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THE CONCEPT OF SOCIAL COMPETENCE OF CHILDREN OF ELDERLY PRESCHOOL AGE

One of the important areas of development of the modern education system is the formation of key personal competencies, among which social competence is of particular importance. According to the Basic Component of Preschool Education (2021), one of the priority outcomes of the educational process is the formation of children's ability to interact with other people, observe social norms, and develop communicative and social skills [1, pp. 10–14].

Senior preschool age is considered the final period of preschool childhood and at the same time an important stage of a child's preparation for schooling. At this time, the foundations of social behavior are intensively laid, moral ideas are formed, and communication, cooperation, and mutual understanding skills with other people are developed. The degree of formation of social competence determines the success of the child's further socialization, his adaptation to the school environment, and the effectiveness of interaction with the environment.

In this regard, it is important to theoretically understand the concept of social competence of children of senior preschool age and determine its main structural components.

The problem of social development of preschool children has been considered in the works of Ukrainian and foreign scientists. A. Bogush emphasizes that preschool age is a period of intensive formation of social qualities of the personality, in particular the ability to interact, empathize and observe social norms [2, pp. 198–203]. Modern educational programs of preschool education define that social competence involves the formation of a child's ability to cooperate, be responsible, self-regulate behavior and realize himself as a member of society [3, pp. 64–70; 5, pp. 45–49]. K. Krutiy emphasizes that the educational space of a preschool educational institution should contribute to the development of the child's social experience through active interaction with peers and adults [4, pp. 112–118]. In the studies of modern scientists, social competence is interpreted as an integrative characteristic of the personality. It includes knowledge of social norms and rules, formed skills of interaction with other people, as well as a positive attitude towards the social environment [6, pp. 15–18]. Ya. Selikova emphasizes the importance of developing socio-emotional skills as a component of social competence, which ensures effective interaction of children in a team [7, pp. 246–247].

At the same time, despite a significant number of studies, the issue of the essence of the concept of social competence of children of senior preschool age requires further clarification.

An examination of scientific research has shown that some aspects of this problem still require additional clarification:

- insufficient specification of the structure of social competence of children of senior preschool age;
- lack of a consistent scientific approach to identifying its main components;
- the need to clarify the content of social competence in accordance with modern educational standards.

As modern researchers note, social competence is formed in the process of activity and interaction, in particular play [8, pp. 34–36], which requires further theoretical justification.

The purpose of the article is a theoretical analysis of the concept of social competence of children of senior preschool age and the definition of its main characteristics.

Social competence is a complex multi-component formation that is formed in the process of socialization of the individual. It includes knowledge of social norms, the ability to interact with other people and the readiness for socially acceptable behavior.

In the scientific literature, social competence is defined as an integrative characteristic of the individual, which includes social knowledge, skills and personal qualities necessary for effective interaction with the social environment [6, pp. 21–24].

According to the provisions of the Basic Component of Preschool Education, the social competence of a preschooler is manifested in the ability to interact with other people, observe the rules of behavior, form moral qualities and a positive attitude towards oneself and others [1, pp. 18–20].

The senior preschool age is marked by the intensive development of the child's social consciousness. During this period, children begin to realize different social roles, understand the rules of interaction in a team and the importance of joint activities. At the same time, such qualities as the ability to empathy, mutual assistance, responsibility are actively formed [2, pp. 210–214].

Educational programs of preschool education provide for the formation of children's skills to interact with peers, resolve conflict situations, and adhere to social norms [5, pp. 51–55].

An important means of forming social competence is game activity. It is during the game that the child masters different social roles, learns behavioral patterns, and develops communication skills. Scientists emphasize that play activities contribute to the accumulation of social experience and the formation of the ability to interact with the environment. [8, pp. 35–37; 9, p. 42–46].

K. Krutiy emphasizes that the social development of a child is ensured through the organization of an educational environment that stimulates communication, cooperation and interaction [4, pp. 130–135].

Thus, the social competence of older preschool children is the result of the complex influence of the educational environment, activities and interaction with other people.

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