

FOREIGN COUNTRIES' EXPERIENCES IN ORGANIZING SPIRITUAL AND EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES (THE CASES OF SINGAPORE AND JAPAN)

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Abstract

The article gives a comparative analysis of the theoretical and practical aspects of the experience of foreign countries in the organization and management of spiritual and educational work on the example of Singapore and Japan. The main idea of the study is that the effectiveness of spiritual and educational activities is determined not by the number of random events, but by values-based holistic system, institutional cohesion, school-family-community cooperation and effectiveness indicators. In the Singapore experience, the Character and Citizenship Education model, the Values in Action program, the caring and supportive school environment, student-centeredness and educational mechanisms based on 21st century competencies were studied. In contrast, in the Japanese experience, the lessons of dōtoku, that is, moral education, the "whole school" approach, tokkatsu activities, collective responsibility, self-management, daily discipline, and educational possibilities of socially useful work were analyzed. The article highlights the common and different aspects of these two experiences, develops methodological, organizational and management conclusions that can be adapted for the education system of Uzbekistan. As a result of the study, the case was substantiated by the need for value-oriented planning, reflective mechanisms, outcome assessment indicators and adaptive model adapted to local needs for the effective organization of spiritual and educational work.

Keywords: Spiritual and Educational Work, Educational System, Singapore Experience, Japanese Experience, Character and Citizenship Education, Values in Action, Dōtoku, Tokkatsu, Values, Management, Comparative Analysis.

ЭКСПЕРИМЕНТЫ ЗАРУБЕЖНЫХ СТРАН В ОРГАНИЗАЦИИ ДУХОВНОЙ И ПРОСВЕТИТЕЛЬСКОЙ РАБОТЫ (НА ПРИМЕРЕ СИНГАПУРА И ЯПОНИИ)

Аннотация

В статье представлен сравнительный анализ теоретических и практических аспектов опыта иностранных стран в организации и управлении духовной и образовательной работой на примере Сингапура и Японии. Основная идея исследования заключается в том, что эффективность духовной и образовательной деятельности определяется не количеством случайных событий, а целостной системой, основанной на ценностях, институциональной сплочённостью, сотрудничеством школы, семьи и сообщества и показателями эффективности. В сингапурском опыте изучались модель воспитания

характера и гражданства, программа «Ценности в действии», заботливая и поддерживающая школьная среда, ориентированность на ученика и образовательные механизмы, основанные на компетенциях XXI века. В отличие от этого, в японском опыте анализировались уроки дотоку, то есть моральное воспитание, подход «всей школы», деятельность токкацу, коллективная ответственность, самоуправление, ежедневная дисциплина и образовательные возможности социально полезной работы. В статье выделяются общие и различные аспекты этих двух опытов, разрабатываются методологические, организационные и управленческие выводы, которые можно адаптировать для системы образования Узбекистана. В результате исследования дело было подтверждено необходимостью ценностно-ориентированного планирования, рефлексивных механизмов, индикаторов оценки результатов и адаптивной модели, адаптированных к местным потребностям для эффективной организации духовной и образовательной работы.

Ключевые слова: духовная и образовательная работа, образовательная система, опыт в Сингапуре, японский опыт, воспитание характера и гражданства, ценности в действии, дотоку, токкацу, ценности, менеджмент, сравнительный анализ.

INTRODUCTION

In the context of globalization, the rapid acceleration of information flows, the growing influence of social media, and the intensification of value-based competition in the minds of young people, the issue of organizing spiritual and educational activities on a modern basis is becoming increasingly important. Today, the process of upbringing should not be limited to isolated lectures, roundtable discussions, or organizational events. Rather, it should be organized as a continuous socio-pedagogical system that is reflected in the daily behavior of students and young individuals, their social responsibility, decision-making culture, conduct, and civic position. In this regard, the effectiveness of spiritual and educational work is determined by the integration of content, methods, environment, and management.

In Uzbekistan, consistent reforms are also being implemented in this direction. Enhancing the effectiveness of spiritual and educational activities, establishing a continuous system of moral education, strengthening the ideological immunity of youth, and organizing the educational process in accordance with modern requirements have been identified as key priorities of state policy [1–5]. However, in effectively implementing these tasks in practice, international experience—especially the practices of countries that have systematized value-based education—serves as an important scientific and methodological resource. Therefore, the experiences of Singapore and Japan are not only interesting comparative materials, but also represent a relevant source of practical mechanisms that can be applied in the context of Uzbekistan.

THE RELEVANCE OF THE RESEARCH TOPIC

The relevance of the research topic is determined by several factors. First, spiritual and educational activities represent a strategic sphere whose outcomes are not immediately

visible, yet they have a direct impact on the long-term sustainable development of society. Second, the practice of evaluating educational activities solely based on the number of organized events does not reflect their actual effectiveness. Third, as the number of factors influencing the minds of young people in the digital space continues to grow, the formation of values, civic consciousness, social responsibility, and reflective thinking is becoming a complex managerial task.

The experiences of Singapore and Japan are particularly noteworthy in this regard. Singapore's education system integrates values through comprehensive mechanisms such as Character and Citizenship Education and Values in Action, linking them with classroom instruction, the school environment, and collective activities [6–9]. In Japan, moral education is not limited to classroom instruction but is implemented through the entire school life, including daily routines, teamwork, special activities, and systems of self-governance [10–12]. A comparative study of these experiences contributes to improving the planning, management, and evaluation criteria of spiritual and educational activities in Uzbekistan.

LEVEL OF PROBLEM STUDY

Issues related to spiritual upbringing, moral education, civic education, and values pedagogy have been extensively studied within the fields of pedagogy, sociology, philosophy, and educational management. In the scientific domain of Uzbekistan, numerous studies address spiritual upbringing, the concept of the well-rounded individual, national values, youth education, and continuous upbringing. Additionally, нормативно-правовые documents define the institutional foundations and priority directions of spiritual and educational activities [1–5].

In foreign literature, in the case of Singapore, Character and Citizenship Education, 21st-century competencies, student well-being, and socio-emotional development have been studied in depth [6–9]. In Japan, *dōtoku*, *tokkatsu*, and the whole-school approach are analyzed as key mechanisms of moral education [10–12]. However, there is a lack of studies that analyze the experiences of Singapore and Japan specifically as a comparative management model adapted to the context of Uzbekistan. Therefore, this article aims to fill this gap.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE AND TASKS

The purpose of the research is to conduct a comparative study of the experiences of Singapore and Japan in organizing spiritual and educational activities, and to identify their theoretical and practical aspects that can be applied in the context of Uzbekistan.

To achieve this goal, the following objectives were defined:

first, to identify the theoretical criteria determining the effectiveness of spiritual and educational activities;

second, to analyze the content and management mechanisms of the Character and Citizenship Education and Values in Action systems in Singapore;

third, to examine the role and effectiveness factors of moral education, *dōtoku*, and *tokkatsu* activities in Japanese schools;

fourth, to compare the commonalities and differences between the experiences of the two countries;

fifth, to develop practical recommendations for the education and upbringing system of Uzbekistan.

The effectiveness of spiritual and educational activities primarily depends on their organization not as random actions, but as a systematic process grounded in values. From this perspective, the experience of Singapore is particularly noteworthy. In this country's educational policy, Character and Citizenship Education views the personal, social, and civic development of students as an integrated system. According to the official approach, this model aims to develop core values such as respect, responsibility, resilience, integrity, care, and harmony among students [6; 8]. Importantly, these values are not taught as abstract slogans, but are integrated with socio-emotional competencies and practical behavioral norms.

The methodological strength of the Singaporean model lies in its foundation on three key ideas—identity, relationships, and choices [6]. This approach encourages students to reflect on questions such as “Who am I?”, “How do I relate to others?”, and “What choices do I make in complex situations?”. As a result, spiritual and educational activities acquire a clear didactic structure, are adapted to age-specific characteristics, and are oriented toward reflection. Furthermore, in Singapore, the school environment itself is considered an educational tool. A supportive school climate, positive teacher–student relationships, role modeling by adults, and peer culture are essential conditions for the effectiveness of Character and Citizenship Education [7; 9].

Another effective mechanism in Singapore is the Values in Action program. Through this program, students actively participate in community life: they observe problems, demonstrate initiative, carry out socially beneficial actions, and engage in reflection [7]. The key point here is that socially useful activity is not merely volunteering, but is organized as a practical manifestation of values. Thus, the content of spiritual and educational work shifts from “talking about values” to “demonstrating them in practice.” In the context of Uzbekistan, it would be appropriate to systematize such reflective practical activities through cooperation between mahalla institutions, educational organizations, and parents.

The experience of Japan, in contrast, is distinguished by its mechanism of embedding educational work into daily life. In this country, moral education is not limited to separate lessons; rather, it is integrated into the entire educational process, classroom culture, school rules, collective work, and systems of self-governance [10–12]. According to MEXT documents, moral education is associated with respect for human dignity, reverence for life, awareness of social responsibility, appreciation of national traditions and culture, and respect for the international community [10]. In this sense, the Japanese model represents a system that harmonizes spiritual and educational work with national identity and social discipline.

In Japanese schools, dōtoku lessons are aimed at discussing moral dilemmas, understanding conflicts between opposing values, and developing independent judgment [11]. However, the real impact of these lessons is strengthened only when they are linked with other activities. This is where tokkatsu—special activities such as class meetings, duty rotations, collective cleaning of the school, student-led organization of events, and shared responsibilities—plays a crucial role in fostering teamwork, responsibility, and a culture of labor. As a result, students perceive social norms not as imposed rules, but as tools for improving collective life. Personal discipline, responsibility for shared spaces, and mutual respect are naturally developed through these processes.

An important aspect of Japan's experience is the transformation of everyday routines and rituals into educational resources. Practices such as preparing for lessons, treating school property with care, maintaining discipline during meals, and collectively organizing classroom spaces cultivate responsibility, diligence, a sense of duty toward the community, and internal discipline in students [11; 12]. This aspect is also highly relevant for Uzbekistan, where educational efforts are often associated with formal events rather than being integrated into daily behavior and habits.

A common feature of both Singaporean and Japanese experiences is that spiritual and educational activities are not treated as an additional burden, but as an integral part of the core educational process. In both countries, the school environment, teachers' personal example, collective activities, student reflection, and a clear system of values occupy a central place. The difference lies in their approaches: Singapore relies more on a competency-based and design-oriented model, where educational activities are strongly linked to student-centeredness, targeted outcomes, and reflection. Japan, on the other hand, exerts influence through daily routines, community life, school culture, and disciplinary socialization. In other words, Singapore represents a model of "intentionally designed meaningful experiences," while Japan reflects a model of "lived daily education."

For Uzbekistan, the key lesson from these two experiences is the need to transform spiritual and educational activities from a collection of events into a systematically managed process. On the one hand, mechanisms such as clear goals, indicators, student reflection, and community service—similar to Singapore—should be strengthened. On the other hand, as seen in Japan, the daily culture of educational institutions, self-governance, collective work, discipline, and responsibility for shared spaces should be turned into educational criteria. The true effectiveness of spiritual and educational activities can be ensured through such dual integration.

Another important issue in adopting foreign experience is not direct replication, but adaptation to the local socio-cultural context. While Singapore's model is based on strong institutional management, clear indicators, and systematic reflection, Japan's experience relies on historically formed collective culture, discipline, and daily school practices. In Uzbekistan, it is advisable to synthesize the constructive aspects of both models. For example, targeted educational modules and community service projects similar to those in Singapore can be developed, but they should be harmonized with mahalla institutions, family values, the mentor-apprentice tradition, and national holidays. Likewise, Japan's

practices of daily labor and responsibility for shared spaces can be reinterpreted through ecological culture, respect for property, public order, and volunteer activities within educational institutions.

At the same time, the professional competence of leaders and teachers is a decisive factor in organizing spiritual and educational work. In Singapore, school leaders and teachers interpret Character and Citizenship Education not as a separate subject, but as “the meaning of every school activity” [6; 9]. In Japan, the educational environment is directly linked to the teacher’s daily behavior, discipline, fairness, and sense of responsibility toward the community [11; 12]. Therefore, in Uzbekistan, it is not sufficient to merely increase the number of methodological guidelines; it is necessary to introduce professional development modules that enhance axiological competence, reflective management, educational design, and social project management skills among school leaders and teachers.

Criterion	Singapore	Japan
The center of the system	Integration of Character and Citizenship Education, Core Values, and 21st Century Competencies.	Moral Education, dōtoku, tokkatsu, and Whole-School Approach
Main method	Targeted Lessons, Social-Emotional Development, Reflection, and Values in Action Projects	Daily Discipline, Collaborative Activities, Duty/Rotation, and School Culture
Result Logic	Understanding Values, Making Choices, and Engaging in Actions Beneficial to Society	Transforming Values into Habits, Responsibility, and Self-Discipline
Management Feature	Central Core and Adaptation at the School Level	National Orientation and Local Alignment of Daily Practices
Lesson for Uzbekistan	Strengthening Mechanisms for Indicators, Reflection, and Service to the Community	Establishing Organizational Culture and Daily Educational Practices

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Comparative analysis shows that the high effectiveness of spiritual and educational activities is associated with four key factors. The first is the clear definition of a value system. In Singapore, the relationship between core values and 21st-century competencies is formally articulated [8; 9]. In Japan, values such as human dignity, collective life, duty, respect, and social harmony are embedded into everyday life through school culture [10; 11]. Thus, for spiritual and educational activities to be effective, there must be a clear answer to the question: “Which values should be transformed into what kinds of behavior?” The second factor is the alignment between environment and process. If spirituality is discussed in lessons, but the school itself operates in an atmosphere of indifference, formalism, or irresponsibility, the educational impact will be weak. The experiences of Singapore and Japan demonstrate that organizational culture, the teacher as a role model,

classroom climate, and collective relationships are among the most powerful implicit factors in moral education. Therefore, in Uzbekistan, the monitoring of spiritual and educational activities should focus not only on activity plans but also on the actual social environment within educational institutions.

The third factor is the unity of reflection and practice. In Singapore, the Values in Action programs ensure active student participation and develop a culture of reflecting on completed activities [7]. In Japan, daily labor and collective activities transform personal experience into moral conclusions [11; 12]. This suggests that, to enhance effectiveness, the model should shift from a “passive audience” to an “active participant” approach.

The fourth factor is the system for evaluating effectiveness. It is relatively easy to assess educational activities quantitatively, but much more difficult to determine their qualitative outcomes. Therefore, it is necessary to develop a set of indicators for spiritual and educational activities within Uzbekistan’s education system. These may include teamwork culture, social initiative, attitudes toward labor, self-governance, levels of indifference to social issues, participation in social projects, and the internal motivation for discipline. In this regard, existing normative documents already emphasize the need to assess the effectiveness of educational activities using scientifically grounded indicators [4]. Thus, international experience provides a strong scientific basis for introducing an indicator-based management model in Uzbekistan.

Another important aspect is achieving a balance between centralization and flexibility in managing spiritual and educational activities. Singapore’s experience shows that while core values and key competencies are centrally defined, schools are given the flexibility to adapt programs based on student profiles and social contexts [6; 7]. Similarly, in Japan, although there is a general national framework, many educational practices are adapted to local traditions and community needs [10; 11]. Therefore, the most appropriate model for Uzbekistan would be an integrative management approach that includes common strategic values, indicators, and a methodological core, while allowing for adaptation at the level of individual educational institutions.

In addition, comparative analysis highlights the necessity of integrating spiritual and educational activities with digital transformation. In Singapore, issues such as cyber wellness and digital citizenship are considered integral components of Character and Citizenship Education [6]. This approach teaches young people to make ethical choices not only in offline environments but also in online spaces. In the context of Uzbekistan, it is essential to systematically incorporate media literacy, critical analysis of information, online communication culture, and digital responsibility into the content of spiritual and educational activities. Only then can such activities achieve real impact by adapting to modern risks and opportunities

CONCLUSION

The results of the study indicate that the key condition for the effective organization of spiritual and educational activities is to view them not as a collection of separate events, but as a management system based on the integration of values, environment, practical

activities, and reflection. The experience of Singapore demonstrates a highly effective model of organizing spiritual and educational work in a student-centered manner, closely linked with targeted outcomes and socio-emotional competencies. In contrast, the experience of Japan shows that sustainable moral behavior can be achieved by transforming daily life, collective labor, discipline, and school culture into educational resources.

As a scientific conclusion, it can be stated that in the context of Uzbekistan, three priority directions are essential for improving spiritual and educational activities. First, it is necessary to develop a clear model of values along with corresponding behavioral indicators. Second, it is important to create a system of reflective and practice-oriented activities based on cooperation among schools, higher education institutions, families, and local community (mahalla) structures. Third, daily organizational culture should be transformed into an educational tool. In this case, the effectiveness of spiritual and educational activities will shift from external formality to internal conviction, responsibility, and civic engagement. Thus, the comparative analysis of the experiences of Singapore and Japan provides both a methodological and practical foundation for the scientific management, evaluation, and modernization of spiritual and educational activities in Uzbekistan.

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