

**The essence of religious and moral
upbringing in modern education**
**Esența educației religioase și morale în
educația modernă**

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Abstract

The article considers the main factors of the cultural and moral values of Orthodoxy. The culture of education in Orthodox schools is considered as a process of the national-regional education system development. The educational field, which examines the values of Orthodoxy, elects culture.

Keywords: the concept of education, morality, education paradigm, personality.

Rezumat

În acest articol sunt analizați principalii factori ai valorilor culturale și morale ale Ortodoxiei. Cultura educației, în școlile ortodoxe, este considerată un proces de dezvoltare a sistemului de învățământ național-regional. Domeniul educațional, care examinează valorile ortodoxiei, alege cultura.

Cuvinte-cheie: conceptual educației, moralitate, paradigmă educației, personalitate.

The institutionalization of moral-spiritual (religious) education in the Republic of Moldova was prepared by the works of some researchers, who created the theoretical-epistemological and didactic-methodological framework of this type of education [15; 14; 3], subsequently confirmed for the implementation of legislative and normative acts [2; 5; 6; 7; 9].

Thus, in 1996, I. Bontaș defines the principles of moral education as norms or legalities that guide the conception, organization and development of actions to form a dignified, civilized moral profile [1, p. 112].

The researcher identifies the following principles of moral education:

- *dignity, civilization and democracy*, which ensures the unity of conscience and moral conduct and the observance of democratic values;
- *combining individual moral education with group and group moral-civic education*;
- *moral education in a conscious and active-participatory spirit*;
- *supporting positive traits*;
- *combining exigency with respect*;
- *unity, continuity and consistency*.

In 1998, Vl. Pâslaru emphasized the unity of the natural, social and moral-spiritual coordinates of the human being, which imposes on education a teleology (system: ideal-purpose-educational

objectives) in three-dimensional unity [15], and in 2001 formulated the concept of unity of identity and tolerance of being human rights, respectively, of education [14].

In terms of educational policies, Moldovan society discussed extensively in the 1990 s. the issue of institutionalizing moral-spiritual education, which ended with the adoption of Law no. 844-XIV of 25.02.00 [9], which established the introduction in primary education, as a compulsory subject, *Moral-spiritual education*, and as an optional subject in education secondary and professional.

Law 844-XIV was followed by the formation of a group of scientific creation, charged with the elaboration of the *Concept of moral-spiritual education in grades I-IV* [3] and the *Curriculum of moral-spiritual education in grades I-IV* [7], approved by the Ministry of Education and Science [5], followed by the elaboration of textbooks and methodological guides, teaching materials.

In the framework plans for the school years 2005-2010, among the optional subjects are *Christian-Orthodox Education*, *History of Religions*, *Religion* and other interdisciplinary courses that are related to the religious education of students.

By Government Decision no. 596 of 02.07.2010 “On the teaching of religion in educational institutions”, starting with the school year 2010-2011, the school schedule

of primary and secondary education institutions includes the discipline *Religion* [6].

In 2010, the Religion curriculum was developed. Introductory course and Teacher's Guide, in 2018 – *Curriculum for the optional subject Religion. Orthodox worship. 10th-12th grades*, followed by textbooks and guides.

Moral-spiritual education (religious) policies and principles in the Republic of Moldova were synthesized by the *Education Code*: the formation of national consciousness and identity, the promotion of general human values and the aspirations for European integration of society [2]. So the religious education, conceived on the values and moral-Christian attitudes, has an important role in the formation-integral development of the student's personality,

The elaboration-approval of the policies and the legal and normative framework of Moral-spiritual education (religious) took place simultaneously with the development of its theoretical and didactic-methodological concepts.

S. Cristea defines moral education as the deepest and most extensive dimension of the activity of personality formation-development, designed and realized on the basis of ethical values [4, p. 127].

VI. Pâslaru defines spiritual values as values produced by the individual's

relationship with divinity, the spiritual values being:

- *total and universal*, engaging at any moment the whole human being, among the secular values can be comparable only with aesthetic values, having the same characteristics, but manifest in the plane of creation, spiritual values having a preponderant character of adoration, glory and humility;

- *fundamental*: they have an eternal and perennial character, perceived as such at any moment of the individual's life; they are unconditionally encouraging – along with aesthetic values, they are the only values unconditioned by the physical existential, for man believes and enjoys God not out of fear of Him and the world he created, but through total acceptance of God and the world created by Him;

- *categorically positive and non-punitive*: the essence of Christianity being in perfection and love not in fear and frustration;

- *individual-community*, with emphasis on the individual relationship with the divinity;

- *self-evaluation*: only the faithful individual can appreciate the quality of his relationship with the divinity, only he himself can realize for himself the degree of perfection and the mistakes and sins

committed, therefore prayer is a deeply individual act;

- *community confirmed*: the community to which the educated person belongs confirms or disapproves his morality based on the committed behaviors [11, pp. 43-44].

V. Mândăcanu, promoter of the *Principles of education in the spirit of Christian morality and ethics*, states that education must be focused on the following principles:

- endowing the educated with fundamental moral-ethical-spiritual qualities based on fundamental values;
- enriching the conscience and faith with spiritual convictions;
- educating the inner spiritual freedom by promoting Christian anthropocentric values;
- application of the education methodology that ensures self-knowledge, self-discovery, self-realization;
- selection of contents, moral-spiritual-cultural-historical models based on national, cultural, Christian traditions [10, p. 39].

Knowledge of religious and spiritual values is a sign of morality and culture. Spiritual education is in close connection with religious education and moral education, says L. Cuznetsov. The author

presents the path of development and spiritual improvement of the educable:

I – gaining self-confidence, respect and love for one's neighbor;

II – forming the position of principle: do not judge yourself and other people;

III – appreciation, support and encouragement of oneself and others by focusing on positive thinking;

IV – sincerity with one's own person and with those around in our deeds and actions;

V – observance of the spiritual legitimacy that teaches us and demands that man be responsible;

VI – awareness that man's ability to orient towards the future / perspective of life is a legitimacy, which teaches us to use current possibilities to design and carry out moral actions over time, including not focusing on past negative events, and prioritizing issues essentials of life [8, pp. 156-160].

Although the psychological and religious vein of the respective staging remains hidden, it is still useful to teachers.

In the system of Moldavian education, a new education culture has begun to function, characterized by such features as:

- historical continuity of generations, the preservation and development of national cultures, the upbringing of a careful attitude to the historical heritage of the people of Moldova;

- the upbringing of Moldovan patriots, citizens of a legal, democratic, social state, respecting the rights and freedoms of the individual, highly moral and showing national and religious tolerance, respectful attitude to the languages, traditions and culture of other nations;
- the formation of a culture of world and interpersonal relations;
- the formation of a holistic worldview and a modern scientific worldview among children and youth, the development of a culture of interethnic relations;
- the education of a healthy lifestyle, the development of children and youth sports;
- environmental education, the formation of respect for nature [2], which are the substrate of spiritual, moral and religious education.

Such a substrate reveals the following main directions in education: pluralism and variability of all educational practices; freedom of all subjects of the educational process; personality-activity approach; optimization of the processes of socialization and individualization; multicultural nature of education etc.

The vast practical and scientific foundation accumulated to date contains the necessary prerequisites for creating the

concept of spiritual and moral education of schoolchildren on the basis of the Orthodox culture.

The key concept in the definition of schoolchild's spirituality is the spiritual culture of the individual, which includes the following priorities: knowledge, morality, national identity, tolerance, health.

Among the criteria of the spiritual culture of the personality are:

- *cognitive*: the level of realization of knowledge in various types of activities (in study, communication, labor, sports, creativity);

- *behavioral*: the level of motivation of the student, his attitude to the world, country, people, himself.

The formation of personality always involves the perception of a particular value system, certain moral and ethical principles. Orthodoxy, as the main religion traditional for Moldova, carries a wealth of moral potential, historical, social, philosophical, educational and psychological knowledge.

The concept is implemented through a comprehensively targeted program of spiritual and moral education of schoolchildren based on the Orthodox culture. The multidimensionality of the concept of “concept” involves the consideration of methodological, theoretical and methodological aspects of this problem.

The methodological basis is broad scientific knowledge that answers the

question of how and in what ways to act in order to form a person in a new way.

The methodological basis of the concept is a systematic approach. This approach makes it possible to trace the dynamics of the personality development of the student and to adjust the management of the educational impact, taking into account the individual characteristics of the student.

An analysis of various approaches to the concept of “system” is presented in the works of V. G. Afanasyev, S. Kristia, V. Pyslaru and others.

From the point of view of V.G. Afanasyev, one should consider the “integral system” as “the totality of objects, the interaction of which determines the presence of new integrative qualities that are unusual for its constituent parts, components”.

Based on this definition, we consider the process of spiritual and moral development of an individual as a system in which the interaction of its subjects – the teaching staff of the school, family, and church representatives endowed with their specific functions, ensures their integration and creates a new quality of this system. From the point of view of S. Cristea, the “pedagogical system” is determined by the interconnections of structural and functional components that are subordinate to the goals of upbringing, education and training of the younger generation and adults [4].

In this case, the definition of VI. Pâslaru of the pedagogical system as a complex of interconnected components, the functional development of which is aimed at achieving educational goals, is also relevant. For our study, this position is of particular importance, because its subject is the content, forms and methods of organizing educational work on the spiritual and moral development of students. Pedagogical systems are divided into types; educational systems are of particular interest to us.

Education as a process is carried out in the course of the systematic interaction of certain components of social reality, from which education as a system is composed.

The specificity of educational systems is determined primarily by their purpose.

VI. Pâslaru considers the educational system of the school as a factor in the social development of schoolchildren, emphasizing its humanistic orientation. “In the humanistic educational system, the goals of teachers and students are oriented. Education and training are effective where there is a constant interest of adults in the child. For the teacher, the personality of the student is the main value and the main object of his care”. VI. Pâslaru argues that on the basis of the “correlation of education and upbringing” reflecting the content of educational activity, he identifies the

following forms of organization of the educational process:

- the educational process is fully identified with the educational;
- the educational process is organized as additional to the educational [12].

A study of the theory and practice of *Moral-spiritual education* shows that this type of education will be effective only if, in addition to its full identification with training, its additional system components are organized.

The synthesis of conceptual ideas makes it possible to systematize the following principles of *Moral-spiritual education*:

1. The principle of continuity:

- enriches the content, forms and methods of training and education, accumulates positive results at all stages of the program;
- determines the nature of the relationship between the stages of the pedagogical process, helps to establish patterns, which allows us to predict the logic of its further development;
- allows you to accumulate facts for analysis, correction and prediction of personality development, correction of negative trends, improving the functions of subjects of the educational process;
- provides stable interaction and common requirements both in the direction of a schoolboy-family-school-society, and

vertically the teaching staff – representatives of the Church – other interested services;

- mediates the focus of interaction, the observance of common goals and objectives for all participants in the educational process, in the context of constant dynamic changes in various areas of society, allows you to change, refine, adjust goals, objectives, forms and methods of pedagogical impact.

2. The principle of integration and differentiation:

- contributes to strengthening the links between the content, forms and methods of education, their universalization and harmonization;

- differentiation leads to the division of the system into separate elements with their specific features and characteristics, necessitates taking into account the differences in spheres of influence, and also acts as a form of division of collective labor, which is advisable when the goals are multifaceted;

- the more actively the integration process takes place, the more differentiation manifests itself in different forms, striving to maintain the independence of the elements of the educational system;

- integration takes on the character of a leading trend, combines all the elements and creates objective opportunities for the development of the system, and ensures the integrity of the processes.

3. The principle of coordination:

- provides for the possibility of mutual information, consultations, inclusion of other stakeholders, taking into account possible alternative approaches;

- creates conditions for the sequential actions of all subjects in the educational process.

4. The principle of science:

- provides a combination of practical activity with the scientific and theoretical development of this problem;

- promotes the increase of competence, professional skill of teaching staff, overcoming pedagogical illiteracy of parents;

- creates the foundation for the formation of a scientific worldview, positive motivation of students.

The implementation of the above principles of constructing the concept of spiritual and moral education of schoolchildren on the basis of the Orthodox culture presupposes the creative approach of teachers and on the basis of scientific and pedagogical search and practice will help to identify more advanced ways of implementation.

The goal of spiritual and moral education is to develop the beginning in the culture of spiritual and moral education of a modern student.

Tasks:

Educational:

- formation of a holistic view of students about the Orthodox culture (its

history, nature, cult traditions, symbols, personalities, architecture, lifestyle, legal, ethical standards and regulations, scriptures etc.).

Developing:

- the development of cognitive activity in the field of Orthodox culture (creativity, criticality, thinking, the ability to compare, determine the values of Orthodoxy).

Upbringing:

- the upbringing of moral, national, civil, environmental, aesthetic culture on the basis of the Orthodox culture;
- the education of patriotism, a culture of peace, healthy lifestyle.

Following a systematic approach, it is necessary to build the educational process in such a way that its functioning is carried out, firstly, on the basis of the unity of its constituent parts; secondly, a balanced interaction of these parts in the process of organizing management was provided; thirdly, in the motivational readiness of the teacher for such work, the ability to quickly navigate the situation.

The postulates we have cited are used in the implementation of the concept through principles that are objective in origin and subjective in application. When they are carried out, two most important functions are realized: tentative and prognostic (choice of ways to achieve goals); and the function of the link between theory and practice (predetermining the results of educational activities).

A component of the concept of managing spiritual and moral education of students is the choice of interaction methods.

L. Cuznețov, Vl. Pâslaru in his studies points to subjective circumstances that impede the effectiveness of the educational impact: the historically established attitude of many educators on the educational impact as on the treatment of an adolescent object with a rather limited set of methods: encouragement. Punishment, a system of competitions, and for educational activities as the main, almost the only socially evaluated function of the school, for the classroom-lesson organization of educational work as the only support [8; 11]. The integration of the cultural and moral values of Orthodoxy and the culture of upbringing in Orthodox schools is considered as a process of developing a national-regional system of upbringing. The educational field in which the values of Orthodoxy are considered, culture is chosen. Let us outline the positions of the Orthodox culture in the formation of the schoolchild's spirituality: National culture (national identity and Orthodoxy), the determination of the value of which transcends the boundaries of the national, gaining universal significance.

Thus, the World Culture is formed: religious tolerance, tolerance in Orthodoxy.

Inside both nationality and world culture are designated:

- cognitive culture: students' knowledge of Orthodox culture;

- moral culture: the attitude of Orthodoxy to a person, family, society; ethical standards and traditions;
- culture of a healthy lifestyle (the attitude of Orthodoxy to bad habits, ecology, non-traditional religious trends).

Thus, this concept contains a set of measures and measures that can increase the level of spiritual and moral culture of a student based on the Orthodox culture in society.

In conclusion. The educational potential of Orthodox culture coexists latently in national and universal culture. The study of *Moral-spiritual education* practices in the Republic of Moldova showed that the pedagogical exploration of this potential in general education is systemic and is carried out in the formula: practical approach-theoretical conceptualization-legalization and standardization-technology (development of educational tools: curriculum, guides, teaching materials)-identification of new problems (praxiological approach)-etc. (a new circle of knowledge).

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