Spiritual, Moral and Psychological Development of the Rising Generation through Cooperation between Educational Institutions and Learner’s Families

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Abstract – The article provides an analysis of possibilities and prospects for educational organizations in the implementation of the Strategy for Education Development in the Russian Federation for the period until 2025, the Strategy for Education Development in the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug – Yugra until 2020, the Concept of State Family Policy in the Russian Federation for the period until 2025 and other federal documents. The authors define various approaches to interaction between educational organizations and learners’ families, as a condition for spiritual and moral education of the rising generation. The article presents ideas about spiritual and moral development of learners, their parents and teachers themselves on the basis of foundational national values and traditions of the Russian culture.

Key words – morality, spirituality, traditions, spiritual values, family values, sociocultural origins, educational organizations, education strategy, family policy.

I. INTRODUCTION

Spirituality is an important part of human nature that conditions people’s successful integration into the changing society. Based on its experience society has come to realise that without a spiritual and moral dimension a state disintegrates, its culture decays and the most profound scientific knowledge as well as the latest technologies become useless. Spiritual values is a category which focuses on human, social and cultural significance of various spiritual formations (i.e. ideas, theories, images, etc.) through the concepts of «good and evil», «truth and lie», «beauty and ugliness», «justice and injustice», etc. The social nature of men themselves and the conditions of their existence are expressed in the spiritual values.

The issue of spiritual and moral development of the rising generation has been extensively discussed in scientific literature. In the philosophical context this issue was highlighted in the works by Berdiaev N.A., Tolstoy L.N., Soloviev V.S. and others. Some fundamentals of the problem in question were elaborated in the studies on spiritual and moral development by Russian and foreign educators (Blonsky P.P., Vygotsky L.S., Makarenko A.C., Maslow A., Rogers K., Sukhomlinsky V.A., Frankl V., et al). Different aspects of moral education of the rising generation were described in the works by Bondarevskaya E.V., Boldyrev N.I., Ibragimova L.A., Karakovsky V.A., Likhachev B.T., Shchurkova E.H., et al. Psychological aspects of this problem were studied by Bozhovich L.I., Leontyev A.N., Piaget J., Rubinstein S.L., etc.

The formation and further development of a learner’s personality in accordance with the spiritual, moral and sociocultural values accepted by their family and society is the State’s request articulated in the Federal Law «On Education in the Russian Federation» of 29.12.2012 No. 273-FL (Article 12 «Educational Programmes»). The Order of the Government of the Russian Federation of August 25, 2014 No. 1618-R «Concept of the State Family Policy in the Russian Federation for the period until 2025» says that «the state family policy is a comprehensive system of principles, tasks and primordial actions to support, strengthen and defend the family as a fundamental basis of the Russian society, as well as to safeguard traditional family values, to enhance the role that family plays in the life of the society, to strengthen the authority of parenthood in the family and in the society, to prevent and overcome family disadvantages, to improve the conditions and quality of family lives» [13].
II. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The state family policy is conceived and implemented as a multi-subject activity. Participation of Russian families in implementing the state family policy presupposes their active role in their partnership with the authorities, business and public.

In the «Strategy for Education Development in the Russian Federation for the period until 2025» (the Order of the Government of the Russian Federation of May 29, 2015 N 996-r) it is noted that «the support of family education includes: assistance with family consolidation and defense of parents’ prior right over others to educate their children; <…> contribution to the development of family education culture on the basis of traditional family spiritual and moral values; creation of conditions for increased participation of families in the activities of the organizations engaged in educational activities and work with children; provision of conditions for parent education and counseling on legal, economic, medical, psychological, pedagogical and other questions relevant for family education; strengthening cooperation between the family and educational and other organizations in the upbringing of children» [9].

It is for the first time that at the governmental level a statement is made and laws and orders are issued to return the family to a fundamental place in the upbringing of children in coordination with the authorities, educational, public, religious and cultural organisations and mass media. Nowadays, the institution of family does need to be restored. It also requires the reconstruction of its value content as well as a return to its sociocultural roots.

Definitely, the goal is more global than it may seem. Based on the objective to educate a rising generation, the goals have been formulated. Nevertheless, questions arise regarding the order of implementation of these goals. It is obvious that the first priority should be given to instilling main national values in learners, their parents and educators. However, it should be taken into account that at the formation stage of these values a child needs to be guided. As for adults, among other things, it is necessary to correct the values which were deformed in the course of their lives.

So, what values are being referred to?

«The Strategy for Education Development in the Russian Federation for the period until 2025» builds upon the system of spiritual and moral values established in the process of cultural development of Russia, i.e. humanity, justice, honor, good conscience, will, personal dignity, beliefs in the good and striving for the fulfillment of moral duty to ourselves, our families and our homeland [10]. At the same time, the first value which we need to return to is the family itself.

According to the dictionary by Dahl V., a family is a set of close relatives living together. It is not a social unit but a set (indivisible whole).

Suppose that the definition «the family is a unit of society» that appeared in the Soviet system is still considered to be basic. Some questions then arise: what form and content should this unit have to integrate in the public system? What should be done in case the unit has distorted (single-parent family)? Must we exclude it from the system or continue to observe how the system itself is changing? So, what interpretation of this concept is to be taken as a basis?

The answer is found in the Strategy: «The strategy builds upon the system of spiritual and moral values established in the process of cultural development of Russia» [10].

According to the perception of Russian people (except for the 20th century starting from 1917) a family is an established union of a man and a woman, which is cemented with love. Thus, for an orthodox Christian, a family is a little church and the foundation of a state. For a Muslim, a family means natural bounds between a man and a woman, and family relations are a source of love, compassion and understanding. According to the Jewish point of view, a family is a reflection of the relationship between the God and Jewish people, and each Jewish house is considered to be a sanctuary in miniature. For a Buddhist, a family implies bonds of fellowship between a man and a woman for life. The couple should develop such characteristics as patience, tolerance and understanding.

As can be seen from the above, in the traditional religions of Russia a family is defined not as a group, system or a unit but as a union of two persons who constitute one entity in marriage. All Russia’s traditional religions define family through the divine. Moreover, all religions agree that the family is the foundation of a state. Therefore, there are no objective obstacles to talk to children and their parents about family values from the standpoint of a state. Therefore, there are no objective obstacles to talk to children and their parents about family values from the standpoint of the religion this family belongs to. In fact, if the work with the families of learners is organised in the integrated context regardless of their religious affiliation, it becomes possible to illustrate the model of a modern family with the examples from a particular religion for better understanding and acceptance of the original meanings of the family spiritual and moral values.

When organising work with families to develop basic national, spiritual and moral values, it must be taken into consideration that the educational organisation cannot and should not set a goal «to involve» learners’ families into any religion. The educational organisation can teach people to understand themselves and their family through the sociocultural experience of previous generations, including the religious experience of the Russian state.

An educational programme «Sociocultural Origins» (authors Kamkin A.V. and Kuzmin I.A.) has been implemented in the Russian Federation since 1995. The programme is being successfully implemented in 59 subjects of the RF. The goal of the programme is to transform educational establishments (i.e. kindergartens, schools, centers for continuing education) into social institutions whose fundamental function is harmonious development and education of Russian citizens capable of preserving and enlarging sociocultural and spiritual experience of their homeland. «The programme aims at the revival of the primordial values and categories that have been historically formed in Russia. Goals, principles, methodological and diagnostic tools of the «Sociocultural Origins» programme
fully conform to the requirements of the federal state educational standards for general education at all levels» [6].

An equally important task for family education is to ensure appropriate conditions for parents to improve their social, communicative and teaching competences [10]. It is quite obvious that of all the consolidated participants (i.e. authorities, public and religious organisations, business communities, cultural and sport institutions, mass media, etc.) only educational establishments can turn into foundational platforms, which will provide guidance and education for parents.

Thus, in the «Strategy for Education Development in the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug — Yugra until 2020» it is underlined that «a system of interaction with the family must be created in order to provide competent assistance to the child» [11, 12]. It is one of the priorities of the regional education policy.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The system of interaction with parents is not an innovative project. Issues related to family care and support were studied by such scholars as Bogdanov G.T., Vasilyeva E.K., Vulfov B.Z., Zatsepin V.I., etc. Educational organisations continuously cooperate with the families of pupils and students throughout the period of their stay in kindergarten and during the learning process at school. Yet, at the state level it was not until recently that they began to talk about the cooperation with the family in the context of spiritual and moral upbringing.

So, in what way should the cooperation with families be organised? Psychological and educational support is the type of work with parents which has been thoroughly analysed in psycho-pedagogical science (Avdeeva L.N., Bityanova M.R., Gazman O.S., Konovalenko N.L., Smirnova Ye.G. and others) and is successfully implemented by the institutions at all levels of general education.

Family support as a system of pedagogical or psychological professional activity implies creation of social and psychological conditions for emotional well-being and successful development (self-development) of all family members in educational establishments both internally and externally. If we consider psychological and pedagogical support as a technology, then it is a targeted process of forming the personality of father, mother, child and the whole family as a united whole with a clear hierarchy of subordination (from top to bottom and from bottom to top). As a technology, this support is defined not only through a structured content but also with forms, methods and techniques to work with families. Unlike the technologies of psychocorrection or psychological and pedagogical counseling, the technology of psychological and pedagogical support of the family is not encapsulated in the triad of «parents-child-teacher» but offers activities by performing which the teacher transfers his/her key position of organiser to other subjects of the educational system (i.e. scientific, traditional religious, cultural and sport organisations, etc.). Therefore the consideration of objective positive and negative trends allows us to intensify our work on solving the problem related to the formation of a spiritual world within the rising generation.

Nizhnevartovsk State University has conducted a study with the collaboration of the general education organisations of the city.

The objective of the survey was to look into the process of supporting the families whose children participate in the programme «Sociocultural Origins».

To provide a more complete picture, describing existing conditions and relationships in family education, the study involved school children aged 9-10 and their parents.

At the first stage of the study, child awareness regarding attitudes their closest people have towards them was revealed using projective techniques of N. Kaplan (Burmenskaya, 2005), while the perception of family relations was determined with the help of the projective drawing “My Family”.

In organizing the diagnostic process, we applied the principle of reasonable sufficiency.

Each new study was based on the analysis of the previous diagnostic information.

During the diagnosis, the following results were obtained.

Secure emotional attachment has been identified in 59 % of the total number of surveyed children. It should be noted that the above mentioned children are quite content in terms of social status and about having both parents, which increases the level of their emotional well-being. In the studies on emotional attachment conducted by Russian scientists it was shown that, depending on the group, the number of children with secure attachment varies from 48 % to 66 % (Burmenskaya, 2005). An anxious avoidant pattern of attachment has been identified in 27 % of surveyed children. The peculiarity of this type of attachment is the emotional distancing from the object of attachment. Anxious ambivalent attachment has been identified in 14 % of surveyed children. The peculiarity of this type of attachment is the manifestation of negative feelings about the emotional connection.

The results of the study aimed at identifying the child’s attitude to their relatives according to the model of emotional attachment are presented in the form of a histogram (Fig. 1).

At the second stage of the study, the attitude of younger schoolchildren to their family was revealed with the help of the Kinetic Family Drawing. The percentage correlation of the results obtained from the children who participated in the experiment is presented in the table.

![Fig. 1. Types of emotional attachment](image-url)
The analysis of the color prevalence in the Family Drawing shows the absence of color preferences. It should be noted that children used almost equally dark and light as well as warm and cold colors, which indicates a diverse, often contradictory, perception of the family situation by children. This is confirmed by the high percentage of drawings where one or most of the family members are missing, i.e. the family is not fully represented (59%). 41% of primary school children have drawn an adequate number of family members. Not a single child has drawn more family members than in reality. At the same time, a clearly negative emotional connotation can be diagnosed in 23% of the drawings, in 68% it is neutral, and in 9% it is positive.

The content of communication between parents and their children was determined with the help of the questionnaire proposed in the methodology “Diagnosis of the content of communication between children and their close adults” by T.Yu. Andryushchenko and G.M. Shashlova. The results are presented in the diagram (Fig. 2)

![Fig. 2. Diagnosis of the content of communication between children and close adults](image)

Not only children, but also their parents took part in the experimental part of the research.

It was necessary to find out how parents understand the concept of "spiritual and moral education", whether they are ready to promote the spiritual and moral development of their children, as well as the formation of their moral feelings, uprightness and behavior. In order to identify these parameters, we developed a questionnaire, requesting learners’ parents to respond to several questions. 45 representatives of the parent community took part in the survey, among them 75% (33 persons) were people aged 30 to 50 and 25% were people aged 20 to 30. 14% of the surveyed parents work in education, 75% (33 persons) work in other sectors, and 11% do not work for various reasons. After analysing parents’ answers, some conclusions can be drawn.

![Fig. 3. Communicative personality questionnaire for parents](image)

According to the data obtained, it can be stated that a significant part of the interviewed parents understand spiritual and moral upbringing as fundamental for the development of their child.

![Fig. 4. Communicative personality questionnaire for parents](image)

Answering this question, it was possible to choose no more than three answers. The data show that parents are ready to cooperate with the school in the field of spiritual and moral upbringing. However, the priority is given to the family.

![Fig. 5. Communicative personality questionnaire for parents](image)

The data show the attitude of parents to this problem in the context of modern social attitudes (Other answers suggested existential and religious approaches).
The data testify to the parents focusing on the inner state of a person. However, there is a danger that the internal “encloseness” of the approaches can make it difficult to raise educate the younger generation in the context of “service to the Fatherland”.

The quantitative data clearly showed that the majority of the respondents are focused on raising their children on the basis of the domestic traditions that have been around for centuries. A quarter of respondents adhere to the position oriented to the cultural context (centuries-old domestic traditions evolved in a religious, multipath Russia). A lot of respondents believe that education should be exclusively secular. We believe that it is necessary to explain to the parents that the religious affiliation of our ancestors is a part of the cultural traditions of the peoples of Russia and vice versa. It is impossible to join the culture not taking into account the “religious history” of the Russian state.

According to the data obtained, it can be stated that most parents have heard about the “Sociocultural Origins” program, but their children do not attend it.

Answering this question, many parents highlighted such main categories as “lack of counseling” and “lack of knowledge in this area”. This suggests that it is necessary to create a certain body that would help organise advisory centers for schools to provide education for different categories of the population.

The data show that modern parents recognise the tendency of losing family values and practically ask for help.

It becomes obvious that it is in the family that a person receives the first spiritual and moral education. The family is the primary school of holy, patient and self-sacrificing love.
According to the results of the study, it was revealed that greater openness to the parental community is needed from educational and other organizations. Among the few requests were, as a rule, proposals for joint activities.

Thus, the obtained experimental data allowed the development and implementation of the Programme of psychological and pedagogical support named «Spiritual and Moral Development of Families during the Implementation of the Programme «Sociocultural Origins» (the creators of the programme are I.P. Istomina, I.D. Mehdiyeva).

The program is to organizing of the work on the improvement of the psychological and pedagogical culture of parents for the spiritual and moral education and development of the child.

The above mentioned Programme is aimed at the fostering of teachers’ professional competence related to the support of the families of the learners participating in the programme «Sociocultural Origins». This will be performed on the basis of the spiritual and moral upbringing of learners in general education at all levels as well as on the basis of interaction with the learners’ families. The Programme reveals the basic principles of the support concept for the learners’ families. The concept is a part of the sociocultural and educational programme «Origins». The main directions, levels and forms of psychological and pedagogical support for the families in an educational establishment are analysed in the Programme. Moreover, the Programme defines the themes of the educational activity aimed at the development of a basic system of spiritual and moral values in parents. These values are at the core of the program of education and socialization.

The main idea of the Programme is that of active education and psychological and pedagogical support to the families of the learners participating in the programme «Sociocultural Origins».

The content of the educational material is based on the following principles: scientific approach to the conceptual apparatus; integrity; succession of methods and forms of spiritual and moral education and development of the learners in the system of general education at all levels; humanity; basic provisions of the Concept of the Spiritual and Moral Development and Education of Citizens in the Sphere of General Education; Concept of the Modernisation of Educational System in Russia and the Federal State Educational Standards for General Education.

Aim of the programme: improvement of psychological and pedagogical culture of parents in the field of spiritual and moral development of their children.

Tasks of the programme:

1. Provide educational activities which can be used by teachers and psychologists in their work with learners’ families in accordance with the «Sociocultural Origins» programme.

2. Provide conditions for the formation and further development of spiritual and moral values in the families of the learners of general education organisations.

3. Foster parents’ competence in preserving and strengthening traditional family values.

The programme consists of four parts:

- Relatives and close people.

Here, the following goals are pursued: fostering a caring attitude towards the parents; developing abilities to give them joy; structuring of the past, present and future in the family development; building the sense of responsibility for the continuation of the family name and formation of a sense of love to their homes. Apart from this, the work will be aimed at the formation of ideas about the history of one’s family. Moreover, this part of the programme should build not only a value-based attitude to the family but also understanding of the importance of a family, the importance of being together as a united strong family.

- Labour of the Earth

The content of the work here is connected with the goal to develop diligence, intra-family responsibilities, and mutual assistance in labour among all members of the family as well as to develop the ability to bring joy to the family members, to devote good deeds to them, to give them presents, to thank them for help and understanding, etc.

- Family traditions.

Here, the work is done to form ideas about traditional family holidays, all-Russian and national alike, and family traditions as well as to give information about customs and rituals of family holidays; to make children recognise Father as the head, breadwinner and protector of the family; to identify Mother as the life of the family, the keeper of the hearth and the comforter.

- Native land.

The goal here is to form ideas about the history of the «small Motherland», i.e. the place where the family lives (streets, squares, monuments, temples, etc), boundless spaces and diversity of native nature as well as to foster patriotism and love for the homeland.

In the course of implementing the objectives of this programme the following work was done:

- educational activity of teachers and psychologists aimed at collaboration with families of learners in the program «Sociocultural origins» was organized;

- conditions have been created for the formation and development of spiritual and moral values in the families of the learners of general educational organisations;

- the level of parents’ competence in the preservation and strengthening of traditional family values has been increased.

It should be noted that this Programme can be implemented provided it is further developed in subsequent years of learning, and, given certain modification, it can be implemented in all grades of general education organisations.
According to the «Concept of the State Family Policy in the Russian Federation for the period until 2025», the goals of promoting family lifestyle and preservation of spiritual and moral traditions in family relations and family upbringing should include «the development of family traditions aimed at the consolidation of family identity and cohesion as well as at preserving and supporting family relationships and continuity of generations» [6, 13].

Every family should observe special traditions that may be related to different holidays and celebrations. Preserving family traditions is the sphere of transmitting spiritual and material values from one generation to another in everyday life [4]. Family traditions must have a spiritual sense. They also should be maintained at all times and transmitted from generation to generation. Family traditions are being established for centuries and by several generations, but can be destroyed in the blink of an eye. If just one generation fails to observe such traditions, then the next generation will simply not know them. It is important to realise that spiritual and moral family traditions develop spiritual awareness not only in children, but also in their parents. One of such family traditions is family reading.

Family reading is a family self-education that provides a vast body of spiritual knowledge. Family reading can instil in all the members of the family a respectful attitude to one’s own family, to the history and culture of the homeland as well as to the world sociocultural heritage. For Russians, family reading is a century-old traditional activity, which is now disappearing. Today, children and their parents are no more interested in long conversations about what they have read, as they are mainly concerned with a rapid change of activities. This should be taken into consideration by the teachers and psychologists who organise interaction with the learners’ families, since the education today is focused on the system-activity approach in education and upbringing. Family reading can also be organised within the framework of this approach. Families are offered books of spiritual content and are introduced to active forms of working with texts.

For example, families are asked to organise their work in a modular manner.

Module 1. The work is aimed at clarifying the understanding of what is read, at identifying literary devices, e.g. personification, etc.

Module 2. This module is focused on the content analysis of the text, as analytical and abstract thinking develops actively in childhood. At this stage, such task as «fill in the gaps» can be offered.

Module 3. This module is aimed at instilling pillars of spirituality, i.e. understanding and adopting virtues.

Such work is absolutely necessary with children of 11–14 years old, as at this age virtues change and methods for the development of strong-will are improved. Initially, teenagers simply admire the virtues of other people (10–11 years old), then they express a desire to have such qualities (11–12 years) and, finally, they begin to develop these qualities in themselves (12–13 years). Therefore, it is advisable to talk with teenagers about virtues not only and not so much through fiction, but through contrasts between virtues and vices, qualities and states leading to the personal stagnation and degradation.

In this article, attempts have been made to analyse only some goals of education which are defined at the state level. The following basic principles of upbringing and development have been proposed for general education:

- the principle of living up to ideals (updating of certain ideals preserved in the history of our country, in cultures of the peoples of Russia as well as religious cultures and cultural traditions of the peoples of the world);
- the principle of adherence to moral examples (these examples demonstrate aspiration of people for the heights of the spirit; ideals and values are filled with specific life content. Teacher also represents an example of special significance for the spiritual and moral development of the learner);
- the principle of identification (identification combined with following ethical principles can strengthen: good conscience, i.e. moral reflection of a personality; morality, i.e. ability of a child and adult to formulate their own moral obligations; social responsibility, i.e. a person’s readiness to act in accordance with moral rules);
- the principle of system-activity approach to upbringing (content integration of various types of learners’ activities is carried out on the basis of the core national values).

IV. CONCLUSION

These and other principles define the conceptual foundation of all aspects of living. The teacher is the key figure that gives vital, social, cultural and moral power to this formal way of life. Federal state educational standards emphasise that «it is necessary to fill the learner’s framework of life with numerous examples of moral behaviour which are widely represented in our national and world history, the history and culture of traditional religions as well as the spiritual and moral culture of the peoples of the Russian Federation».

References


