

ADULT'S ATTITUDE IN PROCESS OF WILL DEVELOPMENT OF PRE-SCHOOL CHILD

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Abstract

Will is one of the most important characteristics of personality. Development of child's will in pre-school age is based not only to its direct formation, but it is more like issue of child's general development. Child's will formation is in close correlation with an adult. Relationships between child and adult are one of the main criterions in humanization process in pedagogy, which is characterized by respectful attitude to the child. Adult's attitude can facilitate or prevent development of will qualities like independence, purposefulness and persistence. In order to facilitate child's initiative and will adult should consider childhood as special and unique period in human life and should understand, that childhood is not only certain stage of development during which child acquires society experience, tries to adapt to certain demands in society and accept and perform offered behavior models. Teacher should help child to acquire certain regulations which help to join in society, but on the other side should save child's individuality.

KEYWORDS: a pre- schooler, development of will, attitude.

Introduction

Development of free will in individual is one of prerequisites of well-being - this is an idea of favorite philosopher J. S. Mill. He has developed an idea about the role of freedom in individual in modern society and stressed society's wrong opinion, that derogation of individual and demand, that „ everyone should perform ourselves” (Mills, 2007, p.91) is driving force of society. Every person should be considered as the greatest value of each society. Every person should be respected as individuality, should be stressed his/her special value and should be respected his/her freedom. At the same time respect of individual and maintenance of freedom is one of the most difficult tasks in education because „ trust in freedom, individual choice is the greatest illusion in life of modern person” (Eriksens, 2010, p.186).

In childhood when begins the development of will and formation of strong personality and child is completely dependent from an adult and his/her regulations which often can be against child's „ healthy mind and strong human will” (Korčaks, 1986, p.86) it is very easy to stifle child's initiative and subordinate to system (Fromms, 2003). Stifling of child's initiative is also stifling of child's will and individuality. In order to promote child's will and individuality adult should accept childhood as special and unique period of human life and should understand that childhood is not only certain stage of development during which during which child acquires society experience, tries to adapt to certain demands in society and accept and perform offered behavior models. Childhood should not be sacrificed for the sake of future. Teacher should help child to acquire certain regulations which help to join in society, but on the other side should save child's individuality. Adult is disseminator of higher ideas and values and should accept regulations of childhood and understand that “will of all human beings have not the same object but each person has his/her own (his/ her own well-being)” (Kants, 2006, p. 184). This idea of Kant reflects his demand for humanity and true respect to other person and is especially popular today when individuality more are respected in theoretical investigations despite the fact that the aim of upbringing is creative, free and responsible person.

The aim of research

The aim of investigation is to reflect theoretically and empirically connection between adult's attitude to child and balanced development of child's will.

The methods and materials of research

Ideas of pedagogues and psychologists of Latvia and abroad about consequences of will development in pre-school age create the theoretical basis of study. The experience and survey results of pre-school teachers are analyzed in the context of the study. The questions of survey were developed in order to find out adult's attitude to the child and to reflect correlation between adult's attitude and children will

formation. The results of teachers' survey are analyzed considering frequency and interpretation, using descriptive and analytical statistical method (IBM SPSS Statistika-v19, 0).

Results of the research

Education of each nationality should be based on its spiritual values, own similarities and differences because there are dominant system of ideas in each culture which adds value to certain culture (Vipers, 1990). Educated, mentally enriched, active and moral personality is an ideal of teachers in independent Latvia. This ideal is possible to achieve by using human approach to person, by respecting and supporting expression possibilities of child's personal freedom and individuality and by creating environment for activity or amateur performances. Important role for achieving this aim is for will development as one of the main tasks in upbringing (Dēķens, 1921).

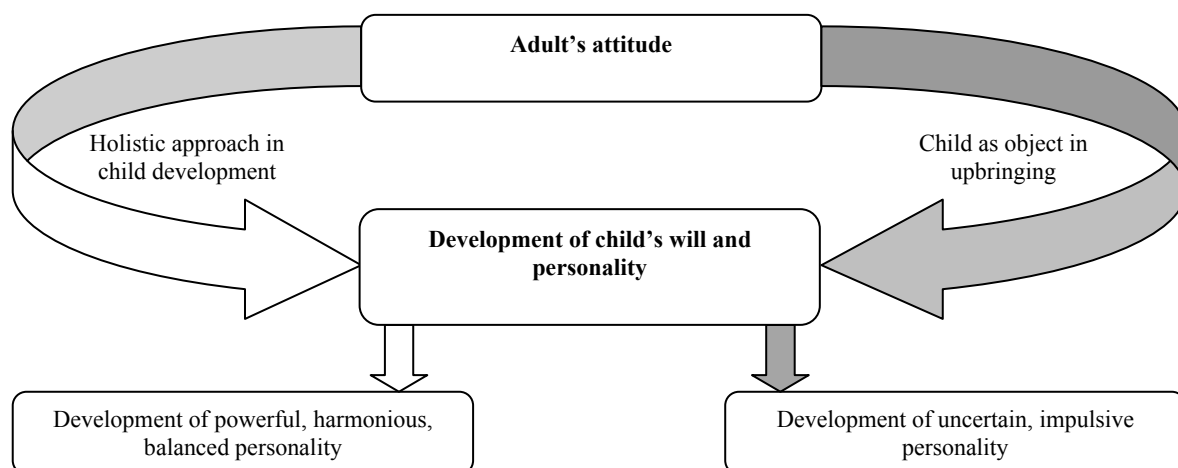
Will development is formation of harmonious, well – balanced, strong personality which has wisdom, clarity of mind, which try to reach moral values all the time. The basis of personality forms active, positive, on personal values oriented, persistent will because without will person has not individual and social value (Birkerts, 1923 Dāle, 1944). Strong will create personality which is ready to act for the sake of others, can perform in accordance with higher moral demands and actively can enter into development of cultural life (Svenne, 1930; Pētersons, 1931; Ausējs, 1938; Staris, Ūsiņš 2000). Its development begins with child's birth as one of direction of moral upbringing, but in childhood will is not formed but there is established basis to its development, it is not possible to form it directly, but only indirectly, it is impossible to break it, only to direct (Natorps, 1911; Dēķens, 1919).

Development of will is directed not so much to will by itself but more to creation of beneficial upbringing conditions. It means to create environment with special way of life, behavior and activity, which step by step the weakest will makes very strong (Students, 1998). Active, creative, free and stimulating environment offers possibility to child dispose of lower instincts. Unconsciously child develops skill to set the aim of his/her own activity without adult's help.

Child's psychic processes and also will formation are in close correlation with an adult. Even in 20 century 30-ies J. A. Student stressed that in childhood environment and its creators have the most important role. Child's psyche is immature, will is not strong, it is easy accessed, influenced and subordinated, it easy follows to unknown will. As more noble-minded, sublimed and exemplary is personality, as easier child's will traits like perseverance, persistence in decision making and realization are forming (Students, 1935).

In pre-school age adult, his/her attitude to environment and world outlook form child's world perception because example is one of the strongest means in upbringing (Birkerts, 1923). Child identifies himself/herself with an adult by distinguishing self. At the beginning it is evident only by observation, but later develops in direct imitation. Also will's directed activity management develops when child identifies self with defined borders. Still imitation is good and valuable mean in upbringing only at that time if it is in accordance with child's perception and stage of development. It is important to consider balance between children's and adult's will and understand, that adult's choice, activity not always match with child's wishes and interests. Adult (teacher) should strive that child not so much imitate him/her but notice in him/her noble-minded, bright, strong, original personality where the best is teacher's initiative (Dauge, 1925). Upbringing should be transformed in creative activity (Vigotskis, 1926, 343), it means that adult is not instrument of upbringing which explains, indicates, but together with child enjoys and experience life.

Development of pre - schooler's will influence not only adult's example, imitation of authority, but also adult's attitude which can facilitate child's activity. Every person (also child) does everything in order to feel well, but as indicates T. H. Eriksen „, a person after birth is thrown in the social world which already exists” (Ēriksens, 2010, 129), that is why activity of every child in majority of cases directs pressure of society and adult's attitude. Also child's perception about right or wrong activity is connected with child's conception about the facts adult expect from him/her. Child accepts adult's behavior and also attitude as a standard and example for his/her activities. Person's future life and also child's will development depend from the fact how sensitive and intelligent is adult (Picture 1).



Picture 1. Adult's role in child's will development

Study of E. Smirnova and M. Sokolova (2005) reflects how adult's attitude influences child's activity, how develops child's personality. By investing parent's attitude to the child both teachers have set final borders of attitude – humanist and authoritarian. Human attitude has holistic approach to child's development and acceptance of personality in whole. Adult is oriented to the child's psychological comfort in certain situations, his/her attitude to those situations are characterized as flexible, labile, inconsistent. Adult is interested, open to children subculture, he/she wants to understand child and usually child gives pleasure to the adult. This is truly respectful attitude to the child and compliance of childhood as special and unique stage of person's life. Every day of each child's life is important to him/her, to his/her development, and it is not living in order to get ready to more important period (school, life).

Adult, which notices unique individual in the child, wants to maintain child's autonomy, which becomes apparent as independent thinking, not following authorities (Rubene, 2008) and also does not want, that child gets worried, cries, is depressed, reserved, but is joyful, merry, open, happy, natural and uses his/her possibilities. Adult is not teaching child, but helps him/her discover self, self possibilities. By respecting, accepting and supporting child's choice adult indirectly teaches child to understand what he/she wants, what can achieve and how can fulfill his/her wish, indirectly helps to develop into powerful, harmonious, balanced personality.

On the contrary, the second approach perceives child as an object in upbringing. Child should make parents (adults) happy, that is why there are certain demands to the child, and his /her activities are directed in a way to match with values which are significant to the adult. Adult has definite, constant enough understanding about the fact how child should be, how he/she should act and behave. Child should comply with authority, neglect of his/her demands and regulations is not acceptable. This attitude facilitates development of uncertain, impulsive personality which is not ready to independent activity.

By perceiving the child as the object in upbringing, child's activity and expression of will often are characterized and explained as naughtiness, incivility, capriciousness, and coarse, aggressive behavior. In the process of child's will development important is not unconditional implementation of demands, but free, creative environment in which child can actively perform, explore and do mistakes.

Survey about pre-schooler wills development were elaborated in order to get to know adult's attitude to the child and discover correlation between adult's attitude and child's will formation. The survey questions were based on investigations of E. Smirnova and M. Sokolova (2005), T.Adorno (1949) and Z.Rubene (2008), they are adapted to specific problems of study.

The respondents were 228 teachers of pre-school education from different pre-school institutions from Latvia. The first survey question demands to tick the most important traits of person (Table 1). All offered trait groups are important for contemporary human being and all of them are mentioned in answers.

Table 1. Teachers' opinion about traits which are the most important for human being

Offered traits	Choices%
emotional expression, soul responsiveness, easy in communication	66.2
energy, decision making and willpower	59.6
love to others, pleasant character	52.2
friendliness and love to the neighbor	52.2
skills to do job, practical touch and economy	27.6
generosity, human social position	11.0
good-looking and good manners	11.0
tactful attitude and sensitivity	8.8
power of mind and seriousness	7.5
creative skills and sensibility	3.5

Four the main significant traits which are mentioned the most often in respondent answers:

- emotional expression, soul responsiveness, easy in communication (151 respondent);
- energy, decision making and willpower 9 136 respondents);
- love to others, pleasant character (119 respondents);
- friendliness and love to the neighbor (119 respondents).

The fact that creative skills and sensibility (8 respondents), tactful attitude and sensitivity (20 respondents) are the most insignificant traits reflects not only teachers, but also value orientation in the whole society. Conception about happy, successful person mainly forms stereotypes in society about the way person should be. All successful people are equal, attentive, and capable to communicate with everyone, friendly, purposeful and patient. In order to reach status of successful person child should be intelligent, fair, obedient, accurate, outgoing, persistent and with own will. Highly are evaluated such traits of strong will as perseverance, decision making, diligence, courage, self-possession and at the same time child should be polite, organized.

The second group of questions forms four unfinished sentences. By analyzing each answer and all answers together the main idea in teachers' conception and eligibility of traits to human and authoritarian disposition were investigated. Teachers' answers were encoded in four groups of traits (Table 2). The traits of will (skill to reach own aim, willpower, perseverance) were distributed from the answers, and also were distributed traits which reflect child's mind, cognition (curiosity, intelligence, inventiveness) which mainly correspond to authoritarian disposition.

Table 2. Teacher answers to illustrate codes

Answer codes	Teacher answers to illustrate codes
Human disposition	holistic approach to child development, respect of individual and personality, child's psychological well-being
Authoritarian disposition	strict respect of certain, constant demands and norms, stable understanding about the way child should be
Child's intellectual development	curiosity, intelligence, inventiveness, etc.
Will traits	skill to reach own aim, willpower, perseverance, etc.

The first continuation of unfinished sentence – *I would like to observe such traits in children of my group like...* reflects which traits teacher would like to observe in children of own group. The answers show teachers' general conception, stereotype what it means to be good child. The child should be tolerant, responsive, disciplined, he/she should please the adult (Table 3).

Table 3. Traits teacher would like to observe in children of group

Answer codes	Teacher answers	Choices %
Human disposition	joyful, believes his/her own power, merry	15,40
Authoritarian disposition	obedient, kind, polite, disciplined, considerate, helpful, honest, outgoing, active, courageous, responsible, accurate	69,30
Child's intellectual development	ingenious, attentive, interested, intelligent	27,38
Will traits	persistent, independent, diligent, purposeful, decisive	21,93

15, 40% of teachers confirm their human attitude to the child because it is important for them to see child joyful, merry, open, creative and who believe to their power. Merry, joyful child acts with much more enthusiasm, energy and positive emotions promote activity and indirectly facilitate development of will.

Majority of teachers (69, 30%) would like to see children of their group friendly, outgoing, kind, warm-hearted, honest, open, responsible. 21, 93% of teachers would like children to have such will traits as independence, purposefulness, decisiveness, patience, self-possession. Adult wishes to observe in the child traits of strong will which begin to develop only in pre-school age by observing and imitating the adult, and also activity by learning to set relevant, clear aim. For the child it is much more complicated to accept information which has no practical use, he/she wants to do, just try, at least to see nearby (Korčaks, 1986).

The second continuation of unfinished sentences of survey - *I am glad when children...* reflects, that the majority (54, 39%) of adults are not pleased by the child which natural impulses are strong, which defends his/her self because he/she usually is characterized as disobedient and creator of mess, but they are pleased by the child who is kind, disciplined, knowing, attentive, outgoing, friendly, open. 33,77% of teachers are pleased by the child which shows willpower, patience, but 19,74% of teachers consider as relevant curiosity, knowledge and intellect. Only 28, 95% of teachers are pleased by childish, joyful, free, creative child. By analyzing answers of second question, it is evident that child's individual, unique personality more is respected in theoretical studies but not in practice (Table 4).

Table 4. Traits which please teacher

Answer codes	Teacher answers	Choices %
Human disposition	happy, childish, joyful, merry, glad, playful	28,95
Authoritarian disposition	kind, disciplined, accurate, responsible to duties, warm-hearted, use to please me, hear and understand me, manages emotions, show mutual respect	54,39
Child's intellectual development	curious, intelligent, knowledgeable, interested	19,74
Will traits	independent, patient, confident, with willpower	33,77

Answers to the third unfinished sentence – *In children I respect the most...* were submitted by 223 teachers. The results show, that 20, 63% of teachers respect child's joy of wonder, childishness, personality, individual, creativity, sensitiveness, warm-heartedness.

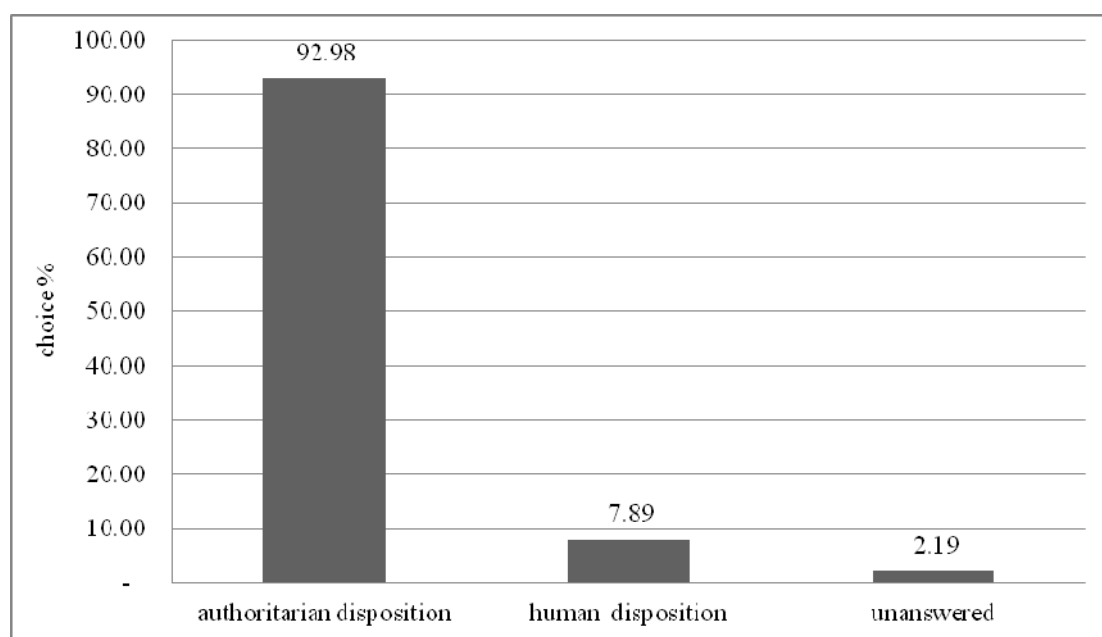
Table 5. Traits which teacher respects in children

Answer codes	Teacher answers	Choices %
Human disposition	child's sincerity, personality, individual, joyfulness, joy of wonder, creativity	20,63
Authoritarian disposition	diligence, order, fairness, accuracy, kindness, good behavior, truthfulness, friendliness, skill to recognize own fault	74,89
Child's intellectual development	intelligence, curiosity, interest, disposition to novelty, skill to use knowledge, skill to make arguments	11,21
Will traits	independence, diligence, responsibility, decisiveness, willpower, perseverance, purposefulness, self-esteem	13,00

The majority of teachers (74, 89%) respect children if they have such traits as diligence, fairness, directness, if they are sincere, empathetic, can collaborate and are friendly. The child should be industrious, accurate, careful, should recognize own fault. 11, 21% of teachers highly estimate such traits like curiosity, intelligence, skill to make arguments, disposition to novelty. Also newest studies reflects that in practice teachers use to trust more to cognitive development as prerequisite of successful life (Edwards, 2010).

13% of teachers important seem such will traits as independence, decisiveness, purposefulness and perseverance. By trying to bring up a person of strong will, M.Štāls indicates that big mistake is made. Inefficient, unreasoned, without certain aim set tasks which are pulled out from environment, in that way hoping to get success and results, experience failure. Integrity of upbringing principles, certain and respectful attitude to the child as a personality is the main condition to reach , without traumatizing child's self, the planned result – person of strong will.

The fact, that teachers in their work more attention turn to child's intellectual development, teaching and authority respect as prerequisite of successful life, not to saving child's individuality, uniqueness, child's self - development and at the same time will formation, is evident in the answers to fourth question – *I feel upset, if children...* (Picture 2).



Picture 2. Teacher feel upset, if child...

Five respondents or 2, 19% did not answer to that question. Only 7, 89% feel upset if child is crying, feel sad, depressed, upset, and afflicted. 92, 98% of teachers unacceptable and undesirable is child's rebellion and resistance to the authority. Actually child should not be passive, without initiative, uncertain, but on the contrary, adult wish child to be accurate, self- controlled, disciplined and without caprices, child should not be naughty and stubborn, aggressive behavior also is not acceptable. Child should be obedient with good behavior.

Child's obstinacy and stubbornness can be explained as protection of self which is evident as a protest against adult's demands. Child is against adult's regulations because wants to implement his/ her idea. Adult's will is prohibition which limits child's freedom, will, self, but any prohibition creates protest and wish to resist. In order to restrain caprices, adult begins to set limits to the child, his/her activities, but sometimes even punish the child. By breaking child's stubbornness with authority, his/ her will also is traumatized. Motive why it is not allowed, why should be discipline, should be explained to the child because „obedience is not end in itself, but it is a mean how to reach self- determination and self-control” (Dēķens, 1921, p.114). Child should learn to manage his/ her desires and adult should facilitate child's efforts of independence.

Survey reflects, that also in today's situation topical issue is how far adult can intervene in child's life by introducing with certain values which should be in relationships between adult and child in order not to prevent development of child's will and individual.

By doing analysis of ideas of pedagogues and psychologists of Latvia independent state (K.Dēķens, P.Birkerts, O.Svenne J.A.Students) and also ideas of contemporary educators (J.Korčaks, E.Smirnova, M.Sokolova), the conditions were found which implementation can facilitate development of strong personality. Will formation of pre-schooler begins with recognizing and saving child's individual and creating certain conditions for upbringing:

- holistic view of personality;
- recognizing and considering of child's interests;
- external procedure (daily rhythm, order of things);
- example of an adult (mental freedom, broad interests, flexible mind);
- respect of child's will (possibility to take and realize own decisions).

Conclusions

A relationship between adult and child is one of the main criterions in humanization of pedagogy, which can be understood as respectful attitude to the child, as skill to accept not only easy understandable ideas, but also differences.

In order to avoid prevention of child's initiative and will, adult should recognize childhood as special and unique period in person's life and should understand that childhood is not only certain stage of development, during which society's experience is acquired, appears adaptation to certain demands of society and occurs acceptance, reproduction of other offered behavior models. Teacher should help to the child acquire certain regulations of cultural environment which help to join in society, but, on the contrary, should save child's individual.

Development of child's will should be connected with child's general development (child's holistic development), it cannot be separated from the person as a whole. Development of will begins with recognizing and considering of each child's individual, supports his/her active nature.

For the successful will development there is necessary communication with an adult, peers and positive environment, in which child's initiative is not prevented, he/ she can develop purposefulness, perseverance, and independence, self-control in activity and in behavior.

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Summary

Bērns griba, tāpat kā citi psihiskie procesi, veidojas ciešās mijattiecībās ar pieaugušo. Pieaugušā un bērna attiecības ir viens no galvenajiem kritērijiem pedagoģijas humanizēšanā, kas tiek saprasta kā cieņpilna izturēšanās pret bērnu.

Pētījuma teorētisko pamatojumu veido Latvijas brīvvalsts pedagogu, psihologu un atziņas par pirmsskolas vecuma bērna gribas veidošanās likumsakarībām. Katras tautas izglītība jābalsta uz savu, savdabīgo un atšķirīgo, par

pamatu ņemot tautas gara vērtības. Bērna gribas attīstība jāskata cieša saistībā ar bērna vispārēju attīstību (bērna attīstība kopveselumā), to nevar atdalīt no cilvēka veseluma. Gribas attīstība aizsākas ar katra bērna individualitātes apzināšanu un ievērošanu, atbalsta viņa darbīgo dabu.

Pirmsskolas vecumā pieaugušais, viņa attieksme pret lietām, pasaules uzskats veido bērna pasaules redzējumu, jo piemērs ir viens no spēcīgākajiem audzināšanas līdzekļiem (Birkerts, 1923). Bērns sevi identificē ar pieaugušo, saskatot tajā sevi. Sākotnēji tas izpaužas tikai vērojumā, vēlāk pārtop tiešā atdarināšanā. Arī gribai pakļautā darbības vadība attīstās, tad, kad bērns identificējas ar to, ka viņam nosaka robežas. Pieaugušā attieksme var sekmēt vai kavēt, tādu gribas īpašību, kā patstāvība, mērķtiecība, neatlaidība veidošanos.

Pētāmās problēmas kontekstā tika analizēti pirmsskolas skolotāju aptaujas rezultāti un pieredze. Aptaujas jautājumi tika veidoti tā, lai izzinātu pieaugušo attieksmi pret bērnu, un atklāt sakarības starp pieaugušā attieksmi un bērna gribas veidošanos. Pedagogu aptaujas rezultāti analizēti pēc biežuma un interpretācijas, izmantojot aprakstošo un analītiskās statistikas metodes.

Pieaugušais, kurš bērnam redz unikālu individualitāti, vēlas saglabāt bērna autonomiju, kas izpaužas kā patstāvīga, autoritātēm nesekojoša domāšana (Rubene, 2008), nevēlas, lai bērns uztraucas, raud, ir nomākts, noslēgts, bet ir dzīvespriecīgs, jautrs, atvērts, lai ir laimīgs, tāds, kāds viņš ir, un izmanto savas iespējas. Pieaugušais nevis māca bērnu, bet palīdz viņam atklāt pašam sevi, savas iespējas. Cienot, pieņemot un atbalstot bērna izvēli, pieaugušais netieši māca bērnu izprast, ko viņš vēlas, ko var sasniegt un kā piepildīt savu vēlmi, netieši, palīdz veidoties par spēcīgu, harmonisku, līdzsvarotu personību.

Raugoties uz bērnu kā uz audzināšanas objektu, darbīgums, t.i. bērna gribas izpausmes veids nereti tiek raksturots un skaidrots kā nepaklausība, neaudzinātība, kaprīzums, izlutinātība, rupja, agresīva uzvedība. Bērna gribas veidošanās procesā būtiska ir nevis bezierunu prasību izpilde, bet brīva, radoša vide, kurā bērns var aktīvi darboties, mēģināt un kļūdīties.

Aptauja atklāj, ka arī šodienas situācijā aktuāls ir jautājums par to, cik tālu pieaugušais drīkst iejaukties bērna dzīvē, iepazīstinot ar noteiktām vērtībām, kādām jābūt bērna un pieaugušā attiecībām, lai bērna griba un individualitāte netiktu stindzināta.

Lai bērna iniciatīva, griba netiktu stindzināta, pieaugušajam jāatzīst bērniņa kā īpašs un unikāls laika posms cilvēka dzīvē un jāsaprot ka bērniņa nav tikai noteikta attīstības pakāpe, kuras laikā tiek apgūta sabiedrības pieredze, notiek pielāgošanās noteiktām sabiedrības prasībām un citu piedāvāto uzvedības modeļu pieņemšana, atveidošana. Audzinātājam no vienas puses jāpalīdz bērnam apgūt noteiktas kultūrvides noteikumus, kas palīdz iekļauties sabiedrībā, bet no otras puses jāaglabā tā individualitāte.

Sekmīgai gribas attīstībai nepieciešama saskarsme ar pieaugušo, vienaudžiem un labvēlīga vide, kurā netiek slāpēta bērna iniciatīva, viņam ir iespējams izkopt mērķtiecību, neatlaidību, patstāvību, paškontroli darbībā un uzvedībā. Pirmsskolēna gribas audzināšana aizsākas ar bērna individualitātes atzīšanu un saudzēšanu, kā arī ar noteiktu audzināšanas apstākļu radīšanu:

- personības skatījums veselumā;
- bērna interešu apzināšanās, ievērošana;
- ārēja kārtība (dienas ritms, lietu kārtība);
- pieaugošā paraugs (garīga atbrīvotība, uzskatu plašums, prāta lokanība);
- bērna gribas respektēšana (iespēja pieņemt un realizēt savus lēmumus).