



CENTRO DE INVESTIGACIONES
DE TRABAJO SOCIAL

ISSN 2244-808X
DL pp 201002Z43506

PERSPECTIVA ACCIÓN Y

Revista de Trabajo Social

Vol. 15 No. 2
Abril - Junio
2025

Universidad del Zulia

Facultad de Ciencias Jurídicas y Políticas
Centro de Investigaciones en Trabajo Social

Experiencia de colaboración social y pedagógica en la formación de la identidad nacional rusa entre los estudiantes

Olga Goncharenko¹, Svetlana Semenkova², Lyudmila Bochantseva³

¹Department of Philosophy and Social Sciences and Humanities, Northern Trans-Ural State Agricultural University, Tyumen, Russia.

E-mail: goncharenko-65@mail.ru; ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3761-5071>

²Department of Philosophy and Social Sciences and Humanities, Northern Trans-Ural State Agricultural University, Tyumen, Russia.

E-mail: semenkova.svet@yandex.ru; ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0152-1070>

³Department of Philosophy and Social Sciences and Humanities, Northern Trans-Ural State Agricultural University, Tyumen, Russia.

E-mail: bochantseva.li@gausz.ru; ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0002-9597-7588>

Resumen. El artículo analiza la experiencia de colaboración social y pedagógica con la Iglesia Ortodoxa Rusa en la formación de la identidad nacional rusa entre los estudiantes. El estudio se basa en un enfoque interdisciplinario que combina métodos históricos, encuestas y observación participante. Se centra en los eventos organizados conjuntamente con el Departamento Diocesano de Educación Religiosa de 2015 a 2023, donde los estudiantes participaron en diversas actividades para mejorar su desarrollo espiritual y moral. El estudio muestra que el compromiso con la cultura ortodoxa dentro de un marco educativo mejoró la comprensión de los valores nacionales por parte de los estudiantes y fortaleció su identidad nacional rusa. Esta colaboración contribuyó a su educación moral y facilitó el desarrollo de habilidades de liderazgo y colaboración a través de proyectos grupales. Los estudiantes informaron de un mayor sentido de responsabilidad cívica y una conexión más profunda con los valores culturales tradicionales. Esta colaboración enriqueció los resultados educativos al incorporar la educación espiritual y moral a la experiencia universitaria. Contribuyó a su crecimiento personal y a su capacidad para desempeñar funciones profesionales y sociales con una sólida base moral.

Palabras clave: alianza sociopedagógica, identidad cívica, universidad regional, interacción, métodos educativos.

Experience of social and pedagogical partnership in the formation of the Russian national identity among students

Abstract. The article considers the experience of social and pedagogical partnership with the Russian Orthodox Church in forming the Russian national identity among students. The study is based on an interdisciplinary approach combining historical methods, surveys, and participant observation. It focuses on events organized jointly with the Diocesan Department of Religious Education from 2015 to 2023, where students participated in various activities to enhance their spiritual and moral development. The study shows that engagement with the Orthodox culture within an educational framework enhanced students' understanding of national values and strengthened their Russian national identity. This partnership contributed to their moral education and facilitated the development of leadership and collaborative skills through group projects. Students reported a stronger sense of civic responsibility and a deeper connection to traditional cultural values. This partnership enriched educational results by incorporating spiritual and moral education into the university experience. It contributed to their personal growth and ability to navigate professional and social roles with a strong moral foundation.

Key words: socio-pedagogical partnership, civic identity, regional university, interaction, education methods.

INTRODUCTION

The modern socio-cultural situation and the development in Russian society stipulate the need to create a special system of education based on Russia's traditional values. According to scholars, this situation was caused by the sharp decline in state involvement in the educational process at the end of the 20th and beginning of the 21st century and the "inability of educators to teach students to make choices based on deeper meanings since many behavioral patterns, values, and anthropological images they offer are not significant for the youth" (Makhinin, 2020, p. 106). The education devaluation resulted from a value shift (Slobodchikov, Ostapenko, 2017).

Due to the changes and challenges faced by the modern Russian state and society in the first two decades of the 21st century, it has become clear that students need a fundamental understanding of the Russian national identity and the importance of state sovereignty. To this end, the course "Fundamentals of the Russian Statehood" was introduced in the 2023-2024 academic year. This course fosters students' civic and political engagement and promotes the formation of an all-Russian culture, which is vital for every citizen. The educators teaching the "Fundamentals of the Russian Statehood" have been tasked with enhancing the educational impact of the new course through practices aimed at shaping citizens and patriots in Russian society, following the best national traditions passed down through centuries and generations. The changing socio-political landscape brings us back to the roots of forming traditional values in the youth. Having extensive pedagogical experience in higher education, we have noted the significant historical collaboration between the agricultural university and Orthodox institutions in Tyumen.

Interest in the interaction between religious organizations and the state education system in the Russian pedagogical, historical, and political science literature has emerged over the past 30

years due to “the emergence of a new educational space in the late Soviet period with knowledge about religion outside the atheistic context” (Pigoreva, 2017, p. 82). Spiritual and moral education is addressed by P.S. Volkova (2023), L.I. Ukolova (2022), V.I. Dal (2016), S. Zhuzeyev et al. (2024), and V.A. Sukhomlinskii (1990). V.A. Sukhomlinskii (1990) emphasized the need “to engage in the moral education of the child, teach them to empathize with others, and be attentive to those around them” (p. 50). Sukhomlinskii (1990) also claimed that “if a person is taught goodness – taught skillfully, wisely, persistently, and with discipline – the result will be goodness. If taught evil, the result will be evil, and if neither goodness nor evil is taught, evil will still prevail. Morality and spirituality develop at any age, but in early school years, they are absorbed more completely” (p. 87). K.P. Pobedonostsev (2011) considered faith and religion to be the foundation of the state. S.I. Miropolskii (Bolonkina, 2011) and S.A. Rachinskii (Zharov, 2012) believed that the core of public schooling is its connection with the church, advocating for the preservation of national traditions, and opposing the adoption of Western approaches to educating children. K.D. Ushinsky (1974, p. 46) defended the idea of national identity and believed that “only a pedagogical system created by the people or based on national principles has effective power and can raise a true patriot”. L.N. Modzalevsky, a follower of Ushinsky’s idea, advocated for the importance of studying the Russian language (Modzalevskaya, 2016). Methodological issues of the Orthodox culture have been explored by K.A. Desyatov (2016), F.N. Kozyrev (2006), A.N. Makhnin (2020), and S.V. Turchak (2010). G.B. Andreeva and O.A. Nikitina (2019) and R.R. Iskhakova and A.S. Kolcherin (2023) touched upon the interaction between the Russian Orthodox Church and educational institutions of different levels. This shift has transformed state policy and allowed secular educational institutions to cooperate with religious organizations and bring the accumulated experience into scientific discussion. I.V. Korolkova (2012, p. 20) argued that “not only the legacy of the Russian Orthodox Church contains an inexhaustible educational potential unaffected by ideological fluctuations since it is based on unchanging values” but participation in joint events also has a positive impact on young people.

Among the most discussed issues are the prospects and risks of interaction between the state education system and religious organizations in the upbringing of the younger generation, the relationship between the concepts of religion and spirituality, the evolution of state policy regarding religious education in schools and the analysis of regional practices, including in higher education, both in a historical context and in context of modern trends in social partnership (Kozyrev, 2014).

The article aims to study the socio-pedagogical partnership with the Russian Orthodox Church in fostering the Orthodox culture among students of the Northern Trans-Urals State Agrarian University.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research is based on an interdisciplinary approach considering socio-pedagogical partnership as an educational process within changing conditions. The research methods included the historical method, the survey method, and observation of students during their participation in joint activities organized by the Diocesan Department of Religious Education and Catechization for secular and religious educational institutions from 2015 to 2023.

A key aspect of the study was observing students on a sightseeing tour to Holy Trinity Men’s Monastery in Tyumen in 2023. During this trip, they engaged with the clergy, observed Orthodox rituals, and reflected on the cultural and religious significance of the monastery.

After the excursion, we conducted a survey to evaluate the participants' experience. The excursion included 25 individuals aged 18-20 years, with six men and 19 women.

The questionnaire also contained questions about visiting Holy Trinity Men's Monastery in Tyumen. 36.8% of the respondents had previously visited the monastery, while 63.2% visited it for the first time.

The survey data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to summarize the responses.

RESULTS

The relationship between the state education system and the Russian Orthodox Church is based on the following principles:

- 1) The principle of productivity implies that projects are practice-oriented and their purposeful activities solve significant practical tasks. The result is a socially significant intellectual product, namely research work by students and educators.
- 2) The principle of pedagogical appropriateness means that the projects are directly related to the future professional activities of veterinary students and veterinary-sanitary experts, whose main mission is linked to the value of compassion. Joint projects comprise the Orthodox values accumulated during the excursion and post-excursion reflections, broaden horizons, and have a clear educational focus.
- 3) The principle of openness and dialogue implies that the project participants (students, educators, and the priest-guide) are engaged in subject-to-subject relationships. Creativity and original ideas are encouraged, and a feedback mechanism is in place. The priest-guide remains open to consultations or discussions and is always ready to provide necessary support.
- 4) The principle of modeling professional and cultural social relationships. Project work occurs within specific time frames with tasks, roles, and deadlines, the analysis and discussion of intermediate and final results, preparation of photo reports, feedback, and research. Group members take on individual and collective responsibility for the project outcomes, manage available resources, etc. Thus, project activities mirror professional and communicative relationships, preparing students for effective work and facilitating their future integration into the profession. Interaction with the priest also enhances social engagement, offers insights into monasticism and Orthodox rituals, and constantly involves them in this type of communication.
- 5) The principle of integration is realized at several key stages of the projects. First, their interdisciplinary nature incorporates knowledge from the history of Orthodoxy, philosophy of religion, local history, Russian iconography, church architecture, and literature. Preparing research papers requires awareness of various scientific fields and effective collaboration. Second, the projects involve active interaction between students and professors who serve as experts at different stages of project work and combine their experience and students' competences. Third, the educational component of the projects addresses the axiological aspects of personality traditionally represented by various forms of education.

The Philotheos Educational Readings are devoted to important moral and ethical issues related to the upbringing of the younger generation and the connection of production, humanism, and benevolence. Between 2015 and 2023, nine round-table discussions were held, with 82 participants

delivering presentations and around 500 people attending as listeners. In recent years, university and school students have been involved in these activities. Clergy members visit the university to engage in discussions. Reflections on these joint activities are expressed through student reviews and essays. Over the past two years (2022 and 2023), students of the Northern Trans-Urals State Agrarian University actively participated in the Student Creativity and Pedagogical Mastery Contest “The Orthodox Culture of Our Region”. They were deeply involved in research focusing on the preservation of rural Orthodox churches, the historical functioning of rural parish schools, and the church’s role in the life of the Tyumen Alexander Real School.

In 2023, a new interaction between the Russian Orthodox Church and the educational institution was implementing educational projects expanding knowledge about Orthodoxy and Orthodox culture in Russia and the Tyumen Region. On the one hand, these educational Orthodox projects provide essential information about the region, its notable figures, and cultural traditions. On the other hand, they have a unique and profound educational impact. This influence is a key factor in forming and developing human personality in its complex and multifaceted nature.

Educational projects are realized through various activities, including excursions, conversations with a priest, photo reports, post-excursion projects, and divergent maps. One of these educational projects was titled “Holy Trinity Men’s Monastery – a Sacred Corner of Siberia”. It aimed to introduce participants to the architecture of Orthodox churches, cathedrals, and monasteries, show them the interior of churches, study the main types of icons and the symbolism of church art and painting, and explore the grounds and décor of the monastery.

Answering the question “What role does religion play in your life?”, 47.4% of the respondents evaluated it as “significant”. 68.4% consider themselves Orthodox Christians. Among them, 26.3% regularly attend Orthodox churches, 57.9% attend them occasionally, and 15.8% do not attend churches.

The results regarding non-affiliation with religion and Orthodoxy were nearly identical: 15.1 and 15.8%, respectively. The remaining respondents had not made up their minds about faith or their attitude toward it.

The results concerning celebrating significant Orthodox dates and events in families. 47.4% of the respondents always celebrate Orthodox holidays with their families; 31.6% do it occasionally; 10.5% celebrate rarely; 5.25% celebrate only if Orthodox holidays coincide with public ones. As for their awareness of Orthodox holidays, the students are most familiar with major celebrations like Easter, Christmas, Epiphany, and Trinity (80%). Lesser-known holidays, such as the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Meeting of the Lord, the Annunciation, the Transfiguration, the Dormition of the Virgin Mary, and Palm Sunday, are recognized by only 20%.

Orthodox holidays have their traditions and rituals. According to 36.8% of the respondents, these traditions and rituals have “a high educational value” because, from the time of the Baptism of Rus to the present day, they have created and continue to create conditions for the unity of the people, fostering an atmosphere of comfort, mutual understanding, and family environment. The most popular traditions and church rituals, recognized by 98.5%, include ice swimming on Epiphany, singing Christmas carols, eating pancakes during Maslenitsa, the Easter kiss, and preparing Easter bread and dyed eggs. Among other traditions and rituals, 14% highlighted Baptism and Matrimony and the Easter tradition of granting free access to church bells: after the service and until evening,

anyone can climb the bell tower and ring the bells. The custom of releasing birds from cages on the Annunciation was mentioned. However, 1.5% reported that they were unfamiliar with Orthodox traditions and rituals because “their parents are atheists and have no interest in this”. 47.4% celebrate all Orthodox holidays with their families, performing rituals and upholding traditions.

It is important to dwell on the students’ knowledge of Orthodox values. The students were asked to select the three most important values from a provided list. The top three Orthodox values were mercy (68.4%), compassion (63.2%), and respect (63.2%). The remaining values were ranked as follows: loyalty (57.9%), striving for good deeds (42.3%), patience (21.1%), spiritual perfection (15.8%), and chastity (10.5%). Goodness, love, duty, family, and homeland did not make it to the top three.

Young people’s interest in Orthodoxy could be sparked by traditions (56%), rituals (20%), Orthodox values (19.6%), and Orthodox education (4.4%). According to 84.2% of the respondents, Orthodoxy helps them find their path in life.

The analysis of their responses leads to the conclusion that the study’s results align with national trends and emphasize the special role of the family in promoting the Orthodox culture among children and young people.

During the excursion, the students were particularly interested in the architecture, icons, iconostasis, meeting monks, learning about the history of the monastery, the landscapes, the relics of saints, the desire to come back, the atmosphere of the monastery, its sanctity, and the sense of mystery. When asked “Which elements of the monastery did you like the most?”, the majority of them answered, “icons and frescoes” (78.5%) and “church architecture” (21.5%).

Participation in such educational projects gives grounds to assert that the project created conditions for embedding Orthodox (eternal) values. Despite the initially negative attitude of some students, these values revealed their potential during a single excursion: through external material images (architecture, icons, and decorations) and especially the priest’s Word. 80% of the students changed their attitude towards the Orthodox religion and culture after visiting the monastery. Among these 80%, 15.8% identified as atheists. The group project activity united the student teams, revealed true leaders, provided direction for further creative and research work, and broadened their understanding of social interactions.

The development of the spiritual and moral culture is a process where students absorb the high spiritual and moral values of existence, determine their spiritual ideals, and strive to achieve them, gaining awareness of profound meanings, self-development, and self-improvement. In this regard, projects encompassing educational and moral activities play a significant role.

CONCLUSION

The historical and modern experience of socio-pedagogical partnership with the Russian Orthodox Church allows us to identify the following methods of fostering the Orthodox culture among university students:

- 1) A key element in socio-pedagogical partnership is the creation of an active environment within the university aimed at immersing students in the Orthodox culture through the study of its history, including its regional aspects and early periods of the educational institution, during

which there was a close connection between secular educational institutions and the Russian Orthodox Church. Reflecting on this immersion in discussions, essays, and research papers helps assess student involvement as satisfactory and confirms that this pedagogical approach fosters a sense of citizenship.

- 2) The development of socio-pedagogical partnership with the department for religious education and catechization through excursions, contests, and conferences increases patriotism and shapes a clear understanding of the Orthodox culture as Russia's leading culture.
- 3) Socio-pedagogical educational activities reproduce professional and communicative relationships, preparing students for effective work activities. This also facilitates their entry into the profession and helps harmonize their interaction with the professional environment. Preparing research papers requires knowledge of various fields of science and the ability to organize collaborative research effectively.

Thus, it is advisable to continue working on this topic. Understanding the Orthodox culture in all its forms and manifestations helps students develop a sense of civic identity through love for their homeland and the surrounding world. In conclusion, higher education can be regarded as the most conducive environment for fostering patriotism and forming the civic stance of students. By using various forms and types of activities, universities expand the cultural space for the self-realization of students and stimulate their creativity.

The study's scientific novelty lies in the systematic exploration of the socio-pedagogical partnership between the Russian Orthodox Church and educational institutions, identifying the forms, means, and methods that contribute to forming the Russian national identity among students.

The research's practical significance is in establishing the connection between the professional sphere and humanism, creating an active environment within the educational institution, and shaping civic identity, patriotism, and civic stance through love for the homeland and the surrounding world.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

- Andreeva, G.B., Nikitina, O.A. (2019). Vzaimodeistvie russkoi pravoslavnoi tserkvi s obrazovatel'nymi organizatsiyami: Istoricheskii aspekt [Interaction of the Russian Orthodox Church with educational organizations: Historical aspect]. *Ryazanskii bogoslovskii vestnik*, 2(20), 146-152.
- Bolonkina, E.V. (2011). Pedagogicheskaya problematika v trudakh S.I. Miropolskogo [Pedagogical issues in the works of S.I. Miropolskii]. *Vestnik Leningradskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta im. A.S. Pushkina*, 3(3), 139-147.
- Dal, V.I. (2016). *O pover'yakh, sueveriyakh i predrassudkakh russkogo naroda* [About the beliefs, superstitions and prejudices of the Russian people]. Moscow: Izdatelskii dom "Argumenty nedeli", 208 p.
- Desyatov, K.A. (2016). Sistema vospitaniya shkolnikov v pravoslavnoi pedagogicheskoi kul'ture [The system of education of schoolchildren in the Orthodox pedagogical culture]. *Izvestiya Volgogradskogo gosudarstvennogo pedagogicheskogo universiteta*, 1(105), 30-38.
- Iskhakova, R.R., Kolcherin, A.S. (2023). *Russkaya pravoslavnaya tserkov i shkola: Vzglyad skvoz stoletie* [The Russian Orthodox Church and school: A look through the century]. *Genesis: Istoricheskie issledovaniya*, 1, 26-36. <https://doi.org/10.25136/2409-868X.2023.1.39656>

- Korolkova, I.V. (2012). Vzaimodeistvie gosudarstvennoi sistemy obrazovaniya i Russkoi Pravoslavnoi Tserkvi v sfere dukhovno-nravstvennogo vospitaniya podrastayushchego pokoleniya [Interaction between the state education system and the Russian Orthodox Church in the sphere of spiritual and moral education of the younger generation]: Abstract of thesis for a Candidate Degree in Pedagogical Sciences: 13.00.01. Institute of Psychological and Pedagogical Problems of Childhood, Russian Academy of Education, Moscow, 146 p.
- Kozyrev, F.N. (2006). Problemy metodologicheskoi kultury v shkolnom religioznom obrazovanii [Issues of methodological culture in school religious education]. *Vestnik KGU im. N.A. Nekrasova*, 12(2), 46-58.
- Kozyrev, F.N. (Ed.). (2014). *Religiya kak dar. Pedagogicheskie stati i doklady* [Religion as a gift. Pedagogical articles and reports]. Moscow: Izdatelstvo: Svyato-Filaretovskaya, 440 p.
- Makhinin, A.N. (2020). *Formirovanie rossiiskoi identichnosti lichnosti kak tselevaya ustanovka protsessa vospitaniya* [Forming the Russian national identity of the individual as a target setting of the educational process]. In T.A. Romm, Z.I. Lavrenteva, E.M. Skrypnikova (Eds.), *Fundamentalnye problemy vospitaniya v usloviyakh sovremennykh sotsialnykh protsessov: Proceedings of the International scientific conference, December 8-10, 2020, Novosibirsk, Russia* (pp. 106-108). Novosibirsk: OOO "Nemo Press".
- Modzalevskaya, T.L. (2016). *Lev Nikolayevich Modzalevsky (1837-1896)*. Saint Petersburg: LEMA, 116 p.
- Pigoreva, O.V. (2017). Vzaimodeistvie shkoly i religioznykh organizatsii v obrazovatelnom prostranstve tsentra Rossii: Gosudarstvennaya i regionalnaya politika [Interaction schools and religious organizations in the educational space of central Russia: State policy and regional practice]. *Evraziiskii forum*, 1(9), 82-91.
- Pobedonostsev, K.P. (2011). *Gosudarstvo i tserkov* [State and church]. In two volumes. Moscow: Institut russkoi tsivilizatsii.
- Slobodchikov, V.I., & Ostapenko, A.A. (2017). *Sistemnyi krizis obrazovaniya i puti vykhoda iz nego* [Systemic crisis of education and possible solutions]. *Lektsii po sistemnoi i soobraznoi pedagogike*, Vol. 15. Moscow: NII shkol'nykh tekhnologiy, 28 p.
- Sukhomlinskii, V.A. (1990). *Kak vospitat nastoyashchego cheloveka: Pedagogicheskoe nasledie* [How to raise a real person: Pedagogical heritage]. Moscow: Pedagogika, 288 p.
- Turchak, S.V. (2010). Sistema dukhovno-nravstvennogo vospitaniya detei i molodezhi Pridnestrovyia [Ethic upbringing for youth and children in Transdnistria]. *Izvestiya Volgogradskogo gosudarstvennogo pedagogicheskogo universiteta*, 45(1), 160-168.
- Ukolova, L.I. (2022). Education of the spiritual culture of a growing person through the synthesis of arts in the space of a pedagogically organized musical environment. *Art Criticism*, 3, 17-25.
- Ushinsky, K.D. (1974). *Izbrannye pedagogicheskie sochineniya* [Selected pedagogical works]: in two volumes. Vol. 1. Moscow: Pedagogika.
- Volkova, P.S. (2023). Art in the aspect of dialogism. On the question of educational philosophy. *Art Criticism*, 1, 6-14.
- Zharov, S.V. (2012). Otrazhenie pedagogicheskikh idei S.A. Rachinskogo v novykh standartakh nachalnogo obrazovaniya [Reflection of S.A. Rachinsky's pedagogical ideas in new standards of primary education]. *Yaroslavskii pedagogicheskii vestnik*, 2(4), 214-216.
- Zhuzeyev, S., Zhailauova, Z., Shichkin, I., Akimova, O., Shadskaja, I., & Filonova, A. (2024). Influence of academic relations between university teachers and students on educational process efficiency. *Revista Conrado*, 20(96), 640-647.