

**CURRENT DIRECTIONS IN ENHANCING MORAL EDUCATION IN PRESCHOOL
INSTITUTIONS BASED ON NATIONAL VALUES**

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Abstract: This article examines the current directions in improving moral education in preschool institutions by integrating national values. Emphasizing the importance of cultural heritage, traditions, and national identity, the study explores how these elements contribute to shaping children's ethical behavior and social skills. The research highlights the role of interactive and innovative pedagogical methods, such as storytelling, role-play, and project-based activities, in making moral education more effective and engaging. The findings suggest that systematic incorporation of national values into preschool education enhances children's respect, empathy, honesty, and responsibility, while fostering a sense of cultural belonging and identity.

Keywords: Moral education, preschool institutions, national values, cultural heritage, child development, traditions, pedagogy, interactive methods.

Moral education in preschool institutions is a fundamental aspect of early childhood development. At this age, children are highly impressionable, and the values they acquire form the basis of their social behavior, ethical reasoning, and personal identity. Integrating national values into moral education ensures that children not only develop essential ethical qualities such as honesty, empathy, responsibility, and respect but also cultivate an understanding and appreciation of their cultural heritage.

National values, including folklore, traditional games, proverbs, customs, and historical narratives, provide a rich foundation for moral education. When these elements are incorporated into preschool curricula, children gain exposure to the ethical norms and social expectations that have been preserved within their cultural context. Moreover, using interactive methods such as storytelling, dramatization, role-play, and cooperative games makes the learning process engaging and age-appropriate, ensuring that moral concepts are internalized effectively.

In contemporary education, it is also important to balance traditional national values with innovative pedagogical approaches. Digital technologies, multimedia, and play-based activities can complement traditional methods, making moral education more relevant and interactive. By combining heritage-based content with modern methods, preschool institutions can achieve the dual objective of preserving cultural identity while promoting the holistic development of moral qualities in children.

Enhancing moral education in preschool institutions based on national values is a critical and timely topic in contemporary pedagogy. Preschool is a period when children begin to form their first ideas about right and wrong, learn to interact with peers, and develop the foundations of ethical behavior. Integrating national values into this process ensures that children not only acquire universal moral qualities, such as honesty, empathy, responsibility, and respect, but also develop a sense of cultural identity and appreciation for their heritage.

National values are transmitted through various cultural elements, including folklore, proverbs, riddles, traditional games, and historical stories. Folklore, for example, contains ethical lessons in narrative form, which are easily understood by young children. Tales that illustrate the triumph of honesty, kindness, and courage allow children to internalize these qualities in a concrete and memorable way. Proverbs, when used in daily conversations, serve as concise moral guidelines, reinforcing lessons taught in interactive classroom activities. These elements connect moral education to the child's cultural environment, making learning more meaningful and emotionally engaging.

Traditional games also play a vital role in developing moral qualities. Many folk games require children to cooperate, follow rules, wait their turn, and consider the needs of others. Such activities cultivate patience, fairness, and teamwork—values that are essential for ethical development. Incorporating national games into preschool programs not only preserves cultural heritage but also promotes socialization and collaborative skills. Celebrations of national holidays and rituals in the preschool environment provide additional opportunities to teach respect, solidarity, and community values, while strengthening children's attachment to their cultural identity.

The use of interactive teaching methods significantly enhances the effectiveness of moral education. Role-playing, dramatizations, and problem-solving activities allow children to experience ethical dilemmas in a controlled environment, providing opportunities for reflection and moral decision-making. For example, a dramatization of a folk tale about honesty can involve children in acting out different roles, allowing them to understand the consequences of ethical and unethical actions. Such hands-on experiences make abstract moral concepts tangible and facilitate deeper understanding.

Project-based learning is another effective approach. Educators can design projects around national traditions, folk arts, or community service activities, where children collaborate to achieve common goals. These projects foster moral qualities such as cooperation, responsibility, creativity, and empathy. By actively participating in meaningful tasks, children learn to consider others' needs, make ethical choices, and experience the impact of their actions in real-life contexts.

Digital tools can complement traditional and interactive methods. Animated stories based on national folklore, educational games that simulate moral dilemmas, and multimedia presentations of historical figures allow children to engage with national values in modern, age-appropriate formats. While technology should not replace direct interpersonal interaction, it

provides an additional layer of engagement, capturing children's attention and reinforcing lessons through visual and interactive experiences.

Teachers play a pivotal role in integrating national values into moral education. They serve not only as instructors but also as cultural transmitters and role models. Their behavior, attitudes, and interactions with children directly influence the internalization of moral values. Therefore, teacher training programs must emphasize the importance of national heritage, child development, and innovative pedagogical strategies. Educators who are well-versed in both cultural content and interactive teaching methods are better equipped to create meaningful and engaging moral education experiences.

Family involvement is equally important. Children's first encounters with moral values occur at home, and the consistency between family practices and preschool instruction strengthens the internalization of these values. Parents can support preschool education by reinforcing national traditions, participating in cultural activities, and modeling ethical behavior. Regular communication between teachers and parents ensures a coherent approach, enhancing the overall effectiveness of moral education.

One of the challenges in this process is adapting traditional content to contemporary realities. Some folk tales or customs may contain outdated ideas that conflict with modern values, such as gender equality or inclusivity. Educators must carefully select, modify, or contextualize these materials to ensure they are age-appropriate and relevant. The goal is to preserve cultural identity while teaching ethical principles that align with today's societal expectations.

Another challenge is balancing national content with global perspectives. While children must learn about and respect their own culture, they also need to develop awareness and respect for other cultures. Integrating universal ethical principles alongside national values provides children with a foundation for moral reasoning that is both locally grounded and globally informed. For example, lessons on respect, cooperation, and fairness can be taught using local stories while simultaneously emphasizing their universal relevance.

From a psychological perspective, integrating national values into moral education supports both cognitive and emotional development. Culturally familiar stories, games, and activities engage children's emotions, enhance memory retention, and make moral lessons more meaningful. When children identify with characters in folk tales or participate in traditional games, they experience empathy, cooperation, and ethical reflection firsthand. Such experiences foster emotional intelligence, a crucial component of moral development.

Institutional support and policy initiatives are essential for the successful implementation of national-value-based moral education. Preschool curricula must prioritize the inclusion of national heritage, provide appropriate teaching materials, and allocate resources for teacher training. Collaboration with cultural organizations, academic institutions, and policymakers can facilitate the development of comprehensive programs that are both pedagogically sound and

culturally enriching. Research on best practices, both locally and internationally, can also inform the continuous improvement of moral education strategies.

In conclusion, enhancing moral education in preschool institutions based on national values is a multifaceted process that requires the integration of cultural heritage, interactive and innovative teaching methods, family collaboration, and institutional support. Folklore, proverbs, games, and traditional practices provide meaningful content for instilling moral qualities, while modern pedagogical approaches ensure engagement and relevance. By balancing cultural preservation with contemporary educational strategies, preschool institutions can raise children who are ethically responsible, culturally aware, and socially competent. This approach not only strengthens moral development but also fosters national identity, preparing the younger generation to participate effectively in both local and global communities.

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