

ЛЮДИНОЗНАВЧІ СТУДІЇ  
Серія «Педагогіка», 6/38 (2018), 84–95

HUMAN STUDIES  
Series of «Pedagogy», 6/38 (2018), 84–95

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УДК 37.04

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**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.24919/2313-2094.6/38.121429>

**Бібліографічний опис статті:** Vovk, Yu., Vovk, L. (2018). The structure of the gender culture of junior schoolchildren. *Людинознавчі студії: зб. наук. праць ДДПУ імені Івана Франка. Серія «Педагогіка», 6/38, 84–95. doi: 10.24919/2313-2094.6/38.121429.*

#### Історія статті

Одержано: 7 вересня 2017

Подано до редакції: 15 лютого 2018

Процеженовано: 14 листопада 2017

Доступ он-лайн: 5 квітня 2018

## THE STRUCTURE OF THE GENDER CULTURE OF JUNIOR SCHOOLCHILDREN

## СТРУКТУРА ГЕНДЕРНОЇ КУЛЬТУРИ МОЛОДШИХ ШКОЛЯРІВ

**Анотація.** Розглянуто процес формування гендерної культури у молодшому шкільному віці; виявлено особливості структури гендерної культури на різних вікових етапах, досліджено взаємини дівчат і хлопців цього віку; визначено критерії когнітивного, емоційного та поведінкового компонентів гендерної культури; виділено три рівні сформованості гендерної культури в учнів початкових класів.

Формування гендерної культури молодших школярів у розвитку особистості дитини є одночасно процесом соціальним та індивідуальним. З одного боку – це набуття знань про гендерні ролі, засвоєння статево-

*рольових норм, правил поведінки, прийнятих у соціальному довіллі, а з іншого – процес розвитку сутнісного «Я» дитини, усвідомлення власної гендерної ідентичності, розвиток маскулінності/фемінності та вміння застосовувати різні типи поведінки. Доведено, що цей процес багатограний, суперечливий, динамічний. Незважаючи на сталість природної диференціації статей, спонтанну сегрегацію дівчат і хлопців, відповідно до якої специфіка кожної статі стає очевидною (хлопці – сильні, хоробрі тощо, дівчатка – красиві, добрі тощо), виховання гендерної культури вимагає від кожного хлопця і дівчини молодшого шкільного віку внутрішнього напруження, осмислення індивідуальних гендерних особливостей, свого жіночого/чоловічого образу «Я».*

*Аналіз наукових підходів до визначення показників гендерної культури показав, що, незалежно від особливостей кожного дослідження, в основу критеріїв та показників гендерної культури покладено вимір когнітивної, ціннісної та поведінкової сфер у контексті гендерних проблем.*

*Структуру гендерної культури молодших школярів представлено трьома компонентами: когнітивним, критеріями якого є сформовані гендерні знання та уявлення; емоційно-ціннісним, критерій якого відображає сформоване ціннісне ставлення до своєї та протилежної статі; поведінковим, критеріями якого є вміння та навички дотримуватися гендерної рівності та чуйності у взаєминах. На основі розроблених критеріїв та їх показників визначено три рівні (високий, середній, низький) сформованості гендерної культури молодших школярів.*

**Ключові слова:** *гендерні цінності, молодший шкільний вік, гендерне виховання, структура гендерної культури, вміння та навички міжгендерної взаємодії, компоненти гендерної культури.*

**The formulation of the problem.** At present the special attention is paid to the process of gender culture formation, caused by many reasons, among which can be mentioned such as acceleration, poor awareness of juveniles with sex development, leveling of moral values etc. Besides there are contradictions between the requirements for gender upbringing and inability of several social institutions to perform educational functions. That's why the problem of personality's gender culture formation is extremely important nowadays.

Gender culture formation of younger pupils during educational activity at primary school we regard as a process of harmonization of gender relations between girls and boys as representatives of male and female constituent parts of society, which have equal possibilities of self-realization, self-expression, self-assertion, performing of social and educational roles, despite different physiological, psychological and individual peculiarities. The actuality of our investigation is caused first of all by potential possibilities of general schools as to gender upbringing of pupils and their insufficient use at educational process.

**The Analysis of the Latest Investigations and Publications.** As we talk about junior school age, when the need for self-assertion as of the sex

representative is being formed in the process of interaction, the basis for moral orientations of gender socialization is built, spontaneous engagement into a system of gender values takes place, the basis for accumulation of such knowledge as equality, parity, uniformity, formation of gender competitiveness of boys and girls is formed – we regard it necessary to use theoretical and practical aspects of gender culture formation, which were investigated by V. Kravets, O. Kikinedzhi, T. Hovorun, O. Ilyina, S. Vykhор, T. Buturlym. The scientific investigation of gender culture has shown, that the specificity of gender culture formation of a younger pupil lies in age and psycho-physiological peculiarities (Jacobsen, de Mello, Kochhann, & Fonseca, 2017, p. 408). The social role of a pupil, which is mastered by child, can be characterized by flexibility of sex and role behaviour, that approaches it to androgynous one (Allison & Ralston, 2017). That's why junior school age is the most sensational in the context of the egalitarian gender representations formation based on their practical, intellectual and spiritual comprehension.

**The aim of the article** – on the basis of psychological and pedagogical sources' analysis to reveal the structure of elementary school students' gender culture.

In our investigation we based on the understanding that the formation of gender culture of junior students at child's personality development is simultaneously social and individual process. On the one hand – it is gaining of knowledge about gender roles, mastering of sex-role norms, rules of conduct accepted in the social environment, and on the other hand – it is a process of child's self-concept development, realization of gender identity, development of masculinity/femininity and ability to use different types of conduct. This process is multifaceted, contradictory and dynamic. Despite stability of natural differentiation of sexes, spontaneous segregation of girls and boys, according to which specificity of each gender is obvious (boys are strong, brave etc., girls are beautiful, kind etc.), upbringing of gender culture demands inner strain from each boy and girl of junior school age, their comprehension of individual gender characteristics and their feminine/ masculine self-concept (Molano & Jones, 2017, p. 14).

We may judge about the level of gender culture by the levels of its structural components formation.

In several investigations the characteristics of gender culture's structure at different age stages is presented. In the structure of the gender culture of older teenagers S. Vykhор distinguishes:

– a cognitive component, which is determined by the focus on sexual identity formation of the person on the basis of a self-concept as a representative of a particular sex representative, of gender roles content and modern gender stereotypes, of feminine and masculine peculiarities;

- an emotional-value component – recognition of the priority of universal values and equal possibilities for people of different genders, orientation on partner interaction and egalitarian marriage;

- a behavioral component – causes the realization of the learned models of gender roles implementation in their own lives through the training of appropriate actions in atypical for this gender activities, training in expressions of respect for another gender and adequate interpersonal communication (Vyhor, 2006, p. 26).

On the basis of pupils-teenagers' gender culture formation V. Baydala suggests such structural components:

- a cognitive one, which means presence of correct ideas about physiological, psychological and social-role peculiarities of a man and of a woman, about his/her own gender role, about rules of gender-role behaviour in the society;

- an emotional-value component, which can be characterized by formation of humanistic gender attitudes, positive feelings caused by the fact of realization of own destination as of a biological and social creature;

- an individual-behavioral component as capability to elaborate own gender-role behavior in accordance with the gender expectations of the society, a demonstration of the desire to improve interaction with representatives of both sexes on the basis of the expression of mutual respect and tolerance (Baidala, 2013, pp. 6–7).

A. Dorokhina (2006) emphasizes the fact that gender culture involves the formation of ideas about the life destination of men and women, the disclosure of male and female physiological, psychological characteristics. And the establishment of the correct relationship between a boy and a girl is supposed to be the criterion for determining the level of gender culture formation.

The analysis of scientific approaches to gender culture indicators establishing has shown that regardless peculiarities of each investigation the basis for criteria and indicators of gender culture is formed by dimension of cognitive, value and behavioral spheres in the context of gender issues.

So, according to the theoretical principles of gender upbringing, in our research we have distinguished generally accepted components of gender culture: **cognitive**, **emotional-value** and **behavioral**. But the criteria and indicators of different levels of junior pupils' gender culture formation have been developed according to the subject of our investigation.

*The gender culture of junior pupils* we define as a subjectively defined system of values, gender knowledge, gender-role norms of behavior that promote the realization of different gender pupils' abilities as equal social entities, form gender qualities of the individual, determine the choice of the correct strategy of pupils' gender identity.

The cognitive component at forming of the investigated characteristic is important. As O. Kikinezhdi (2013) writes: «the way to gender culture is laid

through gender apprehension (awareness)». L. Stolyarchuk concludes that the gender culture formation is performed not through educational disciplines mastering, but through the understanding of the surrounding world. It is essential for the child to understand the organization of mutual relations between people of different genders, especially at solving definite problems (Stolyarchuk, 1999, p. 56). That's why the more the child knows about gender roles of men and women, cultural and moral norms, rules, the more consciously he treats himself and others, the more flexible he is evaluating and perception of gender stereotypes. Taking into account the foregoing, we have determined that the criterion of the cognitive component is gender knowledge and its representation.

Values are one of the most important elements of culture, that's why the emotional-value component occupies an important place in the structure of gender culture. This component reveals the perception of own gender-appropriate self-concept, evaluation of peculiarities, «advantages and disadvantages» of sexes as a standard in constructing gender identity/self-identity. V. Kravets supposes that the formation of a generalized self-esteem of girls and boys is the core of personality at junior school age. The gender self-concept arises as a result of the organization of value-semantic coordinates related to the realization and experience of oneself as a boy/girl into a single system of representations and self-adaptations. Treating of men and women and their evaluation form so-called benchmark at gender self-concept constructing (Kravets, 2011, p. 135).

The investigation of relations' formation between girls and boys show, that in the light of gender representations, they evaluate behavior and actions of each other. L. Bozhovych indicates, that «emotional-value relations are the first thing, which the child learns from important adult people and it influences his/her actions in the space of future social relations» (Kikinezhdi, 2013, p. 112). That is why everything that can be qualified as «a value» should be included in to the child's life through the content, forms of gender upbringing, providing emotional regulation (concern, emotional affinity, trust) of relations with the people of the opposite sex, forming the system of value orientations, needs, motives of the child of junior school age.

So, we determine *gender values* as the criterion of *the emotional-value component*. Mastering of gender culture values enables realization of self-concept, building of harmonious relations, egalitarian relations with the opposite sex representatives.

The third, behavioral component of gender culture contains schemes, rules, norms, standards, models of behaviour, which junior pupils demonstrate. V. Mukhina notes, that junior pupils not only realize their belonging to a definite gender, but also aspire to establish themselves as women or men (Muntian, 2004, p. 14). In school group children master the skills of interaction with

people who are with them at one hierarchical level, work out and fix patterns of relationships with their own and with the opposite sex.

Gender behaviour expresses the system of attitudes in external reaction of personality through the «gender display» (diversity of displays (manifestations) connected with the norms of male and female actions and interactions suggested by the society) (Shevchenko, 2013, p. 254). The behavioral component represents the compliance of the child's behavior to the norms, values and rules of intergender communication and interaction, the ability to realize and to implement the gained gender knowledge through the establishment of tolerant, coherent, gender-neutral interaction stereotypes. This provides the basis to determine the abilities and skills of intergender interaction as the criterion of the **behavioral component**.

So, the content of gender culture means the mastering of gender knowledge, the formation of an adequate emotional evaluation of one's own and of the opposite sex, building effective interpersonal communication and interaction, as well as awareness of the relevant moral norms and rules to be followed. So, the components of gender culture are interrelated and interdependent. It may be concluded that the structure of junior pupils' gender culture has formed proper gender knowledge and ideas, values and skills of interaction.

In accordance with the above-mentioned components and criteria, the indicators of gender culture formation of younger schoolchildren have been developed.

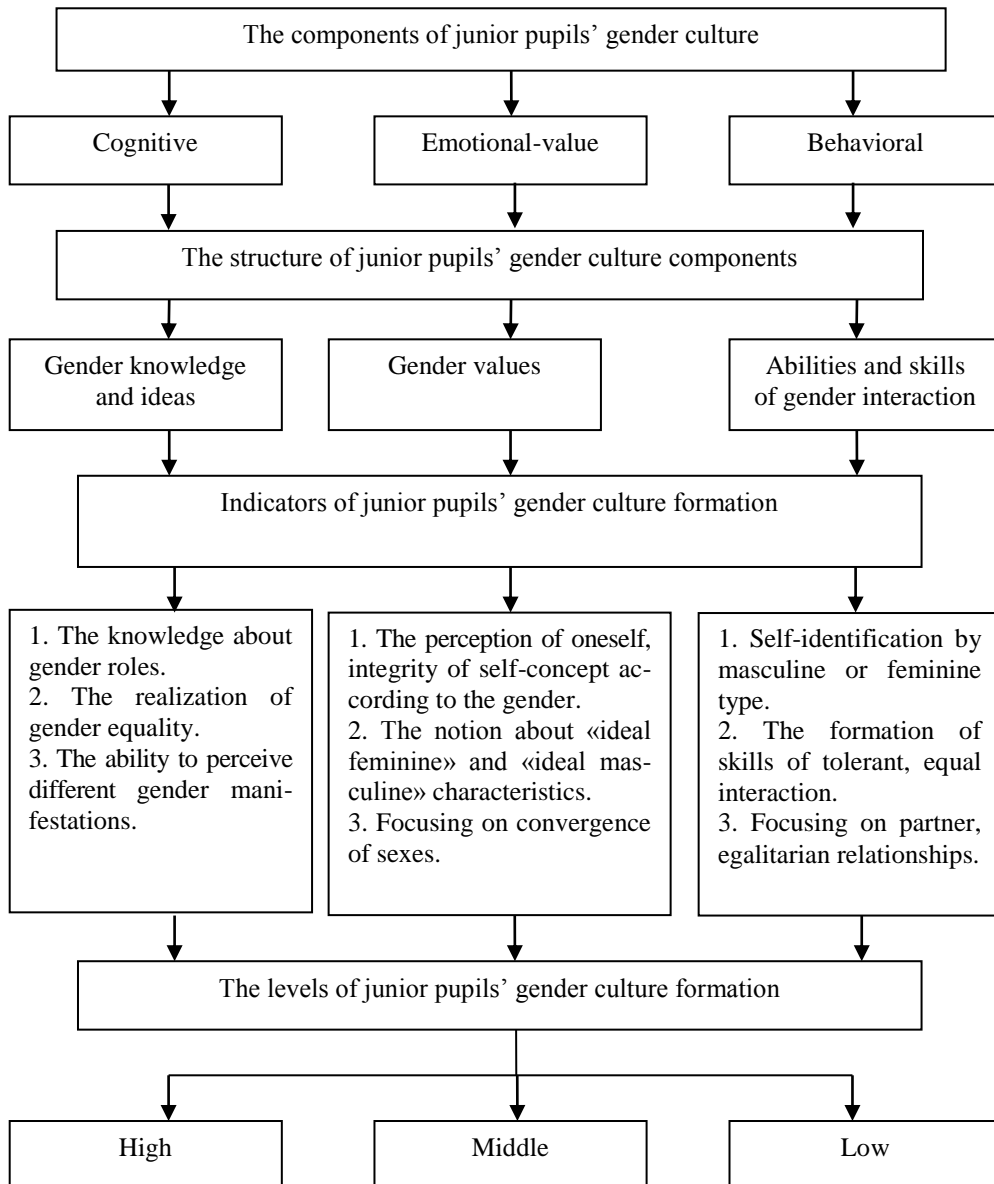
For the criterion «*gender knowledge and ideas*» we have chosen: awareness of gender roles; understanding of the equality of genders; the ability to perceive a variety of gender manifestations. The criterion «*gender values*» is revealed through such **indicators**: self-perception, integrity of self-concept by gender; notion about «ideal female» and «ideal male» characteristics; orientation to gender convergence (gender convergence is the phenomenon opposite to gender segregation, the desire of two opposing sexes to participate in joint activities, communication, friendship, etc.) (Bendas, 2008, p. 87).

We have chosen such **indicators** of abilities and skills of gender interaction: self-identification according to masculine and feminine types; formation of skills of tolerant, equal interaction; orientation to partner, egalitarian relations. The mentioned structural components, criteria and indicators of junior pupils' gender culture have given the basis to distinguish three levels of formation of investigated personality's characteristics and to evaluate them.

The high level is characterized by the fact that gender knowledge and ideas correspond to egalitarian principles, the differentiation of gender roles according gender features is absent. Junior pupils can adequately realize themselves as representatives of particular sex, show their positive treatment to peers of the opposite sex. Emotional-value judgements are based on egalitarian value attitudes. Pupils know the rules of gender interaction on parity

principles and keep to them in their everyday life. Besides their skills of equal and compliant attitudes to each other have been formed.

The schematic representation of the structure of junior pupils' gender culture is shown in Fig. 1.



**Fig. 1. The Structure of junior schoolpupils' gender culture**

The middle level is characterized by presence of idea about equality of sexes at gender roles performing, but it has not been completely formed at

consciousness of junior pupils. They treat themselves positively, but emotional positive interest to their peers of the opposite sex is expressed situationally. The character of the behaviour partially corresponds to the principles of gender equality. The pupils know the rules of partner interaction, but their motivation to their keeping is unstable.

The low level can be characterized by stereotype gender knowledge and ideas of junior pupils. Such pupils differentiate gender roles, which are unproprioate to egalitarian principles of sex equality. The system of gender values is based on stereotype gender standards according to which junior pupils estimate their peers of the opposite sex. Their behaviour can be characterized by stereotype gender manifestations. The skills of equal and compliant interaction are not formed.

**Conclusions.** We have presented the structure of junior pupils' gender culture by three components: a cognitive one, which has such criteria as formation of gender knowledge and ideas; an emotional-value component, which has such criteria as formed value treatment to his/her own sex and to the opposite sex; a behavioral component, which has such criteria as abilities and skills of keeping to principles of gender equality and sensitivity in mutual relations. On the basis of the developed criteria and their indicators we have established three levels (a high one, a middle one and a low one) of junior pupils' gender culture formation. The suggested criteria, indicators and levels of their formation make it possible to diagnose gender culture formation of primary school children.

It is necessary to carry out further investigation of pedagogical technologies and methods of pupils' gender culture formation at the educational process of primary school.

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**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.24919/2313-2094.6/38.121429>

**To cite this article:** Vovk, Yu., Vovk, L. (2018). The structure of the gender culture of junior schoolchildren. *Liudynoznavchi studii. Seriiia «Pedahohika» – Human Studies. Series of «Pedagogy»*, 6/38, 84–95. doi: 10.24919/2313-2094.6/38.121429 [in English].

#### Article history

*Received:* 7 September 2017

*Accepted:* 15 February 2018

*Received in revised form:* 14 November 2017

*Available online:* 5 April 2018

### THE STRUCTURE OF THE GENDER CULTURE OF JUNIOR SCHOOLCHILDREN

**Abstract.** The article analyzes the process of formation of gender culture in elementary school age; elicits the features of the structure of gender culture of different age groups; studies the mutual relations between girls and boys of this age; determines the criteria of cognitive, emotional and behavioral components of gender culture and distinguishes three levels of formation of gender culture in elementary school students.

Particular attention is paid to the process of formation of gender culture, predefined by many reasons, including acceleration, poor awareness of minors in relation to sexual development, leveling of moral values etc. There are also contradictions between the requirements in gender education and the failure of a large number of social institutions to perform educational functions. Thus, the problem of formation of the personality's gender culture is extremely important today.

The formation of the gender culture of junior schoolchildren in elementary school is regarded as a process of harmonizing gender relations between girls and boys as the representatives of the male and female components of society, that are equal in the possibilities of self-realization, self-expression, self-assertion, fulfillment of social and educational roles, regardless of various physiological, psychological and individual peculiarities. The relevance of our research is primarily due to the potential of secondary schools for the gender education of elementary school students and their inadequate use in the educational process.

Consequently, the structure of the gender culture of junior schoolchildren is represented by three components: cognitive, the criteria of which are the formed gender knowledge and awareness; emotional and value, the criterion of which reflects the formed value relation to its own and the opposite sex; behavioral, the criteria of which are skills and abilities to adhere to gender equality and responsiveness in relationships. Based on the developed criteria and their indicators, three levels (high, average, low) of the gender culture of younger students have been determined.

Summing up, we note that the defined criteria, indicators and levels of their formation make it possible to diagnose the formation of a gender culture

of junior pupils. Further research is required regarding the study of pedagogical technologies and methods of formation of gender culture in the educational process of elementary school.

**Keywords:** gender values, midchildhood, gender education, structure of gender culture, intergenerational interaction skills and competences, components of gender culture.

**Declaration of Conflicting Interests.** The authors declare no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

**Acknowledgments.** Sincere thanks to staff at Charitable Foundation «Caritas», Sambir-Drohobych Eparchy, the UGCC with special thanks to Priest Ihor Kozankevych, and Drohobych secondary schools № 1, № 2, № 16, in particular to their directors – Olha Luzhetska, Larysa Pankevych, Volodymyr Kraichyk.

**Funding.** The authors received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.