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## The structure of responsibility of preschool and primary school age children

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### Abstract

The paper deals with the structure of responsibility in preschool and primary school children and its specific features. Responsibility is understood as a personality trait which is reflected in the awareness and emotional experience of the need to do a job that is significant to everybody as well as in the readiness to realize responsible behavior. The main objective of the study is to determine age-related differences (the level of formation of responsibility), as well as manifestations of the behavioral, emotional and cognitive components of responsibility in comparable age groups. The paper presents the results of a comparative analysis of preschoolers' and primary school children's notions about responsibility. The results show that the age period in question is sensitive to the formation of responsibility as a personality trait.

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## 1. Introduction

Despite the fact that responsibility has been extensively studied as a personality trait of great social and personal significance and high relevance, the problem of responsibility formation is given very little prominence in modern psychology.

The main methods of responsibility formation in the mid-20th century experiments (Z.N. Borisova, V.A.Gorbacheva, K.A.Klimova, L.S.Slavin) were aimed at teaching children to follow certain rules, to plan the execution of a job entrusted and at supervising the implementation of the task given. This ignores the fact that children's understanding and following the rules of behavior can lead only to the formation of compliance and promptitude in obeying which can't replace such an important personality trait as responsibility.

Responsibility is considered as an individual quality, which is reflected in the realization and emotional experience necessary to do any work of significance to everybody, as well as one's readiness to realize responsible behavior [1].

This interpretation of the concept allows us to avoid reducing responsibility to the mere execution of one's duties and discipline. The latter can be justified only at the first stages of development of responsibility. These features of one's character can be integrated into the responsibilities of a person only when the requirements of society and the social situation of development really become his/her personal needs (will change from "must" to "I can't do it differently") [2].

Using A. G. Asmolov's idea about attitude being a stabilizer of activities, one can single out the following system of semantic units reflecting the responsibility formation process in the ontogenesis [3]. "I want to do it" → "I need to do it" → "I must do it" → "I can't do it differently".

The theoretical basis of the study is as follows: responsibility is an integral personality trait which is composed of cognitive, behavioral and emotional components:

1. Cognitive component: planning the activity, realizing the need for response, realizing refusal to choose execution of a task and forecasting the results of one's actions.
2. Emotional component: willingness to overcome difficulties, emotional experience related to the result, a positive attitude to responsibilities and emotional sympathy for others.
3. Behavioral and effective components: independence, self-control, discipline, systematic fulfillment of promises, voluntariness, the timing of activity, work quality and completion of the task executed.

The aim of the research is to identify the characteristics of responsibility structure in preschoolers and primary school children.

To achieve this aim the following tasks are stated:

1. to compare the level of responsibility formation in preschoolers and primary school age children;
2. to study the age characteristics of responsibility structure;
3. to identify the concepts of children's responsibility at each age period.

## 2. Method

The participants of our research were 87 dyads – preschoolers (5. 5 – 6. 5 years), primary school children (7-7.5 years) and their mothers. All of them live in Omsk.

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