
THE PRIORITY OF SPIRITUAL AND MORAL VALUES IN EDUCATING THE YOUNG GENERATION

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Abstract

Today, the spiritual and material heritage, customs, and ethical values of an individual's identity as a member of a nation are considered essential in forming the spiritual and equitable qualities of the young generation. However, it has been observed that the historical criteria of values created by our ancestors are being lost across many generations. Ultimately, such neglect damages humanistic qualities and spiritual values and hinders the formation of the nation. To eliminate such shortcomings, it is appropriate to know, study, and apply the ethical, spiritual, and cultural values inherited from our ancestors in life.

Keywords: Values, spiritual heritage, ethical values, national values, nation, people, family, community, young generation, education, upbringing.

Introduction

Today, it is crucial to emphasize the importance of preserving the spiritual and cultural values of a certain ethnic group when educating the growing young generation. In recent years, there has been a resurgence of traditional national education methods and an intensification of the process of socializing the younger generation in all fields of practical activity and the state education system. This year in Uzbekistan, extensive efforts have been made to preserve and further develop cultural values and traditional national customs.

“Preserving, studying, and passing down historical heritage from generation to generation is one of the most important priorities of our state's policy. In the current globalized environment, where new threats such as the dangers of 'mass culture' and dependency mentality are emerging, and where there is a risk of losing manners and values, this is of utmost importance.”¹

As our ancestor Farabi emphasized, “If such beautiful qualities and virtues unite and harmonize within a person, they must then learn how to cultivate these virtues and will among the people and residents of cities.”

However, it requires immense strength and power from a person to instill ethics, manners, customs, vocational habits, and willpower in people and city dwellers. This is achieved in two ways: through education and upbringing. Education refers to combining theoretical virtues among people and city dwellers, while upbringing involves integrating innate virtues and practical vocational skills within those communities.

Farabi's² analysis further illuminates the significance and outcomes of education, linking it solely with words and teaching. Upbringing, however, involves learning through practical work and experience,

¹ Mirziyoyev, Sh.M. (2018). _Milliy taraqqiyot yo'limizni qat'iyat bilan davom ettirib, yangi bosqichga ko'taramiz – I jild._ Toshkent: O'zbekiston, pp. 29-30.

² Farobiy, A.N. (2016). _Fozil odamlar shahri._ T.: Yangi asr avlodi nashriyoti, p. 270.

encompassing the practical skills and vocational activities of that particular nation. Farabi explained that if people are dedicated to their work and profession, and if this interest fully engages them, they become true enthusiasts of their craft.

Indeed, it is evident that restoring traditional culture in Uzbekistan cannot be achieved without considering the national orientation, the psychological and ethnic characteristics of the Uzbek people, and the rich educational experience accumulated over centuries. The spiritual wealth of an ethnic group has always been connected with public education, spiritual and cultural preaching, ethical ideals, views, ideas, and educational instructions. Therefore, conveying national values and their cultural, spiritual, and moral content to the younger generation is especially crucial today, particularly in the field of education and upbringing.

In the current globalization process, the phenomenon of values and their formative and cultural role is given great importance in educating youth to be intellectually advanced and patriotic based on national values. The success and viability of any system of values in social formation are linked to its ability to create a stable and continuous experience in transmitting moral values and forms of behavior.

In the decision of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated June 7, 2017, "On measures to improve the effectiveness of state youth policy and support the activities of the Youth Union of Uzbekistan," it is noted that the effectiveness of state youth policy and the support of the activities of the Youth Union of Uzbekistan have been enhanced. The policy aims to educate young people in the spirit of patriotism and respect for national traditions and values, to form a spiritually mature and physically healthy generation, and to protect the rights and interests of the youth.

Additionally, analysis of the current situation and measures taken in the field shows that consistent efforts are being made to address urgent issues involving a wide range of youth, especially to create suitable conditions for unorganized youth to find their place in life and to ensure a healthy lifestyle for the youth. Due to the negative examples of foreign cultures, the process of "eroding" national values, traditions, and rituals, especially among young people, is a serious issue today. The emergence of an attractive lifestyle, criminal intelligence, cruelty, freedom, and irresponsibility is a significant problem. Due to their age and lack of sufficient life experience, the instability of young people's spiritual and moral beliefs and positions serves as a gateway for inhumane, immoral, and extremist ideas to enter their minds. This indicates that educating young people in the spirit of national values helps preserve our future, nation, and national identity in a free and eternal state.

However, it should be noted that, despite some traditions and national family values being partially or completely rejected in many countries, ceremonies, traditions, and customs that express national values are preserved in Uzbekistan. Undoubtedly, the main role and importance of national participation in these processes are significant. Philosopher Qiyomiddin Nazarov³ provided a detailed explanation of the nation, its distinctive features, and characteristics within the system of values. Values associated with the territory that has influenced to a certain extent, the feelings associated with it, the past, history, culture of the nation, the cultural wealth it has created, and the spiritual heritage it is linked to, also hold an important place.

These values are common to the people of a nation and serve as one of the links connecting individual values with universal human values. When a person understands universal human values and aligns

³ Nazarov Q. Qadriyatlar falsafasi. (Aksiologiya). Faylasuflar milliy jamiyati nashriyoti. T.: 2004, b-39-40

their activities with these values, they also consider and take into account national values, providing a broader definition.

Philosopher Jondor Tulenov⁴ described values as having a social nature, forming and developing through the practical activities of individuals. He explained that values emerge in connection with a set of things and phenomena that bring benefits to people's activities in various fields, primarily production and labor. After this process, values gradually begin to function as a relatively independent domain due to the increasing activity of the subject. He also noted that it is inappropriate to consider natural and social phenomena that do not satisfy human needs, aspirations, and ideals as values. For instance, he clarified that natural resources only become values once they start being used to meet human needs; until then, they are considered natural resources.

Such spiritual and moral values are characteristic of the personal and social consciousness of Uzbek citizens, who take pride in their great ancestors, scientific and historical heritage, hospitality, and hard work. All members of the Uzbek family adhere to a rather strict hierarchy in their relationships—the younger ones must obey the head of the family and the elders. The woman, as the mother and wife of the household head, holds a strong position but is also expected to be more obedient to her husband and his parents. Respecting elders is a national tradition for Uzbeks, which is observed not only within the family but everywhere, regardless of their status, rank, or position. The custom of showing respect to elders includes practices like greeting them first, offering one's seat in transport or public places, not interrupting their conversations, and allowing them to go first. Similar respect is taught and observed towards teachers and scholars.

The mahalla institution, which has been revived during the years of independence, plays an important role in the personal, labor, and social life of Uzbek citizens. Historically and in modern terms, the mahalla has always functioned as a well-defined social, cultural, and spiritual community of people connected by common interests and a shared living space. The mahalla serves as the foundation of the self-governance system for citizens, ensuring public participation in addressing urgent societal issues. Here, collective opinions on pressing economic and socio-cultural matters are often formed, and the rules of conduct for individuals in society are established.

One of the important directions of mahalla activities is the development of high spirituality and morality in the younger generation. However, there are shortcomings in the current upbringing of young people, as they sometimes adhere to spiritual and moral national traditions and values superficially, without deeply understanding their essence. For example, there is often a discrepancy between the behavior of schoolchildren and students within the family and mahalla compared to their conduct in the streets, transport, and public places. This highlights the need for strong cultural communication skills and familiarity with the values of national and world history, science, and artistic culture.

President Shavkat Mirziyoyev encapsulated this necessity, stating, “Another important issue that always concerns us is the behavior, manners, and worldview of our youth. Today, the times are changing rapidly. Who feels these changes the most? The youth. Let the youth be in harmony with the demands of their time. But at the same time, let them not forget their identity. Let the call of 'Who are we, descendants of such great ancestors' always resonate in their hearts, urging them to remain true to themselves. How do we achieve this? Through education, education, and only education.”⁵

⁴ To'lanov J. Qadriyatlar falsafasi. O'zbekiston nashriyoti. T.: 1998, b-13

⁵ Shavkat Mirziyoyev. Milliy taraqqiyot yo'limizni qat'iyat bilan davom ettirib, yangi bosqichga ko'taramiz. “O'zbekiston”, 2016.B.486

By the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century, new distinctive features emerged in national development. Many nations and peoples living in various countries gained their independence and began following their chosen paths of progress. At the same time, there has been a growing desire among nations to understand their identity, revive their national and spiritual heritage, and restore their customs, traditions, and values. Many countries have achieved significant successes in economic, socio-political, and cultural-educational fields. As a result, their aspirations to lead in global development have also intensified. In this process, available material and spiritual resources, the most modern mass information tools - computers, the internet, mobile phones, and other modern technical means - have been instrumental.

From an external perspective, these tools seem to positively impact the development of the entire human way of life, especially improving the material conditions of countries and peoples that have just embarked on the path of development, integrating into the system of universal democratic values, and enhancing their spiritual and educational levels.

Indeed, to address such conditions and shortcomings, it is crucial to nurture the younger generation in the spirit of spiritual values, to appreciate, study, and apply the teachings, wise words, and thoughts of scholars in life. Today's youth are the foundation of the future. Therefore, it is necessary to raise them to be well-rounded, mature, patriotic, and dedicated children who will contribute to the peace and prosperity of the country.

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