

## ANTI-CORRUPTION UNIVERSITY EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT: POTENTIAL AND PROSPECTS (A CASE OF MORDOVIAN STATE PEDAGOGICAL UNIVERSITY)

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**Abstract:** This paper focuses on developing the moral backbone of young people in the modern emotionally intelligent educational environment in order to improve the prevention of corruption. It is proposed to use the experience of the implemented project Development of a Scientific and Methodological Package for Anti-Corruption Education and Integrity Promotion among Youth. The urgency of this paper is high as development of anti-corruption standards of conduct in the educational environment, including higher education, is a national priority of the Russian Federation. The paper analyzes the activities of the Student Anti-Corruption Movement of the Mordovian State Pedagogical University aimed at fostering the standards of anti-corruption conduct among the young generation. The need for action has been dictated by the current scope of corruption leading to the appalling imbalances in the system of state institutions and relationships.

**Keywords:** educational environment, corruption, emotional intelligence, standard of anti-corruption conduct, volunteering, students.

### 1 Introduction

Corruption as an ancient and widespread social evil poses a real danger to many important domains of social life, including education. We have to admit that the corrupt mindset in the educational environment (school, university) is the everyday reality we face and its fighting requires the use of a comprehensive approach.

In its National Youth Policy Framework until 2025, the Government of the Russian Federation, cognizant of the pressing worldview challenges faced by the young generation, pays special attention to the fostering of civic nationhood, tolerance and patriotism among young people, as well as instilling the spiritual values associated with the traditional religions of the country. All the above measures in their entirety should serve a common goal of cultivating in the young Russian citizens of what in philosophy is referred to as *'the ethos'*, or the overall worldview based on the core set of guiding beliefs and values.

Therefore, the high relevance of this paper is largely due to the fact that the development of anti-corruption standards of conduct in the educational environment, including higher education, is a national priority in the Russian Federation.

### 2 Literature Review

The authors were drawing on a large body of scientific literature on the stated problem.

For example, a profound structural analysis of corruption as a historical phenomenon is provided in the works of V. D. Adrianov (2016), M. Yu. Vichuzhanina (2016), B. V. Volzhenkin (1991), L. V. Geveling (2001),

G. N. Gorshenkov (2010), A. V. Manko (2012), and N. Leff (1964).

O. A. Alexandrova (2012), V. G. Astanina (2014), N. Yu. Volosova (2016), and P. A. Kabanov (2014) interpret informational openness and information environment as playing an important role in the fight against corruption.

Legal aspects of the anti-corruption efforts are reflected in the works of E. A. Bykovskaya (2014), D. Yu. Kamyshanskaya (2017), A. V. Koval (2018) and S. M. Kochoy (2018). The psychological aspects of the analyzed social evil are discussed in the works of O. V. Vanovskaya (2009), A. L. Zhuravlev and A. V. Yurevich (2012).

This study relies on the works of I. I. Bikeev, P. A. Kabanov (2019), T. B. Kachkin and A. V. Kachkin (2010), N. A. Lyubkina (2017), A. Ya. Minin (2019), and D. A. Povnoy, G. T. Kamalova (2011) looking into various aspects of corruption prevention and anti-corruption policy in the system of education.

In addition, the authors of this paper used the materials of their collective monograph "Anti-Corruption Educational Environment: Theory and Practice" (2020), which describes a multidimensional approach to creation of the anti-corruption environment in educational organizations in Russia and abroad. The main emphasis in the indicated monograph is on the prevention of corrupt practices in the educational environment through inculcating the firm moral values among the youth.

### 3 Research Methodological Framework

The purpose of this paper is to explore sociocultural and legal aspects of the anti-corruption educational environment. The stated purpose gave rise to the following objectives: to assess the impact of the National Strategy for Upbringing of Children in the Russian Federation through to 2025 on the modern educational environment; to reveal the meaning of the term *emotional intellect of the educational environment*, inter alia through explanation by the team of authors of how the project "Development of a Scientific and Methodological Package for Anti-Corruption Education and Integrity Promotion among Youth", was implemented.

The research sources included different laws and regulations related to the anti-corruption policy. The methodological foundation for the research was constituted by the general philosophical tenets for cognition of being such as the principle of objectivity and regard for the multifactor nature of the explored phenomenon (in this particular case, the prevention of social evil of corruption in higher school); synergetic approach accommodating the variative nature of the historical process; a systematic approach treating the explored phenomenon as an integral complex of interrelated elements, or as a system; deductive (inference from general to specific) and inductive (inference from specific to general) methods.

### 4 Results and Discussion

The National Strategy for Upbringing of Children in the Russian Federation through to 2025 declares that the core values in the value system of the Russians are the family and patriotism (2014).

The above priorities have not emerged out of nowhere, but derived from the historically established moral values of the multi-national Russian population. In the modern conditions, the need is apparent for a moral backbone, the worldview identity, as well as a common ideology - what is commonly referred to as the national idea. At the same time, today we have to admit that many of Russian youngsters are far from traditional values, severely undermined not only by the decades of persecution of

religion in the Soviet times, but also by the ideological vacuum of the "dashing nineties," which created an atmosphere of immorality and cynicism in society.

Such "eternal" psychological phenomenon as the all-or-nothing thinking of adolescents, which is sometimes combined with social infantilism in a bizarre way, also play a role.

In this regard, a researcher O. M. Guseynov (2015) had to conclude that infantilism and escapism are inherent in a large part of today's Russian youth.

Such a distorted worldview based on indifference (or even contempt) to the traditions and values of own country, creates a fertile soil for various deviations, including corruption.

Therefore, the modern educational environment should be properly designed to confront such destructive phenomena and processes.

Researchers from Tatarstan, G. T. Balakaeva, G. K. Akhmetova, S.Zh. Zeynolla (2016), introduced a term *emotional intelligence of the educational environment*, explaining that only those educational organizations that are capable to train successful graduates will be in high demand. As concerns the discussed topic, they emphasize that effective integration into society will hinge on the ability to manage own emotions and emotions of others.

Therefore, it is essential for ensuring observance of the anticorruption prohibitions to build solid moral foundations and instill fear of the imminent accountability for any forms of corruption in the context of the modern emotionally intelligent educational environment. Since often the major hurdle to unveiling the corruptive practices is their deeply latent nature, the preventive measures aimed at minimizing the risk of young people developing a tolerating attitude to corruption in the conditions of educational organization are becoming ever more important.

Within Project 19-1-020253, Development of a Scientific and Methodological Package for Anti-Corruption Education and Integrity Promotion among Youth, supported by the Presidential Grants Fund, the authors of this paper developed a practice-oriented model of training young teachers based on the standard of anti-corruption conduct in the emotionally intelligent educational environment (Prevention of Corruptive Conduct in the Youth Environment, 2020).

This project was fueled by a deep commitment of the grant team to make a valuable contribution to the implementation of the National Anti-Corruption Plan for 2018 to 2020, approved by Presidential Decree N 378 (2018) of June 29, 2018, as well as the Action Plan for Anti-Corruption Education for 2019 to 2020 approved by Government Decree N 2884-r of December 21, 2018 (2018). The project team carried out a comprehensive historical-legal and psychological-pedagogical analysis of the problem of establishing a standard of anticorruption conduct. The obtained results were incorporated in the educational process under the basic professional education program in the field of training 44.03.05 Pedagogical Education (course program, practical textbook, methodical recommendations for teachers, monograph). The implemented work was mainly targeting the problem of the lack of scientific and methodological support at disposal of young teachers to meet the requirements of FSES SGE from May 17, 2012 (2012) to the academic performance in the Law subject under the basic educational program as concerns embracing by students of the standard of anti-corruption conduct.

Another popular trend in modern Russian society is volunteering. As a result of the joint participation of teachers and students in the project, a group of activists of the Student Anti-Corruption Movement (SAM) of MSPU named after M. E. Evseviev was set up. It should be noted that one of the important accomplishments of the SAM anti-corruption volunteering team was a gradual increase in the number of

young people willing to take part in the anti-corruption quest games Together Against Corruption, flash mobs Together We Can Do It, competitions in Anti-Corruption Installations, Anti-Corruption ABC and History of Corruption in Persons, held in the schools of Mordovia.

The strategic goal of this work is to train socially responsible personnel for the system of education and, in general, to build the human capital of a new kind for the socio-economic sphere of the region.

This project was implemented by MSPU in partnership with other universities and research centers from the Russian Federation (Chuvashia, Saratov region) and abroad (United Kingdom).

The research conducted by the project team also helped to identify certain legal gaps in the anticorruption regulation of public relations. According to the authors of this paper, the chaotic development of anticorruption legislation in Russia, which resulted in a huge number of new regulations, will be ineffective unless it gets streamlined and systematized and uses more precise formulations and definitions. For example, currently effective Federal Law N 273 On Combating Corruption provides a very limited explanation of the concept of corruption causing difficulties in practice (2008).

Besides, anticorruption legislation is built on a cross-sector basis, where the key strut is a federal law, but a significant portion of important regulations are laid down in by-laws, which diminishes their legal force. Here it should be noted that the FSES of the secondary general education, approved by Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation of May 17, 2012 N 413 (2012), stipulates a requirement for a student's portrait formulated as "showing respect for the law and order". As for the basic academic performance in the Law subject, here the developed basic legal thinking and adherence by a student to the standards of anti-corruption conduct are assumed. However, the federal standard FSES HE of December 4, 2015 N 1426 in the field of training 44.03.01 Pedagogical Education (2015) contains no mention regarding development of such competence in a future teacher. Fixing this gap will undoubtedly have a positive impact on the organizational and methodological support of professional pedagogical practices and will solve the problem of the lack of competent specialists capable to carry out a mission of minimizing the risk of young people developing a tolerating attitude to corruption in the modern emotionally intelligent educational environment.

The basic concepts, regulations, principles, rules and standards of anti-corruption conduct and professional ethics applicable to officials should be adapted to the context where pedagogical staff operates. In this case, engagement in professional activities implies not only performance of job functions, but also adherence to certain ethical and moral standards imposed by the profession. The historically established professional division of labor has led to certain public morals in society, which are now commonly referred to as the professional ethics.

Moral requirements to the professional activity of an individual had to be fixed in writing in order to establish the specific forms of social responsibility. Today, quite common is the attitude of a person to other people directly depending on his or her individual discretion which, often, cannot be controlled by any other means than through the establishment of a moral standard that is restrictive or preventive in nature.

For ensuring the effectiveness of anti-corruption efforts in a personality-centered school, it is necessary to take into account the counterbalancing, strengthening and stabilizing feedback, built on the spiritual and moral upbringing of the youth. It is important to collect feedback via different channels: operational meetings at different levels of management of the educational organization, discussions, brainstorming, interviews, observation of the process, the result of anti-corruption activities and especially multifunctional express monitoring, which implies

anonymity in receiving, analyzing and storing the results of anti-corruption efforts.

## 5 Conclusion

Thus, the urgent need for fostering an anti-corruption educational environment is caused by the problems of social and economic degradation of society undermined by the destructive effect of corruption, as well as the lack of attention from the researchers to the historical-legal and psychological-pedagogical aspects of establishing the anti-corruption standards of conduct in the youth environment, securing the leading role of education and upbringing in inculcating the civic virtue in youth (Decree of the President of the Russian Federation, 2018).

Mordovian State Pedagogical University named after M. E. Evseev encourages various forms of cooperation between teachers and students in the area under discussion.

Firstly, it engages students in developing the standard of anti-corruption conduct by organizing anti-corruption contests, olympiads, discussion clubs, volunteer movements, projects, etc. Thus, the Rector of this university supported the idea of establishing a student anti-corruption movement "MSPU SAM" by signing Order N 1865 on July 15, 2019 (Official website of MSPU named after M. E. Evseev). A strong negative attitude towards corruption is being instilled in young people not only at the university level, but also at the level of general educational institutions and facilitated by the anti-corruption efforts of volunteers in schools across the Republic of Mordovia. In this regard, illustrative is the work of SAM volunteers in school mediation services that in the emotionally intelligent educational environment is focused on addressing the conflicts of any complexity. Thus, future teachers in addition to transferring the knowledge about new forms, technologies and methods of conflict resolution, also increase the effectiveness of social, psychological and legal assistance in the event of such conflicts. As a result, future teachers acquire valuable skills of pedagogical conflict management.

MSPU SAM is coordinating its action plans with the university's structural subdivisions, other educational organizations of the Republic of Mordovia, the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Mordovia, the Department of Youth Affairs of the Ministry of Sport, Youth Policy and Tourism of the Republic of Mordovia, the Commission on Coordination of Anti-Corruption Efforts in the Republic of Mordovia, the Human Rights Ombudsman in the Republic of Mordovia and public organizations, thus maximizing the efficiency of anti-corruption initiatives among youth.

The student anti-corruption movement MPSU SAM is geared towards establishing a standard of anti-corruption conduct among the younger generation based on a zero tolerance approach to corruptive practices and is open to cooperation with various children and adult communities in the city, the Republic and throughout Russia, which found support and recognition within the frames of the All-Russian Contest of Youth Projects "My country - my Russia".

It is important to highlight the key pillars of anti-corruption environment as distinguished by the authors, such as: anti-corruption education, anticorruption enlightenment, anti-corruption propaganda and anti-corruption awareness of students in educational organizations.

It should also be noted that when implementing anti-corruption requirements related to the prevention or resolution of conflicts of interest in scientific and educational organizations, it is essential to conduct informational and explanatory work on anti-corruption legislation of the Russian Federation.

Our research shows that in the area of education, the best educational practice is the instilling of an intolerant attitude towards corruptive conduct among students and a strong opposition to all forms of corruption.

In general, the need for action has been dictated by the current scope of corruption leading to the appalling imbalances in the system of state institutions and relationships caused by this social evil.

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