

# THE INFLUENCE OF VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES ON THE SOCIALIZATION OF CHILDREN FROM ORPHANAGES BY MEANS OF ART

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## Abstract

**Purpose of Study:** The study is aimed at substantiating theoretically and methodologically the influence of volunteer activities on the socialization of children from orphanages using art and socio-cultural rehabilitation.

**Methodology:** The study is divided into three stages, during which different methods of analysis and information collection are used. At the first stage, a preliminary analysis of secondary data from open sources is carried out. At the second stage, an analysis of the primary information received from the orphanage staff from semi-structured interviews and questionnaires developed by the authors of the study is carried out. At the third stage, conversations with children, as well as the observation during their activities and questionnaires for both the children and the volunteers, are carried out and projective methods are used.

**Main Findings:** The study has revealed a significant role and influence that volunteers and their artistic and creative activities with children have on the process of socialization of children through art. Several practical recommendations have also been developed for organizing the selection of volunteers to work in orphanages and to organize, accompany and support volunteer activities there.

**Applications of this study:** The results of the study can be used in pedagogical activities in the process of organization of leisure and extracurricular activities as additional education, both in orphanages for children with special needs and in educational institutions during the implementation of inclusive education. Besides, the results of the study can be used in the process of organization of psychological assistance and/or corrective work with children with special needs to help them socialize successfully through art.

**The novelty of the study:** The theoretical and methodological substantiation of the positive influence of volunteer activities on the socialization of children from orphanages by means of art and socio-cultural rehabilitation. It was carried out with the help of questionnaires and surveys developed by the authors of the study, analysis and assessment of the degree of volunteers' influence on the process of socialization of children with special needs, with identifying the main requirements for volunteers, practical recommendations for psychological support and support of volunteers and their work with children with special needs in orphanages.

**Keywords:** *Disabled Children, Orphans, Volunteers, Socialization, Art, Artistic and Creative Activities.*

## INTRODUCTION

The modern society aims at ensuring a decent quality of life for each member. Based on this assertion, we can talk about the relevance of the present research, which is connected to a wide range of unsolved problems in ensuring decent adaptation of children with disabilities by society and the state. Organization of social rehabilitation of children with disabilities is one of the most important tasks of modern social assistance systems. The transition from a medical to a social form of disability can be defined as a feature of the welfare state. In this regard, the importance of the value of the personality of each child, regardless of the mental and physical capabilities, as well as the need to respect the rights of such children, are worth mentioning. The appearance of a child with disabilities in the family leads to basic disorders of socialization and adaptation to life, for example, disturbances in the balance of external and internal living conditions of each family member, thereby creating a potential or actual threat to the existence and satisfaction of the basic vital needs of the child. As a result, children end up in orphanages and boarding schools. As a consequence, many children with these disabilities have unproductive socialization. Positive socialization in this context is manifested as a process of conscious construction, ordering or achieving relatively stable relations with other people and the world as a whole (Mashukova & Maksidova, 2015).

Socialization is considered in the article to be a specially organized process of education and upbringing, aimed at finding the integrity by the pupils through the integration of the personal, social and cultural spheres of their life in education. The integrity of the personality here presupposes such individual and personal characteristics as the formation of personal life values, intercultural communicative competence, tolerance of consciousness, creative self-realization, active life position, adequate life perspective, inner freedom and responsibility (Gilfanova, 2018).

*In the context of the present study*, socio-cultural rehabilitation can be defined as a means of developing a variety of cognitive skills, increasing the self-esteem of an individual, creative self-expressing and uniting individuals into a community by means of art and culture. Art and culture in this context provide the development of a variety of vital cognitive skills ([Akishina et al., 2017a](#)).

Social and cultural rehabilitation activities within an orphanage may include:

- Concerts of amateur groups;
- Classes at the craft school;
- Classes in the drawing studio;
- Classes in the clubs of embroidery, artistic knitting, sewing, sculpture;
- Exhibitions of fine arts of disabled people;
- Classes in the musical and drama group, etc.

Socio-cultural rehabilitation has a significant positive impact on children with disabilities ([Valeeva, 2012](#); [Dementeva & Starovoitova, 2010](#)). The main task of the rehabilitation activities is to familiarize children and young people with cultural, spiritual and moral values; to ensure harmonious development based on the inclusion in the world of art and culture ([Akishina et al., 2017b](#)). The approach is based on the idea of a free, harmoniously developed personality, which is focused on spiritual and moral values and strives for constant self-determination and self-expression, as well as recognition of the important role of art in the formation and development of the personality ([Akishina & Savenkova, 2019](#); [Savenkova, 2018](#)).

**The study is aimed at** substantiating theoretically and methodologically the influence of volunteer activities on the socialization of children from orphanages by means of art and socio-cultural rehabilitation.

The main goal of the state social policy of the Russian Federation concerning children with disabilities can be defined as the provision of social protection, an integral part of which is social rehabilitation. Its organization corresponds to universally recognized social rights, fixed in documents of various levels, which do not contradict each other ([Zhavoronkov, 2009](#); [Konstitutsiya Rossiiskoi Federatsii, 1993](#); [Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Russian Federation, 2014](#); The State Duma, [1995a, 1995b, 1995c; 2011, 2012, 2013](#); The President of the Russian Federation, [2012a, 2012b](#)). The above-mentioned documents are the basis for the following main directions of state social policy concerning children with disabilities: prevention of child disability, medical-social and psychological-pedagogical expertise ([Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Russian Federation, 2013](#)), rehabilitation of disabled people (medical and social), social services for children with disabilities, creation of a barrier-free environment that ensures the normal life of children.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The studies by L.I. Akatov, [V.S. Tkachenko \(2010\)](#), [T.A. Dubrovskaya et al. \(2014\)](#) consider the essence of the notion of social rehabilitation of children with disabilities, offer a detailed scheme of the social rehabilitation system and define the functions of social institutions.

The legal framework in the field of social rehabilitation of children with disabilities in the Russian Federation includes documents of different levels:

1. International acts: “Universal Declaration of Human Rights” ([United Nations General Assembly, 1948](#)); “Declaration of the Rights of the Child” ([United Nations General Assembly, 1959](#)); “Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities” ([United Nations General Assembly, 2006](#)); “Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities” ([United Nations General Assembly, 1993](#)).
2. Federal legislation of the Russian Federation in the field of social policy and social protection of disabled people, namely:
  - Constitution of the Russian Federation;
  - Federal constitutional laws, Federal laws, Codes;
  - Subordinate legislation: Russian Presidential Decrees, Russian Government Decrees, Orders of the Ministries.

One of the first international acts that addressed the issue of observance of human rights is the “Universal Declaration of Human Rights” of December 10, 1948, which became the basis for other international legal documents in the field of the protection of human rights. The declaration proclaimed social, economic and cultural rights as well as political and civil rights. The Declaration contains a historical statement in Article 1: “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights”.

The main international document representing child protection is the Convention on the Rights of the Child (adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on November 20, 1989, and ratified by the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union on June 13, 1990) ([United Nations General Assembly 1989](#)). Article 23 provides the most holistic basis for organizing social protection of the child, namely: the right of a mentally or physically disabled child to enjoy a full and decent life, in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance and facilitate the child's active participation in the community; the right of the disabled child to special care or assistance, which should be provided free of charge, whenever possible, taking into account the financial resources of the parents or others caring for the child, to ensure that the disabled child has effective access to and receives education, training, health care services, rehabilitation services, preparation for employment and recreation opportunities, which should contribute to the fullest possible social integration and individual development, including their cultural and spiritual development, which are, in their turn, the main aims of socio-rehabilitation activities.

A very significant international document in the field of protecting the rights of children with disabilities is the "Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities" ([United Nations General Assembly, 2006](#)) (adopted by the United Nations General Assembly's Resolution 61/106 on December 13, 2006). According to the Federal Law of the Russian Federation No. 46-FZ "On Ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities" of May 3, 2012, Russia ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and undertook to include all of its provisions in the legal norms, which govern legal relations in the field of social protection of children with disabilities. Article 7, concerning children with disabilities, prioritizes the interests of the child, ensuring the rights and protecting them. Article 26 is devoted to such concepts as "habilitation" and "rehabilitation". This article notes the need to develop the sphere of comprehensive rehabilitation and encourage the improvement of the quality of social services and programmes.

The fundamental legislative document in Russia is the Constitution of the Russian Federation. Article 19 guarantees the equality of human and civil rights and freedoms regardless of sex, race, nationality, language, origin, material and official status, place of residence, attitude to religion, convictions, membership of public associations, or other circumstances. This means that the health condition cannot serve as a basis for any discrimination.

Article 7 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation is of the fundamental importance for the development of the system of social protection of the population. According to it, the Russian Federation is a social state, which provides support for the family, maternity, fatherhood and childhood, to the disabled and elderly citizens; where the system of social services develops and state pensions, allowances and other social security guarantees are established. Following part 1 of Article 39 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, everyone is guaranteed social security in case of disability.

After the adoption of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, these rights were enshrined in the Family Code of the Russian Federation ([The State Duma, 1995c](#)), in the Federal law "On the fundamentals of protection of the public health", as well as in the Federal Law "On education in the Russian Federation" ([The State Duma, 2012](#)), in the Federal Law "About bases of social servicing of citizens in the Russian Federation" ([The State Duma, 2013](#)), in the Federal Law "On basic guarantees of the rights of the child in the Russian Federation" and others.

Special attention should be paid to the Federal Law No. 124-FZ "On basic guarantees of the rights of the child in the Russian Federation" of July 24, 1998, which establishes the basic guarantees of the rights and legitimate interests of the child, provided by the Constitution of the Russian Federation, to create legal, socio-economic conditions for the realization of the rights and legitimate interests of the child.

"The rights and freedoms of a person and a citizen belong to a child from birth and are guaranteed by the state following the Constitution of the Russian Federation, generally recognized principles and norms of international law, international treaties of the Russian Federation, the present Federal Law, the Family Code of the Russian Federation and other regulatory legal acts of the Russian Federation" ([The State Duma, 1998](#)).

The Federal Law of the Russian Federation "About social protection of disabled people in the Russian Federation", adopted in 1995([The State Duma, 1995a](#)), was the first to declare the need for the creation and development of a state service for medical and social examination and a state service for the rehabilitation of disabled people. This law is the main normative act aimed at comprehensive regulation of relations in the field of social protection of people with disabilities. It establishes the organizational, legal and theoretical foundations of social protection of disabled people; includes a system of guarantees and benefits, provided to citizens; establishes the legal status of public associations of disabled people; distinguishes between the powers of government bodies; consolidates the competence of public service bodies of the medical and social examination and rehabilitation.

The Law defines the following provisions:

- The concepts of "disabled person" and "activity restrictions" (Article 1), "social protection of a disabled person" (Article 2), "medical and social examination" (Article 7), "rehabilitation of disabled people" (Article 9);
- The competence of federal bodies of the government in social protection of disabled people (Articles 4, 5);

- The competence of the federal institutions of medical and social examination (Article 8);
- The procedure of organizing and financing the rehabilitation of disabled people (Art. 9-11.1);
- The procedure of providing medical care to disabled people (Article 13);
- The procedure of providing easy access of disabled people to information (Article 14);
- The procedure of providing easy access of disabled people to social infrastructure facilities (Articles 15, 16).

In subsequent years, in pursuance of the above-mentioned Federal Law, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Russian Federation prepared several normative and methodological documents regulating the organization and activities of the state service for the rehabilitation of disabled people.

The legal framework in the field of organizing social and rehabilitation activities is the Federal Law No. 442-FZ “On bases of social servicing of citizens in the Russian Federation” of December 28, 2013.

This Federal Law establishes:

- 1) Legal, organizational and economic basis of social services for citizens of the Russian Federation;
- 2) The powers of the federal bodies of the Russian Federation in the field of social services for citizens;
- 3) The rights and obligations of recipients of social services;
- 4) The rights and obligations of social service providers.

Thus, since January 1, 2015, this Law has been transformed and some innovations have been made. Following the Federal Law, the list of providers of social services expands, social services to the population will be provided by state institutions along with non-state ones: commercial and non-profit organizations, individual entrepreneurs. In the field of social services for the population, the prevention and an individual approach are emphasized. A new element in the system of social services becomes “social support”, the essence of which is to assist citizens through interdepartmental cooperation in obtaining various types of services (Article 28): legal, medical, psychological, pedagogical, as well as social assistance, which is not related to social services.

The form of an individual rehabilitation program for a disabled person, issued by the Federal institutions of medical and social examination, which was approved by the Order No. 379n of the Ministry of Health on August 4, 2008, includes several types of social rehabilitation.

The list of social rehabilitation measures following the Order No. 379 of the Ministry of Health of the Russian Federation “On approval of the forms of an individual rehabilitation program for a disabled person, an individual rehabilitation program for a disabled child, issued by federal state institutions of medical and social examination, the procedure of their development and implementation” of August 4, 2008: 1) social and environmental rehabilitation; 2) social and educational rehabilitation; 3) social and psychological rehabilitation; 4) socio-cultural rehabilitation; 5) social adaptation; 6) physical culture and recreation activities and sports, aimed at restoring the social status of a citizen with disabilities. The initial legal basis for starting rehabilitation is the presence of a certificate of recognition of a child as a disabled person, issued by the state service of medical and social examination following the Russian Government Decree No. 95 of 20 February 2006 on means and conditions of recognition of a person as a person with disabilities ([Government of the Russian Federation 2006](#)).

The Order of the Government of the Russian Federation No. 2347-r of December 30, 2005, came into force on January 11, 2006. It approved the Federal list of rehabilitation measures, technical means of rehabilitation and services provided to a disabled person free of charge, including measures for restorative therapy and reconstructive surgery, sanatorium resort treatment, prosthetics, orthotics, provision of hearing aids, provision of technical means of rehabilitation (support canes, crutches, wheelchairs, etc.).

To implement the state policy in the field of social protection of disabled people, the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation No. 1201 of August 21, 2012, a committee for disabled people was created in Russia. According to the Decree, the main tasks of the committee are to prepare proposals for the formation and implementation of state policy concerning persons with disabilities; to determine the methods, forms and stages of its implementation; to prepare proposals for the development of the main directions for improving the legislation of the Russian Federation in the field of providing disabled people with equal opportunities with other citizens in terms of constitutional rights and freedoms, social security for disabled people and establishing measures of state support for them based on an analysis of the state of affairs and generalization of the practice of applying the legislation of the Russian Federation in this area.

The main aims of social rehabilitation can be characterized as follows. Firstly, the restoration of the social status and social position of the subject. Secondly, the achievement by the subject of a certain level of social, material and spiritual independence. Thirdly, an increase in the level of social adaptation of the subject to the new conditions of life.

Innovative and traditional psychological-pedagogical and social-pedagogical technologies with various elements of art (Akishina et al., 2017c; 2017d) and artistic and creative activity (Vasyakin et al., 2015) are used the present study.

## METHODS

In the study presented in the article, we tested the theory that the presence of volunteer activities (people with different education, including non-specialized ones, of different age and with different experience, who are not constantly present in the institution) positively affects the development of all spheres of the personality and that in the presence of volunteers, there is an improvement in children's development (Dementeva, 2012).

The study includes three stages (the results from 2016-2020):

1. Desk research, aimed at carrying out a preliminary analysis of secondary data from open sources and creating a final program for collecting and analysing primary data within the field research.
2. Qualitative research, aimed at forming conclusions and recommendations based on the analysis of primary information received from the orphanage staff with the help of semi-structured interviews and questionnaires.
3. Quantitative study, aimed at understanding the level of communicative and other vital skills of children from the orphanage with the help of conversation, observation, questionnaires and projective methods.
4. Formation of guidelines for the application of the results obtained in practice.

The questionnaire included the following personality development factors:

- General activity,
- The sphere of will,
- The sphere of emotions,
- The sphere of cognition,
- The sphere of communication,
- The level of anxiety.

The combination of these indicators can be called the level of socialization. Thus, we can say that the study tested the hypothesis that the presence of volunteer activities (people with different education, including non-specialized ones, of different age and with different experience, who are not constantly present in the institution) positively affects the development of all spheres of the personality and that in the presence of volunteers, there is an improvement in children's development.

However, it is important to note that the socialization of children with disabilities has significant differences from a similar process in normal and typical children. The organization of this process for children with special needs includes the creation of special conditions that provide additional opportunities for the development of children with disabilities and their mastering and internalization of norms, rules of behaviour and values of society. In this regard, it is important to create necessary conditions for communication and contact with as many people as possible and collaborative activities. Besides, it is necessary to take into account that the result of the activity of children with disabilities, the possibility of presenting it and receiving feedback from society in the broadest sense of the word is also important for the socialization process.

Creative activity meets all these requirements (Akishina, 2017). It contains a huge number of forms, methods and ways of working, this allows taking into account the children's characteristics, their wishes and abilities. Creative activity allows reaching the maximum number of children, creating conditions for their interaction, group creativity and co-creation and attracting other people to these processes. It contributes to the creative and personal development of children, their creative realization. The product of creativity is a reflection of the child's inner world, experience, dreams and hopes. This is the child's creative self-expression. Also, the nature of some nosologies and limitations does not allow children to learn and communicate with other children, and creativity becomes the only possible way to interact with the world.

Yet, it is necessary to create special conditions for children with special needs that will contribute to their creativity and socialization. Requirements involve rooms, inventory, organization and implementation of such classes. However, one of the necessary conditions for socialization, in our opinion, is the participation and assistance of volunteers in the work of creative studios and circles for children with special needs. This need appeared due to several significant factors.

Firstly, as a rule, such volunteers are typical representatives of our society; therefore, they are bearers of the values, norms and rules of behaviour adopted in our society. They bring all this to classes, demonstrate to children who become familiar with these standards and, in the end, they adopt them and begin to use in everyday life.

Secondly, these are people with whom the children were not previously familiar. This fact encourages children to communicate, thus they master new communicative skills and abilities and improve the existing ones.

Thirdly, they help children in creative work, if the latter cannot do something if they did not understand or did not hear the teacher’s explanations. This allows every child to participate in creative activities and to create a piece of work.

Fourthly, volunteers often are that kind of people who are the first to give positive feedback and to appreciate the children’s creativity and work.

It is also worth mentioning that the degree of participation of volunteers in creative activities depends on the type of this activity, for example, the volunteer can either participate in dance or help to sculpt and decorate. Not every person can and wants to be a volunteer and to help children with disabilities. In this regard, it seems important to us to answer several questions:

1. Why do people volunteer?
2. What are the requirements for volunteers who work with children with disabilities?
3. What influence do volunteers have on the process of socialization of children with disabilities?

To find the answer to the first question, surveyed volunteers who work in inclusive dance groups and participated either in the Inclusive Dance Festival or in its organization in 2018. The festival was organized by the autonomous non-profit organization the Centre for Sociocultural Animation “Oduhotvorenje”. In total, 243 people were interviewed.

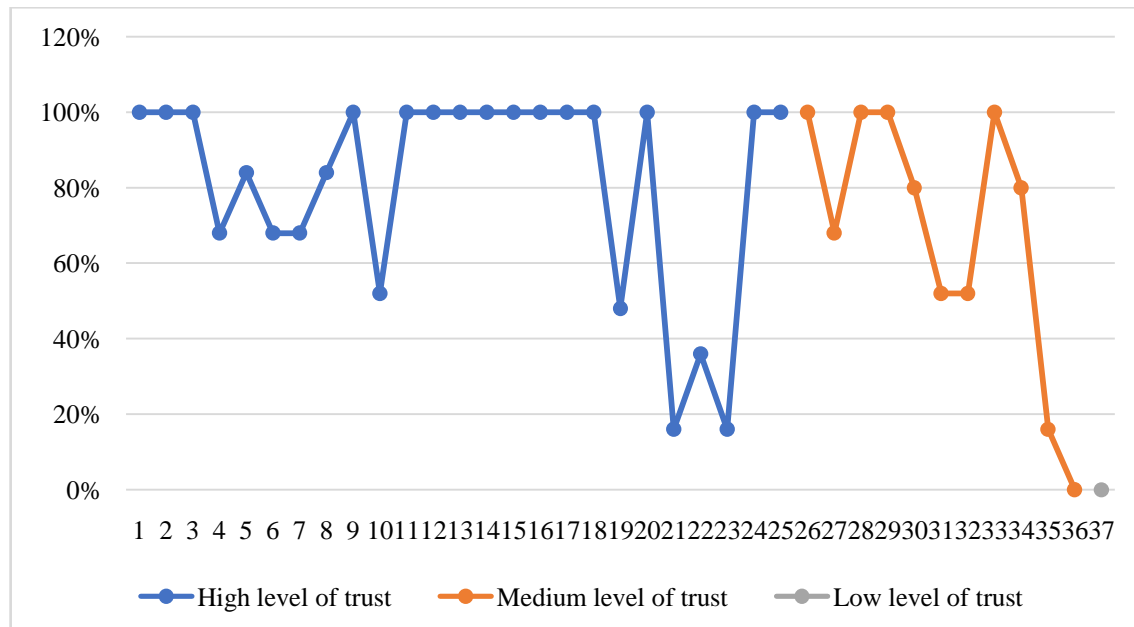
## RESULTS

A survey conducted among orphanage staff about the influence of volunteer activities on the process of socialization of children with special needs by means of art gave the following results (Table 1).

**Table 1:**The percentage of the changes noted by the respondents

<b>General activity</b>	16%
<b>The sphere of will</b>	16%
<b>The sphere of emotions</b>	16%
<b>The sphere of cognition</b>	16%
<b>The sphere of communication</b>	16%
<b>The level of anxiety</b>	20%

The respondent’s number and the noted percentage of changes are shown in the graph in Figure 1.



**Figure 1:**The percentage of the changes noted by the respondents

Thus, there appears the regularity. In general, workers, who we have more reasons to trust, agree that volunteer activities have a positive effect on key factors of children’s personal development. In particular, workers, whose main activity is not just staying with children and caregiving, but psychological and pedagogical work, fully confirm the presence of positive changes in children.

It is also important to note that not all the workers (especially those who were at the end of the list in terms of indicators) fully understood what was meant by the above-mentioned indicators that we asked about. It should also be taken into consideration that in any case, the workers understood this subjectively. Before conducting the survey, the employees were explained what is meant by each indicator, but the survey took place in a working environment, when there is little time to think and to analyse the impressions of the volunteer work. Also, there are difficulties in the correct understanding of some indicators. For example, the “General activity” indicator can be understood incorrectly, taking into account the personal characteristics of the children from the orphanage. As many children, due to their physiological and psychological characteristics, are physically and psychologically disinhibited, this indicator could be perceived incorrectly. Another example is “The sphere of communication”, the development of which is not easy to assess, since many children are unable either physically to speak at all or to improve their ability to speak. On the other hand, such indicators as “The sphere of will” and “The level of anxiety” were shown quite clear. The best examples of this were the two girls with “Mowgli syndrome”, as there was a clear improvement in their development. There is also an aspect of the negative attitude of the orphanage staff towards volunteering in general, and there are several reasons for this. The main one is that the workers lose their authority after active interaction between children and volunteers. Also, after the abundance and differentiation of volunteer activities, it is very difficult for the workers to interest children.

A survey conducted among volunteers, who work with children with special needs in inclusive dance groups and participated in either the Inclusive Dance Festival or in its organization in 2018, gave the following results (only the answers that were mentioned in more than 50% of questionnaires are presented):

1. The qualities that are necessary for working as a volunteer are kindness (75%), patience (63%) and responsibility (48%).
2. The qualities that are not compatible with volunteer work are anger (80%) and irritability (61%).
3. The characteristics of volunteers and/or their work are assistance to people (75%) and benevolence (43%).
4. What would you like to do, who would you like to help? People with disabilities (67%).
5. Why do people volunteer? Due to the desire to do good (84%).
6. What knowledge and skills do volunteers need? Psychological (77%), communicative (79%).
7. What must volunteers be able to do? Communicate (93%).
8. What would you like to learn? Psychology, conflict management (68%).
9. What bonuses do you expect from being a volunteer? None (58%).

Thus, we can see that volunteers are selfless, active, kind people, who want to benefit people.

However, these are quite general characteristics that are difficult to measure with any instrument. This is one of the main difficulties in searching for volunteers to work with children with special needs. Although most people want to help mainly people with disabilities, in practice, not many of them are ready to do it ([Vasyakin & Berezhnaya, 2018](#)).

The results of the observations carried out in 2017-2019 is that only 1-2 out of 10 volunteers, who were involved in work in various studios and clubs, remained there for a long time. Since no existing tools, tests, interviews, etc. can make it possible to check volunteers at the beginning of their work for their readiness for long-term work, the only correct decision is to gradually include them in volunteer activities, under the guidance of more experienced volunteers or teachers ([Kholostova & Dementeva, 2006](#)).

Psychological and pedagogical support of volunteer activities is also necessary to help in difficult situations, resolve contradictions, prevent volunteers from emotional burnout, ensure their need to acquire new knowledge in the field of psychology, successful communications, etc.

## DISCUSSION

The aforementioned allows us to come to the following conclusion: there are positive changes, which were stable during the observation of the children. We cannot guarantee that these results are long-lasting, but we have enough reasons to recommend volunteering considering it to be a positive factor in the socialization of children from orphanages. This is also confirmed by several Russian researchers, such as [A.D. Adamova \(2018\)](#), [Yu.V. Asievich \(2015\)](#), [V.A. Borodina \(2017\)](#), who studied the influence of volunteer activity when working with children with special needs.

As a result of disability, a child experiences difficulties of various kinds: physical, psychological, social and environmental, informational and economic. This range of problems forms a kind of a barrier, which, in its turn, prevents children from integration and positive adaptation into the system of social relations. The studies by N.F. Basov ([2012](#); [2015](#)), [I.A. Gilfanova \(2018\)](#), [I.V. Dombrovskaya \(2019\)](#), [O.V. Krasutskaya \(2019\)](#) consider the problem of creating a barrier-free environment and the need for its creation ([Klyukina, 2016](#)). The state social policy of the Russian Federation defines social rehabilitation as the main element of social support for children with disabilities. Social and rehabilitation

activities include a set of measures aimed at removing obstacles through the formation and restoration of social skills necessary for the successful socialization of the child ([Government of the Russian Federation, 2005](#)).

Social service centres, orphanages and boarding schools organize the work with children with disabilities in the Departments of Social and Pedagogical Rehabilitation. The implementation of measures for social and rehabilitation activities is designed according to the individual rehabilitation program and the resources of the institution ([Kholostova, 2013](#)). The individual rehabilitation program is the main mechanism that regulates the child's need for certain services. The rehabilitation activities are determined by the most significant factors: the psychological and physical characteristics of the child with disabilities, the rehabilitation potential, the achievability of the goal, the availability of the necessary facilities for the implementation of these activities ([Lavrov et al., 2010](#)). The role of a social worker in the organization of social rehabilitation is dominant and comprehensive. Throughout the entire period of social rehabilitation, the specialist accompanies both the child and the family. In the process of implementing rehabilitation measures, the social worker tries to involve family members (if there are any) to increase the effectiveness of work on child development ([Pavlenok & Rudneva, 2009](#)). The success depends on the worker's actions and attitude towards the child. If the child is not desired in the family and the needs for affection, love, emotional contact are not satisfied, if the child experiences internal anxiety, then all this delays the development of the child's personality. For the child's normal mental development, the love of the parents, a calm atmosphere in the family and a benevolent attitude are needed. The complex character of social rehabilitation measures determines the need for interdepartmental cooperation with institutions and organizations. The program of interdepartmental cooperation ensures the complex and highly specialized character of the provision of social rehabilitation services ([Rudenko & Samygin, 2013](#)).

It is important to mention that according to modern studies, the effectiveness of socialization and socio-cultural rehabilitation of children with special needs in orphanages by means of art largely depends on the participation of the parents (if there are any), volunteers and rehabilitation activities specialists. It also depends on the organization of a complex interdisciplinary work of specialists, who interact constantly throughout the entire rehabilitation process. This aspect is reflected in the works by [S.V. Makarova \(2018\)](#) and M.V. Firsov ([2011](#); [2012a](#); [2012b](#)). This fact is fully confirmed in our research.

In this regard, it is important to note some aspects of the work of volunteers with children with special needs, which, in our opinion, are the main ones in the selection of volunteers and correcting their work.

1. Benevolence, positive attitude. First of all, this is important because, as a rule, children with special needs are very sensitive, emotionally incontinent and empathic. Moreover, this is true both for children with saved and unsaved intelligence. They feel very well the attitude and mood of the person who communicates with them, they can adopt the emotional state of their partner in the activity, they can feel an urgent need for positive stimulation and emotional support. This quality of volunteers is manifested in the mood in which they come to classes, in the way they treat the children, the level of their involvement in activities and the level of a positive effect on the mood and work of children from their presence.
2. Absence of disgust. Work with children with different health disabilities may include a variety of actions, such as help in self-service, cleaning after classes, etc. This quality can be observed in the classroom and it serves as a guide for choosing a volunteer for each specific child.
3. Punctuality, reliability. Children with special needs get very attached, used to people, a certain routine, actions. The permanence and habitual course of events serve for them as a guarantee of stability, tranquillity and the absence of anxiety. On the contrary, the change of people causes anxiety and nervousness, up to the refusal of activity. Therefore, ideally, the volunteer should be permanent and always come on time. One volunteer should be assigned to a particular group, lesson and/or child. Also, this quality is important if the character of creative activity (dancing, for example) requires additional skills and time for additional training of the volunteer.
4. Availability of special kind of knowledge. This parameter is very important if creative activities require more or less professional skills in the field of fine arts, choreography or music. In such cases, as a rule, volunteers are selected among students or graduates of special art education institutions.
5. Learning ability, creativity, stress resistance. These qualities are necessary because there are often abnormal situations in the classroom that need to be solved quickly and without much excitement among the children.

The obtained data are confirmed by several modern studies of volunteer activity, such as those by [A.I. Bushueva \(2016\)](#), [E.N. Dorofeeva \(2018\)](#), [G.I. Efremova \(2016\)](#) and [E.V. Krutitskaya \(2015\)](#). However, it is important to remember that despite all the positive results of our research, volunteers are a risk factor for children with special needs who live in orphanages ([Semikin et al., 2016](#)). It can be explained by the fact that volunteers did not undergo special training to work with such children, they often have a fragmentary understanding of it, they may not have the necessary qualities for such work, etc.

Therefore, a careful selection of volunteers who will work with children with special needs in orphanages and control over their activities are required to guarantee the safety of children. However, it should be noted that even a careful preliminary selection in the form of an interview and/or a questionnaire cannot give an unambiguous answer whether



this volunteer will cope with it. As a result, it is necessary to organize and monitor from time to time the effectiveness of volunteer work and participation in the artistic and creative activities with children with special needs. The need for such measures is also mentioned in the research conducted by modern Russian authors, such as [M.Kh. Mashukova \(2015\)](#), [N.A. Novikova \(2016\)](#) and [M.G. Podsekaeva \(2019\)](#).

In our work, we asked teachers to keep a journal where they wrote down their observations and comments on volunteers and their work. The results of these observations were the identified most important aspects of the volunteers' work, as well as monitoring their activities and quick assistance in overcoming difficulties.

To organize high-quality volunteer work, prevent them from emotional burnout, give psychological support and constantly improve their professional level, it is necessary to organize, in addition to monitoring, their attendance at classes on the basics of social rehabilitation and various creative activities, as well as attendance in psychological support groups for the sake of exchange of experience. Such events should be permanent and offer up-to-date information on modern methods and ways of rehabilitation work with children with disabilities and their socialization, the content of creative activities with them and opportunities to expand their creative potential ([Olesina & Radomskaya, 2017](#)).

Psychological support of volunteers can be carried out both in groups and individually, either according to a pre-planned schedule or on request of volunteers. In this regard, it is important to provide volunteers with all kinds of informational, psychological and other support, since the efficiency of their directly depends on it.

## CONCLUSION

The results of the study allow us to draw the following conclusions:

1. All the stages of the research corresponded its aim, namely, to substantiate theoretically and methodologically the influence of volunteer activities on the socialization of children from orphanages by means of art and socio-cultural rehabilitation.

At the first stage of the study, a preliminary analysis of secondary data from open sources was carried out, based on which the final program for the collecting and analysing primary data within the field study was formed.

At the second stage of the qualitative research, several practical conclusions and recommendations were formed based on the analysis of the primary information received from the orphanage staff. To collect this information, questionnaires were developed; direct and semi-structured interviews with the orphanage staff were conducted. All the conclusions and recommendations made at this stage are of great practical value, namely, unequivocal confirmation of the positive influence of volunteer activity on the process of socialization of children with disabilities from orphanages by means of art. The existing difficulties in assessing the work of volunteers, the subjectivity of such an assessment, as well as measures to overcome arising problems are indicated.

At the third stage of the quantitative study, the levels of communicative and other vital skills of children from the orphanage and the dynamics of their development were assessed with the help of specially selected methods for this study, as well as conversations, observation, projective methods and questionnaires. All the surveyed orphanage workers noted an increased level of these skills, which has a positive effect on their socialization in general.

2. As a result, the study revealed a significant role and influence of creativity, artistic and creative activities on the process of socialization of children with special needs. It also proved the positive influence of volunteers and their creative activities with children with disabilities on the above-mentioned process.
3. A simultaneous study of the personal characteristics required to participate in volunteer work helped to identify the most significant qualities, which, in turn, allows us to formulate fairly clear criteria for selecting volunteers among potential applicants. This will help to avoid "random" people in this socially significant activity and to protect children with disabilities from possible harm.

Besides, within this part of the study, practical recommendations were developed and tested for accompanying and supporting volunteers in their activities. This makes it possible to improve the quality of their work and to increase the effectiveness of their artistic and creative activities with children. Thus, it has a positive effect on the process of socialization of children with disabilities and the development of their vital skills and abilities.

The expectations of the most volunteers from participating in such work were identified, which makes it possible to better understand the motivation of people who work as volunteers. Thus, for example, not all of them are ready to help and work with people with disabilities. In our opinion, it is also an important conclusion of the study, since it indicates the need to consider this factor to be fundamental when selecting volunteers to work with children with disabilities in an orphanage.

Thus, it can be argued that the aim of the study, which was to substantiate theoretically and methodologically the influence of volunteer activities on the socialization of children from orphanages by means of art and socio-cultural

rehabilitation, was fully achieved. The study was carried out following the tasks formulated at each stage and the program for collecting and processing the received data.

We managed to substantiate and prove the positive influence of volunteers' participation in the artistic and creative activities of children with disabilities on the process of their socialization by means of art. Besides, we managed to substantiate the need for a purposeful organization of the creative activity of the children from orphanages and volunteers and the work of volunteers in general.

### RESEARCH LIMITATION AND PERSPECTIVES

The materials of the article are of practical value and can be demanded in social service institutions and socio-cultural centres, when organizing work on socialization and socio-cultural rehabilitation of children with disabilities by means of art.

The research methods and the questionnaires developed by us can be used by organizations, which carry out volunteer activities and/or support volunteers and their work.

Since the study on the influence of volunteer activity on the socialization of children with special needs in an orphanage by means of art was carried out based on one social institution, in the future it would be possible to expand the number of social and educational organizations participating in the study.

The results of the study can be used in the process of organizing the interaction between teachers of social and educational institutions and volunteers; in monitoring the activities of volunteers, correcting their activities, and giving psychological and methodological support.

In our opinion, regular monitoring of volunteer activities is also worth organizing to identify and clarify the most important qualities for working as a volunteer with children with special needs, as well as to develop measures of the necessary psychological, social, methodological and informational support for their activities.

### AUTHORS CONTRIBUTION

M.S. Berezhnaya determined the aim of the present study and developed the methodology, carried out a preliminary analysis of secondary data from open sources and formed a final program for collecting and analysing primary data within the field study, interviewed children, organized and conducted a study using projective methods, organized observation, conducted questioning of staff of the orphanage, developed practical recommendations, developed original questionnaires for interviewing the orphanage staff, approximate structures for interviews and conversations with children. Wrote the following sections of the article: Introduction, Literature review, Results and Discussion.

E.V. Mikhailina organized and surveyed volunteers who work in inclusive dance groups and participated either in the Inclusive Dance Festival or in its organization in 2018, developed the questionnaire, processed the mentioned questionnaires and summarized the results of this section of the study, presented the quantitative results of the questionnaire, developed methods of monitoring the activities of volunteers, measures of psychological and methodological support for volunteers and recommendations for organizing the selection of volunteers and monitoring their activities. E.V. Mikhailina took part in writing the following sections of this article: Methods, Results, Discussion and Research limitations and perspectives.

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