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**FOLK PEDAGOGY TO PROMOTE PERSONALITY**  
**DEVELOPMENT**

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**Abstract**

The paper presents theoretical and practical insights into personality development facilitated by folk pedagogy. The authors emphasize that, irrespective of a community, personality development is ensured by ethnic education that promotes human creative and cultural values and ideals including attitude to work, family and others. The paper provides some theoretical and empirical findings indicating that folk traditions are crucial in shaping and training the younger generation. Based on questionnaires, the authors evaluated to what extent teachers know the traditions and customs of their people, and compared different ethnoeducational aspects mastered by urban and rural school teachers. The paper deals with theoretical aspects embracing socio-historical background to folk pedagogy; defines “culture” as a historically determined level of society, creative forces and abilities of a person, expressed in various types and forms of human life – in their relationships and in material and spiritual values they create. The paper points up that folk pedagogy not only creates an ideal that every person should strive for, but also determines the most important conditions enabling them to achieve this goal: a person becomes strong, smart, brave as long as he, once disciplined by adversity, learns to overcome difficulties, develops endurance and perseverance.

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## 1. Introduction

Family is the nucleus of any national education system. The establishment and development of national education systems is rooted in far past. It is family-oriented ethnic education that most vividly portrays spiritual, moral wealth of the population, ideals of the good and beauty, moral and aesthetic relationship to the world around – ranging from attitudes to the family, the clan as the closest environment of a person fastened by family bonds to attitudes to ethnos and inter-ethnic relations. “A person has a future if they have a good sense of the family” (Arsaliev, 1998, p. 15).

No foreseeable future can be imagined without a family either. Therefore, family at large and family-oriented education of the younger generation at all times have been given close attention by advanced social thought represented by scholars, from the most ancient philosophers to modern reformers. Family was perceived as a source, a primary contributor to the national culture inherited from generation to generation for many centuries, and a necessary condition for personal socialization.

Based on the suggestion that education is an eternal category the authors turned to the historical experience behind education. It makes it natural and predictable to recognize some eternal values existing in human pedagogical experience.

Pedagogical values of any nation are of a global nature. They are eternal and universal. Meanwhile, each nation has a national-ethnic identity.

At present, it is getting increasingly relevant to ensure the continuity of personal education provided by educational institutions, family and ethnic environment through folk pedagogy. It is important for the development of ethnic mindset in the younger generations, the development of love for the native people, and citizenship.

Subsequent upon the fact that any family of whatsoever nation can have a lot in common, special, and singular, we can assert that Chechen folk pedagogy also has its own specific family education.

Nowadays, it is not accidental to appeal to your origins, to folk pedagogy. One era turning to another, a radical overhaul of current relations between nations, massive migration of the population, conflicts arising in different corners of an immense country – all this forces people to look back, turn to their origins, customs, traditions, and folk culture. All this, accepted, based on the deep experience of hundreds of generations, comes and goes.

Before talking about the traditional pedagogical culture, let us define its essential characteristics.

The concept of culture encompasses many shades of meaning. If culture as a whole is a general characteristic of a person’s life and any community, up to humanity, then traditional culture is viewed as some established ways of regulating material and spiritual life within a relatively closed social or ethnic community.

Traditional culture in the ancient (tribal) world is primarily associated with the natural life of man, with his attitude to nature that he entirely depended upon. Community was another significant feature of traditional culture. Both naturalness and community were based on constantly consolidated adherence of people to tradition.

A system based on tradition provides those who support it with security. A person following tradition gets a sense of ownership and, therefore, endorsement.

At each historical stage, culture reflects, in a traditional manner, ideas and views (from myths, taboos to methodology), people's attitudes to the world around and to each other, serving to educate a new generation.

Traditions serve as public attitudes, values, ideas, norms of behavior, customs and rituals, etc. Obviously, customs and rituals are the most stereotypical varieties of traditions.

Traditions have a stable set of features like lifetime; ability to transplant, i.e. to travel through time and space, from one generation to another, remaining largely untouched; frequency, i.e. certain forms of relations kept happening for a certain time, got hardwired in people's habits, thus becoming traditional. Once repeated several times, traditional actions acquire a certain pedagogical power. Doing the same actions in various manners one does a kind of moral exercise, which creates the conditions enabling the development of moral habits.

Efforts to preserve, strengthen and develop folk customs and traditions, to transfer industrial, spiritual, and pedagogical experience accumulated by older generations to the growing generations, have always been central in education.

The authors share the statement (Sukhanova, 1976) that a system of traditions being established alongside customs marked the start of folk pedagogy as a conscious, purposeful activity to develop in young generations those spiritual and physical qualities that were called upon by the living conditions of the population.

A pedagogical aspect of studying folk traditions is traced in studies (Arsaliev, 1998; Volkov, 1974), etc. that deal with pedagogical practices of people based on their traditions and customs of education. These publications are beneficial in that they are not only concerned with traditions and their role in the education of an individual, but also with some possible ways to promote them in the educational process in modern conditions.

Based on the literature, tradition (from the Latin *traditio* – transmission, legend) comprises historically shaped, transferred from one generation to another and preserved by public opinion for a long time elements of social and cultural heritage; custom, established order in day-to-day living; the most generalized norms of behavior and principles of human relations; certain social attitudes, values, ideas, customs, rituals; samples of culture and, above all, methods of activity and behavior; fixed in a peculiar, durable and generally accepted form, a steadily repeating element of relations between people, activity, conscience, feelings, which has become generally accepted.

Consequently, folk traditions (including family traditions) are referred to as a universal construct that affects a wide range of material and spiritual phenomena.

The most significant and most effective feature of folk pedagogy is its being inextricably intertwined with life. This is an index of its vitality, socializing significance. Socialization in its most general form is nothing more than personality development under the influence of the surrounding society, culture, and social role acquired by an individual. Folk pedagogy is a part of history, people's viewpoints on children's spiritual and moral education, pedagogical expertise absorbed during historical development of mankind. This expertise cannot be ignored. The traditional culture of education is everything that is directly related to education, including even far-reaching associations.

Traditional pedagogical culture is that sphere of the material and spiritual life led by an ethnic group, which is directly and directly related to educating the younger generation. It includes a set of ideas and techniques for preparing the younger generation for life, traditions and rituals governing child rearing, feeding rules and recipes for baby food, children's household items (cradle, clothes, toys), children's folklore, lullabies and play songs, traditional children's and youth holidays, various forms of national competitions, advice to a young mother and behests of ancestors to descendants, sports and other competitions involving adolescents, their initiation into "maturity", labor duties of children.

The traditional pedagogical culture is based on folk pedagogy that is considered as a set of empirical knowledge, moral and aesthetic views, ideas, information and methods for teaching and educating the growing generation, familiarizing it with social life and production.

The traditional educational culture is a sphere between culture and civilization, being a part of them, which ensures the effectiveness of their mutually compensatory functions. Traditional culture has particular means for ensuring the viability of practices, skills, etc., the transfer, through the generations, of technology, ideas and values. It reasonably ratchets down a need to start from scratch – it becomes the hallmark of the prudent behavior exhibited by an ethnos in history.

Traditional pedagogy and folk pedagogy do not relate to the past alone. If there is a nation, there is also a folk pedagogy. A nation changing inevitably entails changes to its pedagogy. "Modern pedagogy" of any nation should always bear in mind what exactly has driven the very need for preserving a given nation as a historical subject, whose historical identity must be preserved by all cultural means – this is its duty.

The cultural heritage of each nation is a unique laboratory of social experience. Promotion of healthy society requires close attention to all spheres of authentic-national and universal culture. Life calls for the need for every Chechen to deeply and comprehensively understand the rich historical culture beneath kind interethnic relations between the mountaineers and with other communities, the culture of traditional labor, the culture of daily routine, the culture of behavior, the culture of the native language, legal culture, ecological culture, musical, artistic, physical culture and etc.

Endeavors to revive material and spiritual values of the national culture will help to grasp its national and universal significance. Hence, it is imperative to revive a traditional folk instrument for perception, awareness, comprehension and application of both national and universal cultural values in the life of present and future generations.

In this regard, folk pedagogy will acquire paramount importance. It is folk pedagogy that disposes of some nation-bound tools to encourage production, saving and further development of national culture. Folk pedagogy is a historically hard-won theory and practice of progressive education, training of generations and prudent management of the masses.

Folk pedagogy is preliterate pedagogy that has a framework of unique pedagogical concepts and meanings that people preserve for life and career. Philosophers, educators and psychologists, who sprung from the people, outlined ideas and wishes related to moral education of a person, his wishes in society and reinforced them in folklore and pieces of art.

Folk pedagogy is reported not only to create an ideal that every person should strive for, but also to determine the most important environment enabling to achieve this goal: a person becomes strong, smart,

brave as long as he, once disciplined by adversity, learns to overcome difficulties, develops endurance and perseverance. Overcoming difficulties in natural conditions constitutes a substantive principle of real-life education.

Ushinsky (1948) wrote: the greatest teacher ever, derived his pedagogical ideas from folk pedagogy, drawing them from the treasure of universal human culture. "Education, created by the people themselves and based on folk principles, has an educational power that cannot be found in the best systems that rest on abstract ideas" (p. 62).

Sukhomlinsky (1979), deeply delving into the essence of folk pedagogy, emphasizing the need and importance of studying its ideas and people's pedagogical views arising therefrom, believed that, despite its wealth and enormous practical significance, it is still understudied, with no thorough research to be done: "... So far nobody has seriously thought about folk pedagogy, and, apparently, this brought a lot of troubles to pedagogy. I am sure that folk pedagogy is the center of spiritual life of a community. Folk pedagogy provides a deep insight into national character, its attributes and national image.

The most significant and most effective feature of folk pedagogy is its inseparability from real life. This is an index of its vitality, socializing significance. Socialization in its most general form is nothing more than personality development under the influence of the surrounding society, culture, and social role acquired by an individual. Folk pedagogy is a part of history, people's viewpoints on children's spiritual and moral education, pedagogical expertise absorbed during historical development of mankind. And it is unreasonable and unfair to ignore this wealth applicable for personality development.

In this regard, Nikolai Berdyaev (1990), the eminent Russian religious philosopher, said that the desire to create with disregard for nationality is a "great self-deception".

Each person enters humanity through a national identity, like a national person, like a Russian, Frenchman, German or Englishman. A person cannot jump over a whole level of being; he would then become impoverished and empty. The national person is more, not less, than just a person. They have generic traits of a person in general and also traits of an individual – national (p. 101).

Berdyaev (1991) also proved the connection between the national and the universal inspired by the development of culture that will never be "abstract-human", but always "concrete-human", it (culture) as national, individual-folk originates from universal humanity. "The national and the universal in culture cannot be opposed. The universal, therefore, has the heights of national creativity" (p. 92).

Similarly, it is legitimate to underline that the high moral requirements of each nation are similar. Such concepts as love for the homeland, reverence for the father, mother, memory of ancestors, respect for their faith, focus on such moral qualities as loyalty and justice, conscience, honor, duty, mercy, etc. are common to all peoples, although they take shape in different historical periods, independently of each other. Along with common features, there are differences in folk pedagogy of each nation, which appear to be ethnic factors in the personality development. In turn, their influence and use make national education more specific. It is a guarantee of the preservation and survival of a definite community.

According to Ushinsky (1948), in order to achieve success in pedagogy, it is necessary to rely on a system created by an ethnic group, which involves natural inclinations of a person, diversity of the

national character tailored by the environment and circumstances. Detailed awareness of oral folk art nurtured by peoples' experience and education helps to better understand the historical development of a community, its customs and traditions, family foundations, all serving as conditions for child rearing. The objectives pursued by personal education have created in folk pedagogy the means that encapsulate the experience of individuals, families, clans and nations. The means involve numerous forms to verbally influence human consciousness: names, lullabies, nursery rhymes, ditties, jokes, fairy tales, proverbs, sayings, songs, riddles, traditions, legends, epics and others. Having embodied in wise speech of folk storytellers, humorists, wisecrackers verbal means perform an important educational role. In their original form, they reflect original folk traditions and customs, methods and techniques of national education. They show ideal images of how perfect a way is to achieve noble tasks of education. With native wording and through centuries, folk pedagogy has brought to us some examples expressing an unfading original "commander's gift, intelligence, courage, tremendous physical strength" of the anti-colonial liberation leaders: Sheikh Mansur, Beibulat Taimiev, Imam Shamil. High devotion to people, native land, hatred of the enemies of the Fatherland, simplicity and humanity of legendary folk heroes: Baysangur Benoevsky, Zelimkhan Kharachoevsky and many others.

The people created a language – a means of expressing and transmitting thoughts, without which there could be no culture at all. The language became a basis for creating the entire spiritual culture. On its basis, oral folk art arose, being a benchmark of folk pedagogy. Language is a tool for fixing symbols, norms, customs. In language, we transmit information and scientific knowledge, and more importantly, behavioral patterns from peer to peer, from elder to younger, from parents to children. According to Berdyaev (1991) "a nation is such communities whose representatives are united, first of all, by a common language, which in turn distinguishes these national communities from others" (p. 82).

Only those who know their native language can be up to speed on every aspect of popular life, choose more effective techniques and methods to influence the consciousness of those around them, and also unmistakably show the level of education and culture. Native language is the most important and is considered the main feature of the ethnos and, of course, the fundamental principle of the entire national culture. It embodies all spiritual values of a community and the entire original culture of the ethnos. No national school capable of transmitting cultural, spiritual and moral values to the younger generation can ever exist lacking a native language.

## **2. Problem Statement**

The study is relevant due to the fact that we live in a time when an appeal for a culture of peace, non-violence, tolerance echoed across the globe, stemming from many factors.

Cruelty, crime, many other social vices and cataclysms that today have swept over society and are accompanied by the basest human instincts, indicate a harsh dehumanization of all aspects of human relationships.

With this in view, as never before, there is a need for a radical change in the moral atmosphere, revival of culture, lost high spirituality of all nations.

In folk pedagogy, family is thought to be a truly operating center of promoting education. Not a single nation, not a single civilized society could make it unless they have the institution of family.

### **3. Research Questions**

Based on the above, the subject of research is folk pedagogy as the basis of spiritual and moral education.

1. What role does the family play in preventing, through folk pedagogy, a propensity for violence among young people?
2. What level of knowledge in folk pedagogy has been attained by school teachers?

### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The paper aims to address the above challenge by enhancing the level of pedagogical skills required to provide education and training of young people.

### **5. Research Methods**

A diagnostic technique by Ishchenko to identify students' level of knowledge of their national language.

A didactic game called "Confused Clothes" to identify students' level of knowledge about the Chechen national costume.

### **6. Findings**

Considering that teachers are bearers of culture to the masses by educating the younger generation, we conducted a study among rural and urban teaching staff where about 197 young teachers participated. It was found that among urban schools 42 teachers, 33.1 %, are familiar with folk traditions. However, they do not use this experience in classes. The other 85 people, 66.9 %, are not familiar with folk traditions and customs.

The following results were found among 70 rural teachers:

- 1) Have but do not use in classes – 18 teachers, 25.7 %;
- 2) Do not know folk traditions and customs – 52 teachers, 74.3 %.

There is a comparative analysis of the results obtained from two groups, rural and urban, and one experimental.

### **7. Conclusion**

Let us carry out a comparative analysis of the intra-level and inter-level correlations of both groups. Intra-level correlations showed that at the neurodynamic (density 83.8 %), psychodynamic (75 %) and socio-psychological (50 %) levels, the structures of the integral individuality of optimists are more organized and ordered as contrary to pessimists (66.7, 42.9 and 40 %, respectively). At the personal level, the density of addictions in both groups is the same (80 %). Further, in both groups, intralevel links are only one-multi-valued, semi-rigid. (Arsaliev, 1998).

As a result, very contradictory data are obtained: the structures of optimists are more developed within the level, while the structures of pessimists are more developed between levels. This involuntarily implies the assumption that personal constructs – optimism and pessimism – have a peculiar effect on personality development: people who aim for positive things make do with poorly developed polymorphic addictions to live in harmony with themselves and the world around. People who see negative sides in everything need a higher compensatory ability to adapt to the world around and inner harmony.

Thus, at this stage, it is clear that optimism and pessimism have a significant impact on personality development.

## Acknowledgments

The findings suggest that the majority of teachers have a low level of knowledge in folk pedagogy. They cannot give necessary directions to parents and children in drawing up pedagogically grounded recommendations for increasing the effectiveness of educating students based on folk traditions.

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