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Management of Ethno-Domestic Conflicts in the Republic of Tatarstan

Gestión de conflictos etno-domésticos en la República de Tatarstán

REZEDA GILMUTDINOVA MAKHMUTOVA

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3429-9800>
garezeda@yandex.ru
Kazan Federal University. Russia

NATALIA ALEKSANDROVNA SHIBANOVA

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9404-6821>
naticur@mail.ru
Kazan Federal University. Russia

VICTORIA ALESKSANDROVNA PAVLOVA

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3517-3684>
vichka_belova@mail.ru
Kazan Federal University. Russia

ELLINA VIKTOROVNA SHUSTOVA

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5886-2824>
leite@mail.ru
Kazan Federal University. Russia

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ABSTRACT

The objective of the study is to identify technologies for managing conflicts that occur on ethno-domestic background in the Republic of Tatarstan, to define the stabilization potential of interethnic relations management subjects. This research is interdisciplinary; as a methodology for the study of social interaction between parties to ethno-domestic conflicts, the structural-functional and sociocultural approaches, as well as the theory of social conflict were used. Timely management of ethno-domestic conflicts establishes counteraction to ideological, national, religious hostility against any ethnic, religious or social group and creates a safe environment in local communities.

Keywords: Communications, conflict management, ethnicity, management, monitoring.

RESUMEN

El objetivo del estudio es identificar tecnologías para la gestión de conflictos que ocurren en el contexto étnico-doméstico en la República de Tatarstán, para definir el potencial de estabilización de los sujetos de gestión de relaciones interétnicas. Esta investigación es interdisciplinaria; como metodología para el estudio de la interacción social entre las partes de los conflictos étnico-domésticos, se utilizaron los enfoques estructural-funcional y sociocultural, así como la teoría del conflicto social. La gestión oportuna de los conflictos étnico-domésticos contrarresta la hostilidad ideológica, nacional o religiosa contra cualquier grupo étnico, religioso o social y crea un entorno seguro en las comunidades locales.

Palabras clave: Comunicaciones, etnia, manejo de conflictos, manejo, monitoreo.

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INTRODUCTION

Conflict management of ethnic relations is a new phenomenon in the managerial practice of Russian constituent regions and it assumes that decision-makers have competencies to intervene into an ethno-domestic conflict in order to transform it.

The conflict analysis carried out in this research reveals the potential of ethno-domestic conflict in strengthening social stability in a constituent region. The analysis of the ways the authorities respond to signals from the population, identification of forms of interference into problematic communication between representatives of peoples living in the Republic of Tatarstan and other people interested in preserving the cultural diversity, will allow to develop a model for constructive resolution of contradictions that inevitably arise in multi-ethnic communities.

Developing measures to manage ethnic conflicts in the Republic of Tatarstan allows to assess the quality of managerial decisions related to harmonization of ethnic and regional identities of residents of the Republic of Tatarstan (Yusupova: 2018, pp.345-360).

The first step in managing a conflict is to use an early detection of situations that threaten ethnic harmony. This detection provides means for revealing the factors that generate the ideology of intolerance and hostility. Conflictological inspection and conflict mapping makes it possible to work with topical issues, that arise in ethnic communities producing the ideology of hatred (Stavenhagen:2016; Handique et al.: 2018, pp.167-176).

The identification of hidden contradictions, the adoption of priority measures to prevent possible conflict situations and communicative barriers is aimed at preventing misunderstanding between parties to ethno-domestic conflicts. Thus, early response to interethnic tension, receiving information about conflicts and immediate response to pre-conflict situations, conducting sociological studies that determine the condition and trends in national relations, can significantly reduce national hostility (Isajiw: 2000, pp.105-124; Cordell&Wolff: 2009; Desrosiers: 2018, pp.580-607; Richards: 2019).

Coordination of government authorities of different levels on prompt settlement of possibly conflict situations in interethnic relations should be a priority to reduce social tension in local communities.

The arrangement of training the representatives of local authorities on the mediation of ethno-political conflicts, the development of skills for non-violent resolution of ethno-domestic, religious, cultural and historical conflicts would form a culture of conflict in small and large communities. Comprehensive on-site consideration of the situation that could lead to social tension and conflict, arranging meetings with leaders of ethno-cultural associations, with unofficial leaders of national organizations in authority, academic and cultural figures on conflict situations emerging will prevent the distortion of coverage of a conflict situation and will allow to distinguish between explicit, implicit and false conflict (Esman&Telhami: 2019).

Monitoring of interethnic tension makes it possible to keep track of distrust, tension, conflicts, disputes between ethnic communities occurring. It will ensure the development of conflict markers between local and arriving communities, creating a methodology for working with anxiety, discontent, fear, social distance, ethnic intolerance, causes of a destructive emotional response to foreign ethnic environment (Sharma et al.: 2017, pp.1-7; Laurent-Lucchetti et al.: 2019).

The final stage in the management of ethno-domestic conflicts is the post-conflict settlement and relieving the consequences of an interethnic conflict. Post-conflict syndrome display and the formation of a new standard indicate a partial or complete normalization of conflict relations between representatives of various ethnic communities. Theoretical understanding of the characteristics of conflict management in the ethnic sphere will help to create a model for the response of the authorities and society to destructive manifestations in the sphere of national relations.

METHODOLOGY

This research is of interdisciplinary nature and covers the scientific problems of ethno-political studies, conflict studies, sociology, ethnology, cultural studies and psychology. To analyze the management strategies of the ethno-domestic conflict, the authors used the structural and functional approach, which allows to describe the functions and dysfunctions of social institutions that ensure the harmonization of interethnic relations. In order to study the influence of ethnic and civil identity on the ability to manage ethnic conflicts, the authors took a sociocultural approach that provides means for describing factors causing ethnic hostility, intolerance, and ethnic stereotypes.

To study the factors of the emergence of ethno-domestic conflicts, the theory of social conflict was used, which allowed to consider the conflict as an inevitable and necessary phenomenon, and its absence as an abnormality. This approach made it possible to identify the positions and needs of the parties to the conflict, contributing to the coordination of their interests, the resolution of emerging problems, which reflects the logic of managing ethnic conflicts.

The empirical basis of the research includes publications of information analysis agencies on ethno-domestic conflicts. Secondary data and regulatory documents of government bodies implementing the national policy in the Republic were used in the study.

RESULTS

Management of ethnic conflict involves localization of the conflict, limitation of its social base and negotiations arrangement. When considering conflict resolution technologies, information, communication (Coleman&Lowe: 2007, pp.377-412), socio-psychological (Vamık: 2020) and organizational technologies (Rothchild: 2008, pp.246-263) are distinguished. Special attention of the authorities was drawn to the problem of managing ethnic conflicts in Russian constituent regions after the events in Pugachevo in 2013. In the same year, the President V. V. Putin signed a law according to which the leaders of constituent regions and municipalities were to be released from their positions in case of interethnic conflicts happening. This law is an example of the use of structural technology for managing ethnic conflicts, involving working with systemic factors that cause ethnic intolerance, the emergence of new socio-economic triggers that threaten social development, leading to tensions and conflicts in ethnic communities depending on location and regional peculiarities.

The principles of influence on ethnic conflict through analysis of causes, indicators of interethnic tension (Vankhanen: 2014), settlement technologies are represented in the works of ethnologists (Tishkov: 2018), conflict scientists (Shapiro: 2016), political scientists (Pain: 2015, pp.300-320). The generalization of the innovative experience of its management (Zartman: 2008, pp.322-339) will allow for the development of alternative ways of resolving ethnic conflicts, with a "win-win" position in the conditions of centuries-old experience of interaction between ethnic communities, as well as taking into account the influence of systemic factors on the transformation of ethnic consciousness.

An important fundamental task of harmonizing national relations is to define theoretical and methodological approaches to ethnic conflicts management. The development of explanatory models of intervention into the process of ethnic conflicts management (Bloomfield et al.: 2003), capable of substantiating different forms of intervention into conflict interaction, taking into account the type of ethnic hyperidentity (ethno-egoism, ethno-isolationism), the intensity of tension and harassment, negativity in communication with representatives of other ethnic groups will help to make the most appropriate managerial decisions.

The study of the experience of conflict interaction that occurred on ethno-domestic background in the Republic of Tatarstan is possible to conduct by analyzing a case that allows to reconstruct the dynamics of

the conflict at the stage of its management, identifying the technologies used – intrapersonal, structural, interpersonal negotiations, aggressive responses. Content-analysis of media publications upon the request of “interethnic conflicts in Tatarstan” makes it possible to argue that local residents, being a party to the ethno-domestic conflict, mainly use aggressive response methods. Heads of municipal areas and constituent regions tend to use structural methods of influence directly on the party to the conflict, changing the relations structure, explaining their rights, duties, official instructions, etc.

The most frequently reported cases of conflict were conflicts that occurred between migrants and local residents in Nurlat and the village of Kurmanayevo. In Nurlat, conflict management was carried out by law enforcement agencies using the interpersonal method of conflict management – by breaking up a group of aggressive drunk young people with a warning shot in the air, whereas representatives of the diaspora acted as mediators. It is worth reminding that interpersonal technologies involve coercion, compromise, cooperation, problem solving (Rothman&Alberstein: 2013, pp.631-658). In the conflict in Kurmanayevo of the Nurlat region, local residents held talks with their counterparts, having involved the head of the region, who used the structural method and initiated a proposal to legally limit the compact settlement of migrants in the region. In his opinion, this decision would help reduce the likelihood of recurrence of the conflict in the region and in the Republic of Tatarstan in general. Local residents used interpersonal management technologies, forcing migrants to leave the village.

DISCUSSION

Ethno-domestic conflicts are managed through monitoring interethnic relations. The monitoring system has been developed in the Republic. It includes conducting sociological research, identifying conflict situations by law enforcement agencies, collecting information gained from communication with public, religious and national organizations, monitoring citizens` appeals through the “People`s Control” system, emergency phone numbers, monitoring the information space (media, social networks), conducting surveys through public opinion research centers. Sociological research is being carried out in the Republic, aimed at identifying the opinions of residents on the possibility of conflicts on a national background, which allows managerial decisions to be taken on time to prevent or resolve conflicts of this type. From 2016 to 2018, 11 studies of this kind were conducted.

In addition, the Plan for the implementation in 2019-2021 the Strategy of the State National Policy of the Russian Federation for the period until 2025 concerning the Republic of Tatarstan finalizes non-discrimination on the basis of nationality, language, attitude to religion, which indicates the extension of tools for assessing interethnic tension. This document defines the idea of the need to monitor citizens` appeals regarding violations of the principle of equality when getting enrolled for the state and municipal services, law enforcement agencies, the judicial system, and the formation of an employee pool.

Another marker of dealing with conflict is the proposal (included into the Plan) for holding public hearings, meetings, round tables, research-to-practice conferences on combating xenophobia and strengthening interethnic harmony in society. Monitoring of the implementation of state programs and sub-programs in terms of national relations conducted in the Republic can also be a marker of ethnic solidarity, the formation of all-Russian identity.

The authorities form criteria for monitoring the level of conflict of interethnic relations. Dismantlement of ethnic stereotypes, formation of positive interethnic communication is achieved with the help of state programs aimed at stabilizing interethnic relations.

The analysis of news feeds, work plans, legal framework, of informational, analytical and methodological materials posted on the official websites of authorities implementing the national policy in the Republic of Tatarstan, allows for the conclusion on consistent work to increase the competencies of subjects of influence

on potential parties to ethno-domestic conflicts – leaders of public associations, media representatives, heads of rural settlements.

CONCLUSION

Developing of a monitoring system for early warning of conflicts in the interethnic sphere at regional and municipal levels helps to prevent conflicts in a multi-ethnic society. The issues of methodological, expert, staff assistance for the implementation of state national policy are given enough attention in the Republic of Tatarstan, which helps to reduce the risks of xenophobia, intolerance, and ethnic conflicts.

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BIODATA

S.N ALEKSANDROVNA: Associate professor at Kazan Federal University, candidate of philosophical sciences. In 2002 she graduated from Ivanovo State University, the sociological and psychological faculty, with a degree in sociology of politics (with honors). In 2006 she defended her PhD thesis on social and philosophical analysis of collective identity. Since 2013 she has been actively studying problems of analysis and conflict resolution in small and large communities.

M.RGILMUTDINOVNA: Associate professor at Kazan Federal University, candidate of historical sciences. In 2005 she graduated from Elabuga State Pedagogical University, the faculty of history and philology, with a degree in history (with honors), social care teacher. In 2009 she defended her PhD thesis on government regulation of culture. Since 2012 she has been studying conflicts in the ethno-confessional sphere.

P.VALESKSANDROVNA: Assistant to a department at Kazan Federal University. In 2016 she graduated from Kazan Federal University, socio-political department, with a degree in conflict studies (with honors). In 2016 she got her Master's degree in corporate conflict management. Since 2016 she has been engaged in reconciliation and mediation issues in educational organizations.

S.E VIKTOROVNA: Senior lecturer at Kazan Federal University, candidate of philological sciences. In 2008 she graduated from Kazan State University, department of philology, with a degree in philology and language and literature teaching. In 2017 she defended her PhD thesis on derivatives in fantasy genre. Since 2009 she has been studying language processes in contemporary cultural discourse.