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ANALYSIS OF THE LEVEL OF TOLERANCE AMONG STUDENTS IN GENERAL SECONDARY EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

The article examines the level of tolerance and empathy among students in general secondary education institutions as components of social-emotional competence. The study combines testing, observation, and training sessions conducted among students of different grades. The results show a generally high level of tolerance, with some differences depending on age and behavioral tendencies. The effectiveness of training as a practice-oriented method for developing social and communicative skills is confirmed. The findings highlight

the importance of socio-pedagogical support in fostering tolerant behavior and improving the classroom environment.

Keywords : *tolerance; empathy; students; social-emotional competence; training*

Relevance of the Study. The social and emotional competence of students in general secondary education institutions is crucial for fostering a safe, supportive, and constructive educational environment. Tolerance and empathy influence the nature of interpersonal relationships, the level of conflict, psychological safety, and the overall atmosphere within the classroom community. In contemporary educational practice, students' ability to engage in constructive interaction, demonstrate empathy, and exhibit tolerance is critical for reducing the risks of social isolation, bullying, and conflict situations. Consequently, diagnosing the level of development of these qualities in adolescents has significant practical and scientific value. Contemporary research emphasizes that social-emotional skills, including empathy, allow for the prediction of future social adaptation and positive interaction patterns in adulthood [1, 4, 5].

The issue of developing tolerance and empathy in schoolchildren has been actively studied by both domestic and international scholars [2, 3, 6]. N. Slobodyanyuk (2021) highlights the mechanisms for developing empathy in adolescents, I. Bidonko (2018) analyzes social tolerance among high school students as an indicator of social competence, and T. S. Kisil (2023) examines the relationship between interpersonal tolerance and a safe educational environment [2, 3, 6]. International studies [1, 4, 5] emphasize the influence of social risk, group norms, and prosocial tendencies on the formation of social-emotional competences during adolescence.

Presentation of the Main Material. To investigate the level of tolerance and empathy among students in general secondary education institutions, a comprehensive study was conducted, which included testing, observation, and practical training exercises. This approach allowed for the assessment of both quantitative and qualitative aspects of students' social-emotional competencies.

The diagnosis of tolerance and empathy was conducted directly at Cherkasy General Secondary School I–III No. 7 of the Cherkasy City Council, among students in grades 7, 8, and 11. The sample included 48 students from various classes: 7-A (12 students), 7-B (14 students), 8-B (11 students), and 11-G (11 students). The assessment employed testing aimed at identifying manifestations of tolerance in situations related to differences in appearance, behavior, and social status.

The test included a scale for evaluating specific social situations, where students were presented with short descriptive scenarios (e.g., observing aggressive behavior from a classmate or a conflict arising from cultural differences). Each response was rated on a five-point scale, where a higher score corresponded to more tolerant behavior and greater empathy.

Additionally, observation and short interviews were conducted following the testing to clarify the motives behind behavioral responses, providing qualitative information about the emotional, moral, and cognitive aspects of social behavior. Simultaneously, typical strategies of student interaction in groups were recorded: active assistance, avoidance, aggressive reaction, or passive observation. The results of the testing are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Comparative Characteristics of Students' Levels of Tolerance

Class	Number of Respondents	Average Score (1–5)	% with High Level	% with Low Level
7-A	12	4.17	70.24%	11.90%
7-B	14	4.41	75.5%	5.1%
8-B	11	4.12	64.94%	9.09%
11-G	11	4.11	64.47%	9.21%

The data analysis indicated that a high level of tolerance predominates across all classes. The highest indicators were recorded in class 7-B, which allows it to be classified among groups with the most developed tolerant attitudes. Class 7-A demonstrated a high level of tolerance (70.24%) and a low avoidance rate, indicating students' readiness for active social interaction. In classes 8-B and 11-G, high tolerance indicators were approximately 65%, while the avoidance rate was around 26%, which may reflect the influence of adolescents' age-related and socio-psychological characteristics, particularly heightened sensitivity to group norms and social evaluation [1–3].

To develop an active tolerant stance and empathic competencies, a training session titled “Tolerance and Empathy as the Key to Friendly Relationships” was conducted in grades 6-B and 6-A. The sessions lasted 45 minutes and combined person-centered, activity-based, and socio-pedagogical approaches. The training incorporated interactive exercises, role-playing games, group discussions, and emotional self-regulation techniques.

A comparative analysis of the pilot session results (6-B) and the main session (6-A) demonstrated that optimizing the organization of space, methodological support, and session structure enhanced students' activity levels, teamwork, and comprehension of the concepts of “empathy” and “tolerance.”

The role-playing game “Three Corners”, conducted with students of class 11-G, allowed for the assessment of moral maturity and ethical sensitivity, as well as the formation of a responsible observer role in conflict situations. Analysis of the game results revealed spontaneous protective behaviors toward victims, conscious rejection of the role of a bully, and the need for further development of nonviolent intervention skills.

Thus, the training functioned not only as a diagnostic tool but also as a practice-oriented method of socio-pedagogical influence, promoting the development of social-communicative competencies, active tolerant behavior, and civic responsibility among students.

Conclusions and Prospects for Further Research. The study revealed that most students demonstrate a high level of tolerance and empathy, indicating a favorable socio-psychological climate in classroom communities and the presence of basic social-emotional competencies. The most developed tolerant attitudes were observed in classes 7-B and 7-A, whereas students in classes 8-B and 11-G require targeted socio-pedagogical interventions to foster active tolerant behavior and reduce avoidance tendencies.

The practice-oriented methodologies used in the training “Tolerance and Empathy as the Key to Friendly Relationships” proved effective in shaping social-communicative competencies, moral maturity, and civic responsibility. The role-playing game “Three Corners” demonstrated that interactive forms of work allow for the identification and correction of students’ behavioral strategies in conflict situations, fostering ethical sensitivity and nonviolent intervention skills.

Further research should focus on: integrating digital technologies into training programs; evaluating the effectiveness of socio-pedagogical interventions among students of various age groups; and examining the long-term effects of formative work on the development of civic responsibility and active tolerance.

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