

## Preface: Mediation in Interdisciplinary and Multi-Paradigm Discourses

On October 24-26, 2019, the 1st International Conference “Mediation in Education: Multicultural Context”<sup>1</sup> was held in Krasnoyarsk, bringing together Russian scientists, teachers and practicing mediators and foreign researchers from Italy, Poland, Portugal, France, Finland, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Thailand. For three days, the Conference discussed the urgent problems of introducing mediation technologies into educational practice to reduce conflicts, create a safe environment for educational institutions and bring to harmony international relations. Studies of domestic and foreign scientists presented at the Conference indicate the high potential of the mediation approach in the social sphere for alternative resolution of conflicts arising in education.

In modern society, objective and subjective reasons for the emergence and aggravation of various kinds of interethnic conflicts, tension in relations between people at the international, regional, group and interpersonal levels are topical. For Russia, resolving disputes with the help of a neutral mediator is a fairly new way to resolve and prevent conflicts in the field of education in order to harmonise interethnic relations. This became the basis for creating a platform for a dialogue and exchange of experience with the use of mediation experience in Europe, organising discussions on the development of mediation in Russia and over countries, as part of the 1st International Conference “Mediation in Education: Multicultural Context”. The Conference presented various areas of Russian and foreign research, experience of introducing the mediation approach into the educational practice of schools and regional mod-

els for organising mediation services. One of the results of the Conference is generalisation of the results of the work of regional centres in Irkutsk, Novosibirsk, Kemerovo oblasts, Krasnoyarsk Krai; experience of mediation services in such cities as Chelyabinsk, Yekaterinburg, Moscow, Kazan, St. Petersburg, etc. The Conference discussed current issues of pedagogical science in the transition to Industry 4.0 related to the development of mediation technologies in the education system, presented interactive reports by international scientists.

The fundamental problems discussed at the Conference include the following: the search for effective ways to prevent conflicts in the field of education through mediation; preventing the spread of radical views in a multicultural environment; consolidation of fundamental knowledge about alternative methods of dispute resolution and recommendations on the promotion of mediation in the field of education, taking into account multicultural specifics. The Conference provided an opportunity for organising a dialogue between leading Russian and foreign scientists and experts in the field of mediation in the social sphere for making important decisions in the field of joint fundamental and applied research, modernising the system of teacher training, and developing a regional professional community of mediators in the field of education. The results of studying these problems provide an opportunity for the academic community to propose new mechanisms for integrating mediation and other ways of resolving and preventing conflicts to harmonise interethnic relations in the education system.

The Conference presented successful practices of restorative and facilitative mediation in education and the social sphere. A separate section was devoted to discussion of models for the formation of the professional

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training of a modern teacher-psychologist in the field of social communication and mediation activities to resolve conflicts between actors of the educational process. Siberian Federal University presented the model of professional training curriculum of mediators for education at the Bachelor's and Master's levels by strengthening practical orientation of training and inclusion of elements of media-communicative practices, supervision, coaching, and negotiation practice in the training programme. The Conference participants discussed qualification requirements and professional competencies of mediators in education and the social sphere, the need to expand communicative practices for productive communication in the multinational and multiconfessional educational environment of the Russian Federation to understand the psychological characteristics of communication processes and multi-intercultural dialogue.

The main result of the Conference is the interdisciplinarity and poly-paradigm nature of the presented research and the positions of scientists, which allowed the Conference participants to consider the possibilities and prospects of using intercultural mediation in education and the social sphere, which we tried to present in this issue of the journal.

This issue consists of articles by plenary speakers and the most striking discussion reports of the Conference participants on the most diverse aspects of mediation practices in education and the social sphere in the context of multi-paradigmatic and interdisciplinary approaches. Let us present overview of the problem fields and substantive directions of the studies.

One of the urgent topics, little studied in Russia, is the topic of mediation as a component of the victimological activity of a modern teacher facing challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and the conflicting nature of the socio-economic environment. For our readers, we give the definition of victimological prevention as a specific activity of social institutions aimed at identifying, eliminating and neutralising the factors and situations that form victim behaviour, provoking the commission of crimes, identifying risk groups and specific individuals with a high

degree of victimisation and influencing them in order to restore and/or enhancing the protective properties and means of crime and subsequent victimisation.

In their article "Victimological Aspects of the Development of Restorative Mediation Practices in a Multicultural Society: Problems, Needs, Development Prospects", professional psychologists of the Faculty of Psychology of Novosibirsk State Pedagogical University, **An-dronnikova O.O. and Radzikhovskaia O.E.** consider mediation as a component of victimological professional activity of a mediator relevant in the face of modern challenges. The problems of education that arise in a multicultural environment in the context of victimisation of Russian society are identified, which determines the main zones of victim tension that arise as a result of geopolitical and migration processes. Based on Russian and foreign studies in the field of mediation and victimological training, the analysis of the effectiveness of using the restorative approach of school mediation services in Russia and abroad is presented. The authors described communities with victimisation-motivational and installation characteristics aimed at preserving their identity, without exchanging cultural patterns. The conducted study allowed the authors to conclude on the relevance of the educational type of mediation in education in territories with multicultural tendencies.

The study by a group of authors from ***the East Siberian Branch of the Russian State University of Justice Arkhipkina A.S., Arkhipkin I.V.*** together with their colleague from ***Sarsen Amanzholov East Kazakhstan State University Dyachuk M.I.*** is devoted to the ***urgent issues*** of changing Russian legislation and the analysis of the regulatory framework for the implementation of conciliation procedures that took place in 2019 in the article "New in the Legislation on Conciliation Procedures in Russia: Judicial Conciliation and Mediation". Based on the personal experience of many years of mediation and legal practice, the authors conduct a comparative analysis of the process and content of judicial conciliation and mediation and the requirements for mediators in resolving disputes. Valuable con-

tribution to understanding the improvement of regulatory legislation in the field of mediation is the authors' substantiation of the advantages of judicial conciliation, the introduction of the concept of a "court with many doors", for the development of alternative ways of resolving disputes.

The article by **Belonogova E.V., Prokopyeva N.G. (Kuzbass Regional Centre for Psychological, Medical and Social Care)** "Algorithms for Mediative Recovery Work of the Territorial Reconciliation Service in Difficult Cases" presents the results of many years of studying the problem of mediative recovery.

The experience of the Kuzbass Regional Reconciliation Service for difficult cases of developing and testing mediative resolution algorithms for complex school and family situations of under-aged basing on the principles of the recovery approach is presented in examples and analytical analysis. This analytics provides an opportunity for the academic community to introduce new mechanisms for integrating mediation and ways to resolve and prevent conflicts to harmonise interethnic relations in the education system.

In particular, mediative recovery with multi-level conflicts in the escalation stage in educational organisations, as well as difficult life situations of under-aged and their families. The description of special social technologies, including various recovery programmes (mediative recovery, community circle, school-parent council, family group conference, family mediation) provides details on mediation technologies tested in successful regional practices. The results of pilot empirical testing of mediation technologies proposed by the authors show their effectiveness in relation to complex school and family conflict situations. It should be noted the authors' conceptual conclusion about the need for special training in recovery technologies and the existence of an organisational structure uniting trained restorative specialists who can carry out the regional reconciliation services that can be efficiently applied by social specialists, the education system, the system for preventing crime and neglect of minors.

We should especially dwell on the article presented by our **Kazakh colleagues from**

**the National Academy of Education named after Y. Altynsarin, President of the Academy Zhilbayev Zh.O. and his colleagues from Innovative University of Eurasia Syrymbetova L.S., Zhetpisbayeva B.A., Dyakov D.V. and Muratova L.M.** In their article "Spiritual Modernisation of Student Youth", they raise the most important ethical and value-oriented problems of the implementation of the national programme for the spiritual revival of Kazakhstani society. The value-semantic orientations of students studying pedagogy are the semantic patterns of the curriculum and the deployment of the content of training and education of future educators of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The authors of the article analyse the degree of formation of spiritual values among students and substantiate the role of the pedagogical community in developing mechanisms for its implementation. The innovative pedagogical idea of the authors' work is the conclusion that the majority of students do not consider the provisions of the Spiritual Revival Programme as part of their system of values, life goals, and attitudes. The authors offer their own conceptual approaches to solving this problem and implementing the Programme in universities of Kazakhstan.

The work by our Polish colleagues **Kozlova O.N., Kozlovska U. (University of Szczecine)** "Partnership Cultures in Education of the 21<sup>st</sup> century" deserves particular attention. The article analyses the logic of the transformation of social ties in modern society and the influence of new communication technologies and continuing education on the reduction of the role of vertical ties in the context of the demand for mediation from the standpoint of post-non-classical sociology. Particular attention is paid to building partnerships in education and social life in general. The authors study the partnership as a key paradigm of our time and as a technology for reproducing systemic stability in the context of globalisation. The authors present a retrospective analysis of the history of development of attitudes towards competition and partnership in the sociocultural process. From the standpoint of the authors' approach, they describe the heterogeneity of partnership cultures as an attribute of the sustainable development of society and the

creation of a system of stable reproduction of the sociocultural process. Social development is associated with the simultaneous expanded reproduction of subjectivity, which implies the need for the development in education of the ability and desire to constantly maintain dialogue relations, the joint development of goals and forms of partnership. Which is indirectly associated with mediation practices in education. The authors, using Poland as an example, consider models for the development of mediation practices and partnerships in various areas of modern public life.

The benefits of using mediation practices in resolving interethnic conflicts between the indigenous population and refugees and immigrants from Africa arriving in Italy are described in the article by *Senior Researcher of University of Bologna, Department of Education Studies Zannoni F.* “Intercultural mediation addressed to refugees and asylum seekers in Italy.”

The development of the institution of mediation in Italy has a longer history compared to the Russian Federation and specific features related to the geographical location, legislation on refugees and the realities of a multicultural society in Italy. The attitude of Italians towards African refugees is ambiguous and sometimes comes to open racist manifestations. In his article, Federico Zannoni analyses European principles and best practices for intercultural mediation used in refugee reception services and social centres for the assistance and integration of emigrants. The presented results of the study conducted in the social services of the city of Reggio Emilia, using the method of interviews and group discussions with refugee migrants in Italy, are of undoubted interest.

The results of large-scale sociological studies of aggression in teenage environment are presented in the article by *the Academic Member of the Russian Academy of Education Sobkin V.S. and his colleagues from the Institute of Education Management of the Russian Academy of Education Kalashnikova E.A., Fedotova A.V.* The article is based on materials obtained during an anonymous survey of more than two thousand students of the 7th, 9th and 11th grades of various Moscow

schools. The results of the study presented at the conference on the influence of gender, age and social stratification factors of adolescent aggression aroused genuine interest of the audience and a productive discussion about the features of manifestations of physical aggression among adolescents, the main motives that encourage teenagers to resort to violence. The authors present their position on the problems of teenage conflicts, highlight the motivational dominants that determine the characteristics of adolescent participation in fights, depending on gender and age. Particular attention is paid to the consideration of manifestations of physical aggression inside school. This is directly related to the need to expand and strengthen the activities of school mediation services on the prevention of school conflicts and the introduction of restorative mediation in extreme clashes between conflicting parties: fights on the school grounds. Readers of the article will be able to learn the opinions of students about the reactions of their teachers to fights between teenagers, and compare their experience of understanding teenage aggression with the position of the authors. In particular, in relation to a rather high level of prevalence of fights among girls, which, according to the authors of the article, indicates a significant deformation of traditional gender-role models of behaviour in adolescent subcultures. The results of large-scale studies of teenage aggression in Moscow schools led the authors to conclude that the manifestation of physical aggression is associated not only with the social mechanisms of functioning of the teenage subculture, but also with the psychological peculiarities of adolescence.

The basis for conducting mediation procedures in the field of education is collision or conflict between the subjects of the education process. Moreover, as the authors of the article “The Possibilities of Empathy in Preventing Interpersonal Conflicts in the Educational Environment of a Higher Education Institution”, conflicts arise for various reasons, depending on objective and subjective factors: the sociocultural situation, personality characteristics of an individual. Despite a large number of theoretical and practical studies devoted to

a holistic understanding of the causes of conflict, the problem of productive resolution and prevention of conflicts at a university is still of interest to scientists and teachers. An inter-university team of authors from St. Petersburg State University and Siberian Federal University (*Smolyaninova O.G. – SibFU; Posokhova S.T., Izotova M.H. – Saint Petersburg University*) explores the empathy in the prevention of interpersonal conflicts in higher education. The problem of the occurrence and prevention of interpersonal conflicts at University is revealed from socio-psychological positions as a multidimensional phenomenon related to the difference in values, attitudes, motives, interests, and beliefs of conflicting parties. The authors attribute the success of mediation procedures to understanding the factors that contribute to reducing the likelihood of a conflict, considering empathy as a significant personality trait that can be used to prevent the development of conflict situations and expand the range of mediation technologies. In the empirical study, the authors used the method of V.V. Boiko diagnosing the level of empathic abilities of students obtaining psychological, medical and technical education aged from 18 to 24 years. The data obtained indicate the greatest severity of empathy among psychology students. The authors conclude that empathy not only limits aggressive tendencies and blocks the competitive attitude towards students with disabilities, but also forms the basis for neutrality in assessing the relationship between conflicting parties. It should be noted that empathy and neutrality are significant characteristics of the professional competencies of mediators, which can be developed in the process of their training during Bachelor's and Master's programmes.

The development of conflict management issues through mediation is reflected in the article "Place of Mediation in the Monitoring of the Educational Process Conflict Factors in the Conditions of Modern Risks" by *Artemov G.P. and Pinkevich A.G. (Saint Petersburg University)*.

The authors focused on risk analysis of the modern educational space and conflict management opportunities, suggesting deep understanding of the concept itself and its individual

elements. The authors consider various models of the use of mediation in the education process from the perspective of conflict management. The article provides an analysis of the monitoring of conflict factors based on qualitative and quantitative methods for collecting information.

*The article by the scientists of Siberian Federal University Mashanov A.A., Rostovtseva M.V.* "Methods of Conflict Study in the System of Education" raises the problem of developing methods for studying conflicts in the education system, analyses the activity-oriented and personality-oriented methodological approaches to studying conflicts. A contribution to the development of the conflict research methodology is the comprehensive approach proposed by the authors, based on the symbiosis of the personality-oriented and activity-oriented paradigms, which allows to take into account personal factors of subjects in the process of conflict development: characterological characteristics, self-esteem and intelligence, as well as behavioural strategies in a conflict situation. The authors offer the results of a pilot empirical study of Siberian Federal University students, diagnosing the leading personality characteristics of an individual, which are significant in the conflict, describing their relationship with the level of proneness to conflicts of personality. We agree with the conclusion of the authors that "a high level of conflict is due to the student's inability or unwillingness to understand and accept the individuality of other people, inability to forgive others for their mistakes, low intelligence, emotional instability, anxiety".

From the standpoint of the need of professional training of a mediator for a multicultural education system, there is no doubt that students need to master complex methods of studying the individual psychological characteristics of a person. Another thing is that if the parties are at the stage of escalation of the conflict, the mediator fails to offer a comprehensive psychological and pedagogical diagnosis. Rather, he or she should be able to draw up a psychological portrait of the personality independently, based on observations of the behaviour, speech, facial expressions of the

conflicting parties. There is no doubt that the results of the pilot study require further work and are of interest to the professional university community.

The formation of a conflict-free educational environment in the context of social transformation and the ethnocultural diversity of modern society confirms the interest in the mediation approach by scientists from various fields (psychology, sociology, pedagogy, phi-

losophy, cultural studies) presented in this issue. Mediation is regarded as an effective technology for managing and preventing conflicts between actors of the education process at all levels of education.

We offer you, dear readers, to judge the significance and quality of the presented studies, to agree or argue with the positions and conclusions of the authors. We will be grateful for the feedback and comments.

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