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## **DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIO-CULTURAL EXPERIENCE OF CHILDREN AS PREVENTION OF AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR**

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### ***Abstract***

One of the characteristic features of modern civilization and Russian society is the intensive transformation of the phenomenon of childhood, which occurs under the influence of high dynamics of socio-cultural development, the processes of globalization, integration and informatization which are increasingly referred to in many works of modern researchers. This process represents a serious challenge to pedagogical science, which for centuries has considered education as the transfer of socio-cultural experience from generation to generation. Childhood not only passively adopts the socio-cultural experience of older generations but also actively develops its new socio-cultural experience. One component of this experience is a high level of aggressive and destructive behaviour. Therefore, the dynamics of development and quality of this experience today require independent attention of researchers in many aspects, in particular in the prevention of aggressive behavior. Methodological value for the development of science for nurture is getting nowadays a perception of personal socio-cultural experience of a child as a goal and result of nurture. Now one of the leading tasks of organizers of nurturing process is to create conditions for building in children positive socio-cultural experience as basis of his or her position of personality; pedagogic supervising of a child while he or she is learning the surrounding world.

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**Keywords:** Socio-cultural experience, education, aggressive behaviour, prevention.



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## 1. Introduction

Intensive transformation of the phenomenon of childhood can be definitely called one of the features of the modern civilization and the Russian society. It is influenced by high dynamics of socio-cultural development, globalization processes, integration, informatization, that is often mentioned by researchers (Brady, 2007; Legault, Anawati, & Flynn, 2006; Miroshkina, Yevladova, & Kurakin, 2017a, 2017b; Volosovets, 2017a, 2017b and others).

But even without immersing in special sociological and psycho-pedagogic investigations, a great number of examples can be easily found in a common everyday life, how the modern childhood forms its own new socio-cultural space, distances itself from older generations, implements its own projects, asking or not asking for adults' advice, creates, searches watches some new world which is unfamiliar for us, new culture runs to future either even without looking back at the experience of older generations, or remoulding it in its own way, at the same time differently solving unsolved by older generations problems... As never before, the subjectivity of younger generations in the modern social practice and social interaction manifests so clearly that childhood should be considered as a full subject of culture creation.

A serious transformation of the phenomenon of childhood in modern conditions, of course, is a serious problem for the pedagogical sciences, which consider upbringing as the transfer of socio-cultural experience from generation to generation. Childhood not only borrows socio-cultural experience from older generations, but also accumulates its own new socio-cultural experience at a faster pace. The dynamics of its development, the quality of this experience today require independent attention of researchers in many aspects, especially in the aspect of preventing aggressive behavior.

On the one hand, it is obvious that the more acts of aggression surround a child, the more often acts of aggression turn to him and the more intensively his own experience of aggressive behaviour develops, the more dangerous the more such experience turns into very dangerous acts of aggression. On the other hand, what seems obvious did not become the basis for changing the pedagogical situation, did not become an approach to organizing the prevention of aggressive behaviour in the educational environment. Therefore, let's try to formulate our perception of sociocultural experience, to generalize our research on the development of personal positive socio-cultural experience in children in order to develop a system for preventing aggressive behaviour in the educational environment.

## 2. Problem Statement

The child personal experience determines his attitude to the world. It is necessary to create a positive experience that will reduce the risks of aggressive behavior.

## 3. Research Questions

- 3.1. What are the conditions for the formation of a positive socio-cultural experience of a child as a factor in reducing the risk of his aggressive behavior?

#### **4. Purpose of the Study**

Identify the conditions for the formation of a positive socio-cultural experience of a child for the prevention of aggressive behavior.

#### **5. Research Methods**

Analysis of the practice of child-rearing aimed at preventing aggressive behavior of children. Surveys and interviews of the socio-cultural experience of children were taken. Analysis of educational programs and prevention of child aggression, available in the public domain. Theoretical modeling of the conditions for the formation of a positive socio-cultural experience of schoolchildren to reduce the risks of aggressive behaviour.

#### **6. Findings**

The term "socio-cultural experience" in the general context of the creation of culture comes from the broader term "culture" as a combination of results caused by human activity, and means, accordingly, the entire combination of artifacts, signs, feelings, values belonging to human culture in general and up to a certain historical epoch, in particular. Such a broad term of socio-cultural experience can be applied to the analysis of child-rearing as an objective phenomenon. Analysis of child-rearing as a pedagogical activity requires substantiation of a narrower perception of socio-cultural experience as a pedagogical phenomenon in the context of a purposeful educational process. Modern pedagogy should be based on the ideas of the child as a subject of social heritage related to the creation of culture and education in the broadest sense as a process of transferring culture. In this case, "socio-cultural experience" is an experience that can be transferred. But when it comes to an upbringing in a narrower sense, the scientific category "socio-cultural experience" should be analyzed from a different point of view as a child's personal socio-cultural experience, which is built in the process of interaction with the outside world.

Very little attention has been paid to such a subjective interpretation of the scientific category "experience" in pedagogy, especially in Russian pedagogy. Teachers have been encouraged to "take into account" this experience for decades, and there has been little discussion about the experience. Historical and pedagogical analysis of the development of Russian pedagogy in the 20th century suggests that this situation may be caused by the "witch hunt", that is, the "hunt for harmful ideas" that took place in the 1930s. Strong criticism of "bourgeois, imperialist pedagogy" was accompanied by repressions against a number of academic teachers, many interesting discoveries were lost (for example, the project method), entire scientific schools based on the works of foreign authors were abolished, for example, the Soviet "environmental pedagogy" of the 1920s years, based on the ideas of such outstanding teachers as D. Dyuy, P. Natorp, G. Kershenshteiner, V. Leigh and others about school life, open to the outside world (as cited in Dewey, 1980; Piskunov, 2001, etc. ).

In most cases, the term "sociocultural experience," meaning "life experience," which is spontaneous, has been used to distinguish it from a deliberately organized educational and training process. Sociology considers it as the leading sociological feature of the personality in a certain social structure; social psychology believes that the nature of social experience exists in the system of social

relations of the individual; psychology, which focuses on the mechanisms of mental development of the individual, characterizes social experience as the certainty of the subject, on which his internal position depends. These issues are discussed in the works of Abul'khanova-Slavskaya (1973), Asmolov (2002), Bozhovich (1995), Vygotskiy (2005). The social experience of children is viewed by psychologists as an image of a truly experienced situation, which is mentioned in the scientific works of Benbenishty, Astor, Roziner, and Wrabel, (2016), Flynn, McDonald, D'Alonzo, Tam, and Wiebe (2018), Legault, Anawati, and Flynn (2006), Nwafor, Anazonwu, Okafor, and Obi-Nwosu (2016) and others. Its resources are child's own actions in life situations and living them, observation of other people's actions and reflection on them and, at last, the implicit experience of other people, which are redesigned and "assigned" and shown in fiction literature, art, cinematography etc. Quite often, the term "motivating background" is also used to characterize social experience (Myasishchev, 2005), which can be described as a combination of triggers, either objective (based on a real situation) or personalized (the values and position of the individual, which is influenced by his or her personality, needs and worldview). Mostly thanks to our historic and pedagogic investigations at the beginning of 1990ies we appealed to the category of personal socio-cultural experience of a child, studied his or her substantive features and dynamics of development within the nurturing process, and can determine today as the target and result of the nurturing process (Wagner, 2011). We concluded that personal socio-cultural experience should not only be taken into account during the nurturing process as well as be formed, but children should also be provided with conditions for intensive accumulation of current positive personal socio-cultural experience that, according to perceptions of psychology, determines the development of a child's position of personality towards the surrounding world (Bozhovich, 1995).

On the basis of theoretical analysis and empirical research, we presented the nature of the child's socio-cultural experience (as a pedagogical phenomenon) as the basis of his or her subjective position, linking images of really experienced situations in the socio-cultural space, reflecting as direct interaction of the child with objects of society and phenomena of modern culture, and also indirect interaction with the culture of previous generations. Pressure of negative experience of mass culture that we can see, for example, in the sphere of environment, in the sphere of spontaneous computerization, in virtual space and mass media and others, can be overcome providing teenagers with positive constructive experience. The researches that we have undertaken let us consider socio-cultural experience not as objective background of pedagogic influence, but as result of nurture.

The goal of teachers is to create conditions for the development of various kinds of positive socio-cultural experience in children. The design experience can be based on activities (for example, creative, environmental, work, cognitive, and others); spheres of communication (adults, peers, communities of different ages, class, children's organization, sports team, etc.); the social roles that the child plays and the positions held in collective activities (for example, leader, helper, performer, etc.); forms and methods of collective activity (holidays, discussions, competitions, etc.) and others.

In each group of experience, a subspecies can be distinguished, characterized in more detail, and its clear structure can be determined. So, the communicative experience will include the experience of "life" and virtual communication, conflict resolution, setting one's own point of view, communicating with representatives of different age and social groups. Environmental experience includes the experience

of children observing the rules of behaviour in nature, the experience of creative activity on the topic of interaction with nature, the experience of observing natural phenomena, the experience of nature conservation, etc.

Let us illustrate the presented theoretical positions with examples of environmental experience, which we paid special attention to in our research on the development of an environmentally friendly culture of the individual, in the development of concepts and programs on environmental ethics for schoolchildren. Unfortunately, there are not only positive examples in widespread practice. So, the most common mistake is that children get acquainted with the norms and rules of behaviour in nature through the transmitted negative examples of interaction with nature. This leads to an expansion in children of ideas about destructive human behaviour in nature, which leads to misconceptions about the norms and values of nature, the formation in children of a passive and sympathetic attitude towards environmental problems at best and a distorted view of the environment. Diagnostics of the ecological experience of children of primary school age and adolescents shows that negative experience predominates in it, with the exception of those educational organizations where systematic work is carried out to expand the positive experience of interaction with nature in children. When it comes to the rules of behaviour in nature, then in widespread practice we get the following scheme. Answering the question "How should a person behave, for example, in the forest?" children repeat what is contained in books or what they heard in class: "It is forbidden to break tree branches. It is forbidden to light bonfires/ It is forbidden to leave fire without looking after it. It is forbidden to damage birds' nests. It is forbidden to tear flowers and plants listed in the Red Book just for fun It is forbidden to throw out the waste." etc. If we do not stop them, traditional "taboo" will be added by those taken from personal observations like: "It is forbidden to take insects' paws off", "It is forbidden to scratch words on a tree trunk", "It is forbidden to set anthills afire"... It seems obvious: children should not be taught negative general opinions if they are mostly unfamiliar with them and they can't understand such opinions. This is because many of them do not dare to ask a respected teacher a question: "How could you imagine such things, Maria Ivanovna, how can you trample a living frog ?!" Are we going to convince children that many people may behave this way? And a book for schoolchildren helps us in this providing the prohibiting sign which depicted so that behind the red line (which means "prohibition") is drawn the foot of a child stepping on a small frog. Are you sure that after such a "transfer of the rules" those who did not even imagine such a thing before will not want to try it? Or follow the prohibition you heard? Or try now to act "like everyone else"? If there were no "pedagogical work", many children would never have faced such a "situation of choice".

What can children choose if they cannot replace negative experiences with something positive? Of course, it is an inaction. If I know it's forbidden and I want to follow the rule, I just won't do it. Thus, the "prohibition" of the interpretation of the rules of behaviour leads to the formation in children of the perception of themselves as some destructive phenomena about the environment, it leads to the understanding that the best rule of behaviour is to do nothing (not anything that is prohibited, the other is unfamiliar to me). It is not occasionally that in the vast majority of cases pessimistic attitude towards ecological situation on the Planet is diagnosed among teenagers, and they estimate extremely low their capabilities to influence the situation. Primary schoolchildren without sufficient experience of productive environmentally significant behaviour and activity, desperately demonstrate it. They use cunning when

we ask them to start with the word combination “you should” and tell us how they should behave in a forest (after hearing “what is forbidden”). They tell us “You should not break tree branches. You should not light bonfires. You should not leave fire without looking after it. You should not damage birds’ nests. You should not tear flowers and plants listed in the Red Book just for fun. You should not throw out the waste”...etc. They just do not dare to tell us: “What else do you want to hear from us if we have never planted flowers or trees with you, if we have never collected garbage in the forest with you, if we have never talked to a tree or pulled an anthill out of life, if we have never brought bird food with us into the forest in winter "... They just do not know what can replace the scientific" forbidden ". They simply do not know what can replace the "prohibited" actions.

Only 5% of children try to suggest something positive. Only 5 % of children try to say that “we should clean up our trash”, “we should bring some birdseed”, “we should pour some water onto smoking ember of bonfire”, “we should water dried flowers” etc. instead of “we should not throw out the waste”.

It is important to understand that extensive negative experience of adults, our awareness of negative consequences of human impact on the environment, bright variety of images of destructive human behaviour in nature that we have in our mind, should not be automatically transferred to children, we just do not have a right to expect the worst from them, thus provoking destructive behaviour because children, as we know from psychology, tend to live up to the expectations of adults and to emulate them. They need positive patterns, examples, their own experience of productive environmental activity and the appropriate behaviour in nature.

Let us turn our pedagogic creative activity to positive energy. There are examples in our experience (Wagner (Tsvetkova), 1997, 2002, 2006). Let us start with a widespread “game” – “Ecological signs”. In 2002 the book “Ecological traffic lights for primary schoolchildren” (Wagner (Tsvetkova), 2002) which can certainly be used for both primary schoolchildren and adolescents in a simplified or complex form, we proposed to separate the Environmental Signs into three groups: actively and proportionally use permissive and warning signs together with prohibition signs. Consequently, the share of negative experiences and models that cannot be ignored and should be appropriately assessed will be one third, and two thirds of examples will be positive models that will serve as a guide for productive environmentally significant activities.

Fiction literature provides a lot of positive patterns. The programme “Little Prince of the Earth” (Wagner (Tsvetkova), 1995, 2006) has been evaluated many times and has been successfully realized for more than 20 years in the form of an extensive socio-dramatic play based upon the book by Antoine de Saint-Exupery. We would like to emphasize the rules that are proclaimed by the characters of the book and made up by the participants of the program: “One should search with heart. What is essential is invisible to the eye”, “One should not judge by words, but by deeds”, “You become responsible, forever, for what you have tamed”, “When you’ve finished getting yourself ready in the morning, you must go get the planet ready”...You have to admit that they sound a little bit differently in comparison with “It is forbidden to chase after and to kill birds” (as it is said in one of the nature study students’ books).

While working with children we keep on creating similar rules. We have got something like: “Say “Hello” entering a forest! Birds, animals, insects feel a kind person”, “Respect the laws of a forest, you are not at home here”, “Tell adults that the nature is in danger if you not strong enough to cope with the

problem”, “Please birds with your skill to keep silence in a forest”, “When you get ready for the school in winter, take some birdseed with you”, “When you have finished your breakfast, feed the birds outdoors”, “Listen to the nature. It will tell those who can attentively listen to a lot. Those who can listen to the nature, become wiser, healthier and nicer”, “Be glad to meet every life, help every life because every living thing has its own value, every life is unique of personality.

## 7. Conclusion

Methodological value for the development of science for nurture is getting nowadays a perception of personal socio-cultural experience of a child as a goal and result of nurture. Now one of the leading tasks of organizers of nurturing process is to create conditions for building in children positive socio-cultural experience as basis of his or her position of personality; pedagogic supervising of a child while he or she is learning the surrounding world.

The undertaken analysis suggests that in order to prevent the aggressive behaviour of children, the efforts of teachers should be aimed at creating conditions for the development of positive experience in children in the following aspects:

- communication and resolution of conflict situations through negotiations;
- implementation of moral and ethical standards in communication with other people;
- role-based interaction and self-realization in different roles and positions: as an organizer of collective activities and as a performer, as an expert and active participant, as a leader and assistant, as a master in a particular area and an assistant, etc .;
- self-regulation, self-esteem, introspection and analysis of triggers of violence;
- cooperation, discussion of problematic issues within the framework of collective activities;
- making own decisions in matters of moral choice, etc.

The presence of a certain experience is fundamental for the development of a person's position and determines its quality, therefore, the presence of a positive experience of interaction together with humanistic values and ideas about ethics can be considered as a “seawall” that can prevent the emotional “wave” from turning into aggressive forms of behavior.

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