

Conceptual levels of the managing of gender conflicts in the field of education in the framework of sustainable development of society

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Abstract. The resolution of gender conflicts should not be their cessation, but their management in order to obtain socially beneficial consequences of these conflicts. Such a conceptual understanding of the potential benefits of gender conflicts provides an alternative to understanding gender conflicts as inevitably destructive and harmful to society. The distinction between levels of gender conflict should not be made in order to institutionally suppress them, as has been the case in traditional society. Distinguishing the levels of gender conflict in a democratic society should be based on a conceptual vision of the possibility of exploiting the potential of multiple social identities of individuals, as well as managing gender conflicts through their explication and understanding. The UN Agenda 2030 program sets constructive goals – the goals of sustainable development, including the development of gender relations. However, the institutional means of achieving these goals must be subject to an adequate conceptual approach to understanding the essence of gender relations. This understanding is ensured by proper gender education.

1 Introduction

Social modernization and establishing of free and open relationships between people is inevitably accompanied by social conflicts due to the need to reconcile conflicting and sometimes directly opposite values. Values in the gender issue are often particularly sharp and uncompromising. To manage such conflict situations, it is necessary to identify the specifics of their course at different levels of conflict development. It is especially important

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to do this in the field of education – where the value positions of future generations of citizens are formed.

Gender issues are the subject of close attention of international organizations that plan to manage social processes on a global scale. The United Nations has developed the Agenda 2030, in which one of the sustainable development goals (SDG), namely SDG 4, is on education, and in particular on gender equality and other issues of protection of gender rights in education [1]. The European Union seeks to take into account the SDGs in all its forms, as one of the key guiding principles for EU policy. The Council of the European Union states that “a prosperous Union also hinges on an open and fair international economic, financial and trade system and sustainable and equitable access to the global public goods; STRESSES that the SDGs are a cross-cutting dimension of the Global Strategy” [2].

Most of the available research on gender conflicts is devoted to two main levels – personal and institutional. Thus, much recent research is devoted to the psychological aspects of intrapersonal and interpersonal gender conflict [3-4], while other big part of social researches is devoted to gender policy issues at the organizational level [5]. At best, it is about managing gender relations at the level of global organizations [6].

If for the Ukrainian scientific discourse gender issues is relatively new, for the countries of Western Europe and the United States the actualization of the study of gender conflicts and tensions dates back to the 1970s. The second wave of feminism, the spread of a network of women's studies and gender studies, the inclusion in the scientific community and social practice of concepts such as "gender", "sexism", "androgyny", etc. lead not only to a reassessment of gender roles but also to understanding the need to study and overcoming gender role tensions and conflicts [7].

At the same time, the systemic approach to the conceptual level of the study of gender conflicts, which would cover all their manifestations, is still insufficiently developed. It is still lack of consideration of the gender aspect of modern education from the point of view of prevention of gender conflicts. Gender education often looks like a form of gender propaganda rather than an impartial and equitable gender education policy.

The purpose of our study is to identify and characterize the systemic relationship of all major conceptual levels of gender conflict, including – in educational communication. The challenge and objectives then is to identify these levels consistently, as well as to show how educational communication allows them to be integrated into a system of impartial and equitable gender education.

2 Conflictology as methodology of the study of gender conflicts

The theoretical study of gender conflicts and their diagnosis in practice is one of the most relevant areas of modern conflictology that is main methodology of this research. Gender conflict (gender role conflict) can be defined as a contradiction (tension) between normative ideas about the traits of women and men, about the behavior of men and women and the inability or unwillingness of the person to meet these ideas and requirements.

At the heart of gender role conflict are differences between the real self and the ideal self-concept, which is culturally linked to gender. Such conflict can be self-directed or projected on others, can be identified on a conscious or unconscious level, and can be demonstrated cognitively, behaviorally, or affectively [8].

That is why gender role conflict is always a psychological state in which gender roles have negative consequences or negative effects on a person or other people. The end result of this conflict is a limitation of a person's ability to actualize his or her own human potential or a limitation of another's potential. Gender role conflict is often accompanied by gender role tension – excessive mental or physical tension caused by gender conflict and the consequences of feminine, masculine or androgynous roles [9].

Any gender conflict is based on the phenomenon of gender differentiation and hierarchical status of men and women that exist in modern societies.

3 Conceptual levels of the managing of gender conflicts

3.1 Intrapersonal gender conflict and its explication

It is very important for every person to recognize own gender – does not matter it is a student, an educator or a manager of educational institution. It should be found out the answer before it would be possible to defend personal gender rights.

Intrapersonal gender conflict is a state of nervous tension that occurs when an individual finds it difficult to maintain a standard of traditional gender role, or is forced to engage in behaviors that are characteristic of the opposite gender role.

Intrapersonal gender conflict can be both constructive and destructive. For example, gender resocialization as a destruction of the previously adopted system of gender values and assimilation of a new one in accordance with the requirements of modern realities is an integral part of the comprehensive development of the individual. However, pressures of gender stereotypes and outdated traditional sociocultural norms may force individuals to adhere to gender patterns (eg, transgender people due to fears of outing, in most cases forced to live not their own, but imposed lifestyle), demonstrate support for patriarchy and patriarchy on the basis of sex, etc. Outing is the disclosure of information about another person's sexual orientation or gender identity without his or her consent. It is important to know that outing can have serious consequences. For example, a person whose personal information is disclosed may lose his or her job, home, family and friends, as well as endanger his or her life and health.

Intrapersonal gender conflict is often considered as a purely psychological phenomenon limited to the inner world of a particular individual, which is determined by external factors of formation and socialization of the individual (for example, sexism learned from the social environment). Thus, numerous foreign studies show that men who assimilate the rigid masculine role expectations of society experience a gender role conflict between the ideal of society and their own real masculinity. This, unfortunately, is associated with many negative consequences: low self-esteem, lower intimacy, limited emotionality, anxiety, depression, shame, aggression [10]. But basis of such psychological problems is lack of conceptualization of own gender identity and non-critical adoption of inherited gender stereotypes.

A type of intrapersonal conflict is the gender conflict of affiliation, which occurs when an individual is a member of several social groups in which he holds different status positions and is forced to perform opposite gender roles. For example, a woman in a leadership position must show so-called masculine traits and at the same time conform to traditional notions of the ideal wife, mother and mistress. It can be said that a gender conflict of affiliation is a conflict between gender and other social identities of the individual, when the requirements for the prototype of gender identity interfere with the performance of roles assigned to other social identities.

As we noted earlier [11], modern human being can maintain a rather complex version of multiple social identity, but it is possible not only to change certain elements of this identity, add or remove them, but also to maintain such a complex profile of social identity throughout human life.

However, it is possible that the more complex the profile of social identity, the more likely it is to lead to certain social tensions and social conflicts.

Due to the aggravated negative experience, intrapersonal gender conflict can catalyze psychological tension, especially in primary and small social groups, and provoke interpersonal conflicts.

But inner experience always encourages the search for the external – it may not be a conflict, but constructive interactions. In any case, if inner experience generates searches and asks questions, then external experience gives answers to them. Someone might wonder about their gender, but these persons could find out which gender suits them only in interpersonal communication. Educational communication provides more opportunities for such practices: it concerns mainly young people, is research-oriented and open to discovery.

3.2 Interpersonal gender conflict and its managing

The interpersonal interactions are most acute and sensitive – especially in case of gender issues. The educational communication should have special ethical basis of mutual respect that should include gender tolerance.

Interpersonal gender conflicts are face-to-face confrontations based on intolerance, intolerance, and a lack of understanding of gender diversity. It is important to note that the mutual negative attitude of the subjects to each other does not always lead to conflict. People may feel mutual hostility, prejudice against each other, but not conflict. Interpersonal gender conflict, like any interpersonal conflict, involves real confrontation between the conflicting parties. Examples of interpersonal gender conflict include marital conflicts over the division of responsibilities within the family, confrontations between parents and children about what a “real” man or “real” woman should look like and do, and sharp misunderstandings between members of a small social group, when one of them came out of it, etc.

In our opinion, interpersonal gender conflict also includes all violent practices in which the victim actively resists the perpetrator – for example, discrimination on the grounds of sex or sexual orientation, abuse, prospects, sexist statements, physical violence, etc.

As a rule, the source of interpersonal gender conflicts is gender stereotypes about a certain category of people. In this case, the conflict, in fact, unfolds not in relation to a particular person, but in relation to the simplified and distorted image of the opponent.

It is important to note that individuals involved in interpersonal gender conflict can uphold both their own and group values. How to harmonize these two types of values – it is the task for gender education and self-education.

Person has to instill its own gender culture and follow or reject group values depending on how well these values correspond to this culture. Otherwise, gender stereotypes could provoke gender intolerance and destructive gender conflict that could shift from interpersonal level to intergroup level – provoke the gender conflict in the educational communities.

3.3 Intergroup gender conflict and its settling

Intergroup gender conflicts in educational communication are dangerous because of its value basis that determines its scale and non-compromise character. Even if someone decides to end the conflict, the group to which that person belongs can significantly impede a peaceful resolution of the conflict. Preserving group identity may require adherence to group values, even in spite of their possible gender inadequacy.

Intergroup gender conflicts are a type of gender conflict, where the conflicting parties are not individuals but groups. At the heart of intergroup gender conflicts is the principle: “Others” are not “Ours”. Such confrontation unfolds from the experience and awareness of one's own gender identity, but such identity could be partially formed or deformed by the group itself. After all, gender identity is not just a statement of compliance with gender patterns of a particular socio-cultural environment, it is a complex dynamic process that

involves the formation of gender identity, including communication with the Other, which leads to self-awareness, We (in-group) and They (out-group).

Depersonalization, anonymity of individuals during intergroup gender conflicts increases the possibility and likelihood of antisocial manifestations, acts of aggression against the Other or Others. For example, clashes between supporters of traditional values and members of the LGBT community.

Gender conflicts between the individual and the group – the source of gender conflicts between the individual and the group, primarily gender differences between group members. The key role here is played by the typicality of the group member within the group in terms of his or her gender (for example, a female police officer in a male team or a male educator in a kindergarten). In other words, the more a prototype of a person's gender identity matches the prototype of a member of a particular social group in terms of sociocultural norms or stereotypes, the less likely the gender role conflict between the individual and the social group is. All this could make education a source of social tension [12]. But proper gender education could give opposite, positive result and makes possibilities to manage gender conflicts.

For example, a female police officer who works in a male team may feel less valuable in her team because of her gender and feel that she needs to express herself even more than her male colleagues in order to be equally valuable. In other words, she feels that her team members believe that her gender identity conflicts with her work. Thus, the difference from the members of the group on the basis of gender makes gender more visible and increases the likelihood that other team members will view the opposite sex through the prism not of her professional competencies but gender identity [13].

In addition, gender conflicts between an individual and a group may be related to the fact that a member of the group, who previously met the basic characteristics of belonging to this group, acquires the traits of the Other, ie becomes a “stranger” in the group.

In most cases, an individual's membership in a social group contains a latent conflict, which lies in the need to maintain a balance between individual aspirations, desires, goals, self-manifestations and collective norms, requirements and responsibilities. Thus, the demonstration of character traits, manners or appearance that do not correspond to the group's ideas about the norms of femininity and masculinity (expressing one's own views that do not correspond to the views of the traditional majority; allegations of sexual harassment by another member of the group; coming out, etc.) can not only marginalize the individual within a social group (for example, in the workforce), makes its membership less significant and valuable, but also leads to open and destructive gender conflict between the individual and the group. But gender education could transform the attitude to the gender identity and the gender identity could become a source of constructive social behavior.

3.4 Societal scale of gender conflict: tensions between social systems

Societal gender conflicts are macro-level conflicts that unfold at the level of the entire social system or individual social institutions and are the result of patriarchal attitudes. Societal gender conflicts include gender inequality in general, feminization of poverty, language androcentrism, gender blindness, and so on.

According to the American researcher of gender role conflicts Jim O'Neill [14], professional counselors and analysts should understand and inform people, individual social groups and communities or society as a whole how gender conflicts limit the emotional, interpersonal, private, professional, physical life of the individual. The researcher emphasizes that the demand of modern realities for instructive materials that explain how sexism and socialization based on gender stereotypes can cultivate gender tensions and gender conflicts cannot be ignored. In addition, this type of information should be included in training

programs for specialists in various specialties at both the bachelor's and master's levels. At the same time, one must raise one's level of consciousness in order to understand and overcome the fears of one's own femininity or masculinity.

Of course, the process of re-evaluating gender roles is complex and difficult. It is difficult for the majority of the public to understand and integrate new gender norms into their own lives. At the same time, it is clear that gender role conflicts are part of social discrimination and support for sexism, they are depressing and destructive for both men and women. That is why new gender behaviors need to be modeled and encouraged at the societal level, and it is important to explain that sexism is a form of psychopathology [15] that brings conflict to people's lives.

4 The options for educational institutions to achieve settling of gender conflicts with help of the SDG

“Agenda 2030” also identifies the educational concepts and models needed for sustainable development: education for sustainable development, education for global citizenship and relevant concepts must teach competencies to help all of us transform our world for collaboration – including gender issues. Comprehensive competencies of this kind can be developed with the help of teaching principles and educational problems of national educational systems: “By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development” [16].

SDG 4 (High Quality Education) nudged also an Education Program of UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization that includes 193 member states) – renewed, comprehensive and transformative program “Education 2030. Framework for Action” [17]. This program aims to contribute to the achievement of all UN SDGs [22]. UNESCO considers education to be an integral and important condition for the promotion of democracy and human rights, the strengthening of global citizenship and sustainable development. UNESCO has developed a framework for action to achieve the global educational goal and supports implementation processes in its member countries.

The OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development that includes 37 developed countries) also develops and monitors sustainability targets at the global level of experience. In addition, it is planned to prepare reports on policy coherence, analysis of progress, etc. The integrated program «The Future of Education and Skills Education 2030 – OECD» [18] and « Leading SDG 4 – Education 2030» [19] offers the forms, visions and principles that underlie the future of the global education and science system. The training structure was jointly created for the OECD-2030 Education Development Program as a project of government representatives and a growing community of partners, including ideological leaders, experts, educational networks, heads of educational institutions, teachers, scientists, researchers, students and youth groups, parents, universities (and other HEIs), organizations and other social partners.

The new program “OECD’s Education at a Glance” examines annually the phenomenon of global education with help of special OECD Indicators [20]. “OECD Indicators in Focus” (EDIF) is a recurring series of briefs that highlight specific indicators in OECD’s Education at a Glance that are of particular interest to policy makers and practitioners recurring series of briefs that highlight specific indicators in OECD’s Education at a Glance that are of particular interest to policy makers and practitioners” [21]. It provides data on the development, funding and efficiency of education systems in 37 OECD countries and a number of partner countries.

For the first time, two new indicators provide comparative data on the level of success in higher education and on the criteria for access to higher education. One section is devoted to the educational policy goal of the 2030 Agenda.

UNESCO has developed a comprehensive program of gender education, which has its strengths and weaknesses [22]. The strong point of this program is its institutional support, but the weak point is the insufficient consideration of the pressure of the social environment and the insufficient conceptualization of the strategy of asserting one's own gender identity. This program involves the adaptation of the individual to the existing gender strategies in society, but does not take into account the desire of the learners to determine their own gender strategy.

In his program report for the next 50 years OECD Secretary-General A. Gurria notes: "Targeted support for the most vulnerable, employment, skills and education to ensure lifelong employability must remain a central focus of our work. We need to address the "E" policy priorities: Employment, Entrepreneurship, Education, Environment and Equality" [23].

But this priorities need decades of years to be successfully implemented. Although the chances of high skills are increasing, the employment prospects of less skilled workers are deteriorating.

5 New opportunities for resolving gender conflicts in the situation of distance education

Most of the instruments proposed to achieve the SDG were institutional. It is good for solving of conceptual aims. But often the institutions were considered as a goal itself. This has resulted in the consideration of social conflicts, and in particular gender conflicts, as barriers that need to be addressed, rather than considering conflicts as a resource to be managed and get the desired results from it.

The example of gender conflict management at various levels shows that the goals of the Agenda 2030 can and should be achieved not only through institutional means, but also through self-management of individuals and groups of individuals, provided by properly their training through gender education. Management of gender conflicts at all conceptual levels, especially at intrapersonal and interpersonal levels, needs the vision of constructive potential of gender conflicts – as a potential of skillful management of creation and the decision of problems [24]. It should be used a conceptual management of resource of multiple gender identity [25].

By 2030, it was planned to develop tools and models that would allow everyone to receive and complete free, fair and quality primary, secondary and higher education, which will lead to appropriate and effective learning outcomes and social development. This proposition however needs concretization because the criteria of social and personal development are quite changeable: even now in terms of pandemic districts one has to revise significantly the understanding of «appropriate» outcomes. So, it is hardly to implement properly the demand to ensure that everyone has access to quality education at all levels, creating appropriate conditions by 2030, which will allow everybody to move successfully to the next levels of education and carry out lifelong learning. On the other hand, domination of distant education simplifies the performing in general several tasks even now, not by 2030: to eliminate gender disparities at all levels of education, to allow all women and men equal and affordable access to high-quality vocational and academic education; to make sure that a much larger number of young people and adults acquire knowledge, skills and abilities related to employment or self-employment. One of such tasks is achieved especially successful – to ensure equal access to all levels of education for all, including people with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children with disabilities. This is due the possibilities of international access of open

educational programs provided by internet. That is why it could be common educational programs for different persons, different countries and different kinds of participation.

The time that has passed since 2015 has shown that the most effective solutions to the protection of gender and other rights were provided by technical means of communication, and secondly by the institutions that used these means.

Systematic verification of all types of education, and consequently gender education, should be carried out not until 2030, but now. It is clear that all students acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for sustainable development, including through education for sustainable development, sustainable lifestyles, human rights defense, gender equality, promoting a culture of peace and non-violence, through global civic education and recognition of cultural diversity and the contribution of culture to sustainable development. If we do this now, then we could expect the proper performance of all other tasks of Agenda 2030.

6 Conclusion

According to the social system approach it should be differentiated several conceptual levels at which gender conflicts unfold, the latter can be divided into: intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, conflicts between the individual and the group (between the groups), societal. In traditional society with closed social order the public authorities conceal gender conflicts and suppress the rights of individuals to determine their gender. The legitimization of gender identities occurs from top to bottom – from the societal level through the level of social groups and to the regulation of interpersonal interaction. The opinion of the individual is not taken into account here at all. In democratic society the legitimization of gender identities becomes from the gender self-identification of personality.

Although the internal gender conflict of an individual is often caused by conflicting requests from his / her social environment to him or her, the level of conceptualization of one's own gender identity by oneself plays a much greater role in a democratic society. The better a person reflects on his or her gender identity, the better he or she is able to help resolve external gender conflicts. The individual receives such an understanding of gender identity through the systemic organization of gender education. In case of multiple gender identity the gender conflict becomes normal and permanent: it does not hinder, but helps to gender education and gender formation of personality. So person needs not to eliminate and stop the conflict, but learn to manage it.

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