

EDUCATIONAL AND UPBRINGING IDEAS IN KARAKALPAK FOLK EPICS

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**Abstract**

The preservation and transmission of moral and ethical values through oral literature remain a foundational pillar of national identity and youth socialization. This qualitative academic investigation analyzes the profound educational and upbringing ideas embedded within traditional Karakalpak folk epics (dastans). Utilizing historical-pedagogical and psychological analytical frameworks, the study examines canonical texts such as "Alpamys," "Edige," and the uniquely Karakalpak epic "Kyrk Kyz" (Forty Girls) to isolate their core pedagogical mechanisms. The research identifies how these epics historically functioned as comprehensive, narrative-driven educational systems designed to instill patriotism, psychological resilience, ethical integrity, and civic duty within the younger generation. Notably, the qualitative review highlights the progressive, gender-inclusive pedagogical models presented in "Kyrk Kyz," which feature female protagonists exhibiting exceptional intellectual and leadership agency. The findings confirm that Karakalpak folk epics transcend mere literary aestheticism; they operate as sophisticated ethnopedagogical tools that provide active cognitive and behavioral scaffolding. Systematically integrating these traditional educational concepts into modern instructional curricula is identified as a strategic necessity to fortify the moral architecture and psychological stability of contemporary youth in a rapidly globalizing educational environment.

**Keywords:** Karakalpak folk epics, educational ideas, moral upbringing, ethnopedagogy, traditional socialization, psychological resilience, national heritage, narrative psychology.

**Introduction**

In the context of rapid globalization and the digitization of the modern educational landscape, there is a critical need to anchor developing youth to foundational cultural and moral archetypes. Modern pedagogical and psychological frameworks frequently prioritize cognitive achievement and technical competency, sometimes at the expense of holistic moral and character development. Historically, within the traditional societies of Central Asia, this critical developmental vacuum was filled by the rich oral epic tradition. Karakalpak folk epics, known as dastans, served as the primary societal institution for continuous education, encoding complex survival strategies, ethical codes, and psychological coping mechanisms into compelling narrative structures. Current pedagogical literature often treats these epics primarily as objects of philological, linguistic, or historical inquiry, severely underestimating their functional capacity as active educational technologies. Academic discourse frequently isolates the literary narrative from the psychological mechanism of observational learning—the process by which a young learner internalizes the moral framework of a revered protagonist. This research explicitly addresses this methodological gap by focusing strictly on the

pedagogical and psychological elements of the texts. The primary objective is to systematically decode the educational and upbringing ideas embedded within Karakalpak epics. By evaluating these narratives through a rigorous pedagogical lens, this study aims to transition the perception of folk epics from passive historical relics into validated instruments of modern character education.

### **Materials and Methods**

A qualitative, historical-pedagogical, and psychological content analysis was executed, targeting the canonical corpus of Karakalpak oral epics. The primary textual sampling frame encompassed the academic transcriptions of universally recognized epics such as "Alpamys" and "Edige," alongside the uniquely Karakalpak epic "Kyrk Kyz," recorded from the repertoire of the renowned zhyrau, Qurbanbay Tadjibayev. The investigative matrix evaluated the texts across specific psycho-pedagogical variables, prioritizing the systematic presentation of moral and ethical scaffolding, including ethical dilemmas, concepts of justice, honesty, and their archetypal resolutions. It also assessed patriotic and civic upbringing by analyzing the definition of civic duty, loyalty to the motherland, and collective responsibility, alongside psychological resilience and role modeling depicted via trauma, adversity, emotional regulation, and gender dynamics in leadership. Data synthesis utilized narrative psychological frameworks, specifically applying Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory to map how the protagonists within these epics function as optimal observational learning models for adolescents. The qualitative parameters were subsequently cross-referenced with modern state requirements for secondary education to determine their contemporary applicability.

### **Results**

The structural analysis of the epic corpus exposed a highly sophisticated, multi-tiered indigenous educational system that abandons passive, didactic moralizing in favor of dynamic behavioral modeling, aggressively targeting the listener's cognitive and emotional faculties.

Across all analyzed texts, the highest educational ideal is explicitly identified as the subjugation of personal ego for the collective survival and prosperity of the community. In epics like "Alpamys" and "Edige," the heroes endure severe psychological friction, physical captivity, and existential isolation, engineering a narrative framework where treason, cowardice, or selfishness results in immediate social and psychological annihilation. This effectively hardwires civic duty and profound patriotism into the developing adolescent psyche.

The epics systematically subject their protagonists to extreme adversity, and the detailed narration of their internal emotional regulation and refusal to succumb to cognitive despair functions as an early, indigenous form of psychological resilience training. This narrative structure teaches young listeners how to process acute psychological trauma, maintain moral integrity, and uphold justice under life-threatening circumstances.

Furthermore, the structural analysis of the "Kyrk Kyz" epic revealed a radical departure from traditional patriarchal educational norms. The protagonist, Gulayim, and her forty female companions are depicted as highly educated, strategically brilliant, and physically formidable defenders of the homeland. This epic provides a scientifically measurable, indigenous pedagogical template for female empowerment, establishing that intellectual agency, bravery, and civic leadership are not strictly gender-bound within traditional Karakalpak educational ideology.

### Discussion & Practical Significance

The qualitative trajectories synthesized within this analysis definitively validate the structural superiority of narrative-driven ethnopedagogy over isolated, didactic moral instruction. The core psychological advantage of the Karakalpak dastan resides in its ability to bypass the cognitive resistance common in youth education. When an educational idea is embedded within the immersive, culturally resonant narrative of an ancestral hero, the moral directive is seamlessly and voluntarily internalized, aligning robustly with Lev Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory of cognitive development. Furthermore, the pedagogical parameters of "Kyrk Kyz" offer a remarkable psychological asset for modern educators to effectively dismantle contemporary gender biases without generating cultural friction. Practically, these outcomes demand a structural recalibration of regional humanities and pedagogy curricula. Educational administrators must transition away from teaching epics merely as rote literature, instead integrating these historically validated texts into active psychological, ethical, and civic development modules within modern education systems.

### Conclusion

The traditional pedagogical models utilized in contemporary education frequently struggle to anchor students within a resilient psychological and moral framework. Karakalpak folk epics represent a critically underutilized, highly advanced system of indigenous pedagogical engineering. The profound educational ideas within these narratives decisively map the trajectories of human resilience, civic accountability, ethical behavior, and equitable social dynamics. Shifting institutional educational resources to aggressively re-integrate these ethnopedagogical matrices into modern instructional design successfully neutralizes the moral ambiguities of the modern era. Elevating the application of traditional epics from passive literary history to applied educational psychology is a strategic imperative required to secure the intellectual, moral, and psychological vitality of the next generation.

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