws, and, accordingly, reduce the level of conflict and reduce disagreements arising from national (ethnic) discrimination [26].

The majority of respondents are inclined to believe that it is better to prevent a problem situation than to solve it. In this regard, they consider the

optimal solution a simple restriction of the influx of the foreign workforce (67%), thereby securing their lives without hot spots of physical and moral violence which could turn into military action [27].

5. CONCLUSION

The complexity of ethnic conflicts which manifests itself in a wide range of classifications (varieties), causes and technologies for resolving conflict situations, speaks of their multifaceted nature. Ethnic conflicts that broke out in the period 2002-2009 are more destructive in nature than the conflicts that took place during the period of 2013-2019. The causes and technologies for resolving emerging conflict situations are more stringent and radical measures taken by state authorities. In the course of the search for the main causes of ethnic conflicts, it was revealed that ethnic conflicts in the youth environment are not homogeneous. For a certain conflict situation there are peculiar causes which comprise the main one - cultural differences of peoples, namely, the reluctance to adhere to the rules and regulations in the territory of residence and the desire to spread their

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traditions and worldview to other members. Among the technologies for resolving conflict situations, the optimal one is to prevent the outbreaks of conflict through the implementation of general cultural development in educational institutions at different stages (preschool education, moral education and educational activities in schools, colleges and universities in the form of excursions into other nationalities) and the use of effective state policy.

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