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FORMING YOUTH'S SENSE OF SOCIAL COHESION AND TRUST BY MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

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Abstract

The article is devoted to the question of multicultural education and its significance for the formation of youth's sense of consent, trust and peacefulness. Russia is a multinational and multi-confessional country, and its state policy is oriented toward the harmonisation of interethnic relations and civil unity. In this connection, the task of cultivating youth's abilities to establish harmonious relationships between the representatives of different social, national, ethnic, confessional communities based on the principles of mutual respect and tolerance to other cultures, ethnos, and religions is significant for Russian education. Multicultural education offers the possibility of positive solution of this problem. The methodology used for the study of the formation of human personality in a multinational and poly-confessional society involves concepts from the philosophy of culture, linguistic conceptions on the relation between language, mentality and culture, and natural-scientific notions about the development of open unstable systems. A central question of multicultural education is the cultivation of youth' sense of social trust and consent, towards which learning outcomes are designed. The outcomes of the research will enable us to understand better the content of multicultural education, the mechanisms for the formation of consent and trust among young people, its mission in shaping people's respect and tolerance to cultural diversity. The results of the research can contribute to the reduction of social tensions in society, the formation of students' receptiveness to intercultural dialogue, the expansion of their opportunities to master a multicultural space, and the creation of conditions for the development of personality.

1. Introduction

Western scholars consider education as one of the most important social activities, which is formative in the historical and evolutionary process within the system of social institutions. They are mostly based on the postmodern methodological approach of social constructionism (Berger, Luckmann 1995; Luman, 2005; Gergen, 1997). The information age has an important effect on modern education, because of the emergence of new types and forms of activity related to universal computerization. This, in turn, changes the way of life and value orientations of people, has a direct impact on the development of interpersonal relationships, interaction and communication. The main task for modern generations of young people in the new conditions of development and formation of the information society and in the process of their socialisation is their mastery of new competences, the most important of which are social and communicative competencies. In this process, the major factors are the multicultural education and the environment, which form humanistic values, underlying civilisations, ethnic and confessional beliefs. A serious component for the development of multicultural education is also the establishment of civil democratic societies, in which grow today the resistance to chauvinism, racism, manifestations of xenophobia and extremism (Biblera, 1998, p. 36). For Russia, which is a multinational state, the issues related to the strengthening of a unified state, that is respect and tolerance for the cultures and customs of different ethnic groups, nations and nationalities are very important. The classical ideas of the humanization of education, the ideas of social trust, consent, and peaceableness that underlie multicultural education remain vital today; moreover, humanistic universal, national, and religious values are reflected in many cultures and ethnic traditions, in spiritual practices and Sacred religious texts.

2. Research Questions

The question of the study is to examine how the potentialities of multicultural education can be used in the modern information society, taking into account the cultural characteristics of the environment in the cultivation of youth's trust and consent.

3. Purpose of the Study

Study of the current state of the problem of formation of social cohesion and consent among young people in the context of multicultural education.

4. Research Methods

In the course of the work the authors used scientific methods: the analysis of philosophical, cultural, ethnological, sociological, historical, pedagogical theories and concepts on the development of ethnos and their cultures, the role and importance of culture for education, adaptation of the individual to different cultural environments, and the dialogue approach.

5. Findings

Consideration of the issues of socialisation of young people in the information age draws us to such social phenomena as trust and harmony in the context of multicultural education. Modern Russian society is multinational; hence, the demand for an education system based on the respect to national and cultural diversity, the formation of social cohesion and trust in the society. According to Asmolov, education today is actually for the students "the institution of accumulation of social trust and consent" (Asmolov, 2008, p.3). The study of social phenomena, such as trust and consent is examined within an interdisciplinary approach that integrates various sociological fields: social philosophy, sociology, economics, culture, social psychology, and pedagogy. In philosophy and socio-economic sciences, the study of trust is viewed as a socio-economic mechanism, underlying the social development of society and ensuring social order. The problem of trusting in social philosophy was studied by philosophers and sociologists in their works such as Aurelius Augustine, Kant, Weber, Durkheim, Giddens, Buber, Tillich, Fukuyama, and others. The historical and philosophical aspects of the study of the problem reflects the dynamics of the development of the category of trust in the context of the pair belief/disbelief in such works as Socrates, Aristotle, Plato, Augustine, Abelard, Thomas Aquinas, Locke, Leibniz, Hume, Kant, Hegel, Soloviev, Ilyin, and others. It is also considered as a background problem in Fukuyama, Seligmen, Veselov and others.

In political science, sociology, psychology, trust is studied as a necessary condition for the emergence and development of social communication – it is necessary to establish harmony, dialogue, understanding, cooperation between people and social institutions. Today, in the context of globalisation, which requires improvement of the mechanisms of communication and cooperation within the global world system, the importance of trust as a social phenomenon is growing, as far as the processes of differentiation, complexity, multidimensionality, uncertainty, and risks accompany almost all aspects of the social activity. In the modern "social architecture of development of the society and the world", (mutual) trust is a basic component of economic and sociological research (Giddens, 2005, p.75).

The psychological nature of trust, viewed as a personal feature, as an element of communication and manifestation of the social and organizational behavior of a person has been studied in many works (Jaspers, Fromm, Erikson, Maslow, Moscovici, Rogers, Franklin, Rotter, Skripkina, Zhuravleva, Shikhirev, and others (Kanetti, Moskovichi, 2009; Maslou, 2008; Rodzhers, 2001; Fromm, 1973; Erikson, 2000; Erikson, 1996).

In connection with the current task of Russian education as "the institution of accumulating experience of social confidence and harmony by the young people" (Asmolov), the most important aspects, in our view, concern the pedagogical context of the problem. Specifically, they concern the elements of trust underlying teaching young people to build communication relationships, as well as the ethical, moral, and spiritual aspects of social trust and consent as sociocultural and social phenomena, and their use in motivating students' willingness and ability to conduct a dialogue of cultures, conflict-free and tolerant behavior. In this connection, we refer the reader to the works of Anthony Giddens, Thomas Luckmann, Edwin Seligman, Piotr Sztompka, Yoshihiro Fukuyama (Inozemcev, 1998; Luman, 2004; Luman, 2005; Seligmen, 2002; SHtompka, 2012; Erikson, 2000; Fukuyama, 2004). In their works, trust has a role of prerequisite and mechanism for strengthening the foundations of social order in society.

Trust is perceived as an important characteristic of interpersonal communication, the basis for the formation of small groups, a result of the process of objectification of social relations.

The analysis of the concept of trust by Russian political scientists, cult urologists and sociologists is focused on the interdependence of the polar pairs trust – distrust and consent – disagreement from a world-outlook standpoint that is a factor favourable to the formation of public opinion, which in turn is a prerequisite for Russia's further development (Ardashkin, 2013; Lukin, 2014; Moskvin, 2014; Stolyar, 2008). Moskvin notes that the semantic content of the pair of terms trust – mistrust is very rich and multi-valued and identifies in it not only a world-outlook component but also certain socio-psychological and political orientations (Moskvin, 2014). Ardashkin examines the process of formation of culture in terms of the functions of the pair trust – mistrust. In it, science and religion function as major worldview systems, among the tasks of which are the formation of the culture of trust and distrust, provokes the risks of violence and conflict. The basis for building trust or mistrust is the interpersonal relations in society, and the building-up of a culture of trust between different groups, communities and individuals is viewed as the most important principle of interaction in it. The state policy in this area should be based on an understanding of the need to support science, education, religion, as well as other relevant worldview systems (mysticism, art, philosophy and others) as practices that favour the building up of trust in society (Ardashkin, 2013). Among these institutions, I would like to focus on the role of education and religion. The results of sociological monitoring surveys carried out in Russia in recent years (Levada, Shanin, 2015; Sobkina, 2012) show that the respondents consider education as space of least manifestation of intolerance and simultaneously as the most capable of fulfilling the expectations of society, as the institution of socialization that can compensate for the defects obtained in the family, or "in the street", due to the often unfair work of the media. The new functions of education as leading social activity are viewed today in the formation of young people's ability to live and communicate in a civil, multinational, multiethnic society, in the cultivation of multicultural competence. The task of the modern school is to actively cultivate in its educational space social values and models of interaction prevailing in the world today and surround the youth. According to the views of many scholars, general education of schoolchildren of different nationalities and religions in the school- or class- space is an effective tool for growing their patience, respect and understanding of people of different ideological views, behavior, for gaining experience of relations of trust and consent (Kozyrev, 2005; Westerhoff, & Neveille, 1974). As an example of this kind of education that combines the efforts of education and religion in modern society in Russia can be the new course "Spiritual and moral culture of the peoples of Russia". The fundamentals of religious cultures and secular ethics have been introduced in the curricula of Russian schools since 2012. This is the first attempt for Russia to include religious components in its secular school curricula, after the 1917 revolution. During the development of this course and its implementation in schools, the educators, the policy-makers of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation and the representatives of traditional confessions in Russia assumed that acquaintance of students with the basics of secular ethics, the world and traditional religious cultures in Russia will serve unification, growing up schoolchildren' feelings of peace and consent based on trust, and thereby contribute to the consolidation of Russian society, the prevention of manifestation of xenophobia and extremism. Today, the tasks undertaken in the process of socialisation and acculturation in the teaching of this course are regarded as practical training of students, as an opportunity for their successful adaptation and integration into a

pluralistic society. The process of formation of identity and growing of tolerance appear to be interrelated elements of a single process that corresponds to the task of spiritual and moral education in school (Kozyrev, 2005; Krylov, 2014). To realise the principle of secularism in school, the class associations of students connect them in a natural way as representatives of different worldviews. "The fact of their joint education creates conditions and opportunities for their free expression, exchange of experience, opinions on pressing issues of life. This contributes to the development of students' feelings of citizenship and pluralism; moreover, it paves the way for civil and universal solidarity in the future" (Kozyrev, 2005, p. 274). It is quite understandable that many philosophers of education, following Dewey, placed great hopes on the "school community" (Westerhoff-Dewey) (Dewey, 2009; Westerhoff, & Neveille 1974). A distinctive feature of the school communities is that classmates, who are connected by a long joint school experience and education, by the bonds of youth friendship, learn to mind of a foreign worldview and acquire an experience of relationships that can be proved fruitful for them in their adult life to develop civil and human solidarity relations (D'yui, 2009; Kozyrev, 2005; Krylov, 2014; Westerhoff, & Neveille 1974). The teaching of the new course allows taking into account the positive aspects of religious practices in educating young people, to induce humanistic ideas of Islam, Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism into the classroom, to involve the richest educational experience of these religions in "cultivating" personality. In all religions of the world, one can find, for example, ideas of good-neighborliness, hospitality, an aspiration to consent, etc. Concerning Islam, for instance, it is very important today, to revive sound interpretations of Muslim views and humanistic ideas (Avanesov, 2010). In this respect, enlightenment is a warranty of peaceful coexistence, in opposition to religious extremism, an example of cultivating trust and consensus.

6. Discussion

In discourse that is being conducted in the world scientific community in examining the phenomenon of trust, two leading theoretical traditions are distinguished in explaining its origin: cultural and institutional. In the culturological theoretical concept of political culture theories - Gabriel Almond, Sidnya Verba, Robert Putnam and other theorists are based on hypotheses about the exogenous nature of trust. The sources of trust/mistrust, consensus/disagreement are the Beliefs, based on values and traditions of culture and assigned by individuals in the period of their socialization, they are the essence of interpersonal trust, which is perceived in the early period of a person's life and renders Influence in his later life on his individual assessments. Interpersonal trust in these concepts, according to the culturological tradition, is given the role of the bases in the formation of political trust, civil culture and raising the level of public and political consolidation (Norris, & Inglehart, 2004). In domestic research, the development of the trust problem is being conducted, taking into account the Western sociological belief theory and the existing approaches to its analysis in the theories of such well-known scientists as Luhmann, Seligmen, Coleman, Fukuyama, Shtompka and others. This approach allows us to interpret trust as an element of civil culture and the basis for the development of civil society. A society of trust is a society integrated on the basis of moral values. Leading importance among them may belong to the principles of respect for the individual and social justice (Bukin, & Erunov, 1974). The concept of socialization, which in many respects acts as a prerogative for micro-level cultural theories of trust, is

considered in Russian science as a substantiating thesis about the possibilities and impact of culture on the formation of the personality values system in the process of its socialization (Garfinkel', 2007) on the specifics of abilities for Manifestation of confidence in the individual development of the individual, depending on the stages of her mental development (Rodzhers, 2001).

7. Conclusion

We made an attempt in this article to highlight the pedagogical components of the phenomena of social trust and consent in modern youth in its socialization. The study of the phenomenon of trust enables us to conclude that in the organization of the educational environment it is important to take into account the cultural component that influences the formation of stereotypes of behavior of the subjects of educational activity. Using the culturological components of the environment allows avoiding potentially hazardous conflict situations. Provided this conclusion, any definite claim that the presence of such components as spiritual culture hinders the integration of the innovative education system, in particular, and the whole process of informatization and globalization, as a whole rises serious doubts. In modern society, the synthesis of information technologies and cultural heritage can enable us to overcome a number of cognitive gaps, in order to create a single space, adapted for the effective participation of people with different worldviews, representatives of different cultures, beliefs, and languages, based on trust and consent as the most important elements of modern social life.

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