

# The Necessity of Forming National Identity in the Consciousness of Student Youth

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**Abstract:** This article examines the necessity of understanding and forming national identity in the consciousness of student youth within the higher education system through a social-philosophical analysis. Additionally, it investigates the role of social sciences in the education system concerning the understanding of national identity in society.

**Keywords:** Higher education system, human spirituality, understanding national identity, social sciences, philosophy of history, spiritual values.



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**Introduction.** In an increasingly interconnected world marked by rapid globalization, the question of national identity has regained urgency, particularly among student youth. National identity – understood as the shared sense of belonging, cultural heritage, values, and historical memory that define a nation – plays a crucial role in shaping the individual and collective consciousness of young people. For students, who are at a critical stage of personal and social development, the formation of a stable and meaningful national identity is essential not only for their psychological well-being but also for fostering social cohesion and civic responsibility.

The process of globalization, while facilitating cultural exchange and broadening horizons, has also led to challenges such as cultural homogenization, identity dilution, and value relativism. In this context, student youth may experience confusion or alienation regarding their national roots and place in society. Hence, actively forming and nurturing national identity in their consciousness becomes a necessary educational and social objective. This formation helps students develop a sense of pride, continuity, and ethical commitment to their community and country. This paper aims to explore the necessity of forming national identity within student youth, highlighting its significance in sustaining cultural heritage and promoting active citizenship in a globalized era.

**Literature Review.** The study of national identity formation among youth has attracted considerable attention in the fields of sociology, psychology, political science, and education. A comprehensive review of the literature reveals several key themes central to understanding why and how national identity should be fostered among students. Benedict Anderson's (1983) seminal work *Imagined Communities* argues that nations are socially constructed communities, imagined by people who perceive themselves as part of a shared collective. This conceptualization underscores the symbolic and cultural dimensions of national identity, emphasizing its role in

uniting individuals beyond immediate personal ties. Similarly, Anthony D. Smith (1991) highlights the importance of shared myths, memories, and symbols in sustaining national identity, especially in times of social change. Research in developmental psychology suggests that adolescence and early adulthood are critical periods for identity formation (Erikson, 1968). During this time, youth seek to integrate personal beliefs with group identities, including national identity, which contributes to their sense of belonging and purpose. Studies by Phinney (1990) have shown that a clear and positive national identity correlates with higher self-esteem and psychological well-being among young people.

Education systems play a pivotal role in transmitting national narratives and values. Curricular content, civic education, and cultural activities provide frameworks through which students learn about their country's history, traditions, and collective aspirations (Banks, 2008). Scholars argue that national identity education must be inclusive and reflective, fostering critical engagement rather than mere rote memorization (Banks, 2008; Freire, 1970). Globalization has complicated national identity formation, introducing multiple identities and transnational affiliations (Castells, 2010). Some scholars warn that globalization can erode national consciousness, leading to cultural dislocation or identity crises among youth (Bauman, 2000). However, others emphasize the possibility of cultivating a cosmopolitan national identity that embraces both local roots and global awareness (Beck, 2006).

A strong national identity is often linked to higher levels of civic participation and social responsibility (Putnam, 2000). Youth who identify positively with their nation are more likely to engage in community service, political processes, and collective action. This relationship highlights the broader societal benefits of fostering national identity in student populations.

The literature converges on the idea that forming national identity in student youth is essential for their psychological development, social integration, and civic engagement. In the face of globalization's challenges, education and cultural institutions must adopt strategies that nurture a dynamic and inclusive national identity – one that honors tradition while encouraging critical thinking and global openness.

In recent years, the legal framework for state support of science and innovation in

**Results and Discussion.** Uzbekistan has been improved. Specifically, from 2018 to 2021, two laws, five presidential decrees, and 26 decisions, along with 35 resolutions and seven orders from the Cabinet of Ministers, were adopted in the field of scientific and innovative activities. More than 30,000 citizens of our country are engaged in scientific research, with over 27,000 of them holding higher education degrees. In 2021, more than 239 billion soums were allocated from the national budget solely for supporting innovative development and innovative ideas, as well as for the design, construction (reconstruction), and equipping of facilities. In 2022, this figure exceeded 671 billion soums, accounting for 0.39 percent of the state budget expenditures.

In accordance with the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated February 16, 2017, on "Further Improvement of the Postgraduate Education System," the process of awarding candidate and doctoral degrees has been revised. As of July 1, 2017, a two-tier system of postgraduate education has been introduced in our country. This decree aims to fundamentally enhance the quality and effectiveness of the training and certification of highly qualified scientific and scientific-pedagogical personnel, further improve the postgraduate education system, and expand opportunities for young people to fully demonstrate their intellectual potential in scientific research activities.

The resolution dated May 22, 2017, on "Measures to Further Improve the Postgraduate Education System" established important regulations regarding the requirements for postgraduate education, the regulations on postgraduate education institutions, and the state certification of highly qualified scientific and scientific-pedagogical personnel.

The Concept for the Development of Higher Education in the Republic of Uzbekistan until 2030 emphasizes enhancing the effectiveness of spiritual, educational, and upbringing activities through various measures in its fourth direction. Specifically:

**Implementation of Five Initiatives:** This includes complex measures aimed at creating additional conditions for the education and upbringing of students and youth, engaging them in culture, arts, physical education, and sports, improving their literacy in computer and internet technologies, promoting reading, and developing professional skills among female students.

**Systematic Organization of Spiritual and Educational Work:** This involves increasing the effectiveness of ongoing measures, enhancing the intellectual potential, thinking, and worldview of youth, strengthening ideological immunity, and nurturing a well-rounded generation that lives with a sense of patriotism and serves the interests of the people.

**Preparation of Responsible Youth:** The goal is to prepare young people who are capable of taking responsibility for solving significant tasks facing the state and society, who are patriotic, proactive, possess modern knowledge and skills, and embody human virtues, using innovative educational methods.

**Promotion of Sports as a Value:** This includes developing and implementing measures to promote a healthy lifestyle among students and the importance of sports in higher education institutions.

**Legal Awareness and Cultural Development:** Enhancing youth awareness of the essence of legal documents, developing their legal consciousness and culture, promoting adherence to a healthy lifestyle, and instilling universal human values alongside national and ethical values.

**Creating Conditions for Social Adaptation:** This involves providing broad opportunities for the social adaptation of students with disabilities and promoting the ideas of inclusivity.

**Collaboration with Parents and Communities:** Systematically organizing cooperation among parents, neighborhoods, and higher education institutions in the upbringing of youth.

**Improving Sociological and Psychological Services:** Enhancing the work of sociological and pedagogical-psychological service groups in higher education institutions, preparing students for family life, and strengthening family values.

**Creating Conditions for Skill Development:** Encouraging students to learn trades, acquire new knowledge, work on self-improvement, utilize modern technological achievements, and develop entrepreneurial skills through meaningful use of their free time.

**Preventing Social Risks:** Addressing the risks of students falling under the influence of harmful ideologies and engaging in socially dangerous behaviors by employing effective educational methods and modern information and communication technologies.

**Mentorship Models:** Developing cooperation between higher education institutions and general education schools within the framework of the “School - Center of Spirituality and Enlightenment” concept to shape students’ spiritual and educational worldview, improve legal literacy, guide them towards professions, and prepare them for independent living.

The transition of the higher education system to a fully market-based credit-module system may lead to an increase in the teaching of social sciences and an increase in the costs of training specialists. This situation, in turn, could reduce the competitiveness of graduates. Therefore, it is advisable for the state to cover these costs. Social sciences play a crucial role in shaping the new worldview of the future generation of New Uzbekistan. In private higher educational institutions, the teaching of social sciences may be implemented as a state order, creating an opportunity to protect our youth from ideational emptiness.

In conclusion, it can be said that understanding national identity and developing national values create conditions for being human in society. This process develops in conjunction with the relationships between individuals and society. The formation of national identity and historical consciousness continues in connection with culture and meaning.

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