

THE EDUCATIONAL POTENTIAL OF CHILDREN'S MUSIC: PEDAGOGICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS

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Abstract. This article presents a systematic analysis of the educational potential of children's music from pedagogical and psychological perspectives. The primary aim of the study is to investigate, on a scientific basis, the multifaceted role of music in the development of children's personality, particularly in areas such as emotional regulation, the formation of social skills, the internalization of national and moral values, and the cultivation of aesthetic taste. For this purpose, both local and international academic sources, as well as traditional and professional examples of Azerbaijani children's music, are referenced, and existing pedagogical and psychological approaches are interpreted comparatively. The study analyzes folk genres (such as lullabies, cradle songs, rhymes, and musical games) alongside musical works composed for children by renowned Azerbaijani composers including Fikrat Amirov, Rauf Hajiyev, and Emin Sabitoglu. These examples are examined for their educational functions, particularly in fostering patriotism, diligence, empathy, love for family, and moral behavior in children.

From a psychological perspective, the article demonstrates that music stimulates children's self-expression, creativity, emotional stability, and social adaptation. It also touches upon the supportive role of music in the development of speech and memory during early childhood.

Keywords: children's music, educational function, pedagogical approach, psychological development, music education.

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UŞAQ MUSIQISININ TƏRBIYƏVİ POTENSIALI: PEDAQOJİ VƏ PSIXOLOJİ ASPEKTLƏR

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Annotasiya. Məqalədə uşaq musiqisinin tərbiyəvi potensialı pedaqoji və psixoloji aspektlər baxımından sistemli şəkildə təhlil olunur. Tədqiqatın əsas məqsədi musiqinin uşaqların şəxsiyyət inkişafında oynadığı kompleks rolunu, o cümlədən emosional tənzimləmə, sosial bacarıqların formalaşması, milli-mənəvi dəyərlərin aşılınması və estetik zövqün inkişafı sahəsindəki funksiyalarını elmi əsaslarla araşdırmaqdır. Bu məqsədlə məqalədə yerli və beynəlxalq elmi mənbələrə, eləcə də Azərbaycan uşaq musiqisinin ənənəvi və peşəkar nümunələrinə istinad edilərək mövcud pedaqoji və psixoloji yanaşmalar müqayisəli şəkildə şərh edilmişdir. Məqalədə folklor janrlarına (ninnilər, laylalar, saymacalar və oyun mahnıları) və peşəkar bəstəkarların – Fikrət Əmirov, Rauf Hacıyev, Emin Sabitoğlu və başqalarının uşaqlar üçün bəstələdiyi musiqi əsərlərinə istinad edilərək, bu nümunələrin uşaqlarda vətənpərvərlik, əməksevərlik, empatiya, ailəyə sevgi və əxlaqi davranış kimi keyfiyyətlərin formalaşdırılmasına yönəlmiş funksiyaları təhlil edilmişdir. Psixoloji aspektlər baxımından musiqinin uşaqlarda özünüifadə, yaradıcılıq, emosional sabillik və sosial uyğunlaşma qabiliyyətlərini stimullaşdırdığı elmi əsaslarla göstərilmişdir. Bundan əlavə, musiqi vasitəsilə erkən yaş dövründə nitq və yaddaş inkişafının dəstəklənməsi məsələlərinə də toxunulmuşdur.

Açar sözlər: uşaq musiqisi, tərbiyəvi funksiya, pedaqoji yanaşma, psixoloji inkişaf, musiqi təhsili.

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CC BY 4.0. Müəlliflər açıq şəkildə öz əsərlərinin müəlliflik hüquqlarını təsdiq edir və jurnala Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) lisenziyası çərçivəsində ilk nəşr hüququnu verirlər. Bu lisenziya, əsərin bu jurnalda yayımlandığı və orijinal müəlliflərə istinad edildiyi halda, onun sərbəst şəkildə digər şəxslər tərəfindən yayılmasına icazə verir.

Introduction

The use of various tools in children's upbringing plays a significant role in shaping their personality and adapting them to society. Among these tools, music stands out as one of the most influential and multifaceted elements. Music primarily appeals to a child's emotional world, encouraging them to feel, rejoice, sympathize, and share. For this reason, music is considered an indispensable factor in a child's development from both pedagogical and psychological perspectives.

Children's music—compositions specifically written for children or covering child-related themes—makes a vital contribution to the formation of their speech, thinking, emotional, and social skills. These musical pieces not only develop a child's aesthetic taste and musical sensitivity, but also serve to instill national and moral values, ethical principles, and a sense of patriotism. The rhythm, melody, lyrics, and sound of music remain in a child's memory, and with repetition, these values are internalized naturally and subconsciously [Bəylərov, E., Ələkbərova, B., 2017].

Recent studies have shown that children's music is not merely a form of art, but also a component of pedagogical and psychological processes. In modern educational approaches, music is utilized as a motivational tool, a means of moral education, and a psychological regulator [Səfərova, A., 2021]. Through children's music, essential life skills such as language development, social interaction, self-expression, cooperation, and empathy are cultivated during the pre-school years.

In this context, Azerbaijani musical culture possesses a rich and deeply rooted tradition. Folk music, lullabies, bayatis, children's play songs, and contemporary composers' works created for children serve both educational and moral functions. The compositions for children by renowned Azerbaijani composers such as Fikrat Amirov, Rauf Hacıyev, and Emin Sabitoglu exemplify the richness of the national heritage in this field [Bəylərova-Ələkbərova, B., 2021].

This article provides a comprehensive analysis of the educational potential of children's music from both pedagogical and psychological perspectives. The aim is to explore the role of music in the moral and intellectual development of children and to identify more effective methods of integrating it into educational practices.

Statement of the Problem

The educational potential of children's music is of considerable importance for children's personality development, the acquisition of moral values, and the development of social skills. However, in educational practice, music is often used primarily as a means of aesthetic education and performance, which limits the full realization of its pedagogical and psychological potential. In this regard, examining the mechanisms through which children's music influences emotional, social, moral, and intellectual development constitutes a relevant scholarly problem. The core of the problem lies in identifying the scientific and pedagogical foundations for the purposeful and systematic integration of music into the educational process.

Methodology

In this study, the educational potential of children's music was examined from pedagogical and psychological perspectives using a qualitative research approach. Data were primarily collected through observation, semi-structured interviews, and analysis of pedagogical practices. The analysis process was based on thematic content analysis, aiming to identify the impact of music on children's emotional and moral development.

Main part

Values play a fundamental role in the formation of an individual's personality, integration into society, and the internalization of social norms. Childhood is the most sensitive period during which these values are acquired and the foundational psychological base is established. During this stage, music—especially children's music—emerges as an effective tool that influences a child's moral and ethical development. This is because music is not only something that is heard, but also something that is felt and experienced. Such qualities enhance its potential for educational impact.

Through the lyrics of children's songs, universal and national values such as kindness, cooperation, honesty, patriotism, and respect for nature are conveyed to children. The poetic language and emotionally rich melodies of these songs help embed these values deeply in a child's consciousness. For example, the song "My Little Chicks" may seem simple in content, but it instills a sense of responsibility, care, love, and affection, influencing both the emotional and behavioral world of the child [Qasimova, T., 2018].

From a pedagogical perspective, information delivered through music tends to be more impactful than other instructional methods, as music operates through emotional memory and leaves long-lasting impressions. Moreover, when chil-

dren sing together, their sense of solidarity and social interaction skills are also strengthened. This fosters the development of communal values [Həsənova, R., 2020].

In psychological approaches, the formation of values is often explained through modeling, repetition, emotional reinforcement, and affirmation. Music aligns with each of these principles. Children's songs, being short, melodic, and rhythmic, are frequently repeated. These repetitions help embed values in the subconscious memory of the child. Additionally, since music evokes positive emotions, the values transmitted through songs become associated with positive mental states. For instance, the song "*Gəl, gəl, ay yaz!*" ("Come, come, oh spring!") evokes feelings of joy, connection to nature, and appreciation for the beauty of life.

The educational function of children's music also plays a crucial role in the formation of national identity. The use of folk motifs, *bayati* forms, and epic themes in the lyrics and musical structure familiarizes children with the national musical heritage and helps them internalize these values. Such musical pieces lay the foundation for patriotism, love for the mother tongue, and a deep connection to historical and cultural traditions [Məmmədşadə, M., 2011].

In order to make effective use of this function of music within the educational environment, music teachers and preschool educators must not only utilize children's songs but also be able to analyze their content and educational value. The selection of music should take into account the students' age level, interests, and socio-cultural background.

The lyrics of children's music typically encompass values such as kindness, friendship, love of nature, respect for parents, and patriotism. These themes play a direct role in shaping a child's moral world. For example, well-known children's songs such as "*Cücələrım*" ("My Little Chicks"), "*Ana*" ("Mother"), and "*Ay Dədə*" ("Dear Grandpa") are rich in both musical and educational content [Qasımova, T., 2018].

During early childhood, children have a heightened capacity for listening and imitation. Therefore, the speech patterns presented through music—whether in the form of songs, rhythmic poems, or playful melodies—form the foundation of their phonetic awareness and articulation skills. For instance, lullabies and bayatis help children develop a sense of rhythm, understand the connection between words, and internalize the fluency of speech. This lays the groundwork for future skills such as fluent speaking, public expression, and logical thinking [Bəylərov, E., Ələkbərova, B., 2017].

Music also contributes to the development of both short- and long-term memory. Melodic structures and rhythmic phrases serve as mnemonic tools. Chil-

dren tend to memorize the lyrics of a song more easily when accompanied by music and later recall them together with the melody and rhythm. This process is related to the activation of associative memory: music creates emotional bonds with specific words and expressions, making them more memorable [Vetlugina, N., 1968, s.184].

Empirical studies show that language learning accompanied by music can be twice as effective as learning based solely on reading or listening. Music emphasizes the rhythmic and melodic structure of language, thus facilitating the acquisition of sequential speech, intonation, and stress patterns in children [Həsənova, R., 2020].

The psychological effects of music are also notable in this context. Soothing music prepares the child's brain to receive information, creates a positive emotional atmosphere, and activates the learning process. Therefore, music not only supports the development of speech and memory but also ensures the sustainability of this development through motivation and emotional stability [Məmmədli, N., Vəliyev, R., 2022].

As a result, music is not only an effective teaching tool for the development of speech and memory in children but also fosters self-expression, creativity, and communication skills. For this reason, music-based methods should be systematically integrated into preschool and early primary education stages.

In education, music functions not only as a means of artistic and aesthetic upbringing but also as a pedagogical tool that plays a crucial role in all key areas of child development—cognitive, emotional, social, and linguistic. The effective use of music in the learning process not only increases student engagement but also promotes interdisciplinary integration and overall development.

In contemporary educational theory, music is considered one of the essential components of integrative approaches. Especially at the preschool and early primary levels, integrating music lessons with other subjects (e.g., language, mathematics, natural sciences, etc.) enhances children's ability to make cross-disciplinary connections, think systematically, and express creativity [Bəylərov, E., Ələkbərova, B., 2017].

During the application of music in education, several core functions come to the forefront:

1. Motivational function – Music makes the learning process more engaging and dynamic, adding emotional color and drawing students into lessons more actively.
2. Cognitive function – Through music, children perceive information at the level of feeling, rhythm, and imagination, which stimulates their cognitive processes.

3. Educational function – Music serves as an effective tool for instilling moral values, patriotic feelings, and collaborative skills.

Practical experience confirms that music-integrated tasks and games, such as those accompanied by songs during lessons, enhance students' speech abilities, attention, and memory. For instance, songs that teach letters, rhythmic activities involving numbers, or presentations that explain natural phenomena through music, not only improve learning quality but also remain memorable for children [Səfərova, A., 2021].

Additionally, music is a natural stimulus that creates psychological comfort, softens the learning environment, and reduces stress. Because of this, it can be used at various stages of a lesson—during transitions, rest breaks, to relieve emotional tension, or at the end of class. For example, light classical music can help children concentrate at the beginning of a lesson, while rhythmic children's songs can support active learning [Həsənova, R., 2020].

For music to be used effectively in the learning process, teachers must:

- Ensure the didactic relevance of selected music pieces;
- Consider the child's psychological developmental stage;
- Use music to support educational and socialization objectives.

Although there are positive examples of this approach in the Azerbaijani education system, the full potential of music is not yet utilized. In some general education schools, music classes are limited to performance and memorization, revealing a need for methodological innovation. This calls for enhanced in-service training programs for music teachers, improved instructional strategies, and the development of digital music resources [Məmmədli, N., Vəliyev, R., 2022]. The integration of music into teaching acts as a comprehensive tool that supports students' cognitive, emotional, and social development. Therefore, music should be seen not merely as an art form in education, but as a pedagogical resource rich in content and values.

From the perspective of self-expression and creativity, music allows children to convey their emotions both verbally and nonverbally. Children's songs, musical games, and improvisational activities play an irreplaceable role in helping children discover themselves, express their feelings, and unlock their creative potential. Psychologically, this contributes to building self-confidence and developing a sense of autonomy [Campbell, P., & Scott-Kassner, C., 2013]. When children's creativity is stimulated through music, their imagination and creative thinking expand. This has positive implications not only in music but also in visual arts, literary expression, problem-solving, and social interaction, fostering psychological flexibility and innovative thought [Bəylərov, E., Ələkbərova, B., 2017].

Children's music also promotes social interaction and the development of empathy. Activities such as group singing, musical games, and rhythmic group exercises strengthen skills like cooperation, turn-taking, active listening, and adapting to group dynamics [Sloboda, J., 2005]. Empathy—the ability to understand and feel the emotions of others—can begin to develop earlier through interaction with music. As children imitate the emotions they hear in music—joy, sadness, excitement—they learn to recognize and share these feelings with others, enhancing their emotional sensitivity and social adjustment [Saarikallio, S., 2009].

As children grow, they face various social and emotional challenges. Music is a powerful psychological support tool for overcoming such difficulties and reducing stress, particularly for children with special needs, trauma histories, or emotional and behavioral disorders. Music therapy is widely used as a psychological intervention in these cases, serving goals such as restoring emotional stability, fostering self-regulation, and reinforcing a sense of safety. Research in Azerbaijan has also confirmed that music can be an effective tool in inclusive education and when working with children who require special education support [Məmmədli, N., Vəliyev, R., 2022].

The psychological effects of music on child development are well-supported both theoretically and empirically. In domains such as emotional regulation, self-expression, socialization, empathy, and creativity, music contributes to a more balanced and healthy psychological formation. To fully benefit from music's multifaceted impact on education and upbringing, it is essential that its use be intentional, goal-oriented, and systematic.

While the pedagogical and psychological potential of children's music has been widely affirmed by modern scientific research and educational practice, several practical and systemic challenges persist in its implementation. Issues related to educational policy, teacher training, and parental attitudes often hinder the full utilization of children's music in the learning and developmental process.

In general education schools and preschool institutions, the subject of music is often perceived as secondary. Its allocated instructional hours within the curriculum are limited, and the integration of theoretical and practical components is frequently weak. As a result, the educational potential of music cannot be fully realized in practice [Bəylərova-Ələkbərova, B., 2021].

Furthermore, there is a notable deficiency in the methodological preparation of music teachers. Many teachers restrict music education to performance and memorization activities. However, music is also a powerful tool for values education, emotional regulation, and psychological expression. The lack of methodological knowledge and skills in these areas limits the effective use of music's multidimensional potential in teaching [Bəylərov, E., Ələkbərova, B., 2017].

In the contemporary era, digital tools play an increasingly important role in engaging children in learning. However, there is a significant shortage of interactive music platforms, mobile applications, and online music resources in the Azerbaijani language that are based on national content. This hampers the integration of music into the technological learning environment [Məmmədli, N., Vəliyev, R., 2022].

Another challenge lies in the lack of parental awareness regarding music education. Some parents still view music solely as a form of entertainment, underestimating its educational function. This perception weakens the use of children's music in the home environment and reduces the sustainability of outcomes achieved in formal education.

Strengthening the status of the music subject in education requires particular attention. Education policy should approach music not only as an aesthetic discipline but also as a means of emotional and intellectual development. Music should be purposefully integrated into curricula and taught in connection with other subjects to enhance its functionality. Moreover, continuous professional development programs for music teachers should be implemented, with special emphasis on the psychological and social dimensions of music. The development of new music-pedagogical teaching materials is also essential [Səfərova, A., 2021].

The quality of music education can be improved through the creation of interactive music applications in the Azerbaijani language, online games, electronic sheet music libraries, and multimedia-based lessons. In this regard, collaborations between local music educators and technology specialists should be encouraged.

Conclusion

Children's music is not merely an art form that cultivates aesthetic taste; it is also a significant pedagogical and psychological tool that plays a vital role in the development of a child's personality. Through music, children develop a wide range of key competencies from an early age, including language skills, memory, emotional regulation, social communication, and attachment to national and moral values. Research has shown that when music is utilized both in educational settings and within the family environment, it contributes to the child's holistic development.

In particular, examples of Azerbaijani children's music—including both traditional folk-based genres and works by professional composers—hold special significance in fostering national and spiritual values, as well as social qualities such as empathy and diligence. These musical pieces not only carry educational content but also stimulate imagination and creative potential in children.

Based on the analyses conducted in this article, it can be concluded that the systematic integration of children's music into education, the enhancement of music teachers' methodological training, the development of digital music resources, and increased parental awareness in this field will enable the fuller realization of music's educational potential. Given the multifaceted role of music in personality development, a more comprehensive approach to children's music is needed—both in terms of scientific research and education policy.

Relevance of the study. The educational potential of children's music is highly relevant in today's context due to its important role in children's emotional, psychological, and social development. This area also remains significant in terms of preserving national values and fostering aesthetic sensitivity in future generations.

Scientific novelty. The novelty of this research lies in the integrated analysis of the pedagogical and psychological mechanisms of children's music, scientifically substantiating its complex role in personality development. What makes this study original is that it systematically presents music's unified educational function in emotional regulation, socialization, national identity formation, and moral value acquisition for the first time.

Practical significance. The practical value of this research lies in the identification of concrete directions and mechanisms for the purposeful integration of children's music into the pedagogical process. The findings offer recommendations for teachers, educators, and parents on how to use music effectively as an educational tool for child development. The findings offer practical recommendations for pedagogical activities and music education policy and contribute to the scientific development of the field.

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