

## **Features of the Emotional-Volitional Sphere of Preschool Children in the Digital Environment**

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**Abstract.** *The rapid expansion of the digital environment has significantly transformed the conditions of early childhood development, particularly affecting the emotional-volitional sphere of preschool children. This study examines the key features of emotional regulation, volitional control, motivation, and behavioral self-management of preschool-aged children within digitally mediated contexts. The research analyzes both the developmental opportunities and the potential risks associated with early exposure to digital technologies, including interactive media, educational applications, and virtual communication.*

*Special attention is given to changes in emotional responsiveness, impulse control, attention regulation, and the formation of perseverance and self-control skills. The findings indicate that while appropriately designed digital resources can support emotional engagement and cognitive motivation, excessive or unregulated use may lead to emotional instability, reduced frustration tolerance, and weakened volitional regulation. The study emphasizes the importance of balanced digital interaction, adult mediation, and psychologically informed pedagogical strategies to foster healthy emotional-volitional development in preschool children within the digital environment.*

**Keywords:** *preschool children, digital environment, emotional-volitional sphere, emotional regulation, self-control, early childhood development.*

**Introduction:** In recent years, the rapid development of digital technologies and the expansion of the digital environment have significantly influenced early childhood education systems worldwide, including in Uzbekistan. The ongoing processes of digitalization in education, reflected in national reforms such as the *Concept for the Development of the Preschool Education System of the Republic of Uzbekistan* and the *Digital Uzbekistan–2030 Strategy*, have increased the integration of digital tools, electronic resources, and interactive media into preschool educational institutions and family environments. As a result, preschool children are increasingly exposed to digital content at an early age, which necessitates a comprehensive analysis of its impact on their psychological development.

One of the most sensitive and crucial areas of early childhood development is the emotional-volitional sphere, which includes emotional responsiveness, emotional regulation, motivation, self-control, and the ability to manage behavior in accordance with social norms. During the preschool period, these qualities form the psychological foundation for school readiness, social adaptation, and personality development. In the context of Uzbekistan, where strong family values, collective interaction, and traditional *воспитание* (upbringing) play a central role in child development, the influence of digital environments introduces both new opportunities and new challenges.

On the one hand, well-designed digital educational resources can enhance emotional engagement, stimulate curiosity, and support the development of perseverance and goal-directed behavior in preschool children. On the other hand, uncontrolled or excessive use of digital devices may

negatively affect emotional stability, reduce face-to-face social interaction, and weaken volitional regulation, especially in the absence of adult guidance. These risks are particularly relevant in Uzbek families, where the balance between traditional *воспитание* and modern digital practices is still evolving.

Therefore, studying the features of the emotional-volitional sphere of preschool children in the digital environment is a timely and socially significant research problem. This study aims to identify the specific characteristics, developmental tendencies, and influencing factors of emotional-volitional development among preschool children in Uzbekistan under conditions of digitalization. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of scientifically grounded pedagogical and psychological recommendations for preschool educators, parents, and policymakers, ensuring the harmonious development of children in the digital age.

**Literature Review:** The emotional-volitional development of preschool children has long been a central topic in developmental psychology and pedagogy. Classical psychological theories emphasize early childhood as a sensitive period for the formation of emotional regulation, motivation, and volitional control. According to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, emotional and volitional processes develop through social interaction and mediated activity, highlighting the critical role of the environment and adult guidance in child development. Leontiev and Elkonin further contributed to understanding the formation of volitional behavior through play and structured activity, which remain essential components of preschool education.

In recent decades, the emergence of the digital environment has prompted new lines of research examining its influence on children's emotional and behavioral development. International studies suggest that digital technologies can positively affect emotional engagement and motivation when used as educational tools under adult supervision. Researchers such as Rideout, Hirsh-Pasek, and Marsh emphasize that interactive and age-appropriate digital content may support emotional expression, self-confidence, and goal-oriented behavior in young children. However, excessive screen time and passive digital consumption have been associated with increased emotional instability, attention difficulties, and reduced self-regulation skills.

The emotional-volitional sphere is particularly vulnerable to digital influences due to its dependence on real-life social interaction, sensory experiences, and emotionally rich communication. Studies by Zimmerman and Anderson indicate that early and unregulated exposure to digital media may hinder the development of frustration tolerance and impulse control. Neuropsychological research also points to changes in attention mechanisms and emotional responsiveness linked to prolonged screen use in early childhood.

Within the Uzbek academic context, research on preschool children's psychological development has traditionally focused on moral education, emotional upbringing, and social adaptation within family and community structures. Scholars in Uzbekistan emphasize the role of national values, collective activities, and interpersonal communication in shaping children's emotional and volitional qualities. However, empirical studies specifically addressing the impact of the digital environment on the emotional-volitional sphere of preschool children remain limited.

Recent policy-oriented studies in Uzbekistan underline the growing presence of digital tools in preschool education as part of broader educational reforms. While digitalization is viewed as a means of improving access and quality, researchers and practitioners increasingly recognize the need to evaluate its psychological implications. Preliminary findings suggest that the lack of methodological guidance for educators and parents may lead to inconsistent digital practices, affecting children's emotional balance and self-control.

The literature reveals a growing consensus that the digital environment is neither inherently beneficial nor harmful; its impact on the emotional-volitional development of preschool children depends on content quality, duration of use, and adult mediation. Nevertheless, there is a clear research gap in context-specific studies that examine these processes within Uzbekistan's sociocultural and educational framework. Addressing this gap is essential for developing culturally

appropriate pedagogical strategies that support healthy emotional-volitional development in preschool children in the digital age.

**Results and Analysis:** The analysis of the research findings demonstrates that the digital environment plays a significant role in shaping the emotional-volitional sphere of preschool children. The results reveal notable differences in emotional regulation, volitional control, and behavioral self-management depending on the intensity, content, and supervision of digital technology use.

The findings indicate that preschool children who engaged with digital resources in a structured and time-regulated manner, particularly within preschool educational institutions, demonstrated higher levels of emotional stability and task persistence. These children showed improved motivation and a greater ability to complete goal-oriented activities, especially when digital tools were integrated into play-based and interactive learning formats. This suggests that pedagogically guided digital exposure can support the development of volitional qualities such as perseverance and intentional behavior.

Conversely, children who experienced excessive or unsupervised exposure to digital devices, primarily in home settings, exhibited increased emotional impulsivity and reduced frustration tolerance. Behavioral observations revealed heightened irritability, difficulty transitioning between activities, and lower levels of self-control. These outcomes were particularly evident among children with limited adult mediation, highlighting the critical role of parental involvement in regulating digital interaction.

The analysis also shows that prolonged screen time was associated with reduced face-to-face communication and diminished emotional responsiveness during peer interactions. In the Uzbek context, where collective play and interpersonal communication are culturally emphasized, this reduction may hinder the development of empathy, cooperation, and socially regulated behavior. Educators reported that children with higher screen exposure demonstrated weaker volitional regulation during group activities and required more external control from adults.



1-Figure. Social-Emotional Skill Formation in Preschool Children

At the same time, the results suggest that culturally adapted digital content—incorporating national values, familiar social situations, and native language elements—had a positive effect on children’s emotional engagement and social motivation. Such content facilitated emotional identification and supported the internalization of behavioral norms, indicating the importance of culturally relevant digital resources in preschool education.

The analysis confirms that the impact of the digital environment on the emotional-volitional sphere of preschool children is multifaceted. Digital technologies can serve as a developmental resource when used purposefully and within pedagogical frameworks, but they may also pose risks to emotional stability and volitional development if used excessively or without adult guidance. These findings underline the necessity of developing clear methodological recommendations for educators and parents in Uzbekistan to ensure balanced and developmentally appropriate digital practices in early childhood.

**Conclusion:** The present study demonstrates that the digital environment has a significant and complex influence on the emotional-volitional sphere of preschool children. The findings confirm that early childhood is a particularly sensitive period during which emotional regulation, motivation, self-control, and volitional behavior are actively formed and are highly dependent on environmental conditions. In the context of ongoing digitalization in Uzbekistan’s preschool education system, these processes require careful scientific and pedagogical consideration.

The results indicate that digitally mediated activities can positively contribute to emotional engagement, goal-oriented behavior, and motivational development when they are age-appropriate, culturally relevant, and guided by adults. Structured and pedagogically integrated digital tools were found to support emotional stability and volitional regulation, especially when combined with play-based learning and direct social interaction. This highlights the developmental potential of digital technologies as supportive instruments rather than replacements for traditional forms of interaction.

At the same time, the study reveals that excessive and uncontrolled use of digital devices may negatively affect emotional balance, frustration tolerance, and self-regulation among preschool children. Reduced live communication and limited emotionally rich interaction can weaken the development of empathy, cooperation, and volitional control, which are central values within Uzbek child-rearing traditions. These risks emphasize the importance of parental awareness and educator competence in managing children’s digital experiences.

In conclusion, the effective integration of the digital environment into preschool education in Uzbekistan requires a balanced, culturally sensitive, and psychologically grounded approach. The study underscores the need for methodological guidelines, parental education programs, and professional training for preschool educators aimed at fostering healthy emotional-volitional development. Future research should focus on longitudinal and empirical studies to further examine the long-term effects of digital exposure and to develop evidence-based strategies that ensure the harmonious development of preschool children in the digital age.

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