Spiritual safety of a personality as a pedagogical problem

ДУХОВНАЯ БЕЗОПАСНОСТЬ ЛИЧНОСТИ КАК ПЕДАГОГИЧЕСКАЯ ПРОБЛЕМА

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Abstract

The article discusses the scientific-methodological, theoretical, and instructional substantiation of the problem of forming spiritual safety of preschool children in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia). The purpose of the research is to study and substantiate the problem of a person’s spiritual safety formation in preschool education. The methodological substantiation of the problem of spiritual safety of the child’s personality and its scientific justification provides for the integrative nature of the research. The authors’ attitude to the research problem is explained by systemic-holistic, activity-related, synergetic, hermeneutic, axiological, culturological, and mentalistic approaches. To implement the planned approaches, a set of complementary methods was used: indigenous methodology, dialectic method, systemic and activity-related approach, diagnostics,

Аннотация

В статье рассматривается научно-методологическое, теоретическое, методическое обоснование проблемы формирования духовной безопасности детей дошкольного возраста в Республике Саха (Якутия). Целью исследования является изучение и научно-методологическое, теоретическое, методическое обоснование проблемы формирования духовной безопасности личности в дошкольном образовании. Методологическое обоснование проблемы духовной безопасности личности ребенка и его научное обоснование предусматривает интегративный характер исследования. Позиция авторов к проблеме исследования объясняется системно-целостными, системно-деятельностными, синергетическими, герменевтическими, аксиологическими, культурологическими,
praxymetry, etc. The results of the study and discussions identified the contradictions existing in modern society and education. To clarify the essence of personal safety, the axiological foundations of its genesis stipulated in the works of the classics of philosophical thought, modern philosophers and government documents of the Russian Federation have been analyzed in methodological assumptions. The categories of “personal safety”, “spiritual safety of the personality”, and “spiritual reproduction” have been defined in the theoretical part of the study. The methodological part of the studied problem reflects the conclusions on the results of monitoring the current state of pedagogical support of the personality’s spiritual safety in the preschool child care institution. The scientific significance of the study is determined, first of all, by the fact that the problem of spiritual safety of an individual is considered as a pedagogical problem, whose methodological, theoretical and instructional foundations are substantiated as a new scientific field in preschool education. The Program for the personality’s spiritual safety formation in preschool child care institutions (PCCIs) is presented, the topics of the cycle of sense-making classes with children of older preschool age are listed, the structural components and methods of educational activities with children are identified, and conclusions on the model implementation are drawn.

**Keywords:** Spiritual safety, children, spiritual activities, model, directions, program, methods.

**Introduction**

The world community has always paid special attention to the protection of children’s safety, as evidenced by the most important international documents: the Declaration of the Rights of the Child (1959), the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), the World Declaration on the Protection and Development of Children (2000), and others.

Safety is one of the basic needs of an individual. A person as a subject of safety should not allow the destruction of spiritual and moral immunity,


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and should take care of its cultivation and reproduction of core sense-making values (Bernardi, 2019). As stated by B.K. Ratnikov (2019), today we are observing how Russia is moving along the path of spiritual impoverishment and degradation due to a change in values-based orientations, an emphasis on the priority of money, the cult of things, shopping, and hoarding. It is well known that materiality, put at the forefront of personality development, destroys the structure of this personality, activating natural instincts in the human mind, rather than a rational beginning. A spiritual crisis is thriving now in Russia. Undoubtedly, not only hedonism, but also such global threats to humanity as cyber extremism, cyber terrorism, whose psychological and spiritual goal is to “threaten, inflict violence and cause fear” (Wilson, 2005), should be the subject of close attention of all social institutions of the society. The problem under study is relevant because of the following contradictions that exist in modern society and education:

- The personality’s spiritual safety is recognized as a new paradigm in national security, while science lacks comprehensive research;
- There is a need to form the personality’s spiritual safety in children, in particular preschoolers, while the scientific, theoretical and methodological validity of this type of safety is insufficient in the theory and practice of education;
- In the scientific works of the classics of pedagogy “spiritual reproduction” is considered as one of the most important principles of pedagogy, while its scientific substantiation and application is ignored in the modern educational process;
- The mental qualities of peoples and nations are recognized as the pivotal basis for the formation of a spiritual personality while their comprehensive study as sources to nourish the personality is inadequate;
- Teachers are required to have well-formed general cultural competencies while they are unprepared for the implementation of the value reproduction tasks in the spiritual development and safety of the personality.

The above contradictions, inconsistency and fragmentation of the knowledge and technologies available in science for solving the indicated problem determined the formulation of the research topic and its purpose.

It should be noted that education is one of the main institutions of the spiritual self-reproduction of peoples. It is the human dimension of education, its spiritual and moral priority that acts as a guarantor in confronting the spiritual degradation of the individual and society. V.A. Sukhomlinsky (2018) emphasized that educators need to keep in mind that, in order to warn a young heart from evil, it is necessary to settle good in it. Persons become good when they fight against evil; there were many specially created, envisaged, ‘built’ human relationships in educational work that aimed to affirm respect for a person as the highest value in the souls of pupils, so that from childhood they would be friends, comrades, brothers for other persons.

**Literature review**

In education, the problem of the personality’s spiritual safety only begins to be developed (Ali, Alaa, Wid, 2018; Abd & Behadili, 2019). Spiritual safety is considered in scientific works as one of the types of national security and represents a state of the spiritual sphere shelteredness in modern Russian society.

In the development of the scientific concept of the personality’s spiritual safety, the publications of Russian researchers are invaluable (Azarnov, 2010; Vozmitel, 2006; Zelenkov, 2015; Tonkonogov, 2011). In these studies, personal safety and spiritual safety are considered as self-sufficient directions of national security.

To study the methodological prerequisites and substantiate the theoretical positions of the study, scientific works were demanded that examined the socio-pedagogical and psychological aspects of personal safety (Baeva, 2006; Zinchenko, 2011; Platokhina, 2010; Rudenko, 2007; Sesyunina, 1992) and many others.

Ideas and theoretical approaches, scholars’ attitudes to the problem certainly enrich the understanding of the essence and implementation of the goals and objectives of the pedagogical support of the personality’s spiritual safety in education (Volchik & Maslyukova, 2019).

In the theoretical part of the study, we explained the categories of “personal safety”, “spiritual safety of the personality” and “spiritual reproduction”. We consider personal safety not only as the absence of a threat, but as a personal quality, a state of creation that guarantees the
reliability of existence, the sustainability of the development and creative life of a person as a subject of security.

Spiritual safety of the personality is the worthiness of the individual, its universal essence. It is determined by spiritual and axiological stability and the behavior of the individuals to ensure their own security and protection of other subjects from spiritual destructive influences in the society. To realize the research problem, we have defined a set of system-forming concepts. The analysis of the explanation of the ‘dangers-safety’ dichotomies is reflected in (Klochkov et al., 2019) arguing that each historical era fills the category of ‘safety’ with its own content.

The phenomenon of spiritual reproduction in pedagogy is an almost unstudied area. In modern philosophy, ‘spiritual reproduction’ is regarded as spiritual consumption and is considered one of the most important elements of spiritual culture. According to philosopher I.B. Sesyunina (1992), spiritual reproduction is a self-developing, dynamic system having its own development logic that is not identical to the processes of material reproduction. The professor believes that a theoretical examination of the phenomenon of spiritual reproduction, an analysis of its essence and the possibilities of forming a personality as a universal subject of social development has a wide access to social practice. A study of the works of the classics of philosophical thought, state documents of the Russian Federation revealed that:

- The paternalistic approach to personal safety is reflected in the works of ancient philosophers; the safety of man, his social essence and value becomes known as part of the social whole (society, state). The philosophical systems of Ancient Greece, the East and Russia, with all their individuality and originality of philosophical constructions of the theory of personal safety, society and state, have common approaches. Personal safety is based on the humanistic, ethical and moral qualities of the individual and society; it is identified with well-being, virtue and justice;
- Personal safety as a global value and human right was considered in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, approved by the UN General Assembly (1948); Thanks to the efforts and the humanistic goal of the United Nations, the need for new approaches to personal safety as a global value is growing in modern society (United Nations Development Programme, 1994);
- In the Soviet period, the safety of man and society was considered only in relation to the state, whereas in the post-Soviet time the reorientation of the hierarchy of objects for safety support takes place. A person came to the forefront, rather than a state (Zelenkov, 2015);
- In real life, the priority of personal safety proclaimed by the Constitution of the Russian Federation is not sufficiently ensured by social and legal mechanisms for implementation. The studies indicate that at the present stage of development of national states and the international system, there are no grounds to talk about the dominance of personal safety in the general security system; it only appears to be an extremely important and potentially promising element of this system. The forms and principles of the considered concept are only being formed and spread out; therefore the role of this concept at the present stage is manifested in the interaction and support of initiatives of national and international security entities in the promotion and development of the concept of personal safety (Beley, 2014).

Materials and methods

The authors’ methodological attitudes to the problem are explained by the following approaches:

- Systemic and holistic approach (the main essence is the upbringing and development of the integrity of the spiritual personality as a subject of life, society and the affirmation of oneself in the society);
- Systemic activity-related approach (development of the personality of the learning and developing subject of activity, organization of activities that initiate spiritual reproduction and spiritual product);
- Synergetic approach (providing for the dialogical interaction of spiritual safety subjects, their common activities, cooperation and spiritual self-
organization of the individual);
- Hermeneutical approach (providing a deep, multidimensional, at the same time holistic understanding of values, organization of the search for sense and phenomenological activity from the standpoint of a spiritual and personal dimension);
- axiological approach (reproduction of national and ethnocultural values into motives, worthiness and the meaning of personality behavior);
- Existential approach (providing personal studies, the development of spiritual abilities, the formation of spiritual self-knowledge and self-realization of a person);
- Culturological approach (a person is a cultural subject; culture is a source, a way of spiritual mastering of reality, cultural values are a universal characteristic of a spiritual person),
- Mentalistic approach (mental values are the spiritual core of the ideology of education, upbringing and personality development as subjects of ethnocultural and national values).

The studied problem of the personality’s spiritual safety is a complex and multifaceted process, which requires substantiation of its scientific, theoretical, methodological foundations from different scientific fields, including culturological, psychological, pedagogical, etc. To solve this goal and in compliance with the outlined approaches, a set of mutually complementary methods of theoretical analysis, diagnostics, and praxymetry was applied in the study.

Fundamental research methods included the dialectic method, indigenous methodology, and systemic activity-related approach. Methods of theoretical analysis contribute to a holistic and multidimensional study of the problem, proceeding from life practice, consider the object in a sociocultural context, and expand the research in depth and breadth, enabling to predict trends in personality development and recognize the subjectivity of personality development. In a conflict between the values of traditional (folk) and elite Western culture, the Indigenous Methodology focuses the study on enriching the problem by interpreting ethnocultural values and behavior patterns as a necessary condition for the reproduction of national cultural traditions. The techniques of the systemic activity-related approach are focused on the development of the spiritual potential of the children’s personality, educating them as a subject of sense-making, reproducing spiritual activity.

Results

Safety has always been an urgent need. It is understood as protection from certain dangers and threats or the absence (or low level) of risks for subjects of public relations. This definition of safety highlights creating appropriate conditions and ensuring protection from dangers and threats. However, it fails to consider personal safety as the highest value, which is stated in the Constitution of the Russian Federation. Neither does it reflect the personal agency—the personality’s potential to ensure its own survival and to prevent spiritual catastrophes in society. Preschool childhood has a significant impact on the formation of a person’s spiritual security. However, there has been no detailed research on this period of childhood.

The subject “Fundamentals of Health and Safety,” introduced in secondary schools on September 1, 1991, plays a crucial role in building and developing personal safety. In preschool education, the problem of ensuring the safety of children has been raised and considered in the works of I. N. Avdeeva, O. L. Knyazeva, R. B. Sterkina (2010), K. Yu. Belaya (2011), A. I. Sadretdinova (2009), and T. G. Khromtseva (2005). The content of the educational field “Safety” aims to solve the following problems: to promote knowledge of the situations and behavior patterns dangerous for people and the world, to develop the behavior strategies that are safe for people and the world, to form a careful and thoughtful attitude to the situations that are potentially dangerous for people and the world. The main objectives of ensuring life safety include identification (detection) of dangers, prevention (prediction) of the identified danger and actions in emergency situations, in other words, teaching children skills of self-preservation (Avdeeva, Knyazeva, Sterkina, 2010).

The results of the conducted survey among children confirmed that teaching them to distrust strangers from an early age increases their anxiety and fear. In this regard, K. Horney (2016) argues that “in reality, hostile impulses of this kind are the main source generating neurotic anxiety”. The formation of a spiritually stable person can occur only if the world is perceived, understood and accepted as good and fair. This, in turn, is the essential basis for the development of a person’s self-value.
In the methodological part of the study we aimed to build and substantiate a structural-functional model for the development of spiritual security of the person, the content and technology of educational activities in preschool institutions, and to test the program “Spiritual security of a child’s personality in preschool education.”

The experimental part of the longitudinal study was carried out in three stages and included working with children.

The monitoring of the current state of pedagogical support for spiritual security of a person in preschool educational institutions showed that:

- In the learning process, insufficient attention is paid to revealing the meaning and value foundations of pedagogical work and the enrichment of the value foundations of the person, including the development of spiritual abilities of children;
- In practice, educators do not systematically focus on the formation of a person, the meaning, and reproduction of ethnocultural and national values as spiritual qualities of a person;
- Teachers and parents lack a holistic vision and understanding of the priorities in this direction of working with children, starting from the preschool age;
- As a result, children are virtually unaware of the essence of the person’s inner spiritual beauty, and they cannot project and “see” the qualities and behavior patterns of a creative person; ethnocultural and national values are replaced by “market values”, “values of material well-being,” with the focus shifted from spiritual ones.

To solve the existing problems, we developed: a conceptual framework, a structural-functional model, a program for the formation of spiritual security of children in preschool education.

The program of the spiritual security of the personality developed by us in preschool education was implemented in three areas:

1. “The development of the spiritual identity of the child as part of the family, kindred, nation, homeland and the formation of qualities of the spiritual security of the individual.”
2. “The development of dignity and spiritual responsibility in a child as the basis of his spiritual actions and behavior” with such sections as “My spiritual ideal,” “My way of ascending to the spiritual ideal.”
3. “The formation of a tolerant personality as the creative basis in a multicultural world.”

The essence of the spiritual security of the individual implies the integral enrichment of spiritual and moral knowledge, the moral experience of relationships, and the transition of values into spiritual and moral beliefs as motives for personal actions.

Therefore, the implementation of the program is based on the development of a three-component structure of self-awareness and includes:

- The cognitive component: the formation of knowledge about the spiritual culture of the safety of one’s people and the individuals’ awareness as the subject of this spiritual culture;
- The emotional component: teaching emotional-value relationships in communication with peers in society as the basis for safe spiritual interaction;
- The behavioral component: the transfer of values into a motive, a real culture of behavior for safe interaction and ensuring spiritual security.

In all these areas, we conducted a cycle of meaning-forming classes (educational activities) with preschoolers. Let us name some topics of educational activities (activities with children): “Magic words as the key to safe communication with others,” “Anger attracts evil, while a friendly attitude attracts good,” “Power of good and love as protection from any threat and need,” “Love without revenge is the crucial feature of generosity,” “Spiritual similarity of peoples in their actions (on the example of fairy tales),” “Threat is the weapon of the weak,” “Evil brings destruction, good brings creativity,” “Spiritual values: my, family’s, kindred’s, nation’s, and Motherland’s as sources of creativity,” “The
Educational activities (classes) with children included the following structural components: motivation of children to spiritual and creative activities, explanation of the goal to form the meaning, children’s activities of spiritual reproduction (creative search, discovery through reasoning, identification, projection, and experiment), comprehension of the discoveries, children’s spiritual creativity, assessment of spiritual discoveries, and children’s reflection.

In the learning process, teachers can use interactive methods of spiritual reproduction aimed at the creation of the meaning, actualization of spiritual ideas, ideals and experience, projection, experimenting, communication, cognitive, creative, and organizational methods of heuristics, problem-based and project learning, and many others. These methods include analytical interpretations, philosophical conversations, Socratic maieutics, games, visualization, cinquains, insert method, and metaphor dialogue.

Discussion

To use such a variety of methods in the learning process, a teacher needs explication skills, i.e. skills of clarification, unfolding ideas and goals as a “sheaf of decisions, tasks, positions, assumptions, and versions,” establishing a “cluster of events, problems,” and explaining to children the relationships, dependencies, intersections, and consequences in spiritual actions. In spiritual activity, the teacher cannot play only one role, while the child remains in the position of a student. In this type of activity, the teacher acts as a tutor, facilitator, organizer, and assistant, implementing the methods and techniques of “understanding technologies” (hermeneutics) such as interpretative comprehension, reflective understanding, and many other.

The restructuring of the teacher’s activities results in a highly positive dynamics in the development of personal qualities of spiritual security. The experiment proved that the child reproduces values when he discovers, understands, confirms his involvement, and sees the connections between the life of a creative person and the fortune of his parents: family, kindred, nation, humanity, a village or a town, small or big homeland, and the world. In general, in any culture, children “understand and share such values as life, friendship...” (Gibbs et al., 2007), which are the essence of their spiritual security.

The scientific, methodological, and theoretical foundations of the study were substantiated with a system-holistic, system-activity, synergetic, hermeneutic, axiological, existential, culturological, and mental approaches and reveal the axiological essence of the phenomenon of “personal spiritual security”.

Children’s security in education is ensured with the programs of “Organization of Children’s Life Safety” and “Fundamentals of Safety for Preschool Children.” Nevertheless, it is necessary to introduce a program for the spiritual security of an individual. On the one hand, this is due to the existing contradictions in society and education. On the other hand, it is believed that the person himself must become a subject of security and become involved in the spiritual transformations in society. These factors require the revision of traditional approaches to the formation of security in socio-cultural institutions, in particular in preschool educational institutions. Only consistent work on the development of axiological consciousness, acquisition of values, spiritual actions, and motives of spiritual behavior can ensure that the individual can resist, oppose, and eradicate spiritual degradation and cataclysms in society.

Researchers D. A. Leontiev (2003) and N. A. Platokhina (2010) point out that it is the formation of the meaning, seen as the emotional and personal search for meanings, the development and experiencing value relationships, that should become one of the important ways of humanizing education.

In general, the scientific significance of the study lies not only in defining the categories of “personal security,” “spiritual security of the individual,” and “spiritual reproduction”, but also in substantiating the essence of the spiritual reproduction of children, which included determining content, methods, and forms of working with children.

Obviously, the formation and increase in spiritual security requires the development and implementation of the concept for the development of spiritual reproduction in social institutions. In this regard, education should be considered as a system that purposefully forms a personality capable of spiritual reproduction as
the basis for the formation of a creative personality.

**Conclusion**

Considering the above, it is clear that in the conditions of forced industrial development, Russian education is to solve the task of educating a spiritual person, and this mission should be accomplished on the basis of national ideas and ethnocultural values of the peoples of Russia. The development of the value foundation of personal security will be effective only as the result of forming a new mindset of the person with a steady interest in the spiritual reproduction of values in his behavior, which would represent the solid basis for ensuring spiritual security.

The developed program “Spiritual safety of the individual in preschool education” allowed us to carry out experimental work in three directions: “The development of the spiritual connection of the child with family, kindred, nation, and the homeland and the formation of the qualities of spiritual security of the individual,” “The formation of dignity and spiritual responsibility in the child as the basis for his spiritual actions and behavior” with the sections “My spiritual ideal,” “My path of ascending to the spiritual ideal,” “Formation of a tolerant personality as the basis of creativity in a multicultural world.”

The fundamental goal of each program section is the development of a spiritual person who is aware of his own spiritual connection with his people, nation, and humanity. It includes educating a responsible and respected person regarding his spiritual actions and behavior, as well as the formation of a self-sufficient and tolerant personality in a multicultural society.

The analysis of the research data shows that the orientation of children towards understanding and reproducing ethno-cultural and national values in the spiritual culture of behavior positively influenced the formation of the essence and foundations of the spiritual security of the individual.

Systematic spiritual-reproductive activities of children in the learning process of preschool institutions with the use of interactive methods and innovative forms of work enriched not only the emotional and axiological experience of children, but also contributed to the creative understanding of spiritual values, active projection, and reproduction of them in the children’s behavior.

**References**


