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# Formation of Children's Moral Qualities through Folk Oral Creativity in Preschool Educational Organizations

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A B S T R A C T

*This article examines the pedagogical significance of folk oral creativity in the formation of moral qualities among preschool children, with particular attention to the cultural heritage of Uzbekistan. Folk oral genres—such as lullabies (alla), proverbs (maqol), riddles (topishmoq), fairy tales (ertaklar), and folk games (milliy o'yinlar)—serve as powerful tools for developing children's ethical understanding, emotional sensitivity, social responsibility, and cultural identity.*

*Drawing on the principles of early childhood pedagogy and cultural anthropology, the study argues that integrating traditional oral creativity into preschool educational practice enriches children's moral development by providing accessible models of kindness, respect, cooperation, honesty, and empathy. Uzbek folk narratives, in particular, embody deep moral-philosophical meanings that guide children toward positive behavior through symbolic imagery, national values, and culturally rooted role models. The article also highlights the role of educators in selecting age-appropriate folklore materials and creating interactive learning environments where children can engage in storytelling, dramatization, and value-based discussions. The findings emphasize that systematic use of folk oral creativity not only strengthens moral education in preschool organizations but also nurtures a sense of belonging, cultural continuity, and respect for national traditions.*

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**Introduction:** The formation of moral qualities in early childhood represents one of the most essential tasks of contemporary preschool education. As children rapidly develop their perceptions of right and wrong, form social behaviors, and internalize cultural values, educational systems are increasingly seeking effective pedagogical approaches that support ethical growth. Among the diverse methods available, the use of folk oral creativity—traditional narratives, songs, proverbs, riddles, and play forms—stands out as a unique educational resource that has preserved the wisdom, worldview, and moral ideals of previous generations.

In many cultures, including that of Uzbekistan, folk oral creativity has historically played a fundamental role in shaping children's character and guiding their emotional and social development. Uzbek folklore is rich in moral–didactic content, emphasizing values such as kindness, respect for elders, honesty, generosity, cooperation, courage, and responsibility. Genres such as *ertaklar* (fairy tales), *maqollar* (proverbs), *topishmoqlar* (riddles), *alla* (lullabies), and various folk games illustrate moral lessons in vivid, symbolic, and age-appropriate forms, making them an effective tool for preschool pedagogy. These traditional materials help children develop empathy, understand social norms, and recognize the consequences of actions through engaging stories and culturally relevant characters.

The integration of folk oral creativity into preschool educational organizations aligns with modern educational standards that emphasize holistic development, cultural continuity, and child-centered learning. By incorporating folklore into daily activities, teachers can foster a learning environment where children not only acquire moral understanding but also develop linguistic, cognitive, and socio-emotional competencies. Furthermore, the use of culturally rooted materials strengthens children's national identity, connects them with their heritage, and contributes to the preservation and transmission of intangible cultural values.

Despite its pedagogical potential, the systematic and scientifically grounded use of folk oral creativity in moral education remains insufficiently explored in many preschool contexts. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the role, mechanisms, and educational impact of folk oral creativity in forming moral qualities among preschool children, with a special emphasis on the rich traditions of Uzbek folklore. Understanding these processes can contribute to improving preschool educational practice and designing culturally informed strategies that support children's moral and spiritual development.

**Literature Review:** The formation of moral qualities in early childhood has long been a central focus of developmental psychology and pedagogy. Classic theorists, such as Piaget (1932) and Kohlberg (1958), emphasized the progressive development of children's moral reasoning, highlighting the importance of social interactions, cultural context, and experiential learning. Piaget argued that children gradually develop a sense of justice and fairness through play and cooperative activities, while Kohlberg's stages of moral development demonstrate the link between cognitive growth and ethical understanding. These theoretical foundations underscore the necessity of creating educational environments that provide meaningful, culturally relevant experiences for moral socialization.

Folk oral creativity has been recognized in various studies as a significant pedagogical tool for moral education. Vygotsky (1978) emphasized the role of cultural tools in children's development, including language, narratives, and storytelling, as vehicles for transmitting social norms and ethical values. Folk tales, proverbs, riddles, and songs provide symbolic frameworks through which children learn about honesty, empathy, cooperation, and respect for social rules. In particular, narrative-based approaches allow children to internalize moral lessons within engaging, memorable contexts, fostering both cognitive and emotional understanding (Nikolajeva, 2014).

In the context of Uzbek culture, researchers have highlighted the richness of traditional oral literature as a resource for early moral education. Uzbek lullabies (*alla*), proverbs (*maqol*), riddles (*topishmoq*), and fairy tales (*ertaklar*) not only entertain but also embed moral and ethical principles. For example, Mirzaev (2008) noted that Uzbek fairy tales often emphasize virtues such as honesty, courage, patience, and respect for elders, providing children with culturally grounded role models. Similarly, Saidov (2015) observed that folk games and interactive storytelling activities encourage cooperative behavior, problem-solving, and social responsibility among preschoolers.

These studies illustrate that folk oral creativity functions as both a cognitive and moral developmental tool, facilitating value internalization in age-appropriate forms.

Recent research in preschool pedagogy highlights the benefits of systematically integrating folk oral creativity into educational programs. According to Karimova (2019), structured storytelling, dramatization, and discussion of folk narratives significantly enhance children's moral reasoning and social-emotional skills. Moreover, culturally contextualized moral education strengthens children's sense of national identity, fostering pride in cultural heritage and continuity of traditions. Cross-cultural studies also support the effectiveness of narrative-based moral education, suggesting that engagement with folk literature universally enhances empathy, ethical understanding, and prosocial behavior (Hoffman, 2000; Ismailova, 2020).

Despite the acknowledged benefits, the literature indicates a gap in the systematic implementation of folk oral creativity in preschool curricula, particularly in integrating Uzbek cultural content with pedagogical frameworks. Most studies focus on descriptive analyses of folklore or its use in family settings, while fewer address structured educational strategies and measurable outcomes in preschool institutions. Consequently, there is a need for research that combines cultural studies, early childhood pedagogy, and moral development theory to design evidence-based interventions for moral education through folk oral creativity.

The literature underscores that folk oral creativity is a valuable tool for the moral and ethical development of preschool children, particularly when integrated into culturally relevant educational contexts. Uzbek folklore, with its rich narrative traditions, offers an effective resource for fostering moral qualities, social skills, and cultural identity. This review provides a theoretical foundation for examining the mechanisms, methods, and outcomes of using folk oral creativity in preschool education, highlighting the need for structured, research-informed approaches.

**Results and Analysis:** The study explored the impact of integrating folk oral creativity into preschool educational activities on the development of moral qualities in children, with particular attention to Uzbek cultural traditions. Data were collected through classroom observations, educator interviews, and structured assessments of children's social behavior and moral reasoning during storytelling, dramatization, and folk games. The results indicate that systematic exposure to folk oral creativity significantly enhances children's ethical understanding, prosocial behavior, and cultural awareness.

**Enhancement of Moral Understanding,** Children who participated in activities based on Uzbek fairy tales (*ertaklar*) and proverbs (*maqol*) demonstrated increased recognition of key moral values, including honesty, respect, cooperation, and empathy. For example, narratives that depicted characters facing moral dilemmas encouraged children to discuss choices and consequences, reflecting Kohlberg's stages of moral reasoning. Educators reported that children were more likely to apply these values in daily interactions, such as sharing toys, helping peers, and resolving minor conflicts.

**Development of Emotional and Social Skills,** Folk oral creativity, particularly dramatization of fairy tales and folk games, facilitated the development of emotional sensitivity and social skills. Children engaged in role-play and storytelling exercises exhibited enhanced ability to recognize and express emotions, practice perspective-taking, and collaborate with peers. Observational data showed that children who regularly participated in folk storytelling activities were more patient, empathetic, and cooperative compared to those with limited exposure to such cultural content.



**1-Picture. Preschool classroom group activity with teacher-led storytelling**

**Strengthening Cultural Identity and Value Awareness,** Integration of Uzbek cultural content, such as lullabies (*alla*), riddles (*topishmoq*), and folk proverbs, contributed to children's awareness of their cultural heritage and national identity. Children showed curiosity about traditional stories, actively asked questions about customs and norms, and demonstrated pride in participating in culturally grounded activities. Teachers noted that these activities also provided opportunities to discuss social norms and behavioral expectations, linking moral lessons to everyday life within their community.

**Educators' Role and Pedagogical Implications,** The analysis highlighted the critical role of educators in mediating folk oral creativity for moral development. Effective strategies included selecting age-appropriate stories with clear ethical messages, encouraging interactive discussions, promoting dramatization, and linking narratives to real-life examples. Educators emphasized the importance of adapting folklore content to children's cognitive levels while preserving cultural authenticity. Structured integration of these activities into daily routines amplified the positive effects on children's moral and social development.

**Limitations and Observations,** While the results were largely positive, some challenges were observed. Children with limited exposure to Uzbek language and cultural content at home occasionally struggled to fully engage with folklore activities. Additionally, consistent application of folk oral creativity across different preschool classrooms varied depending on educator familiarity with traditional stories and pedagogical skills. These findings suggest the need for teacher training programs and curriculum guidelines to ensure effective and uniform integration of folk oral creativity in moral education.

**Conclusion and Recommendations:** The study demonstrates that integrating folk oral creativity into preschool educational activities plays a significant role in the formation of children's moral qualities. Engagement with Uzbek fairy tales, proverbs, riddles, lullabies, and folk games provides children with culturally grounded models of ethical behavior, encouraging honesty, respect, cooperation, empathy, and social responsibility.

The findings indicate that children participating in structured folklore activities not only develop moral understanding but also enhance emotional sensitivity, social skills, and cultural awareness. Educators serve as key mediators, selecting age-appropriate materials, facilitating interactive discussions, and linking moral lessons to everyday life, thereby ensuring effective internalization of values.

Challenges such as varying levels of prior cultural exposure and inconsistent teacher implementation highlight the need for systematic support and training. Consequently, it is recommended that preschool educational organizations: incorporate folk oral creativity into daily routines and thematic curricula, provide professional development for educators on utilizing traditional narratives for moral education, design interactive and participatory activities such as storytelling, dramatization, and folk games, encourage family involvement to reinforce moral lessons and cultural continuity, and create assessment tools to monitor children's moral and social development.

Overall, the integration of Uzbek folk oral creativity offers a sustainable and culturally responsive approach to moral education, fostering ethically conscious, socially competent, and culturally aware preschool children.

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