

Social-Psychological Factors in the Formation of Personal Identity in Primary School Children

Mustafayeva Dilnoza Qayum qizi

Lecturer, Karshi State University



Abstract

This article analyzes the process of personal identity formation in primary school-aged children from a socio-psychological perspective. The study examines the role of family, school, teachers, and peers in the development of identity. It also explores the main social factors influencing the formation of a child's self-image ("I-concept") and the psychological mechanisms of identification and self-awareness.

Keywords: identity, personal identity, social psychology, primary school age, identification, social factors, self-awareness.

Introduction

Today, the study of personal identity is one of the most important areas of social psychology. Social changes, technological progress, and the renewal of communication forms directly affect an individual's self-concept ("sense of self"). The primary school period is one of the key stages in this process, as it is during this time that the child begins to perceive themselves as a social being. The concept of identity in psychology refers to a person's understanding of who they are, their social role, and their system of values. E. Erikson viewed identity as the central element of personal development — a process through which a person defines themselves within a social system. In social psychology, identity is considered the result of interaction between the individual and society.

The Primary School Period and Self-Development

The primary school years represent a stage when a child begins to understand their individual characteristics and form their self-image. During this period, psychological processes such as self-evaluation, self-confidence, and social comparison become active. The attitudes of teachers and parents, as well as positive social feedback, help the child develop the belief "this is who I am."

For children of this age, the most significant social environments are the family, school, and peer group.

- Family is the primary source of identity formation, where the child learns values, gender roles, and moral norms.
- School broadens social roles, allowing the child to evaluate personal capabilities and experience both success and failure.
- Peers reinforce personal identity through mechanisms of social comparison.

Cognitive Mechanisms

Cognitive mechanisms include:

1. Self-awareness and self-categorization. Primary school children begin to differentiate themselves from others. In answering “Who am I?”, they reflect on their abilities, interests, and social roles. Their self-awareness increases, and they start to recognize their strengths and weaknesses.

For example, studies conducted in Ukraine have shown that children’s worldview development involves cognitive, emotional, and behavioral components. Most participants demonstrated high or moderate levels of worldview development.

2. Categorical classification. Children form self-concepts through social categories (such as classmates, family members, and friends), helping them understand their place in social relations.

3. Language use. As language skills develop, children begin to express their feelings and thoughts verbally, which plays a crucial role in self-understanding and communication.

4. Meta-cognitive abilities. Children start to understand both their own and others’ thoughts and can analyze their behavior. This enables deeper comprehension of identity.

For instance, fostering emotional understanding and regulation among children requires creating a positive and supportive school environment.

Emotional Mechanisms

Emotional mechanisms include:

1. Self-attitude. Children develop positive or negative feelings about themselves. For instance, high self-esteem and confidence contribute to positive identity formation by helping children manage their emotions and behavior in difficult situations.

2. Empathy and emotional understanding. Children strive to understand others’ emotions, which helps them learn appropriate social behavior.

3. Emotion regulation. The ability to control emotions supports healthy identity development, enabling children to act calmly and appropriately in challenging contexts.

The Role of the Social Environment

The social environment — family, school, friends, and community — plays a major role in shaping a child's identity. Their opinions, feedback, and attitudes influence the child's self-confidence and self-awareness.

Personal identity formation in primary school children occurs through the interaction of cognitive and emotional processes. Cognitive mechanisms aid in self-understanding, categorization, and expression, while emotional mechanisms foster self-attitude, relationships with others, and emotional regulation.

Identification and Self-Awareness

The process of identification involves the child perceiving themselves as a member of a particular social group. They strive to resemble their teachers, parents, or friends, thereby outlining the contours of their “self.” Self-awareness is the result of this process — the ability to distinguish personal qualities and answer the question, “Who am I?”

The formation of personal identity in primary school children is a complex; multi-factorial process closely tied to the quality of social relationships. Teachers and parents should create supportive, trusting, and encouraging environments to foster positive self-awareness. Psychologists, in turn, should monitor identification processes and design programs aimed at developing socio-emotional skills.

References

1. Erikson, E. Identity: Youth and Crisis. New York: Norton, 1968.
2. Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. The Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behavior. Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1986.
3. Vygotsky, L.S. Pedagogical Psychology. Moscow: Pedagogika, 1991.
4. Karimova, V.M. Personality Psychology. Tashkent: Uzbekistan, 2017.
5. Ahmedova, N. Social Self-Awareness in Primary School Children. Tashkent, 2022.