



Article

The Role of National Values in The Social Life of Youth

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Abstract: This article examines the sociological role of national values in the social life of Uzbek youth amid globalization and digitalization. The study substantiates the function of national values as an informal social control mechanism in reducing youth delinquency. Addressing the deficit of cultural content in the digital landscape, the paper proposes actionable recommendations to integrate values through gamification and contemporary media formats.

Keywords: National Values, Sociology of Youth, Socialization, Generation Z, Digital Environment, Social Control, Anomie, Family Institution, Gamification, Social Networks

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1. Introduction

In the current era, when the first quarter of the 21st century has come to an end, and humanity has entered a new stage of digital civilization, the global socio-cultural space is becoming more integrated than ever before. The borderlessness of information flows, the deep penetration of artificial intelligence technologies into everyday life, and the mixing of cultures pose new social problems for traditional societies. In such conditions, the sustainable development and social security of each independent state directly depend on the spiritual image of the younger generation, which is its demographic driver, that is, the level of awareness of national identity. Considering that young people make up more than 60 percent of the population of Uzbekistan, it becomes clear that the issue of preserving national values and incorporating them into the social life of young people is not just a cultural need, but a criterion of the state's strategic security [1]. The need to preserve national identity in the era of globalization helps young people not to be cut off from their historical roots and to integrate into the global community while remaining faithful to their native language, national traditions, and spiritual heritage.

In today's digital environment, the consciousness of young people is becoming a target of various ideological ideologies and foreign ideas. Elements of "mass culture" entering through social networks and the global network, extreme individualism, consumer psychology, and spiritual nihilism are changing the social behavior of young people and creating a threat of alienating them from the norms of traditional society. The essence of the problem in this complex process is that the social protective function of national values, that is, the ability to create ideological immunity in the minds of young people, is, in a certain sense, facing a crisis today[2]. The main reason for this is the ineffectiveness of outdated methods of instilling traditional values in the minds of the new generation (Generations Z and Alpha), mainly based on exhortation and command. The imbalance between nationalism and modernity is causing young people to lose their

direction in social life. Based on these contradictions, the main goal of this study is to identify and analyze the real impact and mechanisms of national values on the socialization process of modern Uzbek youth, based on empirical data, and to develop practical recommendations for adapting them to the digital environment[3].

2. Materials and Method

The theoretical and methodological foundations of the sociology of values have been widely studied in world and domestic science. Emile Durkheim, the founder of the Western school of sociology, identified the "collective consciousness" and the common value system contained in it as the main factor ensuring the stability of society. According to his well-founded opinion, the weakening of traditional values creates anomie in society, that is, the loss of moral standards and a state of worthlessness [4]. Talcott Parsons, in his theory of social movement, evaluates values as the most important component that maintains the balance of the social system and regulates individual behavior. He emphasized the integrative function of values, proving that it is through them that the new generation adapts to the requirements of the system [5]. Ronald Inglehart, who has studied the transformation of values in the context of modernization for many years, based on the data of the global "World Values Survey", found that as societies develop economically and technologically, secular-rational and self-expression values begin to dominate the minds of young people more than traditional values [6]. In Eastern philosophical and sociological thought, in particular, in modern research by Japanese and South Korean scientists, the concept of value is considered in the context of collectivism and high morality. According to their conclusions, even at the peak of technological progress, preserving national-philosophical traditions such as Confucianism (respect for elders, family unity) helps to maintain young people's trust in state institutions at a high level of up to 68% [7].

The relationship between youth socialization and national values in Uzbekistan is being systematically studied by sociologists, philosophers, and educators. The well-known sociologist Q. Abdurakhmonov evaluates national values as a driving factor shaping the behavior of young people as a social group. The author notes that in the conditions of transition and systemic changes, a synthesis of national values and Western traditions occurs in the minds of young people [8]. Pedagogical scientist Kh. Khudoykulov analyzes the place of national values in the pedagogical system and substantiates that the criteria for national pride and spiritual perfection are formed precisely in the integration of the family, neighborhood, and educational institution [6]. Philosopher scientist O. Qurbonov, showing national values as the basis of ideological immunity, emphasizes that only stable traditions can serve as a spiritual shield against the threats of globalization [9].

However, an analysis of the existing literature shows that, although the general theoretical and pedagogical aspects of national values have been sufficiently studied, there is a serious scientific gap (Research Gap) in the context of the social life of today's Generation Z (those born in 1997–2012) and the emerging Alpha Generation (those born after 2013). Given that today's youth spend an average of 4.5 to 6 hours a day in virtual space (TikTok, Instagram, Telegram) [10], and that traditional institutions (neighborhood, textbooks) are losing their appeal for the digital generation, the sociological picture of how values are being transformed has not been sufficiently elucidated.

used a **mixed-method methodology** that combines quantitative and qualitative approaches. A specially designed 18-question questionnaire (Quartz) was used to collect quantitative data. A total of 4 focus group discussions were conducted to explore qualitative indicators in more depth[11].

The population of the study was defined as young people in Uzbekistan aged 14 to 30 years. To ensure the reliability and representativeness of the results obtained, a stratified random sampling method was used. Yamane's mathematical formula $[n=N/(1+N(e)^{-2})]$ was used to determine the sample size, and the final sample size was $n=1200$ young people

(Confidence level – 95%, margin of error $e=0.05$). By age of participants: 14–18 years old – 30%; 19–25 years old – 45%; 26–30 years old – 25%. In terms of gender, men – 52%, women – 48%, and the study was conducted in Tashkent city (35%), Fergana Valley (40%), and Bukhara region (25%). The data were statistically analyzed using **SPSS (Version 26.0), a program** specifically designed for social sciences, and hypotheses were tested using Pierson's Chi-square (χ^2 test).

3. Results and Discussion

The results of the sociological survey showed that the institution of the family still occupies the most central place in the system of national values of modern youth. 84.2% of respondents answered the question “What is the highest value in life for you?” with “Family stability and parental consent,” which confirms national trends in research by the Institute for Macroeconomic and Territorial Research (IMTR). However, significant differences were found between age groups in their attitude to family rituals and traditions. For example, 72% of respondents aged 26–30 is in favor of holding national weddings and ceremonies in a luxurious and completely traditional way, while among representatives of Generation Z (aged 14–18), this figure dropped to 41.5%. The results of the chi-square (χ^2) test showed that 61% of young people in Tashkent city abandoned expensive traditions and preferred more pragmatic and concise rituals ($p<0.05$). This fact practically confirms R. Inglehart's theory of the transition from traditionalism to rationality[12].

On the other hand, the results of the study showed that national values perform a strong social control function in reducing delinquency and social deviation among young people. As Q. Abdurakhmonov noted, national values are the main factor that internally regulates the behavior of young people [4]. According to the questionnaire, 67.8% of respondents identified “a feeling of shame in front of the neighborhood and relatives” (andisha) and “fear of losing the trust of parents” as the main force that prevents them from committing illegal or immoral acts. It turned out that in the Fergana Valley region, where the community index is high, the positive effect of national-religious values on the prevention of delinquency is 18.4% higher than in Tashkent. This situation fully corresponds to E. Durkheim's hypothesis about the increase in anomie and crime in regions with a weakened collective consciousness [13].

However, when studying the role of virtual space and social networks in the lives of young people, a serious ideological imbalance was revealed. Although 91% of young people who participated in the survey said that they receive daily information only through social networks (Telegram, Instagram, TikTok), only 12.4% answered “yes” to the question “Do you satisfy with national-spiritual content on social networks?” The analysis showed that only 4.2% of the content in the entertainment/Shorts/TikTok direction, where young people spend the most time, reflects elements of national values. On the contrary, pages promoting national values remain in the traditional format, with a very low overall consumption volume (13.4%). 74.2% of young people noted that materials reflecting national values on social networks are presented in a “boring and didactic” spirit, rather than in a modern visual format (memes, podcasts, short trend videos). This clearly demonstrates the problem of finding completely new ways to form a spiritual shield in the age of globalization, as indicated by O. Kurbonov [14].

The results of the study show that Uzbek youth are not completely abandoning traditional values, as in the West, but are modernizing them. While values for 26-30-year-olds are more traditional-conservative in nature, for generations Z and Alpha, the perception of national identity is more related to “personal choice” and “visual aesthetics”. If we analyze it in the context of the theories of T. Parsons and R. Inglehart, the problem is not that young people are disconnected from national values, but that social institutions are late adapting to the digital environment. The lack of national content in virtual space (only 4.2%) creates the risk of a “spiritual vacuum” in the minds of young people. If

national values are not quickly adapted to the language of young people on digital platforms, the system of family control and thought, which is considered a mechanism of social stability in the future, will inevitably completely weaken[15].

4. Conclusion

Based on the research conducted, the following conclusions were drawn: firstly, the institution of the family still remains the highest value for young people, but the principles of pragmatism and conciseness in relation to rituals and traditions are gaining momentum. Secondly, national values (shame, thoughtfulness, parental consent) perform a stronger social and psychological control function than official state institutions in preventing crime and deviance among young people. Thirdly, there is a serious disconnect between the form of promotion of national values and the digital consumer culture of young people, and traditional methods are losing their attractiveness for the new generation.

To eliminate these problems and increase the role of national values in the social life of young people, the following practical proposals are put forward:

1. Creating a school of "National Content Makers": Introducing a system of financial support through state grants and social orders for creative youth who present national values, history, and traditions in the format of TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts, in a modern visual language.
2. National Gamification Program: To establish, based on a state order, the creation of mobile and computer games and VR (virtual reality) excursions that are of interest to young people, based on elements of the history of Uzbekistan, national heroes, and values.
3. Modernizing education and neighborhood integration: Introducing educational modules in universities and schools under the heading "Modern Etiquette and Digital Culture," which teach national values not in the form of dry exhortation, but through real-life case studies and interactive training.

Support system for young families: Expanding the network of professional family coaching and psychological and sociological consultation centers in neighborhoods that will help form young families based on a synthesis of national values and modern psychology.

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