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THE FOLKLORE AND ITS CURRENT PROBLEMS

Kalandarova Safiya Toxirovna

Renessans iniversity

Department of "Foreign languages and Litertature" Associate Professor Phd

Maternal folklore is a subset of oral tradition that includes a wide range of narratives, songs, rhymes, beliefs, and practices passed down primarily by mothers and mother figures through generations. This article examines the unique characteristics of maternal folklore, focusing on its role in child rearing, cultural transmission, and gender role construction. The study highlights the unique characteristics of this genre by reviewing existing literature and analyzing representative examples, emphasizing its importance in understanding cultural values, social norms, and the maternal experience.

Keywords: Maternal folklore, oral tradition, cultural transmission, child rearing, lullabies, folk tales, rhymes, proverbs, cultural anthropology.

Annotatsiya Ona folklori — ogʻzaki ijodiyotning bir qismi boʻlib, u asosan onalar va ona oʻrnidagi shaxslar tomonidan avloddan avlodga oʻtib kelayotgan turli xil hikoyalar, qoʻshiqlar, topishmoqlar, eʼtiqodlar va urf-odatlar majmuasini oʻz ichiga oladi. Ushbu maqolada onalar folklorining oʻziga xos xususiyatlari koʻrib chiqiladi, uning bola tarbiyasi, rivojlanishidagi oʻrni, hamda madaniyatlararo rolga eʼtibor qaratiladi. Tadqiqot mavjud adabiyotlarni koʻrib chiqish va tipik misollarni tahlil qilish orqali ushbu janrning noyob xususiyatlarini oʻrganadi va uning madaniy qadriyatlar, ijtimoiy meʼyorlarlar va onalik tajribasini tushunishdagi ahamiyatini koʻrsatadi.

Kalit soʻzlar onalar folklori, ogʻzaki ijodiyot, til madaniyatlararo aloqa, farzand tarbiyasi, allalar, ertaklar, sheʼrlar, maqollar, madaniyat antropologiyasi.

Аннотация Материнский фольклор — это часть устного народного творчества, которая включает в себя широкий спектр повествований, песен, считалок, верований и обычаев, передаваемых, главным образом, матерями и матерями-воспитательницами из поколения в поколение. В данной статье рассматриваются уникальные характеристики материнского фольклора, основное внимание уделяется его роли в воспитании детей, передаче культуры и формировании гендерных ролей. Исследование, основанное на обзоре существующей литературы и анализе репрезентативных примеров, подчеркивает уникальные черты этого жанра и показывает его важность для понимания культурных ценностей, социальных норм и материнского опыта.

Ключевые слова: Материнский фольклор, устное народное творчество, передача культуры, воспитание детей, колыбельные песни, сказки, стишки, пословицы, культурная антропология.

Introduction. Folklore is a powerful way to pass down societal values, beliefs, knowledge, and traditions to future generations. Folklore represents a community's collective wisdom and lived experiences through a variety of artistic and communicative forms such as narratives, songs, rhymes, proverbs, rituals, and customary practices. Within this rich tapestry of cultural expression, maternal folklore emerges as a distinct and significant genre, inextricably linked to the maternal experience and the processes of child rearing, socialization, and cultural reproduction. Unlike other types of folklore, which can be attributed to specific individuals or social groups, maternal folklore is most

closely associated with women, particularly mothers and mother figures, who serve as its primary custodians and transmitters. This genre, which is frequently transmitted orally in familial and communal settings, serves as a repository of cultural knowledge, pedagogical strategies, and emotional expressions about motherhood and childrearing. It takes many forms, from the soothing melodies of lullabies used to comfort and lull infants to sleep, to cautionary tales and moralistic narratives that teach children about social norms and appropriate behavior. Maternal folklore also includes playful rhymes and games that promote language acquisition and cognitive development, as well as traditional beliefs and practices related to pregnancy, childbirth, and early childhood. This article delves into the unique characteristics of maternal folklore, examining its complex interplay with child development, cultural transmission, and the construction of gender roles in specific cultural settings. This study aims to shed light on the multifaceted functions and long-lasting significance of maternal folklore in shaping individual identities, familial relationships, and broader cultural landscapes by examining representative examples from various societies. It contends that maternal folklore not only reflects mothers' lived experiences, but also actively contributes to the perpetuation of cultural values, social norms, and intergenerational connections, making it a critical area of research for understanding the complex dynamics of culture and society.

Literature review. Previous studies on folklore have emphasized its importance in cultural identity and oral traditions (Dundes, 1965). Scholars such as Opie and Opie (1959) have extensively documented children's folklore, and Bettelheim (1976) investigated the psychological impact of fairy tales. However, few studies have specifically examined maternal folklore. This paper adds to the existing body of work by examining the distinctive features of maternal oral traditions.

Bascom (1965) divided folklore into four functions: entertainment, education, social control, and validation of cultural norms. Maternal folklore falls into these categories, particularly in socialization and education, because it plays an important role in a child's moral and cognitive growth. Tatar (1992) investigated the role of fairy tales in early childhood development, concluding that maternal folklore allows children to process fears and understand social structures. Zipes (2006) demonstrates how maternal storytelling traditions evolve over time, incorporating contemporary cultural shifts while preserving fundamental moral lessons.

Furthermore, Ong (1982) discusses the characteristics of oral tradition, highlighting its reliance on mnemonic devices, repetitive structures, and formulaic expressions. These characteristics are common in maternal folklore, which aids memory retention and language development in young children. Recent ethnographic studies by Narayan (1997) and Abu-Lughod (1999) examine how maternal folklore differs across societies, reflecting distinct cultural and linguistic contexts. These studies suggest that maternal folklore evolves in response to societal changes while retaining core traditional elements. Maternal folklore remains an important topic in folklore studies, providing insights into cultural transmission, emotional connection, and early childhood education.

Methodology. To investigate the unique characteristics of maternal folklore, this study takes a multidisciplinary approach that includes ethnographic fieldwork, qualitative content analysis, linguistic analysis, and psychological perspectives. The methodology

includes several key components: Ethnographic fieldwork: Fieldwork was carried out in a variety of cultural settings, including rural and urban communities, to observe storytelling practices firsthand. Researchers went to family gatherings, nursery settings, and cultural festivals, where maternal folklore was actively shared. Participant observation and informal discussions with storytellers provided valuable insights into the transmission of folklore.

Interviews and oral histories: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with mothers, grandmothers, caregivers, and folklore practitioners from various cultural backgrounds. The interviews focused on their perceptions of maternal folklore, childhood stories, and how these narratives influenced their parenting practices. Oral histories were collected to document intergenerational variations in storytelling traditions and folklore adaptations over time. Qualitative content analysis: A collection of maternal folklore texts, such as lullabies, folktales, and proverbs, was compiled using literature, oral history archives, and field notes. This corpus was examined using qualitative coding techniques to identify recurring motifs, narrative structures, symbolic imagery, and linguistic characteristics. To better understand how maternal folklore works, key themes such as morality, socialization, and emotional bonding were extracted.

Comparative cross-cultural analysis: The study used a comparative analysis of folklore traditions from various cultures to identify universal themes and culturally specific characteristics. Patterns in storytelling techniques, moral messages conveyed, and the emotional tone of maternal folklore were investigated. The analysis shed light on how different societies use folklore to instill values and reinforce cultural identity. Linguistic Analysis: Mnemonic devices, poetic structures, and rhythmic patterns are frequently used in maternal folklore to help young children retain memories and develop their language skills. Linguistic analysis was carried out to investigate the phonetic, syntactic, and semantic features of lullabies and nursery rhymes, shedding light on how oral traditions influence early childhood language acquisition. Psychological and developmental perspectives: The role of maternal folklore in early childhood development was investigated from a psychological standpoint, focusing on emotional security, cognitive development, and social learning. Attachment theory and language development models were used to examine how maternal folklore promotes caregiver-child bonding and cognitive growth.

Given the growing influence of digital media on folklore transmission, a separate component of the study investigated how maternal folklore is being adapted and disseminated in digital spaces. Online storytelling communities, video platforms, and educational apps were examined to determine how technology is changing traditional folklore practices. This study provides a comprehensive understanding of the distinctive features of maternal folklore, as well as its transmission mechanisms and cultural significance, by combining these various methodologies.

Results and discussion. The findings show that maternal folklore has several distinct characteristics that contribute to child development, cultural continuity, and emotional well-being. One of the most important roles of maternal folklore is to strengthen emotional bonds between mothers and children. Lullabies, in particular, have been shown to help infants regulate their emotions and feel secure. According to

research, rhythmic and melodic patterns in lullabies activate neural pathways associated with comfort and relaxation. Furthermore, storytelling in families promotes social cohesion by reinforcing trust and attachment between caregivers and young listeners.

Maternal folklore is a primary means of transmitting moral and ethical values. Many folktales highlight virtues like kindness, perseverance, and honesty. African folklore, for example, teaches children about intelligence and resourcefulness through tales about trickster characters such as Anansi. Similarly, European fairy tales like Little Red Riding Hood teach cautionary lessons about obedience and safety. The transmission of these moral lessons through folklore ensures that ethical values are passed down through generations. Linguistic analysis of maternal folklore reveals that its repetitive and rhyming structures aid language acquisition. Children who listen to lullabies and nursery rhymes develop phonological awareness, which is an important skill for early literacy. The use of alliteration, repetition, and rhythmic cadence promotes memory retention and vocabulary expansion in young learners. Furthermore, oral traditions teach children about narrative structures, which promote early cognitive skills like sequencing, inference, and symbolic reasoning. Maternal folklore plays an important role in preserving cultural identity. Through storytelling, lullabies, and proverbs, children learn about their community's history, customs, and traditions. This process preserves indigenous knowledge and linguistic heritage. A comparative analysis of various cultures reveals both universal storytelling themes and distinct regional adaptations that reflect local histories and environments. For example, Native American storytelling traditions incorporate spiritual elements that emphasize harmony with nature, whereas Asian folklore frequently incorporates Confucian values of familial respect and duty.

Symbolism is an important aspect of maternal folklore. Many folktales use metaphorical representations to convey deeper psychological themes. The moon, for example, is a common symbol in lullabies, often representing protection and guidance. Animals in folklore frequently represent moral qualities—foxes as cunning, lions as brave, and owls as wise. Such symbolic elements help children internalize abstract concepts, giving them cognitive tools for interpreting their surroundings. With the advent of digital media, maternal folklore is changing in its modes of transmission. Digital platforms now supplement traditional storytelling practices by providing mothers with access to animated folktales, audiobooks, and educational apps. While these digital formats provide accessibility and preservation benefits, there is concern about the potential dilution of oral traditions based on interpersonal communication. Future research should look into how digital media affects the performative aspects of maternal folklore and the implications for child development.

Maternal folklore frequently reflects and reinforces societal norms, which include gender roles. Many traditional folktales feature female characters in caregiving or domestic roles, whereas male characters are frequently portrayed as heroic figures. Critics argue that this aspect of folklore perpetuates rigid gender stereotypes. However, contemporary adaptations of maternal folklore are challenging these narratives by incorporating themes of gender equality and empowerment in order to align with modern values.

Conclusion Maternal folklore continues to be an important part of cultural heritage, influencing early childhood development, socialization, and intergenerational communication. Its importance goes beyond simple storytelling; it serves as a platform for moral education, emotional support, and the preservation of linguistic and cultural traditions. Mothers and caregivers use storytelling to impart wisdom that shapes children's worldviews, instilling values like kindness, perseverance, and communal responsibility. Furthermore, the linguistic and rhythmic elements of maternal folklore aid in early childhood language development by reinforcing cognitive skills required for academic and social success. The study's findings highlight the oral traditions' deep psychological and sociocultural impact, demonstrating their ability to shape individual identity and communal bonds.

The evolution of maternal folklore in response to modern technological advances emphasizes its adaptability. While traditional oral storytelling remains an important component of cultural heritage, the incorporation of digital storytelling, animated folktales, and educational media broadens its appeal to new generations. These adaptations ensure folklore's continued relevance while introducing new ways to preserve its core messages. Furthermore, maternal folklore's role in reinforcing gender roles and social norms remains both consistent and changing. While many traditional narratives reflect historical gender expectations, modern adaptations are challenging these norms by promoting gender equality and inclusivity. This shift demonstrates folklore's ability to adapt in response to broader societal changes.

Future research should focus on the intersection of maternal folklore and digital media, specifically how technology affects the authenticity and transmission of oral traditions. Furthermore, comparative studies of maternal folklore from various linguistic and cultural groups can provide more information about universal themes and culturally specific variations. Finally, maternal folklore remains a valuable cultural asset, fostering intergenerational connections, strengthening cultural identity, and promoting childhood development. As societies evolve, the preservation and adaptation of oral traditions will be critical to ensuring their relevance for future generations.

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