

GENDER FEATURES OF MODERN PRESCHOOLERS' MANIFESTATION OF ANXIETY

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Abstract: *The author of the article considers gender features of manifestation of anxiety as a negative emotion that detrimentally affects physical and psychological state of a preschool child. The article considers the most significant factors in relation to the gender characteristics of anxiety in preschool children, and determines criteria for parental influence, family structure, and parental attitude to the child.*

Key Words: *anxiety, gender, gender education, gender education patterns, family education, manifestations of anxiety*

Introduction

According to I. Savina the main cause of anxiety is improper upbringing and unfavorable relationship between a child and parents, especially with mother. In particular, if a mother rejects her child, this makes the child feel alarmed and distressed due to unfulfillment of the child's need for love, affection and protection, which, in turn, gives rise to fear that motherly love is conditional. Also, the child's anxiety can be triggered by prevalence of authoritarian style of communication or inconsistency of parents' requirements (Savina I., Shanina N., 2006).

Also, the main reason for anxiety occurrence is negative interpersonal relationship between children and peers (rejection, rivalry, competition) or adults (increased responsibility, fear of failing to meet adults' hopes and expectations).

Research

Teachers and psychologists emphasize that authoritarian style of parenting does not contribute to child's inner calmness. In their opinion anxiety begins to form precisely at preschool age, so, in this case parents should create a calm atmosphere in the family, as parents' anxieties are transmitted to their children (Prihozan A., 2007).

According to psychiatrists and neurologists, strict authoritarian upbringing with conflicting requirements and numerous prohibitions negatively affects boys and girls of preschool age. Such upbringing leads to neurosis, obsessive states and psychasthenia in children. Self-esteem suffers as well: preschool children become insecure, lose their feeling of independence and more. To be more precise, self-esteem is damaged by isolation from peers, instruction and moralizing (although in this case parents often wish to cultivate good qualities in a child), insults, humiliation, ridicule and physical punishment for mistakes and failures, pointing at a child's weaknesses and inferiority. Considering gender, it can be observed that in boys of preschool age these problems are more pronounced (60%) than in girls (20%) (Kyznetzov Y., 2019).

For preschool children anxiety is as a negative factor, since being in this state for a long time negatively affects not only physical, but also psychological state of the child. Therefore, it is necessary to

assess the child's condition carefully and if there are first signs of anxiety, to take appropriate psychological and pedagogical measures.

As far as gender characteristics of manifestation of child anxiety are concerned, in preschool age the most significant factor is mother's or father's upbringing style. For example, if a boy was brought up without a father, then at a later stage of preschool age due to the mother's overprotective behavior, the child may develop infantility, lack of independence and anxiety. In this case, girls have an increase in anxiety levels due to formation of a negative stereotypes of 'single mother' emotional relationships (Eremeeva V., Krizman T., 1998).

It is also worth noting that lack of identification with the mother can also serve as a reason for girls to lose confidence. And if the father is absent, it may lead to inability to express love and affection, which, in turn, increases child's anxiety and feeling of unhappiness.

The more positive emotions (affection, care) a preschooler receives from the parent, the more protected the child feels, the more he or she develops self-confidence and optimistic perception of the world. If authoritarian upbringing is more prevalent in the family, there is a high probability that a preschooler will develop anxiety, fears, self-doubt and pessimism.

Teachers and psychologists believe that girls are more likely to have more fears than boys, but boys tend to have higher levels of anxiety. The reasons for this correlation are inherent in social upbringing and formation of its stereotypes. Since boys 'from the cradle' are told that 'they should not cry', 'should not be afraid of anything', 'should be a real man', they typically suppress fears, which increases their internal anxiety. Girls are usually allowed to express fear, and often in the process of upbringing they are even encouraged to do so, thus they can project their fears on external objects, which greatly reduces their internal anxiety (Prihozan A., 2007).

V. Garbuzov believes that physiology is another factor in boys' anxiety formation: their heightened physical activity may lead to injuries and punishments, which causes an increase in their anxiety level (Garbyzov V., 1990).

Another interesting fact is gender-specific interdependence between anxiety and intellectual activity. Boys' intellectual abilities are almost completely unrelated to anxiety level, while high anxiety level in girls negatively affects intellectual performance.

Gender differences between boys and girls of preschool age are initially determined by biological factors, but develop under the influence of social interactions and education. As a result, boys' and girls' emotional development and the formation of anxiety due to gender-related differences in upbringing will differ significantly.

Psychologists and educators note that boys and girls of preschool age do have different levels of anxiety, depending on causes and situations. For example, girls' anxiety is more influenced by their communication with others, and boys' by physical component of their development (Kyznetsov Y., 2019).

The most significant factors regarding the formation of children's anxiety according to gender differences are: parenting style, family structure, parental attitude to the child.

Also, the anxiety of preschool children is directly affected by their personal development. Personality development of preschool children from 3 to 7 (8) years is characterized by leadership, independence, responsibility, spontaneity. Personal growth is strongly connected with the awareness of one's own "I", individual qualities which become evident during active cognitive activity and communication with peers. If a preschooler shows increased anxiety, then there may be decrease in active cognitive activity and communication with peers, which negatively affects development of leadership, independence, responsibility, spontaneity.

Results

A study was conducted to determine gender characteristics of anxiety manifestation in modern preschoolers of different age groups (from 2 to 6 years). 15 boys and 15 girls participated in the study. Three techniques were used: Steam Engine technique (author S. Velieva), which allows to identify emotional state of children; graphic technique Cactus (author M. Pamfilova), which allows to identify

anxiety and helps to track which emotional manifestations often accompanies anxiety; method «Home-tree-man» (author J. Buck) which allows to identify gender differences in emotional and personal characteristics associated with anxiety.

Results of the first method application showed that the group has average psychological climate, while positive mental state is observed in 20 children in the group, and in the rest 10 children - negative mental state of different degrees, a prerequisite for anxiety development. Out of 10 people, indicators of a negative mental state were found in 8 boys and 2 girls of preschool age.

The second method showed that, according to the diagnostic results, 10 out of 30 children have pronounced increased anxiety accompanied by impulsiveness, introversion and a desire for protection, in fewer cases increased anxiety is combined with aggressiveness and egocentrism (only in 3 children). It was also identified that all children with increased anxiety show constant and distinct manifestations of impulsivity.

The method also revealed that 7 out of 10 children with pronounced increased anxiety are boys. This once again proves the results of the first method application that showed that negative mental state prevails in boys.

The third method allowed to identify gender differences in emotional and personal characteristics associated with increased anxiety in preschool children. It was found that frequently encountered emotional and personal characteristics associated with increased anxiety were found in more than half of the group of children (17 people):

- 9 out of 17 children are depressed, fearful or shy, as indicated by predominant use of black in their drawings;
- 10 out of 17 children are anxious and aggressive, their area of interpersonal conflicts is expanded, as indicated by predominance of hatching in their drawings;
- 12 out of 17 children are self-doubtful and insecure, as in the drawings they simplified figures and replaced body parts with lines;

At the same time emotional and personal characteristics associated with increased anxiety such as depression, timidity, aggression, self-doubt and expanded area of interpersonal conflicts, according to the results of the third technique, were more typical of girls (10 people).

Conclusion

The study results confirmed the traditional idea that boys of preschool age tend to have more pronounced anxiety and negative mental state than girls.

Results showing that predominance of depression, timidity, aggression, self-doubt and expanded area of interpersonal conflicts are more typical of girls rather than boys were unexpected.

The teacher of this group of children shared details of upbringing of those children who have distinct anxiety and negative mental state. As it turned out, boys developed these traits due to authoritarian upbringing in the family. It was also revealed that these boys were the only children in the families and all family members (including grandparents) showed higher demands for the child. Anxiety and negative mental state were typical for girls who were brought up in authoritarian families and incomplete families, their mothers were expecting them to be initiative, independent, responsible and spontaneous. At the same time, girls did not fully meet their mothers' expectations, which led to punishments and criticism.

The study proves that the cause of increased anxiety is indeed improper upbringing and unfavorable relations between children and parents, especially with mother. Increased anxiety of girls and boys of preschool age is associated with predominance of authoritarian style of communication, inconsistent demands and imbalanced system of encouragement and punishment.

References

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Гендерные особенности проявления тревожности у современных дошкольников

Аннотация: автор статьи рассматривает вопросы гендерных особенностей проявления тревожности как негативной эмоции, отрицательно отражающейся на физическом и на психологическом состоянии ребенка дошкольного возраста. В статье рассматриваются наиболее значимые факторы в отношении гендерных особенностей проявления тревожности детей дошкольного возраста, в частности определяются критерии влияния родительского воспитания, структуры семьи, родительского отношения к ребенку.

Ключевые слова: тревожность, гендер, гендерное воспитание, паттерны гендерного воспитания, семейное воспитание, проявление тревожности