



THE ROLE OF FOLK HANDICRAFTS IN NATIONAL CULTURE AND THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

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Abstract

This article examines the role of folk handicrafts in preserving national culture and integrating traditional values into the modern education system. Folk handicrafts are considered an important component of cultural heritage that reflects the historical experience, worldview, and aesthetic ideals of the people. The study highlights the educational potential of folk handicrafts in developing students' social, cultural, and creative competencies. It also emphasizes their significance in fostering national identity, respect for cultural traditions, and practical skills through the educational process. The integration of folk handicrafts into formal education contributes to the formation of spiritually rich, socially active, and creatively oriented individuals.

Keywords: Folk handicrafts, national culture, education system, cultural heritage, social competencies, traditional values, national identity.

INTRODUCTION

Since ancient times, the simplest and most accessible materials for making various household items have been wood, clay, wool, stone, and vine. Initially, humans created very simple household items, clothing, or tools, but over time, with the development of progress, these objects were modernized, sometimes even changing their form. Alongside their utilitarian purpose, the artistic aspect of the products also emerged. In the process of their creative activity, craftsmen



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sought to enrich the objects they created with decorative elements. Decorative design was expressed through painting, texture application, relief, openwork, and the use of color. Decoration using ornamentation was also employed, reflecting symbols of beliefs and ideas about the forces of nature, which ancient people believed influenced their lives.

With the further development of human society, the creative activity of the people also evolved. Around the late 19th and early 20th centuries, in certain locations – cities, towns, or villages where the population specialized in a particular craft – centers for the production of specific decorative and applied art items were formed. Such places are considered centers of folk crafts. Decorative and applied arts are closely connected with folk traditions and customs, as well as the characteristics and directions of national culture and art inherent to each people, expressed in oral, verbal, and musical creativity, beliefs, and rituals [1].

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Masters of their craft observed nature, animals, and people, listened to legends, epic tales, folk songs, and proverbs. The impressions they gathered from what they saw and heard were transformed into specific artistic images. Beautiful, fantastical flowers, intricate and winding stems and branches of plants, the animal world—including beasts, extraordinary fish, birds, and human life – storyline depictions, and much more were embodied in the works of folk masters through form, painting, carving, or plastic relief.

In our social reality, as in any society, there is the problem of preserving and developing folk crafts, which unfortunately are gradually disappearing today. Among the vast number of crafts, some have found a place in the modern world – they have “adapted” to the dynamic life of our time, continuing to exist and work creatively – but many crafts disappeared along with the last master who knew the technological process of creating a particular type of folk art. This is due to the fact that some items that were necessary in the past lost their utilitarian significance in the present, the raw material base has diminished, and globalization, which has affected folk crafts, has made it impossible for handmade products to compete with mass-produced goods that have lower costs.



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As a result, one of the most significant segments of Russian culture and art is at risk of disappearing [2].

According to M.A. Nekrasova, folk art is a huge part of the culture of every individual, society, and the state as a whole. The government provides substantial support to folk crafts, contributing to their preservation and further development. One of the most important tasks for the state and society is the upbringing of a fully developed individual, spiritually and morally mature, who understands and appreciates the values of their country and feels pride in their homeland.

The use of folk applied art to address the problem of forming value orientations and personal qualities in young people is considered in the works of O.V. Ataulov, L.V. Kuznetsova, N.B. Smirnova, G.A. Nikitin, and others. The modern education system aims to raise a new generation whose members will become active creators and custodians of the spiritual values of the national culture of our people, fostered with friendly attitudes toward other nations and cultures. This occurs through cultivating interest in folk art via storytelling and practical workshops on creating items related to specific crafts. Education begins at the earliest age – preschool – and continues through school art lessons. At an older age, during secondary and higher professional education, students become aware of the significance of artistic crafts in the culture and art of the people and the overall prosperity of the state [3].

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

In the process of learning about folk crafts, students should develop a specific system of knowledge about folk art, national culture, moral values, and behavioral norms. Engaging the younger generation in artistic crafts, which preserve the originality and cultural traditions of folk art, is directly related to generational continuity, which is one of the main tasks in preserving and developing folk artistic crafts [4].

The existence of any society is based on its past, traditions, and way of life. At any stage of development, humanity needs a connection between the generations of the past, present, and future. This naturally occurs through the study of folk art, by exploring material and spiritual culture, understanding, and mastering the traditions of various crafts. In this way, young people enrich their spiritual world



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and enhance their level of self-awareness. The study of folk traditions through decorative and applied arts plays a significant role in developing students' value-based attitude specifically toward national culture. Thus, in-depth and comprehensive study of different types of traditional crafts provides wide opportunities for ethnocultural education.

The mastery of a particular craft has always occurred through the transfer of knowledge from master to apprentice, from parents to children. In our time, with the development of technical progress, remote learning methods for creating certain works of art have emerged. However, this can create cognitive dissonance and does not align with the centuries-old system of training in folk art. Often, in much of the educational cycle, computer-aided design and utilitarian creative functions are emphasized, which largely substitute for hands-on work with materials [4].

It is difficult, and sometimes even impossible, to teach decorative and applied techniques remotely. There are many nuances in passing on craftsmanship to the younger generation, such as in shaping forms or decorative design, which can only be taught effectively "in person." Students need to feel the material, touch it with their hands, hear comments, and observe the master's hand movements during the step-by-step creation process.

The perception of folk artistic crafts occurs through the emotional state of each individual. Traditions embedded in folk crafts greatly influence the manifestation of human emotions and feelings, which in turn encourages empathy and respect for others, strengthening interpersonal relationships within families, collectives, and society as a whole [5].

Integrating training and education through folk art in educational institutions – with its established images, themes, and universal artistic language – not only has a significant educational impact on students but also introduces them to various practice-oriented artistic activities. During lessons on mastering folk crafts, young people learn the substantive meaning and value of decorative and applied art and folk creativity, and apply this knowledge in practical activities when designing and creating their own original artistic works.

For students, especially those receiving an artistic education, it is important to have comprehensive knowledge of culture and art and to use methods of



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professional thinking. The interconnection of these competencies contributes to preparation for future professional activities in a chosen branch of traditional folk art and fosters personal qualities such as tolerance, friendliness, and responsibility.

Alongside other pedagogical processes, immersion in crafts gives students the opportunity to engage in labor in general, and in particular in meticulous, interesting, and rewarding work creating folk art products. Students studying decorative and applied arts and folk crafts will later, with experience, demonstrate their mastery by creating original works in their field. The unity of acquiring theoretical knowledge and mastering practical skills ensures high results in any creative activity focused on forming Russia's spiritual and material culture [6].

During the learning process, students should develop a structured system of knowledge about folk art, national culture, moral values, and cultural behavior. They should also develop research and scientific skills, acquiring not only new general cultural knowledge but also functional research abilities as a way to master professional competencies. Knowledge, which forms the foundation of students' mastery, will always distinguish them from amateurs in art. Without the necessary competencies, genuine professional creative work is impossible. Highly skilled artists capable of creating works of decorative and applied art are the driving force for the further development of traditional artistic crafts.

Exposure to folk art fosters the artistic taste of the younger generation. Developing artistic taste and creative initiative forms the aesthetic culture of the individual and reveals each person's creative potential. The presence of artistic taste is especially important for young people, as its formation is closely connected with personality development, the enhancement of aesthetic culture, and individuality, which is the most valuable aspect of a person.

CONCLUSION

Folk crafts play a vital role in preserving and transmitting national culture, traditions, and values across generations. The study and practice of decorative and applied arts not only enrich the spiritual and cultural development of young people but also cultivate essential personal qualities such as tolerance, responsibility, and creativity. Hands-on engagement with traditional crafts



ensures the continuity of generational knowledge and strengthens emotional, social, and aesthetic competencies. While modern technologies offer new methods of learning, the mastery of folk art remains most effective through direct, practical experience with materials and guidance from skilled masters. Integrating folk crafts into the education system fosters a deep understanding of national heritage, nurtures artistic taste, and prepares students to contribute to the preservation, development, and creative evolution of their cultural legacy.

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