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**FAMILY ETHNOPEDAGOGY IN THE FORMATION OF A CHILD'S ETHNOCULTURAL  
IDENTITY IN MODERN CONDITIONS**

**Dr. Elena Valentinovna Goverdovskaya**

Volgograd State Medical University, Russia

ORCID: 0000-0001-5987-3277

elena\_goverdovskaya@mail.ru

**Ph. D. (c) Ekaterina Anatol'evna Tatarinceva**

Armavir State Pedagogical University, Russia

ORCID: 0000-0002-3868-9216

vorojko86@mail.ru

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djagaeva\_tatiana@mail.ru

**Ph. D. (c) Rovzat Arbienva Alikhanova**

Chechen State Pedagogical university, Russia

ORCID: 0000-0001-8374-8943

arovzat@mail.ru

**Dr. Leorena Ahmedovna Kharaeva**

Kabardino-Balkarian State University after H.M. Berbekov, Russia

ORCID: 0000-0001-6911-1997

leorenakharaeva@mail.ru

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**Abstract**

The present article examines the structure of ethnocultural identity; the factors influencing its formation; the peculiarities of Chechen identity and the use of methods of folk pedagogy for the development of ethnocultural identification of children. The relevance of the study is in the need to find the most effective pedagogical tools that form the ethnic and cultural identity of a child; encourage the development of the culture of interethnic communication; teach to respect both the native and foreign spiritual values and traditions. There is also a need to find opportunities to introduce all these methods in the daily routines of families and educational institutions.

**Keywords**

Identity – Ethnopedagogy – Ethnic environment – Identity components – Cognitive component

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## Introduction

Nowadays, the question of finding the most effective pedagogical methods of educating the younger generation is especially acute due to economic instability, aggravated social, political and economic problems both in Russia and in the world, interethnic conflicts and crises arising from time to time, and, finally, general globalization of both the economy and ideology. Among such methods, folk pedagogy occupies a special place, as they have proven their effectiveness through centuries of practice, but, unfortunately, they are undeservedly forgotten.

Ethnopedagogy is based on the “golden rule” formulated by academician G.N. Volkov: “without historical memory, there are no traditions; without traditions, there is no culture; without culture, there is no upbringing; without upbringing, there is no spirituality; without spirituality, there is no personality; without personality, a nation as a historical personality does not exist”<sup>1</sup>.

A significant part of the negative processes in society associated with the loss of value orientations, national intolerance and aggression towards representatives of other ethnic groups appear due to the absence of a well-coordinated system of ethnic education, which should start in the family, continue in preschool institutions and schools and be supported by all public institutions. In this regard, the study of the ethnopedagogical experience of the North Caucasian peoples is of particular value, since the ethnopedagogy of a multinational region has developed for centuries and made it possible to educate generations capable of maintaining good-neighbourly relations with other peoples, despite cultural, religious and linguistic differences.

The Chechen culture was formed as a part of the Caucasian culture; therefore, an examination of the Chechen ethnocultural identity is possible within a broader socio-cultural phenomenon called “Caucasian identity”.

Caucasian identity is one of the immutable forms of the spiritual life of representatives of Caucasian ethnic groups, which is expressed in the awareness of belonging to a community called the Caucasian world by each representative of the Caucasian peoples and in self-determination in the unity of this world<sup>2</sup>.

Ethnocultural identity is a socio-cultural phenomenon, expressed in the awareness of a person's belonging to an ethnic community, acceptance of cultural, spiritual and material values of this community, its language, history and religion.

Identity for Chechens is determined by two components: ethnic and religious, which are bound together for them. The identity of the Chechens is inseparable from Islam with its laws and traditions, which to a large extent determine the cultural traditions of the Chechen ethnos. The defining criterion of ethnocultural identity for Chechens is the language and genealogy, and their distinguishing feature from other ethnic groups are national traditions and national character. Some of the distinctive features of the Chechen

<sup>1</sup> G. N. Volkov, *Etnopedagogika: a textbook for students of secondary and higher pedagogical educational institutions* (Moscow: Publishing center “Akademiya”, 1999).

<sup>2</sup> A. Yu. Shadzhe, O.N. Damenia, “Dinamika sotsiokulturnykh transformatsii na Severnom Kavkaze”, *Sotsialno-gumanitarnye znaniya* num 4 (2002): 71–72.

identity as a part of the common Caucasian identity are social organization according to the principle of teips, a special attitude to the homeland, the tradition of blood revenge, family cohesion and family responsibility<sup>3,4</sup>.

Throughout its history, the Chechen ethnus has experienced many upheavals, external and internal conflicts, which could not but affect the ethnocultural identity of the people. This identity is characterized by special solidarity, which increases even more in a multi-ethnic environment or while living within another ethnic group, as well as by careful observance of national traditions both in general cultural terms and in everyday life. Moreover, the vector of the formation of the Chechen identity outside the ethnic environment is intensifying, having the following form: ethnus → teip → family<sup>5</sup>.

There are several components of the structure of ethnocultural identity<sup>6</sup>.

*The cognitive component* combines the child's ideas about an ethnocultural community and the awareness of the belonging to this community. It includes the child's knowledge of the origin, as well as stereotypical ideas about national characteristics of behaviour, appearance and character<sup>7</sup>.

*The affective component* combines the feelings and emotions of the child associated with the awareness of the belonging to a particular ethnic group<sup>8</sup>.

*The behavioural component* is expressed in the child's activities associated with the involvement in a cultural and ethnic community of the society; building relationships within this society, participation in cultural, religious and social events<sup>9</sup>.

*The value-oriented component* includes the cultural and spiritual traditions of the ethnus, perceived by the child as value orientations, the attitude to other ethnocultural communities and the principles of interaction with representatives of other nations developed by the child.

Many authors identify the following factors in the formation of ethnocultural identity: culture, language and history of the nation, common traditions and customs, ethnocultural differences from other communities<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Sh. M-Kh. Arsaliev, "Vliyaniya tsifrovых tekhnologii na formirovaniye i razvitiye funktsii semi v usloviyakh sovremennoi informatsionnoi obshchestva" Ekonomicheskie i gumanitarnye issledovaniya regionov num 3 (2020)

<sup>4</sup> S. Sh. Zhemchuraeva, "Istoricheskie osobennosti formirovaniya etnicheskoi identichnosti chechentsev", Izvestiya of Saratov University, Series: Sociology, Politology num 3 (2010).

<sup>5</sup> S. Sh. Zhemchuraeva, Teoretiko-metodologicheskie aspekty sotsiologicheskoi diagnostiki identichnosti chechentsev v polietnicheskoi srede: synopsis of a thesis, PhD in Sociology (Saratov: Saratov State University, 2010)

<sup>6</sup> A. V. Reprintsev y I. S. Sukhorukov, "Formirovaniye etnokulturnoi identichnosti podrostkov i yunostestva kak problema sovremennoi psikhologii i sotsialnoi pedagogiki", Belgorod State University Scientific Bulletin. Humanities series Vol: 7 num 256 (2017).

<sup>7</sup> A. V. Reprintsev y I. S. Sukhorukov, "Formirovaniye etnokulturnoi identichnosti..."

<sup>8</sup> T. G. Stefanenko, Izuchenie identifikatsionnykh protsessov v psikhologii i smezhnykh naukakh. Transformatsii identifikatsionnykh struktur v sovremennoi Rossii (Moscow: Moscow Public Science Foundation, 2001)

<sup>9</sup> T. G. Stefanenko, Izuchenie identifikatsionnykh protsessov...

The formation of ethnocultural identity begins in early childhood and is realized at three levels:

- the cognitive level presupposes the child's first acquaintance with the basics of the national culture, traditions and customs, which begins in the family. Bedtime stories, lullabies, sayings and proverbs, children's games and family holidays – all these elements of oral traditions and family education serve as prerequisites for the subsequent ethnocultural identification of a child;
- the activity level of ethnic and cultural identity is formed in the process of mastering the language and involving it in creative cultural activities through participation in traditional national holidays, mastering the elements of national dances, songs, music and other forms of folk art;
- the practical level of ethnocultural identity implies the people's inclusion in the society of an ethnic community, their self-development and self-realization both within this community and in the multi-ethnic space<sup>11</sup>.

In the most sensitive period for the formation of the ethnic and cultural identity of children, namely in preschool and primary school age, the leading role is assigned to family education.

The process of ethnocultural identification in the family is implemented in three main forms:

- the latent form, in which the child unconsciously assimilates the relationships adopted in the family, the style of communication within the family, sayings and proverbs, often used by parents and older family members, techniques and methods of education;
- the traditional form, giving an idea of the role and function of the family in an ethnocultural community, as well as customs, rules of behaviour in society and religion;
- the reflexive form, which is expressed in the formation of children's attitude towards the family and ethnic group, as well as in the awareness of themselves as members of their families and their ethnic group, and the formation of their inner image of a representative of their people<sup>12</sup>.

The methods and forms of ethnopedagogy in the family are, for example, the distribution of responsibilities between family members and the designation of their social roles; the co-organization of family celebrations and the participation in the national and religious holidays; the study of family genealogy and family history; keeping family albums; preserving family history; passing the cooking recipes. Ethnopedagogy, passed down from

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<sup>10</sup> A. V. Reprintsev y I. S. Sukhorukov, "Formirovanie etnokulturnoi identichnosti..."

<sup>11</sup> N. I. Gulneva-Lugovskaya, "Etnokulturnoe prosveshchenie v sisteme mezhnatsionalnoi tolerantnosti v Kaliningradskom anklave", Izvestia: Herzen University Journal of Humanities & Sciences num 105 (2009).

<sup>12</sup> Yu. P. Vetrov y L. N. Kh ludova, "Nauchnye shkoly v usloviyakh transformatsii vysshego obrazovaniya", Ekonomicheskie i gumanitarnye issledovaniya regionov num 3 (2020).

generation to generation, having centuries-old traditions and reflected in legends, songs, tales, proverbs, sayings of the native language, traditions, customs and beliefs, serves as a powerful means of educating a child's ethnic and cultural identification<sup>13</sup>.

Modern ideas about the nature of ethnocultural identity, its components and patterns of formation make it possible to diagnose the level of its formation and its development dynamics using special methods developed for such kind of research.

The aim of this study: to reveal the interconnection between ethnopedagogical education in the family and the level of formation of the ethnocultural identity of children of primary school age.

## Methods

Analysis of scientific literature data on the examined issues; conversations, observation, questionnaire; qualitative and quantitative analysis of the empirical data.

The research was carried out based on a secondary school in Grozny. The study involved students from the third and the fourth grades and their parents.

To examine the ethnic and cultural identity of children, we used a questionnaire developed by O.L. Romanova<sup>14</sup> for the cognitive component analysis; "Scale of express assessment of the ethnic identity level" developed by N.M. Lebedeva<sup>15</sup> for the affective component analysis; "methodology for the assessment of the positivity and uncertainty levels of ethnic identity" developed by A.N. Tatarko and N.M. Lebedeva<sup>16</sup> for the value-oriented component analysis. Besides, we conducted a survey among the parents of the students, during which they were asked to answer questions related to the structure of the family, the observance of national and Islamic traditions and the everyday language of communication.

The study involved 98 primary school students and 95 members of their families (a father, a mother, a grandfather or a grandmother). 91% of the respondents were Chechens, 4% were Russians, 1% were Kumyks, 1% were Avars (0.3), 2% were Kazakhs, and 1% were Tatars.

The study of the cognitive component of the children's ethnocultural identity revealed that 72% of the respondents developed a strong interest in the history and culture of their nation. They speak their native language, know the history of their family and observe family, national and religious traditions. 14% of the respondents know their nationality, but they are indifferent to the cultural traditions of the ethnos. They focus more on common human values and Western standards of mass culture.

<sup>13</sup> G. A. Geller, Semya v sisteme faktorov formirovaniya etnokulturnoi identichnosti lichnosti rebenka. Etnopedagogika kak faktor sokhraneniya Rossiiskoi identichnosti: Materials from the International Scientific and Practical Conference dedicated to the 90th anniversary of Academician G.N. Volkova (Cheboksary, June 22-24, 2017)

<sup>14</sup> T. G. Stefanenko, Etnopsikhologiya (Moscow: Norma, 2013).

<sup>15</sup> A. N. Tatarko y N. M. Lebedeva, Metody etnicheskoi i krosskulturnoi psikhologii (Moscow: HSE, 2011).

<sup>16</sup> A. N. Tatarko y N. M. Lebedeva, Metody etnicheskoi i krosskulturnoi psikhologii...

They understand their native language, but do not speak it. 4% of children do not identify themselves with a certain ethnic group and do not speak their native language.

Analysis of the affective component of ethnocultural identity showed that about two-thirds of children (62%) show a positive attitude towards their ethnos, while 36% of them were neutral and 2% – negative. Children from the first group are proud of their ethnicity, value the culture and traditions of their nation and know the names of famous compatriots. Children from the second group rejoice at the achievements of their compatriots in sports, art, science; they support national teams, but at the same time they do not feel any emotions from their belonging to a particular ethnic group. Students from the third group preferred not to discuss their nationality in the conversation, they were reluctant to answer questions or refused to answer them at all.

The study of the level of the value-oriented component of the ethnic and cultural identity of children gave the following results:

- 38% of the surveyed children are proud of their nation, culture and traditions. They consider it to be unique and superior over others and show a negative attitude towards other nationalities;
- 45% of students have a positive attitude towards their ethnic group, they are familiar with the culture of their nation, observe the traditions and customs, but at the same time show respect for other nationalities;
- 15% of the respondents have a neutral attitude to their ethnos and are indifferent towards the culture and traditions;
- 2% of children said that they have a negative attitude towards their nationality, sometimes they feel oppressed and would like to leave the region or even the country.

The emotions caused by belonging to a particular ethnocultural group include a wide range from extremely negative to extremely positive. Extreme values, both negative and positive, go beyond the boundaries of the norm, since only a calm positive attitude to one's ethnic group with the clear respect for all others can indicate a formed positive ethnocultural identity of a person.

The questionnaire of the parents (family members) of students allowed us to conventionally divide all the respondents into three groups. The first group includes 78% of the respondents. They speak at home their native language, observe religious norms and customs of their nation and bring up children according to national traditions. The second group includes 15% of the respondents. They speak at home a mixed language, using words from both their native and the Russian languages, observe family traditions rather than national, honour religious principles, but do not always follow them. The third group includes 7% of the respondents who do not speak their native language, although they understand it. They treat the national traditions neutrally or with irony and prefer Western standards of family relations and upbringing children.

## Results

A comparative analysis of the results of the survey of students and the questionnaire of their parents revealed a correlation between the level of ethnopedagogical education in the family and the level of the formation of positive ethnocultural identification in children. Thus, all 45% of students, who demonstrated the normal development of the value-oriented component, were brought up in families classified in the first group, that is, where the methods of ethnopedagogy are actively used. It was also revealed that some children, who live in families classified in the third group, have a hypertrophied sense of belonging to their ethnic group and demonstrate a negative attitude towards other nationalities. This fact may mean that in a mono-ethnic environment, where the ethnopedagogical education in the family is absent, other, non-family factors (such as mass media, social environment and negative experience) influence the formation of a child's ethnocultural identity, and this influence is not always positive.

## Conclusion

The results of the study let us conclude the following:

1. Chechens' ethnocultural identity, as a part of a broader phenomenon called "Caucasian identity", has several distinctive features, such as teip and patronymic forms of social structure, sacred attitude to the homeland, collective and individual responsibility, family solidarity.

2. Ethnocultural identity has its structure, including cognitive, affective and value-oriented components, each of which can be diagnosed with the help of ethnopsychological and sociological methods.

3. The development of ethnocultural identity begins in early childhood, while the socio-cultural environment of the child (in general, the family) is of decisive importance.

4. Ethnopedagogical methods of upbringing have a positive effect on the formation of ethnic and cultural identity of children. Their absence, in their turn, can lead to insufficient development of identity or to its hypertrophied development, which is expressed in an intolerant attitude towards other ethnic groups.

5. The techniques and methods of ethnopedagogy must be revived and supported by introducing them into the daily routines of family education. Also, their adapted form should be introduced into the pedagogical practice of preschool education institutions and elementary schools.

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DR. ELENA VALENTINOVNA GOVERDOVSKAYA / PH. D (C) EKATERINA ANATOL'EVNA TATARINCEVA  
DR. TATYANA ERASTOVNA DZHAGAEVA / PH. D. (C) ROVZAT ARBIEVNA ALIKHANOVA  
DR. LEORENA AHMEDOVNA KHARAEVA