

## ACQUISITION OF SOCIAL EXPERIENCE BY JUNIOR SCHOOLCHILDREN IN A PROVINCIAL SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

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**Abstract:** This paper explores the problem of social experience acquisition by the junior schoolchildren in a provincial social environment. The authors review various approaches to defining the key research concepts, describe the main characteristics of social experience of the junior schoolchildren in the context of a provincial society, analyze the results of a diagnostic study to assess the level of social experience acquired by the junior schoolchildren. Testing of the identified pedagogical conditions (implementation of the extracurricular activity programs; use of various organizational forms of socially oriented activities; activation of interactions between the subjects of educational relationships) has proven their effectiveness.

**Keywords:** junior schoolchild, socialization, social experience, knowledge about social reality, social skills, acquisition of social experience.

### 1 Introduction

Against the backdrop of transformations in the modern society, it becomes increasingly urgent to develop subjective qualities of personality, which help to handle various problems: from everyday life issues to the worldview attitudes in the life situations requiring a vast store of social knowledge, skills, abilities and creative potential. In connection therewith, research into the process of acquisition of social experience, which plays an important role in the social development of personality of junior schoolchildren, takes on particular significance. Children of this age group are capable of gaining elementary social experience, which will later become the foundation for their social development, behavior in situations of positive and negative external influence; strategic pattern for building personal relationships and relationships with the society as a whole.

However, presently the problem of the influence of the provincial society on the result of socialization of the junior schoolchildren remains insufficiently studied. Specific characteristics of a provincial society include a combination of economic, socio-cultural, psychological-pedagogical conditions shaping the values and norms of this community, specific features of intercultural and interpersonal interaction, social partnership between the subjects of educational relationships, etc.

General education institutions charged with a task to neutralize the negative influences of society, have a rich potential to create conditions (a process of establishing interpersonal and business contacts between children and teachers becomes more intense; favorable conditions for cooperation, organization of joint activities and communication, creative activities of teachers and children of different ages; priority of friendly and trusting relationships between teachers and students, etc.) for successful acquisition by junior schoolchildren of social experience in a provincial social environment.

This implies the need for a comprehensive study of the optimal ways to maximize a positive social influence on junior schoolchildren and the tapping of the socializing potential of the modern educational space in a provincial society, which makes our study highly relevant.

### 2 Literature Review

At the present stage in the pedagogical science development, the problem of socialization is examined not only from the angle of procedural characteristics (Aguayo et al., 2021; Dodge et al., 1994; Joan & Davidov, 2010; Wichmann et al., 2021) but also from the angle of its result expressed in a certain amount of social experience which predetermines how successfully a personality interacts with the surrounding social reality. Special features of development of junior schoolchildren are discussed in the works of M. V. Antonova, I. B. Buyanova, S. N. Gorshenina, I. A. Neyasova, T. I. Shukshina (2019); N. V. Kuznetsova, S. V. Maslova, O. I. Chiranova, L. A. Yankina (2020). Special features of socialization at different age stages and socialization of children with special educational needs were explored by E. V. Bartsaeva, N. V. Ryabova (2020), L. P. Karpushina, I. S. Kobozeva, N. I. Chinyakova, Yu. V. Velichko (Kobozeva et al., 2020), K. E. Cherry, E. D. Gerstein (2021), E. V. Zvoyleko, S. A. Kalashnikova, T. K. Klimenko (2016), G. G. Khubulava (2017), D. K. Tanatova, I. V. Korolev, M. V. Nevskaya, L. R. Tairova (2018).

Younger school age is an important age stage in the social development of personality, as it is a period when social norms are actively internalized. As stated in a series of studies (Bartsaeva, 2020; Golovneva & Daminova, 2016; Daminova & Suleimanova, 2017; Mitina, 2011; Khasanova, 2019), the specific features of social experience acquisition by junior schoolchildren are manifested in the following: development of the techniques and skills of productive learning, "the ability to learn"; emergence of self-control, self-fulfillment and self-regulation skills; establishment of new social relationships, strong friendships, intensive development of value orientations, etc. The modern research elucidates the methodological foundations of social experience acquisition by junior schoolchildren, various aspects of targeted work with junior schoolchildren (Bezuglova, 2014; Bykova, 2020; Kolesnikova, 2017), facilitating formation of the content characteristics of social experience, teaching technologies, methods, techniques and means of providing social experience to junior schoolchildren.

The acquisition of social experience by junior schoolchildren occurs under the influence of certain external socio-cultural conditions. In their works, the researchers (Aryabkina et al., 2019; Yevtushenko, 2010; Shukshina et al., 2017) reveal the mechanisms of provincial society influence on the acquisition of social experience by children of different ages. In a provincial social environment, a child has potentially wide opportunities to choose the circle of communication, the system of values, the opportunities for self-fulfillment.

The analysis of psychological and pedagogical literature has led us to defining "social experience" as a result of cognitive and practical activity, expressed in the accumulated knowledge about social phenomena, social skills and behaviors, the unity of a positive attitude towards reality and the ability to express this attitude in everyday life, proactively participate in the transformation of social reality.

### 3 Research Methodological Framework

The purpose of this research was to identify and test the pedagogical conditions facilitating effective acquisition of positive social experience by the junior schoolchildren in a provincial society.

This purpose was accomplished through the following objectives: to analyze the main approaches to the problem of social experience acquisition by junior schoolchildren in a provincial society; to determine the initial level of social experience of junior schoolchildren living in provincial society; to assess the effectiveness of the created pedagogical conditions

for facilitating the acquisition of social experience by junior schoolchildren in a provincial society.

The experiment lasted from 2018 until 2021. The experimental base was Lyceum N 26 and Secondary General Education School with In-Depth Study of Selected Subjects N 30 in Saransk. The experiment involved 196 junior schoolchildren (3rd year primary school students).

The research employed the following methods: analysis, generalizations based on review of psychological and pedagogical literature, pedagogical experiment, questionnaire survey, testing, qualitative and quantitative processing of the research findings.

The following diagnostic tools were used to reveal the current level of social experience of junior schoolchildren at the ascertaining stage of our experiment and to measure the effectiveness of the tested pedagogical conditions facilitating successful acquisition of social experience by children of primary school age in a provincial social environment: the authors' method "An Unfinished Sentence", "Making a Dictionary" (T. P. Gavrilova); the projective method "The Unfinished Stories" (T. P. Gavrilova), the method for exploring the emotional-value component "What is Good and What is Bad" (Gavrilova, 2005); "My Black and White Portrait", "A Fan" (O. S. Bogdanova). This diagnostic toolkit helped us to reveal the age-specific features of social experience acquisition by the junior students, taking into account the conditions of a provincial society.

#### 4 Results and Discussion

Structurally the social experience of junior schoolchildren may be represented as a combination of the following components:

1. The cognitive component is expressed by the knowledge of social reality (rules of building relationships with society and own self; knowledge of the culture of conduct in public places; ideas about the variety of objects and phenomena in nature and society, their properties, qualities and states; basic social concepts, their meaning; elementary knowledge of culture, history of native land and country);
2. The activity component implies the manifestation of social skills and abilities (compliance with the rules of conduct in society; ability to assess own behavior and behavior of others; ability to resolve conflicts with others independently and fairly; ability to plan own actions);
3. The emotional-value component is manifested in the ability to manage own feelings and emotions; ability to learn to perceive own feelings consciously and express them in a way understandable for others; ability to express own views, thoughts, emotions in a form understandable by others; ability to see positives and negatives in the relationship; ability to care about loved ones, be sensitive to the feelings of others, etc.;
4. The reflexive component is expressed in the ability to carry out reflexive activity, to solve elementary problematic social problems and situations; to plan and forecast own activities; to adapt to the changing environment, to approach the solution of social situations creatively; ability to apply knowledge and skills in a new life situation.

For identifying the initial level of social experience among the children of primary school age living in a provincial society, the ascertaining stage of the experiment was conducted over a time space from March till June 2020. This stage of the experiment involved 97 junior schoolchildren in the control group and 99 junior schoolchildren in the experimental group from the general education institutions Lyceum N 26 and Secondary General Education School with In-Depth Study of Selected Subjects N 30 in Saransk. The level of social experience of junior schoolchildren living in a provincial society was investigated through the lens of the indicated components with the help of the following diagnostic tools (the cognitive component - author's method "An Unfinished Sentence", "Making a Dictionary" (Gavrilova, 2005); the activity component - the projective

method "Unfinished Stories" (T. P. Gavrilova), (Shchetinina, 2000), "Ethical Tasks" (T. P. Gavrilova) (Gavrilova, 2005); the emotional-value component - "What is Good and What is Bad" (L. M. Friedman), the technique "Choose a Picture" (O. E. Shapovalova) (Gavrilova, 2005) and the reflexive component - "My Black and White Portrait", "A Fan" (O. S. Bogdanova) (Gavrilova, 2005).

According to the results obtained at the ascertaining stage of the experiment the junior schoolchildren were divided into three groups with high (19.6% (CG) and 20.2% (EG)), medium (45.3% (CG) and 46.5 (EG)) and low (35.1% (CG) and 33.3% (EG)) levels of social experience.

Children of junior school age with a high level of social experience have extensive information about the social side of life, show a desire to deepen their social knowledge, are ready for social action, are able to analyze their own behavior and actions of others, to build positive emotional relationships, show a high level of creative and intellectual activity; are able to analyze their actions, critically assess the actions contradicting the generally accepted norms and rules.

Junior schoolchildren with a medium level of social experience have gaps in the structure of social knowledge, when dealing with the problematic social situations they expect help from adults or peers, when choosing a line of behavior, they decide in their own favor, trying not to harm others, show situational cognitive interest in the surrounding social reality, have no aspirations for making creative transformations.

The third group of primary school students, with a low level of social experience, have an insufficient amount of social knowledge, do things without clear motivation, their social assessments are characterized by the erroneous judgments, show negative emotions when difficulties arise, have a tendency to reproductive practical activities.

Analysis of the research results helped to reveal the following special features of social experience acquisition by the junior schoolchildren with account of their age in a provincial social environment. The level of awareness of the basic social notions, concepts, knowledge increases with age; the content side of the cognitive component of social experience changes due to the growing number of attributes and categories included in the active vocabulary and as a result of clarification of already known information, while new formations are not yet integrated into a single system, remaining isolated components of the social sphere of personality. At this age stage, the circle of relationships expands, their qualitative characteristics change, a simple emotional response to the action typical for first graders, by the third grade becomes a conscious evaluation and a stable emotional attitude, but the emotional-value component does not yet reach the high level of development.

Based on the results obtained in a study, purposeful work for facilitating acquisition of social experience by junior schoolchildren was organized with account of the conditions of a provincial society.

The main focus of this work was to implement the program of extracurricular activities "Me and the Surrounding World" in the experimental group in Secondary General Education School with In-Depth Study of Selected Subjects N 30 in Saransk, which helped to test the first pedagogical condition.

The main objectives of the program of extracurricular activities were: to provide understanding of the phenomena from the social sphere of life and a holistic generalized "picture of the world"; to draw attention to the significance of universal human values and create conditions for developing a positive emotional attitude toward people; to develop the skills of communication in a group of peers; to develop the skills of analyzing own actions and to find non-standard solutions to social situations.

The structure of the program includes the following thematic blocks: "My Home, My Family and Friends", "My School, My

Friends", "My City, My Homeland", "Good Magicians of our City", "The World of Good Deeds and Acts of Kindness". Topics of the lessons allow gradually introduced the content of the main structural components of social experience according to the concentric principle.

The second pedagogical condition was fulfilled through the use of different forms of socially-oriented activities, providing the opportunity to form the structural components of social experience of junior schoolchildren taking into account the specifics of a provincial society environment.

The use of socially-oriented activities for facilitating acquisition of social experience by junior schoolchildren was aimed at reproducing different situations from life; igniting personal interest in children and providing them understanding of social significance of the results of their activities; encouraging initiative of the junior schoolchildren in planning social activities, discussing various options to participate in them, with due responsibility, self-control and evaluation.

The fulfillment of the third pedagogical condition was intended to activate the interactions between subjects of educational relations in the process organized for facilitating acquisition of social experience by junior schoolchildren in a provincial social environment.

The teacher's position in relation to a junior schoolchild in the context of fulfillment of this pedagogical condition implies: expressing value attitude to the student's personality, showing interest to suggestions, wishes, opinion of each student, evaluating the actions of junior schoolchildren relating to the specific situation, accentuating attention on the positive personal qualities of students and their development.

The subjective position of a junior schoolchild in interactions with the teacher implies: independence - the ability to act independently, to make decisions, to show own initiative and to set goals and identify ways to reach them; proactive approach, the willingness of a junior schoolchild to expand the scope of their social activities and communication, to act beyond the requirements, the situation, the role expectations and preferences.

Effectiveness of the fulfilled pedagogical conditions was estimated by examining the level of social experience by junior schoolchildren at the control stage of our experiment. The control stage of the experiment (February-June 2021) included junior schoolchildren from the control and experimental groups. The diagnostic tools were used to find out effectiveness of the tested pedagogical conditions. 34.3% of junior schoolchildren from the experimental group have a high level of social experience which manifested in the deep knowledge of the social reality, socio-moral norms and rules of behavior; the ability to observe the rules and norms of behavior, to analyze own behavior and actions of other people, show confidence and friendliness in the immediate communication with peers and adults; are ready to be proactive and show initiative in the conditions of free choice in socio-moral situations; make positive decisions in the changing interaction context, etc.; 57.6% of children demonstrated the medium level; 8.1% have the low level of social experience. In the control group, some insignificant changes occurred, the low level was shown by 31%, the medium level - by 47.4%, and the high level - by 21.6% of children.

## 5 Conclusion

The conducted research led us to the following conclusions:

The acquisition of social experience by junior school students means perception, accumulation, enrichment, comprehension, acceptance in the facilitating pedagogical conditions of knowledge about social phenomena, social skills and abilities, experience of emotional relationships, experience of creative activity. The key goal of the primary general education becomes not only to carry out the targeted work for shaping positive

social experience, but also to neutralize the negative external influences of social environment on the process of learning.

According to the results obtained at the ascertaining stage of our experiment, we may conclude that the majority of junior schoolchildren have a low level of social experience, which triggered the need to identify and test the facilitating pedagogical conditions for boosting the effectiveness of this process, taking into account the characteristics of a provincial society. The main facilitating pedagogical conditions were:

- implementation of the program of extracurricular activities "Me and the Surrounding World";
- use of various forms of socially-oriented activities seeking to form the structural components of social experience in junior schoolchildren;
- activation of interactions between subjects of educational relations in the process organized for facilitating acquisition of social experience by junior schoolchildren in a provincial social environment.

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