

## Teenage Students' Tolerance Formation

Gulfiia G. Parfilova<sup>a</sup>, Lilia Sh. Karimova<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Kazan (Volga region) Federal University, Kazan, RUSSIA.

### ABSTRACT

The relevance of the chosen topic is determined by the fact that unfortunately tolerance does not appear as the goal set of upbringing of teenagers in secondary school environment. Despite the fact that teachers are aware of the importance of tolerance, they do not perform focused actions on formation and development of tolerance in teenage school children. The purpose of the research was to study and diagnose tolerance in children of secondary school age, as well as to develop and implement programs aimed at the formation of tolerance in adolescents. In compliance with the goal, the following methods have been selected: theoretical (study and analysis of psycho-pedagogical and methodological literature on the study, comparison, generalization), empirical (ascertaining, forming, and control experiment), diagnostic techniques "Properties of a tolerant person", "Tolerant personality traits", "Methods of tolerant behavior diagnosis". These methods allowed diagnosing increasing knowledge about tolerance and awareness of tolerant behavior in adolescents. The experiment involved 50 teenagers of Kazan Aviation Physics and Mathematics Lyceum №145. There was used the complex of diagnostic techniques for tolerance determination: "Properties of a tolerant person". "Tolerant personality traits", "Methods of tolerant behavior diagnosis". On the basis of the results of ascertaining experiment there was developed the program containing forms and methods of personal tolerance formation in teenage students. Statistical analysis of empirical research was carried out by means of standard techniques of mathematical statistics (Student's t-test, Wilcoxon matched pairs test, G signed rank test, Pearson correlation coefficient). The research paper provides practical value for psychologists, supervisors and deputy directors for educational work in schools. It should be noted that collected and evaluated data can be applied to adolescents in education process in general education institutions.

### KEYWORDS

Tolerance, toleration, intolerance, tolerant behavior, teenager

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**CORRESPONDENCE** Gulfiia G. Parfilova ✉ parfilova2007@mail.ru

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## Introduction

### *Urgency of the problem*

Recently, the concept of "tolerance" is increasingly used – in the scientific literature, journalism, politics, education, and even at home. Many researchers in different scientific fields: political scientists, lawyers, sociologists, philosophers, psychologists, educators, cultural studies experts studied tolerance in their work. The problem of tolerance has been widely covered in the media, at the national and international level. The attention of scientists to this problem is primarily due to the fact that violence, malevolence, mutual intolerance, resentment, cruelty, aggression are increasingly manifested in the Russian society and spread among the youth through the media and social environment.

Especially important is the study of the concepts of tolerance and opportunities of tolerant relations formation and tolerant behavior in the school which in the near future will be responsible for the fate of the country, for the fate of the older and younger generations, different nationalities and religions, different views and interests, different opportunities and abilities. This has found justification in the specially adopted federal program "Education of tolerant mind and extremism overcoming in the Russian society."

In many schools, as well as in the whole country, interfaith and intercultural communications are expanded, aided by a number of factors, in particular: a) the training of students from other regions of Russia, CIS and foreign countries; b) interchanges between teachers and students; c) participation in international educational programs. Thanks to the high development of students' tolerance, these social phenomena can contribute to enhancing knowledge about other cultures, religions, nationalities, and, in general, the development of personality itself.

The problem of tolerance can be qualified as the educational problem. One of the most acute problems that affect school, home, and society as a whole is the culture of children's communication. Children do not always manage to behave politely and appropriately, while knowing well that it is necessary to perceive the other person as he is. It is crucial to be tolerant of each other, which is very difficult.

The relevance of the chosen topic is determined by the fact that adolescence is sensitive to the development of tolerance. On the one hand, this is the time of most severe manifestation of intolerance, separation into groups and group-thinking, division into "one of us" and strangers. One of the main internal obstacles to the development of tolerance at this age is egocentrism (and its modifications: culture-centrism / subculture-centrism) - a tendency to believe their way of life the only true, often leading to intolerance and aggression towards another way of life.

Analysis of educational researches has shown that the issues of upbringing and education in a multicultural and multi-ethnic society has long occupied an important place in scientific researches of Russian and foreign scientists.

The number of publications on the problem of tolerance has increased in recent years, though its interpretation was already carried out by F. Bacon (1978), J.Locke (1988), P.Florensky (2000), N.Berdyaev (1994) and others.

In Western countries, it is common to talk about tolerance of the most diverse manifestations of otherness and uniqueness, which is reflected in the theory and practice of multicultural education (Banks, 1981).

The most developed aspect of tolerance is the question of religious toleration (Berdyayev, 1994; Valitova, 1997; Locke, 1988). The problem of tolerance in politics and national-ethnic relations is raised in the works of V.E. Kozlov and T.A. Titova (2006), F.M. Malkhozova (1999) and others. A number of these reveal pedagogical aspect of tolerance (Dmitriev, 1999; Komogorov, 2000).

In the Soviet pedagogy the problem of tolerance was solved in the framework of children's education in the spirit of internationalism (Krupskaya, 1959; Pryanikova, 1997). Noting the humanistic orientation of the Soviet internationalism, it must be said that tolerance was considered only in the context of international relations, while problems of intolerance and discrimination in religion, politics and subcultures were ignored. Interethnic relations were viewed largely from a social perspective.

In recent years, in Russia the problem of teaching tolerance has also been seen in the context of multicultural education. In multicultural education researchers focus on teaching pupils in the spirit of tolerance and respect for other cultures (Makaev, 1999; Malkova, 2002). Conceptual bases of multicultural education have been developed in the Russian pedagogical science (Dzhurinskiy, 2006; Dmitriev, 1999; Makaev, Malkova & Suprunova, 1999; Malkova, 2002). There have been done studies of the problem of school multicultural environment and self-determination of a child in it, the experience of foreign countries has been observed (Dzhurinskiy, 2008; Malkova, 2002).

The problem of tolerance formation in the integral pedagogical process was investigated by the Russian psychologists and educators in various aspects: humanities as the means of tolerance formation (Lektorsky, 1997; Nikolsky, 2002); general questions of psychology and pedagogy of tolerance (Asmolv, 1998; Rozhkov, Bayborodova & Kovalchuk, 2003); ethnic tolerance (Soldatova, 2001; Shaygerova, 2002).

Many researchers address the issue of tolerance formation in children. E.O. Smirnova (2003) studies the development of tolerance in early childhood and pre-school age; Yu.M. Evstigneeva (2003) considers the problem of tolerance in adolescent subculture through interfaith relations; B.S. Sobkin, T.V., Glukhova & S.V. Muterperel (2003) study interethnic tolerance in adolescence.

According to T.V. Makarova & G.F. Larionova (2008), at the present stage of society development it has become urgent to build a culture of tolerance among the younger generation, starting with pre-school children, in order to counter the propaganda of extremism and reduce the social and psychological tension in society.

According to S.D. Shchekoldina (2004), the problems associated with the formation of identity are important to teens. Among adolescents there is common abusive language, degrading people of other cultures or religions, negative stereotypes and prejudices. The basis of this kind of intolerant behavior is the crisis of identity transformation by the type of hyperidentity (ethno-egoism, ethno-isolation, national fanaticism) when over-positive attitude to one's own group generates confidence in their superiority over "strangers." In interethnic interaction hyperidentity is manifested in various forms of ethnic

intolerance: from exacerbating towards members of other ethnic groups to defending the policy of restricting their rights and opportunities. On the other hand, the formation of ethnic identity of a teenager can be realized on the basis of the type of hypoidentity, primarily ethno-nihilism, which is characterized by alienation from one's own culture, unwillingness to support one's own ethnic and cultural values, negativity and intolerance in relation to one's people.

Though there are already numerous researches published, the problem of educating a tolerant person still cannot be considered studied in full. The age context of tolerance formation is not investigated yet. It is not clear yet what age is the most favorable one for the formation of this personal quality? Analysis of age-related characteristics of adolescents identified by psychologists and educators (Vygotsky, 1983; Mudrik, 1983; Feldstein, 1994) allows us to assume that the most effective period to educate tolerance in schoolchildren is adolescence. However, paying tribute to researchers, who revealed the essence of tolerance, ways, conditions, forms and methods of its formation, it should be noted that the issue of tolerance formation in teenagers is not studied enough

### **Methodological Framework**

The purpose of the study was to study and diagnose tolerance in teenage school children, as well as to develop and implement programs aimed at tolerance formation in adolescents.

In compliance with the goal, the following methods have been selected:

1) theoretical (analysis of psycho-pedagogical and methodological literature, comparison, generalization)

2) empirical (ascertaining, forming, control experiments).

Statistical analysis of empirical research data was carried out by means of standard techniques of mathematical statistics (Student's t-test, Wilcoxon matched pairs test, G signed rank test, Pearson correlation coefficient). For the diagnosis of students' awareness and understanding of the issues of tolerance and tolerant behavior there was carried out a study on the basis of three methods: "Properties of a tolerant person" (Kornienko & Gurianova, 2008), "Tolerant personality traits" (Kornienko & Gurianova, 2008), "Methods of tolerant behavior diagnosis".

Within the framework of A.F.Kornienko (2008) method "Properties of a tolerant person", each student was given a list of 15 personality traits, somehow related to tolerance and characterizing both passive and active forms of behavior. Students had to rank the properties of the individual in terms of their compliance with the notion of "tolerance." The priority was given to the property having the highest degree of compliance. With decreasing compliance properties were ranked from 2 to 15.

The method "Tolerant personality traits" was used to identify the traits of tolerance in students, as well as students' positive emotional attitude to the phenomenon of tolerance. Students were given the form, which in tabular form presented 24 personality traits. Respondents were asked to rate on a 10-point scale how much, to their mind, the qualities considered were inherent in their character.

In order to determine what behavior is intrinsic to children: tolerant or intolerant – there was carried out the "Method of tolerant behavior diagnosis".

For the present study not only the availability of knowledge about tolerance in the youth environment is essential, but also the way that knowledge impacts building relationships in the process of interaction.

The empirical research was carried out in Kazan Aviation Physics and Mathematics Lyceum №145. The experiment involved 50 teenagers. The study was conducted in three stages: ascertaining, forming and control.

Ascertaining experiment covered evaluation of three criteria of tolerance formation level: cognitive, emotional and attitudinal and practical. On the basis of these results there was compiled a program containing a variety of forms and methods of tolerance formation in teenagers.

The purpose of the forming experiment consisted in the implementation of the experimental work aimed at increasing knowledge about tolerance and awareness of tolerant behavior in adolescents by means of extracurricular activities with its variety of forms and techniques.

In the control phase of our experiment, there was evaluated the effectiveness of the forms and methods of tolerance formation in teenagers. At this stage, there were revealed the indicators of tolerance formation in adolescent students and studied their dynamics.

In the structure of tolerance there were identified the following criteria: cognitive, emotional and attitudinal, and practical, which were investigated in the course of experimental work.

Cognitive criterion of tolerance indicates child's knowledge of the phenomenon of tolerance, its features and criteria, the potential of a tolerant person; awareness of the diversity of human life, beliefs, worldview, relationships, views, religious confessions; knowledge about oneself, one's abilities, personality strengths and weaknesses; as well as the possession of communicative competence and reflection.

Emotional and attitudinal criterion shows students' positive emotional attitude to the phenomenon of tolerance, students' ability to interact with people, to express empathy and interest.

Practical criterion implies involvement of senior pupils in various activities on the basis of cooperation, mutual understanding and acceptance of other people, their mental and physical characteristics; use of a variety of strategies to resolve conflicts and the creative approach to solve problems without impairment of other people's rights.

At the beginning of our study there were determined students' awareness and understanding of tolerance. Within the framework of A.F.Kornienko (2008) method "Properties of a tolerant person", each student was presented a list of 15 personality properties, in one way or another related to tolerance, characterizing both passive and active forms of behavior. Students had to rank those personality properties in terms of its compliance with the concept of "tolerance". The property having the highest degree of compliance had the first rank. With decreasing compliance properties were assigned the following grades from 2 to 15.

Further there were identified tolerance traits. In identifying personal traits of tolerance, as well as positive emotional relationship of the school student to the phenomenon of tolerance, the students were offered the form, where in tabular form 24 personality traits were presented, and respondents were asked

to rate on a 10-point scale how much, in their opinion, these personality traits are inherent in them.

Then, in order to determine what behavior is peculiar to students: tolerant or intolerant - we carried out a method of "Tolerant behavior diagnosis". In the study it was significant for us not only the knowledge availability about tolerance in the youth environment, but also how this knowledge affect building relationships in the process of interaction. This technique consists of 30 statements, each of which reveals the peculiarities of behavior in a conflict situation. All statements are inserted in the two columns, the rating scale is located between them (-3, -2, -1, 0, 1, 2, 3). Filling in observation cards requires careful approach from the sample participant, as you must remember your personal typical behavior in past conflict situation. Reading the statement, the student ticks the answer that matches his behavior in a conflict situation. When processing the data, scale values are translated into points. For this initial value (-3, -2, -1, 0, 1, 2, 3) are replaced by points (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7). In the future, summation of all points is carried out. This way of obtaining points value will be interpreted. On a scale of tolerant behavior we have three intervals. The interval from 42 to 68 points corresponds to the low level of tolerant behavior, it can be called intolerant, the interval from 68 to 80 corresponds to the average level of tolerant behavior, the interval from 80 to 105 will correspond to the high level of tolerant behavior.

## Results

Analysis of the concepts of tolerance among school students shows that the most important in the structure of tolerance for sample participants are: restraint in expressing emotions and feelings, tolerance and respect for different tastes and customs, which in the preferred list take first, second and third places respectively. This suggests that students associate the properties of a tolerant person with more passive forms of behavior, equating tolerance to obedience.

"The tendency to impose your own views," "balance" and "benevolence in relationships" take thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth places in the list of preferences.

However, it should be noted that there are significant differences in students' individual assessments. The degree of variability of individual assessments averages 46.3% for the sample participants. This suggests that the students' representations have a high degree of subjectivity.

As a result of processing and analysis of ranking outcomes, we were able to obtain data on how students imagine what "tolerance" is, trying to give this concept acceptable definition from their point of view. Since the students operated by the properties of the individual, not associating it with specific people, we can say that this method actually defines a representation of students on tolerance, which can be called "declarative".

Analysis of identifying personal traits of tolerance by students showed that when adolescents associate themselves with the tolerant person, manifestation of the following personality traits was observed: empathy (8.9), the willingness to listen and understand (8.5) and the ability to self-development (8.5). Personality properties that do not have a special connection to the concept of "tolerance", are expressed by students in the following way: the ability to respect

the different tastes and interests (5.5), self-control (5.5), the ability to forgive (5.1), altruism (5.1) and independence (4.5).

In order to determine what behavior is peculiar to students: tolerant or intolerant - we carried out a method of "Tolerant behavior diagnosis". In the study it was significant for us not only the knowledge availability about tolerance in the youth environment, but also how this knowledge affect building relationships in the process of interaction.

We identified that 38% (19 people) of students had a low level of tolerant behavior (intolerant) and 18% (9 people) of students showed a high level of tolerant behavior.

The level of tolerant behavior of most students (44%) belongs to the interval from 60 to 85, it indicates the average level of tolerant behavior of adolescents.

All the results obtained at the ascertaining stage of the experiment were analyzed and in accordance with this data, there was developed the program of tolerance development in school students, which was implemented at the formative stage of the experiment.

The purpose of the formative stage of the experiment: increase of tolerance awareness and tolerant behavior in adolescents through the use of extracurricular activities with its variety of forms and techniques.

Objectives:

1. To inform adolescents about the system of concepts and ideas related to the tolerance, intolerance and tolerant behavior.
2. To develop tolerance as a quality of a person, being important element in building positive relationships between different people and different groups, through the implementation of various forms and methods of extracurricular work.
3. To establish the system of beliefs, values and attitudes that encourage attaining of new knowledge about tolerance manifestation and its implementation based on the humane attitude to people of other nationalities.
4. To form high activity of a person, not only in participating, but also in developing and conducting activities related to the concept of "tolerance".

At the control stage of the experiment based on "Properties of a tolerant person" method, it was found that the most important for the sample participants in the structure of tolerance were as follows: respect for persons of other nationalities, respect of other tastes and habits and the ability to forgive mistakes and errors of others. These behaviors indicate the emergence of an active moral position, rather than passive obedience. Passive forms of behavior such as "tolerance" and "restraint in emotions and feelings manifestation" moved to the fifth and sixth steps, respectively.

"The tendency to defend your own beliefs", "a tendency to impose your own views" and "intolerance of personal shortcomings" took the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth positions in the list of adolescents' preferences.

To test the significance of differences in the data obtained before and after the formative experiment by the method of "Properties of a tolerant person", there was implemented the comparison of Wilcoxon matched pairs test results. It is used to assess differences in the experimental data obtained in two different

conditions on the same sample participants. It reveals the direction of changes and its manifestation.

To compute the criterion it was necessary to calculate the offset value, to determine its absolute value and to rank, to identify unusual shifts in our case there were 17 negative shifts. The sum of the ranks of these shifts is equal to 71, meaning that Temp. for  $n = 50$ , in special tables, we found the critical values:  $Tcr1 = 466$  with  $p = 0.05$  and  $Tcr2 = 397$  with  $p = 0.01$ . In this case, it turns out that Temp. gets into a zone of significance. One may argue that committed changes are not random and are significant at the 1% level.

At the control stage of the experiment, we obtained the following results by the method of "Traits of a tolerant person". After the formative experiment the school students' personality traits manifestation corresponds with the concept of "tolerance" as the ability to forgive, sensitivity, self-control, empathy, independence in judgments and actions. This suggests that after the formative experiment the essence of the concept of "tolerance" is reflected in the students' views about himself adequately.

To test the significance of differences in the data obtained before and after the formative experiment by the method of "Traits of a tolerant person", there was conducted a statistical comparison of the average Student's t-test.

To compute the criterion it was necessary to count the number of freedom degrees ( $\nu$ ) for  $n = 50$ . This number was equal to 49. For  $\nu = 49$  in the specific tables, critical values of t-test were:  $tcr. = 2.02$  with  $p = 0.05$ ;  $tcr. = 2.7$  with  $p = 0.01$ . If we are interested in the level of confidence of 99%, these differences are considered to be reliable. By substituting all the values in the formula for the Student's t-test, we found that the majority of  $temp > tcr.$ , in other words, values obtained before the experiment by the method of "Tolerant behavior diagnosis" were differ from those obtained after the experiment. So, there have been significant changes in the representation of tolerant personality specific traits manifestation, and significance testing ( $p = 0.01$ ) allowed to make such findings.

No changes were made with such indicators as "willingness to listen and understand the other person", "willingness to stand up for your own views and beliefs", "trust in the relationship", "capacity for self-development", "empathy", "tolerance for the shortcomings of others", where  $temp = 1.78$ ,  $temp = 0.53$ ,  $temp = 0.96$ ,  $temp = 1.42$ ,  $temp = 0,37$  respectively. This indicates that the significant differences between these parameters were not found.

Data obtained on the bases of "Tolerant behavior diagnosis" method, indicate that 30% (15 people) of senior high school students have the average level of tolerant behavior, and the majority (70% - 35 people) of senior high school students have the high level of tolerant behavior.

To test the significance of differences in the data obtained before and after the formative experiment by the "Tolerant behavior diagnosis" method, there was conducted a statistical comparison of the Student's t-test average, we found that  $temp = 4.84$ , meaning, that values obtained before the experiment by "Tolerant behavior diagnosis" method were different from the values obtained after the experiment.

Also, in order to prove the efficiency of the program developed by us, we found a statistically significant trend in tolerant behavior performance level shift. For this purpose, we used the sign test. We have found that  $Gemp = 6$ , and

Gkr1 = 8 if  $p = 0.05$  and = Gkr2 6 if  $p = 0.01$ . This empirical value falls in the area of significance, that is overall positive shift obtained in the experiment is statistically significant, which corresponds to an increase of tolerant behavior level after the tolerance formation program implementation.

To determine the relationship between the availability of reliable statistical aggregate we used the parametric test based on Pearson correlation coefficient. Before the formative experiment there was observed a very high level of relation (0.92) between restraint and anxiety, that is, the change of restraint will lead to the change of anxiety in the same direction. But restraint is practically not related (0.03) with the ability to forgive mistakes and errors of others. After the formative experiment the picture of relations varies significantly, there are many links equal to one. This indicates a direct proportional relationship of one parameter from another. For example, in our study, it was found that responsiveness is directly connected with condescension, composure with the capacity for self-reflection, and empathy with respect for the rights of the "other" person. But there are those indicators that are not associated with each other, an increase in one does not lead to another increase: increase in the degree of independence of judgment and action will not affect the increase in the level of understanding of a different point of view.

## Discussions

Tolerance is formed on condition that an individual possesses skills of independent mentality, critical re-evaluation, making assertions based on moral values and awareness of tolerance motivation. Self-respect, self-esteem and lack of inferiority feeling underlie tolerance.

Real tolerance is considered to be the characteristics of a mature individual that does not need to humiliate another person to assert themselves.

There is a good reason to consider the formation and development of tolerance in adolescents as teaching activities aimed at arranging favourable conditions for taking personal independent attitudes and for natural reflexive and individual formation of tolerance.

Particular psychological conditions and special operating control of adults (teachers and parents) in education system are necessary while the formation and development of tolerance in students.

The most important conditions that contribute to the formation of tolerance, in terms of educational institutions, are turning it into an open social and educational system, high professional level of teachers, as well as a favorable psychological climate in the school. The institution should be set up such a social environment, conducive to the development of students mild and tolerant forms of cooperation, willingness to understand the interlocutor and the ability to find a common ground with him.

## Conclusion

The analysis conducted by psychological and pedagogical work showed that the students have revised their views of the tolerant person's properties: school students in a greater degree correspond with the concept of "tolerance" of the following personality properties - flexibility, indulgence, a willingness to listen

and understand the 'other', empathy, independence in judgments and actions, and the personality traits manifestation of a tolerant person change to the ability to forgive, sensitivity, self-control, empathy, independence in judgments and actions. The average level of tolerant behavior has changed to high.

After analyzing the results of the pilot testing, we found that the proposed program of extracurricular activities, including such forms and methods as persuasion and self-persuasion, incentives and motivation, discussion, upbringing situation, training exercises, role plays, games were quite effective.

The teacher, during extracurricular work, guides the cognitive activity of the student to the study of significant differences between tolerance and intolerance, fosters students' high moral qualities: respect for other beliefs and ideologies, acceptance of the other person's features, fair treatment, respect for others' traditions and customs, and responsibility.

### Recommendations

The research paper provides practical value for psychologists, supervisors and deputy directors for educational work in schools. It should be noted that collected and evaluated data can be applied to adolescents in education process in general education institutions.

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No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

### Notes on contributors

**Gulfiya G. Parfilova** is PhD, Associate Professor of General and Social Pedagogy Department, Kazan Federal University, Kazan, Russia.

**Lilia Sh. Karimova** is PhD, Associate Professor of General and Social Pedagogy Department, Kazan Federal University, Kazan, Russia.

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