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Sex-role socialisation of boarding School children

The research is devoted to the problem of sex-role socialization of children that are upbrought out of their families. The aim of the research is to find out the level of the development of sex-role culture of orphan children. 35 pupils of 9th and 11th forms at the age of 14-17 took part in our research.

The difficulties of sex-role socialization of orphans that happen out of family have been analyzed.

Object of the research: 35 pupils of 9th and 11th forms at the age of 14-17 took part in our research.

The main investigation methods are: observation “Unfinished sentences”, questionnaire of Fryeburg “Personal questionnaire” (scale “female-male”).

Results of the research: the level of the development of sex-role culture of orphan children depends on :

- 1 Sex identity,
- 2 Realization and acception of a sex role.
- 3 Behavior according to accepted sex stereotypes.

Nowadays the problem of sex-role socialization of children upbrought in conditions of deprivation, such as conditions of children’s home and Internats are, is one of the most acute in social pedagogics and social work in the Republic of Belarus.

As it occur to be Internat children are deprived of the possibility to see the “real” family, therefore to master models and stereotypes of behavior , qualities, social features of a man and a woman, the relationship between them, to develop skills and knowledge for their independent life, including family life, too. They

can't construct realized understanding of their sex and respect towards another sex. As a result, the number of unhappy marriages among Internat's gradutors and the number of abandoned children before parents, who are alive, is increasing rapidly.

According to the Conception of the Republic of Belarus about the upbringing of children and students (1999), sex-role socialization is supposed "to develop the image of children of life purpose of a man and a woman, with those positive qualities and features of character that are accepted in society; to discover physiological, psychological and ethic particularities of girls, boys; to develop the image of a female and a male dignity, ethic sense of the beauty of childhood, adolescence, youth, maturity, old age, true and false beauty of a man".

The criterions of development or undevelopment of sex roles are:

- 1 presence of the purpose of behavior and qualities that are typical for girls (womanliness, gentleness, tolerance, etc.), and for boys (courage, diligence etc.);
- 2 development of models of behavior and views on the acceptable in society relationships between the sexes, the image of a man's and a woman's life purpose, the aspiration to understand and to take care of one another;
- 3 presence of the image of correctness and adequateness of self behavior and qualities towards another sex from the attitude "I'm a boy" and "I'm a girl";
- 4 presence of honesty, mercy, sincerity, trust and faithfulness among representatives of both sexes.

The results of the researches for the last years make us confirm that the specific conditions of living in closed Institution, like Internat is, determine personal characteristics and particularities of Internat children's behavior:

- 1 deprivation: mother's, emotional, social, sensorial;
- 2 undeveloped experience of communication with people out of the Internat;
- 3 lack of external impressions;

- 4 the delay in creation of the personal construct, “self-conception”;
- 5 undeveloped skills in independent choice;
- 6 inability to master social experience of the older generation because of absence of their families;
- 7 absence of right moral appreciation of environment;
- 8 social and emotional uncertainty.

In context of the talk about the specific conditions of living in such the circumstances there is no process of imitation and identification of children with parents. So the children deprived of the possibility to orient to parental behavior as the example and their own mode. In addition their views on family life, purposes to master social and sex roles are not developed. Teachers as agents of socialization are called to do the role of their biological parents. In their majority there represent female society where the development of female and sex identity is rather hard. In conditions of Children's home and Internat children can't watch their teachers in a role of a mother, a daughter, a wife, a sister or a father, a husband, a son. All this doesn't give children adequate understanding and realization of full value as representatives of definite sex in present time and in future, that, finally, make difficult the process of sex socialization and lead to misrepresentation of the image of sex roles, functions and models of behavior of a man and a woman.

As a rule, graduates from children's home and Internat can't value their own families and aspire to solve spouse conflicts in future. They often have difficulties in family creation, can't build relationships with a spouse's parents. The aim of sex-role socialization is to develop sex culture by means of mastering sex roles and socio acceptable stereotypes and also adequate understanding their own sex identity.

The specific object of sex-role upbringing is the upbringing of the culture of the relationship between the sexes, the development of the ability to realize a sex role, the development of men's and women's identity and the mastering of skills of corresponding behavior.

The priority approaches of work in case of sex-role

upbringing of Internat children we see in:

1. work directed to the children should include information about male and female style of living, discovering the main functions that are correspond to sex roles;
2. demonstration of the definite sex models of behavior;
3. work directed to the development of the practical skills in communication, culture of behavior and speech with another sex;
4. diagnostic work that includes revealing of children's knowledge and skills to define their sex identity, its signs, emotional preferences;
5. work directed to the children's participation in the preparing to independent life, including family life and responsible parentalness;
6. work that includes propaganda of safe and responsible behavior, lowering of risk of undesirable pregnancy, infection with AIDS and etc.

Sex-role upbringing of Internat children is supposed to search methods that can be produce unity of children's consciousness, experience and behavior in effective way. Such **methods** are:

- observation after behavior of the representatives of another sex by placement of children into a foster family or by returning (visiting) into a biological family, widening of the pedagogical collective by teachers of male sex;
- analysis of situations of inadequate or unmoral behavior of representatives of both sexes;
- sincere conversations, lectures, dialogues about the relationships between boys and girls with specialists (social pedagogues and social workers, psychologist, medical staff);
- method of modification of social behavior (the development of vital skills and habits of behavior in definite circumstances);
- social-psychological trainings;
- self- practical activity in adequate skills training.

We conducted a research on the basis of Minsk Internat school № 8. Our

main purpose was to study the level of the development of sex-role culture of orphan children. 35 pupils of 9th and 11th forms at the age of 14-17 took part in our research.

The analysis of results of our research showed the next:

1. About 83% of children identify themselves with the representative of their sex. By 14-15 years old we speak about sex identity (active mastering of cultural and social experience).

2. The most typical qualities of "real" men and women Internat children consider: beauty, mind, kindness - for a woman; strength, diligence, neatness, and mind, respect to women, to value and to defend them - for a man.

3. Because of lack of examples for imitation boy's behavior doesn't conform to their sex role (80%). 25% of respondents have the high level of female. 25% of boys have the high level of male, one boy has the very high level of male. About 50% of respondents have features either of man's or woman's character. It depends on situation.

4. Behavior and qualities of girls conforms to their sex role (55%), 11% of them have the high level of male qualities and features of character. 44% of girls have the high level of female qualities. The same percent of girls (44%) have both psychological and social qualities that are typical for both sexes. We can suppose that this fact is the result of the processes in our society (feminism).

5. 78% of boys in conditions of Internat have rather full image of the stereotypes of boy's and girl's behavior that are accepted in society. The views of 7% of respondents fully conform to generally accepted modes that exist in culture. 11% of boys haven't mastered the basic characteristic of behavior in appropriate way. One boy doesn't have any image of sex-role stereotypes.

6. The image of girls of behavior and features is more full than boys have. About 67% of girls have rather high level of conform of their image of sex-role stereotypes to generally accepted modes of behavior. The views of 22% of respondents among girls conform to the traditional characteristics of boys and girls.

So, we can make the conclusion that in modern society the result of sex-role socialization of children in conditions of Children's home and Internat is the development of qualities and features that doesn't conform to generally accepted in society standards. In spite of the fact that sex role is supposed to master the definite social behavior, demands, standards either for a man or for a woman, the present situation in Internat establishments is the next:

- boys are more passive and female,
- girls are less female (more male features).

So, according to material mentioned above we can propose some **ways of solution to the problem of sex-role socialization of Internat children:**

1. organization of effective alternative forms of upbringing of orphans and children who were left without parental care (their return into biological family, foster care, spending week-end and feasts in foster families, etc.);

2. social-pedagogical and psychological work directed to the raising the level of information about the ethic of relationships between a man and a woman, marriage and family case, responsible parentalness among the children with the help of:

- introduction of the course and classes on sexual upbringing;
- co-operation with medical personnel, sociologists, psychologists;
- spiritual upbringing;

3. The conditions of Internat should be approximate to family model;

4. Raising the level of information culture in case of sex-role upbringing among pedagogical personnel of Internat establishments;

5. Unite of governmental authorities, Mass Media, public organizations to the problem of sex-role socialization of orphans and children who were left without parental care.