

Tolerance of Modern Youth and Internet Technologies



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Abstract: *The collapse of the USSR led to national and religious intolerance, actualizing the problems of tolerance in the modern world and in Russia. It is believed that intolerance towards members of one or another social community (ethnic, racial, religious, etc.) is shown by those representatives who do not have stable values and attitudes. Therefore, the problem of tolerance is relevant for young people. The article presents the first results of sociological studies conducted by the authors in 2015-2018 in the Republic of Bashkortostan. The region selected for research in terms of socio-economic development is stable and has a special ethnic-sectarian structure of the population.*

In order to study the features of the formation of civic identity of residents of a multi-ethnic region, in 2016 a survey of 1000 respondents was conducted. This allowed us to determine the indices of tolerance of the population of the Republic of Bashkortostan depending on gender, age and type of settlement.

To identify problems associated with interethnic relations and the formation of a tolerant (intolerant) attitude of youth, in 2018 the authors conducted a content analysis of the most popular Internet messengers in the Republic. Content analysis has revealed the manipulative techniques that leading Internet instant messengers resort to. It is shown that these techniques have an impact on the formation of youth's negative attitudes towards representatives of various nationalities living in the republic.

Numerous studies record an increase in the time that young people spend on the Internet for entertainment. It is important to encourage modern youth to use the educational, scientific, professional resources of the Internet, which, when used correctly, can help to improve the culture of young Russians. Social technologies for working with youth should be adapted to new technologies in the field of Internet communications.

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I. INTRODUCTION

In the scientific community, tolerance is considered as a way of sociocultural communication and manifests itself in such forms as condescension, respect, indifference, etc. For example, V.A. Lektorsky investigated the following models of tolerance: indifference, impossibility of mutual understanding, condescension, expansion of one's own experience and critical dialogue. At first glance, tolerance is presented as indifference to existing views, since they are considered unimportant to the main problems that modern society faces. If we consider tolerance as the impossibility of mutual understanding, then religious views, specific cultural values are not secondary to man and to the development of society itself. In this case, tolerance will act as respect for others who I at the same time cannot understand and with whom I cannot cooperate. In the third case, tolerance is presented as condescension for the weakness of others, combined with a certain contempt for them. Tolerance, as an expansion of one's own experience, is seen as respect for a different position. Moreover, respect leads to a change in the positions of the contacting parties through a critical dialogue [1; 2].

Russian sociologists, psychologists, educators, political scientists are actively engaged in studying various aspects of youth tolerance, including interethnic tolerance in the youth environment [2-5]. In recent decades, an increase in studies of tolerance in the field of mass communications has been recorded [5-9]. The analysis of numerous sources prompted the authors to study the level of youth tolerance in the Republic of Bashkortostan. The choice of the region is due to the fact that, on the one hand, it is a typical region of Russia in terms of socio-economic development, on the other hand, it has a special ethnic-sectarian composition of the population, which largely determines its individuality and distinguishes it from other Russian regions.

The object of our study is youth living permanently in the Republic of Bashkortostan. The subject of the study is the level of tolerance (general, social, ethnic) in the youth environment, Internet communication as a factor in the formation of tolerance (intolerance).

The purpose of the study is to determine the level of youth tolerance through the demonstrated verbal attitude to some slogans of mass Internet messengers; to analyze the forms of manifestation of tolerance (intolerance).

Study objectives:

1. substantiate the assumption that dialogue is a universal technology for the formation of tolerance (intolerance);
2. substantiate the ongoing changes in media culture;
3. identify changes in youth's activities on the Internet as a condition for the formation of tolerance (intolerance).

II. RESEARCH METHODS

For research purposes, quantitative and qualitative methods were used.

At the first stage of the study (2016), 1000 respondents living in the Republic of Bashkortostan were interviewed for a systematic sample to study the peculiarities of the formation of the civic identity of Russians living in a multi-ethnic region. During the survey, the methodology of G.U. Soldatova, O.A. Kravtsova, O.E. Khukhlaeva, L.A. Shaigerova (express questionnaire "Tolerance Index") was used [10]. The express questionnaire contains three subscales that are aimed at diagnosing ethnic tolerance, social tolerance and tolerance as a personality trait.

The first subscale of tolerance - low level of tolerance - records the presence of pronounced intolerant attitudes towards the world and people. The second subscale - average level - is aimed at identifying the tolerant and intolerant traits of respondents in various life situations. The third - high level - allows us to identify people with pronounced features of a tolerant personality.

Note that the subscale "ethnic tolerance" allows one to determine the respondent's attitude to representatives of other nationalities, as well as identify attitudes in the process of intercultural dialogue. The subscale "social tolerance" records the presence of tolerant and intolerant manifestations in the course of interactions with representatives of social groups, personality attitudes towards ongoing social processes. The subscale "tolerance as a personality trait" allows you to diagnose the personality traits, attitudes and beliefs of the respondents that determine their attitude to the surrounding reality. Moreover, according to the developers of the questionnaire, tolerance as a personality trait allows you to identify and record the respondent's attitude to another person, to another point of view, to a different style of behavior [10].

It should be noted that during the interview questions were asked aimed at revealing the respondents' attitude to slogans in which an intolerant attitude towards people of other nationalities is expressed in an open or hidden form. The attitude to the slogans, in our opinion, is an indicator of the tolerance (intolerance) of the interviewees.

At the second stage of the study (2018), a content analysis of the Internet messengers "Live Journal", "Ufa Journal", "Twitter", "YouTube", "Facebook" was carried out. The purpose of the content analysis is to determine the trend and nature of messages in the listed Internet messengers, their role in highlighting the problems associated with interethnic relations and the formation of a tolerant (intolerant) attitude of youth. In the above messengers, 500 publications were selected and analyzed on issues of interest to the authors.

III. RESULTS

In the course of processing the results obtained at the first stage of the study, the indices of tolerance of the population of the Republic of Bashkortostan were calculated. Table 1 presents the distribution of indices depending on the age of the respondents.

Table 1. Distribution of indices depending on the age of the respondents.

Age	Tolerance indices			
	general	ethnic	social	as a personality trait
18-24	88,06	26,17	27,11	27,22
25-30	85,66	25,94	25,57	27,18
31-40	86,06	25,22	25,20	27,24
41-50	88,03	26,33	26,36	28,33
51 and older	86,66	25,47	26,16	28,04
Total	87,09	25,90	26,28	27,52

Here are the values of the indices of general tolerance: 22-60 - low; 61-99 - average; 100-132 - high. Levels of ethnic, social tolerance and tolerance as a personality trait: 7-19 - low; 20-31 - average; 31-44 - high.

As can be seen from the data presented in Table 1, the average value of the index of general tolerance of respondents is 87 points. This corresponds to the average level. Due to the fact that the average level of general tolerance ranges from 61 to 99 points, and if we divide it into three sublevels, we can draw a conclusion: the index of general tolerance is on the border between average-average and average-high sublevels. Deviations from the average value based on the age of the respondents do not exceed 1.5 points. Thus, it cannot be claimed that representatives of one generation are more tolerant, and representatives of another generation are less tolerant. Young people are characterized by the same level of general tolerance as representatives of older generations. The index of tolerance as a personality trait is also on the border between average-average and average-high sublevels. The indices of ethnic and social tolerance are slightly lower. The indices of ethnic and social tolerance among young respondents virtually repeat the indicators characteristic of representatives of older generations. We should note that the average values of the tolerance index cannot characterize the whole situation (just as, for example, the average salary in the region). And even the obtained "average-high" index of tolerance of the entire population, including youth, does not allow us to say that, in reality, everything is all right. This is due to the fact that, firstly, the average level of tolerance includes the presence of tolerant and intolerant orientations and attitudes of a person. As a result, it is necessary to identify how intolerance of the individual and society as a whole is manifested. Secondly, the average level of tolerance in the dynamics may show less stability than high or low levels.

Depending on the changes that take place, intolerant traits push out tolerant traits in the mind of an “average-tolerant” person, in his feelings and behaviour.

The diagram shows the distribution of the indices of general, ethnic, social tolerance and tolerance as a personality trait. As you can see, the distribution of each index from low to high is not smooth.

Moreover, respondents with an average tolerance index are characterized by spasmodic dynamics. This suggests a lack of stability of the average level of tolerance, a diverse combination of tolerant and intolerant traits.

Next, we dwell on tolerance of the population as a whole, and of young people aged 18 to 30. We begin our analysis with indicators of a low level of tolerance (or a high level of intolerance). Intolerance as a personality trait (attitudes, beliefs that determine a person’s attitude to the world around him) is inherent in only three percent of the population. Among young people, this indicator varies: for 18-24-year-olds, it is 3.4%; for 25-30-year-olds it is 3.5%. As you can see, it cannot be claimed that the representatives of the younger generation are more or less intolerant than the older ones. Thus, it cannot be claimed that young people are inherently more intolerant. Note that the proportion of intolerant people in relation to representatives of various nationalities and representatives of social minorities is significantly higher than those who are intolerant by personal qualities. For example, one in four respondents is intolerant towards representatives of certain ethnic groups (26%). Among young people aged 25 to 30, there are already 31% of them.

Let us evaluate the level of ethnic tolerance depending on gender. The analysis showed that men are characterized by a lower level of ethnic tolerance (29,3%) than women (22,6%). Women often demonstrate ethnocentric attitudes. This is due, in our opinion, to the fact that in the minds of men (they often have social and power resources), the problems of social justice (injustice) are more often actualized. In conditions when ethnicity continues to be an urgent problem of modern society, it is “otherness” that often becomes the criterion when searching for the guilty party.

The next trend, which was identified in the analysis of the level of tolerant attitudes, is the dependence on the type of settlement. It was revealed that a low level of tolerant attitudes is characteristic of more than a quarter of the inhabitants of large cities (28,8%). For comparison: a similar indicator was obtained in 25,1% of the population of medium-sized cities and in 23,8% of the inhabitants of rural settlements. This is explained by the ethnic homogeneity of rural settlements and medium-sized cities, in which national customs and traditions are preserved longer and better as grounds for identification. Residents of rural settlements often speak their native language, wear national clothes, use national utensils, prepare national dishes, engage in national crafts, etc. Residents of medium-sized cities understand their native language but less often communicate in it at work and at home, prepare national dishes on holidays, national utensils are stored as relics, etc. The communicative space of a large city is an ethnically non-integrated environment in which, along with the titular ethnic groups, representatives of labor migrants live, with pronounced sociocultural differences. Migrants actively exhibit a conflict character in

their interaction (in mosques, migrants often occupy the front rows on Friday prayers, which causes indignation among local residents).

One in four is intolerant of such social groups as beggars, tramps, refugees, representatives of non-traditional religions, etc. (24%). A similar situation was revealed among young people: among respondents in the age group from 18 to 24 years old, there were fewer socially intolerant, and among respondents in the age category from 25 to 30 years old - more than in general among the respondents.

Every tenth respondent demonstrates a high level of personal tolerance. The analysis showed that young people aged 18 to 30 years have a higher level of personal tolerance: 19,4% among 18-24-year-olds; 15,3% among 25-30-year-olds. It should be noted that in terms of “ethnic tolerance” and “social tolerance”, the proportion of people with a high level of tolerance decreases markedly (1,2 and 2,9%, respectively). Among young people, they are about 5% of the total number of respondents.

For the purposes of the study, we analyze the level of intolerance on the example of two of the most famous slogans: “Russia is for Russians!” and “Close borders for migrants!”, which are directed against migrants from countries of Central Asia, the South Caucasus and the North Caucasus. We consider these slogans as markers of social and ethnic tolerance of the respondents.

Every tenth respondent is not only accepting of the slogan “Russia is for Russians!”, but also supports it. Depending on nationality, no patterns were identified. From 9,8 to 11,4% of Russians, Bashkirs, Tatars and people of other nationalities accept and support this slogan. A similar picture was revealed depending on the age of the respondents, including among young people.

Almost one in five (18,3%) of the respondents refers to the slogan “Russia is for Russians!” with acceptance but does not support it. At the same time, 30% of Russians refrain from supporting this slogan; among respondents of other nationalities, they are from 10 to 14%. Among the representatives of the young generation (18-24 years old) accepting of this slogan but refraining from supporting it - 23%.

Every tenth is indifferent to the slogan "Russia is for the Russians!" (9%). Among young people, two more percent of respondents showed indifference. Often their own indifference is perceived by individual representatives as a tolerant attitude towards something or someone. However, in crisis situations, one's own indifference is transformed in the consciousness and behavior of people, taking the form of active tolerance, passive or active intolerance.

Just over half of the respondents (55%) do not support the slogan “Russia is for Russians!”. Every second representative of the young generation (18-24 years old) also does not support it. Among the Bashkirs, Tatars and people of other nationalities, their share is from 58 to 62%. However, under conditions of socio-political destabilization, the identified “margin” of tolerance may not be sufficient.

Every fifth respondent is not only accepting of the slogan “Close borders for migrants!”, but also supports it.

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The slogan meets acceptance and support among 11% of young people aged 18 to 24 years. Among representatives of young people aged 25 to 30, there are twice as many of them - 22%. The same number of respondents were sympathetic to the slogan "Close borders from migrants!", but at the same time refrain from supporting it. Indifference to this requirement was found among young respondents aged 18 to 24 years

(29%): at the age of 18-24 years - 37%, at the age of 25-30 years - 31%. This is clearly not enough for the formation of tolerance to migrants.

To test this hypothesis during the study, respondents were asked to evaluate the proposed areas of migration policy in the Republic of Bashkortostan. The responses received are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Respondents' attitude to the areas of migration policy, in% of the total number of respondents.

Area	Possible answer	
	support	do not support
Deny entry of migrants	32,3	60,5
Allow entry for only representatives of peoples living in the Republic of Bashkortostan	41,3	50,8
Allow entry for those who speak Russian	45,0	45,5
Allow entry for those who share our rules and traditions	60,3	32,0
Allow entry for all able-bodied	31,9	55,7

Migration processes are objective and migration flows can be controlled, but in modern conditions migration cannot be stopped by prohibitive measures. Our research data shows that the local population is ready to put all the problems associated with adaptation and socio-cultural integration on the migrants themselves: "when in Rome, do as the Romans do". This position is supported by 58,6% of residents of the capital, 56,6% of residents of medium-sized cities, 56,1% of residents of rural settlements. Only 8% of local residents are ready to accept migrants as they are and expressed their willingness to change their ideas and behavior in the process of interaction with migrants [11-13].

Tolerant (intolerant) attitude towards "others", marked on ethnic, racial, religious and other social grounds, is formed in the process of direct social contact, as well as through communication on the Internet. It is Internet communications that today have received the greatest distribution among Russians, and among young people the scale of Internet communications is impressive. According to the results of a VCIOM (Russian Public Opinion Research Center) survey, about half of young people aged 18-24 years named the Internet as the main source of news; among young people aged 25-34, this figure was 37% [14]. In 2016, these figures were already 62% and 47% [15]. It should be noted that the degree of trust in Internet sources of information is increasing every year and today fewer Russians trust traditional media. This leads to a rather low threshold of insight of young

people in the process of perceiving this information.

What are the reasons for this attitude to Internet information among young people? Internet communications are carried out only if there is a desire of participants who independently determine the structure of their own requests and the time range. Internet messages can be re-accessed through bookmarks, reposts, and comments. The low insight threshold for information in the global network is due to the large heterogeneity of Internet content, which is formed due to a large number of services. Unlimited availability of contacts is important. Depending on the type and form of interactions, a person can simultaneously enter into communication with a large number of users, which provides a kind of "horizontal equality" of the participants in the communication process. Anonymity creates additional opportunities for self-presentation of the individual. Thus, Internet media are perceived positively in comparison with traditional media, which have great limitations in creating user feedback.

Next, we present the results of our content analysis of the Internet messengers "Live Journal", "Ufa Journal", "Twitter", "YouTube", "Facebook". The share of the "Live Journal" messenger in the total number of publications for the studied period of time was 66.8%, "YouTube" – 11,9%, "Facebook" – 9,7%, "Ufa Journal" – 7,7%, "Twitter" - 3,9% [7].

Based on the content analysis, the following manipulative techniques were identified in Internet messengers:

An "emotional roller coaster" manifests itself as a demonstration of intolerance, often using profanity (Twitter, Facebook), facts of insult and threats, a series of fibs (trolling) (in 80% of cases on YouTube). Emphasis is placed on differences in relation to representatives of ethnic communities and social groups.

"Identification of feelings with facts" is often shown on Twitter and Facebook, where messages describe cases of everyday nationalism, and "vibrant generalizations" are used in the comments.

The techniques of repetition and fragmentation of information are characteristic of the "Ufa Journal", in which 54.2% of publications are devoted to the discussion of interethnic relations in the Republic of Bashkortostan.

In the analyzed materials, the significance of the discussed issues, problems, competence of the participants in communications is achieved through the use of scientific terms, phrases and expressions. The problems of interethnic relations are most often discussed in the LiveJournal, it is the leader among the examined Internet instant messengers. The publications most often analyze the history of the emergence of such phenomena of sociocultural interaction as fascism, genocide, tolerance, and identity; characterize the theoretical foundations of national and religious politics; the role of social institutions in regulation of interethnic interactions. A significant number of publications are devoted to migration issues; the causes of hatred and hostility, bills in the field of regulation of interethnic relations are analyzed. At the same time, authors and commentators actively use scientific concepts.

IV. DISCUSSION

What do the results of measuring tolerance levels by express questionnaire demonstrate? Tolerance indices approaching the upper limit indicate that the person has “blurred the boundaries of tolerance” due to psychological infantilism, with developing connivance, condescension, or indifference.

However, as shown by the index data on the levels of general, ethnic, social tolerance and tolerance as a personality trait, presented in Fig. 1, there were no respondents with extremely high tolerance indicators in the sample. Therefore, we can talk about a really high level of tolerance of the surveyed population.

Question: how to explain the discrepancy between the data on low and high levels of tolerance as a personality trait, on the one hand, and similar data diagnosing ethnic and social tolerance? Tolerance as a personality trait characterizes a person’s attitude to their social environment, their orientation in relationships with other people. The social world of a person is quite stable. Ethnic and social tolerance is associated with a specific social situation, which is influenced by such phenomena as labor migration, intersectorian and interethnic relations, social inequality, marginalization and lumpenization of representatives of individual social groups. If we take into account that the mechanisms of identification, reflection and empathy play a leading role in the process of people's perception, then in the perception of indirectly interacting social groups through Internet technologies, stereotyping becomes more important.

It should be noted that the average values of the tolerance index do not always reveal the real situation. Moreover, the tolerance of the population of the studied region, including young people, is characterized as “average-high”, which does not always characterize a successful situation in reality. Firstly, the average level of tolerance in statics is a combination of tolerant and intolerant orientations and attitudes of the individual. Consequently, it is also necessary to know in what intolerance of both individual individuals and society as a whole is manifested. Secondly, the average level of tolerance in dynamics is less stable in comparison with a high or low level. Depending on the changes that occur, intolerant traits are able to displace tolerant traits in the consciousness and behavior of an “average-tolerant” person.

Ethnic and social tolerance are more mobile and more dependent on the social situation. In a stable social environment, social and ethnic tolerance remain stable characteristics. But in conditions of social destabilization, the growth of social anomie, tolerance can quickly turn into its opposite. An example is the outbreak of ethnic intolerance and violence in the USSR in the late 1980s and in the post-Soviet space in the 1990s.

In such circumstances, when the majority of the population, including representatives of the young generation, have an average level of tolerance, representatives of the power structures responsible for implementing youth policy should not be reassured. In conditions of socio-economic instability, young people are able to dramatically change their behavior. In addition, the spread of intolerance among young people can be carried out by certain political and social forces, more often during

election campaigns.

The Republic of Bashkortostan did not face an intensive migration influx, like Moscow, St. Petersburg, the Tyumen region or other regions of the country. Migrants do not create competition in the labor market because they occupy jobs unattractive from the point of view of the local population. Nevertheless, a quarter of the respondents completely agree, and about half of the respondents agree with the opinion that migration contributes to the growth of unemployment. This position is shared by 20% of young respondents as a whole. More than a third of respondents aged 18 to 24 years and more than half of respondents aged 25 to 30 are ready to agree. Concerns about the replacement of local residents by labor migrants are caused by the general problems of employment faced by residents, primarily young people and people of pre-retirement age. Part of the population is against migrants due to differences in lifestyle.

V. CONCLUSION

Today, in the scientific community of psychologists, educators, sociologists, political scientists, and journalists, young people on the Internet remain the most discussed topic. An analysis of the discussions boils down to the fact that young people need to be isolated from the Internet and returned to the real world. Today, the scientific community should propose solutions not through confrontation with the Internet, but through the search for options for shaping such an attitude to the Internet that will help shape a healthy young generation. Social communications technologists should inform young people about the destructive impact of Internet communications. It should be remembered that Internet communications have a positive impact on interactions (and not only for young people) in the context of the expanding capabilities of communication networks. The information environment on a global scale is subject to continuous changes, and modern youth today adapt to them much faster than representatives of other age categories (the authors know from their life experience).

Unfortunately, young people often use the Internet as a resource for entertainment. Therefore, there is the problem of how to encourage modern students and working youth to effectively use the educational, scientific, professional resources of the Internet. In our opinion, Internet resources can act as a means of accumulating the human, social and cultural capital of young Russians. Social technologies for working with young people are not always adapted to new technologies in the field of Internet communications. Today it is necessary to identify areas of work with youth in the field of Internet communications.

An important issue is what the media culture of modern youth should be and what mechanisms shape it. Poor media culture is caused by numerous factors (family, school, mass media, etc.). A person through socialization channels must learn to distinguish between misinformation, manipulation, select information, remove extremist information, and for this, they should master the norms and values of behavior on the Internet.

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