

## Kazakhstan Model of Interethnic Relations: Cultural Aspect

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### Abstract

*The purpose of this study is to critically examine the nature of interethnic interactions in the Republic of Kazakhstan through the lens of the cultural aspect at the institutional level, as well as to identify the model of interethnic relations in Kazakhstan. As research methods, the study involved diachronic and synchronistic methods corresponding to cultural studies, which allowed considering the current state of interethnic relations in the country by aspects and systemically, considering historical-geographical, socio-economic, cultural, and linguistic contexts. The study also employed a psychological approach, which allowed considering the development of interethnic relations from the standpoint of subjective cultural mechanisms. As a result, a descriptive model of interethnic relations in the Republic of Kazakhstan was formulated, and the study identified the crisis moments affecting the full-fledged development of coexisting ethno-religious microsociums, native people and immigrants, in the multilingual and multicultural system of the republic.*

**Keywords:** Multiculturalism; polyethnicity; diglossia; interethnic tolerance; multinational state

### Introduction

At this stage of nation-building, Kazakhstan is experiencing one of the most interesting metamorphoses in the creation of a harmonious interethnic society unique throughout Central Asia. This study touches on the cultural aspect of interethnic relations. Multi-ethnic structure of a country provides the researcher with an excellent opportunity to keep track of the centuries-old tradition of interethnic relations and make this study comprehensive and objective (Keller & Takacs, 2019). Throughout its centuries-old history, the territory of Kazakhstan has become home to many peoples who, willingly or unwillingly (due to migration and deportation), came to this land, bringing along their culture, language, traditions, and religion (Ziller et al., 2019). In this situation, after gaining independence, Kazakhstan had to overcome many challenges, but due to cultural traditions, the state managed to handle any crises swiftly that broke out in many post-Soviet states after the collapse of the USSR (Kalenova, 2019; Siromska, 2020).

One of the keys to understanding the structure of interethnic relations is the cultural, confessional, and linguistic diversity in a multi-ethnic state (Salguero Montaña & Hejazi, 2021; Thelamour & Mwangi, 2021), which Kazakhstan represents. In the chosen cultural aspect, the starting point in understanding this issue is the Kazakh tradition of multiculturalism and tolerance. Kazakhstan is the central conductor of Western and Eastern cultures, becoming a connecting link, moreover, cultivating a unique symbiosis of a multi-ethnic state that treats

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every citizen with respect. Numerous ethnic groups living on the territory of the state do not feel violated or treated as second-class citizens. In the interethnic issue, cultural tradition places emphasis on understanding each nation and granting the right to ethno-cultural authenticity. The “Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan” is dealing with this issue (Kalenova, 2019). The uniqueness of interethnic relations in the Republic of Kazakhstan is the heterogeneity of the population. Over its centuries-old history, not only ordinary migrants, but also exiles, deported not only individuals, but also entire nations have become residents of this land. Such abrupt changes in the national composition in many regions of Kazakhstan could lead to interethnic conflicts and crises, but here one must consider the connecting link of every citizen in the state – Kazakh unity.

Kazakhstan's unity is mostly a cultural issue because based on centuries-old exchange of customs and experience in the harsh conditions of the past, the idea of a single – Kazakh – nationality is outlined in every representative of the multi-ethnic environment living in Kazakhstan, and in its every resident including native people, people whose ancestors migrated to Kazakhstan at or against their will as well as those who migrated to the country recently. Its role lies in providing every ethnic group or people with the opportunity to profess their faith, follow their customs, learn their language, but culturally feel and be proud that they are a citizen of Kazakhstan. In such an environment, a multicultural atmosphere is formed (Fuhse, 2020), where every citizen feels respect and tolerance for any representative of other nationalities, seeing in them not their national or religious enemy, but a Kazakhstani citizen, such as themselves (McDoom, 2019).

In addition, a consolidating role in this issue is played by a common history, which makes all these steps possible. The central aspect here is the freedom of a representative of each ethnic group in the process of studying their history to get acquainted with the history of neighbouring peoples, developing an understanding of personal and ethnic involvement in the general context of a political nation (Coenen & Kunst, 2021). A feature of a successful cultural diversity in a multi-ethnic state is an adequate model of interethnic relations as a foundation for the comprehensive development of each individual, which in turn has a beneficial effect on improving the political, economic, and socio-cultural well-being of Kazakhstan.

## **Materials and Methods**

The study of the Kazakh model of interethnic relations employed methods and approaches inherent in cultural studies. In the field of cultural studies, most popular and frequently used research methods are diachronic and synchronistic. From the standpoint of the diachronic method of research, it is necessary to chronologically present the facts according to the multidirectional factors in the culture of modern Kazakhstan, which influenced the nature of the model of interethnic communication. While the diachronic research method allows considering the developed model of interethnic relations from the standpoint of the historical context as a sequence of events, the synchronistic research method allows analysing the structure in question in a single time interval, which allows investigating it from the standpoint of cultural factors relevant to a given period, while using more narrowly focused methods. Together, diachronic and synchronistic research methods allow considering the situation on the contrast of a general time interval and a specific one, as a result of which a qualitative



transformation can be tracked, the processes of migration and deportation to Kazakhstan in different periods of time can be studied.

Another valuable tool in cultural studies is the general comparative method, which is used to concretise common and distinctive aspects of the cultures under study. It is also employed in the study of intercultural relations, since it allows comparing and evaluating certain data and derivatives of inequality of peoples in a particular territory, specifics of native people's and immigrants' cultures. The comparative method allows assessing the level of development of each of the ethnic groups, as well as to identify the key events that took place in the fate of one or more of them and became a decisive event for the higher position of the ethnic group among others. The comparative method is valuable from the standpoint of tracing correlations in the development of cultural processes of parallel ethnic groups and determining mutual interethnic influences.

The comparative method was used to the distinct specification of the cultural differences of some ethnic groups from others using elements of typological and semiotic methods that were used to investigate the cultural system of an ethnos in its entirety (typological) and to explore the sign system of a separately considered ethnos (semiotic). The typological method allows investigating the cultural structure as an integral system on the smallest scale, establishing the type and similarity of the typological components of the ethnos and differentiating them.

To investigate the subjective mechanisms of the semiotic component of disparate cultures, the authors applied a psychological approach, which allows factoring in the psychological unconscious and conscious reactions of the masses of people in historical and social contexts, which also provides the insight into the result of subjective individual and collective behaviour in cultural phenomena. The said method is employed to describe the behaviour of a particular ethnic group, which is indispensable in the general study of interethnic relations. Using the psychological approach of the study, it is possible to identify the level of development of the culture of a particular ethnic branch and, consequently, to determine the most probable model of behaviour of the subjects of this culture, or vice versa—to determine the development level of a particular ethnic group according to behavioural reactions or cultural assets.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Interethnic relations and the model of ethnic policy of Kazakhstan**

After the collapse of the USSR, the realities on the territory of Kazakhstan started changing in an entirely different vector of development of interethnic relations. The peoples living in this territory have inherited from their historical and cultural past an immense variety of traditions, confessions, and cultures. Representatives of this region, living on the break between East and West, create a unique cultural and civilisational structure where Asian and European components are combined (Karassayev et al., 2021). Over its centuries-old history, the modern lands of Kazakhstan are full of examples of interethnic interactions at various levels of social, cultural, and ethnic aspects. The lands of Kazakhstan in different periods of their history were part of different multi-ethnic states, which represented various models of synthesis and symbiosis, which included various ethnic groups, religions, and cultures (McDoom, 2019).

Modern Kazakhstan maintains stability in interethnic relations, compared with other regions of Central Asia and the former USSR. This situation is due to many factors: the traditional

polyethnicity and multiculturalism of the region; the habit of living in peace and harmony with neighbours; the stability of political leadership; the totality of economic, political, historical, and social features of the region.

The main problem of Kazakhstan inherited from the USSR in the issue of interethnic relations is the ethnisation of the concept of nation. This creates a paradox in the post-Soviet space, when the designation of a nation is not a civil society, but primarily an ethnicity. First of all, it is necessary to understand that the peoples on the territory of Kazakhstan were formed on a multi-ethnic (linguistic, cultural, etc.) basis, which gives rise to the problem of interethnic relations between “indigenous” and “non-indigenous” peoples (the last ones migrated to Kazakhstan for different reasons, on their will or against it). In this context, the policy of interethnic relations cannot be focused on the imaginary or formal equality of ethnic groups (Kamenou, 2019). Multi-ethnic states set before themselves an entirely different approach, where only an efficient multi-vector ethnic and linguistic policy can succeed. The cultural aspect of polyethnicity can be traced in the cultural project “Trinity of Languages” adopted in Kazakhstan – Kazakh Russian and English (Lokhande & Reichle, 2019).

In maintaining stability in interethnic relations, the State must comply with particular conditions for national minorities, ethnic groups, and respect the right of the people to cultural authenticity. In this context, international law grants numerous inalienable rights to the use of ethnic minority languages, which by right cannot be restricted under any circumstances. A general understanding of these rights can be found in the Copenhagen Meeting of the Conference on the Human Dimension held in 1992 and the document attached to it. Interethnic relations should be treated with great caution because massive efforts should be made to strengthen stability in multi-ethnic mutual understanding. Various socio-economic factors can have a different impact on the state, as well as on their implementation of national policy in interethnic relations (Hussain, 2021). In this vein, the statements of sociologist A.N. Teslenko should be noted. “Currently, over 115 ethnic groups and nationalities live peacefully on the territory of Kazakhstan, and a complex tolerant model of coexistence of Christianity and Islam has developed, allowing the young state in the centre of Eurasia to concentrate the influence of the West and the East” (Kamenou, 2019). It is necessary to supplement this statement with the data of the 2009 census, which specify that over 130 ethnic groups and nationalities live on the territory of Kazakhstan.

The existence of a voluminous range of approaches to the rights of national minorities leaves an imprint, primarily in the specific features of the ethnic composition of the population of the state. This ethnopolitics requires the state to use modern mechanisms for peaceful coordination of the interests and needs of ethnic groups. A considerable number of ethnic groups in Kazakhstan require solving issues of a national nature, because of which the state is gaining experience in ethno-political construction (Colak et al., 2019). One of the key factors in building interethnic relations is the socio-economic development of the state, which increases or limits the government's ability to support migrants, national minorities and social balance. The state's commitment to international law and democratic values plays an essential part in preserving the cultural and linguistic rights of national minorities. In the issue of interethnic harmony in Kazakhstan, one can see a generally stable state associated with the observance of these rights.

The leading role of the government in supporting interethnic relations is to support regular and close contacts of state bodies with representatives of minorities. The state should be



informed about the issues of all ethnic groups living on its territory. In Kazakhstan, the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, created by President Nazarbayev as a platform for solving and resolving issues concerning the issues of ethnic and national minorities, can serve as a vivid example of the policy supporting interethnic relations and ties (Kamenou, 2019).

Interethnic relations and ethnic policy in Kazakhstan are of particular importance due to the multi-ethnic composition of the population. As a result of centuries-old interactions of Turkic, Slavic, and other peoples, a tradition of mutual respect and tolerance has developed, and young people are being brought up in the spirit of tolerance. Interethnic relations in Kazakhstan are constantly supported by a balanced national policy. The above-mentioned Assembly can serve as an example, which in the ethnic aspect unites the social, economic, political, and spiritual processes of the modern society of Kazakhstan.

To this end, an important aspect of interethnic relations should be specified, namely the interlanguage one. The culture of interethnic harmony is a heterogeneous phenomenon due to the heterogeneity of the geography of languages on the territory of Kazakhstan, developed in specific historical conditions. Since constructive dialogue should be based not only on a common political and national idea, but also on common means, the linguistic situation can be considered a correlate of the level of interethnic harmony in the model under study as a literal indicator of the possibility of “compromising”. The structure of any political nation, including Kazakhstan, should begin with the search for publicly available methods of solving problematic issues, the effectiveness of which directly depends on the communicational means, methods, and approaches. Multilingualism in a stable internal political and cultural-social environment signifies a peaceful coexistence of representatives of different ethno-linguistic groups, which in turn indicates the effectiveness of the policy of civil society structure. It is worth noting the dominance of the titular ethnic group, which automatically includes Kazakh in most of the local multilingualism, albeit with certain exceptions depending on the measure of compactness and the number of resident representatives. The tri- and quadrilingualism found in some regions also testifies to the stable and culturally organic nature of the policy of interethnic harmony. A distinctive feature of interethnic communication is the transition from quantitative multilingualism (the number of speakers of more than one language) to qualitative multilingualism (the number of languages mastered), especially among young people, which confirms the effectiveness of educational initiatives. Researchers (Pratto & Stewart, 2020; Tleuzhanova et al., 2019) also note the imbalance of particularly bilingualism in favour of the Russian language in comparison with the rest. It is for the sake of preserving and developing languages that the Kazakh media broadcast in 12 languages and clubs and courses for those wishing to learn a particular language are supported everywhere.

Back to the language issue, the main feature of the modern stage of development of the Kazakh society (which can be referred to all post-Soviet republics) is the rapid development of languages, cultures, and self-consciousness of all peoples. Notably, Kazakhstan has established a developed system of education in the national language, supported by legal guarantees that protect the inalienable right of citizens of any nationality to develop their language and culture. Schools in the national languages of small peoples and national minorities function in the places of residence of national and ethnic minorities in Kazakhstan, which only confirms the positive attitude of the state concerning constructive interethnic relations in Kazakhstan (Tleuzhanova et al., 2019).

In modern realities, the Assembly has become a social force that has intertwined with conventional institutions of civil society and expresses its position in the chambers of Parliament, as well as at the level of the media and various organisations (Pratto & Stewart, 2020; Tleuzhanova et al., 2019). Over the years, the Assembly, in understanding the socio-political consciousness of the people, has become a protective mechanism against interethnic problems and a tool for the country's security to find constructive solutions to problematic issues (Kisfalusi et al., 2020). In this regard, the Assembly has become an essential element of the Kazakh political system, uniting the interests of all ethnic groups and ensuring respect for the rights of every citizen regardless of their belonging to a national or religious group. This system of interactions allowed for effective moderation of the society where representatives of over 130 ethnic groups live (Verkuyten & Yogeewaran, 2020; Saleem, 2021).

Paragraph 3, Article 7 and Paragraph 2, Article 19 of the Constitution of Kazakhstan prescribe the right to learn and actively use native languages, Article 6 of the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan “On Languages in the Republic of Kazakhstan” (Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan..., 1997) consolidates the right of every citizen to freely learn their native language and use it in communication. The ethnolinguistic policy in educational institutions is also consolidated and operates according to the Constitution.

The data of the Ministry of Culture, Information, and Sports of Kazakhstan indicate that over 80 % of the media outlets comply with the requirements of the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan “On Media” and broadcast in state languages at least 50 % of the total content volume. Along with the main languages, various magazines and newspapers are published in Kazakhstan, programmes are broadcast in 11 languages, while all national media receive state financial aid. One of the striking cultural aspects in interethnic relations is the issue of coverage of the involvement of citizens of Kazakhstan in the cultural life of the country and the use of their native language and culture is carried out in periodicals within the thematic areas. To this end, the coverage of topical issues of modernity, integration processes on the territory of the CIS, is also provided by active publications designed to subject the topics of national ethnic groups (Saleem, 2021).

Thus, national schools function in places where ethnic minorities live, while Sunday schools for the study of native languages and traditions work at national cultural centres, and national media are published. Furthermore, the Assembly of the Peoples of Kazakhstan, created by the President of Kazakhstan Nazarbayev, united all national cultural centres and is an active mechanism for representing the interests of national minorities in the development of national policies and programmes in the field of interethnic relations.

### **Interethnic tolerance and interethnic harmony in Kazakhstan**

Considering the above, a separate aspect in the cultural development of interethnic relations in Kazakhstan is interethnic tolerance. As previously stated, over 130 nationalities and ethnicities, various faiths live in Kazakhstan, who live in peace and work for the good of the country. According to the interethnic tolerant model, society in Kazakhstan develops in harmonious unity and mutual understanding. Following the words of the first President of Kazakhstan N. Nazarbayev: “Unity in Kazakhstan is based on noble ideals calling for patience, peacefulness, and mercy. It is the duty of every citizen of Kazakhstan to preserve spiritual and cultural values and preserve the unity of the people and stability in the country”.



The concept of tolerance in the context of interethnic relations includes the ability of each member of society to accept the existence of other individuals with a different opinion, that is, to contend with the opinion of others and realise the right to distinctiveness. The development of interethnic tolerant relations in Kazakhstan constitutes a long and complex process (due to the multinational nature of the state), starting from early childhood and proceeding throughout life. To develop this understanding, education becomes a key factor that contributes to the cultivation of awareness of ethnic and cultural differences in socio-political community, friendship between various religious and national groups (Kozhevnikova & Merkulova, 2020). It should be remembered that the development level of the educational system affects what values are formed in individuals in the process of communicating with the outside world (Kuzelnyi, 2020), as well as the inherent values (especially at school and student age) that affect the future of the state (Saleem, 2021).

The main foundation for creating an atmosphere of tolerance and mutual understanding, especially in a multinational state like Kazakhstan, is the educational system, which forms an idea of the normative model of interethnic relations among the younger generation, and is also one of the key tools for preventing tension in society, contributes to the successful introduction of the concept of intercultural dialogue to avoid internal conflicts. It is also important that children of deported to Kazakhstan people are not discriminated by children whose families live in the country for generations, thus, tolerance in the educational system is crucial.

The process of developing interethnic tolerant relations is based on the educational system, especially the introduction of advanced methods of didactics and personal consciousness of the teacher, who should help the younger generation gain respect for the honour and dignity of each people living in Kazakhstan. The unconditional equality of ethnic groups, despite their number and origin, the emphasis on the cultural component instead of qualitative and quantitative indicators and data should become part of Kazakhstan's pedagogical culture.

For example, 2019 was declared the Year of Youth in Kazakhstan. The international holidays “World Youth Day” and “International Students' Day” united the younger generation through the narrative of involvement in international relations of solidarity, erasing the boundaries of national and cultural differences. Before the pandemic situation in the world, the international We Are the Future of Kazakhstan student youth forum, which united people from all over Central Asia, became traditional (Escobar-Tello, 2021). The purpose of the educational system in interethnic tolerant relations is to convey to future generations a complete idea of a complex ethnopolitical national culture in parallel with the culture of other countries, which should develop their sense of national dignity, internal and external solidarity, give them the foundations for a full life in a multi-ethnic and multicultural society.

The means developing the nation-forming global narrative are based on the principles of conformity of their aspect influence and the possibility of use in the educational process, based on the bioadaptive structure and the content of the qualities under study. The means related to interethnic tolerant relations include (Wachter, 2020): informing young people about the culture and way of life of the nationalities of Kazakhstan; conducting joint collective events to collect, study, and disseminate various ethnographic and general cultural materials; cooperation with national cultural centres; organising and conducting national and local ethnic events and holidays; involving students in the decision-making process in real life situations related to the problem of interethnic tolerant relations; initiating self-organisation of

discussions and round tables of a given issue; organising educational excursions and expeditions.

During the period of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, the activities of this state institution were aimed at solving certain tasks (Corradi & Levrau, 2021):

- preservation of interethnic and interfaith harmony, stability in society;
- elaboration of consultative and advisory proposals for the implementation of national policy, contributing to the development of friendly relations between representatives of various ethnic groups, promoting the spiritual and cultural revival of the country according to the principle of equality of rights;
- providing representation with reliable statistical and scientific data to consider the interests of many ethnic groups and nationalities in the ethnic policy pursued by the state.

In addition to this, the Assembly's activities contribute to the growth of the country's international authority through the demonstration of diplomatic peacekeeping potential through the effective solution of internal interethnic issues. In this regard, society and citizens should realise that peace and stability in the state are not formed by themselves but are established by consolidating each individual citizen through an internal representative ethno-cultural identity into a single nation, public-state coordination of efforts for the effectiveness of interethnic and interfaith processes. During the creation of the Assembly, President N. Nazarbayev formulated numerous tasks for society, the key among which was the development of public consciousness that meets the tasks of systemic modernisation. The entire administrative apparatus and civil society, including the media, non-governmental business, social and educational industry institutions should be involved in this process (Wachter, 2020).

Thus, in modern realities, one of the key components of constructive and tolerant interethnic relations is the systematic education and personality development as a carrier of ideas of ethnocultural identity, political national identity and involvement in the system of multifactorial interaction of ethnic groups in the context of a single state and autonomous social institutions.

The model of interethnic tolerant interaction, if one considers it in the cultural aspect, was created on a historically established basis, the mentality, and traditions of individual peoples living on the territory of Kazakhstan, which consolidated from ethnic groups into a single political nation. In this regard, one can recall the Kazakh folk proverb that says: “Birlik bolmai tirlik bolmas” (there is no life without unity) (Wachter, 2020), which is the quintessence of the strategy of nation-building of Kazakhstan, which is based on unity and harmony.

Over an exceptionally long period of development, Kazakhstan has developed a unique tradition of interethnic relations between various peoples living on it. It is based on the attitude of Kazakhs filled with peacefulness, understanding, and tolerance towards all ethnic groups and nationalities who, by the will of fate, found themselves on the territory of a common homeland. In the 1990s, with the collapse of the USSR, internal interethnic conflicts threatened many former republics. Numerous young states have experienced them in the most severe form. Kazakhstan was predicted to suffer from the most adverse scenarios, but a





balanced and cautious national policy aimed at the benefit of all the peoples of Kazakhstan made it possible to survive the transition period relatively painlessly.

The Kazakh model of interethnic harmony constitutes a multifactorial regulatory structure that factors in many features of Kazakh society (Kros, 2020): the residence of ethnic groups and nationalities; the state dominant, unitary, and consolidated nation – Kazakhs; the polyethnic state; the state language – Kazakh; the state need for the development and provision of national languages of all ethnic groups; the interests of citizens who received a second homeland as a result of forced migration (including deportation); a multi-confessional society; a society with deep traditions of universal tolerance, which is implied as a common heritage and value by all ethnic groups of Kazakhstan; an original and complex model of interethnic relations concluded in the harmonisation of all features.

The Kazakh model of interethnic relations offers the following postulates:

Interethnic relations are impossible without constructive and creative interactions of civil society institutions represented by ethnocultural and public associations, as well as public initiative movements, which must meet an adequate response from the state. This response was the creation of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, which became a broad platform for dialogue between the state and society.

1. All ethnic groups should have a high civil, legal, and social status. All ethnic groups do not act as national minorities but are treated as citizens who have the full rights of a single people.
2. Representation and political realisation of the interests of ethnic groups is carried out at the highest level. The Chairman of the Assembly is the guarantor of the Constitution – the President.
3. The interests of interethnic relations are ensured through guaranteed parliamentary representation in the Assembly. 9 deputies gather in the Mazhilis from the Assembly.

In modern realities, an individual in the process of socio-cultural life communicates with many ethnic groups and nationalities. Thus, the optimal model of interethnic relations is formed as follows. Kazakhstan constitutes a community of citizens of various nationalities, but not a new ethnic community. Integration processes in Kazakhstan are based on the preservation of ethnic uniqueness in the country. The development of a new system of social structure of institutions is in demand, as a result of which there are opportunities for an adequate response to all the requests of the multi-ethnic society of Kazakhstan.

### **Integration and disintegration processes in multi-ethnic societies in the context of a pandemic**

The global crisis caused by the pandemic has triggered the intensification of the processes of interethnic relations, which are most clearly manifested in multi-ethnic states. Integration processes, which imply a transitional state or the process of combining social phenomena into a single whole, the coexistence of heterogeneous elements of society. Integration also acts as a process of harmonisation of interaction between different social and ethnic groups (Kros, 2020). As for the disintegration processes in interethnic relations during the pandemic, it is a process of disintegration of the social whole into separate parts. The most obvious derivatives

of this process are the processes of disintegration and disappearance during the pandemic of a common social organisational structure, values, institutions, norms, and common civic interests. The development of disintegration processes contributes to the aggravation of social conflicts, including conflicts with representatives of various ethnic groups, which can have an adverse effect on any multi-ethnic state.

The experience of the European Union demonstrates that the crisis that emerged as a result of the coronavirus pandemic in 2020 leads to the intensification of disintegration processes in multi-ethnic societies. In this case, the relevant post-COVID-19 issues for Kazakhstan and the entire world are problems of a socio-economic nature: poverty, inequality, unemployment. Therefore, the scientific community currently needs to focus on investigating the context of these issues due to their threatening nature to national welfare. The research data are also relevant for Kazakhstan, which has suffered from the consequences of the post-COVID-19 crisis. Therewith, the disintegration processes only indirectly affected the territory of Kazakhstan, due to a well-thought-out policy in interethnic relations, as mentioned above (Geerlings, 2019). The crucial issues of the post-COVID-19 crisis for Kazakhstan are socio-economic in nature. The crisis phenomenon in the social sphere is most evident in the decline in the level and quality of life of the population, the growth of unemployment, the deterioration of social well-being, etc.

The introduction of restrictions on movement and temporary closure of borders led to the “closure” of the population of Kazakhstan within certain territorial entities, which led to the automation of society. Automation in this case leads society to low social contacts and the dominance of private family interactions in public life. People have no idea about common problems, they tend to rely on their loved ones. However, disunity increases due to the introduction of anti-epidemic means to counteract the pandemic, for example, self-isolation, social distancing (Hua et al., 2020; Shnarbekova, 2021).

Thus, the pandemic and many restrictions imposed to counteract the pandemic have various social effects that contribute to both the automation of society and partial disintegration. These processes under the condition of a multi-ethnic state, such as Kazakhstan, impose interethnic contradictions and conflicts inherent in it, which can harm society through the rejection of national and civic values. However, using the above-mentioned solutions in terms of interethnic relations, the state managed to get out of the COVID-19 crisis with minimal damage (Hua et al., 2020).

## **Conclusions**

Interethnic relations on the territory of Kazakhstan are a complex social and cultural process, which over the centuries has developed a unique multi-ethnic model of relations for the whole of Central Asia, where hundreds of ethnic groups and nationalities can live in peace and prosperity. Migration and deportation to Kazakhstan had an impact on the existence of multiculturalism in the country. The implementation of this model of coexistence is allowed for by numerous factors, including the creation of a direct dialogue between different groups of ethnic groups with the state on a permanent platform – the Assembly of Peoples of Kazakhstan – which is the main source of solutions to all current and future ethnic and national issues. The development of universal tolerance among the population is allowed not only by the cultural origins of the multi-ethnic coexistence of many nationalities based on a



centuries-old tradition, but also by the educational system that teaches the younger generation in the spirit of interethnic equality and respect for every citizen of Kazakhstan.

This also includes a considerable cultural aspect, which lies in the development of national media, as well as the provision of an opportunity for every citizen to study and honour their cultural heritage. The study provided examples of complementary public-state regulation of the development of interethnic relations in Kazakhstan, and especially the maintenance of balance in the language issue. Despite the heterogeneity of the socio-cultural and ethnopolitical situation in Kazakhstan in the historical and geographical aspect, different ethnic groups still coexist in harmony in areas of non-compact residence, which demonstrates the model of multilingualism actively supported by the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan. Despite the heterogeneity of multilingualism depending on the ethnic composition of the regions, the presence of bi-, tri-, and quadrilingual phenomena in the regions of non-compact residence of representatives of different ethnic and religious groups indicates the effectiveness of the educational strategy and national socio-information policy.

Due to the tolerance and wisdom of the Kazakh people, as well as the reasonable, balanced and fair national policy of the First President N. Nazarbayev, an atmosphere of harmony and stability has been consolidated in Kazakhstan. What saved Kazakhstan from the life-taking ethnic confrontations that took place in other republics. Thus, the unifying link of interethnic relations in Kazakhstan is the culture of the peoples living here, who, over their centuries-old history, have absorbed many ethnic groups and peoples who are mixing, creating a unique structure of multi-ethnic relations in Central Asia. Migration, deportation, and resettlement of peoples to the lands of Kazakhstan forced the peoples to adapt to new conditions, absorbing a piece of culture and tolerant ideas to the local population, resulting in a unique model of interethnic relations and mutual understanding.

In the future, it is necessary to consider possible improvements in the conditions for the existence of a multi-ethnic state, including the specifics of creating conditions for the development of the culture and languages of the ethnic groups of Kazakhstan.

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