

# MORAL CHOICE OF CHILDREN AGED 6 TO 8 YEARS IN SITUATIONS WITH ETHNOCULTURAL CONTEXT: WHAT ARE THE MOTIVES?

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**Abstract:** The relevance of the presented research is due to the insufficient study of the motives underlying the moral choices made by preschool children in relation to the situations with ethnocultural context. The call to identify these motives and highlight their characteristics became the spring of decision for conducting the investigation. The purpose of the study is to identify, compare, and analyze the motives of the moral choice in children aged 6-8 in situations with ethnocultural context. The results of the study may enrich scientific ideas on the age-specific characteristics of the motives of moral choices made by preschoolers and on the possibilities of factoring the characteristics of these motives in moral upbringing and ethnocultural education. An analysis of the motives of the moral choice in 120 children aged 6-8 in situations with ethnocultural context was conducted by methods of comparison and grouping. The presence of differences in the motives for particular choices made by children aged 6-7 and 7-8 was determined using the non-parametric U Mann-Whitney criterion. The characteristics of the motives of children's moral choices were revealed by the methods of analysis and generalization. Within the framework of research, the data was obtained on the types of motives for the moral choice in situations with an ethnocultural context in children aged 6-8, as well as on the differences in these motives at the ages 6-7 and 7-8. The features of these motives peculiar to 6-8-year-old children in general, and for each of the groups of children of 6-7 and 7-8 in particular, have been identified and described. The results of the study can serve the basis for the pedagogical regulations project development in the field of the moral choice of children based on the characteristics of this choice.

**Keywords:** moral choice, motives of moral choice, situations with ethnocultural context, features of the moral choice motives, children aged 6-8.

## Introduction

The relevance of children's ethnocultural education beginning with the preschool level is quite obvious both for the state and society as a whole and for the pedagogical community and parents, particularly due to the current risks of interethnic conflicts, the rise of xenophobia, negative effects of migration, etc. The solution to various issues of ethnocultural education is based on the moral foundations of this process. The categories of 'good' and 'evil', which form the basis of the conceptual apparatus of morality and ethics, are also important concepts of ethnocultural education in terms of understanding by society and individuals of the relations between representatives of different nationalities in situations of moral choice. Genuine moral conduct and actions are always determined only by internal moral motives, so moral choice, in turn, is always independent and free of external influence, coercion, or pressure. Moral motivation actualizes motives based on moral values, which include an assessment of the situation. The latter, in turn, indicates the presence of a value aspect.

The moral value of a real or imagined act consists in the harmony of motive and result, their one-pointedness and coincidence. However, the behavior and relationships between the adults (not even mentioning the children) often exhibits a discrepancy in moral choice and its motive. The moral choice that seems a quite correct form the moral standpoint might be motivated by the very non-moral reasons. It is well noted in psychology and pedagogy that the motives of preschoolers often do not contain the orientation to the result (consequences) of an act performed. Thus, the motives for making the correct moral choice are mainly the desire to get the approval of adults (the teacher or parents) or fear of punishment and condemnation, that is, the motives that do not have moral context. Therefore, one of the foregrounds in pedagogy and psychology is the problem of the motives of moral choice, which is a trite but true observation since it continues to remain in the discussion field in the context of the early stages of ontogenesis.

It should be noted that the age-specific characteristics of preschool children such as high level of imitiveness, rapid assimilation of patterns of moral behavior, a pronounced interest in the field of morality and human relationships, and the ability to solve situations of moral choice based on moral motives allow organizing children's ethnocultural education based on mainstreaming the moral part of this process. This is possible due to the characteristics of the motives of children's moral choices made under the situations with ethnocultural context. At present, with some familiarization of the motives of moral-destined actions and behavior of children of senior preschool and primary school age, the sphere of motivation for their moral choice in relation to the ethnocultural component of various situations (real-life and educational, imaginary and real, natural and artificially created) remains not fully covered. The solution to this problem will determine the content of pedagogical support for the development of internal moral motives for the moral choice of children in preschool educational institutions, as well as in the practice of family education.

Answers to the questions like: 'What motivates a preschool child and a primary school student to make a positive moral choice in situations where an ethnocultural context is present along with moral?', 'What are the dominants in the structure of the motives of moral choice?', 'What are the features of the motives of moral choice in ethnocultural situations in children of 6-8?', 'Are there any differences in the motives of moral choice in groups of children aged 6-7 and 7-8?', 'What kind of ethnocultural

components of the particular situation will contribute to the manifestation of internal moral motives to a greater extent?' and others acquire special significance not only in the practice of children's moral upbringing in educational organizations or in a family environment but also in extracurricular practices. This primarily concerns the practice of ethnocultural education in areas with a multiethnic population and regions with large migration flows or with high migration risks for significant groups of the population.

*The logic of conducting the motivational study* of the moral choice in children aged 6-8 in situations with ethnocultural components suggested the following: determination of the goal, hypothesis, and research methods; selection, analysis, processing, and interpretation of diagnostic results; distribution of motives of moral choice by types and kinds; comparison of the types and kinds of motives manifested in situations with ethnocultural context related to different types; identification of differences in types and kinds of motives of moral choice in children aged 6-7 and 7-8; highlighting the features of the motives of children's moral choice in situations with ethnocultural context; formulation of conclusions and identification of possible upcoming trends in the further study of the problem.

*Study Structure.* The section following the introduction contains a review of the scientific literature on the problem of moral choice and its motives. The following is a link to data and research methods, as well as methods for analyzing its results. Then, the results of data analysis are presented in the form of quantitative and qualitative characteristics of the types and kinds of motives for the moral choices of children aged 6-8 years, made in situations with ethnocultural context. The formulated features of the motives of moral choice are peculiar both for children of 6-8 in general and for groups of children of 6-7 and 7-8 in solving imaginable ethnocultural situations.

The theoretical and practical significance of the study is presented within the framework of the discussion; also, the possibilities of pedagogical influences on the motives of children's moral choice are noted, promising directions in the study of the problem are formulated.

## Literature Review

The issues of moral choice in modern literature are disclosed in the context of Christian views on ethics [34], state requirements for schools to develop moral ideals in children [23], consideration of ethical dilemmas related to assessment [33], and also within the context of cognitive psychology [20]. The problem of the motives of children's moral choice in situations with ethnocultural context may also be considered in the context of the conceptual field, including not only the definition of 'ethnic identity' but definitions of 'moral identity' and 'emotional identity' as well. Recently, identity has been considered a source of moral motivation. The concept of 'moral identity' implies a tendency to act under one's moral consciousness [19; 22]. Hardy S.A., Carlo G. under the moral identity comprehend the degree, to which a person built own self-esteem around moral choice (for example, moral values). The authors disclose theoretical principles and research results linking morality, identity with moral behavior, and commitment [25]. Hardy S.A., Carlo G. note that research on moral motivation has for a long time focused on the consideration of moral reasoning and, to some extent, moral emotions as sources of this motivation [25]. The formation of moral identity is often associated with a period of

early adulthood [25; 31]. However, the rudiments of moral identity appear in children in the form of moral motives that may not be related to selfish interests [9; 10; 11; 12; 13].

The concept of 'emotional identity' is reflected in a study by Baumrind D. [18]. It is established that the presence of loving, but demanding parents who care about meeting the needs of the child leads to the child's manifestation of quite mature forms of moral and social behavior. Lack of social and moral maturity in children is associated with a lack of attention from emotionally cold parents, using mainly the methods of punishment. Hertz, S.G., Krettenauer T. found while studying the influence of emotions on children's moral choices that the presence of moral emotions in young children indicates a significant likelihood of them making moral choices and prosocial actions [26]. The problem of the motives of moral choice can also be considered through the prism of its dependence on various factors. So, for example, Moore, C., Tenbrunsel A.E. studied the relationship between cognitive complexity and moral choice. The authors established that decisions made after reasoning with low and high levels of cognitive complexity are less moral than decisions made after reasoning at moderate levels of complexity [30]. The dependence of people's moral judgments on the digital context when using smartphones in conflicting moral situations is described by Barque-Duran, A., Pothos, E.M., Hampton, J. [17]. McDermott, R., Hatemi, P.K. described human aggressiveness as a motive for the adoption of foreign policy decisions and moral choice [29]. A study by Rachel Burr shows that the concept of a 'good child in Vietnam' depends on family circumstances and expectations, and the moral choice of such a child is determined by accepting own position in the hierarchical structure of the family and the desire to subordinate personal needs to the collective [32].

Before considering the problem of the motives of the moral choice in children aged 6-8, it is necessary to highlight some areas in the research of moral choice in preschool childhood. Psychology and pedagogy considered the problem of children's moral choice in several prospects:

The first prospect is a discussion on the accessibility of a full-fledged moral choice for modern preschoolers. Currently, several psychologists and educators (Moreva G.I., Sushkova I.V., Falina M.N., Jacobson S.G., and others) [7; 8; 9; 10; 11; 12; 13; 15; 16] are stating that modern children of senior preschool age may (under situations of moral choice) voluntarily and without external coercion and pressure act in accordance with moral standards, refusing to satisfy the desires and needs of their own. Although the results of the study, conducted at one time by Kolberg L., testified to the contrary [21; 27; 28].

The second prospect is represented by attempts to create classifications of preschoolers' moral choice. The study by I.V. Sushkova features two types of moral choice: the correct one (corresponding to the requirements of morality) and the incorrect (not corresponding to the requirements of morality). The author refers to the first such types as positive, partially-positive, and compromise; the second is represented by negative, partially-negative, declarative, and camouflage [10; 11; 12; 13]. E.Yu. Frolova distinguishes altruistic and egocentric, conscious and unconscious, age-appropriate, and age-inappropriate types of moral choices. The author notes that altruistic choice is dominant in personality orientation, and the egocentric choice is less quantitatively expressed. The *conscious* choice is leading in terms of awareness. In terms of adequacy to age, an *adequate* (age-appropriate) reasoned choice comes to the fore [15].

The third promising area of research is related to the identification of the moral choices of preschool and primary school children in the context of ethnocultural education (Gerasimova E.N., Pronina A.N., Sushkova I.V.) [14; 35].

The fourth prospect is the development of the content of pedagogical regulation of preschool children's moral choice (Sushkova I.V. [11; 13] and others).

And the fifth one is the study of the parents' impact on the moral choice of children. This refers to the investigation of the methods of emotional and speech influence of parents on the formation of an older preschooler as a subject of moral choice. It was revealed that about half of parents use positive methods of emotional impact on the moral behavior of children (Suvorova O.V., Shalina A.A.) [6].

Given a sufficiently developed scientific range of the types and kinds of children's moral choice, the motives for this choice do not always fall under the consideration of scientists studying the moral development processes in preschool children. Although some research on this problem is available. E.V. Subbotsky noted that the moral motivation of a preschooler maybe also the pleasure in making the correct, from the point of view of morality, choice, as well as from satisfying the expectations of loving adults. This leads to the subsequent 'transfer of love' from the object of love (relevant meaningful adult) to moral standards. Such a transfer can be generalized and considered as a motivation for moral actions not only in relation to loved ones but also to other people [4]. Laricheva N.V. has shown that the analysis of situations described in works of fiction can motivate children's readiness for moral choices in solving real-life situations [3]. Several studies had demonstrated the differences in the moral choice of children belonging to different groups. It has been established that children with unfavorable sociometric statuses are more motivated to positive types of moral choice than children with favorable sociometric statuses (Kirilina D.O.) [2]. Garcia-Molina, I., Clemente-Estevan, R.-A., Andrés-Roqueta, C.A. conducted a comparative analysis of choosing motives of children with autism spectrum disorders and children without such disorders. It is noted that the motives of the choice of children with autism spectrum disorders are dominated by *descriptions*, and the motives of children who do not have such disorders are preoccupied with *explanations* of the mental state [24] The article by Zhao, X., Kushnir, T. notes the presence of cultural similarities in the stories of Chinese and American children about personal and moral problems in the form of awareness of their motives in solving personal problems (desire) and in solving moral problems (assessments) [36].

In science, the issues of the moral choice motives of modern preschool children are disclosed to a lesser extent than of the motives of this choice in older age categories. Nevertheless, it is known that the ability of older preschoolers to argue their moral choice is quite pronounced and the number of reasoned types of moral choice exceeds the number of unreasoned more than double [15]. Moral motives are the motives of personal significance approved by morality (motives of voluntary desire to do good for another, sometimes even in at the cost of neglecting personal desires and needs). To the moral motives that determine the real or imaginary choice of a preschool child, I.V. Sushkova attributes the motives of such content that reflect the moral orientation of real or potential action, and child's activities on socially approved and personally conscious moral normativity often reflected in child's speech [9; 11; 13]. As part of the study of the relationship between social intelligence and the moral choice of preschoolers, E.V. Subbotsky and O.B. Chesnokova considered the manifestation of social intelligence in the

form of deception and manipulation in adults and children [5]. It is shown that the phenomenon of manifestation of social intelligence in the form of adult deception is a prerequisite for the emergence of free moral choice and internal moral motivation. The possibility of such motivation arises when the child can choose between personal interests due to the violation of moral standards and the rejection of these interests and compliance with these standards [5].

There is also an opinion in psychology (associated primarily with the study of L. Kolberg) that the motives of the moral choice of preschool children are the motives of the fear of punishment and the motives of the desire to receive praise or reward [21; 27; 28]. Thus, for example, Znamenskaya I.I., Sozinov I.M., Aleksandrov Yu.I. emphasize that at the early stages of development (aged 3-6), moral choice is largely made based on intuitive criteria, and at 7-9 years – based on rational components [1]. However, this opinion seems quite controversial considering modern children of senior preschool age.

As shown by the research of I.V. Sushkova, children of this age category are up to both different types and kinds of moral choice, and different types of motives, among which are internal moral motives, the range of which is also quite diverse [10; 11; 12; 13]. Several Russian researchers (Gerasimova E.N. Malyutina E.N. Sushkova I.V., Yakobson S.G., and others) noted that even the need for approval and recognition and the desire to preserve own positive 'image of I' may become the motive for making a moral choice [7; 8; 10, 11; 12,1; 16; 35].

Thus, a good case can be made that modern science and educational practices exhibit certain interest in the problem of the moral choice of preschool-age children; there is also some information on the motives for this choice. But at the same time, there is insufficient knowledge of the motives of such a choice made in situations with ethnocultural context. The study of the motives of children's moral choice in such situations will enrich scientific ideas about the age-specific characteristics of these motives and the possibilities of considering the peculiarities of these motives in pedagogical practice, which, from the moral point of view, provides for the correct choice.

From this perspective, the *hypothesis of the study* was the assumption that the motives of the moral choice of children aged 6-8 in situations with ethnocultural context differ in features, the consideration of which can be the basis of pedagogical activities to develop children's motivation that provides the correct (from the moral point of view) choice in the conditions of educational organizations. The *purpose of the study* is to identify, compare, and analyze the motives of the moral choice in children aged 6–8 in solving situations integrating moral and ethnocultural components.

## Methods of Research

The scientific basis for studying the motives of children's moral choice was experimental research of the principles of moral consciousness in children aged 6-7 [11], as well as the study of the characteristics of the moral choice of children aged 6-8 in situations with ethnocultural context [35]. The study involved 120 children (n = 120) attending educational institutions (60 children aged 6-7 and 60 children aged 7-8). Age dispersion: min 6 – max 8. Children were asked to solve two types of *imaginary* situations with ethnocultural components:

- the first type was represented by situations with a *child's personal participation*: situations of moral choice where various moral conflicts are based on ethnocultural

material, and where the child acts as a subject of relations (Example: 'Imagine that you and your mother have not had time to have lunch today. Before to start shopping, she bought you your favorite ice cream and told you to wait at the store entrance. You have not had time to even bite off a single piece when you suddenly saw a dirty, tearful, lonely dark-skinned baby (the named race or nationality differs from the race or nationality of the child), who is clearly hungry, so he looks at you and reaches out to your ice cream. What will you do? And why would you do that?')

- the second type was *depersonalized situations*. These situations also include moral components; however, the child is no longer a direct participant here but rather acts as an 'outside observer'. The basis for the construction of such situations was a modified version of the Saks-Sidney methodology ('Incomplete sentences'), which was enriched with ethnocultural content (Example: Continue the sentence: 'If children tease and beat a child who came from another country whose skin color is not the same, like, for example, dark, then ... .. and why?').

Children's responses to: 'Why would you do this (that)?' after solving each situation of the first type and to the question 'Why?' after solving each situation of the second type became material for analyzing the motives of the choices made. The analysis included: identification of the range of types of motives and highlighting their kinds; determination of their quantitative characteristics at the age of 6-8, as well as within the age groups of 6-7 and 7-8; comparison of the types and kinds of motives of the moral choice of children of 6-7 and 7-8, exhibited in ethnocultural situations; identification of dominant types and kinds of motives; qualitative characteristics of the motives of moral choice in ethnocultural situations.

The presence of differences in the types of motives of moral choice in different types of ethnocultural situations in children of 6-7 and 7-8 was determined using a non-parametric criterion for two independent U Mann-Whitney samples. To identify the presence of statistically significant differences in the types of motives between boys and girls, a nonparametric criterion was also applied for two independent U Mann-Whitney samples. The classification of the moral choices of senior preschoolers and a description of the motives for this choice given in the works of I.V. Sushkova [10; 11; 12; 13] formed the basis for the analysis of moral choice motives in children of 6-8 in situations with ethnocultural context.

The motives of choice can be verbalized or non-verbalized (for example, to the question 'Why?' the child answers: 'It had to be done', 'I wanted it this way', etc., without revealing the reason for the choice made). Verbalized motives for the correct moral choices made in situations with ethnocultural context were conditionally divided by type: external non-moral motives, internal non-moral motives, and internal moral motives. In turn, internal moral motives were divided into emotional motives, cognitive motives, aesthetic motives, and motives associated with the development of self-identity.

This classification of motives became the basis for quantitative and qualitative analysis of the results of the study. The manifestation of each type of motive was awarded points depending on the degree of its moral significance: lack of moral motivation due to incorrect moral choices (LM) – 0 points; external non-moral and moral motives (EXT) – 1 point; internal non-moral motives (INT) – 2 points; internal moral motives (IMM) – 3 points.

## Results

Each of 120 participating children's decisions was analyzed; a total of 12 situations with ethnocultural context were reviewed. The total number of choices made was 1,440 (720 in resolving situations with personal participation and 720 - in resolving depersonalized situations). The results of the study are presented below in Tables 1, 2, 3, 4. 5. The experimental material allowed distributing the motives of children's moral choice by types and kinds, presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Quantity of types and kinds of motives of moral choice in children aged 6-8 years

Types and kinds of motives of moral choice in children aged 6-8 years	Situations with personal participation	Depersonalized situations
Lack of moral motivation due to incorrect moral choices	222	120
External non-moral motives	5	0
Internal non-moral motives	4	0
Internal moral motives	489	600
<i>Where:</i>		
<i>EM</i>	196	204
<i>COG</i>	280	396
<i>SELF</i>	11	0
<i>AM</i>	2	0
Total correct moral choices out of 720	498	600

### Legend:

*EM* – emotional motives,

*COG* – cognitive motives,

*SELF* – motives associated with the development of self-identity,

*AM* – aesthetic motives

The results presented in Table 1 demonstrate that the lack of moral motivation due to incorrect moral choice in situations with personal participation is almost two times greater than in depersonalized situations. This is probably due to the greater degree of personal involvement of the child in the situational context and the circumstantial inability to make the correct moral choice based on the refusal to satisfy own desires or needs. The table shows that the number of internal moral motives of the correct moral choice in depersonalized situations significantly exceeds the number of these motives manifested in situations with personal participation. The quantity of internal moral motives significantly exceeds the total number of external non-moral motives and internal non-moral motives; in depersonalized situations, these manifestations were not recorded at all. In turn, the number of internal moral motives in depersonalized situations significantly exceeds the number of similar motives in situations with personal participation. The structure of internal moral motives is quantitatively dominated by cognitive motives. The quantity of emotional motives is lower; the motives associated with the development of self-identity and aesthetic motives are either represented insignificantly (in situations with personal participation) or absent at all (in



depersonalized situations). The quantity of motives for the moral choice of children, differentiated by the ages of 6-7 and 7-8 in different types of situations with ethnocultural context, is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Quantity of motives for the moral choice in children aged 6-7 and 7-8 years in different types of situations with ethnocultural context.

Types of moral choice motives in children of 6-8	Situations with personal participation		Depersonalized situations	
	Aged 6-7	Aged 7-8	Aged 6-7	Aged 7-8
Lack of moral motivation due to incorrect moral choices	138	84	84	36
External non-moral motives	5	0	0	0
Internal non-moral motives	2	2	0	0
Internal moral motives	215	274	276	324
<i>Where:</i>				
<i>EM</i>	100	96	104	100
<i>COG</i>	112	168	162	234
<i>SELF</i>	3	8	0	0
<i>AM</i>	0	2	0	0
Total correct moral choices out of 360	222	276	276	324

**Legend:**

EM – emotional motives,

COG – cognitive motives,

SELF – motives associated with the development of self-identity,

AM – aesthetic motives.

The data in Table 2 show a range of types and kinds of moral choice motives, differentiated by two age-specific categories. The lack of moral motivation due to incorrect moral choice is ultimately expressed in children aged 6-7 in situations with personal participation; the lowest number is observed in children aged 7-8 in depersonalized situations. External non-moral motives are recorded only in children aged 6-7 in situations with personal participation; internal non-moral motives are also found in children of the same age in situations of both types. The table demonstrates that the number of correct moral choices in depersonalized situations is higher compared to situations with personal participation; the number of internal moral motives is also higher in these situations, both for children aged 6-7 and 7-8. The numbers for cognitive motives are at the top. The quantity of emotional motives in children aged 6-7 is slightly higher than of these motives in children aged 7-8. Emotional motives prevail in situations with personal participation, while cognitive motives prevail in depersonalized situations. Motives associated with the development of self-identity and aesthetic motives are few and only appear in children aged 6-7. The presence of differences in the types of motives for moral choice in different types of situations with an ethnocultural context in children aged 6-7 and 7-8, determined using a non-parametric criterion for two independent U Mann-Whitney samples, is shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Differences in the types of motives in different types of situations in children aged 6-7 and 7-8 years (according to U Mann-Whitney criterion).

Testees	
Aged 6-7 (n=60)	Aged 7-8 (n=60)
0.03*	0.05*

Comment: \* – the difference between the samples of 6-7 and 7-8 years by types of motives in different types of situations with  $p \geq 0.05$ .

The results presented in Table 3 demonstrate significant differences in the types of motives of moral choice between groups of children aged 6-7 and 7-8 years in different types of situations. The results of the distribution of types of moral choice motives in situations of different types depending on the gender are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Quantity of types of motives for the moral choice of boys and girls in situations of different types (%).

Testees	Types of moral choice motives	6-7 лет		7-8 лет	
		Depersonalized situations	Situations with personal participation	Depersonalized situations	Situations with personal participation
Boys	LM	40	26	24	10
	IMM	60	74	76	90
Girls	LM	46	25	16	13
	EXT	4	0	0	0
	INT	4	0	0	0
	IMM	46	75	84	87

Legend:

LM - lack of moral motivation due to incorrect moral choice;

EXT - external non-moral and moral motives;

INT - internal non-moral motives;

IMM - internal moral motives.

To identify the presence of statistically significant differences in the specified indicators between boys and girls, a nonparametric criterion for two independent U Mann-Whitney samples was applied, which showed the absence of significant differences. The authors' attempt to conduct a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the distribution of types of moral choice motives in situations of different types depending on the gender showed that the gender characteristics of the experimental sample do not determine the choice of the type of motive depending on the type of situation. This fact indicates the absence of gender specificity in the motives of the moral choice in children aged 6-8 in different situations with the ethnocultural context. The aspectual diversity of motives, their content and quantitative characteristics are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: The total quantity of types and kinds of motives for the correct moral choice in children aged 6-8 years in situations with ethnocultural context.

Nº in stages	Types and kinds of motives	Quantity
	Verbalized motives	1098
	External non-moral motives	5
1	Desire to follow the guidance of adults	5
	Internal non-moral motives	4
1	Fear of punishment or condemnation	1
2	Desire for praise and approval	1
3	Desire to avoid personal troubles or difficulties	0
4	Establishment of mutually beneficial relationships	0
	Internal moral motives	1089
	<i>Emotional motives</i>	400
1	Friendship	6
2	Respect for the feelings and emotions of other people	365
3	Sense of shame	2
4	Personal sympathy	18
5	Desire to achieve moral balance and gain psychological comfort	7
	<i>Cognitive motives</i>	676
1	Awareness of the need to respect the interests of those age categories, which, from the point of view of morality, should be distinguished by increased attention and care on the part of society	155
2	Awareness of the need to ensure that the needs of the sick or suffering are taken into account	271
3	Awareness of the vital needs of another person	254
	<i>Motives associated with the development of self-identity</i>	11
1.	Desire to maintain own positive image of 'I'	1
2.	Desire to benefit someone or to be useful	5
3.	Recognition of the priority of collective interests over personal ones	3
4.	Duty and responsibility	2
	<i>Aesthetic motives</i>	2
1.	Achieving moral and aesthetic harmony	2
	Non-verbalized motives	0

As shown by the data in Table 5, children aged 6-8 are lacking non-verbalized motives for the correct moral choice. Three types of motives are distinguished among the verbalized motives of this choice: external non-moral, internal non-moral and internal moral. In turn, there are from one to five types of motives of various contexts distinguished in the structure of each of these types. External non-moral motives include the desire to follow the guidance of adults ('Mom says so'). The internal non-moral motives are comprised of the desire for praise and approval ('Because Mom will like it'), and fear of condemnation and punishment ('Because they will scold me'). The internal moral motives are comprised of:

- *emotional motives* – friendship motives ('She is my best friend/girlfriend'); respect for feelings and emotions (either own or others) ('Because he is ashamed that he is being teased'); shame and admission of guilt ('I am ashamed for them - they are misbehaving'), feelings of love and sympathy for a person ('Because I like her'); achievement of moral balance and emotional comfort ('I want it to be nice and calm').

- *cognitive motives* – respecting the gender differences ('You can't offend girls'); awareness of the need to meet the needs of sick or suffering ('Because he feels bad'); awareness of the importance of preserving human life and health ('Because someone may fall and die'); awareness of the need to respect the interests of those age categories, which, from the point of view of morality, should be distinguished by increased attention and care on the part of society ('Because she is old and it will not cope'); awareness of the vital needs of another person ('Because he is hungry and he has nowhere to live').

- *motives associated with the development of self-identity* (desire to maintain a positive image of own 'I') ('So that I would feel right doing such a thing'); the desire to benefit others and to do something for them ('Because if I don't give him that, he won't succeed'); recognition of the priority of collective interests over personal ones ('I will give them my money because it will be of good use for everyone'); motives of duty and responsibility ('Because I always do that. That's necessary, and that's the way it supposed to be').

- *aesthetic motives* (achievement of moral and aesthetic harmony) ('It is not nice to act like that').

These results allow for further discussion.

## Discussion

The results of the study showed that modern preschoolers aged 6-8 not only demonstrate a desire (well-recognized to be peculiar to this age category) to comply with socially approved patterns of behavior but can also explain their choice with moral motives. At the same time, children, in most cases, exhibit the stability of such motives, as evidenced by their repeated reproducibility in a significant number of answers. The study demonstrated a significant prevalence of internal moral motives over other types of motives. Most of the motives recorded in the study were attributed to internal moral motives, which are personally significant for the child, as well as approved by society. These are motives of the desire to do good for another, sometimes even in a situation of complete voluntary renunciation of personal desires and needs. The number of correct moral choices in depersonalized situations is higher compared to situations with personal participation; the number of internal moral motives is also higher in these situations. When analyzing the responses of children, no motives were revealed that did not have positive moral significance (desire to avoid troubles and difficulties, desire to obtain personal gain; establishing mutually beneficial relationships with other people; self-esteem and self-affirmation; desire to act like adults). As a part of the study, *the peculiarities of the motives of moral choice* were revealed, characteristic both for children of 6-8 years in general and for groups of children of 6-7 and 7-8 years, imaginatively realized such choices in situations with ethnocultural context. *The features of the motives of moral choice that are peculiar to children aged 6-8* include the following:

- an adequate understanding of the moral meaning of the situation with ethnocultural context;
- the ability of the vast majority of examined children to solve ethnocultural situations of moral choice and argue in favor of particular choice as well;
- wide range of types and kinds of motives for moral choice;
- lack of non-verbalized motives characterizing the correct moral choice;
- structuredness of motives manifested in different types and kinds;
- the manifestation of the whole range of motives in situations with personal participation;
- differentiation of several different types and kinds of motives of moral choice depending on the age of children;
- manifestations of internal moral motivation significantly exceed the number of external non-moral motives and internal non-moral motives in situations of both types;
- pronounced dominance of internal moral motives, both in children aged 6-7 and in children aged 7-8 years;
- rare individual manifestations of external and internal non-moral motives in situations with personal participation, and the absence of these manifestations in depersonalized situations;
- hierarchy of types of motives expressed in the dominance of cognitive motives in the structure of internal moral motives;
- isolated cases of manifestation of aesthetic motives in situations with personal participation and the lack of these motives in depersonalized situations;
- lack of manifestations of motives associated with the development of self-identity in depersonalized situations;
- presence of significant differences in the types of motives of moral choice in different types of situations between groups of children aged 6-7 and 7-8 years;
- lack of gender specificity in the motives of moral choice shown by children in different types of situations;
- bigger numbers of correct moral choices and corresponding bigger numbers of manifestations of internal moral motives in depersonalized situations compared to situations with personal participation.

To the *features of the motives of moral choice peculiar to the children aged 6-7 years* were attributed:

- an insignificant manifestation of external non-moral motives in situations with personal participation and lack of these manifestations in depersonalized situations;
- the range of motives represented by a different number of types with the vast majority of internal moral motives;

- the number of manifestations of internal moral motivation in children aged 6-7 is significantly lower compared to the number of similar manifestations in children aged 7-8;

- manifestation in situations with personal participation of the entire spectrum of distinguished types of internal moral motives (emotional motives, cognitive motives, motives associated with the development of self-identity, and aesthetic motives);

- the presence of a hierarchy of types of moral choice motives with the dominance of cognitive and emotional motives;

- lack of manifestations of motives associated with the development of self-identity in depersonalized situations;

- lack of aesthetic motives in the structure of moral choice motives;

- a significantly smaller number of cognitive motives, compared with children aged 7-8;

- the number of manifestations of motives associated with the development of self-identity in situations with personal participation is less (almost three times) as compared with children aged 7-8;

- lack of aesthetic motives in situations with personal participation in the structure of motives of moral choice of children aged 6-7;

- an insignificant number of manifestations of the least valuable, from the point of view of morality, external motives and internal non-moral motives in situations with personal participation, and the absence of such manifestations in depersonalized situations;

- lack of manifestations of moral motivation due to incorrect moral choice is found much more often in situations with personal participation than in depersonalized situations.

As the *features of the motives of the moral choice in children aged 7-8*, the authors distinguish the following:

- increased manifestations of internal moral motivation compared with the number of similar manifestations in children aged 6-7;

- lack of external non-moral motives of moral choice in situations of both types;

- significant excess in the number of internal moral motives compared with the number of motives attributed to other types;

- the presence of a hierarchy of types of internal moral motives;

- significant excess in the number of cognitive motives as compared to the number of such motives in children aged 6-7;

- the dominance of cognitive motives in two types of situations, which indicates the special importance of cognitive processes in the development of moral consciousness in children of this age;

- a smaller number of emotional motives in comparison with children aged 6-7, both in situations with personal participation and in depersonalized situations, which

indicates a slight decrease in their significance compared to cognitive motives that come to the fore;

- more frequent (almost three times) manifestations of motives associated with the development of self-identity in situations with personal participation compared to children aged 6-7, which can be attributed to the increasing need for self-affirmation at this age;

- isolated cases of manifestation of aesthetic motives in situations with personal participation and lack of manifestations of these motives in depersonalized situations;

- lack of moral motivation due to improper moral choice in situations with personal participation is observed more than twice as often as in depersonalized situations.

## Conclusion

The study showed the presence of *features of the moral choice motives* in situations with ethnocultural context, peculiar to both senior preschool age as a whole and to the choices in groups of children aged 6-7 and 7-8 years, made in an imaginary way. The study also demonstrated that personalization of situations with personal involvement reduces the positive effects of moral choices, along with reducing the possibilities for manifesting internal moral motivation compared to depersonalized situations. Also, depersonalized situations provide more opportunities than situations with personal participation for the manifestation of the correct moral choice and internal moral motives by children aged 6-8. This is possible because the 'anonymity' of the situation reduces the degree of personal 'involvement' of the child in the process of solving it, allowing for the evaluation of its context from a distance, thus making the correct moral choice, as it were, 'beyond own participation'. However, the pedagogical value of situations with the personal participation of the child should also be noted, since it could be the very first conscious attempt to reveal personal meaning. The 'personal attachment' of the child to the moral conflict reflected in such situations allows, on the one hand, actualizing the child's interest in satisfying his desires and needs, and on the other hand, resisting them on the basis of internal moral motives, which are built on his own 'do what you must' convictions. Thus, situations of personal participation are the most significant for the actualization of personal meaning. The depersonalized situations appear to be of least significance since within this framework the child is 'removed' from the context and acts as an 'outside observer'. However, at the same time, depersonalized situations relieve a certain child's 'stress' associated with the expected assessment of the choice made, thus wise facilitating this choice. In general, the technological value of two types of situations is manifested in the fact that they can act both as a means of diagnosing the moral development of children and as an effective means of their socialization and moral education in the context of ethnocultural education. The results of the conducted research may contribute to enriching the pedagogical regulation of children's moral choice with a scientific understanding of its value. The use of such situations can be considered as a certain 'binary technology' for the development of the moral choice of children and the development of moral consciousness in general. The development of such technology appears to be beneficial and quite promising.

The results of the research demonstrate the possibilities for further consideration of the features of the motives of moral choice in the process of children's moral education and allow determining the direction of a prospective study of the problem in the following areas: comparison of the motives of children's moral choice in situations integrating moral and ethnocultural contexts, as well as in situations that do not provide for such integration; identification of the dependence of the motives of moral choice on the ethnocultural context of situations; identification and differentiation of the motives of children's moral choices made in real-life situations in different periods of preschool and primary school childhood; designing the process of pedagogical influence on the motives of this choice.

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