



THE NECESSITY OF DEVELOPING STUDENTS' COMPETENCE IN NATIONAL IDENTITY

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.23283936>

Abstract.

In the Concept for the Development of the Higher Education System until 2030, the training of highly qualified personnel with high spiritual and moral qualities and independent thinking, along with the acquisition of modern knowledge, is defined as a priority goal. This article discusses the current necessity of the concept of national identity.

Keywords: national identity, national value, identity, competence, national affiliation.

Introduction.

In modern society, the socialization environment of youth has expanded significantly in terms of content and function, and the worldview of a student's personality is no longer formed only within the family, mahalla, educational institution, and direct social relations. As a result of digital communications, transnational information flows, the free exchange of cultural products, and opportunities for indirect communication with various social groups, the student simultaneously develops under the intersecting influence of national, global, and digital cultural spaces. UNESCO's conceptual approach to educational prospects also emphasizes the need for educational and social learning processes to occur in various cultural and social spaces, and to interconnect natural, institutional, and virtual educational environments. The impact of digital technologies is particularly evident in higher education, which, according to UNESCO's 2023 Global Education Monitoring Report, is the link in education that is adopting digital technologies the fastest. This situation not only increases the sources of knowledge and cultural experience for students but also strengthens their regular interaction with various variants of values, life models, historical interpretations, and social behavioral norms.

It would be scientifically one-sided to evaluate this process solely as the intensification of external cultural influences or the weakening of national values. This is because modern socio-cultural changes not only deny the existing identification foundations of the individual but also create opportunities for their re-understanding, adaptation to new conditions, comparison with other cultural experiences, and conscious reinforcement. In particular, an empirical study conducted by A. A. Alghamdi with the participation of 350 university students showed that modern social changes interact with the cultural, moral, and professional identification of students, but this influence is not uniform or linear; the study notes that the social environment, personal factors, and behavioral manifestations are in a dynamic relationship. In this regard, the pedagogical essence of the issue is manifested not in the artificial restriction of youth from various cultural influences, but in preparing them to understand their content, compare it with their own historical and cultural experience, and form a conscious attitude.

In the context of expanding opportunities for information and cultural choice, preserving national ideas acquired from previous generations solely through traditional socialization mechanisms does not yield sufficient pedagogical results. This is because the student is not merely a recipient of the cultural content they encounter, but acts as an active participant who selects, compares, interprets, and coordinates it with their life views. Accordingly, the task facing modern education is linked to the development of the student's ability to understand their national-cultural foundations, argue, compare them with other cultural contexts, and independently evaluate their personal significance, rather than conveying national identity as a set of ready-made views. UNESCO also shows that modern educational content should not be limited to the acquisition of knowledge, but should be aimed at developing the ability to critically evaluate and apply it in practice, and intercultural learning should become an important direction of educational content.

Consequently, the current socio-pedagogical relevance of the issue of national self-awareness in students is manifested not in the increase of external cultural influences themselves, but in the increased need for a meaningful understanding of these influences based on national-cultural experience, comparative assessment, and the formation of a personal position based on them. In such conditions, it is insufficient to perceive national identity solely on the basis of origin, tradition, or emotional closeness; it is necessary to understand its historical and cultural content and consciously determine its place in the system of personal values. For this reason, transforming a student's national identity from a mere sense of belonging to a conscious, reflexive, and grounded personal position appears as one of the important pedagogical needs of modern higher education. It is precisely this need that requires clarifying the socio-pedagogical mandate of higher education regarding the purposeful development of students' national identity in subsequent analysis.

The necessity of developing students' national self-awareness is also determined by the state and societal requirements for educational goals. The legal basis of this requirement is reflected in the fact that the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan separately defines the responsibility of the state and society for the upbringing of the younger generation. Article 79 of the Constitution establishes that the task of the state and society is to foster in children and youth a sense of loyalty to national and universal values, pride in the rich cultural heritage of the country and people, and patriotism and love for the Motherland. This norm not only limits the result of upbringing to instilling specific spiritual qualities but also raises the meaningful connection of the younger generation with the cultural heritage of the people to the level of a socially significant task. Therefore, the issue of integrating historical and cultural heritage into the personal development of youth should be considered not as a secondary task of higher education, but as one of the directions determining its social responsibility.

Article 4 of the Law "On Education" establishes the integration of national and universal human values into education and upbringing as one of the fundamental principles of state educational policy. This rule means that it is insufficient to place educational goals related to values only within the scope of extracurricular spiritual and educational activities. On the contrary, their content should be harmonized with the educational process, teaching aids, pedagogical communication, and the student's independent activity. Therefore, the issue of using national and cultural heritage in higher education raises the scientific and pedagogical question of "what

content and pedagogical activity can create a student's conscious involvement in this heritage?" rather than the question "what should be promoted?"

The professional and educational results of specialist training are also interpreted holistically in the direct development strategy of higher education. The Concept for the Development of the Higher Education System until 2030 defines the training of highly qualified personnel with high spiritual and moral qualities and independent thinking as a priority goal, along with the acquisition of modern knowledge. The concept also emphasizes the need to strengthen the spiritual and moral content of higher education and to educate youth in the spirit of respect for national values and patriotism. Furthermore, it defines tasks for developing the spiritual and moral consciousness of student youth, forming a strong civic position, and utilizing new teaching and upbringing methods, which indicates that the results of higher education cannot be evaluated solely through professional training criteria. Consequently, alongside professional competence, the development of an individual's cultural belonging, spiritual responsibility, and social position is part of the functional tasks of higher education.

An aspect that further enhances the relevance of the research topic is that the issue of national education has been organized on the basis of a separate systemic mechanism in recent years. The "Program for Increasing the Effectiveness of Educating Youth in the Spirit of Loyalty to National Values and Patriotism within the Continuous Education System," approved by Cabinet of Ministers Resolution No. 34 dated January 28, 2026, provides for the creation of a unified national education system from preschool to higher education, the development of a "National Education Model," and the implementation of specific educational mechanisms. The program identifies the period of 16-22 years in secondary specialized, vocational, and higher educational organizations as a separate stage, which provides for the development of respect for national values and an active civic position. This situation reflects the need to view national education during the student period not as a repeated continuation of the general educational process, but as an independent stage requiring specific goals and pedagogical tools.

Especially important from the point of view of the research problem is the definition of tasks for updating the methodological support for the higher education stage in this Program. The program provides for the preparation of "National Values," "Professional Culture," and other educational literature in the "Self-awareness" series, the development of special methodological and content tools for the "Hour of the Future," as well as support for scientific and innovative projects in the field of national education. These tasks demonstrate the existence of a trend in educational policy toward the transition of national education from declarative challenges to a system provided with content, methodology, and pedagogical mechanisms.

3. Transforming the educational requirements set for society and higher education into a practical pedagogical result requires, first and foremost, clarifying the difference between mastering national-cultural content and transforming it into a competency-based quality that serves the realization of an individual's national identity. The student can obtain sufficient information about the history, cultural heritage, customs, traditions, and values of the people. However, the presence of this information in memory does not mean that it is associated with an individual's historical and cultural affiliation, is accepted as a value criterion, or influences personal decisions and attitudes in specific life situations. In this regard, although knowledge



of national content is an important basis for national self-awareness, it cannot be considered its final pedagogical result.

This difference stems from the very essence of the competency-based approach. In the OECD's conceptual document Learning Compass 2030, competence is defined as a holistic concept that integrates knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values. It is emphasized that knowledge and competence should not be contrasted; knowledge is the fundamental basis of understanding, but competence implies the ability to mobilize acquired knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values based on the requirements of a complex situation. When this methodological rule is applied to the subject of our research, a pedagogical priority becomes not what a student knows about national values, but what functional significance the mastered content acquires in the process of self-awareness, evaluation, and attitude.

From this point of view, the acquisition of real meaning for the individual of knowledge about national values requires several qualitative changes. Initially, the student assimilates a specific historical and cultural content; at the next stage, they understand its essence and modern significance; then they evaluate it based on personal and social criteria and relate it to their own views. In the process of reflection, the opportunity arises to understand one's attitude toward this value, the reasons for its formation, and personal significance. Only then can the national-cultural content emerge from the state of ready-made external information and become one of the internal foundations of the student's position regarding their belonging.

It follows that evaluating the effectiveness of education with national content solely by the student's ability to remember historical facts, recount the content of traditions, or correctly name values does not fully reflect the result intended in the study. The cultural content mastered in the development of national self-awareness competence should serve to resolve personal meaningful issues such as "what is my connection to this historical and cultural community?," "what meaning does this value have for me?," and "how does this belonging reflect on my assessment and behavior?." Thus, the inclusion of the concept of "competence" in the research topic is determined not by the need to increase the volume of national-historical knowledge, but by the need to transform it into a student's conscious belonging and a grounded value-based attitude.

It is precisely this difference that reveals another important aspect of the pedagogical problem: the same national-cultural content is not assimilated by an individual at the same level at different age stages. Its transformation into the reflexive content of personal outlook, value choice, and belonging requires taking into account the identification processes specific to the student's developmental period.

4. The necessity of developing national identity competence during the student period.

Talabalik davrining milliy o'zlikni anglash kompetensiyasini rivojlantirish uchun ahamiyati shaxsning bu yoshda yangi bilimlarni ko'proq o'zlashtirishi bilangina izohlanmaydi. Muhim jihat shundaki, yoshlikning mazkur bosqichida ilgari oila, yaqin ijtimoiy muhit va ta'lim orqali qabul qilingan qarashlar shaxsning tobora mustaqillashib borayotgan hayotiy maqsadlari, tanlovlari va kelajak tasavvurlari bilan qayta muvofiqlashtiriladi. Zamonaviy identiklikka doir tadqiqotlarda 18-29 yosh oralig'ini qamrab talabalik va yoshlik davrida identiklik rivojlanishi muhim rivojlanish vazifalaridan biri bo'lib qolishi ta'kidlanadi. I.Sánchez-Queija, P.Domínguez-Alarcón, M.Díez va Á.Parra identiklikni bir martalik yakunlangan natija emas, balki muqobil imkoniyatlarni ko'rib chiqish, muayyan majburiyatlarni tanlash, qabul qilingan pozitsiyani

shaxsiy qadriyat, maqsad va ideallar bilan muvofiqlashtirish hamda zarur vaziyatlarda uni qayta baholashni o'z ichiga oladigan dinamik jarayon sifatida tahlil qiladilar [134-135-p].

The presence of processes such as choosing a specific direction, identifying with the decision made, studying alternative options, and re-evaluating previously made decisions among the measurements of identity in the study indicates that the process of re-contenting an individual's future and value orientation continues during the student period. This substantiates that during the student period, there is an opportunity for development to consciously consider pre-formed ideas related to belonging and values.

The uniqueness of the student environment is an additional factor that enhances this opportunity. Research by M. Syed and M. Azmitia shows that during the transition to college, the reorganization of family and peer relationships, new social connections, classroom and extracurricular experiences, and encounters with different perspectives create new contexts for re-evaluating identity [1012-1013-p]. In particular, the study notes that students' encounters with different people and perspectives, educational activities, and interaction with peers can enhance awareness of the role of ethnicity in an individual's life.

The pedagogical significance of the student period for our research is manifested in the intersection of the following two processes: on the one hand, an individual's identification decisions related to values, goals, and affiliation are reviewed; on the other hand, the higher education environment allows for the enrichment of these views with new knowledge, cultural texts, and experience in communication and interpretation. Therefore, the goal of developing national self-awareness during the student period cannot be the exact repetition or reinforcement of ideas formed in childhood and adolescence. At the same time, the pedagogical task is to create conditions for the student's deeper understanding of previously mastered national-cultural content, its independent assessment, and its connection with their life prospects.

This also does not require defining the student period as the initial stage of the formation of national identity. On the contrary, the initial foundations of national identity arise in earlier socialization processes. The unique pedagogical potential of higher education lies in the strengthening of the possibility of reflective re-understanding and personal justification of these foundations. Consequently, the relevance of developing students' competence in national self-awareness stems not from the need to "reform nationality," but from the need to transform previous cultural experience into consciously assimilated, internally grounded, and coordinated content with a modern personal position.

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