Formation of High School Students' Civic Competence in the Context of Ethno-Cultural Traditions

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Abstract

The goal of the research is to increase the civic competence of students in educational institutions by involving ethno-cultural traditions. All over the world, national problems have aggravated, conflicts have arisen, for the solution of which new forms of intercultural and interethnic interactions are needed. Within the framework of the study, the situation was analyzed, the cultural traditions and values of the Armenian, as well as of peoples' living in Armenia were studied, a two-stage sociological study was carried out, its results were analyzed and relevant recommendations were made. From the analysis of the results it became clear that the study of the traditions and habits leads to the development of the culture of one's own people к other nations and love, responsibility and an attitude towards the Motherland and the Country is formed. Society has an objective need to form a competent citizen, who will be able to implement civil rights and obligations in the best way, who will have civil position and participation in the processes taking place in the country. The ethnocultural habits directly contribute to the formation of students' civic competence, and the incusion of them into educational institutions will create potential opportunities for that. In order to build civic competence, first it is need to deveop skills among learners and educators who, in different life conditions (including crisis and risk), in various educational situations (as well as self-educational), will be able to make decisions, identify problems and propose solutions, as well as take targeted and responsible actions, developing creative and critical thinking.

I. Introduction

The modern world is a world of globalization processes and intercultural communications. These processes are accompanied by the increasing contradictions of coexistence between peoples and cultures, which solution requires new forms of intercultural and inter-ethnic interaction, as well as a systematic perception of the intercultural communication ability of different socio-cultural entities. Society has an objective need to develop a competent citizen (Galoyan, 2014; Gasparyan, Poghosyan and Gavrilin, 2018; Poghosyan, Gasparyan, Grigoryan and Poghosyan, 2015).

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The approximation of national culture to new generations is becoming a modern pedagogical problem of our time, as every nation not only preserves the traditions of education coming fromhistory, but also strives to pass them on to future generations in order not to lose their national identity.

When the country is in crisis, national problems aggravate and contradictions arise. Each ethnic group, following and understanding their own culture, natural objects and phenomena, knowing not only the ethnic culture of others, but also their past and present, can effectively solve the problem of living and interacting in a multinational environment.

The potential possibilities of ethno-cultural customs in the formation of learners' civic competence and the insufficient actuality of the latter's resources is aimed at improving the quality of the learner's civic competence. The problem of students' perception of cultural heritage and borrowing of cultures is based on the development of issues of national-universal harmony, which is present in the works of local և regional philosophers, historians, culturologists and artists.

Many countries have people of different ethnic origins, as well as a large number of immigrants. The problem of formulating life priorities as well as the relationship and impact of the national ethos on the value system, has always been and remains a subject of interest for both native and foreign researchers (Kharatyan, 2010; Gavrilin, 2015).

Today, society has an objective need for a competent citizen who will be able to perform his civil rights and responsibilities in the best way. This is aimed at updating the content of education due to changing educational content goals, where the competency componentis added to knowledge, skills and abilities. At the same time, civic competence comes as an integrated competency based on a number of key competencies. The latter is based on the readiness of learners to develop civic competence, social activism, moral, civic stance and effective implementation of civic obligations (Gavrilin and Gasparyan, 2019; Salnikova, 2011).

This change in the purpose of the educational content is timely. According to scientists, learners on the one hand need to be prepared to live in a conscious life and in a democratic country, on the other hand to promote the formation of a legal consciousness (Abramyan, Gasparyan and Poghosyan, 2014).

This problem is set for education system specialists from different countries. It is mentioned in the normative and strategic documents for the development of the education system. According to modernization concepts of education of different countries, the education system should form individuals who will be able to live not only in civil society and in legal state, but also be able to fully use civil and political rights. Improving the quality of civilization of students and the formation of civic competence directly contribute to ethno-cultural habits, the inclusion to educational institutions of which will create a potential opportunity for their use (Gasparyan and Poghosyan, 2016; Kulikova and Andreeva, 2012; Morozova, 2008).

According to the modernization concepts of education in different countries, the education system mustform individuals who will be able to live not only in a civil societyand legal country, but also be ready to exercise fully their civil-political rights. For example, multicultural interactive learning multimediaapplied in thematic learning is used nowdays (Ririn, Perangin-Angin and Mursid, 2020).

At the global level, Armenia has joined international agreements, including the "Education for Sustainable Development" process since 2005, which prioritizes the humanitarian nature of education, the rights and freedoms of the individual, the formation of an active vital position, high morality, tolerance and mutual respect, to be an active citizen,

patriotism and responsibility. He also pays special attention to the development of a respectful attitude towards national culture and cultural traditions.

There are few pedagogical and psychological complex studies on the accumulated scientific-theoretical knowledge database on the phenomenon of "civil competence", which explore the possibilities of applying national cultural traditions (Ivanova, 2007; Gavrilin, 2016).

Civil competence is presented as the unity knowlegde on civilization's competence, unity of readiness and ability, which allows to actively, effectively and responsibly control the rights and obligations of a member of a democratic society, applying the acquired knowledge, skills and civic qualities (Gavrilin and Gasparyan, 2019; Zimnaya, 2006).

The main manifestation of civic identity is the recognition of the homeland as an active sense of devotion to the civic community, recognition of its significant value.

The components of a citizen's civic identity are:
- Knowledge of history, nature and culture
- Recognition of one's identity
- Behaviour in accordance with ethical requirements, moral and legal norms

Ethno-culture is life in a multinational environment. As mentioned above, the first step in building civil authority is to become aware of an individual's civic identity. Civil competence is already the ability and willingness to be a citizen. Civil competence is an integrative characteristic of a person, which is determined by the ability to realize the full range of civil rights and responsibilities in a democratic society, based on:
- The knowledge acquired about the country or state
- Derived values
- Expressed civil position
- Experience in civil behaviour

If in Soviet years the ideological component was emphasized in civic education, in the post-Soviet period, along with the increased importance of civic education (as a necessary condition for the survival of states), various interesting and new approaches to solving the problem arise (Gasparyan and Poghosyan, 2016; Gavrilin, 2016; Matin, Gasparyan and Poghosyan, 2016).

In the current situation, one of the problems of the modern school is the formation of students with insufficient civic competence, and the issues related to the formation of various qualities of the citizen are less studied.

While mastering history and sociology, learners form an idea of the difference between the concepts of human mental development, the "equality" and "equity". The subject of literature provides an additional opportunity to detailise and specify the important concepts of "morality", "law", "legality", "responsibility", "dignity" and "honour".

Students are encouraged to pay attention to issues of a moral-philosophical nature: good-evil, life-death, generational change, man-god, man-nature, individual-nation, honor-debt, conscience and moral choice.

While learning foreign languages, students get general information about the country which language they are learning, the country's contribution to the national and world culture, what guides to the understanding and tolerance of peoples and societies.

Natural science subjects (biology, ecology, geography, healthy lifestyle) focus the learners' attantion on natural, social, and economic human rights issues, as well as the study of the laws of nature, the misuse of which can bring catastrophic consequences.

Natural science subjects form a sense of responsibility for the world, the environment, both in local and global levels.

II. Research Method

In the frame of the scientific theme "18RF-003", "Model of Formation of High School Students' Civic Competency" the cultural traditions and values of the Armenian and peoples living in Armenia were studied (Gasparyan, Poghosyan and Gavrilin, 2018; Gavrilin and Gasparyan, 2019; Ivanova, 2007; Official Journal of the European Union, 2006).

The problem of students' perception of cultural heritage and cultural borrowing is based on the development of national and universal harmonyissues, which is found in the works of philosophers, historians, culturologists, and artists (Zakharov and Tikhonova, 2012).

The rapprochement of the new generation with the national culture becomes a modern pedagogical problem of our time. Due to the literary sources students' sense of belonging to the school significantly impacts on their loneliness; it is necessary to strengthen the psychosocial support of students in schools, coordinating them through mentoring, guidance, coaching and counseling (Baru, Ndegwa, Njoka and Mbugua, 2020).

Each nation not only preserves the traditions of education that have historically existed, but also strives to pass them on to the next generations in the future, in order not to lose their national feature, identity and language. In order to implement the latter, it is necessary to make the course interactive during the teaching process, to use effective educational materials, which will contribute to the raising of the students' awareness (Syakur, Sugirin, Margana, Junining and Sabat, 2020). In the traditions and legends that the people have created, they have reflected their ancient beliefs, public life and household, historically crucial events և mentality. There are traditions that have emerged during the peoples' struggle for the unification of communities for national independence, such as Gendang Lima Sedalanen's function of preserving a culture that is a form of "love" for their culture and a means of uniting the community (Baru, Ndegwa, Njoka and Mbugua, 2020).

The rapprochement of the new generation with the national culture becomes a modern pedagogical problem of our time, since each nation not only preserves historical traditions, but also tries to convey this to the next generations in order not to lose its national image and identity. The Armenian people in their traditions and legends reflected their ancient beliefs, public and home lifestyle, historical fortunate events and mentality.

There are traditions that have emerged during the people's struggle for freedom and national independence that are associated with popular celebrations, singers, musicians, gusan competitions, intellectual games, humoresques, family customs and various rituals - births, weddings and farewell ceremonies.Agriculture-related motives have found their expression in applied arts: carving, carpet weaving, traditional costumes, miniature painting and folk tales (Kharatyan, 2010; Ovechkin, 2013).

To find out the learners'knowlwdge ontraditions of the Armenian and other peoples, a two-stage sociological survey was conducted and an analysis was carried out.Students, teachers and administrators from 197 high schools of three regions of Armenia - Lori, Kotayk and Aragatsotn - participated in the survey.

In the first phase of the sociological survey, the questionnaire had 16 questions, with its sub-questions dealing with the traditions of both Armenian and other peoples living in Armenia.Issues related to age, sex and nationality ("passport") were also clarified.Most of the studied learners (150) were Armenians, 27 students of other nationalities - 10 Yezidis, 8 Assyrians, 7 Russians, 1 Greek, who study in Armenian schools.There were also immigrated learners from former and current Armenian families (mainly from Azerbaijan and Syria).

Respondents mostly answered the following questions on:
- Languages, literature (fairy tales, fables, legends, etc.),
- Religious traditions (Christmas, Easter, Vardavar, Penthesis, etc.),
- Cultural traditions (folk songs, celebrations, recipes, carpets, dances, fairs, etc.),
- Education (life, crafts, professions, etc.),
- Educational (moral ideals: respect for ancestors, patriotism, cohesion, honesty, empathy),
- Family traditions (hospitality, entertainment, respect for the elderly, etc.).

In the second phase of the sociological survey it was found that there are obstacles to the implementation of cultural and educational initiatives.
- In some schools, there is a lack of funding for realization of such initiatives: clothing, equipment and hall;
- Proper progress and lack of cultural awareness work, as cannot attend different cultural centers, such as arts,sports schools, etc;
- A limited number of educational materials - alternative programs, tools, and professional resources;
- Weak or no cooperation between educational and cultural organizations with communities of different nationalities;
- Confirmation of positive image of schools, cultural organizations and organizers;
- Encouraging inter-community cooperation.

III. Discussion

Among the respondents the villagers were more familiar with the traditions of the Armenian people than the citisens. 150 students were well aware of their cultural traditions, they mentined holidays, rituals that were characteristic of the region, such as Lori winter, Cheese holiday, Watermelon holiday, and so on. About 24 percent of respondents were partially aware of them. Existing data shows (60 percent of respondents) that there is a lack of knowledge gained from information sectors in the family and school. About 80 percent of respondents knew about the most popular holidays of the Russian people (Maslenica, Easter, Christmas and New Year).However, the traditions of the people include not only celebrations but also songs, dances, clothes, fairs and hospitality, dishes that were included in the questionnaires.

The key questions of the questionnaire make it clear that respondents know as much about themselves and other peoples' traditions as they were tought in their school or at home because of celebrating those holidays. Respondents love and know their national fairy tales, fables, sayings, riddles, games, many of which were mentioned.

There was an approximate equal distribution of answers.Students are aware of different cultures mostly from their schools and information sources.The interesting thing is that they know more about religious holidays.

As the result of the surveythe following recommendations were clarified:
1. Providethe learnersof the regions the opportunity to participate in cultural events concerning not only Armenia but also other countries;
2. Develop cultural education programs to organize events in the regions;
3. Present new approaches to cultural education in the legal field;
4. To support the development of cultural and educational cooperation with the help of local and international organizations;
5. Include parents in the above activities;

6. Involve Armenian, Russian and other national culture and education professionals;
7. Develop a website on cultural and educational awareness;
8. Implement a school curriculum with complementary activities in Armenian and other national cultural institutions;
9. Restore the tradition of holding cultural Olympiads;
10. Hold online classes, seminars with schools from different countries.

Thus, the study of traditions and customs leads to the development of the culture of its people and other nations, forming a love, responsibility and attitude towards the Motherland, the Earth. According to the majority of respondents, they believe that people should follow the traditions of their people, which will help preserve the culture of the time and strengthen people's roots and connection with other nations.

IV. Conclusion

With the transition to a new educational paradigm, priority will be given to the formation of learner'civic competence, which will ensure meaningful and responsible public activity, moral political position and readiness to fulfill civic obligations as a full member of society.

The issue of students' perception of cultural heritage and cultural borrowing should be based on the issues of national and universal, international and regional harmony. The rapprochement of the new generation with the national culture becomes a modern pedagogical issue of our time, since each nation not only preserves historical traditions, but also tries to convey this to the next generations in order to preserve its national image and identity.

Each individual's path to the world culture is based on the unity and interconnectedness of ethnic cultures, as well as through the awareness of the spiritual values of national culture. The basis of ethnopolitical culture is the organization of dialogue with other cultures, the perception, understanding and acceptance of their values.

To build civic competence, learners and educators first need to develop skills that can make decisions, identify problems and deliver solutions in different life situations (including crisis and risk), as well as target and responsible actions:developing creative and critical thinking.

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