



The Development of Moral Values of School Children with Visual Impairments Folk Music

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Abstract

The relevance of the presented paper is conditioned upon the fact that today, the subject of the development of moral values in children with visual impairment through musical motifs of folklore is a very understudied issue. However, based on the statistics of the World Health Organisation for 2021, about 2.2 billion people worldwide have visual impairments. The purpose of this paper is to study the features of the psychological and pedagogical characteristics of children with visual impairments, their moral development, and the development of ways of spiritual and moral education through folk music. To achieve this purpose, the following methods were used: analysis, synthesis, comparison, induction, statistical analysis, and deduction. In particular, the method of statistical analysis of sources of American, Kazakh, and Russian researchers within the boundaries of the subject was used. The practical basis was the statistical data of the WHO company for 2021. The result of the study was a complete analysis of the statistics of children with visual impairment in the territory of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The study's main conclusion is that modern methods of teaching children with visual impairment are based on the musical accompaniment of educational activities since the musical form allows the development of moral values. Visually impaired students are characterised by insufficient development of the visual-imaginative level of mental activity, which determines the uniqueness of specific conceptual thinking due to visual perception disorders and limited visual experience. The alienation of a child with visual impairments from others entails secrecy and lack of communication, which can be expressed in a large volume of complexes in the future. The applied value of this paper lies in the development of recommendations for improving the system of pedagogical education of children with visual impairment through folklore-applied developmental classes.

Keywords: folk music; pedagogy; teaching; visual impairment; moral value

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INTRODUCTION

Currently, the issue of teaching children with visual impairment in educational institutions is insufficiently studied in the scientific literature, both in the stu-

dies of Kazakh scientists and in the works of American, Russian, German, and other researchers. The main developments in the issue of such children's psychological portraits were made in the 90s. Today, the main task of pedagogy is to develop fun-

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damentally new approaches and concepts to the development of such a category of students' attitudes to moral principles and ideals. To solve this issue, a comprehensive analysis of theoretical, statistical, and practical sources of Russian, American, Kazakh, and other researchers was carried out in the paper.

Considering the WHO statistics for 2021, it can be stated that visual defects are common among adults and children, leading to the correction of an educational programme for teaching students who have faced this problem.

Most accurately, the problem in this area was expressed by English scientists who studied the communication of children with visual impairment in the educational process. Their work reflects that, to date, there are few studies devoted to the study of understanding skills of the surrounding world in visually impaired children. However, the studies conducted prove that this category of students lags behind their peers by this criterion (Sullivan and Oakhill, 2020). In addition to that, it is noted that the characteristics of a child other than children without visual impairment can play an important role during play and peer interaction and that individual variations should be considered when providing support in playing with peers (Verver *et al.*, 2020; Schott *et al.*, 2021).

In this paper, arguments were given stating the fact that children who are limited in the source of information have a distorted view of the world around them. A lack of emotional attachment to the object of cognition characterises these children. Notably, visual perception is crucial for developing multisensory information processing abilities. For this reason, early visual impairment may interfere with the transmission of various sensory information during environmental exploration (Purpura *et al.*, 2021). This fact is confirmed by studies conducted in 2018 and 2020. Notably, visually impaired students have lower discrimination thresholds for native speech and music (Arnaud *et al.*, 2018; Alamos and Williford, 2020). Thus, based on

the position of this approach, the authors state that the obstacle to obtaining an accessible source of information is the main problem for the development of moral attitudes for children with visual impairment.

In the subject under study, music is the main source of conveying information and teaching moral norms to children with visual impairment. Music can positively influence the development of a cognitive connection between the heard and the learned image. One of the proofs of this thesis is a study by German scientists who focused on comprehensive music lessons at school, which led to positive performance indicators for visually impaired students (Frisen *et al.*, 2021). Since music lessons can positively influence learning, it should also be noted that without a meaningful part, music cannot form such emotions as responsiveness and goodwill in children. These concepts are formed in children with visual impairment in a specific form, so it is necessary to develop special methods of interaction. One of these methods is the introduction of folklore into the teaching structure. Using folk songs, fairy tales, and instruments, the student will be able to form moral beliefs and categories. For example, the experience of Kazakhstan proves that folk instruments are a symbol of the history and culture of people, therefore, they can be used in lessons for educational purposes.

The relevance of the study subject is conditioned upon the fact that in modern society, the development of value orientations in children is a very problematic issue, especially in children with visual impairment. In this paper, the main aspects of the development of such children's psyche and the reaction of teachers to interactions with them were studied.

The originality of the research lies in the comprehensive study of the approaches of various authors to this issue. The research subject is considered from the perspective of global and national trends in educational programmes. The main elements of scientific originality consist of de-

veloping recommendations for improving approaches to developing children's emotional structure using folk music.

METHOD

The work involved statistical and system analysis methods of data from the World Health Organisation, and data applied to the territory of the Republic of Kazakhstan. A comprehensive approach to the study of the material was applied. The logic of this study's construction is to consider the psychological and pedagogical characteristics of children with visual impairments.

The first stage of the study allows understanding how the psyche of such a group of children perceives sources of information, what connections it can form, and how fundamental conclusions about the world are formed. At the first stage of the study, the following conclusions were made:

Firstly, the classification of visual impairments was highlighted, which includes blind, visually impaired, and children with strabismus and amblyopia. Secondly, according to data for 2020, there are 161 156 children with special educational needs in the territory of the Republic of Kazakhstan, of which 8 312 are visually impaired children. Thirdly, the study established that children with visual impairment struggle to establish connections between objects depicted in the picture and classify objects. In the first stage, the main method of research was the method of statistical analysis. The first stage is characterised by the use of WHO statistics for 2021.

The second stage studied the features of the moral development of children with visual impairment. As a result, the following results were established: Firstly, it was identified that modern psychology distinguishes three main periods in the development of universal values in a child: (1) infancy, (2) early childhood (from 1 to 3 years), and (3) preschool childhood (from 3 to 7 years).

Secondly, it was established that

children with visual impairments have negative moral qualities to a greater extent, such as eccentricity, selfishness, and lack of a sense of duty and partnership due to the lack of sufficient information from visual receptors.

Thirdly, it is concluded that including children of this category in musical activity is a necessary condition for developing moral values in visually impaired younger schoolchildren since music stimulates the emotional experience of higher moral values.

In this regard, recommendations for teachers on the education of these moral values through folk music are proposed. At this stage, the method of induction and comparison was used. The theoretical basis was the research of such scientists as A. Litvak, V. Varaksina, and others.

In the third stage, the experience of such countries as the United States of America (hereinafter referred to as the USA), Italy, France, and Germany was studied. Recommendations for improving the educational system of the Republic of Kazakhstan were proposed. At this stage, the induction method was used. In this paper, recommendations were proposed for the inclusion of the following stages in the learning process of children with visual impairment: (1) development of moral ideals, (2) implementation of a set of educational activities, and (3) development of children's creative potential through the use of folk art in the form of music.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Features of psychological and pedagogical characteristics of children with visual impairments

Children with visual impairments represent a diverse category in terms of the characteristics of their visual functioning and the origin of diseases and conditions of social development. According to the well-known classification, there are the following categories of children with visual impairment: (1) The blind. This category of children should be taught with

correction based on the Braille system (Plaksina, 2003), (2) Visually impaired. Visually impaired – a subcategory of people with visual disorders and visual acuity in the better-seeing eye from 0.05 to 0.2 (Plaksina, 2003), and (3) Children with strabismus and amblyopia. Notably, visual impairments cause deviations in all types of cognitive activity.

There are qualitative changes in the system of relationships between analysers; there are specific features in the process of forming images, concepts, speech, the ratio of figurative and conceptual thinking, and orientation in space (Polepkina, 2014). Consequently, a peculiar psychological system is formed in the child. According to the World Health Organisation, for 2021, about 2.2 billion people worldwide have near or far vision impairment. This group includes people suffering from the following diseases (Figure 1):

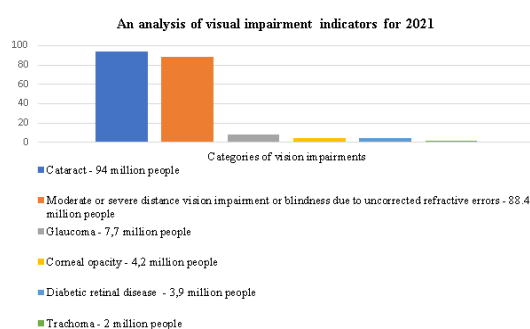


Figure 1. Analysis of data on indicators of visual impairment according to WHO statistics for 2021

There are 161 156 children with special educational needs on the territory of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Inform. kz, 2020). This statistic includes children with the following diseases (Figure 2).

Based on statistical analysis, the authors state that in the Republic of Kazakhstan, children with visual impairment do not occupy the last place in terms of the number of this disease. Therefore, it is necessary to develop a special psychological and pedagogical approach to the education of these children. Notably, speech is not impaired in most children with visual impairments, but the sphere of active commu-

nication, cognitive activity, and imitation is narrowed. Therefore, it is necessary to pay attention to this and use visibility more often when possible to teach the practical use of knowledge and skills (Dubrovina, 2004). The difficulties of establishing logical links between the objects in the picture and classifying objects should also be noted.

Visually impaired older preschoolers are characterised by the underdevelopment of visual-figurative and visual-effective levels of mental activity, which determines the originality of specific conceptual thinking, which leads to visual perception impairment (Dubrovina, 1998). Therefore, children with visual impairment should be provided with unique educational needs, which are best addressed at an early age. For example, one of the concepts of introducing children with visual impairment into the educational programme is inclusive education. It is recognised worldwide as a philosophy of achieving equality, justice, and quality education for all children, especially those who have conventionally been excluded from basic education due to disability and other characteristics. Inclusive education has become a well-known form of education in the USA and France.

Data analysis in the Republic of Kazakhstan

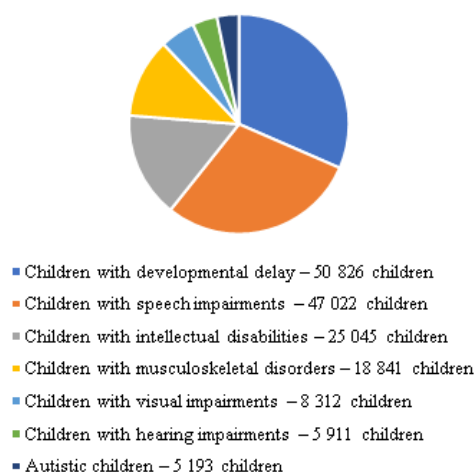


Figure 2. Analysis of disease indicators in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2020

Thus, based on statistical data analysis and psychologists' research, it is noted that visual diseases in school-age children

are quite common in the Republic of Kazakhstan. This circumstance affects the cognitive activity of children. Therefore, in pedagogical activity, it is necessary to implement new approaches in teaching this group of students.

Features of the moral development of children with visual impairment

To determine the range of work for teachers with such a group of children, it is necessary to understand the mechanism of functioning of moral beliefs and ideas. Modern psychology identifies three main periods in the development of universal values of a child: (1) Infancy (the first year of life), (2) Early childhood (from 1 to 3 years). By age 2-3, children are kind-hearted, attentive to the elders, and care about nature. In addition, they greet and say goodbye (at the reminder of an adult), and calmly state personal wishes using the words "thank you" and "please" (Dobrovolskaya, 2011). (3) Preschool childhood (from 3 to 7 years). In this category, it is necessary to highlight the periods: at the age of 3-4, the child has an image of "I", that is, self-awareness. At this age, children correctly evaluate good and bad actions; at the age of 4-5 years, the child has a personal attitude to the observance (and violation) of moral norms. At this age, the child has such qualities as modesty, responsiveness, and the desire to be fair, strong, and brave. By the age of 6-7, children desire to know their people's culture (through fairy tales, proverbs, sayings), show a caring attitude towards it, and respect the culture of other peoples (Litvak, 1998). At this stage of the child's development, the fundamental principles of morality must be laid.

The topic of educating children with visual impairments is very relevant for modern pedagogy since the moral development of children with visual impairments is qualitatively different from the moral development of normally developing peers (Dobrovolskaya, 2011). In turn, the consequences of visual impairment are insufficient information about the world around them, which reduces cognitive

interest, which is why there is a violation in the emotional and behavioural attitude of children to various fields of activity, relatively narrow contacts of the child with others, which entails secrecy, lack of communication, the desire to retire into their own world. In this regard, modern pedagogy should be focused on the needs of this category of children.

The spiritual and moral education of children with visual impairments using music

Musical activity promotes emotional responsiveness and creative self-expression of children with visual impairments. Musical activity includes three components: 1. Listening to music involves the student's perception of its general concept. The teacher in this situation should help the student with visual impairment to describe the perceived sensory indicator; 2. Musical and performing activities. At this stage, the child must divide emotions from the perceived into categories to separate positive feelings from negative ones; 3. Musical and creative activity. At this stage, it is necessary to move on to more complex concepts of understanding the moral actions of the characters. It is necessary to diversify the repertoire with tales and complex, multifaceted works (Varakina, 2013). Within the framework of this training, the teacher must necessarily control the material's acquisition process. First, folk art is connected with national and cultural characteristics that require additional interpretation.

According to the Murager programme, compiled by scientists, teachers, and musicians, children are taught to play not only a traditional musical instrument but also improvisation. The main purpose of the programme is to teach schoolchildren the skills of performing kui on dombra and combining playing dombra and singing (Dzherdimalieva, 2007). Children, along with acquiring the musical tradition of the Kazakh people, get acquainted with myths and legends. Thus, along with music, native history, and poetic folklore, the fate of

folk musicians penetrates into children's souls (Amanov and Mukhambetova, 2002).

Thus, based on research on the influence of folk music on the development of moral ideals in children with visual impairment, it should be noted that education through musical instruments and specialised classes should be introduced into educational institutions and correctional classes (Dzherdimalieva, 2007). Since a child with a visual impairment perceives information worse than children without visual defects. Folk music will help convey fundamental principles such as love for the motherland, courage, honour, and dignity. In addition, there is a huge amount of folklore and fairy tales in the folk music of Kazakhstan. It will be easier for children to associate themselves with understandable characters that are used in folklore.

Works of literature and folklore contribute to the development of speech, give samples of the Russian literary language, and enrich the vocabulary with new words, poetic vocabulary, and figurative expressions (Alekseev, 2006). It is known that younger preschoolers are characterized by a craving for a rhythmically organised constitution of speech, sonorous major rhymes, so they are happy to listen to folk songs, jokes, nursery rhymes, and fairy tales (Alekseev, 2006). Using small folklore genres in their work, children get acquainted with the colourfulness and imagery of their native language. As a means of expression, music is inevitably woven into the fabric of human thoughts and actions. Music can deeply reduce sensitivity, influence, condition, and inspire the audience. Throughout history, theorists have agreed that music can profoundly influence human character and shape morality. Music awakens feelings and tells stories through the listener's musical perception. Thus, music is a powerful source of human virtues, character, and emotions.

Thus, Italian scientists' research identified that early visual impairment can interfere with the transmission of various sensory information during the study and recognition of the environment. Russian

scientists also noted this fact and confirmed the development of unfavourable emotions in children with visual impairment, as opposed to children without visual impairment. Visual-tactile transfer for object recognition occurs early in typically developing children but slowly matures during school age. Subsequently, it was found that the object recognition processes were studied in 11 visually impaired children and compared with the results of 22 control children. The participants were tested using a clinical protocol that includes visual examination of black-and-white photographs of ordinary objects, tactile examination of real objects, and visual-tactile transmission of these two types of information. The results show the normal development of tactile unisensory processing in children with poor sight and a considerable difference in multisensory transmission between the two groups. In children with visual impairment, multisensory processes do not contribute to the recognition of common objects as in ordinary children, probably because early visual impairment can affect cross-sensory calibration of vision and touch (Purpura *et al.*, 2021). This study shows that children with visual impairment need a special attitude and a qualified approach. The development of adequate educational programmes for blind children provides a stimulating opportunity for those who wish to creatively act in a specialised field of a wide area of education. There is always an incentive to combine the knowledge and methods used in general education with thoughtful experience and best practices introduced by qualified specialists and apply this combination to the education of blind children.

In another work by German scientists, it was discovered that although the development of motor images has been widely studied in sighted children, it is unclear how children with varying degrees of visual impairment represent motor actions through motor representations constructed using the remaining intact sensory organs, especially touch (Schott *et al.*, 2021).

There are few studies devoted to the

study of reading comprehension skills in visually impaired children, despite evidence indicating that they lag behind their typically sighted peers in reading comprehension. Comparing the performance of children with visual impairments with peers without visual impairment corresponds to chronological age during the performance of a task that requires them to make emotional, temporal, and spatial conclusions from short texts. The data obtained show that children with visual impairment demonstrate a certain deficit in conclusions about spatial information in narratives, as opposed to emotional or temporal information. The results are discussed concerning the role of visual acuity in image skills and how this affects the construction of a mental model of a text (Sullivan and Oakhill, 2020). Hearing or visual impairments can negatively affect a child's development and involvement. However, there is not enough literature on the involvement of children with hearing or visual impairments.

In one of the studies of the causal relationship between music learning and emotions in children with visual impairment, it was established that musical accompaniment improves some components of emotional intelligence in children from 6 to 7 years old (Frisen *et al.*, 2021). This study shows that children in this age category are most active in forming spatial thinking and attitudes to events in the outside world. Thus, music influences the development of fundamental values.

Visual impairment in childhood often has lifelong consequences. To strive for the highest level of functioning, involvement, and quality of life and to ensure children's well-being, children should have the right to the most effective rehabilitation programmes (Elsman *et al.*, 2019). Children with visual impairment have lower discrimination thresholds for native speech and music (Arnaud *et al.*, 2018). The impact of the impairment on learning will vary considerably depending on the nature and degree of vision loss: some students will be born without vision, others will

lose it gradually; some will have no vision at all; others will have some vision, they will be photosensitive or will have limited peripheral vision. It is also possible that vision and photosensitivity will change day after day.

The role of music in the lives of visually impaired people can be expanded to provide more opportunities for groups through practical experience, outdoor activities, and psychosocial survival strategies. Group music programmes should be considered to enhance interpersonal and collective experiences for both visually impaired and sighted people. Learning music can not only improve the intelligence and morality of children, which contributes to the development of their personality, but also can improve their aesthetic abilities. Music education for children is an important step in promoting universal education. For example, the experience of teaching children with visual impairment in Germany shows that the country has created integrative classes for children with and without visual impairment, in which a special teacher is invited for 4 hours a week: 2 hours for teaching a child and 2 hours for teacher consultations (Chvanova and Dubrovina, 2018).

In France, the system of school inclusion with a special teacher is actively used (Dzherdimalieva, 2007). In the USA, a team of specialists is formed to work with a blind child, consisting of teachers for children with visual impairment (American..., 2021). Living with a visual impairment leads to such problems as impaired ability to read, write, understand non-verbal signals, and understand a language with a large number of visual images. Working in the classroom can also cause psychological stress. This may expose the child to isolation.

Some researchers consider these emotions as learned social behaviour. Moreover, the appearance of desolate behaviour depends on higher levels of the cognitive process. It is known that this behaviour is the result of incomplete or inaccurate modelling due to inadequate and

poor communication with others. People with disabilities, especially the blind, are at a higher risk of acquiring inappropriate and ineffective behaviours. Children with disabilities often cannot take part in social interaction with peers and adults, and their social and emotional adaptation to future interactions is difficult. According to WHO, blindness in school-age children is less common than in adults, and its prevalence increases with increasing age. Visually impaired children remain more detached and isolated and may exhibit immature and inappropriate behaviour. Blind teenagers worry more about their future, are less able to suppress their anger and aggression, have a negative attitude toward themselves, and suffer from “acquired helplessness”, which exacerbates frustration.

Many studies show that music has a large positive effect on people’s behaviour. Music therapy is used to treat some physical, emotional, and psychological disorders. Pain, anxiety, grief, and relationship problems are the most common problems that people try to solve using music. Playing and listening to music can release endorphins, modulate emotions, and relieve pain. In addition, music changes the functions of the nervous, hormonal, and vegetative nervous system, which positively affects stress, satisfaction, and self-confidence.

As the research of Kazakh, American, and Italian scientists in this field shows, music is a tool for conveying a certain information message to children. Psychologists note the relationship between a child’s spiritual development and his emotions and feelings (Tribushnaya, 2006). Due to the fact that today children with visual impairment are the most vulnerable category of students, in addition to musical instruments, new progressive technologies have been introduced into the teaching methodology in the Republic of Kazakhstan (Tribushnaya, 2006).

Thus, within the framework of the project “Special Books for Special Children”, which is being collectively

implemented by the Open World Youth Volunteer House and the Samruk-Kazyna Trust Social Project Development Fund, tactile books for blind and visually impaired preschool children have been developed. In accordance with the State Programme for the Development of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2016–2019, it plans to develop textbooks for children with visual impairment (in Braille) and children with intellectual disabilities (Social Projects ..., 2021). Many creators of progressive musical and pedagogical systems based on folk musical traditions paid great attention to children’s musical creativity, represented in such forms as instrumental performance (Chvanova and Dubrovina, 2018).

The analysis of numerous existing programmes on the musical education of children has shown that in recent years, music pedagogy has increasingly turned to children’s performance as one of the leading methods of teaching and upbringing, and the development of musical and creative abilities of children is currently one of the important musical and pedagogical tasks. Children’s musical creativity has become much more widely represented in various programmes, and methodological recommendations for secondary schools and in Kazakhstan. Consistent introduction to the world of national musical culture in such an area as playing national musical instruments available for an untrained child contributes to the development of respect for the historical past (Chvanova and Dubrovina, 2018).

In the conditions of increasing national consciousness, a music teacher should skilfully introduce all children to the musical culture of Kazakhstan, thereby implanting love for its people and folk cultural traditions.

Thus, teachers need to work with this category of children in a following way: (1) to form highly moral ideas in children about the rules and norms of behaviour in society, (2) to prepare a complex of direct educational activities focused on the establishment of moral principles

by introducing children to the folklore of the Republic of Kazakhstan, and (3) to use this set of activities in the creative activities of children.

Based on this analysis, the authors of the paper state that the development of moral ideas is considered in pedagogy as a system of moral principles, norms, and rules that a student is obliged to learn through folklore methods of conveying information.

CONCLUSIONS

This study is primarily aimed at a complete and comprehensive study of the subject of the development of moral beliefs in children with visual impairment through folk music. The following conclusions were made based on the obtained statistical and practical results. Firstly, in this study, the features of the psychological and pedagogical characteristics of children with visual impairments were identified. Based on the limited sources of perception of information, the psychological portrait of students is built based on an indifferent attitude to what is happening, thereby forming such qualities as secrecy and indifference. Thus, the main point of the development of a closed personality type in children with visual impairment is the absence of an emotional-figurative connection with the surrounding reality. Secondly, modern research in the field of psychology has shown that the main age of development of moral beliefs and ideals falls on the category of children aged 6-7 years old. Therefore, teachers need to implant the basic principles of morality in children starting from the first grade. Folk music is most suitable for this since one can easily convey the fundamental categories of good and evil, love and hate, and good and bad deeds through simple categories of songs and fairy tales.

Thirdly, the spiritual development of a child with visual impairment can be carried out using a music programme in the classroom. To do this, the teacher must include Kazakh folk instruments in the edu-

cational process, play simple and complex works, and focus the student's attention on the emotional and sensual component of the image. A necessary element of the student's involvement in this educational process will be musical improvisation, when the child independently tries to express feelings through playing a traditional instrument. Folk music promotes understanding and reflection of the mentality of Kazakhs in the personality of the child, as well as the development of such a deeply emotional feeling as love for the motherland. This learning process should be clearly structured since children without visual impairment also take part in educational activities. Therefore, it is necessary to make the following recommendations for improvement in pedagogical activity: (1) to explain complex moral categories to children through folk music using fairy tales and songs, 2) to use traditional Kazakh tools in the process of studying the history of the Republic of Kazakhstan, (3) to promote the popularisation of historical literacy of schoolchildren in the Republic of Kazakhstan through the folk epic and folklore.

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