FORMING A CHILD'S MORAL CULTURE IN A MULTI-CONFESSIONAL SOCIETY

Saltanat M. Abylaikhan[1*], Zhanat A. Karmanova[1], Gulzam K. Abilkassimova[1], Gulmira B. Beisenbekova[1] and Nazira S. Baizhumanova[2]

[1]Buketov Karaganda State University, Universitetskaya street 28, Karaganda, 100028, Republic of Kazakhstan
[2]Karaganda State Technical University, Bulvar Mira street 56, Karaganda, 100027, Republic of Kazakhstan

Abstract

Moral education mostly aims to form an individual's moral culture. The latter can be called 'morality in action', i.e. morality that is realized in a person's daily behaviour. It is based on deep moral consciousness combined with moral feelings and human will whose bearer can make a choice and perform a deed in the reasonable and responsible manner. This research aims to review and analyse the concept of moral culture as one of the main components of an individual's spiritual culture, as well as to consider experimental studies on the formation of interreligious tolerance constituting the moral culture of children of the senior preschool age. The article analyses the conceptual and theoretical foundations of moral culture as one of the main components of an individual's spiritual culture. The authors have distinguished criteria, levels and indicators forming the interreligious tolerance of senior pre-schoolers in the experimental part of their study. They have also considered diagnostic methods for identifying personal qualities, the state of its formation and dynamics at the ascertaining and formative stages of the experiment in specific pedagogical conditions.

Keywords: morality, senior, interreligious, tolerance, conditions

1. Introduction

Education and upbringing are in constant development and connected through fundamental changes in socio-economic and political spheres. They aim to transfer new experience and knowledge, substantiate new theoretical approaches to solving problems concerned with the education of the younger generation. One of these areas is moral education, whose important component is the formation of moral culture among children of the senior preschool age. Moral culture is manifested in an individual's desire to achieve mutual understanding and harmonize different customs, traditions, interests and

---

[*]E-mail: sabylaikhan@list.ru

opinions, not with coercion but using methods of explanation, education and upbringing.

In modern social conditions, moral relationships are considered a special tool ensuring peace and harmony in the multi-confessional society of Kazakhstan, a guarantee of peaceful coexistence of different individuals. Therefore, preschool education institutions face a difficult task of forming a moral person capable of establishing effective ties through understanding both fellow senior pre-schoolers and other people in their everyday life.

Moral culture should be based on the realized need to create a holistic system of contemporary ideological orientations since it is an integral part of social and individual consciousness. A person's moral culture as an ideological and axiological phenomenon can be formed only in the system of national and universal cultures, i.e. it should rely on the values that have been developed throughout the history of humanity and certain nations and are still being created in the modern cultural process. An individual's moral culture determines the development of society, various spheres of its functioning, including religious.

The formation of one's moral culture is not just the adoption of certain norms and rules of behaviour but real inclusion into general cultural integrity based on internal spiritual and creative-volitional striving for self-realization with due regard to cultural and historical traditions established through social and innovative changes in one's environment. The formation of moral culture is the only way to build cultural and communicative connections with others. Therefore, one of the defining elements of an individual's moral culture is the desire and ability to carry out intercultural communication.

In fact, moral culture is not only an indicator of good manners or one's ability to adhere to certain ethical rules but is a holistic integrative phenomenon that reveals characteristics of a person who can create a unified culturally-oriented worldview using their own spiritual and moral guidelines. According to A.S. Frantz, "while analysing the moral process based on the identification, development and enrichment of all the parameters of the human 'I', one can learn more about a real person, communication as a way to unite a person (the direct subject of culture) with objects of its particular, vital world" [1].

Thus, an individual's moral culture contributes to the familiarization of each person with general cultural values. It means that society trying to achieve harmonious socio-cultural and civilizational development should pay special attention to the formation of moral culture as the main idea of an individual's moral education.

Many researchers consider tolerance, including interreligious tolerance [2-4], as one of the most important components of moral culture. Studying the nature of tolerance and examining its various forms, V. Lektorskii understands this quality as one's extended experience and critical dialogue, i.e. tolerance is an active attitude of a person who accepts different opinions and worldviews, asserts their own system of values from the perspective of others, respects their own and other ethno-cultural and religious heritage, interacts with carriers of opposing views to expand life experience [5]. S. Aubakirova supports this

opinion and interprets tolerance as an active position of an individual who critically supports another worldview to enrich their own experience [6]. Psychologists G. Soldatova and L. Shaigerova consider tolerance as a person's ability to build positive relationships with others and the surrounding world, to form their own positive image. They believe the optimal level of empathy, flexibility and interpersonal skills are significant personal components of tolerance [7]. V. Kukushin defines interreligious tolerance as the perception of others as they are along with one's willingness to interact with them based on respect, goodwill and manifested in actions that are in close connection with an ethno-religious identity [8].

Table 1. Main types of tolerance and their specific formation among senior preschoolers.

Types of tolerance	General characteristics of a tolerance type	Its specific formation among senior preschoolers
Internal	Conviction that other people can have their own opinions; ability to consider conflict situations from different perspectives.	Conviction that reference persons of senior pre-schoolers (their parents and educators) can have their own opinions. Conflict situations are considered at the emotional and spontaneous level.
External	Ability to stay calm in unexpected situations: conflict, uncertainty, risk; make a decision and act in these conditions even if all the facts and possible consequences are unknown.	The internal tolerance of senior pre-schoolers is only forming. As a rule, senior pre-schoolers cannot stay calm in situations of conflict and uncertainty. Furthermore, they are unable to make tolerant decisions in such situations.
Natural	The formed openness and trustfulness of a person without dividing their experience into individual and social.	Natural tolerance prevails in the behaviour and consciousness of senior pre-schoolers mostly in relation to family members and educators. Later social experience gives senior pre-schoolers the opportunity to form other types of tolerance.
Moral	Tolerant attitude to moral orientations of other people allows perceiving the latter as carriers of unique moral norms, which can differ from their personal notions.	The foundations of moral tolerance are laid in the senior preschool age on the basis of family morality, ethno-confessional norms and rules of behaviour.
Ethical	The basis is an individual's self-sufficiency that allows them to respect not only others but also themselves.	Some elements of ethical tolerance are cultivated in senior pre-schoolers by raising respect for their family, parents, preschool education institutions and immediate circle. Thus, children of the senior preschool age develop self-respect.

Summing up the above-mentioned interpretations of the phenomenon under study, we consider interreligious tolerance as a special form of a personal attitude which presupposes the understanding and perception of other religions, respect to differences, benevolence to representatives of other confessions, and a desire to interact with them through constructive dialogue.

We have taken into account achievements of other scientists [9-13] regarding the definition of main types of tolerance and their correlation with peculiarities of senior pre-schoolers and presented the results of our study in Table 1. It demonstrates that senior pre-schoolers possess natural tolerance with some elements of moral and ethical types.

Table 2. Criteria and levels of evaluating the interreligious tolerance of senior pre-schoolers.

Components of interreligious tolerance	Levels	Criteria
Cognitive component	Low	Children do not fully understand the significance of interreligious tolerance and cannot distinguish tolerance and intolerance.
	Middle	The knowledge of interreligious tolerance is incomplete and unstable; its moral basis is still forming.
	High	Children of the senior preschool age aim to form certain personal qualities necessary in a multi-confessional society. They know the norms of interreligious tolerance.
Emotional-axiological component	Low	The lack of self-containment and self-control, a negative attitude to personal differences.
	Middle	The situational manifestation of self-restraint, empathy, self-control; a situational-emotional attitude towards others.
	High	The stable manifestation of a tolerant attitude towards others, developed empathy, emotional stability in interpersonal relationships.
Activity-related component	Low	They lack interpersonal flexibility; their tolerance is selective based on certain individuals and circumstances; a high probability of conflicts, undeveloped self-reflection skills.
	Middle	They accept the tolerant attitude of others but reveal their own interreligious tolerance selectively; possess only basic self-reflection skills.
	High	They independently reveal interreligious tolerance and self-restraint to different opinions; the high level of self-reflection skills.

2. Methods

The experimental study on the formation of interreligious tolerance among children of the senior preschool age was conducted on the basis of kindergartens in the city of Karaganda and involved 12 educators and 186

children. The ascertaining stage assumed the study of the formation of interreligious tolerance and determination of its level using diagnostic methods.

Taking into account the multicomponent nature of interreligious tolerance and the lack of a unified methodology for determining its levels, we used diagnostic methods aimed at the manifestation of a child's personal qualities (the existing methods and modified ones especially for senior pre-schoolers in accordance with the study objective): 'The knowledge of your national religion', 'Images with a plot' (cognitive component); 'Determining the emotional state of people depicted in the given pictures', 'Learn one's mood' (emotional-axiological component); 'Mitten', 'Treat your friend to a candy' (activity-related component) [7, p. 13].

To measure and diagnose interreligious tolerance, we developed a criterion-level scale for evaluating interreligious tolerance of senior pre-schoolers as a mandatory structural element of any properly organized pedagogical research (Table 2).

3. Results

Levels of interreligious tolerance among senior preschoolers comprise cognitive, emotional-axiological and activity-related components as presented in Figure 1.
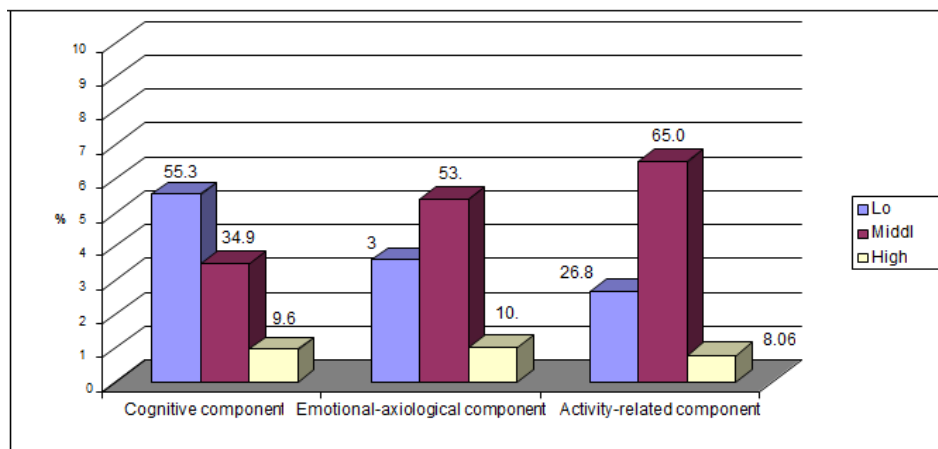
Figure 1. The formation of cognitive, emotional-axiological and activity-related components of interreligious tolerance at the ascertaining stage of the experiment.

The diagnostic methods used throughout the research revealed the general level of interreligious tolerance among senior pre-schoolers: the middle level of interreligious tolerance prevails (135 participants, 72.58%); the low level of interreligious tolerance is typical for a smaller number of children (48 participants, 25.81%); only three children (1.61%) demonstrated the high level of interreligious tolerance. These data made us create specific pedagogical

conditions that should increase the number of children with high and middle levels of interreligious tolerance.

Based on certain features of personal development, their typical manifestation in children's relationships and the results of observation, we have determined specific pedagogical conditions for the effective formation of tolerant relationships among senior pre-schoolers:

1. The purposeful and constructive interaction of teachers and families in the formation of interreligious tolerance of children (through the psychological and pedagogical diagnosis of parents, establishing methodological work with parents, organizing joint activities for parents and children) to create a moral and tolerant educational environment characterized by benevolent communication.
2. The formation of full-fledged knowledge and skills of tolerant relationships among senior pre-schoolers through the humanization and humanitarization of preschool education (in particular, the use of personality-oriented technologies).
3. The use of specially selected pedagogical methods and techniques for achieving the goals set, in particular, the introduction of innovative pedagogical technologies (multimedia presentations and interactive learning elements) and the design of the impactful cultural and educational environment of preschool education institutions (the enrichment of this developing environment with multi-confessional materials).

Later all the senior pre-schoolers were divided into control (97 children) and experimental groups (89 children). Although we had created the above-mentioned pedagogical conditions in the experimental groups, their effectiveness was tested experimentally. The control groups of senior pre-schoolers attended some classes filled with moral, multicultural and multi-confessional content to increase their level of interreligious tolerance.

*Why the data obtained at the control stage were ambiguous?*

Answer: Lessons alone are insufficient; educators also need 'specific pedagogical conditions'. For instance, a certain criterion (indicator) is being formed in all children (memory, way of thinking, imagination, ability to read, write, count, etc.), and it is fully formed in all children in the end (to varying degrees). However, children will show better results if this criterion (indicator) is formed according to 'special' methods.

The topics of classes were as follows: 'Travelling around different countries', 'The people around me and I', 'Whom I respect', 'Can you forgive?', 'I am a person of little mark', 'Everyone is attractive in their own way', 'National symbols', 'Travelling around Kazakhstan', 'Know your own religion and respect others', etc.

The assessment at the end of the formative stage was conducted with the same diagnostic methods used at the ascertaining stage of the experiment demonstrated qualitative and quantitative changes in indicators for each component of interreligious tolerance common to senior pre-schoolers (Figures 2-4).
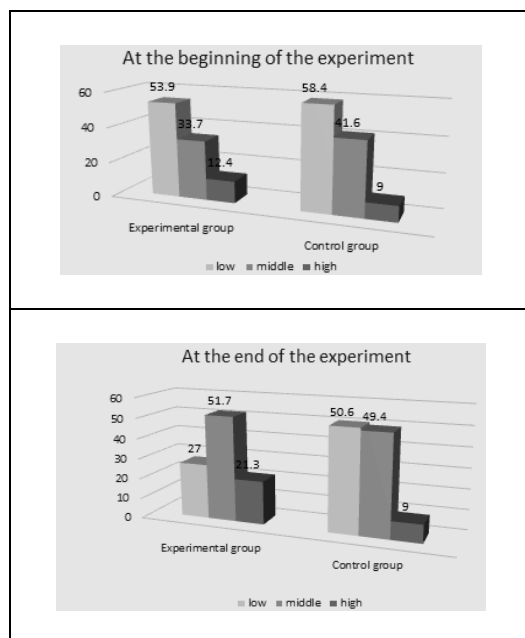
Figure 2. The comparative graph showing the cognitive component of interreligious tolerance in the beginning and the end of the experiment.
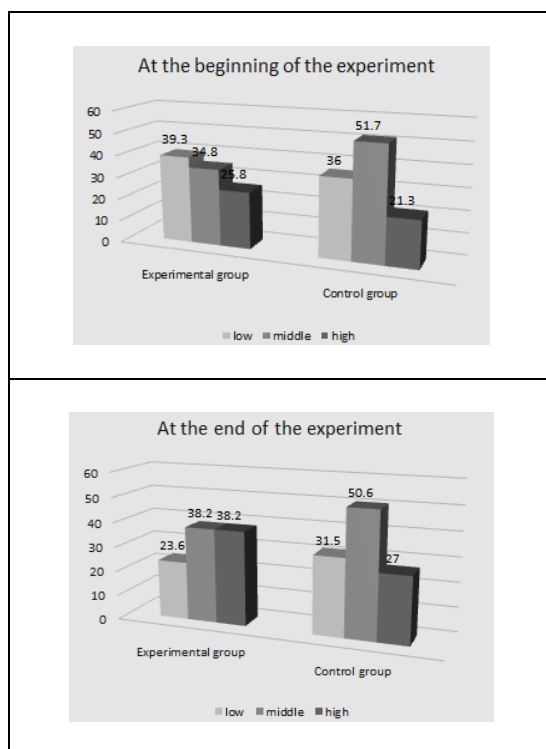
Figure 3. The comparative graph showing the emotional-axiological component of interreligious tolerance in the beginning and the end of the experiment.
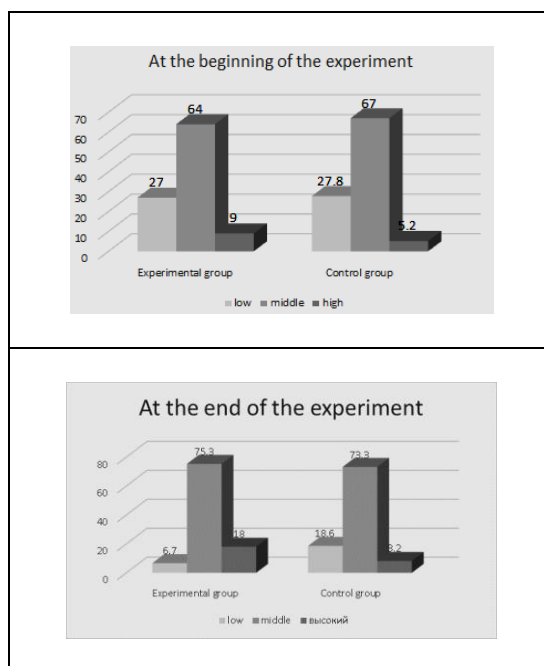
Figure 4. The comparative graph showing the activity-related component of interreligious tolerance in the beginning and the end of the experiment.

Changes in the components under study caused changes in the integral indicator of the formed interreligious tolerance of senior preschoolers at the end of the formative stage of the experiment (Table 3).

Table 3. The comparative characterization of the integral indicator revealing the formation of interreligious tolerance among children of the senior preschool age at the ascertaining and formative stages of the experiment.

Level	Experimental group			Control group		
	Ascertaining stage	Formative stage	Dynamics	Ascertaining stage	Formative stage	Dynamics
Low	24.7%	9.0%	− 15.7%	26.8%	21.6%	− 5.2%
Middle	74.2%	79.8%	− 5.6%	71.1%	76.3%	+ 5.2%
High	1.1%	11.2%	+ 10.1%	2.1%	2.1%	0

4. Discussion

As one can see, we have achieved certain results in the applied aspect of forming interreligious tolerance: the number of senior pre-schoolers with high and medium levels of interreligious tolerance significantly increased in the experimental groups, while the number of children with the low level of interreligious tolerance decreased. The control groups also demonstrated the growth of interreligious tolerance to the middle level. Unfortunately, the number of senior pre-schoolers with the high level of interreligious tolerance remained

unchanged. This fact proves the insufficient effectiveness of classes for the formation of interreligious tolerance, while specific pedagogical conditions have demonstrated their efficiency in this area.

The formation of interreligious tolerance is based on fostering the culture of interethnic and multi-confessional communication, which is built on the centuries-old experience of peaceful, tolerant, civilized coexistence, cooperation, international and multicultural association of different peoples aimed to solve common problems. The culture of interethnic and interreligious communication becomes an element of a child's tolerant behaviour under the combined influence of the following factors:

- a positive personal experience in a multi-ethnic and multi-confessional environment;
- the knowledge of cultures, values and traditions, including religious and national;
- the possession of common cultural norms governing human relationships.

It should be noted that the concept of interreligious tolerance, as well as tolerance in general, is relatively new for preschool education institutions. In this regard, it is possible to put forward an assumption that tolerance should become an integral part of a unified educational process. It is also necessary to note activities of educators aimed at unifying the multi-confessional group of senior pre-schoolers. Teachers should harmonize norms and forms of communication among children from various communities; actively use the knowledge of socio-psychological characteristics so that all of the above-mentioned acts strengthen the friendship of representatives of different religions.

A special direction of pedagogical activity is the prevention of conflicts in children's collectives that can be the result of improper relationships among representatives of different religions or insufficient experience of positive relationships. Initially, joint activities of representatives of various religions should consider some aloofness of children in micro-groups according to their ethno-confessional background. It is necessary to ensure that interests of the latter do not contradict the goals and objectives of the entire children's collective.

It can be stated that the formation of an individual's moral culture in a multi-confessional environment is an objective process purposefully normalizing the mutual influence of main socialization factors to ensure the desired result, i.e. the formation of a comprehensively developed personality capable of mutual understanding, communication and cooperation with representatives of different nations and religions. One of the stages of developing a child' moral culture is the purposeful formation of such qualities as tolerance, orientation to cooperation, peacefulness and mercy, intolerance and irreconcilability with all manifestations of poor culture, interreligious enmity, violence against a person, etc.

In this context, tolerance is a personal and socially recognized concept that provides not just specific means to achieve a goal but a very specific technology for building relationships among various actors. It is like a litmus test

to determine the level of social maturity and culture of social agents participating in this communication (relationship), their readiness to collectively search for common ground, ways of cooperation, harmony and peace in a multi-confessional society.

Summing up, the tolerance of senior pre-schoolers acts as a category of ideological consciousness and the main criterion for evaluating the culture of human relations as a condition and, to a certain extent, a means of achieving their constructiveness.

Nowadays issues of upbringing and education of the younger generation in the context of tolerance and respect for diversity are of special importance. This is due to the fact that one of the social phenomena of modern Kazakh society is a multi-confessional environment. Tolerance is an obligatory condition for forming the youth since the future of the republic depends on young people. Tolerance as the basis of the worldview of young people dominates in a complex of values and should perform a regulatory function in their activities.

Revealing interreligious tolerance, a person will never try to conquer other people or somehow harm them. Tolerance involves respecting the dignity of others, ability to recognize other viewpoints, opinions, lifestyles, realize that every person has the right to individuality. Interreligious tolerance promotes mutual understanding when confessional communities pay attention to unifying values (universal human values) and then to those that distinguish them (religious values). At the same time, the latter should not be perceived as negative but rather as a pattern to be understood and respected.

Consequently, tolerance manifestations contribute to the regulation of interpersonal relationships and determine the desire to treat another person as oneself. Tolerance belongs to universal values and therefore is an important condition for the development of an interreligious dialogue, which provides the opportunity for equal interaction during interreligious relations.

5. Conclusions

The senior preschool age is a special stage in forming a person's attitude to the surrounding world. This age is especially favourable for laying foundations of a cultural behaviour since senior pre-schoolers can perceive requirements for their behaviour, they are responsive to external influence, tend to imitate, believe their teachers when they stress the need to comply with moral standards.

It should be noted that the moral culture of senior pre-schoolers is shaped by many factors. In this regard, humanistic relations between educators and students are of great importance. Describing certain elements of moral culture, one should consider interreligious tolerance, i.e. complex personal education that lets individuals to freely and successfully interact with others in a multicultural and multi-confessional society. Its formation among senior pre-schoolers requires purposeful pedagogical influence and relevant conditions (cooperation

between preschool education institutions and families, the humanization of the educational process, the introduction of innovative technologies, the expansion of the content of education by means of an ethnic culture, the design and creation of the cultural and educational environment of preschool education institutions).

The research does not present a comprehensive overview of this pedagogical problem. It is necessary to study the age dynamics of personal qualities under consideration, to create and experimentally verify current socio-pedagogical conditions for the formation of interreligious tolerance in a multicultural educational space.

Further studies in this direction should also develop technologies forming the moral culture of future preschool teachers and students of pedagogical universities.

References

[1] A.S. Frantz, *Nravstvennaya kultura: strategiya issledovaniya idealnogo obraza (Moral culture: strategies of studying the ideal)*, Izd-vo Ros. gos. prof.-ped. un-ta, Yekaterinburg, 2005, 11.

[2] R.B. Godzhieva, Problemy pedagogiki i psikhologii (Problems of pedagogy and psychology), **2** (2010) 186-190.

[3] E.V. Magomedova, Nauchno-metodicheskii elektronnyi zhurnal 'Kontsept' (Scientific methodical electronic journal 'Kontsept'), **40** (2016) 42-45.

[4] S.M. Karakotova and L.M. Koichueva, Mezhdunarodnyi zhurnal prikladnykh i fundamentalnykh issledovanii (International journal of applied and fundamental studies), **4** (2014) 165-169.

[5] V.A. Lektorskii, Voprosy filosofii (Problems of philosophy), **11** (1997) 46-54.

[6] S.S. Aubakirova, Z.N. Ismagambetova, A.G. Karabayeva and G.G. Akhmetova, Eur. J. Sci. Theol., **10(6)** (2014) 89-98.

[7] G.U. Soldatova and L.A. Shaigerova, *Psikhodiagnostika tolerantnosti lichnosti (Psychodiagnostics of a tolerant personality)*, Smysl, Moscow, 2008, 46.

[8] V.S. Kukushin, *Vospitanie tolerantnoi lichnosti v polikulturnom sotsiume (The upbringing of a tolerant personality in a multicultural society)*, GinGo, Rostov-on-Don, 2001, 52-53.

[9] V.A. Sitarov and V.G. Maralov, *Pedagogika i psikhologiya nenasiliya v obrazovatelnom protsesse (Pedagogy and psychology of non-violence in the educational process)*, Academa, Moscow, 2000, 216.

[10] K.K. Tilova, *Printsipy formirovaniya tolerantnosti (Principles of tolerance formation)*, MGOU, Moscow, 2006, 150-155.

[11] A.B. Pankin, T.A. Badmaeva and S.G. Dongacovna, Eur. J. Sci. Theol., **11(3)** (2015) 13-19.

[12] N.A. Shagaeva, Eur. J. Sci. Theol., **11(3)** (2015) 175-181.

[13] A.M. Shchetinina, *Diagnostika sotsialnogo razvitiya rebenka (Diagnostics of the child's social development)*, NovGU im. Yaroslava Mudrogo, Veliky Novgorod, 2000, 88.