
Advancing Success in Behavior and Activities as One of Conditions for Development of Self-Esteem with Children

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Abstract:

Problem of development of self-esteem under the modern conditions is very actual and significant. Personality is determined in the center of a new mindview, and this guarantees success in formation of new society. This is related to certain requirements to personality of transforming society, necessity for formation of people who think and can stand for themselves and their relatives.

Analysis of philosophical (N.A. Berdyaev, I. Kant, etc.) and psychological (B.G. Ananyev, A.G. Asmolov, L.S. Vygotsky, A.N. Leontyev, S.L. Rubinstein, etc.) research allows viewing self-esteem as iterative quality of human personality, in interconnection with sense of life, responsibility, inherent worth, self-respect, etc.

The works of the scientists do not fully analyze psychological and pedagogical foundations of self-esteem: moral value of personality and logics of their development with children. A moral "vacuum" appears on conscience, which is a threat to children – therefore, there are unsolved contradictions between need in moral development of a child and his state at the current moment. The purpose of the research is to theoretically substantiate and experimentally prove the effectiveness of development of self-esteem with over-fives with advancing success in behavior and activities.

Authenticity and substantiation of scientific provisions are provided by initial methodological provisions, their correspondence to modern tendencies of development of the system of pre-school education; use of complex of methods which conform to the purpose, tasks, and object of the research; accuracy and duration of experimental work.

The research allowed proving the possibility for effective development of self-esteem with children ages 5-7 in the process of stage-by-stage organization (motivational, educational, pre-educational) of advancing success in behavior and activities. As a result of the conducted forming experiment, children offered various methods of manifestation of self-esteem, using words, gestures, and tactile reactions. They treated each other and adults with respect, sympathized and helped them if necessary. They valued their achievements and talked about them.

Key Words: *self-esteem, feelings, children, situation of success, praise, behavior, activities.*

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As a result of theoretical analysis, we received a range of conclusions, the main of which are given in this paper. The topic of self-esteem drew interest of many scientists over a large period of time. Still, there is comprehensive opinion on what self-esteem is.

Studies of the notion of self-esteem could be divided into two main directions:

1) philosophic and ethical – this direction of the notion development is rooted in the remote past and are elaborated more thoroughly. They are reflected in works of various periods and peoples (Aristotle, Petrarch, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Fichte, etc.).

2) psychological and pedagogic – the notion of self-esteem is viewed in pedagogic and psychological works by B.G. Ananyev, L.I. Bozhovich, Y.E. Zaytseva, T.V. Korotovskikh, V.N. Myasishchev, etc.

Scientific research on this problem were realized mainly in philosophical and ethical course. In the pedagogic direction, the term “self-esteem” is analyzed not very thoroughly, which proves insufficient elaboration of the stated problem.

The initial task within our research is the notion of self-esteem. Having studied multiple definitions of this term, we came to the conclusion that most often the term “dignity” marks the “value” of a human. The nature of this value could consist in its sense or certain qualities. Significance of the content is obvious, and specific qualities can be evaluated according to their manifestation by the very person or other persons (society). Human moral values are viewed as significant for evaluation of human dignity. Self-esteem is viewed as adequate state of a child, expressed in determination of value, self-respect, trust into strength and success, and realization of fact that the child is valued by fiends and adults, especially parents.

The process of development of self-esteem is accessible to over-fives due to their psychological peculiarities: strengthened development of moral and willed, intellectual, and emotional spheres of personality; realization of the sense of moral requirements and rules; capability for prediction of consequences of actions appears; on the basis of forming moral feelings, self-esteem is developed; determination of a sense of duty, justice, and respect to people is developed, as well as responsibility for entrusted work; the highest point of personal development is development of consciousness, and the main feature of forming consciousness of a child is self-esteem, which is most clearly manifested in capability for preservation of the set distance between the child and adults and children who surround them; such qualities as collectivism, responsibility, and discipline are formed.

Also, within this research, such notions as activities, behavior, and success advancing are viewed. In it in the behavior of over-fives that the connection of moral qualities and personal features is expressed very clearly, so it is advisable to view the notion “behavior”.

According to S.L. Rubinstein, behavior is a special type of self-improvement: it is behavior when motivation of deeds goes from substantive plane to plane of personal and social relations (both in close interconnection: personal and public relations are conducted through substantive ones). Human behavior has natural background, but its sense is the socially explained activities, which are mediated by language and other insignia concept – its usual type is labor, and its usual attribute is interaction.

The next step of the research was determination of the notion “activities”, as it is in the activities that the most vivid manifestations of moral feelings could be seen and children’s behavior could be analyzed. Activities are dynamic system of interactions between a subject and surrounding world, in the process of which the individual purposefully influences the subject, which results in satisfaction of his own needs.

From the point of view of psychology, success is feeling of joy and pleasure from the fact that the result, which an individual strived in his work, is either identical to expectations or surpassed them. Then, when success becomes constant, there could appear reaction which gives way to huge possibilities of personality which were hidden until then.

From the pedagogic point of view, situation of success is a combination of conditions, with a certain goal and certain organizations, at which means of achievement of significant results in activities of particular person and the group on the whole are manifested.

Regarding advancing – in the definition dictionary we see that it is literally “giving an advance”. Applying this notion to the topic of our research, we see that advancing is providing a child with a certain benefit, expressing a positive opinion on the person – though the child does not deserve it as of now. Advancing supposes that the child will change for the better. At that, the child receives a moral satisfaction, and, what’s important, moral liability to be at his best, which makes him to change for the better (acceptance of personal exclusiveness, the basis is any merit of the child which corresponds to the offered activities).

Theoretical results, received in this part of the research, could be viewed as methodological foundations necessary for substantiation of specific methodologies of development of self-esteem with over-fives during advancing success in behavior and activities.

Special attention is paid to organization of experimental work, its course, and the received results. The determining stage of the research was aimed at study of the level of development of self-esteem with over-fives in the process of advancing success in behavior and activities. More than 200 children aged 5-7 from pre-school educational organizations of Tolyatti, Russia took part on the experiment.

The research included determining and forming experiment and control view, for realization of which the following indicators were distinguished: generalization of ideas on self-esteem; availability of methods of manifestation of self-esteem (words, gestures, reactions); level of manifestation of self-respect and respect to others; evaluation of moral notions which include manifestation of self-esteem; realization of wished and preferences, past and future actions; self-evaluation, self-attitude, and self-acceptance.

Analysis of the results of diagnostic tasks (conversation “Tell about yourself”, “What can you do best”, and “What is good and what is bad”; solving problem situations “Self-portrait”, “Diagnostic tests”, and “Evaluate deeds”) allowed distinguishing three levels of development of self-esteem with over-fives.

Low level (35%) is characterized by the fact that children cannot evaluate deed of their equals in age, emotional reactions are absent, over-fives do not accept themselves as they are, diagnostic tasks are not always performed, and there is not reaction to adult’s help.

Medium level (55%) is characterized by the fact that children evaluate behavior of their equals in age as positive or negative (right or wrong, good or bad), but do not motivate evaluation and do not show respect to others – or show respect, evaluate behavior of their equals in age in the right way, but do not motivate their evaluation; emotional reactions are absent or are too weak; they have medium self-esteem and can tell the content of moral notion, self-attitude and self-acceptance are at the medium level, and they often use adult’s help.

High level (10%) is characterized by the fact that children show respect to others and themselves, evaluate behavior of the equals in age correctly, and motivate their evaluation; emotional reactions are adequate and vivid, they are expressed in words and active gesturing; self-esteem is high, they evaluate moral notions correctly and determine their content; they accept themselves and implement dignity into reality.

Results received in the process of the determining experiment allowed concluding that low indicators are caused by peculiarities of pedagogic practice:

- there is no system for development of self-esteem with over-fives;
- insufficient methodological preparation of pedagogues and parents for effective solutions of tasks (selection of methods, forms of work, means, etc.).

Analysis of theoretical provisions, results, and data received in the process of the determining part of the research allowed us to pass to the forming experiment. It was divided into three stages: motivational, teaching, and transformational.

The 1st (motivational) stage is aimed at creation of motivations with over-fives for expression of self-esteem. Children were offered problem situations, taken from life and fairy tales. The purpose of the stage was to make children show respect and

tolerance for people regardless of their social origin, race, nationality, language, religion, sex, personal features, appearance, and physical handicaps; self-respect.

After these tasks, children were suggested to tell their favorite fairy tales hero what they knew about their nation (games, dishes, holidays). Children's stories were interesting and based on examples. This showed that offering a child a possibility to tell about himself, we ensured effectiveness of formation of ideas that the child spoke of.

The games "Praise your friend" and "Mirror" were very interesting, for a child received a chance to hear about himself and his achievements. In the game "Praise your friend", the children had to name all skills and habits that they liked in their friends.

The pedagogue discussed the content of situations with children. After the discussions, the effectiveness of the conducted work was checked. The children were to draw any of the offered problem situations which they remembered and liked.

The 2nd (teaching) stage is aimed at teaching children aged 5-6 the means of manifestation of self-esteem through advancing success in behavior and activities. This stage included conduct of educational activities and a range of series of role games and exercise games for development of such means of manifestation of self-esteem as words, gestures, tactile reactions, or actions through advancing success in behavior. Here, the pedagogue pushed children with low self-esteem to the front. He distributes the roles between children, and the most responsible roles (councilor, ship captain, etc.) are given to children with low self-esteem – at that, he says that there's no doubt that the child will cope with the role and that he always manifests himself in games with others. The pedagogue always directed the game in order to push children in certain direction so they could use methods of manifestation of self-esteem.

For stimulating and motivating children for searching various methods of regulation of emotional state and self-esteem, it was offered to find solutions to problem situations in the process of collective discussion:

- "What to do if I fail?", "Coping with constant failures", "Manifesting self-esteem" (a set of cards is offered with description of problem situations, peculiar for children of this group);

- "Failures of others" (children's drawings depicting failures are offered, children are to determine what the author of a drawing is afraid of and to offer him the ways for overcoming the problems);

- "Coping with failures" (to help a boy – drawing a picture with various methods of overcoming the failures);

- "How to share joy with another person?" (children are to find various ways to please their mothers, fathers, grandmothers, grandfathers, friends, and teacher).

It should be noted that joint solving of problem situations, in which it is necessary to help another person in regulation of his emotions, motivated children for search for new methods of regulation of self-esteem. This fact proves the work of L.S. Vygotsky on the social role and collective activities in mental development of the child (answers of some children motivated other to answer as well, they were a sort of a tip, and there was a process of mutual thinking and creation).

The 3rd (transformational) stage was aimed at realization of means of manifestation of self-esteem in behavior and activities – words, gestures, tactile reactions, or actions. It was manifested by creative tasks and problem situations that children were to solve independently.

Creative tasks, according to which a child was to determine his personal qualities, were very interesting. The children were to determine and name their qualities. For children with low level this task was illustrative – i.e., the picture caused association with a certain quality. The child has to pick up pictures which characterized his qualities. Children who could read and new their qualities were offered to choose from the list of qualities and stick the corresponding pictures.

Games “When angry, I...” and “When offended... I” supposed that children independently choose methods for overcoming aggression or bad mood. The children offered mainly the following methods: yell into the “Yelling” box, sit by themselves in silence, or draw.

Creative tasks “That’s what I do best” was presented in variants. Children who could not determine their skills performed the task with illustrative part (choosing from the set of skills). Children, who knew their skills, showed the skills which were different from the skills of other children. Over-fives distinguished the following skills: drawing, dancing, reading, writing, singing, doing the splits, etc.

The pedagogue suggested the children tell what achievements in their lives they were proud of. At that, it is important to pay children’s attention (using examples) to the fact that each child could be proud of his knowledge in a certain sphere – e.g., space, plants, animals, transport, as well as skills – sewing, embroidering, tending plants and animals, doing crafts, etc. The children were to draw that what they were proud of. Finally, the exhibition is to be shown to the parents, who are to write down their children’s stories of what they are proud of.

As a result of the forming experiment, it is possible to note positive dynamics in development of self-esteem with children aged 5-7 through advancing success in behavior and activities, which was reflected in the process of the control experiment.

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