HSR (LONDON),
HOUGHTON STREET REVIEW JOURNAL
ISSN: 2058-5519|Impact factor-15.9
http://houghtonstreetreview.com/index.php/hsr

NATIONAL VALUES AND THE PROBLEM OF NATIONAL IDENTITY IN THE CHARACTER OF YOUNG PEOPLE

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17.00.07 — Theory and History of Culture, Cultural Studies

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Doi: https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.21993632

Abstract: This article analyzes the role of national cultural values in shaping the character of young people from the perspective of cultural studies. The study examines the essence of the concept of national values, their historical roots, the mechanisms involved in character formation, and the educational role of the family, the education system, and art and literature. Based on research conducted using survey, interview, comparative-analytical, and observation methods, the results show that family upbringing is the predominant factor influencing the character of young people. Problems of preserving national identity under conditions of globalization are analyzed, and practical recommendations addressed to the state, educational institutions, families, and young people themselves have been developed.

Keywords: national cultural values, character of youth, upbringing, institution of the family, education system, globalization, national identity, spirituality.

Introduction. Educating a spiritually mature future generation is one of the priority directions of state policy in independent Uzbekistan. It is no secret that, amid the intensifying processes of globalization, the need to preserve national identity is growing year by year; however, the fact that the rich spiritual heritage shaped by the Uzbek people over the centuries is not being used fully and systematically in the modern educational process makes this problem increasingly urgent.

Today, certain gaps and discrepancies are observed in the value system of young people: on the one hand, traditional values, and on the other, a new way of life shaped under the influence of digital space and foreign culture, giving rise to a conflict between the two. For this reason, an in-depth scholarly study of the influence of national values on the formation of young people's character, the identification of the mechanisms of this influence, and the development of evidence-based recommendations for their practical application acquire pressing scholarly and practical significance. Accordingly, the main purpose of this article is to analyze, both theoretically and empirically, the role of national cultural values in shaping the character of young people, to identify the channels through which this influence operates, and to develop practical recommendations.

The concept of value is interpreted in cultural studies as a set of socio-cultural criteria — passed down from generation to generation by a given people or society — that determine a way of life, morality, and spiritual maturity. Within the scope of this study, national values were conditionally divided into **three broad** groups for analysis.

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Spiritual values include concepts such as religion and faith, morality and ethics, conscience and justice, and respect for elders. **Social values** encompass norms that regulate social life, such as the sanctity of the family, communal solidarity, respect for labor, and compassion. **Cultural values** unite examples of material and spiritual culture such as art and music, language and literature, and customs and national dress. These three groups are closely interconnected and together form an integral system of **national-cultural values**.

The results of the study show that there is a direct relationship between national values and character formation. This process is realized through the following consistent chain: national values → the process of upbringing → patterns of behavior → character formation. Each national value contributes to the formation of a particular character trait (Table 1).

National value	Character trait formed
Labor and perseverance	Determination, responsibility, goal-orientation
Respect and reverence for parents	Modesty, considerateness, tolerance
Honesty and integrity	Conscientiousness, trustworthiness, moral stability
Hospitality	Openheartedness, kindness, sociability
Value of knowledge and enlightenment	Thirst for knowledge, creativity, analytical thinking

Table 1. The influence of national values on character traits

The family is the first and most important institution in the formation of a child's personality — the so-called "first madrasah." The study identified **four main methods** of family upbringing. The *method of admonition* involves guidance through life experience and words of wisdom, including parental example and stories about great ancestors. The *method of example* is based on demonstrating the behavior of elders as a model, including the instilling of mentality through national cuisine, holidays, and the native language. The *method of practice* is reinforced through the repeated performance of good habits in daily life and adherence to customs. The *method of encouragement* supports positive behavior through praise and reward, playing an important role in instilling diligence and a sense of responsibility.

The cultivation of cultural values continues consistently at every stage of education. At the preschool stage, the foundations of national upbringing are instilled through national games and songs, holidays and traditions, and the native language and folklore. At the general-education stage, this is reinforced through literature and history lessons, cultural events, and education about national heroes. At the higher-education stage, more advanced forms are implemented, including cultural studies courses, scholarly research, cultural projects, and national crafts.

National literature, folk music, and fine art are important means of shaping the character of young people. The works of thinkers such as Alisher Navoi, Babur, and Cho'lpon form a solid foundation for moral education, cultivating a sense of patriotism, diligence, and a striving for knowledge. Folk music performed on national instruments such as the dutar, doira, and gijjak nurtures national spirit and feeling, instilling qualities such as emotional richness, justice, and generosity. Examples of fine art such as miniature painting, ganch (carved plaster) ornamentation, and embroidery develop creativity and patience, as well as aesthetic taste and creative thinking.

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It is no secret that, under conditions of modern globalization, a number of threats affect the formation of young people's character. These include the growing influence of foreign culture, the increasing impact of the internet and social networks, the risk of losing the native language, the weakening of traditional values, and instances of mankurtism — that is, the loss of self-identity. A number of solutions are proposed to counter these threats: strengthening national upbringing programs, creating digital content in the Uzbek language, developing centers for cultural heritage, engaging young people in cultural projects, and introducing the concept of biculturalism.

Based on the results of the study, the following practical recommendations were developed. At the state level, it is recommended to update the concept of national upbringing, support cultural centers, and strengthen the values module within youth policy. At the level of educational institutions, it is necessary to introduce “National Culture” as a compulsory subject, incorporate values modules into curricula, and restore the mentor–apprentice (ustoz–shogird) system. At the family level, it is important to discuss issues of national upbringing at family councils and to preserve national holidays and customs. At the level of young people themselves, it is recommended that they independently study national cultural heritage, actively participate in cultural events, strengthen communication in their native language, and promote national values on digital platforms.

In conclusion, in today's era of advancing globalization and digital technology, raising young people on the basis of national values is of strategic importance for independent Uzbekistan. The rich spiritual heritage of our people is the most reliable shield protecting the minds of young people from alien ideas.

Based on the findings obtained:

1. National values (diligence, respect for parents, honesty, and a striving for knowledge) directly shape the character of young people. Through the chain of value, upbringing, and daily behavior, this process establishes qualities such as responsibility, conscientiousness, and tolerance in young people.

2. Cooperation between the family and the education system is extremely important. Role models and methods of encouragement within the family, together with the heritage of thinkers taught in educational institutions and folk art, create strong spiritual immunity in young people.

3. In countering the risks posed by the internet and foreign culture, an effective approach lies not in prohibition, but in increasing engaging Uzbek-language content in the digital space and teaching young people to remain modern without losing their identity (biculturalism).

In conclusion, if the measures proposed at the state, educational-institution, and family levels are implemented in practice, the problems raised in this article will find a positive resolution. Such an approach, aimed at preserving national identity, will serve to raise a comprehensively mature and competitive generation for the future of our country.

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