

RESEARCH ON THE CHECHEN REPUBLIC YOUTH VALUE ORIENTATIONS AS A FACTOR OF PREVENTING THE PROPENSITY FOR EXTREMISM

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Abstract: The research is timely and important because today, young people are exposed to a sufficiently intensive and professionally modeled extremist influence of well-funded recruiters of various types and levels. For this reason the article aims to identify distortions in the system of value orientations of the young people who can form the beliefs justifying extremism. The leading method applied for the research of this issue is a questionnaire survey. The questionnaire developed by the authors consists of 24 questions divided into the following sets: Legal Awareness; Social Circle; Value Component; Future Time Perspective, Picture of The World; Cultural Component; Spiritual and Moral Component. The authors believe that on the whole this questionnaire comprises a set of indicators allowing complex consideration of the basic components of the system of young people's value orientations. From the analysis of the basic components of the system of modern youth value orientations as exemplified by the Chechen Republic young people, factors have been identified that can cause the propensity for extremism in young people. The article substantiates the need for carrying out preventive work among young people, taking into account the basic components of the system of value orientations; it justifies a set of measures for preventing and correcting today's young people's destructive social activity. The information is of practical value for teachers, psychologists and other professionals engaged in working with young people.

Keywords: Youth, youth value orientations, preventive work, focus of interests, motivation of behavior, social activity, legal awareness, future time perspective.

INTRODUCTION

A person's value attitude to the world permeates all areas of his/her life, is characteristic of his/her spiritual state and determines his/her actions. The personality values are an important criterion for evaluating the material and spiritual culture, the state and social system, the behavior of other people and one's own behavior. Thanks to the value system, a person adapts to public relations, determining his/her place in them.

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The relevance of the research presented in the article is associated with the specific social situation of the development of the region with a considerable experience in taking preventive measures for overcoming social tension in public relations and improving civil security. Nevertheless, young people continue to be exposed to a sufficiently intensive and professionally modeled influence by means of extremist information spread mainly through the Internet. Measures taken by law enforcement agencies are insufficient for the struggle against well-funded recruiters of various types and levels; a more effective means of counteracting such a destructive phenomenon as extremism is, naturally, the personality and emotional maturity of young people who can recognize manipulations and resist them, possess a clear system of life values and high level motivation to a creative and positive transformation of the society, and who can take responsibility for the arrangement of their lives and the lives of their loved ones.

The issue of the study of values is most acute in the times of public transformations and deep changes in the material and spiritual conditions of people's life. Of particular importance in such circumstances is the study of the value orientations of young people, whose perception of what is happening is particularly acute and vulnerable, since they have not achieved personality maturity yet and their value system at this age is still forming.

At present, especially great is the influence of spontaneous socialization, since the information of various kinds and quality becomes publicly available; in addition, young people have an opportunity to establish contacts regardless of the communication partner's location. Therefore, the issue of changes in the minds of today's youth is particularly acute.

The study of the features of the young people's value attitude to public life is particularly important and relevant, since it allows us to determine the focus of their interests and needs, motivation of the behavior, the preferred areas of activity and the spiritual potential; it enables us to understand the trends of the change in youth public conscience. This knowledge allows prediction of the main tendencies in youth social activity.

Youth social activity can be realized both in acceptable (or adequate) and in asocial, extravagant, perverted forms, including an extreme expression of radical views (radicalism, fanaticism, extremism and terrorism); values such as the beauty of nature and of art, entertainment, creativity will be regarded as insignificant (Dokutchayev, 2009, p. 35).

When investigating value orientations of youth, it was taken into account that they are formed in the process of satisfying many personality needs, namely, the need for being included in a social group, for security, respect, mutual understanding and support, interpersonal communication, self-realization, recognition of their adult maturity by adults, etc. All these needs are completely taken into account and

satisfied by members of extremist groups at the stage of active involvement of a young person in their counter-social environment. In doing so, the most unsatisfied needs are thoroughly chosen and it is their satisfaction that is given particular attention to.

Absolute success is achieved by them if these young person needs are not satisfied in the family and other close social-oriented environment. In this case, the emotional and intellectual emptiness is successfully filled with false values and beliefs against the background of creating an atmosphere of pseudo-support and trust.

It is value orientations that essentially influence the choice and building of relationships and life activity spheres significant for a young person. Incompleteness of the value system that is adequate to the society's requirements, absence of a clear hierarchy in this system, lack of life experience and trusting relationships with relatives, lack of knowledge in the field of legal culture, and limited interests make young people the objects of manipulation by radical groups.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The study of the value system has been attracting the attention of Russian researchers since 1960s. The theoretical basis for studying this issue is the works by I.I. Antonovich (1995), L.M. Arkhangelsky (1970), V.A. Blumkin (1987), V.V. Grechany (1972, 1993), O.G. Drobnitsky (1967), A.G. Zdravomyslov (1986), B.A. Kislov, V.A. Tuev, M.P. Tkacheva (2009), I.S. Kon. (1984), A.M. Korshunov (1998), T.B. Lyubimova (1973), I.A. Mayzel (1966), V.V. Prozerskiy (1966), V.P. Tugarinov (1966), A.G. Khartchev (1966), V.N. Sherdakov (1966), and others. In their works, fundamental issues relating to the value theory were considered and analyzed; historical roots of the origin of the issue of values in philosophy, ethics, culturology and aesthetics were studied; correlation of the value system with the spiritual and material world was clarified; forms and ways of the existence of values were investigated.

Since the beginning of the 1970s to the present, the object of study for Russian scientists has been the structure and content of the system of public and personal values, factors that can significantly influence the formation and transformation of the value system and the hierarchical structure of the value system (Veretskaya, 2006; Zdravomyslov, 1986; Zolotukhina-Abolina, 1995; Penkov, 1972; Yadov, 1994).

In the process of ideological reorganization, psychological transformation and social conflicts of the 90s of the last century, the youth value orientations underwent a significant transformation. The conflict of priorities consisted in a difficult choice between wealth and education. O.Karpukhin believes that there is "a phenomenon of hypertrophied desire to have material benefits which is not provided with an

equal desire to create these benefits” (Karpukhin, 1998). V.T. Lisovsky (1988) found that many students, having graduated from the institute, do not intend to work according to their speciality and their only criterion for the future activity is the level of income. According to Yu.R. Vishnevsky, young people learn to make money in a spontaneous market and together with the market way of life, in its worst version, they also assimilate all its inherent characteristics: aggressiveness, moral nihilism, disrespect for the law, contempt for creative work.

At present, Russian researchers pay attention mainly to the analysis of the causes that lead to the crisis of the value system and of those transformations which the value orientations of various social groups of Russian society undergo. In doing so they are increasingly attracted by the opportunity to turn to the world experience in the study of the value system, as since foreign authors’ fundamental research works in this field have become available, as well as formerly inaccessible or little-known works by Russian authors. Thus, the researchers believe that the system of value orientations is increasingly affected by individualism (Losun, 2015) and religious faith (Semyonov, 2007).

In science, there are many definitions of values and value orientations that somehow emphasize their content and meaning.

Values are people’s generalized ideas about norms of their behavior and about goals and means for achieving them; these ideas are based on historical experience and are concentrated reflection of the meaning of the culture of an individual ethnos and of the whole of mankind. They are reference points in the mind of every person with which individuals and social groups correlate their actions (Dokuchaev, 2009).

Values are symbols of people’s integration into the human community (Gavrilyuk & Trikoz, 2000, p. 104). Value orientations are a component of the personality orientation. They are material and spiritual values shared and internally accepted by the personality; and predisposition to the perception of life and activity conditions in their subjective significance.

Value orientations are an important component of the world outlook of the personality or of the group ideology; it expresses (represents) the preferences and aspirations of the individual or group concerning certain generalized human values (welfare, health, comfort, knowledge, civil liberties, creativity, work, etc.).

Our research is based on regarding value orientations to be the elements of the internal (dispositional) structure of the personality; these elements are formed and fixed by the life experience of the individual in the course of socialization and social adaptation distinguishing the significant (essential for this person) from the insignificant (not essential) through accepting or not accepting by the personality of certain values perceived as a framework (horizon) of limit meanings and fundamental life goals, as well as determining acceptable means of their realization.

Within the theme of our research, value orientations are considered to be “a conscious regulator of the personality social behavior” (Volkov, 1981, p. 322). E.S. Volkov believes that value orientations play a motivational role and determine the choice of activity (Volkov, 1981, p. 322).

The aim of the research conducted by the authors of this article was to study the basic components of the system of value orientations of modern youth as exemplified by the Chechen Republic young people, to identify the factors that can cause the propensity for extremism in the Chechen young people. The research was carried out in 2016 and was supported by the Center of Youth and Children Public Associations, PERSPECTIVA. 1700 young people (100 from each region of the Chechen Republic) at the age of 18-25 took part in the survey.

The post-war psychological situation in the region has long been a fertile ground for a massive influence on the minds of young people burdened with the experience of psychologically traumatic situations. “Analysis of the current psychological problems of the Chechen children and young people made by researchers in the field of medicine, clinical psychology, pedagogy and psychology has shown that “they come from war” (Minazova & Minazova, 2012, p.116).

The Chechen young people became victims of hostilities, finding themselves in conditions that threatened life, level of education, ability to self-actualize, to realize their personality and creative potential. The state of frustration of youth in the post-war period was aggravated by a negative image of a Chechen purposefully created in the public conscience, preventing from establishing constructive interethnic and interreligious relations.

Taking into account “weak links” in the psyche and behavior of young people, the republic gives purposeful and systematic social and psychological support to young people and works on the prevention of deviant behavior, primarily, the propensity for extremism.

RESEARCH METHODS

The research was conducted, using the method of a questionnaire survey. The questionnaire developed by the authors consisted of 24 questions divided into the following sets.

The set *Legal Awareness* allows the determination of whether the young people are familiar with the legislation, and whether they know which actions are permitted and which ones are illegal.

The set *Social Circle* aims at studying the parameters by which young people evaluate individuals and choose friends. Questions of this set help reveal the person’s attitude to the surrounding world, his/her attitudes and social stereotypes.

The set *Value Component* enables us to determine what is the most significant for young people: career, money, fame, helping people, good relationships with

people and others. Actually, the questions of this set are aimed at determining what exactly underlies the person's preferred style of behavior and characteristics of his/her life.

The set *Future Time Perspective, Picture of the World* shows young people's attitude to their future, the ability and desire to set goals, to plan and evaluate their actions, to achieve their goals and evaluate the outcome of their activities. In addition, this set demonstrates how young people perceive the surrounding world, whether they consider it to be friendly or hostile to them.

The set *Cultural Component* makes it possible to evaluate young people's cultural development, to determine what literature and music trends they prefer and to identify the main interests.

The set *Spiritual and Moral Component* is a key one in our research, since it is closely connected with all other questionnaire sets which are considered only in the relationship with the spiritual and moral content of the personality structure of young people. The set determines the degree of responsibility of young people for their actions towards their loved ones and society as a whole.

The authors believe that on the whole this questionnaire contains a set of indicators that make it possible to compose a complex portrait of a modern young man, to identify the strengths and weaknesses of youth, to see which personality aspects are worth working at, and which to rely on in forming a harmonious, responsible and motivated young generation; and in particular, with a high degree of probability, to determine the young man's propensity for extremism.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The conducted research has shown that the most problematic in some regions is the indicator *Legal Awareness*. The lowest rates are in the following regions: Vedenskiy Region (12,7%), Nozhai-Yurtovskiy Region (13,3%), Sharoiskiy Region (12,1%), Shatoiskiy Region (11,9%), Itum-Kalinskiy Region (11,4%), Shelkovskiy Region (11,6%).

In our opinion, the low rates in these regions are due to the fact that the population of mountainous areas is initially friendly and hospitable; therefore, young people cannot even think that they may refuse to give their phone to their acquaintance at his request for making a call or to deliver the package to destination when the young man goes somewhere and his acquaintance asks him to hand over something to someone "on the way" to the destination. This is also explained by the fact that people living in these areas rarely leave their place of permanent residence because of the remoteness of their area or because of the attachment to the household. They are busy with their own business, therefore they are poorly informed about the main trends of changes in public moods.

Young people living in the above-listed areas consider it normal to offer food and drink to anyone who asks for it, because hospitality is a traditional feature of Chechen people. Unfortunately, all sorts of perpetrators may use this for their criminal purposes.

In order to increase the level of legal awareness of young people we recommend the following:

1. Delivering lectures and seminars by a lawyer (teacher, juvenile inspector, police officer) who will explain possible intentions of the perpetrators and consequences for those who do not know how to refuse such requests. Simply put, criminals, hiding from justice, may ask their young acquaintance to buy food for them at the store or bring it from home. It is unlikely that having fulfilled their request, the young man will think that he has become a partner in crime, because in the Caucasus nobody has traditionally been refused food, water and even overnight accommodation. However, the modern world is changing, and what used to be a tradition can now be regarded as aid for criminals, or even complicity in the crime, depending on the circumstances.
2. Training for removing anxiety, for developing the personality position, for the ability to refuse requests that are surprising and suspicious. Good results can also be achieved by working at problem situations, using the case method and the technology of *Forum Theater* in which learners can live through a problematic situation in conventional units, and acquire and understand quite a real experience that later can be transferred to real life. The technologies even give an opportunity to make mistakes, analyze and correct them in a simulation game form.

The proposed activities must necessarily be implemented in schools and other educational institutions.

According to the aggregate indicator, the set *Future Time Perspective* is problematic. 42% of the young people perceive the surrounding world as neutral; rather a big group of respondents (34%) thinks that the surrounding world is hostile; only a small number of the respondents (19%) consider it to be friendly.

Indicators showing primary importance of “the Islam Commandments” and of “financial independence” were almost equally estimated (44% and 42% respectively); that is, by their answers the respondents marked the indicators that dominate in their value system, thus confirming the need for financial well-being together with highly developed religious and moral qualities, while leisure and entertainment as values were marked only by 14% of the respondents.

The respondents who regard the surrounding world as friendly consider it also to be interesting; they want to be engaged in its study, exploration and transformation. They have formed clear ideas about what they want to achieve and how they see

their professional and personal life. Young people in this category are able to set goals and plan their future in accordance with their value system.

This category of respondents is not a concern from the point of view of propensity to extremism.. They are goal-oriented mature young people having adequate ideas about the surrounding reality; it is difficult to lead them away with doubtful ideas and false values.

People who regard the world as neutral, under adverse conditions may find themselves in an at-risk group. But most of all, a reason for concern are respondents who believe the world to be hostile. These young people do not have a clear plan of action aimed at building a career and providing material and spiritual support for their family. Moreover, they do not have the skill of systematic work; they want to get results almost immediately, without making much effort. Hard work aimed at getting the result not immediately but after quite a long period of time is not attractive for them; it makes them feel bored and irritated.

This group of respondents dislike and envy people enjoying material benefits; they are unable to understand that material prosperity can be achieved through systematic work, both physical and mental, but they consider it an extreme injustice that someone is wealthy while they are not.

Respondents of this group are the most difficult category; they are the ones who are most susceptible to negative influences, suggestion, temptation with money, luring with “beautiful life”; they are the easiest to convince of the unfair structure of the world and to make them believe that it is they who are called upon to correct this world.

These people are intolerant of members of other cultures and religious confessions; they are uncritical to themselves and their real possibilities; they have narrow stereotyped thinking and cannot predict the consequences of their actions due to intellectual and emotional underdevelopment, being an easy prey for various kinds of extremist recruiters and ideologists.

Along this line, we recommend doing the following:

1. The training *Building the Future Time Perspective* in which the main element, in our opinion, is career guidance aiming to disclose and develop personality potential (interests, aptitudes, skills, abilities).
2. Discussions with children and youth on advantages and disadvantages of the preferred careers
3. A good preventive effect can be produced by training for the development of tolerance, intercultural interaction skills and humane personality traits.
4. In addition, training for actualization of resources and positive goal-setting; for trust and rapprochement between schoolchildren and young people; training of conflict-free behavior.

5. A good educational effect can be achieved by reading together short stories or watching movies with educational content followed by a compulsory discussion in a relaxed atmosphere.

This organizational form of the lesson is more suitable for working with teenagers, whose ability to reflect is poorly developed and is only at the stage of formation; it is difficult for them to talk about themselves, their feelings and experiences. However, they can identify themselves with a literary character.

Judging by what role of the main literary character appeals more to the audience, one can easily determine features of their moral make-up, the predominant or deprived moral qualities, the system of moral values in general and its hierarchical structure. Thus, the leaders get an opportunity to unobtrusively influence the participants' system of values by a managed discussion.

All of the above listed activities can be carried out by cultural workers, deputy directors of schools for organizational and educational work, school psychologists and social educators.

The results obtained for other indicators do not raise concerns; however, we recommend the following preventive measures:

1. Talks on spiritual and moral education of children and youth that can be conducted by religious figures, spiritual leaders, ethnologists, etc.
2. Round tables for discussing topical youth problems, inviting real or preparing improvised experts from among young people. It should be noted that in the distribution of roles among the trainees they are given an opportunity to choose a role (profession) and to independently search for the necessary information, which stimulates their cognitive activity and, ultimately, raises awareness and ability to navigate in the world of the profession, evaluate their potential, their strong and weak points.
3. Holding competitions for the best knowledge of the customs, traditions and Constitutions of the Russian Federation and the Chechen Republic (preferably in comparison, for better mastering of the basic provisions of the documents); competitions and other intellectual and cognitive activities that can enhance the cognitive activity of the participants, actualize the sense of patriotism, strengthen the civic stand and responsibility for their actions towards their loved ones and the society as a whole.
4. Holding exhibitions of products that children and young people have made with their own hands, possibly with the subsequent sale of products in the form of an auction and the transfer of the proceeds for the improvement of their settlement and for educational institutions of a special type (boarding schools, rehabilitation centers for children with developmental peculiarities, gerontological centers, etc.). Preparing and giving charity concerts in these institutions will facilitate actualization of young people's creative

abilities and the development of a sense of responsibility and emotional attachment.

5. Providing time-management training that will promote discipline, concentration, formation of respectful attitude to spending time, which, in turn, can increase the productivity of work and motivation to achieve the goal.

CONCLUSION

From the results of the conducted research it is possible to assert that the researchers' increased interest in value issues is based on their desire to achieve a deeper understanding of the nature and regularities of the socio-cultural conditionality of value orientations and life meaning of today's young people.

Since radical changes in the society are almost impossible or not final without changing the value component of people's mind, it is extremely important, in our opinion, to study and adequately monitor the process of transformation of the hierarchy of life values, needs and attitudes of young people, without which real understanding and management of public development processes is impossible (Serdyukova & Lalaeva, 2015 p. 511).

Young people who are convinced that the surrounding world is hostile (provided they are semi-literate) are unable to distinguish the essential from the nonessential; they have superficial thinking; under the influence of extremist information, they may become embittered and resentful toward representatives of state bodies and authorities and successful citizens (without taking into account that their success is the result of systematic skilled work); they may want to wear a military uniform, take up arms and thus feel superior over these people. Therefore, it is very important to carry out a specially organized preventive work with this category of respondents.

The research conducted by the authors of the article is important and timely; it has allowed us to identify the most vulnerable positions in the system of value orientations of the Chechen youth and to determine the main lines of the preventive work that enables us to influence the young people's value system and the general cultural level of their development painlessly and in good time; which in the long run will allow us to prevent the development of the propensity for extremism among youth.

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