

FORMATION OF SOCIAL RELATIONS IN PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

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Abstract. This article explores the process of forming social relations in preschool children, focusing on the psychological, developmental, and educational factors that influence early socialization. Preschool is a critical stage for acquiring the skills of interaction, cooperation, and communication that form the basis of future social competence. During this period, children learn how to share, resolve conflicts, express emotions, and understand the perspectives of others. The article discusses the role of family, peers, and educators in shaping social relations, as well as the impact of play, language development, and cultural context.

Keywords: Preschool children, social relations, early childhood development, socialization, communication, peer interaction, play, education.

INTRODUCTION

The preschool years represent a formative period in human development, when children begin to construct the foundation of their social world. Social relations at this age are not merely a byproduct of growing up but an essential element of personality formation. Children's ability to interact successfully with peers and adults contributes to self-esteem, emotional well-being, and future academic and social success. Social relations are shaped through daily interactions in the family, in educational institutions, and in broader cultural contexts. In preschool settings, children are exposed to structured group activities that encourage cooperation, sharing, and role-taking. Understanding the mechanisms and conditions of social relation formation in preschool children is therefore vital for educators, parents, and psychologists seeking to foster healthy development.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

One of the fundamental mechanisms in the formation of social relations among preschool children is play. Play is the primary activity of childhood, and through play children experiment with roles, negotiate rules, and learn to cooperate. Role-play games such as "family," "shop," or "doctor" allow children to enact social scenarios, practicing empathy and responsibility in a safe and imaginative environment. Cooperative games, meanwhile, require children to share resources, take turns, and achieve common goals, thereby strengthening social bonds. Play thus functions as both a mirror of existing social norms and a laboratory where new forms of social interaction are tested and refined.

The development of language and communication skills is another central factor in shaping preschool social relations. Language provides children with the tools to express needs, negotiate conflicts, and build friendships. In early preschool years, communication is often limited to short, concrete expressions, but by the later stages, children can engage in extended conversations, explain ideas, and offer emotional support to peers. Teachers and parents play a crucial role in modeling effective communication, encouraging polite expressions, and providing opportunities for dialogue. Storytelling, singing, and group discussions enhance both vocabulary and social competence, making communication a cornerstone of social relation formation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Family influences are equally significant in the early formation of social relations. Parent-child interactions serve as the child's first model of communication, cooperation, and emotional expression. Children who experience secure attachment and consistent support at home are more likely to approach peer relationships with confidence and openness. Conversely, inconsistent or harsh parenting can result in difficulties such as aggression, withdrawal, or anxiety in social settings. Families also transmit cultural norms and values that shape children's expectations of social interaction, influencing how they relate to authority figures, peers, and community members.

The preschool environment itself provides unique opportunities and challenges for the formation of social relations. Being part of a group requires children to adapt to social norms beyond the family, including following rules, respecting authority, and cooperating with diverse peers. Teachers serve as mediators in this process, guiding children through conflicts, reinforcing positive behaviors, and modeling respect and fairness. Structured activities such as group projects, collective singing, and storytelling circles foster a sense of community, while unstructured playtime allows for the spontaneous development of friendships [1].

At the same time, preschool children face psychological challenges in developing social relations. Some children struggle with shyness and find it difficult to initiate contact with peers, while others may display dominant or aggressive behaviors that disrupt group harmony. These tendencies are often linked to temperament, emotional regulation, and previous social experiences. Educators must adopt differentiated approaches, offering encouragement and structured opportunities for shy children while teaching self-control and empathy to more dominant individuals. The goal is to create a balanced social environment where all children can participate and feel valued.

Another crucial element in the formation of social relations is the development of empathy and perspective-taking. Preschool children gradually learn that others have feelings, thoughts, and desires that may differ from their own. This shift from egocentric thinking to social awareness is essential for cooperation and friendship. Educators can support this development by engaging children in discussions about emotions, reading stories that highlight characters' inner experiences, and encouraging children to reflect on the consequences of their actions on others. Empathy not only strengthens individual relationships but also builds the foundation for moral development and social responsibility [2].

Cultural and societal factors also shape the process of social relation formation. In collectivist contexts, such as those common in Central Asia, cooperation, group harmony, and respect for elders are emphasized, while in more individualistic cultures, independence and self-expression may be prioritized. Preschool education in Uzbekistan, for example, often integrates traditional values of respect, cooperation, and community belonging alongside modern pedagogical approaches. Such integration ensures that children's social relations are rooted in their cultural heritage while preparing them for participation in a globalized society [3].

CONCLUSION

The formation of social relations in preschool children is a multifaceted process influenced by play, communication, family, education, and culture. It is during these years that children develop the essential skills of cooperation, empathy, and emotional regulation that will serve them throughout life. By providing supportive family environments, high-quality preschool education, and opportunities for meaningful peer interaction, society can ensure that children grow into

socially competent, confident, and empathetic individuals. Attention to challenges such as shyness, aggression, and unequal participation is necessary to create inclusive environments where every child can thrive. Ultimately, the early formation of social relations is not only about preparing children for school but also about laying the foundation for their role as responsible and connected members of society.

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