

**PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS IN THE INTEGRATED APPLICATION OF FOLK PEDAGOGY
IN TODAY'S EDUCATION SYSTEM**

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Annotation: *This article explores the significance, challenges, and strategic solutions related to the integrated application of folk pedagogy in the modern education system. Folk pedagogy, with its deep moral and cultural roots, is recognized as a valuable resource for enhancing students' spiritual and ethical development. However, its application faces several obstacles including methodological gaps, generational disconnection, curriculum rigidity, and limited teacher preparedness. The article proposes practical recommendations such as curriculum reform, teacher training, community involvement, and the use of digital technologies to ensure effective implementation. Emphasis is placed on the transformative potential of folk pedagogy to create culturally responsive and morally enriched learning environments.*

Keywords: *folk pedagogy, national identity, value-based education, cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, moral development, teacher training, educational innovation, community participation, curriculum integration*

Folk pedagogy refers to a set of practical views formed within the life experience and way of life of a particular people concerning the goals and objectives of education. It is a form of practical activity manifested through empirical means such as customs, traditions, ethics, rituals, lifestyle, artistic creativity, and games—norms that every individual in a given society is expected to follow. In academic discourse, folk pedagogy is also referred to as ethnopedagogy. One of the most significant features of folk pedagogy in pedagogical science is its antiquity. For any people to exist as a distinct ethnic group, it must possess a unique identity. The social, spiritual, and intellectual identity of a people is shaped through pedagogy. Since folk pedagogy is born with the people themselves, its history is inseparable from the history of the people. The second characteristic of folk pedagogy is its entirely practical nature. The folk approach to education and its outcomes is pragmatic; thus, folk pedagogy is not expressed in abstract ideas but is embodied in customs, traditions, practices, moral codes, and behavioral norms. It is not merely a collection of thoughts about education, but rather a system of obligatory moral behaviors, continuously observed and regulated by the community.

A third characteristic of folk pedagogy is its anonymity. The creators of the norms of folk pedagogy are unknown, which has led to these norms being regarded as sacred and unquestionably followed. If the author of a pedagogical requirement in ethnopedagogy

were known, its influence might diminish, as it would be seen as merely the opinion of an individual. Anonymity lends an air of mystery and sanctity to traditions, customs, and behavioral norms. The fourth trait of folk pedagogy is its syncretic (blended) nature. Just as the life of the people is multifaceted yet holistic, so is its pedagogy. Since various pedagogical measures are conducted simultaneously, folk pedagogy is characterized not by specificity but by generality.

The fifth feature is its broad scope and universality. The practices of folk pedagogy are equally applicable to all members of an ethnic community. Regardless of an individual's personal preferences or desires, everyone must adhere to the pedagogical and lifestyle requirements of the people. In folk pedagogy, the learner's wishes are not considered in fulfilling these requirements. The sixth characteristic is its manifestation in the daily lifestyle of a particular ethnic group. Folk pedagogy, being empirical in nature, is aimed at organizing the lives of society's members, and its rules are not subject to debate—they are meant to be observed in daily life.

Uzbek folk pedagogy has a long history and represents one of the most conservative and slowly evolving components of national culture. Despite this conservative character—which helps preserve the national identity—it has undergone various changes throughout its development. The history of Uzbek folk pedagogy can be divided into distinct periods: the pre-Islamic era, the Islamic influence period, the period of external influences, and the independence era. This periodization reflects the unique spiritual, lifestyle, and intellectual characteristics of the Uzbek people. According to historical and archaeological evidence—such as the Avesta and excavations in Selengur, Khorezm, Bolaliktepa, Issiqqurgan, Chust, Rishton, and Burchmulla—the Uzbek people had a distinctive worldview and lifestyle prior to adopting Islam. Concepts such as life and death, this world and the afterlife, good and evil, beauty and ugliness, righteousness and sin, lawful and unlawful all carried unique meanings in pre-Islamic times.

The adoption of Islam fundamentally transformed the Uzbek way of life, aligning it with that of the broader Muslim world. It significantly influenced the people's lifestyle, culture, spirituality, economic and social life, while the core of the national identity remained intact. This resilience was possible due to the long-established and strictly followed system of customs, traditions, and values. After accepting Islam, the Uzbek people adopted new values regarding lawful and unlawful actions, sin and virtue, fate and destiny, the afterlife and resurrection. These new concepts were incorporated into daily life, customs, traditions, rituals—becoming part of folk pedagogy. Moral behaviors, customs, and traditions of this era came to reflect these spiritual beliefs.

For a long time, the Uzbek nation lived according to the Islamic-influenced folk pedagogy. However, in the second half of the 19th century, Russian colonization introduced drastic changes to the Uzbek way of thinking, lifestyle, and educational principles. It was no longer possible to live solely according to the religious, ideological, and cultural framework defined by Islam. As people's consciousness, morality, and thinking

changed, so did their pedagogy. New traditions and norms emerged, while certain pedagogical and moral values were lost.

The Soviet era saw the most significant losses in folk pedagogical heritage. Despite rapid social transformations, the Uzbek nation managed to preserve its identity thanks to folk pedagogy. With the independence of Uzbekistan, the nation's way of thinking, worldview, and interpretation of life have undergone a renewal. The people's spirituality and moral image are evolving, reflected in newly emerging customs, traditions, behaviors, and norms. In this new era, many Islamic traditions are being revived and reintegrated into practical educational processes.

Today, folk pedagogy continues to enrich itself in accordance with contemporary demands and retains significant practical and educational value as a historical and cultural phenomenon. Folk pedagogy, as a deep-rooted and experience-based educational tradition, has long served as a powerful tool in shaping the moral, ethical, and cultural upbringing of younger generations. In recent years, with the rising emphasis on national identity, spiritual development, and the personalization of education, the integration of folk pedagogical elements into modern schooling has become increasingly relevant. However, despite its rich potential, the practical application of folk pedagogy in today's formal educational settings faces several significant challenges.

One of the primary problems lies in the lack of systematic methodology for incorporating folk pedagogical elements into the school curriculum. While many educators recognize the value of proverbs, riddles, legends, folk songs, and traditional games, these elements are often treated as optional or supplementary rather than core components of the learning process. As a result, their educational potential is underutilized. Moreover, many teachers lack formal training or sufficient resources to effectively employ folk methods in teaching, which leads to superficial or inconsistent implementation.

Another issue is the dominance of standardized curricula and assessment systems, which often prioritize measurable academic outcomes over moral or cultural development. This creates tension between traditional methods—which are often narrative, oral, and community-based—and modern approaches that emphasize quantifiable skills. The digitalization of education, while offering new opportunities, also risks pushing out intangible cultural elements unless deliberate efforts are made to integrate them creatively.

Additionally, there is a generational gap in the understanding and appreciation of folk culture. Urbanization and globalization have distanced young learners from their heritage, leading to a weakening of intergenerational transmission of traditional values. Many students are more familiar with global media content than with their own national folklore, which reduces the resonance of folk pedagogical materials in their everyday lives. To address these challenges, several practical solutions can be proposed. First, the development of teacher training programs focused on folk pedagogy would help educators understand its principles and apply them effectively in various subjects. Second, revising

national education standards to allow for flexible, culturally embedded learning experiences can encourage schools to adopt folk elements in a structured and meaningful way. Third, collaboration with local communities and elders can help revive oral traditions and embed them into classroom activities, thereby ensuring their relevance and authenticity. Lastly, the integration of digital tools—such as storytelling apps, gamified folklore quizzes, or virtual reality experiences based on folk themes—can help bridge the gap between tradition and modernity.

One of the key problems lies in the marginalization of cultural content in mainstream curricula. The modern education system often emphasizes technical knowledge, standardized testing, and global competencies, which can inadvertently sideline local traditions and national cultural resources. As a result, folk pedagogical elements are either superficially included in extracurricular activities or omitted altogether from formal instruction. This creates a disconnect between students' educational experiences and their cultural heritage. Another challenge is the methodological gap in implementing folk pedagogy. While many teachers acknowledge its importance, few have access to structured guides, methodological recommendations, or professional development opportunities focused on how to integrate folk traditions into teaching across subjects such as literature, history, ethics, and even science. The absence of pedagogical frameworks that contextualize traditional knowledge within contemporary educational goals makes it difficult for educators to go beyond symbolic inclusion.

Generational disconnection further exacerbates this issue. Rapid urbanization, digital lifestyle, and the influence of foreign media have weakened intergenerational transmission of oral traditions. Many students, especially in urban settings, have limited exposure to traditional stories, symbols, or values that once served as cornerstones of community-based learning. As a result, folk pedagogy may appear outdated or irrelevant to them, unless reinterpreted in contemporary contexts. In addition, institutional resistance to curriculum innovation slows down the process of integration. Education authorities often favor uniformity and efficiency in curriculum design, leaving little room for localized or culturally adaptive content. Teachers may feel restricted by rigid programs and overwhelmed by performance metrics that do not account for cultural or spiritual development.

Despite these obstacles, the potential of folk pedagogy remains undeniable. It provides holistic education, fosters identity, promotes moral reasoning, and supports emotional intelligence. To realize this potential, strategic interventions are needed. First, educational policy should recognize folk pedagogy not merely as cultural decoration but as an essential pedagogical asset. This means revising curriculum standards to formally include folk elements and developing subject-specific resources for their implementation. Second, teacher training programs must be updated to include modules on national folklore, cultural heritage education, and innovative methods of integrating oral traditions into classroom learning. Pre-service and in-service teachers should be equipped to use folk

materials not only in language and literature classes but also in interdisciplinary and project-based learning.

Third, schools should collaborate with local communities, involving elders, storytellers, musicians, and artisans in educational activities. This helps bridge the gap between formal schooling and cultural environments, making education more meaningful and rooted. Fourth, modern technology can be harnessed to revitalize folk pedagogy. Digital storytelling platforms, gamified learning apps based on folklore, interactive heritage maps, and audio-visual archives of folk songs and tales can make traditional content more accessible and attractive to the younger generation. In doing so, educators can create a synergy between the past and the present, tradition and innovation.

In conclusion, the integration of folk pedagogy into the contemporary education system offers a pathway to enrich students' learning experiences, foster cultural identity, and promote moral development. However, its success depends on conscious efforts to overcome methodological, systemic, and societal barriers. With thoughtful planning and innovative adaptation, folk pedagogy can become a vibrant and effective component of modern education.

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