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Methodology of Nurturing Kindness and Generosity in Primary-School Children Based on Navoiy's Maxims

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Abstract: This article examines the use of Alisher Navoiy's maxims in nurturing kindness and generosity in primary-school children. The thinker's ideas on humanism, generosity, and mutual help are analyzed from the standpoint of their potential for shaping the spirituality of younger pupils. The practical experience of linking wise sayings to real-life situations, role-play, and group activities is presented through a comparison of the results of the experimental and control classes. The findings show that education grounded in Navoiy's maxims ensures that moral qualities do not remain mere knowledge but translate into real behavior.

Keywords: Navoiy's Maxims, Kindness, Generosity, Moral and Spiritual Education, Primary Education, Moral Values, National Heritage, Interactive Methods, Educational Situation, Role-Play

1. Introduction

Raising the younger generation to be spiritually mature is one of the most responsible tasks facing the education system. Qualities such as kindness, generosity, compassion, and mutual respect, once instilled in a child's nature from an early age, are preserved throughout life and form the moral core of the personality. Research in pedagogy and developmental psychology shows that it is precisely between the ages of seven and ten that a child first forms ideas about empathy, conscience, and justice. At this age the child perceives the world primarily through feeling, imitates surrounding adults and peers, and only begins to distinguish good from bad. The right guidance given in this delicate period lays the foundation for the rest of life.[1]

Today, when the flow of information has intensified and the child is exposed to many influences at once, the importance of moral education has grown even further. As mobile phones, the internet, and various forms of entertainment occupy a child's free time, the need for education based on family and national values increases. The spiritual and educational reforms being carried out in Uzbekistan also make reliance on national heritage in youth education a pressing task. From this perspective, making productive use of the gems of our classical literature is one of the important directions of modern pedagogy.[2]

The idea of using Navoiy's maxims in education is not new. Classical enlighteners and later pedagogues also recommended turning to Navoiy's heritage in raising a moral younger generation. However, this appeal has often been limited to memorizing a maxim or explaining its meaning orally. Modern pedagogy, by contrast, demands the child's active participation, emotional involvement, and practical activity. Thus, combining Navoiy's maxims with today's interactive teaching methods serves as an important bridge linking tradition and modernity.

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A child masters moral concepts not through abstract definitions but through concrete examples, images, and emotion. Therefore, the effectiveness of education largely depends on the means it relies upon. Our people's centuries-old spiritual heritage, and especially the work of Alisher Navoiy, is an inexhaustible treasure in this regard. In his works Navoiy defined humanism, generosity, kindness, honesty, and helping others as the qualities of a perfect human being. The maxims in "Mahbub ul-Qulub" and "Hayrat ul-Abror" have a simple content that a child can understand, and the ideas they advance are in harmony with today's educational requirements.[3]

Navoiy's line "If you are a human, do not call a person the one who has no sorrow for the sorrow of the people" locates the measure of humanity in the ability to share another's pain. This idea clearly expresses the essence of nurturing kindness. The thinker interprets generosity not only as sharing wealth but as openness of heart and a desire to benefit others. Such views can serve as a firm support in shaping a child's moral world, for they unite universal and national values.[4]

Experience shows, however, that merely having children memorize maxims or read them aloud does not yield the intended result. The child must feel the meaning of the maxim, connect it with personal life experience, and draw the resulting conclusion independently. Only then does the maxim cease to be dry advice and become part of the child's behavior. Traditional methods of education cannot always ensure such deep assimilation. For this reason, developing a methodology that conveys Navoiy's heritage to children in harmony with modern interactive methods – role-play, dramatization, group discussion, and analysis of educational situations – is a pressing issue. This article examines precisely this issue, both theoretically and practically.

2. Materials and Methods

The study was aimed at identifying the possibilities of nurturing kindness and generosity in pupils of grades 1–4 on the basis of Navoiy's maxims. The experimental work was carried out in general secondary schools, with a total of 96 pupils taking part: 48 formed the experimental group and 48 the control group. Both groups were selected to be close to each other in age, academic performance, and initial educational indicators, which made an unbiased comparison of results possible. The main research methods were pedagogical observation, conversation with pupils, questionnaires, comparative analysis of their behavior, and pedagogical experiment.[5]

Maxims from Navoiy's "Mahbub ul-Qulub" and "Hayrat ul-Abror", didactic poetic passages, relevant texts from primary-school reading and ethics textbooks, and legends and fables adapted to children's age were selected as research materials. The maxims were grouped by theme: kindness, generosity, honesty, diligence, compassion, and mutual help. For each theme one core maxim and a reinforcing legend or real-life example were prepared. This allowed the teacher to reveal the concept consistently throughout the lesson.

The methodological work was carried out in three stages. In the first, explanatory stage, the maxims were adapted into language children could understand. In the lesson the maxim was read aloud, unfamiliar words were explained, its meaning was opened up through questions and answers, and it was then discussed together with the pupils. The aim was for the child to grasp the meaning rather than memorize the maxim mechanically. At this stage the teacher acted not as a leader but as an interlocutor.[6]

In the second, activation stage, group work and play methods were introduced. Pupils were divided into small groups and expressed the idea advanced in the maxim through role-play, a short scene, or a drawing. On the themes of generosity and kindness, real-life situations were constructed, and the children determined through discussion which course of action was right. Educational games such as the "tree of kindness" and the "box of warmth" were used here: each pupil reported a good deed done during the day or

dramatized a situation of helping a peer. This stage ensured the child's active participation and emotional involvement.[7]

In the third, consolidation stage, an analysis of educational situations was carried out. Pupils were presented with situations encountered in life that required a moral choice, and they evaluated each situation on the basis of the meaning of the relevant maxim. To determine and assess the results, pedagogical observation, comparative analysis of pupils' behavior, conversation, and questionnaire methods were used. At the beginning and end of the experiment, the behavioral indicators of both groups were recorded against three criteria – willingness to help a peer, expressing compassion, and sharing one's belongings. In the experimental class the lessons were organized on the basis of Navoiy's maxims and interactive methods, and in the control class in the traditional way.[8]

3. Results and Discussion

Bringing the maxim closer to the child's perception

Observations showed that when a maxim reaches the child in close, familiar language and with a concrete example, the child begins to feel the moral meaning on their own. Compared with dry admonition, a maxim conveyed together with a real-life situation and play has a markedly stronger effect. When the line "A person attains their goal through labor" was explained in connection with the theme of work and honesty, the pupils spoke about their own household chores and study tasks and drew conclusions about the value of labor. In such lessons the child not only remembered the maxim but found in it a meaning relevant to themselves – a sign that the moral concept had been truly assimilated. When a child finds the answer to "why should I act this way?" on their own, the rule ceases to be an external demand and becomes an inner conviction[9].

Generosity turning into practical action

In nurturing generosity, Navoiy's views on helping others and on generosity itself became an important support. In Navoiy's interpretation, generosity is not only material giving – considering another's sorrow as one's own, lifting someone's spirits, and teaching what one knows without sparing it are also manifestations of generosity. This broad meaning was conveyed to the children through the "tree of kindness" game: on a tree drawn on the classroom wall, each pupil wrote a good deed they had done, adding leaf after leaf. By the end of the week, the tree coming into leaf evoked visible joy in the children. In this way generosity ceased to be a concept in a book and became a practical act the child performed in daily life. Small but sincere actions – lending a pen to a peer, helping someone who had fallen to their feet, explaining something to one who did not know – increased. Importantly, the children began to feel kindness not as an obligation but as a source of joy[10].

The "box of warmth" game also proved useful in making the concept of generosity even more understandable for children. A special box was placed in the classroom, and each pupil wrote on paper a warm word or expression of gratitude they wished to address to a peer and placed it inside. At the end of the week the notes were read aloud. This game developed in the children the ability to notice one another's good qualities, to be grateful, and to say a kind word. Many pupils, inspired by such recognition, strove to do even more good. Thus, encouraging the child and acknowledging their good deed serves as an important impetus in the education of generosity.[11]

The educational impact of role-play and dramatization

The impact of role-play and dramatized stories was especially noticeable. When a child enacts a moral situation themselves, the change appears not at the level of knowledge but at the level of feeling and behavior. We observed that pupils who had played the scene "helping a friend" were more inclined to support their classmates in the following days, noticing on their own those in difficulty and hurrying to help. A child who plays a "good" character in a scene takes that quality on themselves as well – this is explained by the

phenomena of imitation and assimilation in developmental psychology. During play the child learns to put themselves in another's place, which is the psychological basis of empathy. Thus, making the child feel the idea of the maxim in practice imprints it not only on the mind but on the heart.

Analysis of educational situations and independent moral thinking

The analysis of situations taught pupils independent moral thinking. In discussions around questions such as "Should one help the poor?" and "What do you do if your friend makes a mistake?", the children listened to one another's views and tried to justify their own decisions. While at first most gave superficial answers, as the discussion deepened they began to use the concepts of compassion, forgiveness, and justice. This is an early but important manifestation of moral independence. When a child reaches a conclusion through their own reflection rather than repeating a ready-made answer, that conclusion becomes their conviction. In the course of discussion, the pupils' tolerance toward one another and their respect for differing opinions also grew[12].

It proved important that the situations were chosen to be close to the child's everyday experience. Simple yet lifelike cases were discussed: what to do when a classmate asks for a pencil they have forgotten, checking on a friend who has fallen ill, or helping a small child who has lost their way. When a child analyzes a situation familiar to them, the likelihood that the moral decision will carry over into real life increases. For this reason, constructing educational situations from the child's age characteristics and everyday environment enhanced the effectiveness of the methodology.

Maxims enriching language and thinking

Working with maxims enriched the children's speech and increased their interest in the mother tongue. In the process of interpreting figurative expressions, pupils learned new words, tried to grasp figurative meaning, and developed their aesthetic taste. The melodiousness of Navoiy's language attracted the children, and they memorized some lines of their own accord. A memorized maxim later appeared naturally in the child's speech – they began to refer to maxims in conversation or in debate. In this way Navoiy's heritage served the child's linguistic and aesthetic development alongside the education of kindness and generosity. This shows that moral education performs several tasks through a single means.

The combined effect of maxim and legend

Presenting each maxim together with a matching legend or fable further increased the effect. The child remembers and feels an abstract maxim through a concrete story. For example, when a maxim about generosity was linked to a short legend about a hero who, seeing another's need, gave help without reproach, the pupils wished to imitate the hero of the story[13]. The image in the legend became a living model for the child. This demonstrates the educational power of the artistic word – its capacity to influence through emotion. The maxim affected the mind, the legend the heart, and when the two were combined the moral idea was fully assimilated.

The role of the teacher and methodological recommendations

The experiment showed that in this methodology the teacher's skill is of decisive importance. The teacher must not merely read the maxim aloud but be able to connect it with the child's life, ask open questions, and listen with respect to every pupil's opinion. It is crucial in discussion not to state the correct answer at once but to prompt the child to think. Likewise, the teacher being a model of kindness and generosity – acting in accordance with their own words – is the most effective factor in education, for the child imitates above all what they see. Methodologically, it is recommended to organize the lessons regularly, briefly, and engagingly throughout the week, and to present the maxims consistently by theme.

The role of cooperation with the family

During the experiment it also became clear that the effect of education is higher when school and family act together. Pupils were given a small observation as homework – “whom did I help in my family today?” – and the results were discussed in the lesson. When parents acknowledged the good deed done by the child, this behavior was reinforced in the child. Thus, education based on Navoiy’s maxims should not be confined to the classroom but should extend to the family environment as well. This ensures the continuity of moral education and helps values take shape in the child as a coherent system.[14]

Comparative analysis of the experimental results

At the beginning of the experiment, the indicators of kindness and generosity in both groups were almost equal. By the end of the experiment, however, significant growth across all criteria was observed in the group that studied on the basis of Navoiy’s maxims and interactive methods. The table 1. below shows the share of pupils (in percent) who displayed positive behavior on each of the three criteria.

Table 1. Pupils (in percent) who displayed positive behavior on each of the three criteria

Assessment criterion	Control (start)	Experimental (start)	Experimental (end)
Willingness to help a peer	44 %	46 %	79 %
Ability to express compassion	40 %	42 %	75 %
Sharing one’s belongings (generosity)	38 %	39 %	72 %

As the table shows, while the indicators in the control group remained almost unchanged, in the experimental group all three roughly doubled. This shows that education grounded in Navoiy’s maxims and enriched with play and situation analysis is more effective than the traditional method. Most importantly, the growth appeared not in words alone but in the children’s real actions – helping, sharing, and showing compassion.

Moreover, the pupils’ attitude toward the maxims also changed. While at the start of the experiment most regarded the maxims as “old sayings”, by the end they came to see a maxim as useful advice relevant to their own lives. According to the questionnaire results, the majority of pupils in the experimental group rated the lessons as engaging and expressed a wish to learn more from Navoiy’s maxims. This shows that interest in classical heritage can awaken at an early age.

The results obtained are also consistent with the conclusions in the scholarly literature. Researchers note that education relying on national spiritual heritage and the artistic word activates moral feeling in the child and, when linked with personal experience, turns into stable behavior. The pedagogical potential of using examples of classical literature in education has likewise been substantiated in a number of sources[15]. The results of this study confirm that approach in primary-school conditions in practice and clarify the place of Navoiy’s maxims in the education of kindness and generosity. At the same time, the study showed that the harmony of interactive methods with national heritage opens up new educational possibilities.

4. Conclusion

The results of the study confirmed the high pedagogical potential of Navoiy’s maxims in nurturing kindness and generosity in primary-school pupils. The main condition is to bring the maxim closer to the child’s feelings through role-play, real-life situations, and group discussion rather than merely having it memorized. Under such an approach, moral

concepts pass into the child's behavior: the generosity and kindness they have read and heard about are manifested in real life as helping a peer, showing compassion, and sharing.

At the same time, working with maxims develops the child's speech, aesthetic taste, and awareness of national identity. The effect of education increases further when school and family act in cooperation. This shows how broad the educational potential of Navoiy's heritage is. The comparative analysis of the results of the experimental and control groups proved the superiority of such a methodology over the traditional one in figures as well.

For this reason, it is advisable to involve Navoiy's heritage regularly and consistently in the moral and spiritual education process of primary education. This serves the spiritual maturity of the younger generation, the transmission of our national values from generation to generation, and the strengthening of an atmosphere of kindness in society. In future research, testing this methodology in different grades and regions, studying its long-term effect, and enriching it with the heritage of other classical authors remain promising directions.

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