

# Ethnic stereotypes of Indigenous People in the North of Yakutia

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**Abstract.** The article presents research of ethnic stereotypes and tolerance of indigenous people of the North Yakutia (Chukchi). The peculiarities of ethnic auto- and heterostereotypes of indigenous people of the North are also identified.

**Keywords:** Ethnic Stereotypes, Auto- And Hetero- Stereotype, Ethnic Tolerance, Indigenous People, Chukchi

## 1. Introduction

The Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) is multicultural region, where not only indigenous ethnic groups live historically, but also representatives of different nations of Russia and CIS. 32,860 members of small nations of the North live in the Sakha Republic, including Evenki - 18,232, Evens - 11 657, Yukagirs - 1097, Chukchi - 602, Dolgan - 1272. The number of minorities of the North is 3.2% of the total population of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia).

One of the most important tasks of the modern society is a revival and preservation of ethnic identity of indigenous people, which is a component of ethnic identity and is associated with the behavior stereotypes.

Intercultural processes of assimilation and intercultural cooperation have become the realities of the modern society in a time of global change, these processes require special attention. Reduction of ethnic tensions, increase of cross-cultural tolerance, and development of integration processes are relevant in our time. Study of the content of ethnic stereotypes, especially intercultural cooperation and socio-cultural adaptation of minorities represents big interest. The relevance of ethnic stereotypes is important for understanding the issues of communication, intercultural relations in the analysis of intercultural interaction, ethnocentrism and ethnic conflicts.

**Aim:** Study the characteristics of the ethnic stereotypes and the intercultural tolerance of the indigenous peoples, namely Chukchi, living in the territory of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia).

**Sample size:** 110 Chukchi (men and women) living in the village Kolymskoe.

## 2. Methods

Ethnic stereotypes were examined with an open questionnaire (autostereotypes and heterostereotypes). The content of the auto-(images of Chukchi) and heterostereotypes of the Chukchi (images of the Evens, Evenks, Yukagirs, Dolgans, Yakuts and Russians) was studied by using the questionnaire, which consisted of seven open-ended questions (proposals requiring completion) [2]. The questionnaire "The Index of Tolerance" by G.U. Soldatova was used here to identify the level of ethnic tolerance [3].

The Chukchi from village Kolymskoe have the closest contacts with the Evens, Yukagirs, Yakuts and Russians, so the images of these groups are presented in detail. The Chukchi did not encounter in practice of intercultural communication with the Evenki and Dolgan, thus they had difficulties in describing these groups of people and gave very vague answers about the stereotypes.

## 3. Results and Discussion

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The intensity patterns are very low during the study that, for the entire sample for each ethnic group known as the quality from 1 to 8 times. So we tried to combine them and get a rough stereotypes of ethnic groups. We obtained the following stereotypes of people:

**Evens:** outgoing, friendly, good-natured, kind, good, simple, hard-working, cheerful, quick-tempered, respect their own people, unstable diligent, wouldn't survive without others help, clever, cunning, recognize their nationalists, laconic.

**Evenki:** good, open, smart, kind, hard working, fast, caring, hospitable, angry, violent, will creep out of the skin, but will try to make in their favor/to their advantage.

**Yukagirs:** nice, friendly, outgoing, hard, strong, easy, beautiful, respectful, arrogant, put themselves above others, fastidious, sly, without the benefit will not communicate with the person uncommunicative with unfamiliar, unfriendly, helpless, indecisive, independent farmers, rude.

**Dolgan:** good-natured, they can't be taught by somebody how to work because they have reached everything they own by themselves and they know how to do things and wouldn't teach anyone, optimistic, conscientious, good family men, violent, such as the Evens, mysterious, they received everything by themselves.

**Yakuts:** peaceful, hardworking, responsive, sociable, clever, arrogant if they are bosses, but if they become your friends they are normal people, they are disrespectful to the Russian-speaking population, pretentious, nationalists, they are proud for their nation, talented, talk to each other a lot, do not like when they are addressed in Russian, more liberated, greedy, mean, evil.

**Russian:** different, strong, good-hearted, hospitable, friendly, sympathetic, honest, simple, sociable, honest, kind, sociable, normal, friendly, loyal, liars, con, indifferent to other nations, consider themselves intelligent, clean "fluffy" and clever, but if they are in extreme situation they will be helpless and could die, and do not try to survive, calculating, thinking that they alone live in Russia, neat.

**Chukchi** are open, trusting, friendly, hospitable, shy, follow their household traditions, industrious, hospitable, friendly, calm, patient, with a loud voice, not hasty, although there are explosive, not patient, emotional, easily offended, industrious in their workplace, responsible, militant, you should talk to them kindly, good-natured, interesting, intelligent, proud of their nation, dependent and helpless, delicate, with good character, hard-working, humorous, straightforward, independent, laconic, respect elders, distinguished candor and modesty, responsive.

Thus, autostereotypes of Chukchi are positive, and heterostereotypes are generally inconsistent (it reflects both positive and negative characteristics of people). Quite a lot of negative traits ascribed to Yukagirs and Yakut. This can be explained by the "contact hypothesis," the closer geographically ethnicity and the more contacts, the more cause for conflict and hostility.

It can be concluded that the indigenous peoples of the North have positive attitude towards themselves, which means a positive perception of the world, but situation differ as for the content of heterostereotypes of other nations.

In communication most of the Chukchi ignore ethnic origin of other people and have intercultural attitudes towards other ethnic groups. Though the Chukchi have the ethnic identity, the most important thing for them is their identity as the citizens of the Russian Federation [4]. In general, we can note average level of importance of ethnic factors in the life of the Chukchi with a tendency to decrease.

In the questionnaire "The Index of tolerance" the Chukchi showed the average level in the scale of "Ethnic tolerance" in all groups.

The analysis of every single question in the scale of "Ethnic Tolerance" showed that in general, most of the respondents exhibit ethnic tolerance. 52% of the respondents do not agree with the fact that in mixed marriages usually there are more problems than in marriages between people of the same nationality, 38% do not agree with the notion that it is normal to assume that your nation is better than other nations, 31% do not agree with the opinion that it is difficult to feel good about other nations, 38% are willing to accept a person of different nationality as a member of the family, 45% agree to have friends among people of different nationalities, 31% can imagine to have a black man as their close friend.

Fisher's angular transformation method was used in processing the results of the questionnaire ( $\phi$ -criterion). In general, statistically significant differences were found between men and women ( $\phi_{\text{emp}} = 2.226$  at  $p \leq 0,05$ ), though we did not find statistically significant differences between young and adult Chukchi ( $\phi_{\text{emp}} = -1.004$ ).

Statistically significant gender differences were found for question № 4 "The Caucasians will be treated better if they change their behavior," where women more likely did not agree ( $\phi_{\text{emp}} = 1.856$ , with  $p \leq 0,05$ ), question № 7 "It's normal to assume that your nation is better than others", where women more likely did not agree ( $\phi_{\text{emp}} = 4.395$  at  $p \leq 0,01$ ), question № 11, "I am ready to accept a person of different nationality as a member of my family", where women agreed ( $\phi_{\text{emp}} = 3.995$ , with  $p \leq 0,01$ ), question № 14, "I'd like to have friends of different nationalities," where women also agreed ( $\phi_{\text{emp}} = 3.070$ , with  $p \leq 0,01$ ), question № 21, "I can imagine to have a black man as my close friend", where women agreed ( $\phi_{\text{emp}} = 2.142$ , with  $p \leq 0,05$ ). Thus, women on certain answers have shown a high level of ethnic tolerance than men.

Thus, the Chukchi showed average level of the ethnic tolerance. The researcher A. A. Buczek studying the psychological characteristics of the indigenous people of Kamchatka (Itelmens, Koryak, Chukchi, Even), has revealed a high degree of cross-cultural understanding between the nations of Kamchatka [5]. She also listed such specific psychological traits of the North people as secrecy, seclusion, restraint talking, but at the same time sociability, openness, friendliness, cheerfulness, and attentiveness to the other party, helpfulness, kindness and hospitality[5].

The practical significance of the survey is that the results of our study can be used in intercultural business and tourism, in optimization of cross-cultural communications, improving interethnic tolerance.

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