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Moral Orientation on Norms of Mutual Help and Responsibility in Middle Childhood

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Abstract

Peculiarities of the moral orientation in primary school in implementation of norms of mutual help and responsibility in solving the moral dilemmas are considered. The heterogeneity of moral reasoning and the relationship between the level of development of moral judgment and the child's readiness to follow moral norms in the behavior are revealed. It is proved that moral orientation on the principle of care is preceded by the orientation on the principle of justice.

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Keywords: moral orientation, moral dilemma, moral judgment, social situation of development, helping behavior, responsibility, moral reasoning.

1.Introduction

It is a well-known fact that the level of cognitive development determines child's moral judgments and peculiarities of moral choice in situation of moral dilemma solving. (Piage J, Kohlberg L., Eisenberg N.) [1], [2], [3]. Investigations done by of A.N.Leontiev, L.I.Bozhovich, S.N.Karpova, S.G. Yacobson shown that assimilation of social norms and standards of moral behavior occurs in active child's action and his communication with adults and peers, where these samples becomes the regulators and motives of behavior [4], [5], [6], [7]. Social situation of development specific for every age (Vygotsky L.S., Elkonin D.B., Karabanova O.A.) defines different children sensitivity to content of moral norms and as the result different dynamic of

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assimilation of moral norms with different content [8], [9]. We supposed that it will be reflected in differences in orientation on realization of moral norms of mutual aid and responsibility in middle childhood, concretely in heterogeneity of moral judgments about each of the moral norms. Helping behavior, cooperation and interaction in process of problem solving that can't be solved independently by the partner, seeking for help, corresponds to the child's relations with peers in middle childhood [10]. The acceptance of responsibility for results of your activity is the goal of development at that age.

2. The present study

Empirical investigation of peculiarities of moral orientation on norms of mutual aid and responsibility for the results of your own behavior is aimed on definition of moral orientation of children in middle childhood.

Aims:

- To define differences of orientation on realization of moral norms of mutual aid and responsibility/honesty in middle childhood.
- To investigate the peculiarities of moral judgments proving realization/violation of moral norms of mutual and responsibility.

3. Method

4.1 Participants

1295 schoolchildren aged from 9 till 10 took part in the investigation, attending the 4-th grade, living in Moscow, Vologda, Novosibirsk, Omsk, Tambov, Habarovsk, Kaluga regions.

4.2 Measures

We developed the technique of moral dilemmas aimed on realization of moral norms of mutual help and responsibility/honesty and readiness to take responsibility for results of your action. Subjects were given the moral dilemma in two forms. The first form presented the hero – subject's peer - that broke the moral norm in the situation of moral choice, the second form showed the hero –subject's peer – that realized the moral norm. Different variants of moral choice basis were given. All of them correspond to different stages of moral consciousness in L.Kohlbergs theory – preconventional, conventional and postconventional. The subject was to choose interpretation that was most adequate to hero's choice according to his opinion. In conclusion subject was to answer the question how he himself will behave in situation of moral choice.

Parameters of esteem of moral dilemma solving by subjects:

- Readiness to realize the moral norm in verbal behavior.
- Level of moral judgments/interpretation development in situation of realizing/breaking the moral norms.

5. Results

We analyze the subject's readiness to realize norms of mutual help and responsibility.

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