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## FORMATION

OF ANTI-PROPAGANDA SKILLS AGAINST RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM  
IN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

## FORMACIÓN DE COMPETENCIAS ANTIPROPAGANDÍSTICAS CONTRA EL EXTREMISMO RELIGIOSO EN ESTUDIANTES UNIVERSITARIOS

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### ABSTRACT

The article is dedicated to the problem of extremism as a social phenomenon, the danger of which is that it diminishes the results of numerous efforts of the society towards its progress. Spread of youth extremism is one of the most acute problems of modern Kazakhstan. The number of crimes is growing, violence is increasing, and its character is becoming more and more organized. One of the key ways to fight terrorist and extremist manifestations in the social environment is their prevention. It is necessary to form anti-propaganda skills against extremism at educational institutions. The solution to this issue lies in the inclusion in the curriculum of higher education subjects, illuminating the problem of protection against propaganda of religious extremism. The course of Religious Studies will enable youths to adequately estimate socially hazardous situations associated with the manifestations of this phenomenon, use the necessary forms of control in the case of mental manipulation of people's consciousness, and help people who suffer from religious cults and organizations of totalitarian character.

**Keywords:** Extremism, Skills, Youth, Elective courses, Educational program, Religion, Typology of destructive religious organizations.

### RESUMEN

El artículo está dedicado al problema del extremismo como fenómeno social, cuyo peligro es que merma los resultados de los numerosos esfuerzos de la sociedad por su progreso. La propagación del extremismo juvenil es uno de los

problemas más agudos del Kazajstán moderno. El número de delitos crece, la violencia aumenta y su carácter es cada vez más organizado. Una de las formas clave de luchar contra las manifestaciones terroristas y extremistas en el entorno social es su prevención. Es necesario formar competencias antipropagandísticas contra el extremismo en las instituciones educativas. La solución a esta cuestión radica en la inclusión en el plan de estudios de la enseñanza superior de asignaturas, que iluminen el problema de la protección contra la propaganda del extremismo religioso. El curso de Estudios Religiosos permitirá a los jóvenes estimar adecuadamente las situaciones socialmente peligrosas asociadas con las manifestaciones de este fenómeno, utilizar las formas necesarias de control en el caso de manipulación mental de la conciencia de las personas, y ayudar a las personas que sufrieron cultos religiosos y organizaciones de carácter totalitario.

**Palabras clave:** Extremismo, Habilidades, Jóvenes, Cursos electivos, Programa educativo, Religión, Tipología de organizaciones religiosas destructivas.

## INTRODUCTION

The current interest in extremism as a social phenomenon is due to its significant danger, nullifying numerous efforts of society towards its progress. Political, national, and religious extremism and terrorism were major threats in the early XXI century which were not only a threat to the national security and integrity of Kazakhstan but also a worldwide problem.

One of the key ways to fight terrorist and extremist manifestations in the social environment is their prevention. It is particularly important to carry out such preventive work among young people because this medium due to several different factors is one of the most vulnerable to the negative influence of a variety of anti-social and criminal groups. Social and physical vulnerability of young people, frequent maximalism in estimates and judgments, psychological immaturity, and strong reliance on the opinion of others - these are just some of the reasons to talk about the possibility of quick circulation of radical ideas among the youth.

The reason for youth participation in extremist activity is not always the dissatisfaction with their financial situation. Changes in government policy concerning the youth and, the lack of a national ideology have led to other extremes, and almost stopped paying attention to them. Traditional moral values, such as patriotism, and religious tolerance are rejected and mocked. The Mass Media began to preach the cult of cruelty, violence, greed, and achieving high economic status by any means.

Such large-scale destructive treatment could not but have a negative influence on young people.

Extremism among young people is determined not only by its danger to public order but also by the fact that this criminal phenomenon has the feature of turning into more serious crimes such as terrorism, murder, grievous bodily harm, and mass riots. In sociology and statistics, this group usually included people aged 15 to 30 years. Youth, living their life, resolving conflicts, comparing possible options, taking into account that for young age are typical: emotional excitability, inability to restrain, lack of skills of even simple conflict resolution, then all of the above mentioned may lead to the commission of deviation (Kochergin, 2008; Kubyakin, 2010).

Most extremist crimes are committed by minors in the group. Numerous youth gangs often turn into extremist groups. The commitment of children and teenagers to commit crimes or other acts of anti-social orientation in the group has the following explanation. It is well known that adolescents are particularly susceptible to peer influence. Aspiring to be recognized in this environment, they often seek the company of other teens who could appreciate them (Berkovets, 2009).

From the perspective of development trends of modern youth extremism, the concept of "youth culture" is retained. A youth subculture is the culture of a certain younger generation with a common lifestyle, behavior, group norms, values, and stereotypes. It is at this level that the subculture of the young generation acquires noticeable countercultural elements: leisure, especially by young people, is seen as the main area of activity. They are at the forefront of mass riots (Aldabergen, 2014). Of particular concern in this regard is the fact that a large proportion of young people for various reasons are involved in extremist activity of criminal organizations and movements. A vivid manifestation of this process is the massive participation of youth in ethnic, racial, and religious conflicts, the growth of youth crime, etc. (Shalamova & Khovrin, 2007).

## DEVELOPMENT

To solve this problem in the youth environment also, it is necessary to create a self-perpetuating system of ideas, careers, and distribution channels, which can promote, autonomously from the government, the formation of positive public awareness and exclude the option of using violence to achieve any goals. Such a system can and should be the institutions of civil society, academic and business communities, educational institutions, and the media.

Today in the fight against youth extremism it should be primary to eliminate the causes and conditions conducive to deviant behavior, among which are currently the most relevant are the reduction of family authority and marital trouble, loss of spiritual values and moral guidelines by society, propaganda of violence, drugs, hatred and calls for enrichment. All this causes among the youth resentment, intolerance, aggression and protest (Shalamova & Khovrin, 2007).

The most important social institution in a position to fully implement state policy on working with teenagers and young people is an educational system which serves as an important tool in the process of state education of youth. Socialization functions are implemented by schools, technical and vocational schools, universities, and the army. But the importance of training and educating at school is much more significant than all other stages of socialization because the consciousness of an individual increasingly develops at school and during this period society has the opportunity to positively influence the formation of the individual's personality.

Manifestations of extremism among students are more likely to occur on ethnic grounds. To prevent extremism and promote interethnic harmony and religious tolerance among students it is necessary to:

1. Enhance the role of student associations in the life of the university, the degree of their influence on the processes in the student environment.
2. Organize in educational institutions elective courses on legislation in the field of combating extremism, create anti-extremist stands in the frame of educational institutions and student hostels, involve law enforcement bodies to engage more actively in this work.
3. Organize monitoring of curricula and textbooks to identify materials aimed at inciting inter-ethnic conflicts.
4. Make one of the quality criteria of educational work in universities quantitative indicator reflecting dependence of its state on the number of students charged with criminal and, in some cases, administrative responsibility. It is also possible that this criterion should be taken into account in the examination of the performance of universities for their state accreditation
5. Develop and implement with the help of national diasporas a set of measures for the development of inter-ethnic dialogue and internationalism in the student community, including the establishment of the International Friendship Clubs.
6. Introduce in the curricula of educational institutions teaching the basics of religious studies in all specialties as a compulsory subject.

7. As part of the educational work educational institutions pay more attention to activities for the promotion of culture and traditions of the peoples of Kazakhstan and conflict-free communication skills training, as well as educating students about the social danger of hate crimes for the development and progress of society.
8. The absence of curriculum subjects, illuminating the problem of religious aspects of security, in particular, protection against encroachments of sects, makes youths unable to adequately assess socially dangerous situations; use the necessary forms of psychics control when manipulating people's minds; help victims of sects and cults (Karyenov, 2004).

Given the trends theoretically justified making an optional course in the field of providing personal and public security against destructive manifestations of religious organizations.

The elective course *Religious Studies* as the structuring element of training of university students has a huge potential in the system of higher education. The course is not limited to the introduction of educational line in the system of life security; it is also a tool for developing, shaping, and perfecting influence on the personality of the student and may be directed to the solution of several psychophysical, aesthetic, humanistic, and creative tasks.

Knowledge of the theory of religion, history of religion, and typology of destructive religious organizations defines areas of work with students on anti-propaganda against religious extremism, such as the generation of knowledge and skills to recognize non-traditional religious cults; building knowledge about pseudo-religious sects, knowledge of their distinctive features; formation of skills to distinguish between destructive and constructive organizations organization whose work is not connected with religion, but directly related to crime and extremism; building knowledge about religious extremism, the legal protection of citizens against the encroachments of destructive religious organizations.

For anti-propaganda against religious extremism in the future professional activity of university students, it is necessary to develop the ability to assess the possible risk of religious extremism in the region; the ability to classify the danger of destructive religious organizations and the laws of their manifestation; ability to control the situation when dealing with followers of these organizations; ability to advise victims of destructive cults and their families about where and how to get help.

Formation of skills in students of anti-propaganda against extremism is based on their knowledge of the activity of destructive religious organizations, such as knowledge

of the classification and characteristics of destructive religious organizations; knowledge of the social and psychological aspects of destructive religious organizations; knowledge of the principles, rules and requirements of safe conduct in socially dangerous situations related to religious extremism and aimed at countering extremist activity; knowledge of forms and methods of legal protection of citizens against the encroachments of religious extremists). All this variety of knowledge can be obtained through the study of the following elective courses: "Religious Aspects of Security," "Psychology of Religious Sects," "Religious Extremism: the nature, form," "Typology of religious sects," and "Religion."

During the creation of training programs such competence should be considered as the formation of skills of anti-propaganda against religious extremism and include modules such as a target-oriented module, an operational-activity module, and an assessment and correction module.

1. Program-target module defines the following aspects of the model: the development of training programs and the definition of objectives and means of activity depending on the level of development of students' skills. This module contains the following components: motivational-value and information-cognitive.

Motivational-value component reflects a positive emotional attitude toward the course, the need for it, a system of knowledge, interests, motives, and beliefs, organizing and directing the willpower of individuals, cognitive and practical work on mastering the values of the elective course on Religious Studies, and the spiritual perfection.

This component also determines the motivation to succeed and the motivation to overcome failures at students in the learning process. The educational process should be designed so that students have the motivation to achieve success in the process of learning and motivation to overcome setbacks.

Information-educational component allows to solve problems on the mastery of knowledge students for religious aspects of security; defines cognitive needs of students and is active in obtaining information in the elective course "Religion".

2. Operational-activity module consists of the following aspects: motivational- volitional attitude to an optional course; building knowledge, skills, and abilities; organization of joint communication activities.

All three aspects constitute the following subject-reflex component, which is implemented through three stages: preliminary, current, and retrospective.

Motivational and volitional attitude to an optional course. During training, students must develop a motivational attitude towards learning. To develop in students motivational and volitional attitude to an optional course, you should try to consider these positions. If a student in the classroom is inactive, or bored, we must first of all understand why he's not interested.

An assessment and correction module defines the following aspects of the developed model: assessment and self-assessment of results; correction of working plan on the basis of obtained subject reflexive result.

Assessment and self-assessment of results at present is the subject of many books. So much attention paid to this issue is objectively justified. Only by constantly analyzing and introspection a teacher's work can we identify both failures and successes in the course of employment, and thus will be able to fix the first and not lose sight of the second in subsequent classes. The analysis is conducted by school administration, and self-analysis and self-esteem - by the teacher (Kuznetsov, 2012, 2013).

The most important pedagogical conditions for skills formation are as follows: transfer of a student from the object of education and training into the subject of management and self-management, personal growth experience in the presence of the group and the teacher, which encourages further work on personality and is a source of self-development, self-education; application of level differentiation (program-target level, organizational - activity, evaluating - correcting); create situations of personal development during classes; assessment of value potential of the elective course through one's own activity; updating the development of reflective skills of students; teacher's readiness to implement subject approach to teaching.

Basic principles and criteria for selecting the contents of educational material and forms of conducting classes for students of humanitarian universities in the area of anti propaganda against religious extremism can be defined as the following: the principle of matching the social order, the principle of scientific and practical significance of educational material; the principle of account of the real possibilities of a learning process; the principle of unity of educational content from the position of all subjects; principle of humanization.

When selecting the content of education, one should be guided by the criteria of forming a holistic reflection of problems of forming a comprehensively developed personality; the criterion of scientific and practical significance of educational content; criteria of corresponding content complexity to real educational opportunities for students

of a particular age; criteria for matching content's capacity to the time dedicated to studying this subject.

Practical implementation of the abovementioned tasks allows for implementation of the primary forms of the traditional organization of the educational process: lectures; seminars and workshops; control system; and students' independent research work, including a flexible mixture of independent cognitive activity of students with different sources of information, operational and systematic engagement with classroom forms of teaching and students' group work.

Defining the level of skills of fighting against religious extremism as the primary goal of university students training in the specified field, the term "skills" implies such personality traits which means possessing the complex system of mental and practical actions needed for appropriate regulation of activity by the subject's knowledge and skills. Such skills should also be possessed by the teacher himself: the ability to transfer knowledge, solution options, methods of training, and education in terms of a new pedagogical situation, transforming them according to the specific conditions of educational work; the ability to find for each teaching situation a new solution from a combination of known to the teacher ideas, knowledge and skills; ability to create new elements of pedagogical knowledge and ideas and design new techniques for solving a specific pedagogical situation.

One of the key goals of modern education is to develop students' willingness and ability to learn throughout their lives, systematically adding and enriching professional knowledge and skills obtained in higher education. The ability to learn as the need for self-improvement is fundamental in teaching students. Students must be able to evaluate themselves, and their inner world, and understand the motives of their actions. The process of self-analysis as the subject of future professional activity is possible for students only if they possess reflective abilities.

Reflection is a complex thinking capacity for constant analysis and evaluation of each step of professional activity. With the help of reflective abilities - intellectual, personal, communicative, and cooperative we can manage our own activities and create conditions for self-education.

Speaking of student reflection, we invariably discover its activity aspect - a subjective nature. In this regard, contents, methods and forms of students training at the stage of higher education should be aimed at increasing the level of independence, of the arbitrariness of professional conduct and activities, ultimately - to its formation as a subject of professional activity and conduct, able to isolate and confront any negatives. The notion of reflection in

the context of philosophical problems generates the ability of mind and thinking to address himself; as the analysis of knowledge to obtain new knowledge; as the introspection of the state of mind and soul; as a way out from life preoccupation into the mental side; as a research act directed to mastering one's own implementation.

Religious Studies course is individually oriented. Thus, we can say that student-centered learning is one of the methods of skills formation of anti-propaganda against extremism when the establishment, implementation, and diagnosis of educational activities take into account the natural, personal, and individual characteristics of the student and the teacher. Only joint action, which is based on these principles, allows participants to fully develop the educational process within the framework of a humanistic orientation (Nistotskaya, 2011).

Besides scientific knowledge in the content of education includes "meta-knowledge" (Yakimanskaya, 2021), i.e., methods and techniques of learning, knowledge of how to work with the teaching materials. Implementing the principle of subjectivity requires constant maintenance, and not only the intellectual development of a student, but also spiritual and overall development, because the purpose of education is individuality development.

In this type of teaching such features deserve approval as respect for the student's personality, attention to his inner world and its uniqueness (subjectivity), training aimed at developing the student's personality, the original construction of teaching contents and methods, search for new forms and methods of teaching.

Personality-centered education is closely linked to the area of psychology, which offers to build education in accordance with the principle of "developing aid." It means not to tell a man what to do, solving his problems for him but let him realize himself and wake his own energy and internal strength so that he makes a choice, and make decisions on his own.

As the basis of individually-mediated education, we can consider a personality-oriented teaching situation, i.e., a situation in which the interests, needs, and personal experience of a student appear as important components of the educational process as knowledge and skills. When revealing its essence, it is necessary to clearly understand that such a situation cannot be implemented purposefully by the curriculum, it has no material given from the outside, and prescribed organization technique, and is not suitable for all audiences at a time. To identify indicators that show whether the level of personal interaction of subjects of training has been reached is a complex task, which requires from the teacher and her adequate

diagnostic tools - not only scientific instruments but also expressions of sympathy, intuition, openness, overcoming stereotypes and existing rules (Grigoryeva, 2012).

Inclusion of the teacher and student in the personality-oriented situation means a special change of all parameters of teaching. What was external regarding the communication of the teacher and the student (target, contents of the educational process, etc.), was defined by outer social institutions, changes its source, it becomes an internal stimulus, the result of intimate consent and cooperation of subjects. Conflict of motives, meaning, and value clash becomes here a tangible field of interpersonal communication.

Designing a training situation implies using the following methods:

- 1) representation of the elements of education contents in the form of personality-oriented tasks of different levels;
- 2) assimilation of contents in terms of dialogue as a special didactic and communicative environment providing subject-semantic communication, reflection, and self-realization of personality;
- 3) imitation of social role-play and spatiotemporal conditions for the implementation of personal functions in situations of internal conflict, collision, and competition.

Organization of educational dialogue by the teacher is another important pedagogical condition for the formation of skills of anti-propaganda against extremism in students. From the point of view of didactics, the triad "problem - dialogue - game" forms a basic complex of student-centered learning, creating a value-semantic field of inter-subjective communication as an integral part of the whole educational process. In this situation educational process is not substituted by purely educational content, but the world of human experience opens from its other side - personality -meaningful when taken as a personal value by addressing not only memory, but also to the deep structures of consciousness.

Any learning material is presented in the form of a task system in different ways associated with student's life-semantic sphere. The three types are meant: 1) subject, including actual data with indirect reference to its connection with the humanitarian value sphere 2) constructive, directed towards finding means of familiarizing students with this field of culture which are associated with the transfer of the contents of the studied material from the subject form into activity- communicative; 3) personality-oriented, connected with identifying value-semantic component of the material (Usheva, 2009).

Educational dialogue appears not only as a method of teaching, but also as an integral component, the inner content of personality-centered learning. Dialogue acts in this case as one of the essential characteristics of the learning process, an indicator of its transition to student-semantic level. Dialogue is not only the means, but also the aim of learning, not only the process, but also the contents, the source of personal experience, a factor of actualization of sense-forming, reflective, critical, and other functions of the individual.

Obviously, dialogue does not arise spontaneously. Experience of dialogic communication is accumulated gradually and in the initial stages inevitably includes elements of formal organization: the scenario, the distribution of roles, etc. Introduction to the dialogue situation assumed the usage of the following elements of technology:

- 1) Diagnosis of readiness of students for dialogical communication - basic knowledge, communicative experience, perception from different points of view;
- 2) Search of reference motives, i.e., those questions and concerns worrying students, through which they can effectively shape their sense of the studied material;
- 3) Processing of learning material in the system of problem-conflict issues and challenges which involves the deliberate aggravation of collisions, their elevation to the eternal human - ethical issues;
- 4) Thinking through the different variants of development of dialogue storylines;
- 5) Design of interaction methods for discussion participants, their possible roles and conditions for accepting them by students;
- 6) Hypothetical detection of improvisation zones, i.e., such dialogue situations in which it is difficult to predict the behavior of its members.

Getting into the dialogic situation is connected to the radical change of teacher's communicative settings. The question "Who is my student?" dominates the usual "What features should he have?" (Krylova & Strukova, 2012).

A special role is given to imitation - game situations. The need for teaching organization results in the development of imitation-game situations, when personal features of students become needed. This can be achieved if the cognitive action is performed in the structure of an activity that implements a specific personal meaning. The latter is obtained by the cognitive action itself. Thus, by developing a technical project, students master the laws of kinematics and dynamics, when role-playing "the trial of an oil refinery factory" get acquainted with the ecology of

the region, modeling with the help of computer consumption of raw materials and transportation routes comprehend the concept of cost. Educational activity included in the context of socially and personally considerable situations acquires a different motivation and semantic structure. Instead of the traditional “to remember and say” goal there is a real goal to achieve, and the learning process acquires involuntary traits, competition, cooperation, and methodological reflection.

The game is valuable with its motivation, especial creative, heuristic, team spirit of personality rather than its formal attributes in the form of roles and rules. Every game is above all and first of all a free activity. Formally the elements of the game serve for reaching the free creative mood of its members. To such elements, we refer to the game's objectives and rules, substantive and methodological scope, a set of roles, and scenarios as a way of generating events. The game inevitably contains competition and conflict, role adoption, and expert evaluation of results. This is not just a model of life. It is in a sense above daily life, because it reveals its hidden contradictions, and sharpens competitiveness.

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## CONCLUSIONS

Thus, the most important condition for skills formation is the teacher's willingness to implement a personality-oriented approach. Of course, we should not idealize personality-centered learning. Its drawbacks stem from its advantages: it is impossible to determine the contents and methods of teaching, based solely on the interests of the student - it usually leads to lower levels of academic learning. Games, spontaneous activity, and positive emotions become the goal; the acquisition of knowledge becomes less important. It is more reasonable to combine other interactive forms with personality-oriented type of teaching to disclose the student's creative abilities.

In connection with the above said, one of the effective means of forming a negative attitude towards religious sects among the youth is classes in schools. With their help, one can explain the real religious situation in the country, the socio psychological aspects of destructive and extremist religious organizations; students will be able to master skills of assessing social hazards connected with religious extremism; and use appropriate forms of control in case of mental manipulation of people's minds.

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