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Developing a New Psychology of Moral Education for Pre-school Children

Rozwijanie nowej psychologii moralnej
edukacji dla przedszkolaków

KEYWORDS

moral education,
moral develop-
ment, preschoolers,
children's morality,
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moral-*"Self"*.

ABSTRACT

The moral education of personality during preschool childhood is essential for moral growth in the next age periods. Searching for new approaches to the implementation of the tasks of moral education of the individual is topical in modern transformational changes in education. The aim of this article is to reveal theoretically the psychological foundations of the concept of the innovation of moral education of preschool children. The main determinant of it is the formation of moral self-identity. On the basis of theoretical analysis it was proven that the moral education of a preschooler should be considered as an integral unity and interaction of such a multicomponent structure: cognitive, emotionally-valuable and behavioral elements. Research results of Ukrainian and foreign psychologists convincingly prove that the dynamics of moral education in preschool age are mediated by the moral feelings of the child. It is also determined by the contradiction between the desire to preserve the child's positive image of *"Self"* and representations of the real image of *"Self"* (which in preschool age synergistically conditioned by a moral image of *"Self"*).

The result of the implementation of this psychological model must be the growth of a child's moral education – primarily, it will show itself

in the enrichment of internal potential and affirmation of moral image of "Self". The specifics of the represented new look at the psychological basis of preschoolers' upbringing in conditions of modern education is the creation of an integrative educational model, the core of which is the development of moral self-consciousness.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE ABSTRAKT

wychowanie moralne, rozwój moralny, przedszkolaki, moralność dzieci, osobowość, samoświadomość moralna, moralne „Ja”.

Wychowanie moralne osoby w okresie przedszkolnym ma kluczowe znaczenie dla jej moralnego rozwoju w dalszych okresach. We współczesnych warunkach transformacyjnych zmian w systemie oświaty aktualnym jest poszukiwanie nowych sposobów realizacji celów moralnego wychowania jednostki. Celem niniejszego artykułu jest określenie osobliwości psychologicznych zasad innowacyjnej koncepcji wychowania moralnego przedszkolaków, której głównym wyznacznikiem jest budowa własnej tożsamości moralnej. Na podstawie wykonanej analizy teoretycznej udowodniono, że wychowanie moralne osobowości przedszkolaka należy postrzegać jako integralny system oraz wzajemne powiązania następującej wieloskładnikowej struktury: kognitywnej, emocjonalno-wartościowej i zachowania. Materiały badań ukraińskich i zagranicznych psychologów w sposób oczywisty udowodniły, że dynamika wychowania moralnego w wieku przedszkolnym wyznacza się moralnymi uczuciami dziecka i charakteryzuje się sprzecznościami pomiędzy dążeniem dziecka do zachowania pozytywnego wizerunku „Ja” oraz realistycznym wizerunkiem „Ja”, co w wieku przedszkolnym synergistycznie generuje postrzeganie moralnego „Ja”.

Wynikiem wdrożenia zaproponowanego psychologicznego modelu wychowania moralnego przedszkolaka powinien być wzrost jego edukacji moralnej, widocznej, przede wszystkim, we wzbogaceniu moralnego potencjału oraz kreowaniu wizerunku moralnego „Ja”. Specyfiką przedstawionego nowego poglądu na psychologiczne podstawy moralnego wychowania dzieci w wieku przedszkolnym w warunkach współczesnych zmian w systemie kształcenia jest kreowanie integracyjnego modelu wychowania, którego podstawą jest rozwój moralnej tożsamości jednostki.

Introduction: relevance of research

The problem of the increasing role of moral principles in all spheres of social life is the dominant feature of a highly developed democratic society. The modern priorities of development in Ukraine have posed new tasks for reforming the educational sector.

Primarily, this should be at its fundamental level – preschool education. The issues of moral identity formation at the preschool age is one of the most urgent for present society, since they involve the formation of the new person with its inherent moral qualities, traits, skills and habits of moral behavior together with their moral considerations. A person with such a portrait will be able to develop and purify society. Providing perfect moral development is possible in the case of the successful implementation of moral education – process directed at the formation of the moral emotions, moral judgments and moral behavior of growing personality.

The implementation of the problems of moral education among the young generation in Ukraine has an important educational, public, social and scientific importance. The uniqueness of moral education is caused by age and individual features, the norms of public morality, principles of regulation behavior and others. Therefore during preschool childhood it is necessary to encourage the development of emotions and moral feelings that will provide children with the desired moral qualities and personality traits; to induce them to assimilate certain rules and regulations; to develop appropriate motives and habits of behavior. This is stated in the basic governmental documents about preschool education: The basic component of preschool education in Ukraine (2012); Ukrainian Law “About Preschool Education” (2001 with revisions) and other legislative and policy documents. In particular, Ukrainian Law “About preschool education” (p. 4) emphasizes the need “to formation among children of preschool age moral standards, gaining the life social experience”¹; accordingly to it, one of the main tasks of preschool education (art. 7) is defined as the “formation of child, development of creativity, gaining the social experience”². Task fulfilment of the State standard in preschool education is provided through the implementation of educational influence on children. In order to achieve results in terms of the “child’s identity” “Self-attitude” and “Self-consciousness” units (according to the basic components of preschool education) it is necessary to create proper conditions for the psychological and pedagogical support of moral education in its whole in its integration. Particularly, preschooler should learn how to “navigate the main emotions and feelings”³, including moral, “to restrain negative emotions”; “to differentiate good and evil”; “to establish itself in their moral qualities”⁴ etc.

Consequently, moral education is being fulfilled in the process of the purposeful influence from adults to children. This fulfillment is aimed at mastering a preschooler’s basis of moral culture covering the synthesis of knowledge about morality; moral

¹ *Про дошкільну освіту*: Закон України, Київ 2001, р. 5.

² *Ibid*, р. 6.

³ *Базовий компонент дошкільної освіти* (нова редакція), А. М. Богуш (наук. кер.), Київ 2012, р. 11.

⁴ *Ibid*, р. 12.

feelings and motives and habits of moral behavior. The result of moral education through the environmental impact and the accumulation of a child's own moral experience is its moral development.

Analysis of research on the subject

The importance of this issue is underlined by many Ukrainian academics such as Т. Роніманська (Т. Поніманська), О. Козлюк (О. Козлюк), Г. Марчук (Г. Марчук) etc. According to these, the whole atmosphere of a preschool educational institution – adults' behavior, communication, joint activity of children – should serve to implement this goal. Moreover, with planned and prepared forms of work, a teacher should also use all of the off-plan events. The researchers note that “the very educator's mastery lies in the ability to appeal to the feelings and experiences of children in appropriate and adequate way, delicately and tactfully discuss bothering issues, gently and accurately help in exploration of the human world. In the technologies of humaneness education, the child is both object and purpose of education and the subject of social and moral development”⁵. Moral education is the foundation for education in general: “Connection of moral categories should act visibly and be clear for preschoolers; otherwise we'll get the threat of moral formalism. Situations enriching social and emotional experiences of children will do a good job. They reflect a certain problem in life child to understand from personal experience”⁶.

Unusual interest in the context of this problem was caused by academic studies in the last years of the twentieth century and were presented by scholars from the USA, Australia and Poland. The necessity of moral education realization within the personal approach was particularly stressed in a number of foreign psychologists' works. Thus, Т. Kitwood, stated that each person should have their ethical (moral status) and that is why, every individuality requires appropriate attitude, respect and recognition as unique one. Simultaneously, he also defined the relational aspect of personality and substantiated it by the need to observe moral norms and rules in certain environments. He remarked that morality studies “lead us deeply into the world of kinship, trust and responsibility, to moral meaning of gained experience, feeling of freedom, overcoming social conditions, to the unity of intellect, emotions and actions”⁷.

⁵ Т. І. Поніманська, О. А. Козлюк, Г. В. Марчук, *Виховання людяності (До Базової програми розвитку дитини дошкільного віку “Я у Світі”)*, Київ 2008, р. 5-6.

⁶ Ibid, р. 7.

⁷ Т. Kitwood, *Psychotherapy, Postmodernism and Morality*, „Journal of Moral Education”, 19 (1990) 1, р. 5.

Therefore, understanding the psychological foundations of a person's moral education may improve this process. T. Kitwood said that for clarifying the psychology of moral education it is necessary to take into consideration the integration of feelings and emotions in the moral life of the person⁸.

The American scholars M. Berkowitz & J. Grych identified the main factors of the moral development of personality, which are the main points in the process of moral education. These are knowledge of meta-moral characteristics, psychological aspects of morality and psychological mechanisms of effective moral education that should start at an early age. Of these, the greatest interest is about the nature and content of meta-moral characteristics. They were set in the following way: 1. Social orientation – personality's moral behavior is aimed at taking care of others. 2. Self-control – control of its own temptation to break moral rules. 3. Compliance of standards – internalization of external behavior norms. 4. Self-esteem – getting positive feeling from moral behavior. Besides these main issues, the authors added other concomitant components that are mandatory in the meta-moral characteristics: 1. Empathy – setting up not only for its own emotional reactions, but also to the people around. 2. Conscience – interiorization of moral norms and guilt. 3. Moral reasoning – development of complicated forms of moral reasoning to solve moral dilemmas. 4. Altruism – preference to another, unselfishness⁹. Of these, a logical connection between moral judgments, moral feelings and moral behavior may clearly be singled out as components of the moral education structure of the individual.

Representatives of the Polish scientific school Z. Olek-Redlarska and W. Stypuła believe that in the foundation of a personality's moral education there must be moral values. Z. Olek-Redlarska says that the modern world needs the moral development of each person and their moral values¹⁰.

The researcher W. Stypuła writes that "formation of sensitivity to moral values provides the development of moral behavior and moral character traits"¹¹. Moral values are at the heart of moral education process. Following positive moral values results in the development of individual moral responsibility. Respectively, the indicator of moral manners is the compatibility between moral values and actions¹². In the opinion of W. Stypuła, the effectiveness of moral education depends on such structural components as: moral feelings (development of empathy, the "awareness of its

⁸ T. Kitwood, *Sentient Being, Moral Agent*, „Journal of Moral Education”, 17(1988) 2, p. 83-91.

⁹ M. W. Berkowitz, J. H. Grych, *Fostering Goodness: Teaching Parents to Facilitate Children's Moral Development*, „Journal of Moral Education” 27(1998) 3, p. 371-391.

¹⁰ Z. Olek-Redlarska, *Rozumienie pojęć moralnych. Edukacja wczesnoszkolna*, Białystok 2002, s. 14.

¹¹ W. Stypuła, *Wychowanie do wartości jako główny wyznacznik i rezultat wychowania moralnego*, „Społeczeństwo i Rodzina”, (2008) 17, s. 120.

¹² Ibid, s. 123.

suffering from pain of others”), motivation of moral behavior, moral reasoning. The scholar in question emphasizes the importance of the appearance of the altruism of the individual (that is close to the views of the American psychologists M. Berkowitz & J. Grych) – feature serving as a psychological indicator of moral education.

At the current stage of psychology development in the United States, exceptional scientific interest causes concept of integrated moral education, whose origin lie in the works of J. Rest. He offered a four-component model of personality’s moral development, which to his mind, allowed him to outline the degree of moral growth. This model includes: 1) moral sensitivity (perception); 2) moral judgment; 3) moral motivation (making moral decisions); 4) moral character (moral action). Such a comprehensive consideration of moral development in the context of moral education, according to the author, will contribute to identifying current problems, implementing reasonable judgments, making wise decisions, having motivation to perform actions in order to maintain a positive morality throughout life. The author writes: “This Four Component Model implies that all four processes of morality need to be fostered”¹³. The essence of the concept of integrated moral education by J. Rest comes down to the unification of moral feeling development, moral judgments, moral motivation and moral action in the formation of personality during educational influences. This conceptual issue appeared in collaborative research with D. Narvaez.

The collaborative research of D. Narvaez and J. Rest also submitted a deepened description of the next components: moral sensitiveness – means understanding that there is a situation that requires moral actions with consequences for others; moral judgment – defines how to act in specific situations; making moral decision implies the consideration of alternatives and a reconciliation of pros and cons of possible consequences for oneself and others; moral action – is based on willpower and skills necessary for the implementation of decisions. The scientists believe that such a model should be used as a basis to determine the tasks of the moral education of personality¹⁴.

The peculiarity of moral education, to D. Narvaez’s mind, lies in its realization not only within the curriculum, but its existence as a constant and “hidden” curriculum. The whole of a person’s life, its communication and activities are “morally loaded with meaning”. Consequently, high demands are placed on the teacher, who not only get children acquainted with moral rules and norms, but should also follow them. Gaps in the children’s moral development because of the lack of a sufficient education may cause “moral blocking”; this may be shown in different situations such as disregard, extinction of trust and demonstrating “moral closeness”. The shortcomings of moral

¹³ J. R. Rest, *Morality*. [in:] *Handbook of child psychology: Cognitive development*, eds.: P. H. Mussen (series Ed.), J. Flavell & E. Markman (Vol. Eds.). Vol. 3, New York, 1983, p. 569-570.

¹⁴ D. Narvaez, J. Rest, *The Four Components of Acting Morally* [in:] *Moral Behavior and Moral Development: An Introduction*, eds. W. Kurtines, J. Gewirtz, New York, 1995, p. 385-400.

experience shall show themselves even later, because a feature of the age is the accumulation of “emotional memory”¹⁵.

In this manner, moral education in present preschool education is interpreted as the purposeful process of the formation of children’s moral consciousness and appropriate behavior. Thus the foundation of becoming a person determines the level of moral development. The reason for this is that the formation of preschooler’s visions of the world, their relationships between people in various life situations, about “*Self*” occur together with the development of feelings and moral qualities. So, a preschooler forms the foundations of their moral orientation that is essential for the formation of his personality; these foundations are characterized as a system of arranged behavior motivations, which determines the level of education and staying in the environment (of peers and adults, first of all). Therefore, moral education serves as a foundation for child’s formation and provides a comfortable state in the environment (through activities and communication).

Despite a significant increase in psychological and pedagogical studies about the problem of moral personal growth, there is still a significant gap between the theoretical and methodological principles in Ukrainian preschool education; their experimental implementation and technological support.

As follows, it is possible to highlight the basic *contradictions* between:

- society requirements with regard to the moral education of the young generation and actual results of children’s moral education and theoretical basis relying on the modern understanding of the child;
- difficulties among pedagogues and practitioners in providing for the moral education of preschool children and an insufficient level of the elaboration of methodological support for personal moral growth; this should occur on the basis of the implementation of a set of educational influences with a clearly selected structure and appropriate level of diagnostic tools and work systems.

The purpose of this article – to describe the theoretical foundations of the concept of the new psychology development for preschooler’s moral education; the essence of which is the organization of the educational process on the main role of the phenomenon of moral self-identity formation.

Description of the theoretical innovations of the concept

for the need to pursue innovative approaches for the implementation the tasks of moral education of preschool children is caused by the demands of modern educational changes (in terms of formation, the personality has a new format). Formation

¹⁵ Ibid.

of the basics of moral education of preschool children in the current conditions of educational transformation involves the substantiation and implementation of such leading scientific statements as: basic principle of preschoolers' moral education serves moral consciousness; the source of its development is normative "Self"; content of moral consciousness is determined by structural components, which has a certain uniqueness.

Hypothesis of the research: preschoolers' moral education should be considered as an integral unity and interaction of cognitive, emotional and behavioral components; it is implemented in the process of the internalization and exteriorization of moral ideals, samples, norms and rules underlying basic ethical concepts. The dynamics of moral upbringing in preschool age are mediated by the moral feelings of the child; it is also determined by the contradiction between the desire to keep the positive image "Self" representations of the real image "Self" that is synergistic at the preschool age due to a moral image of the "Self".

Theoretical and methodological basis of research:

- studying theoretical and methodological principles of the moral education of preschool children;
- taking into consideration the modern world and Ukrainian tendencies towards the studied questions;
- consideration of moral education as an integral unity of cognitive, emotional and behavioral components.

Presentation of the main material

In recent years, views about moral education (including children of preschool age) have undergone significant changes: from finding the child as an object of the receiving and assimilation of knowledge about moral norms and their fulfillment to the recognition the child as a subject of her own life-building and understanding her need to be moral.

Morality provides for the regulation of behavior via fixed norms, external psychological compulsion and control. It is submitted as "ready-made" (historically prescribed) and requires the subordination of these norms from an individual, even if he does not understand their meaning and relevance. Morality forms together with personality. It is inseparable from the content of an individual's "Self" and is often considered as a degree of the internalization of his moral values. This is a sphere of moral freedom, where civil and human demands are similar to motivation.

The famous psychologist S. Rubinstein (С. Рубинштейн) made the following generalizations towards nature of morality: between life and any moral system

naturally appear some contradictions as far as morality (norm, prohibition) – is always a limited life. In his opinion, “moral contradiction reflects the contradiction of reality”¹⁶, and the specific nature of morality is formed in a common, generally human comparable character of moral provisions, which do not exist only in relation to the life of a particular person.

In modern foreign studies (P. Welch et al.) it has been proven that moral questions are being actively discussed by members of psychological and philosophical science. The author says “moral psychology needs a better ethical basis than it can provide by itself and hopefully many more moral psychologists will venture into the domain of moral philosophy. Though the above texts exemplify the problems that arise when moral psychology reduces moral-philosophical inquiry to empirical analysis... Moral psychologists ought not to let the widespread disagreement in ethics keep them from delving into moral philosophy, seeing for themselves whether or not a certain moral tradition is superior”¹⁷. He believes that many philosophers represent morality as a connected reason of human thinking and perception. And psychology has to make fundamental contributions in order to make morality acting and perform the task of moral education. Toward this P. Welch writes: “Psychology has fundamental contributions to make to morality and moral education, but the latter presuppose answers to questions the investigation of which lies outside the purview of psychology. Any ethical theory presupposes a psychology, but moral psychology presupposes an ethics”¹⁸. So, the conclusion here is that ethical theory admits psychology and moral psychology admits ethics.

According to psychology, morality is a set of rules for human behavior, or what really exists, in philosophy – rather a certain standard and nonesuch of relationships between people. However, in psychological research the problem of the perfect (how should be a person?) is also often raised. Hereby, interest in the sphere of moral psychology is not only real, but perfect. Philosophy deals with defining moral explanation, thus explaining moral values, showing their source, reasons, social functions etc. Psychology explores the very discourse of moral values and principles, their structure, hierarchy and determinants (according to research by I. Bekh (I. Бех), 1992)¹⁹.

Therefore, the following definitions may be pertinent: morality is a way of external regulation of human behavior through established social norms; morality is a level of personal development, when internalized moral values of society become imperative

¹⁶ С. Л. Рубинштейн, *Бытие и сознание. Человек и мир*, Санкт-Петербург, 2003, p. 385.

¹⁷ P. Welch, *Moral psychology and the problem of moral criteria*, “Journal of Moral Education”, 40 (December 2011) 4, p. 525.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ И. Д. Бех, *Психологические основы нравственного развития личности*, Киев 1992, p. 320.

for one's life. The Ukrainian psychologist I. Bekh (I. Бех) notes: "Morality is not being passed hereditary to the baby, it is being brought up"²⁰ and the emotional and moral perfection of the child depends on the ability of the educator to enter the inner world of the child through empathy. Moral consciousness reflects the degree of assimilation of public morality by an individual. The development of the moral consciousness of an individual is considered as a process of realization, learning, acceptance moral ideals, values, norms and rules with the purpose of further transforming them into an effective regulator of behavior²¹. The child acquires moral experience by accepting the moral culture of society, which is home; it also receives from educational micro society moral positive samples and moral values passing the process of internalization through awareness, feelings and experiences.

Preschool age is a sensitive period for the implementation of educational actions in different areas of personal development. Education itself is interpreted as "systematic and purposeful influence on the consciousness and behavior of the child in order to form her moral concepts and attitudes, principles, values and skills of practical behavior creating conditions for its development... During the process of education develops volitional qualities and individual character traits... Considering education as a process implementing through the interaction of teachers and pupils (and pupils themselves); psychology studies the regularities of personality's self-development under conditions of specially organized educational system, which provides not a passive adaptation to available forms of social life and not supplying it to a socially established standard, but a purposeful development of each child, as a unique individual and as a creator of itself and circumstances... Organization of such education... should focus the development of the subjective child's world on the assignment of social values and simultaneously develop creative autonomy in solving complex moral problems in accordance with established social norms"²² by O. Stepanov (O. Степанов).

This information confirms what has been proved by many studies: that the moral education of preschool children is closely connected with moral development, as far as interaction between pedagogical influences and individual development occurs through perception, awareness, estimation and testing moral demands in experience.

Interpretation of the concept of moral development by C. Stonehouse is seen in the light of regularities examination concerning preschool children. The study of moral development is mainly dedicated to the study of the process through which personality internalizes (perceives and assimilates) the socially acceptable norms, rules

²⁰ І. Д Бех, *Виховання особистості*, Київ 2008, р. 31.

²¹ Ibid, р. 606-610.

²² О. М. Степанов, *Психологічна енциклопедія*, Київ 2006, р. 57.

and limitations and relies on them in its behavior. Theoretical and empirical data are focused on three conceptual aspects towards this process: moral judgments (how child consider moral situation), moral behavior (how it acts in such situations) and moral feelings (what she feels in these moments)²³.

Analysis by S. Jacobson (С. Якобсон) and others enriched moral development theory with knowledge about the formation of moral ideas and moral evaluations among children. She mentioned: "Psychological studies clearly show that preschool childhood is a sensitive period of moral development. This means that in preschool age appears conditions favorable for children's assimilation of morality norms and principles. Therewith, if the period when the child is very sensitive to the moral sphere, will not be used correctly, later it will be extremely difficult to catch up with"²⁴. Her works are aimed at clarifying the central problem of regulation in the study of children's moral education. S. Jacobson (С. Якобсон) emphasized the importance of the identification process with real or imaginary moral carriers of patterns and rules for the moral development of the individual. One of the proposed points is that adults (parents and caregivers) should focus a child's attention on the people around them, their feelings, feelings and needs; it will not do to consider the backlog of the child at classes as a reason for immoral acts, although intellectual development also influences the formation of moral behavior; it is necessary each time to focus the child's attention on her own moral behavior, comparing them with the generally accepted norms. In other words, the moral development of the preschool child according to S. Jacobson (С. Якобсон), – is a complicated and contradictory process: first there is a familiarization of norms "verbally" and there is a record in behavior violations; later moral norms begin to influence the behavior of the child.

For N. Melnikova's (Н. Мельникова), the moral development of the preschooler personality admits the following: understanding itself; development of personal behavior mechanisms; development of primary ethical stages and moral evaluation on its basis; the appearance of new motives of actions. Overall, moral development has a close connection with the general process of the social and mental development of children, the formation of integral personality. So, development of a moral sphere of personality is a process of the accumulation of moral experience by mastering the moral patterns given by society, which are produced on the basis of the main ethical concepts N. Melnikova (Н. Мельникова)²⁵. The result of preschooler moral development becomes *m o r a l e d u c a t i o n* – a system of sustainable morally-valuable

²³ C. M. Stonehouse, *Patterns in moral development*, Waco (Tex.), 1980, p. 48-69.

²⁴ С. Г. Якобсон, *Психологические проблемы этического развития детей*, Москва 1984, p. 38.

²⁵ Н. В. Мельникова, *Развитие нравственной сферы личности дошкольника*, Казань 2009, p. 34-36.

motives, which appear in the relations of child with peers and adults, its behavior in general, founded on moral standards and norms.

As for the levels of moral education of the individual, its manifestations in behavior and influence, the following problems are listed (by O. Vlasova (O. Власова)):

- “excellent (internal) manners – existence of moral habits and moral feelings as needs of fulfillment moral standards and countering their violation – consolidation of available moral standards;
- good (external) manners – presence of automatic moral skills, usage of well acquired lessons of moral knowledge characterized by involuntary actions, which correspond to moral standards - education of moral habits;
- situational manners – good knowledge of moral norms, but compliance with them only in situations threatening troubles (arbitrary implementation of actions); possible violation of moral standards fulfillment – reposition of moral skills;
- bad manners – knowledge of moral norms, but absence of skills to fulfill them; manifestation of bad manners and immoral actions – moral skills learning;
- discourtesy – an uncertain idea of moral norms and skills; frequent manifestations of bad manners and actions contradicting moral norms – teaching the knowledge of moral norms”²⁶.

The results of the research conducted by O. Kononko (O. Кононко) confirm that one of the indispensable conditions for appearing subjective in terms of the significance of moral norms is their feasibility. “The last one needed analysis of vital facts, selection of appropriate evidences, substantiation of their actions and deeds. Argumentation of ethical norms in order to provide personal sense implied child’s possibility to choose the version of his behavior and making its own decision as a result of the deployment of internal dialogue. Preschooler was attributed to the role of the subject of vital activity, who is capable of solving simple social and moral tasks and put demands to itself”²⁷, – emphasizes O. Kononko (O. Кононко). Ergo, the personal development of a preschooler depends on its sphere of moral growth that is extremely important during his childhood. Accordingly, the task of preschool teachers consists in not missing the possibility of the educational influence on a child and carrying out moral education in its all aspects.

In this manner, analysis materials of Ukrainian²⁸ and foreign²⁹ studies that are aimed at studying the psychological basis of the moral education of the individual

²⁶ O. I. Власова, *Педагогічна психологія*, Київ 2005, р. 236-237.

²⁷ O. Л. Кононко, *Психологічні основи особистісного становлення дошкільника*, Київ 2001, р. 31.

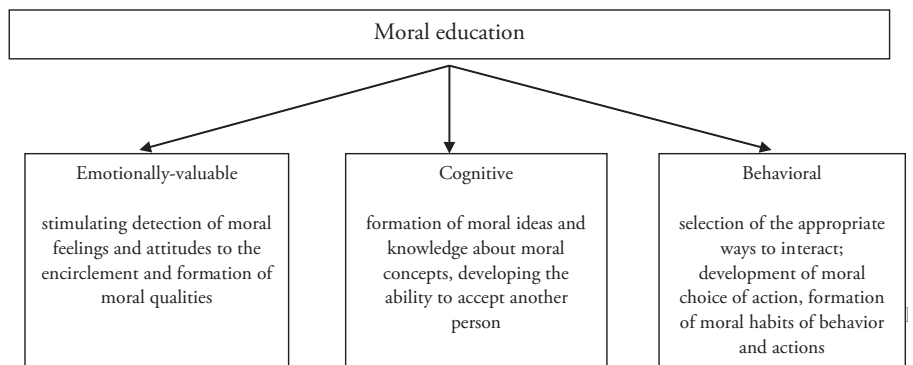
²⁸ Л. Лохвицька, *Моральне виховання: нові чи старі проблеми*, “Дошкільне виховання”, (2014) 7, р. 12-16.

²⁹ Л. Лохвицька, *Зарубіжні колеги про моральне виховання*, “Дошкільне виховання” (2015) 5, р. 8-11.

proves that system of moral education covers the following components: emotionally-valuable or sensual (affective), and behavioral components (by L. Lokhvytska (Л. Лохвицька)). The result of moral education should be the formation of moral competence of the individual, structural components which is the development of moral feelings, moral judgments and moral behavior. Herewith *“formation of moral self-consciousness is the core (main determinant) of moral education”*³⁰ (by L. Lokhvytska (Л. Лохвицька)). That is moral education for its structure should be considered as “three-component psychological formation... including: cognitive, emotional and behavioral components”³¹ by I. Bekh (І. Бех). Intuitively it is given in a scheme³² figure 1 (see Fig. 1. Components of moral education).

Respectively, this outlines necessity of realization the moral education as a holistic process based on the psychological determinants, which determines its occurrence. So, moral education is understood as the purposeful interaction of adults and children; this interaction is aimed at the formation of moral feelings and qualities, the assimilation of moral norms and rules, development of moral motives and behavior skills. Theoretically described prerequisites of moral education should, in this practical aspect, realistically reflect the degree of unity of the moral consciousness, feelings and emotions of the child, which ensures the efficiency and effectiveness of the process.

Fig. 1. Components of moral education



Source: own study.

³⁰ Л. В. Лохвицька, *Особистість дошкільника: Дорога до Я-морального*, Тернопіль 2016, р. 32.

³¹ І. Д Бех, *Виховання особистості*, Київ, 2008, р. 15.

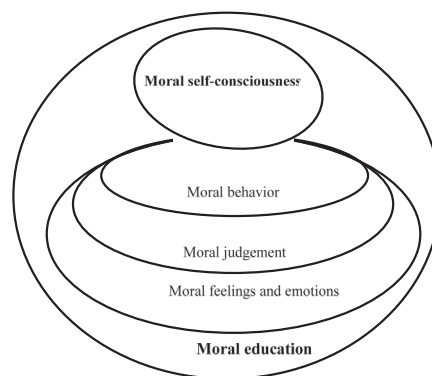
³² Л. В. Лохвицька, *Особистість дошкільника: Дорога до Я-морального*, Тернопіль 2016, р. 33.

Making an analysis of the whole theme in psychological and educational research allowed us to discover that the moral ideas and judgments of preschoolers are characterized by such features as elementary, concreteness, connection with feelings. That is the goal of the educational process, passing into convictions, convictions – into habits, and habits – into inclinations. Insufficient development of ideas about the norms and rules of behavior reduces the level of moral motives and limits the amount of moral behavior of the individual as a whole. For this purpose it is necessary to teach children to see the need for the realization of ideas about moral standards in different situations. Moral feelings serve as the driving force of the child’s behavior. During childhood, preschool moral feelings become deeper and sustainable, they relate to the increasing amount of events. Development of preschooler’s feelings is caused by the growth of opportunities of its communication with adults and peers and the development of various activities.

In the process of moral education, children’s feelings get stronger, become more sustainable and are increasingly able to play the role of motives. True morality is marked by firmness of moral motives, need of moral behavior. If a child commits an act because of coercion or fear of punishment, it cannot be considered as moral. Throughout preschool childhood, such moral feelings are developing: dignity, shame (own guilt). The child is ashamed when its dignity is humiliated, hence to avoid the shame, adults’ accusations, it can keep away from bad deeds. With the approval of behaviour, the preschooler feels pleasure, joy for the good deed and on this basis a sense of duty is formed.

Consequently, components of the structure of moral self-consciousness are moral feelings and emotions, moral judgment and moral behavior. Intuitively it is given in a scheme³³ figure 2 (see Fig. 2. Components of moral self- consciousness).

Fig. 2. Components of moral self-consciousness



Source: own study.

³³ Л. В. Лохвицька, *Особистість дошкільника: Дорога до Я-морального*, Тернопіль 2016, р. 74.

Moral self-consciousness, the formation of which occurs in the preschool years is the foundation of the process of moral education, since any educational “situation of personality is directly connected with the self-consciousness in the sense that it gives *Self* a measure: the more self-consciousness, the more *Self* grows”³⁴ (by I. Bekh (I. Бех)). It therefore follows that a scientific understanding of nature, laws and components of preschooler’s moral education is to a great extent linked with the analysis of the structure and specificity of its moral self-consciousness.

Expected results

The idea of the implementation of a moral education of the growing personality by defining the formation of moral consciousness as the main determinant is aimed at creating moral-“*Self*”; it is also a constructor that should improve the current educational process, carefully transforming it according to the requirements of today. The innovation of the proposed approach in the psychology of moral education is defined by consideration the moral education of preschooler’s personality not only as a result of external factors (to which he replies in certain ways: compliance or non-compliance with ethical standards), but as his moral self-regulation. Moral self-regulation of personality involves the expression of its own subjectivity, inner actions as need of the adoption of a moral value and ultimately – forming moral-“*Self*”. The essence of this new look at the psychology of moral education of preschool children in the conditions of modern educational changes is the creation of an integrative educational model focusing on the development of moral self-consciousness as the rod of the formation of the moral-“*Self*”.

Conclusions

1. Moral education is considered as a process of teaching someone to follow and profess morality in society; the purposeful and systematic impact on consciousness, feelings and behavior of children in order to form their moral character, manifested in compliance with the norms of public morality.
2. In conditions of modern educational change, the basis of moral education implementation is determined by the formation of moral consciousness in the personality of the growing preschooler. Continuously focusing a preschooler’s personality on the moral “*Self*” may encourage a motivation for moral enrichment and the expansion of its own moral experience.

³⁴ I. Д. Бех, *Концептуальна модель Я-цетрованості у вихованні та духовному розвитку особистості*, „Педагогіка і психологія” 88 (2015) 3, p. 6.

3. Moral education should have an integrative nature that is the interaction of moral consciousness (cognitive component), feelings, relationships, feelings (emotional and evaluative component) and the child's behavior (behavioral component), dynamics of which in early childhood is mediated by feelings.
4. As for pre-school children, it is seen as the purposeful interaction of adult and child in order to form moral feelings and qualities, assimilation of moral norms and rules of moral motives and behavior skills.
5. It is promising that the moral education of preschooler will be more successful in cases which create the full psychological and pedagogical conditions: high moral potential of the surrounding social microenvironment; activity of the child in learning moral experience; special psychological support of preschooler's moral development.

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