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Research Paper



The program me of Pyatigorsk state university on counter extremism activities on the territory of the educational organization and student dormitories

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Abstract

The relevance of the research is conditioned by the necessity to arrange countermeasures against extremism on the territory of the educational organization and student dormitories, and by the absence of a scientifically justified model for operation of universities in this direction. Research goal: theoretical justification and elaboration of the programme on counter-extremism activities on the territory of the educational organization and student dormitories. The leading research methods were the analysis and generalization of the pedagogic experience, statistical processing of the quantitative data concerning the problem state in the educational organization, and simulation. The research results contribute to further scientific comprehension of the problem of preventing extremist manifestations among the youth in the present socio-cultural situation and to creation of the required conditions for successful fulfillment of the anti-terrorist and anti-extremist line of the government. The programme for extremism prevention in the student environment was presented, the introduction of which will allow achieving a positive effect in educating a personality that can express the Russian spiritual and moral imperative, has a proactive attitude with regard to opposing asocial phenomena, radicalism, extremism, and terrorism in all forms; the socio-cultural conditions for preventing the extremist attitudes that contribute to pedagogic correction in the process of educational and leisure activities were revealed. Research value: the research showed that applying a complex of preventive measures with due account for the organizational-pedagogic, socio-psychological, professional socio-cultural conditions largely optimizes the activity on introduction of conceptual provisions of the state youth policy, and reduces the level of destructive behaviour in the student environment. The materials of the paper can be useful for the heads of educational structures of different level and other subjects of educational activity, and can be used in the outreach and volunteer activities of the youth non-governmental organizations.

Keywords: *Counter-Terrorism and Counter-Extremism Activities; Educational Organization; Student Dormitory.*

1. Introduction

The geopolitical problem of the terrorism and extremism ideology dissemination becomes global presently. The growth of terrorism worldwide and cultural and moral tension contribute to the increasing potential of the terrorist and extremist groups that affect the public consciousness and destroy the primary life-purpose attitudes and values of people. The rising generation under these conditions comes to be the most vulnerable category in terms of cultural-psychological state being in a kind of value-based and spiritual vacuum, disorganized and subjected to the extremism and xenophobia influence that destroy traditional values of the national cultures and religions of the peoples of Russia. According to specialists, it is this environment where it is rational to ramp up all forms of activities to develop tolerance and understanding of the national-cultural and confessional features. It is required to develop a young person with a steadfast civic position, able of confronting the ideology of terrorism, fascism, xenophobia and various extremist tendencies.

One of the most important directions and at the same time a significant part of the anti-terrorism line is elaborating an integrated system of values of the modern Russian society and introducing it in the regions, developing the anti-terrorist and anti-extremist conscious among the population, especially among young people. At the same time, the educational practice encountered the lack of scientifically justified tested models of activity at the higher educational institutions in the specified direction and poor scientific and methodological support of the process [1-3].

The goal of our research was to elaborate and theoretically justify the program me on counter-extremism activities on the territory of the educational organization and student dormitories.

The resolution of the following objectives helped to achieve the goal: describing the state of the problem under study in theoretical literature, analyzing the experience of using the potential of the socio-cultural activity with respect to extremism prevention in the youth environment, determining the criterial mechanism that allows evaluating the efficiency of the socio-cultural activity of universities regarding extremism prevention, justifying the scope of activity within the counter-extremism programme on the territory of the educational organization and student dormitories, identifying the most efficient methods and forms of this work.

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2. Literature review

Theoretical analysis of the papers of foreign and domestic authors regarding the problem under study testifies that the present stage of the Russian society transformation is characterized by numerous social conflicts. On the one hand the aggravation and high intensity of social conflicts are appropriate for any social system experiencing transformations, on the other hand there is a number of objective conditions and subjective factors of proneness to conflicts in the Russian society that differ the transition process in this country from any other. Such factors include cross-national and inter-confessional relations that generate proneness to conflicts of the modern society, give rise to extremism and terrorism and consequently require special attention from the state and society. Lasting co-residence within the unified state has formed a sense of involvement in the fates of Russia, and a number of common Russian ethnic-confessional commonalities, ideas, preferences and attitudes among the poly-ethnic and multi-confessional population. In many respects the future of Russia, its national integrity and unity depend on how will the relations develop between various national and confessional groups both in the centre and within the regions. Proneness to conflicts, aggression, and violence in such relations observed lately are considered by the authors as a particular hazard since they represent one of the original causes of extremism and terrorism [4-8].

The youth environment by virtue of its social characteristics and perceptual acuity of the surroundings is characterized as a part of society that accumulates and implements the negative protest potential most quickly. Under the impact of social, political, economic and other factors the radical views and convictions are formed easier in the youth environment which is most subjected to destructive influence. Thus young citizens fall into the ranks of the extremist and terrorist organizations that actively use the Russian youth for their political interests. Over the last years the expansion of the number of extremist movements that engage young people in their activity is observed. According to the expert assessments on the average 80% of participants of the extremist organizations are persons in the age under 30 [9].

The international and domestic experience of counter-terrorism and counter-extremism activities testifies that the power methods of resolving the problem can only temporarily localize a threat of terror attacks. But in general such threats will persist while the system of the terrorism infrastructure reproduction exists [10-12]. The key elements of this system are the terrorism and extremism ideology, the instigators and mediums thereof, dissemination channels of the specified ideology, as well as people who come under its influence as stated in the Concept for Counter-Terrorism Activity in the Russian Federation.

Extremism is one of the most complex socio-political problems of the modern society which is associated in the first place with the variety of the extremist manifestations, and heterogeneous composition of the extremist organizations that have a destabilizing influence on the socio-political situation in the country. The present-day extremism which components are intolerance, xenophobia, nationalism and fascism by denying the ethnic and religious diversity endangers the safety of society (safe co-existence of nations and social groups), violates the human rights, hinders the achievement of civil accord and disrupts the principles of the democratic and law-governed state. It makes the struggle against extremism the most important objective of the government authorities which is also specified in the Strategy of National Security of the Russian Federation till 2020.

In the Strategy it is indicated that among the primary sources of threats to national security in the area of state and public security is the extremist activity of the nationalist, religious, ethnic and other organizations and structures aimed at violating the unity and territorial integrity of the Russian Federation, destabilizing the domestic political and social situation in the country. It is specified in the document that in order to prevent the threats to national security it is required to ensure social stability, ethnic and confessional accord. Complication and variation of the role of the extremism factor together with the transnational effect generates the necessity to develop adequate approaches and efficient comprehensive counter-extremism methods in the present-day Russia as a new unconventional threat.

The above actualizes a necessity to organize and carry out the system counter-extremism measures by the state through the relevant informational policy, and antiterrorist activities at regional and municipal levels. However in the general complex of antiextremist measures the special role shall be given to educational organizations which significant potential consists in developing value orientation among students, educating a mature person and preventing negative social phenomena determined by the specific nature of their activity [13], [14]. The importance of the education system in counteracting against the extremism ideology is conditioned by the fact that education in the present conditions is the most universal social institution covering almost all members of society (performing uniting functions due to its social nature); the impact on formation of a person within the frameworks of this institution is most consistent, scientifically justified and organized; the educational system activity ensures reproduction of a citizen and patriot – the primary creator of the future of Russia; a backbone role of the education in society continuously grows and becomes decisive [15].

According to scientists, public officers and education practitioners one should understand that the educational institutions are the key and inherent element of socialization of the modern youth. Practically each citizen of our country passes through this system irrespective of religious convictions, ethnic belonging, political views and personal preferences. It has a direct impact on the person's development. At the same time the present educational system in the Russian Federation gives inexcusably negligible attention to developing a system of "filters" in the youth with respect to the extremist and radical ideas. Such situation does not let the youth who turned face to face with the extremist ideas and convictions to properly evaluate the threats and take the right decision. Working in this field is extremely important. As the events of the recent years showed even high level of education and culture does not always help young people to draw boundaries between the admissible and inadmissible behaviour. It indicates the need for a considerable transformation of the educational process in part associated with developing a law-abiding conduct in the youth.

3. Materials and methods

When elaborating the counter-extremism programme on the territory of the educational organization and student dormitories we based on the definition of pedagogic simulation as a type of pedagogic activity aimed at overcoming the permanent contradictions in interrelation of the pedagogic science and practice involving such processes as diagnostics, forecasting, goal-setting, monitoring, simulating, designing, programming etc.

We distinguished two stages of diagnostics with respect to the problem under study: 1) revealing the level of socio-cultural perception of extremism by the youth; 2) identifying personal features that induce developing extremist attitudes by the youth. On the first stage of diagnostics, the information awareness of respondents concerning the extremism problem was evaluated. On the second stage the degree of inter-ethnic and inter-confessional tolerance of respondents was determined (the methods of G.U. Soldatova "Cultural and Value-Based Differential," "Types of Ethnic Identity," and L.G. Pochebut "Social Distance Scale").

The objective of the method of "Cultural and Value-Based Differential" – is to evaluate the group value orientations: on the group, on authority, on each other and on social changes. The value orientations were stated within the frameworks of the psychological universal evaluation of culture "individualism – collectivism." The scale "orientation on the group – orientation on oneself" is considered on the basis of such parameters as an intra-group support (mutual assistance – disunity), subordinance to group (submission – independence) and traditionalism (loyalty to traditions – devastation

of traditions). Orientation on changes is considered in the range "openness to changes – resistance to changes" with respect to parameters of: openness - closed nature of culture (openness – restraint), orientation on prospects (forward-looking – focus on the past), risk degree (attitude toward risk – carefulness). Orientation on each other is considered in the range of "focus on cooperation – rejection of cooperation" with respect to parameters of: tolerance – intolerance (peaceful disposition – aggression), emotional disposition (heartiness – coldness) and motivation for achievements (compliance – rivalry). Orientation on authority is considered in the range of "strong social control – poor social control" with respect to parameters of: abidance by prohibitive and regulating norms of society (discipline – willfulness, law-abidance – anarchy) and authority significance (respect for authorities – distrust of authorities). On the basis of "raw" data the manifestation rate of the evaluated quality and coefficient of coincidence of manifestation rates in different groups are determined [16], [17].

The methodological elaboration "Types of Ethnic Identity" allows identifying the ethnic self-consciousness and transformation thereof under conditions of inter-ethnic tension. One of the indicators of the ethnic identity transformation is the growth of the ethnic intolerance. Tolerance/intolerance – the main problem of the inter-ethnic relations under conditions of the growing tension between nations – was the key psychological variable when making the questionnaire. The degree of the ethnic tolerance of the respondent is evaluated on the basis of the following criteria: the level of "negativism" with regard to the proper and other ethnic groups, threshold of emotional reaction to alien surrounding, expressiveness of aggressive and hostile reactions with regard to other groups. The identity types of different quality and degree of ethnic tolerance are distinguished on the basis of a wide range of the ethnocentrism scale starting with "negation" of identity when negativism and intolerance are registered with regard to the proper ethnic group and finishing with the national fanaticism – apotheosis of intolerance and the highest degree of negativism with regard to other ethnic groups. The questionnaire contains six scales that correspond to the following types of ethnic identity: ethnic nihilism; ethnic indifference; norm (positive ethnic identity), ethnic egoism; ethnic isolationism; ethnic fanaticism.

The objective of the test "Social Distance Scale" (version of L.G. Pochebut) consists in the following. The concept of social distance that was introduced by the American sociologist E. Bogardus at the beginning of the XX century characterizes the kinship (aloofness) of social or ethnic communities, groups, and individuals. The social distance scale (or Bogardus's scale) helps to evaluate the degree of the social-psychological acceptance of each other by people. Therefore it is often called the social acceptability scale. It is used to measure the distance associated with the race or national identity, age, sex, profession, religion, and also to measure the distance between children and parents. The social distance scale shows the degree of psychological kinship of people facilitating the ease of their cooperation. The maximum social distance means that a person (or ethnos) keeps aloof and apart. Civility and etiquette as cultural communication ways help to hide one's personality, originality and culture; the majority of communications in such cases is symbolic and formal. The minimum social distance helps to elaborate the ideas about other people since when people are well-acquainted and interested in each other and national culture they are engaged in cooperation and everyone recognizes the originality and individuality of each other. The proposed scale evaluates the relation to one or another nationality.

4. Results

The research showed low awareness level of respondents concerning the problem of extremist attitudes dissemination. When performing the diagnostics 5 levels of perception of the term "extremism" by respondents were identified: 1) level of semantic interpretation; 2) evaluating (emotionally-sensual) level; 3) informative level; 4) the level of concrete-historical interpretation; 5) the level of undifferential assessments. Having analyzed the answers we received the following results: 44% of respondents perceive extremism on the informative level, 20% – on the level of semantic interpretation; 20% give a concrete-historical interpretation; 10% have an evaluating perception; 6% did not give any definite answer to this question.

Identifying personal features that stimulate the formation of extremist attitudes among students also revealed the potential for activities in this direction. Thus, in particular, the method of G.U. Soldatova "Types of Ethnic Identity" provided results that testify that respondents are characterized by indifferent relation to the problem, high level of ethnic egoism, and strong manifestations of national fanaticism. The level of the ethnic tolerance is testified by the social distance between different ethnic groups. The social distance scale is used to measure the distance associated with the race or national identity, age, religion etc. In order to measure the social distance we used the version of the scale as per the method of L.G. Pochebut. The level of social acceptability of respondents is 65%, which means the commitment to cross-national integration.

5. Discussion

As a result of diagnostics measures we came to the following conclusion: the levels of socio-cultural perception of the extremism problem by the youth testify the lack of objective information on the problem, predominance of the informative level of perception which entails dissemination of the extremist attitudes among the rising generation. The lack of deep understanding and information background regarding the extremism issue leads to the fact that many respondents can become participants of such organizations without suspecting what they are engaged into. Therefore the necessary socio-cultural condition for preventing extremism should be the outreach and awareness activity in the course of which the youth will acquire the required knowledge concerning the extremism problem.

The analysis of personal traits of the youth allowed us to distinguish the special features of extremism attitudes manifestation: intolerance towards representatives of other nationalities and differently-minded due to many reasons: from the lack of knowledge concerning one's own traditions and traditions of other nations to conscious destruction of cultural values; aggressive form of intolerance; low self-esteem which contributes to development of conformist tendencies among the youth; inability to develop life strategies; focus on oneself, indifferent attitude towards the needs of others, priority in settling own problems; passive life stand, lack of interest in the political and social changes, consumer attitude to life; lack of available and interesting leisure for the youth.

Basing on the results obtained from the diagnostics the development levels of the extremist attitudes of a person were distinguished which were subsequently included in the programme for prevention of the extremist activity on the territory of the educational organization and student dormitories.

The socio-cultural conditions that contribute to the development of a self-sustainable and tolerant person which conditioned the priority directions in the system of preventive measures and became a basis for the programme simulation were determined. Socio-cultural conditions represent the aggregate of technological components of the present-day socio-cultural activity aimed at preventing the extremism in the youth environment that include:

- Organizational and pedagogic component – mastering skills, knowledge and perception that are required for life in a multicultural society (carrying out themed nights, participating in organization of national holidays).
- Socio-psychological component – developing the amateur activities of a person, motivated participating in the cultural and creative activities, tolerant cross-cultural and inter-confessional cooperation (a cycle of classes devoted to forming a tolerant conscious, program me project for conducting anti-extremist events, leadership trainings).

- Professional component – studying the management of the socio-cultural activity in the process of preparing the youth to anti-terrorist and anti-extremist activity

On the basis of the distinguished socio-cultural conditions we determined the goal of the programme – to create a system of educational activities with the youth to prevent extremism including adapted socio-cultural conditions for the development of personality; its functions are as follows: awareness-building; communicative; cultural and creative; recreational and health-improving. The principles of building a programme were determined: cultural and value-based attitude; self-fulfillment, self-development and self-affirmation of a person; priority of the general human interests; dialectic unity and succession of the cultural-historic, socio-pedagogic and national-ethnic experience, traditions and innovations.

Criterial-performance block includes criteria, indicators, levels and result of the pedagogic activity. Among the criteria the following were distinguished: cognitive, motivational and value-based, emotional, behavioural and activity-related. The indicators of each of the criteria are:

1) cognitive – enlightenment and awareness of young people concerning the danger of extremism, knowledge about the danger of extremist activity (the concept and primary threats of extremism, subjects of religious extremism: extremist organizations, their religious, nationalist and political ideas etc.); mental flexibility, ability to structure the information and imagine potential outcomes from the situation, ability to understand and evaluate the importance of certain actions in regulating intellectual activity for the optimum resolution of emerged problems and in accordance with the norms accepted for this activity;
2) motivational and value-based – maturity and commitment to the general human morality standards; humanistic world attitudes and life-purpose values; legal awareness; respect for the course of law and moral-legal traditions; respect for the multi-nationality of our society; need for developing the values of general human culture and forming the pursuance of creating and increasing the values of spiritual culture, and of participating in the cultural life of the Russian society; certain world outlook which is incompatible with the extremist attitudes; necessity of counteracting against the strategies of extremist nature;
3) emotional – maturity of self-consciousness and higher needs of a person, inner freedom and self-respect, emotional and communication spheres, reasonable self-esteem, developed empathy, tolerance, sufficient maturity of the emotional-volitional regulation, sustainability to negative social impacts;
4) behavioural and activity-related – active participation in public life, control over proper conduct, control over the situation and people involved, conscious proper behavioural style; constructive cooperation of a young person with the representatives of other nations; participation in a socially important activity incompatible with the destructive forms of the youth subculture.

The conceptual framework of the programme for formation of the intercultural cooperation skills and prevention of extremism and terrorism manifestations is provided in the Pyatigorsk State University as a result of developing and implementing a complex of interrelated concepts: a concept of the university as a model of a multicultural civil society and professional community; a concept of the university as a centre of diversity of languages and cultures; a concept of the university as a peace-building centre; a concept of the university as a site for state-confessional and inter-confessional cooperation. Engaging the students into a united sphere of activity the Pyatigorsk State University (PSU) creates a unique space of common culture where students feel like a single team and get plenty of opportunities for the national self-identification and self-expression at the same time. It is this friendly, creative and uniting environment into which the students are absorbed from the first day of study that counterbalances the proneness to conflicts and creates opportunities for efficient cooperation.

Today the educational institutions with the Pyatigorsk State University among them face the objective to develop a system of values among students associated with the reality of the world model; to help them master the methods and skills of successive mental activity in the cross-cultural communication; to develop personal features required for a person to integrate into another culture. Within the frameworks of implementing the Programme for Strategic Development of the Pyatigorsk State University it is proposed to settle a complex of objectives one of the most important among which is to form the advanced system of the transformation-oriented worldview training of graduates as transformation leaders expressing the Russian spiritual and moral imperative, able and willing to secure the Russian intellectual-innovative leadership, protection of state interests of the Russian Federation and countermeasure against the ideology of extremism and terrorism. Being a subject of the general system of social-political and socio-cultural relations, cross-cultural, inter-ethnic communication the PSU makes a significant contribution to implementing a state social policy of Russia based on the respective laws, decrees of V.V. Putin, RF President, state targeted programmes and modern political doctrines that in the first decade of the XXI century created the organizational backgrounds for spreading a major prevention of extremism, manifestations of xenophobia and international intolerance among which the following can be distinguished: the Decrees "On ensuring cross-national accord" dated May 07, 2012 and "On the Strategy of the state national policy of the Russian Federation for the period to 2025" dated December 19, 2012; the Federal Law No. 114-FZ "Concerning Countermeasure against extremist activity" dated July 25, 2002; the Strategy of Counter-Extremism Activity in the Russian Federation to 2025 dated November 28, 2014; the National educational doctrine of the Russian Federation (RF Government decree No. 751 dated October 04, 2000); RF Government Resolution No. 506-r "On approval of the Concept of the state youth policy in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation within the North-Caucasian Federal District to 2025" dated April 17, 2012; Government decree of the Russian Federation No. 1493 "Concerning the state programme "Patriotic education of citizens of the Russian Federation for 2016-2020" dated December 30, 2015 etc. In its activity the University also follows the Government decree of the Stavropol territory "Concerning the system of monitoring and prompt response to manifestations of religious and ethnic extremism in the Stavropol territory" dated April 29, 2013 as amended, the resolution of the Governor Council of Stavropol territory on the issues of inter-ethnic relations dated October 20, 2015, regulations of regional and municipal programmes "Stavropol Region – Antiterror," "Safe Pyatigorsk" and other documents.

The Pyatigorsk State University is involved in the system of interregional and international links expanding social, political and worldview horizons of the students in the area of human and civil rights, minority rights, prevention of "hate language," counteraction against racism, religious extremism and ethnocentrism. The integral system created and improved in PSU aims at educating a citizen of Russia, a patriot and a person with a proactive attitude, innovative thinking, and also at developing a person capable of not only respecting other cultures but also counteracting against extremism and terrorism, and violation of law enforcement standards. The student youth of PSU initiates and carries out the peace-making actions, tolerance trainings and events aimed at integrating and popularizing national cultures, counteracting against extremism and terrorism manifestations on its own. Among such projects the following can be distinguished: the Youth Council on Inter-Ethnic Relations; Friendship Centre; Peace-making; Following the Path of Mountain Dwellers; the Festival "Russia – is our Common Home;" Caucasian Tournament; Commemoration Event confined to the Solidarity Day in Fight against Terror; Pyatigorsk International Model of UN; polemical-political club "Globus;" University – is a Tolerance Area; We are one Family; a concert devoted to the national Unity Day – "We are all together, but we are different; a training "Tolerance Power." By elaborating and implementing such projects the youth seeks to overcome stereotypes and create a field for peaceful coexistence and inter-ethnic cooperation by its own efforts

transforming the world towards cooperation of different nations, people of different nationalities.

The Programme of Pyatigorsk State University on counter-extremism activities on the territory of the educational organization and student dormitories is based on the idea of reasonable reduction of a free uncontrolled socialization space of a young person (Kozhanov, 2017). The activities shall be directed to strengthen and integrate the educational impact of a family, university, public associations and mass media. The life activity of a teenager or a young person shall proceed in artificially created constructive, positive fields within which he/she grows-up, masters the standards and stereotypes of public conduct and settles the important worldview problems. The primary resource of the programme is the educational system representing the most organized institution covering practically all life spheres of society.

The programme is based on environmental approach according to which such conditions for a young person are created that considerably reduce manifestations of the extremist activity. For successful implementation of the programme it is required to create and develop positive youth mass media capable of performing a civil socializing function. An important place in the general system of preventing the extremist manifestations belongs to the activities of clubs, project teams and elective courses which objective is to organize a positive developing leisure for teenagers and youth. In order to make their activity efficient and attractive for the young generation a system comprehensive support is required for such associations.

6. Conclusion

In such a manner we see the following most important university activities against extremist manifestations in the youth environment: outreach and awareness-raising activities associated with the development and introduction of disciplines devoted to the study of religion, its history, culture and traditions, courses to study the counter-extremism and counter-terrorism legislation; psychology and pedagogical activities associated with the development of psychological and pedagogical departments in educational institutions that deal with revealing the persons from the group of "enhanced psychological and pedagogical influence" and further activities with them; organizational activities associated with increasing the role of the student public associations in the university life, creating the clubs of international friendship with the national expat communities taking part, and with implementing the programmes for students adaptation and integration. Settling the objectives will provide an opportunity for a comprehensive and diversified development of students, and ensure further development of the university as a subject of socio-cultural infrastructure of the region as a Cultural Centre, a translator of socio-cultural values having a positive impact on the youth socialization and education of a person expressing the Russian spiritual and moral imperative, with a proactive attitude against asocial phenomena, radicalism, extremism, and terrorism in all its forms.

The criteria for a comprehensive assessing the efficiency of a socio-cultural prevention of extremist behaviour in the youth environment are as follows:

1) The criterion of a social and cultural causality (the indicators: the general state of the socio-economic and socio-cultural situation in the region; availability of the extremism threat and background for dissemination of its ideology; sufficiency of the outreach and awareness-raising support to extremism prevention).
2) The criterion of a personal orientation (the indicators: no acceptance of the ideology of extremist behavior; motivation for participating in activities against the extremism ideology; involvement of a person in the socio-cultural activity).
3) The criterion of integrating the preventive measures against extremist behavior (the indicators: preventive activity of the educational segment of socio-cultural environment; preventive activity of the cultural segment of socio-cultural environment; preventive activity of a sporting segment of the socio-cultural environment).

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