

Future Teachers' Attitude to the Security Problem and Counter Terrorism

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Abstract

The relevance of the theme under study is determined by the problem of ensuring stability and security of the society through young people's attitude to terrorism. The human community must be able to protect a person's world outlook, educational, scientific and cultural needs that determine a person's existence and mental world. One of the key trends in the fight against extremist and terrorist acts in the social environment is their prevention. It is especially important to carry out such preventive measures among young people. The rising generation appears to be the most unprotected category of the population susceptible to the influence of xenophobia destroying traditional values of national cultures and religions which is in a peculiar kind of a spiritual and axiological vacuum. 79 students of 1-5 years of study at the age of 17 - 22 were questioned according to the test-questionnaire 'Young people's attitude to terrorism'. Almost all respondents (95%) confirmed that terrorism is dangerous for the society and the problem really exists. Most respondents distinguish such qualities as cruelty, mercenariness, quick temper, and instability when describing a terrorist's portrait. When analyzing major reasons why people become terrorists, the students gave the first place to striving to feel power over people. Among other important reasons that influence a terrorist's personality development, they stated commitment to a certain ideology and striving to achieve material wealth. We need an integral system of terrorism prevention including, among other things, its pedagogical foundations.

Keywords: terrorism, terrorism prevention, antiterrorism, security.

1. Introduction

Terrorism is a social phenomenon which turned into one of the most dangerous socio-political and moral problems in terms of its scope, unpredictability and consequences which accompanied the humanity when entering the XXI century (Zhalilov, 2013). The consequences of terrorist acts include mass casualty incidents, destruction of material and spiritual values, hostility between the states which provokes wars, mistrust and hatred between social and national groups.

The problem of ensuring stability and security of the society is mainly determined by young people's attitude to terrorism. In recent times, the question of reasons why terrorism spreads as one of the most important threats at the national, regional and global levels becomes especially urgent. It is impossible to build a mechanism of protection from danger of terrorism, without studying its nature. The analysis of reasons why terrorism appeared is given in the works by S.A. Arutyunov (Arutyunov, 2003, 2004), M.K. Asanbekov (Asanbekov, 2005), E.N. Ozhiganov (Ozhiganov, 2005) proving the necessity of the balanced approach and thorough analysis of reasons for committing terrorist acts.

We know that economic instability in the society creates the conditions of national confrontation forming a special state of collective consciousness which is characterized by the inappropriate evaluation of reality, by the state of fear, spite and aggression, as well as by the sentiments of uncertainty and unjustified expectations. Extremist calls for acts of protest find a fertile ground, exteremism and cult of cruelty become an integral part of the society consciousness (Voronovich, 2005).

One of prerequisites for the spread of terrorism is emergence of the information-oriented society. Mass media are a source of knowledge about the world for a person, the important factor of socialization and self-determination of personality. As the habit of reading newspapers and magazines is supplemented by the habit of listening to the radio,

watching TV, spending time in the Internet, the field of potential influence of terrorism on the society and their abilities grows (Voronovich, 2005). The stronger mass media become, the higher is their role in the formation of public moods, the wider is the wave of terrorism (Hoffman, 2003, Moiseev, 1994).

The human community must be able to protect a person's world outlook, their educational, scientific and cultural needs that determine a person's existence and spiritual world. We are responsible for the life of each individual: if terrorism puts a person's life in danger it means that it endangers the whole human civilization and the humanity future in general (Zhalilov, 2013). For the sake of the future of all people, for the sake of the future of the human civilization, we all must join our forces, in a mutual dialogue, to fight all destructive forces encouraging terrorism. The time itself imposes high requirements on a person, their world outlook, spiritual and moral health, stability of axiological orientations, the system of taboos, the ability of making quick decisions and act both in extreme and ordinary life conditions. Modern researchers consider it necessary to form worldview security as a consequence of the crisis of ideology, culture and the spread of extremism and terrorism (Bakhtina, 2013, Mukhina et al., 2015). It is necessary to admit the fact that the power-based method of counter-terrorism used exclusively is inefficient so terrorism must be fought on the ideological, worldview, conceptual front (Bokan, 2011).

One of the key trends in the fight against extremist and terrorist acts in the social environment is their prevention. It is especially important to carry out such work among young people as it is the young generation, on account of a wide range of factors, that is most vulnerable in terms of susceptibility to the negative influence of various anti-social and criminal groups. Nowadays the young generation can be freely involved in extremist activities through mass media (Vershinin, 2012). In these conditions the rising generation appears to be the most unprotected category of the population which is in a peculiar kind of a spiritual and axiological vacuum, is disorganized and susceptible to the influence of xenophobia destroying traditional values of national cultures and religions. Social and cultural vulnerability of young people and common maximalism in judgments and estimates, psychological immaturity, significant dependence on other people's opinion are just a small part of the reasons that allow us to talk about the possibility of easy spread of radical ideas among Russian young people.

Certainly, it is much more profitable to prevent extremism and terrorism among young people than to eliminate the consequences of such phenomena. It is important to carry out complex activities to form the legal culture among young people. In particular, this can be contributed to by significant extension of the legal component in upbringing and education. The awareness of their own rights and freedoms will contribute to the development of the young generation's respect to the rights and freedoms of other people, to their life, health and dignity. The necessary moment is the development of young people's tolerant philosophy, tolerant attitude to all people regardless of their nationality, religion, social and financial situation and other circumstances. According to the Part 2 of the Article 19 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, any forms of restriction of citizens' rights on the basis of social, ethnic, national, lingual and religious affiliation are forbidden. Every person since childhood must bear the thought that all people must be respected regardless of any circumstances. This will help in counteracting various kinds of religious, national and social extremism.

Successful counter-terrorism cannot be only ensured by security services' antiterrorist activity. In modern conditions every citizen must be equipped with antiterrorist knowledge and skills necessary for ensuring personal and social security. The modern educational system and mass media have some opportunities for providing the Russian population with the proper level of literacy in the field of counter-terrorism necessary for ensuring safety of the society and the state. One of the necessary elements of creating the conditions for literacy in the field specified is the introduction of the discipline 'Counter-terrorism' in the curriculum of the Pedagogical Education program (qualification 'Bachelor') (Vishnyakov et al., 2012).

The purpose of this study was to investigate the structure of the future teachers' attitude to the terrorism problem.

2. Materials and Methods

The study organization: the research work was carried out at the premises of Mari State University, pedagogical course 'Health and safety basics and law'. 79 students of 1-5 years of study at the age of 17 - 22 took part in the study. The test-questionnaire 'Young people's attitude to terrorism' was used. The questionnaire questions included open tasks, assessment tests and multiple-choice questions. The research methods included the following: study and analysis of psychological and pedagogical literature, questionnaire survey, qualitative and quantitative analysis of the data obtained, mathematical treatment. Statistical treatment was carried out in the software package STAT50.

The attitude to terrorists in the paper was evaluated with the help of the answers obtained from the respondents, regarding the terrorism problem, and through the respondent's reaction to the terrorist acts committed. The characteristics such as psychoemotional stability, 'social distance', the degree of coverage of terrorist acts in mass media

and the role of the state in ensuring security were also studied. The analysis of the most widespread variants of terrorists' motives and causes of terrorism was carried out. To determine a terrorist's stereotype and the factors explaining it, young people were offered the questions consisting of adjectives oriented at the evaluation of a terrorist's traits of personality and character made by the respondent.

3. Results and Discussion

It is hard to say that modern international situation is stable. One of the reasons why this is so is the scope of terrorism which takes a truly universal form nowadays. The significant changes in the forms of terrorism and in the practice of fighting it have occurred in our country as well. Russia has faced the outrageous facts of its performance, both on its own territory and in Russia's neighbouring states. The security problem existence in the modern society was confirmed by the results of questionnaire survey, thus 95% of respondents answered that the problem really exists and almost all respondents confirmed that terrorism is dangerous for the society.

Rampage of terrorism is not only a Russian-wide but also the most urgent international problem nowadays. The events of recent years clearly proved that Russia, like all the world community, is helpless in countering the scope of terrorism, though the state's role is very significant in this fight. Answering the question, 'Do you believe that the state does its best to solve the problem of terrorism?', most respondents supported the state's actions.

When analyzing the students' opinion of the mass media role in the coverage of terrorism problems, we built a miscellaneous picture.

The analysis of the students' attitude to the problem of the terrorism problem coverage in mass media determined that most respondents (more than 40%) experience difficulties in evaluating the quantity (redundancy or insufficiency) of the information on the terrorism problem provided by mass media; they are 'rather satisfied' with the quantity of information on terrorism (which they obtain, have or are provided with) and that they have a rather high level of awareness of the terrorism problem; 33.54% of respondents (majority) found it difficult to give a certain answer about panic mongering in the society by mass media though it should not be left unmentioned that 29.6% of respondents do believe that there is no panic mongering in mass media.

Further, we carried out an analysis of several aspects of a terrorist's image which is formed in young people's mind.

It was important to find out if young people's attitude to terrorists depends on a terrorist's personality. According to the study results, the majority of respondents (more than 36%) answered that they are completely sure that their attitude does not depend on a terrorist's personality. This statement shows a hostile opinion of a terrorist act, 23% of respondents stated that 'it is more likely' that the attitude to terrorists does not depend on their personality. However, the fifth part of students found it difficult to answer this question. There were occasional answers stating that 'it is more likely' that their attitude to a terrorist depends on their personality.

The questionnaire survey included the question of terrorists' belonging to a group of criminals. In young people's mind 75% fully referred them to the criminal world and almost 20% of respondents stated that 'it is more likely' that they can be called criminals.

In our opinion, there were interesting judgments about a terrorist's image (from respondents' point of view) as that of a mentally ill person or a person who deliberately commits a crime. Young people have no common point of view regarding the answer to this question. Thus, 14.6% of respondents found it difficult to answer, 19% answered that 'it is more likely' that a terrorist is a mentally ill person and 26% believe that terrorists, most likely, deliberately commit a crime. Difficulties in giving an answer to the question, 'Is a terrorist a mentally ill person?' were traced later as well. Thus, almost equal number of respondents highlighted such answer options as 'It is more likely that he is' (27%), 'It is more likely that he is not' (35%) and 23% of young people found it difficult to give an answer. The attitude to a terrorist's image was analyzed in open questions: the students were offered to state basic qualities which characterize terrorists. Most respondents marked cruelty. Such qualities as mercenariness, quick temper, and instability took the second place in terms of popularity. When analyzing major reasons why people become terrorists, most respondents gave the first place to striving to feel power over people. Among other important reasons that influence a terrorist's personality development, the respondents stated commitment to a certain ideology (2nd place) and striving to achieve material wealth.

Much attention was paid to the analysis of the questions aimed at determining a personal attitude to terrorism. Most respondents (41.9%) consider that 'terrorism is policy and actions aimed at frightening and terrifying the society and/or political adversaries'. Among the terrorism characteristics most students chose the following ones: violence (91.6%), acts of cruelty (64%), law infringement and intimidation (59.6% and 54.2% respectively). A third of respondents (30.6%), and a half of respondents among senior students refer religious fanaticism to the terrorism characteristics, 6% of

respondents consider that terrorists strive for a better world.

Only 41% of students consider that terrorist actions must not be justified under any circumstances, 14% found it difficult to answer this question. In their turn, 15% believe that terrorists can be only justified if they commit terrorist acts with good intentions.

When answering the question, 'What associations do you have with the word 'terrorism'?', most respondents (53%) answered 'violence', the second place was taken by the words 'fear' and 'death' (48% and 39% respectively), the third place was given to the words 'victims', 'intimidation', 'cruelty' (15-20%). The options 'explosion', 'panic', 'murder' also turned out to be popular.

The absolute majority of respondents will not feel sympathetic to a terrorist under any circumstances (87%). But we are anxious about the fact that some respondents chose other answer options: 'It is more likely that I will not' – 6.5%, 'I cannot say' and 'possibly' – 3% each.

We noted a wide scatter in the answer options chosen when answering the question, 'Does your attitude to a terrorist depend on their motives?'. About a quarter of respondents chose the options 'It is more likely that it does' and 'I am completely sure that it does not', 16 % consider that their attitude to a terrorist will depend on their personality and motives, and 21% found it difficult to give an answer.

None of the respondents will be able to completely justify a terrorist for themselves. Almost a half of respondents believe that the blame for the terrorist act committed can rest with somebody else besides a terrorist, and a third of students found it difficult to answer this question.

Contradictory answers were given to the questions, 'Is it possible to come to understanding with terrorists?' and 'Is it worth conducting negotiations with terrorists?'. When answering the first question, none of the respondents chose the answer option 'I am completely sure that it is', a bit more than a quarter of students consider that people most likely can come to understanding with terrorists. Negative answers were given by 38%. 59% of respondents believe that it is worth conducting negotiations with terrorists. It can be explained by the fact that we questioned future teachers of the subject 'Health and safety basics' who consider themselves competent and able to conduct negotiations to prevent a terrorist act. At the same time, 26% of students consider that they will not conduct negotiations with terrorists.

We analyzed the answers to the questions which determine students' psychoemotional stability in the conditions of emotogenic factors related to the threat of terrorist acts. When answering the question, 'Do you feel safe?', the positive answer was given by 68 % of respondents and 15 % of respondents found it difficult to give an answer. 17% do not feel safe. The following question specified if terrorism influenced this feeling of safety. The following answers were given: 35% found it difficult to give an answer, 33 % answered 'It is more likely that I do', 21% - 'It is more likely that I do not', 10 % - 'I am completely sure that I do', 1% - 'I am completely sure that I do not'. When analyzing these answers, we can note that more than 2/3 of students feel safe which shows their relative psychoemotional stability. This stability is relative because a person's psychoemotional state can be changed under the influence of other negative factors. For example, more than 43% of students confirmed that terrorism affects their feeling of safety.

The psychoemotional stability is also influenced by the general level of a person's anxiety, the degree of empathy development, mechanisms of identification of oneself with victims of terrorist acts. To determine the degree of influence of these factors, the students were asked the following questions: 'Do you sympathize with victims of a terrorist act?' and 'Do you fear that you or your relatives can become a victim of a terrorist act?' 81% fully sympathize with victims of a terrorist act, 14% chose the option 'It is more likely that I do', 1.2% found it difficult to give an answer; 2.44% chose the option 'It is more likely that I do not', 1.2% - 'I am completely sure that I do not'. Feeling sympathetic is a normal healthy reaction of the majority of respondents, nevertheless, a bit more than 3% of students do not sympathize with victims of a terrorist act. Such emotional behavior, on the one hand, helps people fence themselves off other people's grief, keeping their own psychoemotional state, and, on the other hand, can contribute to forming emotional callousness. 74% of respondents are afraid that they or their relatives will become victims of terrorist acts. A sense of apprehension generated in the society after terrorist acts have been committed is what terrorists count on. It sharply rises during the first days after a terrorist act has been committed, but then stabilizes a little. The data given show that more than a half of students are afraid for their life and for the life of their relatives as a result of a terrorist act. This sense of apprehension is related to unpredictability and situatedness of a terrorist act, uncertainty about where and when it is committed. Such mechanisms lead to the number of psychological victims exceeding the number of physical victims as a result of a terrorist act by many times. Nevertheless, according to our survey data, about 14% of respondents do not feel such anxiety. This can be explained by the fact that students, during their professional training to be teachers of health and safety basics, gain special knowledge about the rules of behavior in the face of terrorist act, or by the fact that focused attention to this problem gradually mitigates the feeling of danger.

The feeling of danger can also be influenced by 'social distance' (Kulakov, 2009) which means, in our study,

geographic remoteness of a respondent from the place where a terrorist act is committed. The respondents were asked if they felt emotional anxiety when they become aware of the terrorist act committed on the territory of the Russian Federation or in any place in the world besides the Russian Federation. The data obtained show that 42% of respondents always feel anxious if the terrorist act has been committed on the territory of the Russian Federation, and only 23% always feel so anxious if the terrorist act has been committed in the any other place in the world besides the Russian Federation. 48% are more likely to feel anxious in the first case and 53% - on the second case. These data confirm that the feeling of anxiety about the terrorist act committed is influenced by geographic remoteness from the place where it is committed, and this influence is in direct proportional relationship.

When answering the question, 'Does terrorism make you feel negative about it?', 92 % gave a positive answer, 2% found it difficult to give an answer and 6% marked the option 'It is more likely that it does not'. The survey results show that the vast majority of students have a negative attitude to terrorism but we feel anxious about the insignificant group of young people who do not have a negative attitude to it and do not sympathize with victims of a terrorist act. It is these young people that can be targeted by extremist groups as potential new members of these groups.

4. Conclusions

The results obtained show that the structure of students' social idea of terrorism is miscellaneous but almost everybody believes that the problem really exists and terrorism is dangerous for the society. The vast majority of respondents condemn terrorism and has a negative attitude to it. The most popular associations to a terrorist's portrait include cruelty, striving to feel power over people, commitment to a certain ideology. We determined the direct dependence of the feeling of emotional anxiety on geographical remoteness of the place where the terrorist act is committed. At the same time, the role of mass media in panic mongering is evaluated ambivalently, about 30% of respondents consider that 'it is more likely' that such influence does not exist. However, there is a small part of respondents who believe that terrorists can be justified if they act with good intentions, and terrorists strive for a better world. Such groups are not very numerous but the fact of their existence must be an alarm signal for the society.

Terrorism prevention is a component of the state policy in the field of counter-terrorism that affects political, social, mental, cultural and other spheres. It is necessary to create an integral system of prevention including, among other things, pedagogical foundations of terrorism prevention. During the training process it is reasonable to contribute to condemnation of terrorism, emotional antagonism to all types of terrorist activities, awareness of methods of recruitment in terrorist organizations and ways to counter them, formation of emotional stability and inner assurance of unlawfulness of methods used by terrorists to achieve their goals as well as formation of stable antagonism to extremist behavior with informed determination of the personality attitude of a future teacher of health and safety basics.

Terrorism as a global problem requires continued attention and investigation and thus represents a broad field for studies with their further practical application.

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