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## THE ROLE OF TEACHERS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE YOUNGER GENERATION: RESULTS OF A SOCIOLOGICAL SURVEY IN KAZAKHSTAN

This article presents some of the results of a sociological study regarding the role of teachers in the development of children and adolescents in Kazakhstan. The study was conducted by an independent research organization, the Center for Study of Public Opinion, it is a large-scale research project covering all regions of Kazakhstan, urban and rural areas. An empirical study of children and adolescents aged 8-17 years was conducted using a survey. In turn, the object of the study was divided into two groups according to the age of 8-12 and 13-17 years. The results of the 2005 respondents survey showed that teachers play an important role in the upbringing of children, they cultivate responsibility and respect for each other in children. For children and adolescents, teachers form social and national identity and personality formation, carry out educational work. The results also show that school teachers are in second place after families in shaping the worldview of children. In addition to the educational function, teachers play a kind of role of protectors and advisers, as almost every fifth minor turns to teachers for help in solving their problematic issues.

**Key words:** teachers, children and adolescences development, education, role of teachers, school and teachers, sociological survey

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### Мұғалімдердің жас ұрпақты дамытудағы рөлі: Қазақстандағы социологиялық сауалнаманың нәтижелері

Бұл мақалада Қазақстандағы балалар мен жасөспірімдердің дамуындағы мұғалімдердің рөлі туралы социологиялық зерттеудің кейбір нәтижелері келтірілген. Зерттеуді тәуелсіз зерттеу ұйымы – «Қоғамдық пікірді зерттеу орталығы» жүргізді, бұл Қазақстанның барлық аймақтарын, қалалық және ауылдық елді мекендерді қамтитын ауқымды ғылыми жоба. Сегіз және он жеті жас аралығындағы балалар мен жасөспірімдер арасында эмпирикалық зерттеу сауалнама жасау арқылы жүргізілді. Өз кезегінде зерттеу нысаны болып балалар мен жасөспірімдер 8-12 және 13-17 жас аралығына қарай екі топқа бөлінді. Осы жас аралығындағы 2005 респондент арасында жүргізілген сауалнаманың нәтижелері мұғалімдердің бала тәрбиесінде маңызды рөл атқаратындығын, олар балаларда жауапкершілік пен бір-біріне деген құрмет сезімдерін тәрбиелейтіндігін көрсетті. Мұғалімдер балалар мен жасөспірімдер арасында әлеуметтік және ұлттық бірегейлікті қалыптастырады және жеке тұлғаны қалыптастыру процесін және тәрбие жұмысын жүргізеді. Нәтижелер, сонымен қатар, мектеп мұғалімдері балалардың дүниетанымын қалыптастыруда отбасыларынан кейінгі екінші орында екенін көрсетеді. Тәрбиелік функцияларымен қатар мұғалімдер қорғаушылар мен кеңесшілердің рөлін атқарады, өйткені көмелетке толмаған әрбір бесінші бала өзінің шешілуі қиын мәселелері бойынша мұғалімдерден көмек сұрайды.

**Түйін сөздер:** мұғалімдер, балалар мен жасөспірімдердің дамуы, білім алу, мұғалімдердің рөлі, мектеп және мұғалімдер, әлеуметтік сауалнама.

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### Роль учителей в развитии подрастающего поколения: результаты социологического опроса в Казахстане

В данной статье представлены некоторые результаты социологического исследования о роли учителей в развитии детей и подростков в Казахстане. Исследование было проведено независимой исследовательской организацией – Центром изучения общественного мнения

(ЦИОМ), который представляет собой масштабный исследовательский проект, охватывающий все регионы Казахстана, включая городские и сельские населенные пункты. Эмпирическое исследование было проведено среди детей и подростков в возрасте от восьми до семнадцати лет посредством опроса. В свою очередь, объект исследования был разделен на две группы детей и подростков, 8-12 и 13-17 лет соответственно. Результаты опроса 2005 респондентов этой возрастной группы показали, что учителя играют важную роль в воспитании детей, они прививают детям чувство ответственности и уважения друг к другу. Педагоги формируют социальную и национальную идентичность у детей и подростков, осуществляют процесс формирования личности и проводят воспитательную работу. Результаты также свидетельствуют, что школьные учителя занимают второе место после семьи в формировании мировоззрения детей. Помимо своих образовательных функций, учителя играют роль защитников и консультантов, поскольку каждый пятый несовершеннолетний обращается за помощью к учителям по сложным вопросам.

**Ключевые слова:** учителя, развитие детей и подростков, образование, роль учителей, школа и учителя, социологический опрос.

## Introduction

The role of teachers in the development of children, adolescents and the personality in general is constantly in the field of interests of researchers from various countries. At the same time, there is an interdisciplinary approach, i.e., the teacher is the object of research by representatives of various academic fields.

The younger generation spends a significant amount of time at school, surrounded by teachers and peers and communicating with them, and Kazakhstani schoolchildren spend 24 to 39 hours (Ministry of Education and Science, 2017) per week (varies by grade), where they can improve in the context of personal development. In this process, teachers take an important role model in decision-making, the correctness and identity of their decisions (Kaplan, 2012) Conducting a study among adolescents, Negru Subtirika and others found that teachers, schools and the school environment influence internal psychological processes in the development of personality. (Negru Subtirika, 2015) The influence of school and teachers on the formation of adolescent identity can be viewed from three different angles. First, teachers and schools unintentionally impact adolescents. Second, they can intentionally impact. Third, schools and teachers can influence indirectly by creating a supportive school environment. (Monique Verhoeven, 2019) The younger generation, like the future of any country, must be socially and professionally developed and identified as a person. To ensure this development, the educational system, especially schools and teachers, have a special role to play.

In Kazakhstan, as in the rest of the world, attracting the best candidates for the teaching profession and keeping them in this profession should be a priority of educational policy. In this

direction, the “State Program for the Development of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2011 – 2020 years” (Ministry of Education and Science, 2010) and “2020 – 2025 years” (Ministry of Education and Science, 2019) were signed for the development of the education system and, in particular, support for teachers, special attention is paid to the law on the “status of a teacher”. (Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2019) “It is important to improve the quality of the teaching staff. It is necessary to strengthen the standards of basic pedagogical education, the requirements for advanced training of teachers of schools and universities. Each region must act integrated teacher training centers”, – said the President in his Address to the Nation (Nazarbayev, 2012) When choosing a teaching profession in Kazakhstan, the most important factor is altruistic-internal motivation (the second is the influence of others, the third is external motivation), which implies the socio-psychological influence of teachers on schoolchildren and society as a whole. (Irsaliyev, 2018) In addition to knowing and teaching his subject, a teacher must have a high cultural morality, deeply understand national identity, educate spiritual and moral values in the younger generation, shape the views and social outlook, and children’s attitude to life (Myrzakhanova, 2014) The laws adopted in recent years to support education and teachers instill great confidence in the development of the education sector and, subsequently, the development of the country and the nation.

It is of interest to analyze empirical data on the role of teachers in the life of Kazakhstani children and adolescents, their subjective opinions and assessments. This article presents some of the results of a sociological study conducted by the Center for Study of Public Opinion in 2017 at the request of the Republican Public Association “Baqytty Bala”

within the framework of the state grant of the NJSC “Center for Support of Civil Initiatives” with the support of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Civil Society of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

### Scientific research methodology

The main purpose of this study is to study the socio-economic situation of Kazakhstani children, their value orientations, to determine what problems and issues they are most concerned about. The objects of the study were school-age children up to 17 years old and parents of minor children, i.e., adult population with school-age children up to 17 years old inclusive.

This is a large-scale research project covering all regions of Kazakhstan, regional centers, cities of republican significance, small towns and rural settlements. The sample size is 2000 child respondents (1000 children aged 8-12, 1000 children aged 13-17) and 1000 parents. The statistical error does not exceed 2.5%. When forming the sample, a multi-stage combined approach was used using stratification (regions of the country and type of settlement), random selection (villages, streets in settlements) and systematic selection (houses and apartments). One respondent was interviewed in the household, if there are several respondents, then the selection was carried out according to the principle of the last birthday, i.e., the survey involved the household member whose birthday has already passed and was closest to the date of the survey.

In this project, an individual standardized interview was used in the form of an F2F in-person survey. A standardized interview presupposes, like formalized observation, a detailed development of the entire procedure, including the general plan of the conversation, the sequence and construction of questions, the options for possible answers. (Yadov, 1972) Methodologically, the conduct of an individual standardized interview is regulated by the main researcher of the project; interviewers cannot deviate from the set sequence of questions, answers to them, change the wording, ask additional questions.

During the implementation of the project, all ethical issues were observed, participation in the study was voluntary, based on the informed consent of the respondents. Potential survey participants were provided with all the information about the goals and objectives of the study, about the voluntary nature of participation, anonymity and confidentiality of answers. When interviewing minors, the parents or guardians of the children get acquainted with the

information about the study and confirmed their consent to the participation of children by signing a special informed consent form.

### Results and Discussion

According to the survey results, 1005 children aged 8-12 years and 1000 children aged 13-17 years old took part in the study, a total of 2005 children, the average age of the survey participants is 12.5 years, the minimum age is 8 years, the maximum age is 17 years. The sample was evenly distributed in terms of gender: 50% girls and 50% boys. The distribution by ethnicity of the respondents is close to the official statistics of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The survey participants from the number of children represent various schools (about 70% of ordinary schools, 30% of gymnasiums, lyceums, etc.), they also represent different families (80% from families with two parents and 20% from single-parent families). At the same time, the sample represents urban (59%) and rural children (41%). Most of the children surveyed (83%) have sisters or brothers, and the sample also includes children who are the only ones in the family (17%). In general, the socio-demographic characteristics of the sample indicate that children from various social categories of the Kazakh population took part in this sociological study.

In general, a significant part of Kazakhstani families (35.8%) has two children, 28% have three children, 12.5% have four children, and 7% of families have five or more children. Descriptive statistics for the indicator of the number of children in families: Mean 2.6; Standard deviation 1.2; Minimum 1; Maximum 10.

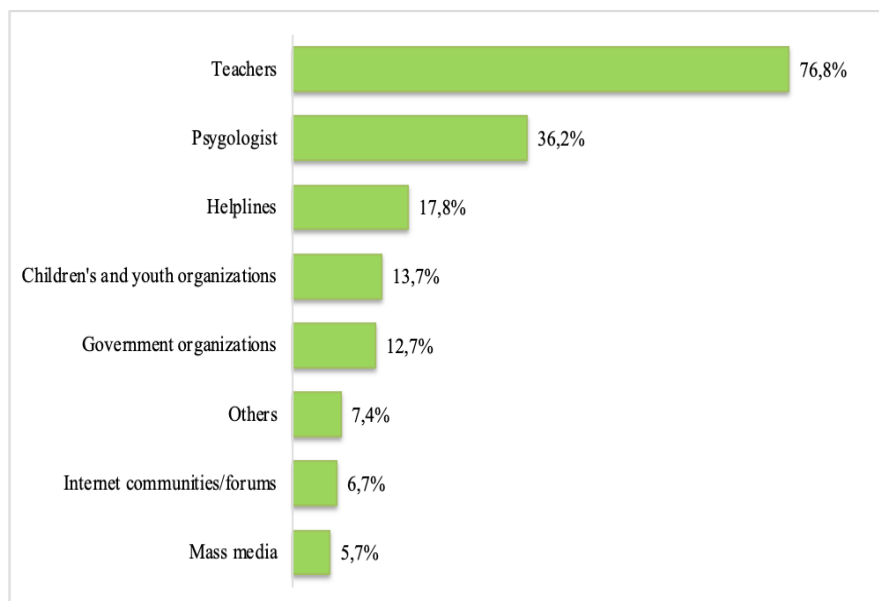
The results of the study showed that the majority of Kazakhstani children (74%) are covered by various types of additional education or extracurricular activities, i.e., visit any sections, circles, organizations. These are mainly sports sections or organizations related to active recreation (52%), circles, sections, organizations related to creativity, art (28%), circles, sections related to music (27%). The coverage of additional education was analyzed in the context of socio-demographic characteristics, statistically significant differences are observed in the context of regions of the country and age groups: children aged 8-12 more often attend various sections than children aged 13-17.

In case of problematic situations, how children protect their interests, whom they turn to for help in the first place, there is an opinion that modern children have begun to turn to Internet communities more often. To understand the above questions, the

survey participants from among the children were asked the appropriate question “If you are faced with an unfair attitude towards yourself, how do you protect your interests?” Based on the results of the answers, it turned out that a significant part of children (37%) shares the opinion that they have not faced unfair treatment of themselves. At the same time, the majority of children (63%) believe that they have faced unfair treatment of themselves. A significant part of them turn to their parents (46%). Attention is drawn to the fact that almost every fifth child (21%) turns to their teachers for help. Another 13% of children turn to friends and 11% turn to relatives, about 2% of children turn to Internet communities for help. Analysis in the context of socio-demographic characteristics showed that significant differences are observed in the context of the age groups of children: the responses “addressed to parents / guardians” and “did not encounter unfair treatment” are common among children aged 8-12 years, responses “addressed to friends”, “Appealed to the Internet communities” are much more widespread among children aged 13-17. The appeal to teachers is approximately equally widespread in both age categories of children: about 21% of children in each age category turn to teachers for help in solving their problematic issues.

It is intuitively clear that a close society, namely parents, relatives and friends, most often enjoy the trust of children, and accordingly children turn to them first of all to resolve their issues (Kolodyazhnaya, 2012) But the question arises as

to who else besides parents, friends and relatives or which organizations are trusted by children, where they prefer to turn to solve their problems. In order to determine this, the participants of the study were asked the question: “What do you think, to whom, to what organizations, except for parents, friends and relatives, children can turn to solve their problems?” As a result, the vast majority of children (77%) answered that children can turn to their teachers. At the same time, the study showed that many children are aware of the professional help of psychologists to solve certain problems, so a significant part of children (36%) said that they would turn to a psychologist. In third place in terms of prevalence are helplines, which will be used by about 18% of minors. The data distribution of the indicated question is shown in Figure 1, in descending order of frequency of responses. Among the answers “Other”, the following answers were identified: I find it difficult to answer (0.1%), receptions of political parties (0.5%), police (0.5%), to public associations / NGOs (1.2%), religious organizations (1.2%), we solve our problems ourselves (1.3%), crisis centers (2.6%). Thus, the data indicate that the majority of Kazakhstani children trust their teachers and, if necessary, turn to them for help in solving their problems. This is already another question for study, what are the problems for children, as this study has shown, often these are various experiences due to relationships with peers, due to appearance, as well as experiences due to social problems in the families of children.



**Figure 1** – Distribution of answers to the question “To whom, to what organizations (except for parents, friends and relatives) children can turn to solve their problems?”, N = 2005

Studying the involvement of children in social processes, it should be noted that mainly children are involved in activities taking place in educational institutions. In addition to the main studies, children are involved in various subbotniks (Saturdays – Voluntary, collective, unpaid work to carry out some socially useful work assignment, originally done on Saturdays), landscaping of the territory, creative, sports and educational events. Participation in these activities is both voluntary and compulsory. Thus, the survey data show that about a third of children (27%) voluntarily took part in the improvement and landscaping of yards, plots and city streets. A quarter of children (25%) helped socially vulnerable members of society (the

elderly, street children, orphans, homeless, needy people with disabilities), also helped animals, zoos and nature reserves. According to the research data obtained, it should be noted that children are more willing to help animals, since it is according to these activities that there is a significant share of voluntary participation (25%) and one of the smallest shares of forced participation, at the insistence of teachers or parents (8%). Forced participation of children, i.e., at the insistence of teachers, coaches, it is more widespread in such events as subbotniks (53%), educational talks aimed at preventing deviant behavior (43%), improvement and landscaping of yards, plots, streets (36%). The data are presented in Figure 2.

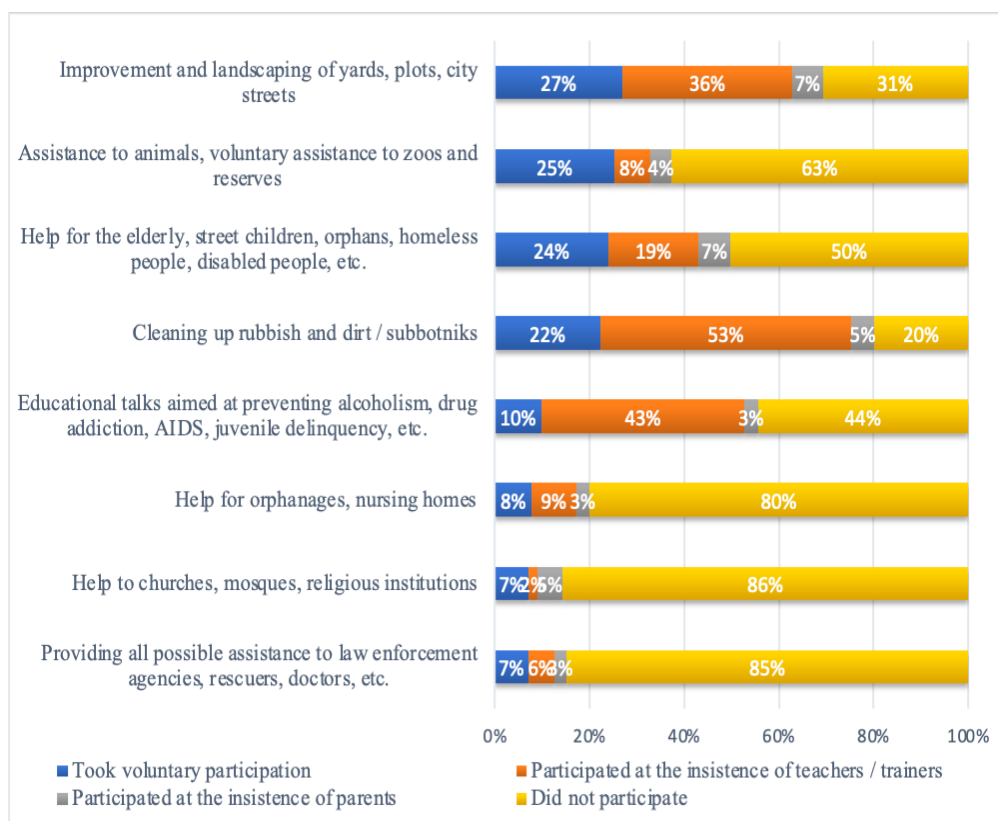


Figure 2 – Participation of children in various events / activities, N = 2005

In general, in terms of social processes, it should be noted that mostly children are involved in activities taking place in educational institutions or organized by educational institutions. Children are practically not involved in other social processes taking place outside of school, among them the following responses were noted: rallies, demonstrations, protests (May 1, May 9, parade,

protest against alcoholism) – 3%; appeals and complaints to government agencies – 1%; asked questions, expressed their opinion on the official electronic sites of local authorities / Akimat, ministries or state bodies – 0.6%.

Children spend their leisure time in different ways, and spending free time changes over the years, which was confirmed by the results of our

research: there are differences in the age categories of children 8-12 years old and 13-17 years old. Twenge and his team, in a study conducted in the United States on more than a million adolescents, showed that students in grades 8, 10, 12, who are 14, 16, 18, respectively, spend more time online than reading books and magazines. (Twenge, 2019) The older children get, the less time they spend with their parents, they sit at home and watch less TV, they read less books, and go less to various circles. Older children spend more time in gyms, on the Internet, play computer games, go to cinemas, cafes.

Studying value orientations, it should be noted that the five most important values for children included: parents (88%), health (80%), safety (47%), family and traditions (36%) and quality education (27%). The indicated values correlate with another assessment of life values, primarily those that are significant for children: “their own health and close relatives”, “family happiness”, “calm / peaceful life”, “get a quality education” and “study well”. Thus, the results obtained demonstrate that the values of the family, its well-being, health and education are common among the majority of children. In addition, attention is drawn to the fact that safety is also important for a significant part of children. The results of the survey of children showed that education is one of the five important values for them.

The primary socialization of children takes place in the family, children are first of all brought up in the family, here their attitude to various circumstances is laid, life values are formed. (Abdul Rahim Chandio, 2019) The question arises, what else, besides the family, influences the formation of children’s value orientations, their attitude to life. In order to understand this, the question was inserted into the questionnaire: “What primarily affects your attitude to life, your values?” As a result, the answers were distributed as follows: 63% of the children answered “upbringing received in the family”, 59% of the school, 39% answered “the example of parents”, 40% “friends”. Thus, the results of the survey carried out indicate that despite the expanding role of the Internet in the life of society, with its unlimited and versatile information, the worldview of children is mainly formed in the family, school, and among friends. It is also noteworthy that the school is in second place after the family in shaping the worldview of children, and the school is, first of all, teachers who implement the educational and upbringing process.

As part of this article, we will present the results of answers to a number of questions to

assess the implementation of the “Child Friendly City” initiative in the Republic of Kazakhstan. This is an international initiative implemented by the Committee for the Protection of Children’s Rights of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan with the support of the National Commission for Women Affairs and Family and Demographic Policy under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) Office in Kazakhstan. (UNICEF, 2015) Answering the questions of the section “My education”, the overwhelming majority (91-92%) of the respondents from among the children answered: “at school they teach me how to protect the environment, how to be healthy”, “at my school children are respected regardless of their religion, culture, nationality, gender”. The presented subjective assessments of children also indicate the important role of teachers in the upbringing of children; teachers cultivate responsibility and respect for each other.

### Conclusion

The survey results presented in this article indicate that the majority of children (80%) are involved in social processes at the level of subbotniks (Saturdays – Voluntary, collective, unpaid work to carry out some socially useful work assignment, originally done on Saturdays), garbage collection and environmental pollution, but most often such participation is not voluntary, but at the insistence of teachers. Thus, the study confirmed that teachers play an important role in educating responsible citizens of the country. Teachers bring up the foundations of ecological culture in children, introduce children to work and responsibility for preserving the environment.

The most influential after family (63%) is school (59%) on children’s attitudes towards life and values. As the great teacher-educator Ybyrai Altynsarin said: “the heart of the school is the teacher,” they form life values in the younger generation and bring up personalities in them. The school (59%) plays a special role in children’s attitude to life and life values. The study also confirmed that children are mainly involved in events taking place in educational institutions, where various elections, referendums, public hearings on various issues, sports and creative events are organized.

The events of 2020, namely the coronavirus pandemic, once again demonstrated the importance of institutional education and parenting, as well as the important role of teachers in this process.

It is of interest to study the role of the teacher at the present time, in the period of getting out of the situation of quarantine restrictive measures and distance learning, what are the subjective assessments of children and parents about the role

of teachers in the education and upbringing of the younger generation of Kazakhstanis. Thus, to trace the dynamics of public opinion and subjective assessments about the role of teachers in the life of the younger generation.

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