

# Formation of Ideological Security of Minors in the Russian Federation: Counteraction to Extremism

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## ABSTRACT

Minors, being active users of advanced communication technologies and joining various virtual communities or communicating with remote users, face numerous threats and risks. One of these threats is propaganda spread by terrorists and violent extremists. Minors who do not have sufficient level of knowledge and skills are not able to objectively assess destructive information, and involvement in such communities leads to the devaluation of moral and ethical foundations, loss of family values, and destruction of personality. After that, they are easily involved in extremist activities. In this regard, state policy plays an important role in addressing issues of ideological confrontation with extremist organizations and propaganda they spread. In this study, the authors assume that the creation of an effective system of ideological security will neutralize the spread of radical extremism ideas among minors, and contribute to prevention and overcoming of this negative phenomenon. The main purpose of the study is to investigate the key directions of the formation of ideological security of minors in the Russian Federation. The study showed that the Strategy of Ideological Security should include cultural and social-communication technologies for the formation of internal stability of the individual, family, nation, society, the creation of the ideological environment safe from political, national, religious extremism that provokes violence in various forms, including terrorism. The results obtained in the study will provide a comprehensive approach to the solution of the problem of effective counteraction to the spread of extremist manifestations among the youth in the Russian Federation. The efforts of the nationwide Strategy of Ideological Security should be aimed at combating the ideological principles of extremism.

**Keywords:** *minors, ideological security, religion, education, extremism*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Extremist and terrorist organizations propagating the ideology of violence target a wide audience. Such propaganda is most dangerous for minors. This is due to the fact that minors, firstly, due to insufficient knowledge, life and professional experience, cannot adequately assess the information provided, secondly, they are prone to aggressive extremist actions, and thirdly, they are the most socially unprotected group of the population. These and other factors contribute to the distortion of the ideas of minors about spiritual and moral values, about public and state institutions, and then to their involvement in criminal activities.

In this regard, the state policy aimed at resolving issues of ideological confrontation with extremist organizations plays a crucial role. Creation of an effective system of ideological security, the purpose of which is to neutralize, prevent and eradicate radical extremism among the younger generation is a priority task of the state.

Such a system should be based on social and communication technologies for the formation of the internal stability of the individual, family, nation, society, the creation of an ideological environment, safe from political, national, religious extremism that provokes

various forms of violence, including terrorism. The system of ideological security should be based on the universal civic values of human rights, culture of peace, humanism, and tolerance.

Neutralization, prevention and eradication of radical extremism is possible through the formation of the nationwide Strategy of Ideological Security based on cultural and social-communication technologies.

The problems of the formation of the ideological security of minors are relevant and are considered by scientists all over the world. The works by O'Mahony C. *Constitutional Protection of Children's Rights: Visibility, Agency and Enforceability* [1] and by Leviner P. *Human Rights in Child Protection – Implications for Professional Practice and Policy* [2] focus on the role of the state in creating conditions for the safe existence and development of the younger generation, including issues of education and upbringing.

The problems of the formation of minors' world-view and their legal support are raised in the works by Schweitzer F. *Children's Right to Religion in Educational Perspective* [3], Hemming PJ. *No offence to God but I don't believe in Him: religion, schooling and children's rights* [4]. The authors, analyzing the legislation of Great Britain, note that the role of religion and religious education in the process of

education of children have been poorly studied in modern scientific literature.

The problems of religious education in terms of international law are considered by Taylor R. in the work *The Child's Right to Religion in International Law* [5] and by Schweitzer F. in *The Child's Right to Religion. Religious Education as a Human Right?* [6].

N. Ali and B. Whitham in *The unbearable anxiety of being: Ideological fantasies of British Muslims beyond the politics of security* [7] investigate Slavoj Žižek's theory of ideology as the basis for countering extremism and terrorism among the Muslim youth of Great Britain.

Liu Zhongzhen in his work *The Influence and Countermeasures of the Social Ideological Trend on the Campus Security and Stability from the Adolescent Perspective* [8] notes that extremist organizations in China employ ideological attitudes to affect the minds of minors and instill the ideas of violent overthrow of the state system. Liu Zhongzhen believes that the negative impact of certain social concepts on the world-view of minors affects the security and stability of society. The author proposes to maintain social stability through the formation of a socialist value system among minors. Liu Zhongzhen's opinion is supported by Wang Suling in his work *On the Self-consciousness of Cultural Security of Ideological and Political Education in College* [9].

A number of Russian scientists also investigate the safety of minors in the light of extremist and terrorist threats. Thus, L.A. Buraeva notes that extremist organizations influence minors with the aim of recruiting them [10].

E.I. Deshina and A.N. Merkulova in their work *Youth as a social and demographic group most vulnerable to the influence of extremism and terrorism on the Internet* [11] note the need to form modern technologies for ensuring national information security that can resist the popularization of the ideas of extremism and terrorism among the youth. O.V. Nardin agrees with the opinion of E.I. Deshina and A.N. Merkulova; however, she considers their approach to the problem of countering the spread of extremism and terrorism narrow [12]. It is necessary to work not only in the information sphere, but more importantly in the cultural and ideological sphere.

## 2. METHODS AND MATERIALS

The methodological basis of the study was the dialectical-materialist method and main general methodological principles and methods of cognizing social reality. The study addresses the problem of forming the Strategy of Ideological Security and analyzes various methodological approaches to its resolution. In order to form the conceptual and methodological foundations of the study, the concepts of ideological security were analyzed. The use of systemic and structural-functional methods enabled considering the tendencies and prospects for the formation of the Strategy of Ideological Security of minors in the national security system of the Russian Federation.

The study employed the principles of the systematic approach, dialectical interdependence, behaviorism and

political hermeneutics. The theoretical and methodological basis of the study is the synthesis of the general theory of security and modern theories of the analysis of social phenomena.

To solve the problem posed, a complex of mutually complementary scientific methods was used in the study. These were systemic and socio-cultural analysis; structural and functional method; analysis of documents and sources; interdisciplinary analysis.

The method and the systematic formation of the foundations of the study contributed to the formation of the structure and logic of the work so that the theoretical results obtained have an output character. This allows verification of both the methodology used and the scientific results obtained.

## 3. FORMATION OF THE IDEOLOGICAL SECURITY STRATEGY IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

### 3.1. The main directions of the Strategy of Ideological Security of minors

Solution of the problems of ideological confrontation is important for the development of measures for the prevention of extremism. It can be stated that in modern Russia the spread of sectarianism, separatist and nationalist ideas, the substitution of cultural values and many other destructive processes affecting the escalation of extremism are due to a crisis of spiritual life, which causes degradation of both social institutions and the individual.

The state should focus on this problem and develop the Strategy of Ideological Security to unite the country's population regardless of age, national, social, and political affiliation. The entire cultural potential of the Russian Federation must be used to develop the strategy, since the development of the ideological sphere is the dominant area of cultural activity. The formation of ideological and moral immunity from violence is the main goal in countering extremism.

The purpose of this Strategy is to neutralize, prevent and eradicate violent extremism.

The Strategy should be based on universal civic values of human rights, culture of peace, humanism, tolerance, and as a result, it should contribute to creating conditions for the formation of a personality with high moral and moral qualities, with a stable system of internal self-control and consciences.

The Strategy should employ cultural and social-communication technologies for the formation of the internal stability of the individual, family, nation, society, the creation of an ideological environment, safe from political, national, religious extremism that provokes violence in various forms, including terrorism.

Moreover, cultural technologies should come to the fore, since all the best moral commandments of generations, the great ideas of Russian enlightenment, charity, mercy, spiritual nobility, and respect for their national traditions are

transmitted through culture. As an all-encompassing system, culture is woven into the daily life of society and thus provides, organizes and regulates its life. It is culture that gives a person inner freedom and responsibility towards himself, society and the whole world.

Culture has a lot of manifestations: religion, education, upbringing, art, science, mass media, law, sports, etc. All of them play a significant role in the prevention of an extremist mentality. However, the most significant, in our opinion, are religion, upbringing, education.

### **3.2. Religious education of minors as a condition for the formation of ideological security**

One of the dominant cultural components is religion. Archbishop Celestino Migliore, who took part in a meeting of the UN General Assembly dedicated to strategies for combating terrorism, said: 'With the correct understanding of the true role of religion, it can become part of the solution to the problem of combating terrorism' [13].

Almost all religious associations call for peace, which is confirmed, in particular, by their latest documents, including: Fundamentals of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church, Fundamentals of the Social Program of Russian Muslims, Fundamentals of the Social Concept of Judaism in Russia and the Social Position of Protestant Churches in Russia.

The Fundamentals of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church – the church of the majority of the Russian religious – quotes the 'golden rule' formulated in the Gospel of Matthew: 'So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them' [Matthew 7:12]. The Fundamentals also states that 'propaganda of violence, enmity and hatred, national, social and religious hatred, as well as the sinful exploitation of human instincts, including for commercial purposes, are unacceptable.'

But are these rules always implemented in practice? Due to purposeful propaganda in the mass consciousness of Russians, terrorism is unambiguously associated with Islam. Islamic fundamentalist ideology in its extreme, extremist manifestations has been widely used as an effective means of softening the statehood of the Russian Federation.

It should be noted that it is not about one of the world's religions, but about those manifestations that make it possible to carry out subversive activities hostile to Russia, create, expand centers of separatism, inspire interethnic hostility, sectarian strife, armed clashes, and reproduce extremism, violence and terrorism under the cover of Islamic dogmas.

No doubt, a sharp increase in violence and terrorism is associated with a wide range of economic, political, social and other problems. Most often, specific 'customers' stand behind terrorists and derive material and political benefits from human grief. However, it would be an unforgivable mistake to ignore the religious factor, which is inextricably

linked with the history of all peoples, including their most tragic episodes. Therefore, the state should:

- carry out explanatory work among the population about the speculative nature of the terrorists' religious justification, since all classical religions reject violence;
- suppress the activity of non-traditional religious organizations and sects that preach violence;
- develop programs in order to organize constructive interaction of various religious confessions and widely cover their activities aimed at achieving interethnic and interreligious harmony and tolerance [14].

### **3.3. Education as a social institution that provides the foundations of ideological security**

In the fight against terrorism, culture reveals one of its principal essences – education. Education is the most important social institution that ensures transmission of culture from generation to generation, preserves and reproduces cultural values.

D.I. Supaat in his work *Linking women empowerment and children's right to education and the quest to reduce vulnerabilities* [14] argues that despite the fact that children's right to education is the basis for exercising many other human rights, its implementation can be significantly limited. Insufficient level of education and vocational skills make young people easy prey for extremist and terrorist groups.

Therefore, the education-related problems require close attention from the state. During reforming, secondary and vocational education is of special significance, since it is meant to teach tolerance and provide knowledge and work skills that are necessary to successfully compete in the labor market in the economy of the 21st century. This feature is highlighted in the study *Children's Rights to Education - Where is the Weight for Children's Views?* [15].

Therefore, to provide preventive measures within the field of education, it is necessary:

- to activate the educational work of educational institutions, which should be aimed at developing an all-Russian national civic and cultural identity of children and youth on the basis of historical and cultural continuity. It is about strengthening the spiritual, moral, cultural unity of our society, fostering Russian citizenship, patriotism, historical consciousness, love for the Motherland;
- to master the values of the traditional culture of the peoples of Russia in the educational system, including ethnic and confessional values, to ensure formation of an individual cultural, ethnic, confessional identity. However, these values should not be placed at the service of separatism, ethnocentrism, confessional isolation and intolerance. And it is the state and its well-thought-out policy that can provide this identity. If the state does everything possible to ensure the rights of citizens to their cultural identity, it will receive the moral right to punish those who strive for special privileges and do not recognize the same legal rights of fellow citizens;

- to foster in the younger generation respect for the historical, cultural traditions of the peoples of Russia, historical memory, the norms of generally accepted morality, human rights and freedoms, real values. These are civil and religious values common to all Russians (memory of the defenders of the Motherland in the Patriotic War and other wars, respect for veterans, outstanding achievements of our people in spiritual, material culture, science, etc.);
- to ensure transparency and openness of confessional educational systems in terms of professional religious education. The internal confessional educational standards are required along with non-interference of the state in the training of priests in accordance with current legislation. Measures are needed to integrate the educational systems of Russian confessions into the Russian educational system. The society should be aware of these systems, which are meant to be open but not self-contained.
- to strengthen the humanitarian principles in the educational environment, which implies: teaching the social sciences, primarily history, in educational institutions to place emphasis not only on the whole set of facts but also on moral ideological values as criteria for progress; formation and implementation of a language policy that provides conditions for development and functioning of native languages and strengthens the role of the Russian language as a coordinator and organizer of the cultural space of Eurasia, a mediator in its ties with the world [14]. In order to have a positive impact and be perceived in the educational system, this work should be based on current historical and cultural traditions, spiritual and moral values of the peoples of Russia, the priority of law. In this case, the resource of education, as a social institution, will be most effectively directed at the consistent prevention and countering of terrorism.

### ***3.4. Educational work as an integral part of formation of ideological security of minors***

Educational work is closely related to religious and educational components in the fight against terrorism. The educational component should be based on universal human values, ideas of non-violence and harmony, wealth and complementarity of cultures. The conviction in the dissemination and upholding of these principles are educational values that oppose extremist ideology.

When solving such serious problems as extremism, education of young people must be a priority, since rising generation is a natural condition for the existence of the human community. Komissarova E. G. and Krasnova T.V. in their work *Child's right to family education: regulative dimension of the issue* [16] note that at present, due to the inadequate adaptation of the legal theory of family education to the study of traditional family values and positive parenting relationships, a separate scientific discipline related to the private law position of minors within the framework of the theory of family law needs to be created.

As part of educational measures, the state must:

- strengthen the forms and methods of propaganda among the population, clarify both the ideological delusions of the ideological foundations of extremism and the essence of anti-extremist ideas. Extremists justify their actions using distorted symbols of legitimacy, create legends about their righteousness, invulnerability and imminent victory. The task of social and cultural institutions is to reveal the cynicism of extremist and terrorist acts;
- carry out special work with young people most susceptible to criminal and terrorist impact, infection with the false ideology of terrorism;
- develop and implement measures to reduce the social base of terrorism through conducting information and political events, identifying and eliminating centers of ideological support and support for terrorist movements;
- create an effective educational system, which will cultivate in children, youth and adults such qualities that orient the individual towards active rejection and countering of terrorism, and exclude terrorism as a means of achieving any goal in civil society;
- promote active maintenance of the traditions of peacemaking and people's diplomacy, customs and traditions of world-neighborliness and mutual understanding by cultural figures, take an active part in the settlement and prevention of social, interethnic, inter- and intra-confessional conflicts in the regions;
- form in the minds of young people a high image of the Motherland, which evokes a sense of pride and a desire to contribute to the creation and prosperity of the country; educate in the public consciousness the image of a positive hero with a sense of his own dignity, realizing his personal responsibility to society and the Motherland;
- cultivate in the public consciousness the image of a healthy and full-fledged family through the media, since a person receives true spiritual and moral education only in the family. The prestige of families raising morally and physically healthy children must be high.
- promote the dissemination of research and achievements of domestic and foreign scientific thought in the field of philosophy, morality, pedagogy and other spheres of human consciousness both through the institutes of science and education, and through various media [14].

## **4. CONCLUSION**

Without a clear understanding of the current moral and psychological state of a society facing a spiritual and ideological crisis, any measures to counter extremism are ineffective.

All cultural and ideological contradictions are superimposed on political, socio-economic and other problems, and entail the degradation of the spiritual life of society; the destruction of historical, cultural, moral traditions and humanistic values; the establishment of the cult of individualism, egoism and violence; the formation of moods of national humiliation in society.

As a result, all these factors promote political extremism and weaken the ability of state authorities to effectively

resist it. Therefore, the cultural and ideological efforts of the national anti-terrorist system should be aimed at combating the ideological principles of extremism and terrorism.

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