Citizenship, Tolerance and Humanism: Achievements and Safeguards — A Case of Young People's Interpretations of Being A Citizen of A Particular State, Lithuania

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Abstract: At the same time, the research on how a young generation interprets situation and what are their perspectives on achievements in the sphere of human rights, citizenship, humanisms of young people is utmost importance both for professionals in public security and in any other field, for educationalists in any sphere, and for the civilisation as we know it. The status achieved is a result of immense joint efforts of thousands of years, and therefore it deserves efforts to preserve, cherish and further develop. It is aimed in this paper both at analysing the concepts and the way they are interpreted by young people, also some the data of a study on the interpretations on perspectives of young people on concepts at focus, is presented. The following research question was formulated: In what way the young people interpret concept of citizenship, of being a citizen in a contemporary Lithuania.

Key words: citizenship, tolerance, culture, humanism, dimensions

1. Introduction

Humanism, tolerance and acceptance of different culture (including religion, other aspects, such as cuisine, marital traditions, etc) comprises a core characteristics of a contemporary ideas of what is to have a society of equal, supportive and mutually respectful individuals and groups. In this context the subjective, authentic experience of each individual becomes of an utmost importance, especially, if situation of a young person is analyzed. Young people live in the context analyzed and characterized above, as if it is a given state. They did not yet have opportunity to analyze it themselves. They have no knowledge (or have not yet internalized it) on the

history of humankind and the long way of thousand and hundreds of years it took to come to the state of things we have now. They take situation as it is, as if it is for granted. However, for those of us, working in the sphere of public security, it is obvious that the level achieved is a results of immense and long lasting efforts, the results of the process that suffered as many downturns as it enjoyed peaks. Therefore the need for a reflective, careful, respectful and responsible attention and safeguarding the situation is obvious to us. At the same time, the research on how a young generation interprets situation and what are their perspectives on achievements in the sphere of human rights, citizenship, humanisms of young people is utmost importance both for professionals in public security and in any other profession, and for the civilization as we know it. The status achieved is a result of immense joint efforts of thousands of years, and therefore it deserves efforts to preserve, cherish and further develop. It is **aimed** in this paper both at analyzing the concepts and the way they are interpreted by young people, also some the data of a study on the interpretations on perspectives of young people on concepts at focus, is presented. The following **research question** was formulated: In what way the young people interpret concept of citizenship, of being a citizen in a contemporary Lithuania. **Methods** of critical analysis of references and a quantitative survey were used for the development of the paper. The methodology and instrument for a survey were developed by an international team, led by Prof. Beata Krzywosz-Rynkiewicz. Data was processed using methods of **multiple regression** analysis. Due to the limitations of the paper, only a part of results is presented.

2. Citizenship, Tolerance and Humanism: Achievements and Safeguards

In 21st century we still identify ourselves and others as belonging to different socio-economic strata, and to different religions, and as speaking different languages. The very question what or who comes first: individual or the society is irrelevant, as we are as both the product of where we live, as we are producers of the living situation (Jarvis, 2001). The ideas of citizenship and humanism, responsibility to share and defend have least two and a half thousand years of recorded history, stemming from the Ancient Greece, and living through downturns and almost total oblivion to   appreciation and almost unanimous support. At least in the geographical area that is today known as the European Union and the parts of the world that have been under heavy influence of Anglo-Saxon diffusion, starting at modernity (17 century) (Jarvis, 2001).

On the other hand, a more explicit attention to Western humanism has an even shorter history. As Lévi-Straus put it; "no civilization can define itself if it does not have at its disposal some other civilizations for comparison" (Lévi-Strauss, 1976, p. 272). In other words, we know about ourselves as much and because we know others. It is interesting to note that Lévi-Strauss claims all cultures having experienced technological advancement or "progress", because only to a hedonistic contemporary eye the advancement is equalled to space shuttles. In a historical perspective, changes in building technologies, such as invention of bricks, is a major technological advancement, much more important that the ones quoted by a contemporary person. The cultural experience of a contemporary person just blinds him/her from acknowledgement of major accomplishments of earlier of other cultures. Western culture, author states, somehow proved to be less filtering than other cultures, that is, many of the advancements known and discovered in other cultures have been successfully integrated into Western culture, prompting its development: certainly technological, and artistic, and in some cases societal. The more Western "culture" accumulates, the more diversity is produced, and the more issues, phenomenon, aspects of living are labelled "culture-thing". Simply because they are not things we live. Culture clearly becomes "artificial", "made by man", as T. Parsons once put it bluntly: more and more so for a contemporary person's everyday experiences,

not just theoretical discourse (here from Butrime, Zuzeviciute, 2010).

Therefore humanism, tolerance and acceptance of different culture (including religion, other aspects, such as cuisine, marital traditions, etc) comprises a core characteristics of a contemporary ideas of what is to have a society of equal, supportive and mutually respectful individuals and groups (Jarvis, 2001; Zuzeviciute, Tereseviciene, 2009). Even if other arguments (Milner, Browitt, 2002) could be provided for the changes in the of living a life of a contemporary person, there is no doubt that discovery of other "cultures", and consequently, ever increasing diversity, together with the dominance of market economy, which, if not corrupted, proved itself to be most effective (but not inclusive and just) in generating wealth, had impact on our perception of who we are, where we are going, what we consider "worth" having or creating (Zuzeviciute, Tereseviciene, 2009). In this context the subjective, authentic experience of each individual becomes of an utmost importance, especially, if situation of a young person is analyzed. Young people live in the context analyzed and characterized above, as if it is a given state. They did not yet have opportunity to analyze it themselves. They have no knowledge (or have not yet internalized it) on the history of humankind and the long way of thousand and hundreds of years it took to come to the state of things we have now. They take situation as it is, as if it is for granted.

However, for those of us, working in the sphere of public security, it is obvious that the status quo achieved is a result of immense and long lasting efforts, a result of the process that suffered as many downturns as it enjoyed peaks. Therefore the need for a reflective, careful, respectful and responsible attention and safeguarding the situation is obvious to us. At the same time, the research on how a young generation interprets situation and what are their perspectives on achievements in the sphere of human rights, citizenship, humanisms of young people is utmost importance both for professionals in public security and or any other field, and for the civilization as we know it.

Therefore in this paper it aimed both at analyzing the concepts and the way they are interpreted by young people, also some the data of a study on the interpretations on perspectives of young people on concepts at focus, is presented.

3. Citizenship: The Concept and Its Interpretations

Authentic experience of the significance of each individual's own opinion is essential if the overarching aim is to have a society which appreciates rights and also develops citizens who are able to cherish and defend these rights (Foster et al., 2005; Ross, Zuzeviciute, 2011).

The birth of the concept and the very phenomenon of citizenship in the West, it is generally agreed, come from the Classical Greece. Greeks were profoundly concerned with establishment of order against chaos, as they were at frontier of establishing civilized: regulated and managed by reason world, as opposed to the world, which was regulated by unknown forces. This concern is reflected in their philosophy, literature and understanding of what social cohabitation is. As a social dimension, order for Greeks seems to be intimately related to citizenship. The most widely spread and acknowledged model of 'citizenship' seems to include the following factors: common law; appropriate and negotiated systems of governance, and norms and values of the community. Law, its flawless functioning, and norms/values are at focus in this model; therefore, those are several themes at least, which might be pursued in our paper in order to disclose the phenomenon of being a citizen and of acting as one. Legislation concerning equal rights and duties, as well as systems and prevailing norms seems to be an integral part of the concept of citizenship.

However, contemporary discussions on citizenship seem to be focused on the ***context*** of citizenship. If for an

ancient Greek "citizenship" meant order, security and relative freedom in a very specific, geographically, socially, and politically limited area, it is not the case today, or at least it is debatable. One of the main challenges that face contemporary European society is multiculturalism. On the one hand, European society has never been otherwise, as Durkheim noted (Durkheim, 1993), certain location in Europe in 13th century were examples of extreme multiculturalism. Paris university, established in 13th AD is one of such examples, since among students we could have found people from all over Europe and beyond. On the other hand, however, we can identify a major, in-depth difference between situations prior to modernity, and in 21st century. Earlier, locations where many cultures met, and interacted (most often — with extreme success) were even if numerous, than surely limited to certain places (for example, universities, courts of monarchs, monasteries). Today, however, the same applies to almost all clusters of society, geography of multicultural situation is universal, as is the level of impact to individual's, groups', and social institutions' (for example: system of education) lives (Durkheim, 1993; Field, 2003; Teresevičienė, Zuzevičiūtė, 2005).

Though citizenship, as notes, is a complex idea, which has its roots in antiquity, it acquired its contemporary significance during the 18-century revolutions and the Enlightenment movement (Jarvis, 2001; Field, 2003). The idea of "citizenship" also refers to conditions under which people participate in the wider community. Usually, and historically, the wider community is related to the entity — nation state. In a number of instances relating an individual to one's political/economic/social context by means of identification as a "citizen" of a certain entity, proved to be a powerful means of building those political/economic/social entities (Giddens, 1993). On the other hand, relating through "citizenship", was also corrupted in many instances. It seems, *citizenship* has lost its intrinsic, un-reflected relatedness to values. Duties and rights should be equally represented in the equation. If duties are overemphasized, individuals lose the ability to voice their authentic needs (Tereseviciene, Zuzeviciute, 2005). Even if historical importance of citizenship in the formation of national states cannot be overestimated, recent tendencies, referred to as postmodernism or late modernity, sometimes question the importance of national state for citizenship. It is widely argued that citizenship is being transformed, and possibly has lost its original meaning, under the impact of globalizing trends. Proponents of the idea note a shift of economic power particularly (Hargreaves, 1999). Even if there are clear signs that globalizing tendencies are weakening some roles of the nation state, there are also signs that nation states can regain their roles. One of the examples is formation of trans-national coalitions such as the EU. The coalition, sometimes referred to as supra-nation, assists in retaining and even strengthening capacities of national states. The majority of contemporary processes, such as migration, globalization or population growth, create new problems, including environmental pollution, health, conflict and poverty. Not all problems can be effectively solved through political regulation, and they require active civic attitudes and engagement (Nelson & Kerr, 2006). Thus the claim that the strength of globalizing tendencies has changed the terms of engagement, and that nation states are therefore in an extremely unstable and uncertain situation can be viewed with some reservation (Foster et al., 2005).

Therefore any culture should start and promote discussions in the field and also support citizenship education, because the status achieved is a result of immense joint efforts of thousands of years, and therefore it deserves efforts to preserve, cherish and further develop.

4. Participants of the Study

351 adolescents aged 10−18 years old participated in the study. These students attended Kaunas secondary

school and a gymnasium in one of the near- border towns. Participants' age mean was 13.8 years (SD = 2.2); 166 (47.3%) of them are male, 185 female. Almost three quarters of the participants live with both parents (N = 253, 72.1%), other live with either with single parent (N = 77, 21.9%) or one of the parents is dead (N = 19, 5.4%).

5. Methodology

We used 34 item young people citizenship activity questionnaire developed by co-authors of this article (Zalewska, Krzywosz-Rynkiewicz, 2011) to evaluate adolescents' citizenship activity. Active, semiactive and passive citizenship factors were estimated in this study. These citizenship behavior dimensions were inspired by Kennedy's concept (1997, 2006) and modified with regard to other classification of citizenship (Herbst, 2005) and civic activity (Theiss-Morse, 1993; Lewicka, 2004, 2005). 6 scales were used in this study: **Passive citizenship dimension** which represents national identity (appreciating symbols, myths and history) and patriotism (supporting your country, military service, loyalty). **Semi-active citizenship dimension** which represents loyalty (obeying the law and subordination to regulations, respect for the state) and citizen virtues, taking interest in public affairs and declared participation in elections. **Active citizenship consists on 4 subdimensions:** (1) **political activity** which represents declared participation in conventional political activity (e.g., being a member of a political party), (2) **social activity** is connected to participating in social movements and organizations working for the local society and in actions for building and maintaining local community (3) **action for the change** represents commitment to changing status quo (e.g., protests, street graffiti) and (4) **personal activity** represents responsibility for oneself and one's future, engagement in self-development. **Active citizenship dimension** represents active attitude towards citizenship and responsibility. Evaluation for this scale is the sum of 4 active citizenship dimensions. Coefficient of Cronbach's alpha is calculated to estimate the internal consistency for each scale. The results are following: passive citizenship dimension — 0.73, semiactive dimension — 0.58, active citizenship dimension — 0.68, active citizenship in political activity subdimension — 0.58, active participation in actions for change — 0.73, active citizenship and social activity subdimension — 0.65, active citizenship and personal activity subdimension — 0.50. Because of low internal consistency the last mentioned scale should be interpreted with caution.

6. Procedure of the Study

Participants were asked to answer questions of the *Active citizenship* questionnaire and answer questions concerning demographics. The questionnaires were anonymous. Parents granted permission for adolescents to participate in study. The SPSS 18.0 package was used for a statistical analysis of empirical data. Descriptive statistics was used to describe the variables. For the statistical analysis multiple linear regressions were run to evaluate which citizenship dimensions may predict each other for adolescent citizenship activity while controlling the sociodemographic characteristics. Three regression analyses were performed and every adolescent's citizenship activity dimension was regarded a dependent variable. Sociodemographic characteristics (participant's age, gender (0 = female), school he or she is attended type (0 = gymnasium) and parents family status (0 = lives with both parents)) were included in series 1 in the regression model in order to control them. Remaining citizenship activity dimensions and subdimensions were included in series 2 in the regression model as the main variables. Active citizenship dimension was included in the analysis only as dependent variable in the 3rd regression model, however active citizenship subdimensions were included in the analyses when evaluating

passive and semiactive citizenship activity predictions.

7. Results of the Empirical Study

Regression model for the Passive citizenship dimension. Results of multiple regression analysis revealed that sociodemographic characteristics alone explained only 8,8 percent of Passive citizenship intensity dispersion ($F_{(4, 346)}$ = 9,413, $p < 0.001$). Sociodemographic variables and other citizenship activity dimensions and sub-dimensions explained 26.2 percent of Passive citizenship dispersion ($F_{(9, 341)}$ = 14,802, $p < 0.001$). Regression coefficients and other statistics for regression model 2 (results for variables included in series 2 of multiple linear regression analysis) are presented in Table 1. According to results, younger participant's age, male gender, living with both parents, expressed adolescent's semi-active citizenship activity more and expressed political activity more (as related to higher intensity of adolescent's passive citizenship activity status). The strongest relationship is between passive and semi-active citizenship activity dimensions.

Table 1   Results of Regression Model Coefficients for Predicting Adolescent's Passive Citizenship Activity

	B	Stand. error	t statistics
Participant's age	**-0.113**	**0.090**	**-2.254***
Participant's gender	**0.202**	**0.386**	**4.127***
School type	-0.033	0.379	-0.676
Parents family status	**-0.140**	**0.456**	**-2.695****
Semi-active citizenship	**0.313**	**0,084**	**5.925***
Active citizenship: political activity	**0.168**	**0.113**	**3.277****
Active citizenship: actions for change	0.013	0.095	0.268
Active citizenship: social activity	0.061	0.042	1.138
Active citizenship: personal activity	0.079	0.097	1.661
Constant		2.791	4.730*

Coefficient in multiple linear regression model is significant at *$p < 0.001$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.05$ level.

Regression model for the Semi-active citizenship dimension. Regression coefficients presented in Table 2 and results of multiple linear regression analysis revealed that only about 3.6 percent of semi-active citizenship dimension dispersion ($F_{(4, 346)}$ = 4.308, $p = 0.002$) may be predicted by sociodemographic characteristics; while sociodemographic variables and other citizenship activity dimensions and subdimensions explained 29.9 percent of semi-active citizenship dispersion ($F_{(9, 341)}$ = 17.581, $p < 0.001$). Regression coefficients and other statistics for regression second model (results for variables included in series 2 of multiple linear regression analysis) are presented in Table 2.

According to results, female gender, attendance of school in a big city (secondary school), expressed adolescent's passive citizenship activity more and political, social, personal activity and less dominated actions for change are related to higher intensity of adolescent's semi-active citizenship activity status. The strongest relationship is between semi-active and passive citizenship activity dimensions.

Table 2   Results of Regression Model Coefficients for Predicting Adolescent's Semi-Active Citizenship Activity

	β	Stand. error	t statistics
Participant's age	0.023	0.056	0.459
Participant's gender	**-0.117**	**0.240**	**-2.417***
School type	**0.119**	**0.230**	**2.554***
Parents family status	0.002	0.256	0.045
Passive citizenship	**0.298**	**0.032**	**5.925***
Active citizenship: political activity	**0.170**	**0.069**	**3.406****
Active citizenship: actions for change	**-0.175**	**0.057**	**-3.715***
Active citizenship: social activity	**0.237**	**0.025**	**4.647***
Active citizenship: personal activity	**0.132**	**0.059**	**2.865****
Constant		1.729	3.655*

Coefficient in multiple linear regression model is significant at *p < 0.001, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.05 level.

Regression model for the Active citizenship dimension. According to results and regression coefficients presented in Table 3, about 6,7 percent of Active citizenship dimension dispersion (F(4, 346) = 7.323, p < 0.001) may be predicted by sociodemographic characteristics, and only 16,9 percent of Active citizenship activity dispersion may be predicted by sociodemographic variables and passive, semi-active citizenship activity dimensions (F(6,344) = 12.864, p < 0.001). According to results, the younger is participant's age and gender (female) and more expressed by adolescent's passive and semi-passive citizenship activity. They are related to higher intensity of adolescent's active citizenship activity status. It seems that the strongest relationship is between active and semi-active citizenship activity.

Table 3   Results of Regression Model Coefficients for Predicting Adolescent's Active Citizenship Activity

	β	Stand. error	t statistics
Participant's age	**-,133**	**,164**	**-2,585****
Participant's gender	**-,151**	**,709**	**-2,955****
School type	-,046	,702	-,910
Parents family status	-,050	,777	-,997
Passive citizenship	**,160**	**,099**	**2,850****
Semi-active citizenship	**,237**	**,153**	**4,345***
Constant		4,326	11,059*

Coefficient in multiple linear regression model is significant at *p < 0.001, **p < 0.01 level.

To summarize the results of the study, passive, semi-active and active adolescent's citizenship activity are positively related to all dimensions of citizenship activity, with exception of adolescent's actions for change in society — the last mentioned subdimension is negatively related to semi-active type of citizenship activity or

unrelated to any dimension of citizenship activity. Participant's age (younger) predicts both passive and active citizenship activity. Adolescent boys more actively participate in passive types of citizenship activity, and adolescent girls more intensively participate in active forms of citizenship activity.

8. Conclusions and Discussions

The empiric study seems to suggest that young people interpret themselves being citizen in a very personal and intimate way. The same trends are found out in other European countries (Krzywosz-Rynkiewicz, Zalewska, Ross, 2010). Young people do seem to be interested in the benefits that a contemporary society has to offer them (especially, boys) rather than in actively joining the acivities for the citizenship (however, girls to some extent do demonstrate some willingnness to contribute to joint aspirations). There is observe a deficit of participation — action for social comunity, change and readiness to act in politics. On the other hand, the age of participants may explain the profile of the resulst to a significant extent as adolescent girls and boys do yet have to locate themselves in the world and society. However we must to be aware that young people, their attitudes and activity levels will determine the quality of human resources and social development in the future. Meanwhile, research studies point to a steady decline in young people's involvement in public affairs (Eurobarometer, 2013). Passive youths are hardly likely to become active citizens in adulthood.

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