



Pedagogics of Nonviolence as Means of Improvement the Effectiveness of Interpersonal Communication

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Abstract

Being the most active part of society, young people worldwide face a variety of life situations and a need to solve them. It requires to make and execute decisions. The ability to avoid aggressive actions, to build good interpersonal relationships in the family, at school and at work based on friendship and tolerance is an important indicator of human intelligence level. Aggressive behavior of a young man effects negatively the processes of his socialization. Current study presents the outcomes of the work of development the non-violence pedagogy and argues the need to develop these principles in the future pedagogical work.

Keywords: Education; Pedagogics of nonviolence; Humanism; Learning youths; Phenomenon of violence and nonviolence; Aggression; Alarmism

Introduction

The thematic is justified by profound trends in the social evolution and, respectively, development of range of various but, at the same time, interrelated social, sociocultural, ethic, geopolitical, pedagogical or other problems which solution requires an upheaval of the phenomena of violence and nonviolence. Escalation of various expressions of violence in the present-day world escalation jeopardizes the existing world order and the existence of the mankind itself. Multiplying political conflicts are solved in a far from peaceful way. It is noteworthy that such conflicts arise at the background of prosperity, stability, enhancement of ideals of the humanism in the most developed regions of the planet, which is a paradox of the present-day situation. Pacifist movements are active, antiwar campaigns, spreading anti-war action, peacemaking efforts and encouragement for disarmament of countries enhance. "But where the danger is, also grows the saving power" [1].

It is obvious that one of the major elements for the solving of interreligious and interethnic problems directly linked to the process of the globalization and the terrorism threat could be an enhancement of the nonviolence principle.

Only a psychologically mature personality that is capable of acting reasonably and nonviolently in different situations can withstand the above. Clearly, the existing situation in the world penetrated with violence cannot contribute to the development of such a personality. Therefore, Heavy responsibility falls on educational institutions and on the family that can create relatively favorable conditions for the development of a nonviolent interaction with the younger generation by relying on humanist ideas. However, It is required for the ideas of nonviolence to become a priority in the educational process. The fact is obvious that a mature democratic society should have cultural and educated youths that is capable of expressing their moral wholesomeness, civil position, tolerant culture, and of using ethic forms of interaction with other people while communicating [2].

Problems of education have always taken an important place in philosophic concepts. The principle of nonviolence has matured to millennia. The wisdom of this principle and its eternal truth have been preserved till now. The ethics of nonviolence is a teaching promoting a renounce of evil and application of force against a neighbor has passed several prominent stages in its development.

The first such stage can be marked as the age of the basis formation of the nonviolence concept in the ancient time and in the Middle Ages. The idea of the nonviolence is present in many religions such as Jainism, Buddhism, Hinduism, and in philosophic teachings. The problem was given thought in works of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle.

The second age begins in the period of the Renaissance and comprises the Modern Age. The main keynotes become the progressing anthropocentrism and individualism related to it, as well as attributing the human life with the utmost value. The subject was addressed by many thinkers from Erasmus of Rotterdam to Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Immanuel Kant. For example, J. Rousseau stated in the book "Emile or On

education" that the upbringing should be free from any attempts to force a person to take any acts [3].

In Russia, the beginning of the nonviolence as a movement that began to rapidly develop due to social reforms of the late XIX – early XX century was set by the philosophy of L. Tolstoy and his teaching of "non-resistance to evil with force". This teaching opens the new, the third stage of the apprehension of this problem. Tolstoy believed that nonviolence was the principle uniting all the universal religions, and that one could apply violence or aggression towards the neighbor in no case and under no circumstances. He criticized the existing education and upbringing system where everything was based on the will and instructions of the adults, and that the teaching should only be nonviolent. The thinker stated that the freedom of education and upbringing was the necessary condition for a conscious activity of a human being, while a forced education had always been a share of evil for the human [4].

Many thinkers of the XIX–XX centuries polemicized Tolstoy and his teaching of the non-resistance to evil with force. These are, first of all, representatives of the Russian religious philosophy – I. A. Ilyin, V. S. Solovyov, N. O. Lossky, S. N. Bulgakov, V. V. Rosanov and others.

The theory of the nonviolence by Tolstoy was further elaborated and supplemented by the Indian philosopher and politician Mahatma Gandhi. The innovation of Gandhi's theory was the fact that he considered and practically applied the principle of nonviolence as an efficient political model.

In the XX century, the concept of the nonviolence was further developed in works by A. Schweitzer, J. Sharp, H. Page, researchers of the pacifism D. Cady, A. Fortune, R. Niebuhr, and others.

At the present stage, while developing its contents and specific technologies, the pedagogics of nonviolence relies on ideas of the foreign and domestic humanism-focused psychological and pedagogical science and practice. Ideas of such humanists as K. N. Ventsel, C. Rogers, M. Montessori, C. Freinet, V. A. Sukhomlinsky, Sh. A. Amonashvili, L. S. Vygotsky, their methods and technologies of education and upbringing are based on principles of cooperation, non-compulsion, creative apprehension and conscious discovery of the world around.

Therefore, the practical elaboration of ideas of nonviolence marked the beginning of the contemporary, the fourth stage in the development of the nonviolence concept. A wide range of various approaches, teachings and schools has formed. These are the ethic school (A. Schweitzer, A. A. Guseynov, R. G. Apresyan, etc.); the historic school (E. L. Nitoburg, F. N. Yurlov, E. S. Yurlova, etc.); psychological and pedagogic school (M. Montessori, Yu. M. Orlov, Y. I. Makarova, N. V. Nalivayko, etc.); political and legal school (J. Sharp, A. N. Chumakov, D. Cady, V. Meyers, etc.) and other.

Methods

Considerable experience in the spirit of non-violence has been accumulated in world practice of training and education.

Almost all developed countries have worked out special programs to educate younger generation in the spirit of peace and humanism.

Pedagogy of nonviolence is studying the following mechanisms: the violent interaction of the person with other people, nature, society and the world in general; the goal of non-violent pedagogy is to educate younger generation on the basis of non-violence, in the spirit of peace, respect for the rights and dignity of others, respect for nature, all living beings.

There was, is coercion, violence, evil, etc. in the world. The question is not whether to accept or reject the violence or non-violence, but the choice of priorities for every person at every moment of his life, no matter what tendency of designing his life he chooses - destructive or creative, nonviolent or violent. The opportunity of nonviolent alternatives, the construction in accordance with life and activity is something that is called a culture of non-violence. It is a complex and vast concept that includes both the mastery of the idea of non-violence as a value and the corresponding relationship to reality, and the actual behavior. It does not form itself spontaneously. It requires long and painstaking work to create the conditions for its development. Science, education, art and media are to play a significant role in creating a culture of non-violence.

The basic ideas of non-violent pedagogy which are actively promoted in all UN agencies of the world, and above all, the UNESCO ("Culture of Peace and Democracy" programs) consist in the idea that interpersonal relationships of adolescents should be based on the principles of dialogue, positive attitude towards each other, the rejection of violence (mental, physical) as a way of resolving conflicts.

Results

Surveys, questionnaires and testing among students of Kazan Federal University on the subject of conflict management and aggression (the method of A. Bass and A. Dark, T. Leary, K. Thomas, Phillips) showed that among 100% tested, 43% of university students are vulnerable to low aggression, the remaining 57% of students the aggression rate varied (45%) and high aggression (12% of respondents). Thus, in accordance with the results, we can conclude that the majority of students have low and neutral rates of aggression and conflict, but there is a problem with the presence of high aggressiveness in some young people.

In the course of this research, it was found that for the successful implementation of the ideas of non-violent pedagogy it is necessary to fulfill the three most important conditions. Firstly, it is the preparation of the teaching staff of educational institutions to work in a new environment; secondly, the change in the structure of management of innovative educational institutions on the basis of democracy and the expansion of freedom of choice of forms, methods, techniques of teaching and training both for students and for teachers.

The main forms of work of educating future teachers are student surveys to identify their orientation on teaching and disciplinary, personal model of interaction with children; theoretical and practical training aimed at understanding and overcoming psychological defenses and future related anxieties by future teachers; develop their ability to prevent and resolve conflicts; training in non-violent interaction with children.

In Kazan (Volga Region) Federal University, the work is carried out to create a secure and nonviolent developing educational environment, to develop technologies shaping students' abilities to perform nonviolent acts and to resist in a nonviolent way. In order to solve interreligious and interethnic problems, the policy is implemented to develop a tolerant, empathic and moral culture and patriotism.

As a result, among the students and professors of the University, the principle of nonviolence acts as an alternative to the law of "balancing", as a special force, as means to overcome egocentrism and expression of love, as independence, as a capability to positively interact, as a respect of rights and dignity of others, as an attitude of care towards the nature and to all the living things.

Discussions

Such school as the pedagogics of nonviolence emerged in the early 90-ies of the XX century in the humanism-focused pedagogic science and practice. Initially, the pedagogics of nonviolence did not have its own exact subject and revealed itself as a public movement of pedagogues speaking out against various forms of compulsion of dignity of children and youths, against strict postulates of the traditional pedagogics. Its emergence was conditioned with a penetration of humanistic ideas into the field of education, understanding of the fact that profound changes should occur in the education along with the changes typical for the society as a whole at that time.

A strong impulse for the above was the pedagogics of cooperation developed at that time by innovative pedagogues. In certain provisions, the pedagogics of nonviolence directly coincided with the pedagogics of cooperation. However, the work to find own subject was performed at the same time. Finally, such subject was found and defined – that is the shaping of the position of nonviolence with all the members of the educational process. The main objective of the pedagogics of nonviolence is to bring up the younger generation on a nonviolent basis in the spirit of peacefulness, respect of rights and dignity of others, attitude of care towards the nature and all the living creatures populating our planet, is the capability to solve conflicts without using any overt or covert forms of compulsion [5].

The methodological foundation for this school is the principle of nonviolence serving as the leading one in a number of religious and philosophic ethic concepts, where nonviolence is regarded as a universal value.

The contemporary education system, in spite of great advances of the civilization and culture, suffers a crisis as significant changes of natural and social and cultural conditions of the humans' existence occur, a tipping point has emerged in the system of values accepted by the society and a different estimation of the role of the education in the human life arising from such changes.

There are as many problems in the Russian education as there are questions raised by the life before the contemporary education, and many questions are still unanswered or, having received a theoretical justification, are not practically implemented. One of the crucial problems of the present-day Russian school is the problem of the value system.

The concept of "value" was first introduced in the scientific environment in the 60-ies of the XIX century. In the philosophy and sociology, "value" is construed as a concept used to mark the humane, social or cultural significance of certain items or phenomena. There are different axiological concepts: naturalistic, sociological, dialectic material, objective idealistic, subjective idealistic. Depending on the type of the concept, there are different constructions of the nature of the value. A philosopher N. S. Rozov proposes the following structure of values [6]:

Values themselves (good, beauty, benefit, justice, freedom, art, social equality);

Ideals combining various categories of values: ideals of the human, social structure, school, management;

Principles of consciousness combining categories of values with schemes of thought;

Specific objectives (categories of values in conjunction with a description of certain indicative items).

The axiological basis of the educational system should take the human itself as a real value but not to consider the human as a medium.

The value of an individual human life for the society has always been more or less low, and a human being could be easily and not always justifiably sacrificed against practically any interests of authorities. Even nowadays, in spite of the striving for humanization, people did not stopped killing each other but even do it larger numbers and in more sophisticated ways. A geneticist A. A. Neifach noted a profound disharmony in the development of the intellectual and moral culture of the man and stressed that, although entering the XXI century more or less prepared, the man remains at the level of the Cro-Magnon in the moral respect [7].

E. Fromm justly noted that the man is the only living creature capable of finding a special pleasure in acts of killing or torturing other of its own kind, and in the present-day society, there are systems to stimulate and "cultivate" such abilities in human, but there are much fewer remedies against such perverted needs [8].

What can expect the mankind in the future, if in spite of the development of the intellect and creative capabilities, the destructive principality of the man does not decrease in

magnitude but gives rise to more monstrous forms, specific social and cultural systems emerge where evil and vices are cultivated very eagerly. The man as an open system is capable of advancement and sophistication, which is evidenced by the history of culture, but it is also capable of “reverse barbarism” and “degradation”. And while the former requires centuries of enormous spiritual efforts, the latter – the cultural degradation of the mankind may occur within one generation.

Will the mankind overcome this tragic situation or will it be doomed for self-destruction? Is the man unable to resist the abundance of exasperating and empoisoning situations in the real life? This is one of the problems that concerns both geneticists and pedagogues because it is them who are in charge to produce the human product of the supreme quality – the personality, and it is them who oppose negative factors of the real life throughout the period of maturing of an individual.

Violence and nonviolence are the ethic pair of notions characterizing the man’s attitude towards the world: to the nature, all the living things, other people, from the point of view of implementation of ideas of the good and evil as moral laws governing the man’s daily activities.

The notion of “violence” in the contemporary society is applied in a very broad meaning including all the forms of physical, psychological, economical suppression that give rise to the respective moral qualities as lies, hatred, hypocrisy, so the violence is identified as evil in general. The violence in the contemporary society should be defined with the term of “aggression”.

“Aggression is any behavior containing a threat or adamage to other people” [9]. As for domestic psychologists, this point of view is shared by T. G. Rumyantseva and I. B. Boyko. They regard aggression as a form of the social behavior implemented in the context of the social interaction, but the behavior will be aggressive when two conditions are met: when there are aftermaths disastrous for the victim, and when the code of conduct is violated [10].

Expressions of aggression with humans are endless and diverse, therefore, it is advisable to group them according to the following system: physical-verbal, active-passive, direct - indirect. Such a combination produces various categories under which the majority of aggressive acts fall.

In educational institutions, among learning youths, the following types of aggression prevail:

Verbal-active-direct, for instance, a refusal to carry out necessary tasks or a verbal insult or humiliation;

Verbal-active-indirect, for instance, dissemination of libel or rumors about a person;

Verbal-passive-direct, for instance, a refusal to talk to another person or to answer his/her questions;

Verbal-passive-indirect, for instance, a refusal to give certain verbal explanations or clarifications, etc.

Therefore, a conclusion can be made that aggression is behavior of an individual intended to cause harm to another person.

There are several theories explaining the essence and the origin of aggression. For instance, S. Freud believed that aggression is a natural instinct [11]; evolution theoreticians thought that the origin of the aggression is the instinct of struggle inherent for all animals, including the human; theoreticians of social aggression regard it as a social phenomenon, that is, a form of behavior adopted in the society. Choices that the man makes every day often depend of the experience obtained in the early childhood. If the emotional relations in which the child was engaged were performed in the principle of pressure or compulsion, then being an adult he and his behavior will depend on the collective opinion. However, psychologists consider such form of behavior as normal within the framework of behavior. But if apart from the pedagogical or parental pressure the child happened to experience exquisite forms of violence, such as, for instance, battering, which turns into a situation of development, a special personality structure is formed which is characterized with an environment-dependent cognitive style and dependence of the self-esteem on others [12].

Psychologists A. Bandura and R. Walters studying the diagnostics of aggressive behavior among adolescents note that the aggressiveness occurs as a result of certain psychological problems which, in their turn, arise from an unfavorable psychological environment in the surround of the adolescent-in the family and among the peers. The aggressive behavior becomes a kind of a defensive reaction in a situation with an uncomfortable psychological environment in the person’s life [13].

One of the causes of the aggressive behavior of learning youths and of their mental constriction, that is difficulties with a correction of their behavior and the degree of their consciousness of the process, is the pedagogic constriction that includes authoritative suppression and suppression of the person’s interests. The barrier may also be lack of interest of the pedagogue towards the students, moral demagoguery, blocking of the free will, and compulsion.

Nonviolence as a value serves as an alternative for the law of “balancing”, as a special force to overcome the egocentrism, as independence and a capability to interact positively, as a principle of humanism in the pedagogics and psychology.

Whenever adults demonstrate various forms of violence in their relationship with children, the latter develop the feeling of alarmism. Alarmism means an anxiety, anxious attitude of the individual and the society in general towards events taking place in the world, including the natural environment, and towards oneself. Alarmism is a dominant idea of the consciousness, perception of the environment, behavior and acts. The alarmism is especially dangerous among adolescents. It results in emergence of various forms of abnormality of the mental health with children and adolescents-emotional disorders and behavior deviation. Emotional disorders a depressed conditions: anxiety, fear and psychosomatic

expressions of behavior deviations related to them, which are sustainable behavior patterns under which basic rights of others and the main public norms and regulations corresponding to the given age are violated. They include thefts, lies, runaways from home, damage to property, skipping school, etc. [14].

Certainly, such behavior is a reflection of an unstable social, environmental, economic, psychological situation in the society, change of values, which confirms a statement by L. Vygotsky, who claimed that what should come out of a child in the process of its development is conditioned by the environment from the very beginning [15].

Such situation in relation to the instability of the mental health with adolescents can be observed not only in Russian schools. Foreign pedagogues and psychologists studying school factors enhancing the mental health or promoting its degradation noted that the financial standing, size of the school or classrooms, training syllabi, penalties, the social or intellectual composition of students have no effect on the children's behavior.

An important factor for maintenance of a comfortable situation in educational institutions are awards, praises, support and arranging of conditions for a creative self-development of the student's personality. The personality of the pedagogue is especially crucial, because it is he or she who should take the first step on the path of the moral advancement. It is a hard and difficult path that requires from the teacher much courage, the capability to rise to a higher moral step of development and to prove with one's own example the possibility to act nonviolently. The teacher's purpose is to awaken the aspiration to find one's own path towards the truth through faith and love, without violence or aggression in the growing human [16].

Pedagogy of nonviolence is not a "complete freedom-I do whatever I want". No, it is a free and right choice wherein the definition of objectives is of utmost significance. In order for a child to learn to regard a situation critically, to make the right decision objectively and voluntarily while preserving one's personal freedom, it is necessary to create a special environment where the child could predict and control oneself as a personality in its daily activities and in the society. "There are no children but there are humans", a Polish pedagogue Janusz Korczak wrote [17]. A child is a human too. It means that it should be treated in the same way as a mature personality.

An important condition for a comfortable training is the humanization of the education, development of educational systems considering the acknowledgement of the personalities of the pedagogue and the students as one of the priority values, harmonization of their interests, interrelations and conditions for their development [18]. Because "the only real luxury is the luxury of human communication", as said by Antoine de Saint Exupery. The man is the utmost value of our society, so let us turn it into the same.

One of the most important conditions for a positive interaction with other people is also the formation of the

social intellect with the learning youths. The social intellect as a concept by a researcher V. N. Kunitsyna is individual dispositions, abilities, features facilitating the development of skills and crafts of social acts and contacts in one's personal experience [19]. The social intellect manifests itself as an ability to choose a nonviolent act that is defined as an act enhancing positive intentions of the other party, that is, an act related to the benefit or preserving the independence of each member of the interaction [5]. In the process of such interaction, the main integral function of the social intellect is implemented, that is, the formation of long-term, lasting interrelations with the prospect of development of a positive mutual influence based on the apprehension of the level and the nature of the interrelations. Such position of nonviolence is the base for the nonviolent interaction and conditions the specific character of the person's acts in relation to other people.

Conclusion

Therefore, the analysis performed proves that the pedagogics of nonviolence asserting itself as a philosophic category within the philosophy of education requires a thorough study of means to eliminate the alarmism with adolescents as a way to maintain the mental health of learning youths, as a factor resolving major problems of the Russian education. Nonviolence in various social relations contributes to the uniting of people, and moreover, to the uniting of states, it leads to the dialogue and cooperation.

Development of the person's social intellect has a good impact on the formation of positive and efficient interpersonal relations, on a successful adaptation in the social field.

Recommendations

Historic theoretic and scientific methodological provisions of this research can be the basis for further researches in the field of updates of the contents and forms of teachers training, improvement of the professional activities, spiritual advancement and development of the personality of the pedagogue based on the ideas of the pedagogics of nonviolence. The scientific material can be applied in courses of lectures on pedagogics, psychological and pedagogical practical training, while conducting the pedagogical practical training of students

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