Development of a tolerant personality as an objective need of the modern civil society

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Abstract

The development of modern society and the process of the European integration has taken place in the context of globalisation, understood in terms of the interaction and interrelation of different countries and peoples. Mobile and dynamic societies need a personality that is ready for mutual understanding and interaction, prepared for life in conditions of a multicultural environment and is able to see itself not only as a representative of a native culture and living in a particular country, but also as a global citizen.

Keywords: tolerance, personality, teenagers', modern society, values, behaviour

1. Tolerance as the main principle of mutual relation in the modern society

> "Tolerance is respect, acceptance and appreciation of the rich diversity of our world's cultures, our forms of expression and ways of being human" (Declaration of principles on tolerance, UNESCO)

Globalisation constantly reminds us that the world is a diverse and single body at the same time; that different approaches to the same processes are inevitable due to the variety of cultures, but that they are also dangerous, both for specific social subjects and for the world as a whole. Studies of tolerance as the main principle of interrelation are thus very important at the present time.

Research, and daily life, reveals that one of the specific features of the modern societies is the fast growth of aggressiveness, rejection of other people's different opinions, judgements and needs. Development of the modern humane society is impossible without a development and increase of tolerance, because "humanisation is harmonisation of the man's personality' relations with his essence and people around him" (Chehlov, 2014).

The urgency of developing tolerance is grounded in the fact that "mutual understanding" stands out as a social and personal value, since it offers us the possibility of ensuring interaction between people for the development of society. Absence of mutual understanding leads to destruction of the integrity of social interrelations, and as a consequence, to self-destruction of the personality, to aggression. Presence of interaction, based on mutual understanding, on the contrary, contributes to the development of an individual's feeling of safety, confidence in their actions and to development of the person's values.

The problem of tolerance is rather new in research both in Latvia and abroad. First studies on this topic appeared only in the middle of the 1990s (Gordon Willard Allport, Borba Michele, Kamungeremu David, Vogt W. Paul, Wandberg Robert). An important development in the area was the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance approved by Resolution 5.61 of UNESCO General Conference on November 16, 1995. The Declaration provides the international definition of the meaning of tolerance and the opposite concept, i.e. intolerance. As appears from the above, "tolerance is respect, acceptance and appreciation of the rich diversity of our world's cultures, our forms of expression and ways of being human. Tolerance, the virtue that makes peace possible, contributes to the replacement of the culture of war by a culture of peace. Consistent with respect for human rights, the practice of tolerance does not mean toleration of social injustice or the abandonment or weakening of one's convictions. It means that one is free to adhere to one's own convictions and accepts that others adhere to theirs. It means accepting the fact that human beings, naturally diverse in their appearance, situation, speech, behaviour and values, have the right to live in peace and to be as they are. It also means that one's views are not to be imposed on others. Intolerance is rejection of other people, unavailability to co-exist with other (different) people; it is expressed with destructive, conflict and aggressive behaviour" (Declaration of Principles on Tolerance, UNESCO, 1995).

In addition to the definition provided above, every culture has a specific definition of tolerance, which are mostly similar to each other, but have some different features. Some definitions of tolerance are as follows:

- *tolerance* (French) – confidence that other people can think and act in the manner that differs from our own manner (Le Robert quotidian, 1996);
- *tolerance or toleration* (British) – readiness to be tolerant, indulgent, to allow co-existence of various views without their discrimination (Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, 2014);
- *tolerencia* (Spanish) – ability to accept ideas and opinions, which differ from own views and opinions (Enciclopedia Espasa, 2003);
- *kuan rong* (Chinese) – to accept other people as they are and to be generous to other people (Berkshire Encyclopedia of China, 2009);
- *tolerance* (American) – ability or realisation of acceptance and respect to other people's faith and beliefs (Encyclopedia Americana, 2006);
- *tasamul'* (Arabic) – indulgence, charity, total mercifulness, ability to accept other people as they are and to forgive;
- *толерантность* (Russian) – ability to tolerate (control oneself, endure), acknowledge, accept existence of somebody, to reconcile, to bring to conformity with oneself to somebody or something, to be indulgent to something, somebody (Толковый словарь русского языка, 2008);
- *tolerance* (Latvian) is a feature that accepts that other people have their own opinion that is different from your own, which they confirm. It requests certain freedom of mind and ability to understand other people. It is also necessary to suppress arrogance and to be able to understand that you do not consider yourself the only one who is right (Pedagoģijas terminu skaidrojošā vārdnīca, 2000).

We see that each definition is specific. The British one contains indulgence, the Chinese definition has generosity, the Russian – ability to tolerate, the Latvian – understanding of other people.

In connection with above it is necessary to concretise features of tolerant and intolerant personalities. One of the first scientists who offered general characteristics of tolerant and intolerant personalities was a representative of humanistic psychology Gordon Willard Allport. In his work "The Nature of Prejudice" (1954), he laid methodological foundations for studying tolerance as a psychological phenomenon, separating out the following parameters of tolerant and intolerant personalities:

Table 1.Parameters of tolerant and intolerant personalities (Allport, 1979)

Parameters	Tolerant personality	Intolerant personality
Self-orientation	More self-oriented in work, creative process, theoretical reflection. In problematic situations this person usually blames himself/herself, but not the surrounding people. Such people seek after personal independence more that after belonging to external institutes and authorities, because they do not need anyone to hide behind.	In problematic situations, this person blames other people more that himself/herself. He/she seeks after belonging to external institutes and authorities.
Responsibility	Does not abdicate all responsibility, is ready to be responsible for his/her actions.	Believes that events happening around do not depend on him/her. Tries to disclaim responsibility for everything that is going on around. This peculiarity leads to development of prejudice to other people. The position is following: I don't hate people and I don't harm other people, but they hate and hurt me.
Need in distinctness	Sees the world in its variety.	Divides the world into two parts: black and white. There are only two kinds of people: bad and good. Emphasises differences between „our" and „alien", has a difficulty to accept event neutrally. This person accepts or does not accept them.
Empathy ability	The ability is defined as a social sensitivity, ability to	Assesses his/her partners in his/her own

	formulate more adequate judgements about other people, i.e. these people assess adequately both tolerant and intolerant people.	image.
Knowledge about oneself	Tries to understand his/her merits and demerits. Has a critical attitude to himself/herself and restrains from blaming other people in all his/her troubles.	Sees more merits in himself/herself than demerits. Is disposed to blame other people in his/her troubles.
Immunity	Usually feels safe, and therefore does not need to protect from other people. Absence of threat and confidence that it is possible to cope with it is an important precondition on upbringing the tolerant person.	Has difficulties in living both with other and with himself/herself. Is afraid of the social environment and of himself/herself: is afraid of instincts, feelings, lives with a constant feeling of threat.
Freedom and democracy preference	Does not pay attention to hierarchy in the society, prefers living in a free, democratic society.	For this person the social hierarchy is extremely important, regulates his/her life in the authoritarian society with strong power. This person believes that strong discipline is very important.
Sense of humour	Has a sense of humour and is able to laugh at himself/herself, his/her demerits and does not strive for dominancy amongst the others.	Does not have sense of humour and is not able to laugh at his/her demerits.

The optimal age for the development of tolerant cognition and tolerance settings is the juvenile age, because it is the age of the development of mental processes and the formation of personality. It is the stage of development, which gives the best possibilities for purposeful formation of his/her physical, mental and sociocultural characteristics. This age boundary is characterised by the child's transition to another social conditions, when he/she starts living according to laws of the adult society, he/she is actively developing as a subject of social relations and starts bearing responsibility for his/her actions. In this period you can trace the polarity of mind: purposefulness, perseverance – impetuosity, instability; increased self-confidence, refusal to compromise in judgements – vulnerability and uncertainty in oneself; need in communication – wish to seclude oneself; aggressive behaviour – timidity; romantic appeal – cynicism, prudence; tenderness – cruelty. This age is ready for development of the life platform of motives and values, own views, beliefs, ability to react adequately on remarks, true and incorrect criticism, the ability to stand up for own opinion without disgracing other people.

"Values of tolerance – self-respect, justice, absence of violence, cooperation – obtain personal sense only when the schoolchild makes himself out, assesses his actions, their

motives, when the moral self-control and the readiness for self-perfection of the personality are developed. Tolerance is always internal freedom, these are relations on equal terms, it is always the dialogical level of interaction" (Soldatova, 2003).

2. Empirical research

The aim of the research was to examine the level of teenagers' tolerance in Latvia.

On the basis of the research the following tasks were defined:

- to discover if teenagers have tolerant/intolerant aims;
- to reveal the specificity of teenagers' spheres of values and motivation.

The participants of the empirical research: pupils of the 7th – 9th forms (in total 172 respondents) of various institutions of general education in Latvia.

The methodological part of the empirical research includes:

- diagnostics of attitude to life values (M. Rokich's method, modification of D. Leontyev);
- questionnaire "Index of tolerance"(G. Soldatova, O. Kravcova, O. Huhlaev, L. Shaygerova).

2.1 Diagnostics of attitude to life values

Analysing the literature on the personality's value orientation, the author bases his research on M. Rokich's method (2007), who divides values on the basis of traditional contraposition of values-aims and values-means. Accordingly, he defines two classes of values:

- terminal (aims) values – these are persuasions that the final aim of the individual existence is worth striving for it;
- instrumental values – these are persuasions that some way of actions or personality's features are preferable in any situation.

The aim of the research is:

- defining the hierarchy of values orientation taking into account the terminal and instrumental values (values – aims and values – means).

The participants of the empirical research: pupils of the 7th-9th forms of various institutions of general education of Latvia.

Respondents were offered two lists of values, which they were supposed to arrange in the order of significance, i.e. the first place is for the most important values, but the 18th

place is for the least important.

The results of the research allow defining the degree of psychological mechanism formation of values orientation. The concrete values important for personality, their interrelations and other values' significance indicates the person's action direction and means, with help of which he/she achieves his/her aims.

Table 2. Teenagers' terminal values in Latvia (*Marchenoka, 2006*)

No.	Values	Place
1	active, energetic life (life completeness and emotional richness)	11
2	life wisdom (maturity of judgement and common sense, obtained with life experience)	16
3	health (physical and mental)	10
4	interesting work	8
5	nature and art beauty (feeling the beautiful in nature and art)	18
6	love (spiritual and physical intimacy with a beloved)	3
7	stable financial welfare (absence of financial difficulties)	1
8	good and trustful friends	6
9	public recognition (respect from the surrounding people, colleagues)	7
10	cognition (possibility to improve education level, to enlarge the mental outlook, general standards, intellectual development)	13
11	productive life (maximal usage of one's possibilities, forces and skills)	12
12	development (self-cultivation, permanent physical and mental perfection)	14
13	entertainment (pleasant, easy time spending, absence of obligations)	2
14	freedom (independence, self-dependence in judgements and actions)	4
15	happy family life	5
16	others' happiness (welfare, other people's, the whole nations', the humanity's development and perfection)	17
17	creative work (possibility of creative work)	15
18	self-confidence (internal harmony, freedom of internal doubts, contradictions)	9

The results of evaluation of the terminal values are rather interesting. Such values as stable financial life, entertainment, love, independence, freedom (independence) take the leading positions in the ratings' top five places. It appears that these categories of values are the society's social priorities as reflected by teenagers. It is worth paying attention to the value category, which is in the last five categories: mental outlook, development, creative work, life wisdom, other people's welfare (incl. the state), beauty of nature and art. The given category is very significant at the moment of choice of the personal life trajectory.

One of the important discoveries in the given research: beauty of art (feeling the beautiful) is ranked the last place in rating.

Table 3.Teenagers' instrumental values in Latvia (*Marchenoka, 2006*)

No.	Values	Place
1	neatness (cleanliness), ability to keep things in order, order in actions	7
2	good manners	8
3	high demands (high requirements to life and high pretensions)	9
4	cheerfulness (sense of humour)	3
5	diligence	11
6	independence (ability to act independently, resolutely)	2
7	implacability to one's and other people's weaknesses	4
8	education (breadth of mind, high general culture)	10
9	responsibility (feeling of duty, ability to keep one's word)	16
10	rationalism (ability to think reasonably and logically, take well-considered and rational decisions)	5
11	self-control (reserve, self-discipline)	17
12	courage in defending one's opinion, views	1
13	strong will (ability to have one's way, not to recede when facing difficulties)	6
14	tolerance (to others' opinions and views, ability to forgive others' faults and mistakes)	18
15	breadth of opinions (ability to understand others' opinion, to respect others' tastes, customs and habits)	12
16	honesty (truth, sincerity)	15
17	efficiency in business (diligence, productivity in work)	13
18	sensitiveness (attention)	14

Analysing the results of the instrumental values list, it is possible to conclude that such values as courage in defending one's opinion, independence, life cheerfulness take the first places in the list. Relevant and important value at the given period time is education, but it is placed in tenth place. It appears that honesty and efficiency in business (diligence) are the result of influence of common human values. Special attention should be drawn to the fact that tolerance, self-control, responsibility, honesty, diligence take one of the last positions in rating.

Drawing conclusions, we can identify the contradiction: the terminal value "stable financial life" has rather a high rating, but the instrumental value "diligence" is one of the last ones.

2.2 Questionnaire "Index of tolerance"

For diagnostics of the general level of tolerance the express questionnaire "*Index of tolerance*" was used. The basic material for the questionnaire were 22 statements reflecting general perception of the environment and other people and social settings in various spheres of interaction, where the teenager's tolerance and intolerance can be seen.

Each answer to the direct statements was evaluated according to the point scale from 1 to 6. Answers to contrary statements were assessed with reverse points. Then the points were summed up. As a result:

- 22-60 – low level of tolerance;
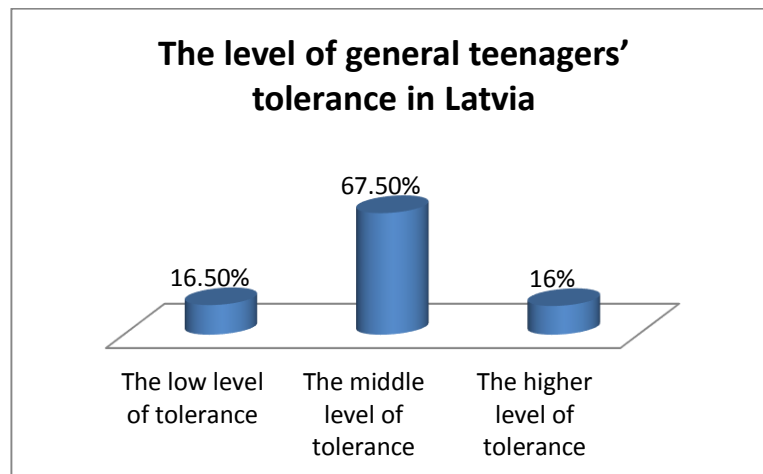- 61-99 – middle level of tolerance;
- 100-132 – high level of tolerance.

For the qualitative analysis of tolerance aspects the division into sub-scales was used:

1. *Ethnical tolerance*: 2, 4, 7, 11, 14, 18, 21 (reflects the teenager's attitude to other ethnic groups and his/her settings in the sphere of international interaction).
2. *Social tolerance*: 1, 6, 8, 10, 12, 15, 16, 20 (gives the possibility to examine expression of tolerance and intolerance to various social groups as well as to investigate the individual's attitude to some social processes).
3. *Tolerance as a personality trait*: 3, 5, 9, 13, 17, 19, 22 (includes points diagnosing personality traits, attitude and beliefs, which to the considerable extent define the teenager's attitude to the environment).

The questionnaire gave the possibility to diagnose the general level of tolerance according to the quantitative characteristic, and on the basis of the sub-scales to reveal the distinction of social, ethnical tolerance and tolerance as a teenager personality trait in Latvia.

The general level of tolerance enables us to determine if teenagers possess the personal characteristic of tolerance, taking into account the distinction of this characteristic in relation to surrounding people. This indicator reflects the level of the society's tolerance rather than the level of teenagers' tolerance.

Illustration 1. The level of general teenagers' tolerance in Latvia (Marchenoka, 2013)
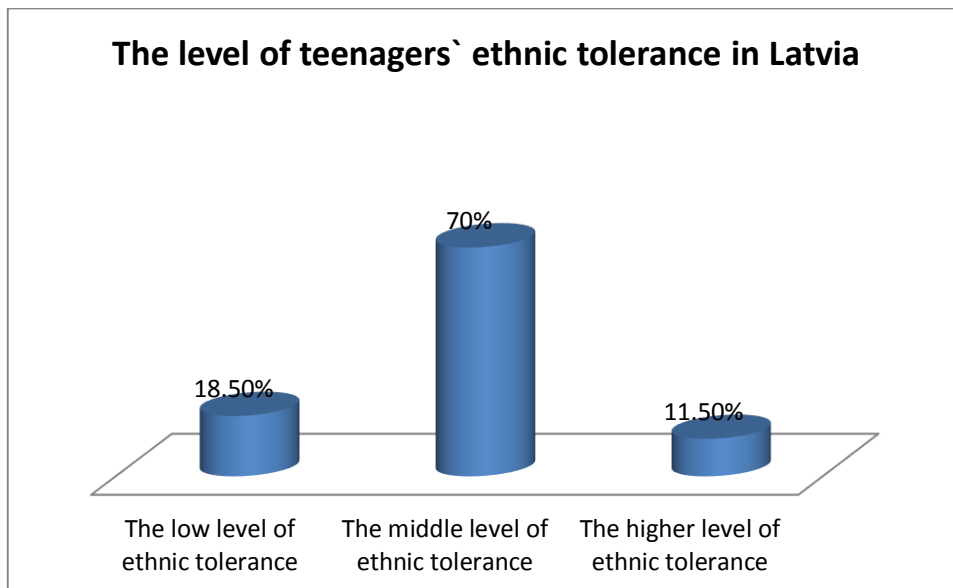

The results of the research (Illustration 1) showed that 67.5% of respondents have got the middle level of tolerance. The results indicate that this group of teenagers can behave in various ways depending on social situations. In some situations they display tolerance,

but in other cases – intolerance. Almost equal are indicators of the high level (16%) and the low level (16.5%) of tolerance. The low level of tolerance is the most dangerous, because it is an indicator of social conflicts brewing in society. Our discovered data, i.e. 16.5%, are still within the norm, and this situation is determined by the fact that Latvia has historically been multi-ethnic and socially varied and this led to the reduction of negative attitudes to "alien" cultures and different world outlooks. Owing to this historical fact, modern multi-ethnical classes in Latvian schools do not cause critical conflicts, as happens in some other countries. 16% of respondents who displayed the high level of tolerance, on the one hand, demonstrate the good level of stable developing society, but on the other hand, it also can illustrate other trends indicating that "borders of tolerance" are being blurred out, and it is related, for instance, to psychological infantilism and tendencies to indifference.

Ethnic tolerance is the most striking indicator of the level of society's development, because in the process of globalisation, *"understanding"* and *"acceptance"* of another culture is the highest indicator of its democracy and stability. Statements that were included in the assessment: "It is correct to consider that your people is better than others"; "I want to have friends of various nationalities"; "It is difficult to have respectful attitudes toward some peoples"; "Any religious currents have the right to exist." As we can see, this unit includes the ethnical prejudice, being the most urgent in the modern society, related to representatives of other nationalities (according to the racial characteristics).

Illustration 2. Teenagers' ethnic tolerance in Latvia (Marchenoka, 2013)

The results of the research showed that majority of the teenagers questioned have the middle level of ethnic tolerance – 70% (Illustration 2). Intolerance was expressed by 18.5% of the respondents. It is rather a high indicator. It indicates that representatives of this group, first, will experience difficulties in adapting in the society, and second, they represent potential "nationalists", which is not acceptable within the framework of globalisation of the world building the policy of intercultural dialogue between cultures and nations. 11.5% of teenagers expressed the high level of ethnic tolerance. This indicator can be evaluated in two ways: on the one hand, it is warrantable taking into account the region of the questionnaire, but on the other hand, the accuracy of these data cannot be evident in the context of the respondents' internal knowledge of "correct" answers, and it does not mean that they share this opinion. But even in this case, the result is also positive, because the wish to be tolerant is a step toward development of a tolerant society.

Social tolerance allowed for the examining of expressions of tolerance and intolerance towards various social groups and to investigate individuals' attitudes to some social processes. This unit included the following statements for assessment: "In mass media any opinion may be displayed"; "If the beggary and vagabonds have problems, it's their own fault"; "It is unpleasant to communicate with untidy people"; "All mentally diseased must be isolated from the society"; "We can help refugees not more than any other people – local people have no less problems"; "Newcomers must have equal rights with the local people".

Illustration 3. Teenagers' social tolerance in Latvia (Marchenoka, 2013)
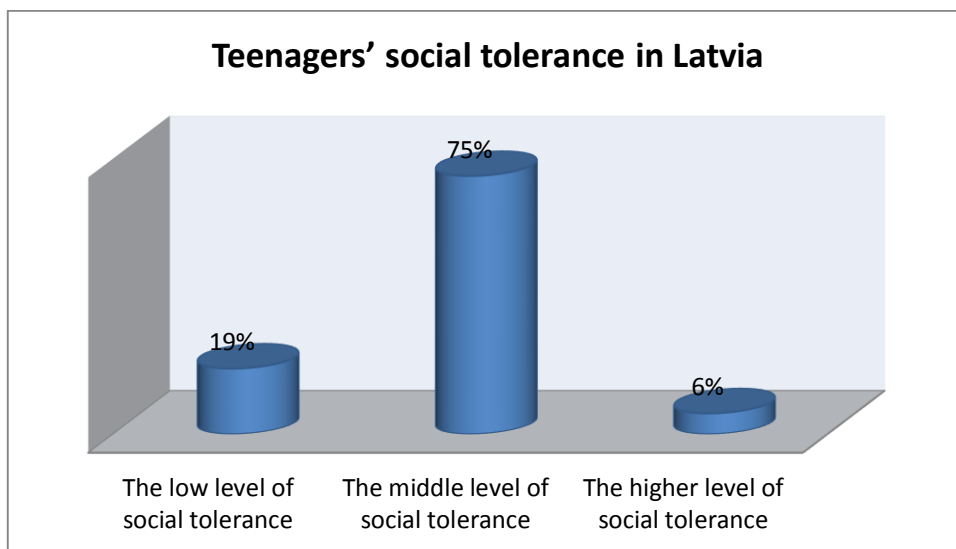

The research revealed the following results. The high level of tolerance was expressed

by 6% of the respondents, the middle level – 75% and the low level – 19% (Illustration 3). The high level is as 6% as lower than the high level of ethnic tolerance discovered within this research. It indicates that the social situation in Latvia is more critical than ethnic one in attitude to various social groups. It is necessary to comment that the juvenile age is more categorical and aggressive. The teenagers expressed particular aversion to such social groups as tramps and ill people. Almost 100% of the respondents replied that they do not want to communicate with untidy people. The statement that newcomers must have equal rights with the local people also received positive assessment.

The sub-scale "Tolerance as a personality trait" diagnoses personal characteristics, attitude and beliefs defining the person's perception of the surrounding world, mostly in relation to other people from the point of view of dissent and different behaviour. This unit of evaluation of tolerance included the following statements: "If your friend betrayed you, you must revenge"; "In a dispute there may be only one correct point of view"; "Even if I have a different opinion, I'm ready to listen to other viewpoints"; "If somebody is rude to me, I'll pay him/her back"; "The person having another opinion than me, irritates me"; "Disorder irritates me"; "I'd like to become more tolerant to other people."

Illustration 4. Tolerance as personality's trait of teenagers in Latvia (Marchenoka, 2013)
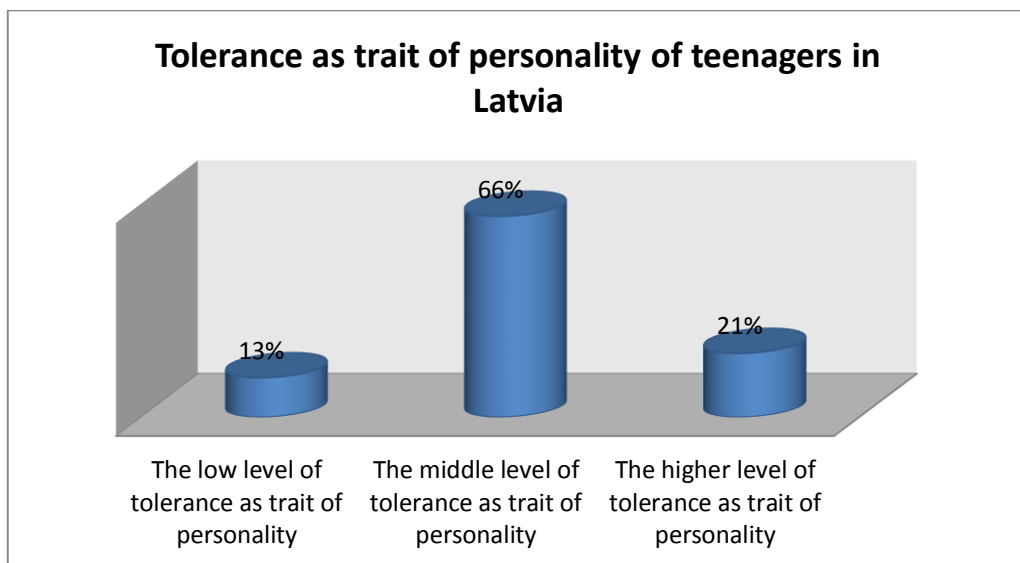
The results of diagnosing this sector of tolerance are the highest if we consider the indicator of the higher level of tolerance, which reached 21% and is the highest in comparison with the previous blocks (Illustration 4); it indicates that tolerance to other

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people in interpersonal aspect is more developed in modern teenagers in Latvia. The middle level reached 66%, and the low level was shown by 13% of the respondents. These teenagers (13%) are so-called "problematic" children, who usually have bad relations with parents and other teenagers due to the high level of egoism and egocentrism.

Conclusion

Today tolerance is a multi-aspect category, and its value is human dignity, justice, absence of violence, cooperation and it gets personal significance for teenagers only when he/she gains an understanding of himself/herself, evaluates his/her actions and motives;

- Values orientation in teenagers' civic education and development is fundamental, that interweave the sphere of all values system and their interaction; of course, it needs a certain level of maturity, which relates both to one's physical and moral development as a whole, which includes cognitive, affective, intellectual and moral development, which ensures knowledge and skills, competence to develop such opinions, confidence, position, action and attitude that are necessary in order to conceive phenomena and their changes happening in oneself, other people and in the world;
- Development of the teenager's civil consciousness is influenced by: Heredity; Environment; Social environment; Purposeful upbringing and conscious self-education, directed to recognising values significance in life.
- In this process, the interaction of regularities of nature, society and upbringing is expressed. That is why in the process of the teenager's civic education, adults must also take into account systems, factors, mechanisms of these interactions, which can positively or negatively influence the teenager's values orientation;
- The empirical research of the given problem allowed for discovering the contradiction between the terminal values, where the value "stable financial life" has rather a high rating, but the instrumental value "diligence" is one of the last in the list;
- The level of general tolerance gave the possibility to define that 67.5% of the respondents have the middle level of tolerance, 16% - the high level of tolerance and 16.5% - the low level of tolerance. The low level of tolerance is the most dangerous, because it is an indicator of social conflicts brewing in the society;
- The results of the research of ethnic tolerance showed that the largest part of the interrogated teenagers (70%) has the middle level of tolerance, 11.5% expressed the high level of ethnic tolerance and intolerance was expressed by 18.5% of the interrogated teenagers. Despite the fact that the society in Latvia has always been multicultural and the research group was ethnically heterogeneous, the level of ethnic intolerance was rather high indicating that in case if the respondents do not change their standpoint in the future, they will have difficulties in adapting in the society and they can be considered as potential "nationalists", which is not acceptable in the process of globalisation of the world building the policy of intercultural dialogue between nations and cultures;

- It was discovered that social intolerance is higher that the ethnic intolerance (19%); it is mainly expressed in a version of beggars as free members of the society and the dislike of the diseased. It indicated that the social situation in Latvia is more critical than ethnic.
- The teenagers were more tolerant in interpersonal relations, when it is necessary to accept "different" points of view and behaviour and showed the high level of tolerance as a personality trait (21%). 13% of the respondents displayed the low level of tolerance in this subscale; these respondents mostly represent so-called "problematic" children, who usually have bad relations with parents and other teenagers due to the their high level of egoism and egocentrism;
- The research showed that the Latvian society has not reached the level of civic and democratic society, where the level of tolerance must be represented in all the scales. It determines tasks for development and upgrading of methods for formation of tolerance in teenagers and achieving better results in the future.

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