

## THE IDEOLOGICAL MECHANISMS FOR DEVELOPING MORAL IDENTITY AMONG THE YOUTH OF NEW UZBEKISTAN

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### Abstract

In recent years, the national identity of the social world has been increasingly challenged by efforts aimed at alienating people from their national consciousness and cultural identity. In such a context, only a nation that glorifies its own identity and national values can deserve genuine respect and recognition. Indeed, a people who remain faithful to their cultural heritage and convey their national traditions and identity to the younger generation without distortion are capable of preserving their name, language, and faith in the world. In this process, the development of self-awareness and identity among youth has become an important and urgent issue.

**Keywords:** National identity, globalization, national values, national identification, information.

### Introduction

In the 21st century, the rapid pace of globalization has come to encompass all spheres of human activity. Especially in this era of globalization, information has turned into a powerful instrument — the most formidable weapon — that influences human consciousness and emotions in various ways. As the saying goes, “*Whoever possesses information, possesses the world,*” a notion that is now universally acknowledged [1].

The intensification of global information exchange has led to the constant exposure of young people to the flow of information. Today, more than 10,000 websites exert a negative influence on the human mind and morality, and over 50,000 web pages promote immorality and indecency [2]. These websites and their social media platforms actively propagate content aimed at distorting the moral values and identity of the younger generation.

Given the accelerating development of the information world and the spread of destructive ideas, countries such as China, South Korea, and Russia have already developed and implemented state programs to ensure information security [3]. Indeed, in today’s tense and fast-changing era, even a seemingly insignificant message directed against the moral integrity of youth can, under the force of global information flows, cause invisible yet irreparable harm.

Therefore, adopting such international experiences into the lives of our youth can help to better understand their lifestyle, quality of life, time allocation, interests, needs, and level of socialization within society. From this perspective, the large-scale reforms carried out in our country require the ability to manage time effectively and purposefully.

In today’s rapidly developing world, one of the key priorities of our state is to ensure the proper education and upbringing of the younger generation, as well as to effectively organize youth policy. According to the **UN Sustainable Development Goals**, by 2030 the share of young people in the world is expected to increase by 7 percent. This highlights the need to pay greater attention to youth-related issues and challenges associated with their development.



In 2017, during his speech at the **United Nations General Assembly**, the President of Uzbekistan proposed adopting a *Convention on the Rights of Youth*, calling on all nations to take responsibility for the future of young people. Today, there are more than **18 million young people** in Uzbekistan — an unprecedented figure in our history. From 1991 to 2016, only 25 legislative acts and regulations related to youth were adopted, while from 2016 to 2023 this number exceeded 100.

It is projected that by 2040, Uzbekistan's population will reach 50 million, with youth comprising around 60 percent of it. This means that creating decent living conditions for them requires a **safe state, effective governance, stable economy, and strong social guarantees** [4]. This process can already be observed in citizens' assemblies, general education schools, vocational colleges, technical institutions, and higher education. To complement the quality of education among young people, various clubs, skill centers, language-learning institutions, and sports complexes have been established.

However, any process that fails to consider the interests and motivations of youth may prove ineffective. In this regard, the great writer **Chingiz Aitmatov** once said: *"There is no need to force a camel's skin onto a human head; the wars of the future will not be fought on the battlefield but in the ideological arena."* [5]

Indeed, the current process of globalization has expanded the scope of ideological influence to such an extent that any person lacking firm personal convictions, strong will, and deeply rooted national and spiritual values accumulated over centuries can easily fall under its sway.

The social networks and internet system have become such an immense and boundless phenomenon that people now spend hours—even entire days—wasting their time and lives unproductively. As a result, especially among youth, negative traits such as impatience, indifference, disrespect toward elders' opinions, and neglect of ancestral values have been growing. Such tendencies are cause for serious reflection.

"Today, more than 90% of the world's population has access to social media. The number of users continues to increase year after year. According to experts, the minimum average time a person spends on social media per day is about three hours. At first glance, this may not seem alarming" [6]. Yet considering that the majority of social media users are young people, this situation naturally demands greater vigilance.

The expansion of virtual communication among individuals has reduced the need for face-to-face interactions. It should be noted that in modern life, the number of people who prefer to communicate through social networks rather than meet in person has significantly increased. Virtual interaction distances young people from reality, diminishing their ability to express genuine emotions and experiences. The continuation of such tendencies could lead to the erosion of fundamental human feelings among youth. As it is aptly observed, "In the recent past, people used to invite others by saying, 'Come to my home,' whereas now we hear, 'Visit my Telegram channel' or 'Check out my Facebook page'—and we are no longer surprised by it" [7].

Therefore, in today's rapidly changing and intensively developing society, one of the most urgent tasks is to protect the moral and spiritual consciousness of young people from the harmful influences, ideological attacks, and destructive ideas that penetrate through the global internet network. To reliably protect the youth from these threats, it is necessary to design and implement long-term, modern spiritual and ideological programs based on precise strategies.



There is a universal rule in life that everyone knows: people are united by shared interests. Hence, in order to unite young people around a common goal, we must engage them in projects that offer material incentives, promote their initiatives, and inspire participation through meaningful spiritual and cultural activities.

When discussing the ideological mechanisms for developing moral identity among the youth of New Uzbekistan, it is essential to first consider the country's modern history, social and spiritual transformations, and the role of the education system. Moral identity, at its core, means an individual's understanding of self and purpose in life; secondly, it implies recognizing, accepting, and enhancing the existing moral and spiritual values within society. To achieve this effectively, several ideological mechanisms must be developed to shape and strengthen moral consciousness among the youth of New Uzbekistan amid the processes of globalization.

Moral identity plays a central role in the spiritual, social, and cultural growth of young people, as it determines how they perceive themselves, the extent of their contribution to national development, and their respect for moral norms. The ideological mechanisms for shaping moral affiliation among youth encompass the following directions:

**The role of education:** In introducing young people of New Uzbekistan to national and moral values, the educational process plays a vital role. Moral and spiritual education, the teaching of national traditions, and the concept of "Uzbekistan as our common home" in secondary and higher education institutions serve as powerful tools for cultivating moral belonging.

**Historical and cultural heritage:** New Uzbekistan's rich historical, cultural, and spiritual heritage strengthens the national and moral identity of its youth. It is important for young people to study and show respect toward their traditions, customs, and religious values, as this fosters a sense of rootedness and continuity.

**Mass media and social networks:** Today, mass media and social networks are viewed as key instruments for youth education because they play a significant role in shaping moral consciousness. It is essential to provide national media content, and to use science, literature, art, and culture to promote proper moral values.

**The family as a moral foundation:** The family is the primary environment where moral and ethical knowledge is shaped. Elders—especially parents and close relatives—play a decisive role in instilling moral and religious norms in the minds of youth. Social institutions, moral standards, and ethical rules in society also have a substantial impact on the moral identity of young people.

**Modern and national moral values:** For today's youth of New Uzbekistan, it is equally important to cultivate both modern and traditional moral values. To foster moral identity among the younger generation, international cooperation, competitions, and initiatives must be developed to create new ideological mechanisms at the regional level.

**Youth organizations and movements:** Existing youth structures and movements, such as the *Agency for Youth Affairs* and the *Youth Union of Uzbekistan*, help young people form moral consciousness and engage in socially active life. These organizations are instrumental in enhancing the moral education of youth.

**Government programs and education:** The state's educational and upbringing policies aim to morally strengthen the youth. It is essential to conduct psychological seminars and training sessions in educational institutions to reinforce moral and spiritual awareness among students.

**Patriotism and national pride:** Cultivating patriotism, creating inspiring national content, and



instilling a sense of pride in one's homeland are critical in shaping moral identity among the youth of New Uzbekistan. This fosters a sense of responsibility toward the country and motivates young people to use their potential for national progress.

At this point, it is time to critically reassess our attitude toward young people. Over the years, most programs and initiatives have primarily targeted talented and gifted youth, while the majority—those who may not fall under this category—often remain outside these opportunities. Hence, any youth-oriented approach or program must aim to include all young people and emphasize broad participation and encouragement.

As one political thinker wrote:

“Tell me what moods dominate the youth today, and I will tell you what kind of generation we will have tomorrow.” [8]

Indeed, approaching this issue with seriousness is essential, as the youth—our greatest wealth and the owners of tomorrow—must be educated with a strong sense of moral, ethical, and national consciousness.

To further develop moral identity among youth, the following measures should also be implemented:

- Renewing and enhancing youth spirituality through national programs that engage them in processes of transformation and modernization;
- Promoting unifying ideas among youth of different opinions and worldviews, such as patriotism, national peace, prosperity, and the rule of law — ensuring that enlightenment becomes a sacred force against ignorance;
- Continuing efforts to explain to youth the humanistic nature of our sacred religion and the moral principles of our ancestors.

Therefore, it is necessary to:

- Increase and improve the quality of short films, national serials, and feature films in mass media that reflect historical, moral, and spiritual values;
- Expand the number of websites that embody national and ethical content and organize youth-oriented interactive challenges, quizzes, and educational initiatives;
- Create engaging online games, tests, and motivational projects based on national and moral themes to strengthen the sense of Uzbek identity and values among youth.

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