

DISTINCTIVE FORMS OF THE “SELF-CONCEPT” IN 6–7-YEAR-OLD PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

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Abstract: This article analyzes the specific characteristics of the formation and manifestation of the “self-concept” in 6–7-year-old preschool children. Research results demonstrate that the self-concept develops differently at each stage of childhood development, becoming particularly evident during the preschool period.

Keywords: Preschool education, self-concept, self-awareness, individuality, psychological development, reflection, methodology, child personality.

In recent years, psychological and pedagogical research has increasingly emphasized the importance of self-concept development in children [1]. During this period, children shape their internal image of self by understanding their individuality and internalizing social roles and values [2].

Since gaining independence, Uzbekistan has implemented significant reforms in the preschool education system. Reforms initiated in 2017 under the leadership of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev marked a new era in this field [3]. In 2018, the Ministry of Preschool Education was established. Enhancements in educational quality, teacher training, and the implementation of innovative programs—particularly the “Ilk qadam” (First Step) concept and STEAM technologies—have had a positive impact on the development of children’s self-concept [4].

Therefore, studying the forms and specific characteristics of self-concept development in children remains a pressing issue. In preschool-aged children, the self-concept manifests in unique ways, and various studies have been conducted to identify its age-related features.

This research is devoted to studying the development and distinctive forms of the self-concept in 6–7-year-old preschool children. It analyzes children's levels of self-awareness, their adoption of social roles, and their attitudes toward themselves [5].

The self-concept plays a central role in a child’s personal development. At the age of 6–7, the child begins to perceive themselves as an independent

individual, a process that significantly influences their social and emotional development [6]. The study identifies specific forms of this process and the factors that influence its formation.

A study was conducted among 6–7-year-old preschool children to investigate the development of the self-concept. A total of 40 preschoolers participated in the research. The following methods were applied:

- **Questionnaires** – to assess the level of self-awareness;
- **Observation** – of play activities and social interactions;
- **Interviews** – with educators and parents.

The study revealed the following forms of self-concept:

- **Social self** – the child perceives themselves as a member of a group;
- **Emotional self** – the child recognizes and expresses their emotions;
- **Cognitive self** – the child becomes aware of their learning processes.

Family environment, pedagogical approaches, and surroundings are critical in the development of self-concept. The formation of a conscious and meaningful “self-image” is closely linked to personal development. The self-concept begins when a child recognizes themselves as a distinct individual and understands their uniqueness [7]. For instance, as V.I. Slobodchikov and E.I. Isaev noted, from the age of three, children begin to form a social “self,” which is often expressed in phrases such as “I’ll do it myself!” [8].

Moreover, the works of A.N. Leontiev, L.I. Bozhovich, and L.S. Vygotsky emphasize that all forms of children’s activity are intrinsically linked to the level of their self-awareness [9]. The creation of positive psychological and pedagogical conditions is essential for the development and reinforcement of a child’s self-concept.

At the age of 6–7, children begin to comprehend their physical and psychological characteristics, marking a crucial stage in self-concept development and laying the groundwork for personal identity formation.

According to research findings, during this period, the formation of the self-concept in children is primarily influenced by the social environment, family upbringing, and communication with peers.

Children at this age tend to compare themselves with others and try to understand their abilities, capacities, and social roles, all of which contribute to the initial formation of their self-image.

The preschool period of 6–7 years represents an early phase in the consolidation of the self-concept, during which children’s attitudes toward themselves, self-esteem, and internal motivation begin to take shape.

At this stage, children strive to express their thoughts and emotions, which intensifies efforts to understand the inner self and establish their place within the social environment.

The development of the self-concept is of vital importance for fostering personal qualities such as independent thinking, decision-making, and a sense of responsibility for one's actions.

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