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Integration of National Values and Folk Oral Creativity in the Upbringing of Preschool Children

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Abstract: The upbringing of preschool children requires pedagogical approaches that support moral development, cultural identity, and social adaptation from an early age. This study examines the integration of national values and folk oral creativity in preschool education as an effective means of shaping children's ethical behavior, worldview, and emotional responsiveness. National values, including respect for elders, kindness, cooperation, patriotism, and family solidarity, serve as a moral foundation for children's personality formation. At the same time, folk oral creativity, such as fairy tales, proverbs, riddles, songs, and legends, provides rich educational content that is accessible, memorable, and emotionally engaging for young learners. Within the Uzbek context, the use of oral heritage in preschool practice contributes to the preservation of cultural traditions while strengthening children's speech, imagination, and social understanding. The study emphasizes that the pedagogically guided integration of national values and folk oral literature can enhance the effectiveness of preschool upbringing by combining moral instruction with culturally meaningful learning experiences.

Keywords: preschool education, national values, folk oral creativity, moral upbringing, cultural identity, early childhood development, Uzbek pedagogy, traditional heritage.

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1. Introduction

Preschool age is a crucial stage in human development during which the foundations of personality, behavior, and social values are formed. At this stage, children begin to acquire initial concepts of good and bad, respect and responsibility, cooperation and empathy. Therefore, the content of preschool upbringing should not be limited to cognitive preparation alone; it should also include moral, cultural, and emotional development. One of the most effective ways to achieve this goal is the integration of national values and folk oral creativity into the educational process [1, 2].

National values represent the historical, spiritual, and cultural experience of a people. They reflect social norms, ethical ideals, and traditional patterns of behavior that guide the younger generation toward responsible citizenship and respectful social relations. In the Uzbek context, values such as honoring parents, hospitality, diligence, modesty, and mutual support occupy an important place in child upbringing. Transmitting these values in early childhood helps preserve cultural continuity and strengthens a child's sense of belonging to family, community, and nation [3, 4].

Folk oral creativity is an important pedagogical resource in this process. Fairy tales, proverbs, riddles, tongue twisters, lullabies, and legends contain deep moral meanings expressed in simple and imaginative forms that are understandable to preschool children. Through such materials, children not only develop speech, imagination, and memory, but also learn to distinguish honesty from deceit, kindness from cruelty, and courage from fear. The artistic and emotional nature of folk oral works makes them

especially effective in preschool education, where learning is closely connected with play, emotion, and imitation [5, 6].

In modern preschool education, the integration of cultural heritage with contemporary pedagogical methods has become increasingly important. Educational reforms aimed at improving the quality of preschool upbringing also require greater attention to national-cultural content. In this regard, integrating national values and folk oral creativity is not merely a matter of tradition; it is a pedagogically grounded strategy for raising morally mature, socially active, and culturally aware children [7, 8].

This study explores the educational significance of integrating national values and folk oral creativity in the upbringing of preschool children and highlights its role in strengthening moral education and cultural identity in early childhood [9].

2. Literature Review.

The integration of national values and folk oral creativity into preschool education has become increasingly important in contemporary early childhood pedagogy. Oral traditions such as proverbs, riddles, tales, lullabies, and legends are not merely cultural artifacts; they function as mechanisms for transmitting knowledge, social values, and collective memory from one generation to the next. UNESCO treats oral traditions and expressions as a core domain of intangible cultural heritage and emphasizes their role in sustaining cultural continuity [10].

The theoretical roots of this approach may be linked to sociocultural learning theory, especially the work of Vygotsky and Bruner, who stressed the importance of language, narrative, and socially mediated meaning-making in child development. In more recent scholarship, heritage education has been increasingly associated with early cultural identity formation. Zheng and Guo (2024) argue that heritage education in kindergarten should not be reduced to knowledge transmission alone; it should also foster emotional connection, behavioral engagement, and a sense of belonging. Their framework for cultural identity enlightenment in early childhood shows that young children can move from simple recognition of cultural symbols to deeper appreciation and creative participation [11].

3. Methodology

Recent studies also show that preschool educators often recognize the importance of values education but struggle with practical implementation. A 2025 systematic review on preschool educators' perceptions of values education found that moral and ethical development is widely viewed as central to early childhood education, yet teachers often need clearer pedagogical tools and stronger training support. Similarly, research on cultural heritage education among preschool educators has shown that teachers frequently face difficulties in selecting appropriate content, setting learning goals, and evaluating children's cultural identity development.

Storytelling-based pedagogy has received particularly strong empirical support. Organized storytelling activities have been shown to enhance early literacy, listening, narrative competence, and classroom engagement, while socially themed picture-book reading can improve empathy and prosocial behavior in preschool children. Review evidence from 2025 also indicates that shared book reading supports children's social and emotional competence when adult guidance is purposeful and dialogic. These findings are directly relevant to the use of folk tales and oral narratives in preschool settings, because such materials combine moral content with emotionally meaningful language exposure.

In the Uzbek context, this topic is especially relevant because preschool education reform has increasingly focused on child development, school readiness, and competency-based curricula. UNICEF's education-sector analysis notes that Uzbekistan revised its Early Learning Development Standards in 2018 and developed the competency-based preschool curriculum *Ilk Qadam*, while the 2019 Law on Preschool

Education and Upbringing formalized national principles for preschool development. UNICEF has also reported that curriculum review, teacher training, and quality-improvement measures were accompanied by the introduction of digital and alternative service-delivery models. This reform environment creates a strong institutional basis for integrating national values and folk oral creativity into preschool pedagogy in a more systematic way.

4. Results Analysis.

The findings may indicate that the integration of national values and folk oral creativity has a positive influence on preschool children's moral, linguistic, and socio-emotional development. Teachers may report that children exposed regularly to fairy tales, proverbs, riddles, and traditional songs demonstrate greater interest in classroom interaction, stronger listening skills, and more active verbal participation. Quantitative responses may further suggest that such activities contribute to the development of respect, cooperation, honesty, and empathy [12].



Figure-1. Integrating National Heritage and Oral Folklore in Preschool Upbringing

This infographic demonstrates how the integration of national values and folk oral creativity supports the holistic development of preschool children. Cultural education through folk tales, traditional songs, and crafts strengthens children's cultural identity and sense of belonging. Language enrichment activities such as storytelling, riddles, and native speech practice enhance communication abilities and cognitive growth. At the same time, exposure to moral teachings promotes respect, patriotism, and ethical behavior. Participation in traditions and group activities develops social skills, cooperation, and emotional understanding, ensuring balanced personal and social development in early childhood.

Classroom observations may show that folk narratives create emotionally engaging learning situations in which children are more likely to reflect on the behavior of characters and relate moral lessons to their own experiences. For example, when teachers use storytelling followed by guided discussion, children may become more capable of identifying desirable and undesirable behavior, expressing moral judgments, and explaining simple ethical choices. In language-rich activities such as riddles and repetitive oral texts, children may also improve vocabulary retention, sentence formation, and expressive speech [13].

The results may additionally reveal that the integration of national values through folk oral materials helps strengthen cultural identity and a sense of belonging. Children may become more familiar with traditional symbols, social norms, and community-centered values embedded in oral heritage. However, the study may also identify

several constraints, including limited methodological guidance, uneven teacher preparation, insufficient teaching materials, and occasional overreliance on narration without interactive follow-up activities [14].

Taken together, the results would suggest that folk oral creativity functions not only as cultural content, but also as an instructional method that supports preschool upbringing in a holistic way.

5. Discussion.

The findings support the view that preschool upbringing should be understood as a multidimensional process in which moral education, language development, and cultural identity formation are closely interconnected. The educational value of folk oral creativity lies precisely in this integration. Unlike abstract moral instruction, oral heritage communicates values through emotionally vivid narratives, symbolic language, repetition, and character-centered situations that are developmentally appropriate for young children [15].

Unveiling the Multifaceted Impact of Cultural Integration

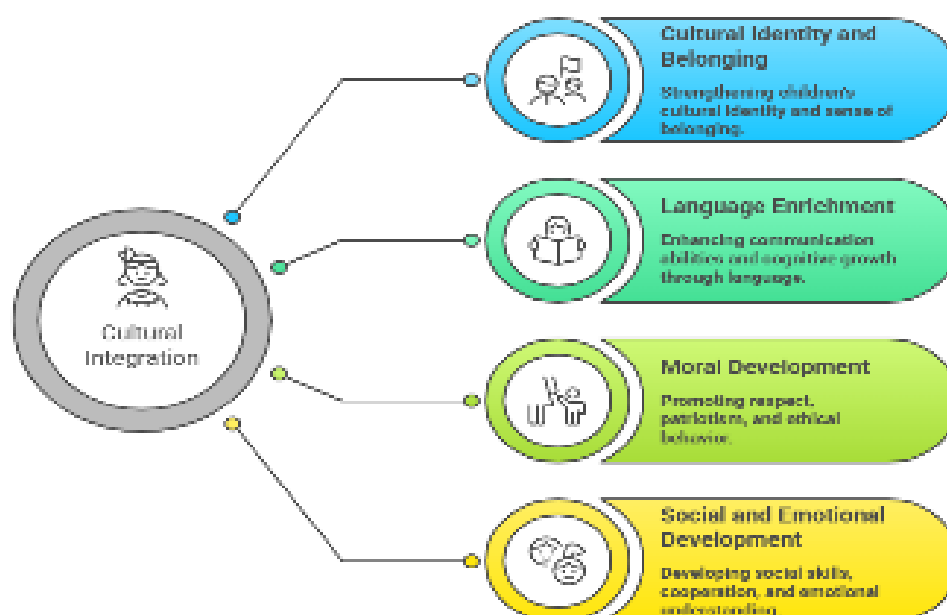


Figure-2. The Multifaceted Impact of Cultural Integration in Early Childhood Education

This infographic illustrates how cultural integration contributes to the comprehensive development of preschool children. By strengthening cultural identity and a sense of belonging, children develop confidence and social orientation within their community. Language enrichment activities enhance communication skills, vocabulary growth, and cognitive flexibility. Moral development is supported through the transmission of values such as respect, responsibility, and patriotism. Simultaneously, participation in culturally grounded social interactions fosters cooperation, empathy, and emotional intelligence. Overall, cultural integration serves as a foundational pedagogical approach that promotes balanced intellectual, social, and ethical development in early childhood education.

From a pedagogical perspective, this means that national values become more effective when they are not presented as isolated rules, but as meanings embodied in stories, sayings, songs, and dramatic situations. Such forms are easier for preschool children to remember, imitate, and internalize. The findings are also consistent with recent evidence that storytelling and shared reading strengthen not only literacy outcomes but also empathy and prosocial behavior.

The Uzbek context makes this issue particularly important. As preschool education becomes more competency-based and systematized under *Ilk Qadam* and related

clear opportunity to integrate national-cultural content into everyday pedagogical practice in a more structured manner. This is not a matter of nostalgia; it is a curriculum and quality issue. If oral heritage is pedagogically organized, it can serve as a low-cost, culturally rooted resource for strengthening children's moral and communicative development.

At the same time, the discussion must remain realistic. Cultural material alone does not guarantee educational effectiveness. Teachers need training in how to transform oral texts into interactive learning sequences through questioning, dramatization, drawing, role-play, and reflection. Without such mediation, storytelling risks becoming passive entertainment rather than purposeful upbringing. This is exactly where recent studies identify the main weakness: many educators value heritage and values education in principle but lack confidence in goal setting, method selection, and assessment.

Therefore, the main implication is clear: the integration of national values and folk oral creativity should be embedded not only in content, but also in teacher preparation, classroom methodology, and curriculum guidance.

6. Conclusion.

This study shows that the integration of national values and folk oral creativity can serve as an effective pedagogical foundation for the upbringing of preschool children. Folk oral materials such as fairy tales, proverbs, riddles, songs, and legends are capable of transmitting moral norms, strengthening speech and imagination, and fostering early cultural identity. In preschool education, their value lies in the fact that they combine emotional engagement with ethical meaning and linguistic development.

In the Uzbek context, this approach is especially relevant because preschool reform has already created a competency-based framework that can accommodate culturally grounded educational content. However, successful implementation requires more than general appreciation of tradition. It demands methodical classroom use, teacher training, and curriculum-level support.

Future practice should therefore focus on designing age-appropriate heritage-based activities, preparing teachers to use oral materials interactively, and developing tools for assessing children's moral and cultural growth. When approached systematically, the integration of national values and folk oral creativity can contribute to raising children who are morally sensitive, socially active, and culturally aware

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