

## THE SOCIAL-PEDAGOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF SHAPING NATIONAL IDENTITY IN STUDENTS THROUGH SPORTS

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### Abstract

This article is dedicated to studying the importance of sports in the formation of national identity. National identity encompasses the unique characteristics, traditions, and values of each nation, playing a significant role in social life. The use of sports in shaping national identity among students is crucial for their physical, spiritual, and social development. The article presents thoughts on the concept of national identification, the individual's sense of being part of a national society, and the unifying role of sports activities.

**Keywords:** National identity, sport, physical education, spiritual development, social development, national values, traditions, education and upbringing, Uzbekistan development strategy, personnel training, innovative education, preschool education, universal values, globalization, migration processes.

### Introduction

National identity is a concept that encompasses the unique characteristics, traditions, and values of each nation, playing a significant role in its social life. The importance of sports in shaping national identity among students is considerable. Sports serve not only as a means of physical development but also as a crucial tool for moral and social development. National identification refers to an individual's sense of being part of a national community, with a feeling of connection to their national values, traditions, and culture. This concept holds significant importance for the stability and development of society. The role of sports in shaping national identification is particularly crucial, as sports activities unite people and bring them together around common goals.

### LITERATURE ANALYSIS AND METHODS

Uzbek pedagogical science is actively working on creating new theoretical concepts aimed at content-wise renewal of the education and upbringing process. The ongoing radical reforms in the teaching of general education subjects are closely related to the creation and testing of new generations of school textbooks. For each subject, several alternative textbooks have been developed, with a particular emphasis on educating students in the national spirit.

In the development strategy of Uzbekistan, one of the key factors ensuring the progress of society is the prioritization of education and upbringing. The “Harmony of education, upbringing, and development” principle and the philosophical principle of Eastern pedagogy emphasize the inseparability of education from upbringing and vice versa. The “Theory of Knowledge” presented in Abu-l-Mu’in an-Nasafiy’s work *Kitob at-tavhiyd li-qavo’id at-tavhiyd* and other works address important issues such as children’s right to knowledge, the improvement of the education and upbringing system, and the need to consider students’ potential and abilities.

The "National Model of Personnel Training" holds significant importance in ensuring the achievements of young people on a global scale. The "National Program for Personnel Training" adopted by our government outlines the gradual implementation of innovative education and training technologies. One of the major tasks facing Uzbek pedagogy is the formation of national identity, the upbringing of a well-rounded generation, and the training of competitive personnel.

The Law on Preschool Education and Upbringing, adopted on October 22, 2019, and the newly revised Law on Education, passed on September 23, 2020, incorporate the principle of integrating both national and universal human values into education and upbringing. This forms the foundation of the methodology for improving the social-pedagogical mechanism of shaping national identity in students.

The political changes occurring within the global community are leading to globalization. Peoples residing in different regions of the world are beginning a common migration process. The migration process, which was previously observed in Africa and Europe, is now notably extending into Central Asia.

In our country, the issues of national identity, understanding national self-awareness, national mentality, and interethnic relations have been reflected in the research of F. Abdurakhmonov, J. Bahromov, N. Nazarov, R. Rahmonov, Z. G'afurov, Q. Khonnazarov, S. Atamurodov, A. Achiliev, A. Ashurov, B. Qosimov, B. Karimov, Sh. Qahhorova, and Sh. Madaeva. Their work has contributed to the interpretation and historical analysis of these topics.

Among the scholars of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), B. Ashmarin, V. Balsevich, M. Vilenskiy, G. Germanov, S. Kramskoy, L. Lubisheva, O. Masalova, L. Matveev, Yu. Nikolaev, S. Pavlov, I. Sechenov, V. Smolevskiy, A. Sunik, and G.D. Kharabugi have studied the modernization and innovative technologies in organizing physical education, as well as the formation of a sports culture in the process of student development.

Additionally, in the CIS countries, scholars such as S. Abashin, I. Shteynberg, N. Lebedeva, G. Soldatova, S. Ikonnikova, L. Ionin, T. Stefanenko, N. Antonova, and others, in their scientific research, have emphasized the importance of identity issues in society, the awareness of self, social-cultural experience, cultural-historical memory, and socio-cultural heritage. They have studied these as an essential social-psychological theoretical issue.

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## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In today's information-driven society, influencing people through information has become one of the easiest and most effective methods. In this context, promoting physical education and sports as an essential part of a healthy lifestyle, along with ensuring high-level informatization and utilizing multimedia products in this process, holds great importance. Through this, it is possible to guide students in the process of shaping national identity through sports, increase their interest, and develop motivation.

To achieve this, it is necessary to support physical education and sports development projects in the media, promote physical education and sports, improve the quality of work by leading television channels in promoting a healthy lifestyle, and create and distribute cinematographic, print, and visual materials, TV and radio programs, and Internet resources in the fields of physical education, sports, and healthy lifestyle. This also includes the formation of a state order for the creation and distribution of such resources, broadcasting information-analytical programs under the "Sport for All" initiative, making extensive use of Internet opportunities to promote physical education and sports, especially physical rehabilitation, healthy lifestyles, and encouraging public participation in physical education and sports. Additionally, publishing scientific-methodological and social-popular materials and guides to engage and encourage the population in physical education and sports is required. [3]

The principles of holistic development in the system of physical education are of great importance in shaping the student's personality. These principles are aimed at raising the younger generation from the earliest stages of school life to become physically and morally strong, harmoniously developed, and physically robust individuals. They focus on the development of students' physical abilities, motor skills, and competencies, while simultaneously addressing their moral, intellectual, aesthetic, and work-related education. This approach is a comprehensive one, aimed at the all-around development of students.

Such a comprehensive approach in the physical education system is "specified according to the individual characteristics of people, the stages of their developmental age, the characteristics of physical education activities selected as the main activity at a particular stage of life, and other situational factors" [4].

In the general secondary education system, physical education classes are focused on guiding students toward engaging in sports activities. These lessons aim to help children perform exercises recommended by the physical education program, reinforce and improve the learned exercises, develop their skills, and teach them to apply these exercises in various real-life situations. Through this process, their physical abilities are assessed. By evaluating their potential and ability to perform various physical exercises, students can be directed toward specific sports.

Moreover, physical education in schools must fulfill its role in preparing students for a healthy lifestyle, guiding them, and promoting health. Directing students toward health-related activities impacts the development of a healthy lifestyle culture within society. Additionally, explaining how all school subjects are related to nature and human health

has a significant impact on children's consciousness. Physical education plays a crucial role in strengthening students' health, fostering their overall personal development, preparing them for work and defense of the homeland, and helping them acquire life-essential movement skills and competencies.

Zero is a critical period in children's physical development, as it marks a stage of rapid growth. Therefore, it is necessary to invest effort and energy to ensure students' physical development and normal growth.

In the context of developing physical education, the focus is not only on enhancing students' physical abilities but also on stabilizing their mental state and creating an educational methodology that positively influences their psychological well-being. The goal is to prepare students with high moral and spiritual potential, excellent qualifications, physical strength, and strong willpower. To achieve this, foreign experiences and practices from developed countries are being studied within the framework of preparing highly skilled specialists who are mentally and physically well-developed.

Based on the research and analysis conducted, it is necessary to organize the educational and training process of institutions that prepare mentally and physically competent specialists according to modern requirements. Furthermore, it is essential to organize these processes using advanced pedagogical technologies to enhance the effectiveness of education and upbringing. As the President of our country, Sh.M. Mirziyoyev, emphasized: "In today's rapidly changing world, when we think about solving the increasingly complex and important issues ahead of us, we are more certain that their solutions are closely tied to education and upbringing, the formation of youth's worldview based on modern knowledge, high spirituality, and enlightenment" [5]. Indeed, all social issues are measured by the level of education, the scientific potential of society, and the elevation of its worldview.

### **Social-Pedagogical Features of Shaping National Identity:**

- **Developmental Diagnostics:** This involves identifying the personal characteristics and capabilities of individuals, enhancing their potential, and developing strategies to improve their abilities. As a result, this process fosters reflective analysis, as well as reflective control, management, and planning. Ultimately, it contributes to shaping reflective culture as future specialists.

- **Psychological Counseling:** This includes support for the emotional and psychological well-being of students, aiding in their mental and emotional development.

- **Personal and Intellectual Profile Correction:** This aspect enhances the effectiveness of the process by promoting consistent personal and intellectual growth, the development of overall reflective abilities, and the formation of intellectual, communicative, cooperative, and personal reflections. It also involves correcting the "self" image, social identity, self-formation, and adopting optimistic social positions.

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At the identification stage (4-5 stages), the primary task is preparing students for future professional activities. This is the stage where the formation of professional values begins, and many students often get married and take the next step into adult life. Psychological support plays an important role at this stage, as it ensures the final diagnostic evaluation of professional skills.

In the process of testing the pedagogical developments aimed at improving the social-pedagogical mechanism of shaping national identity among students, we focused on the following aspects:

- **Oral Surveys:** We conducted oral surveys with students to identify their identities. This allowed us to understand their opinions, feelings, and overall perspectives on national identity.

By using these methods, we were able to assess the effectiveness of our pedagogical efforts and identify areas for further development in shaping national identity among students.

**Behavioral Observation:** We attempted to identify the characteristics of students' national identity through observing their behavior, conduct, and interactions within the community. This, in turn, helped improve their social relationships and mutual understanding.

**Analysis of Educational Work:** We focused on understanding the ongoing educational and developmental activities within the continuous education system, in order to determine the parameters for shaping national identity. This helped students in understanding and internalizing national values.

**Extracurricular Activities:** We found it effective to apply the mechanisms for shaping national identity during extracurricular activities for general education school students. The activities were designed with consideration of students' playfulness, and they served to relieve their boredom and fatigue from regular educational sessions.

**Principles of Event Organization:**

In our pedagogical developments aimed at improving the social-pedagogical mechanism of shaping national identity, we adhered to a principle based on the students' age-specific characteristics, progressing from simple to complex. This principle guided the selection of materials for different age groups.

- **Primary Grades:** In primary grades, we emphasized organizing traditional national games, performing national children's songs, and encouraged students to wear classical national costumes during events.

- **Higher Grades:** For higher grades, we found that organizing educational events based on the principle of "imagery → imagination → interpretation" was highly effective. Both the event organizers and participants (students) played an active role, with the teacher acting more as a director during preparation.

### **Changes in the Education Process:**

This principle prompted students to develop teamwork, adopt project-based methods, and form self-management skills. These processes encouraged students to internalize and demonstrate the qualities of true Uzbek national heroes.

**Final Year Students:** The educational work with final-year students greatly differed. At this stage, they were required to master historical facts, analyze them, and express opinions about historical events. By fostering their ability to think logically about historical and political events, we helped them cultivate critical thinking and engage in debates. This allowed students to develop creative thinking skills.

The historical and political events internalized by students were later embedded in their identity, becoming an essential part of their "self" and key qualities. This process helped in shaping their national consciousness.

**Psychological Support:** It is crucial for psychologists to assist students in self-formation in their professions and guide them through the process of reflection. Additionally, providing psychological support in family and personal matters is equally important.

The most important aspect is helping students to understand themselves and find their place in the world of professions. The success of this stage depends on several factors:

- Being able to imagine oneself as a future professional;
- Being ready for independent activity;
- Being able to express oneself;
- Demonstrating one's capabilities, having a high self-esteem, self-confidence, low social anxiety, and high levels of reflection.

### **Sport and National Identity**

The social-pedagogical foundations of shaping national identity through sport are based on the idea that through sports activities, students learn about the traditions, values, and history of their nation. Sports competitions, team games, and national sports types allow students to experience national unity, solidarity, and team spirit.

### **Sport and National Identification**

**The Positive Impact of Sport:** Sport has the ability to unite various social layers, enhance national pride, and provide an opportunity to fight for common goals. Participation in sports competitions strengthens the feeling of unity with the national team among young people.

**Cultural Traditions:** National sports and traditional games play an important role in shaping national identity. These traditions allow young people to feel and respect their national heritage.

**Education and Training:** Sport is an important tool in shaping stable behavior in young people within the educational process. Sports activities help develop their abilities to work in teams, compete, and achieve success.

### **Social-Pedagogical Foundations**

**Education and Training:** It is important to teach students national values through sports activities and introduce them to national traditions. For example, by studying national sports, students can better understand their nation's history and culture.

**Team Spirit:** Since sport is a collective activity, it develops a sense of solidarity, friendship, and cooperation among students. This, in turn, helps strengthen national identity.

**Cultural Exchange:** Participating in sports competitions provides an opportunity to establish contacts with different nations. In this process, students can preserve their national identity while also learning about other cultures.

### **CONCLUSION**

The social-pedagogical foundations of shaping national identity through sport are significant, and in this process, education, team spirit, and cultural exchange play essential roles. Through sports activities, students can learn about the values, traditions, and history of their nations, which can help strengthen their national identity.

Shaping national identity holds great importance in the educational and developmental process. Uzbek pedagogy is working on creating an educational system that meets the demands of the time while considering national values. This plays a vital role in ensuring the spiritual and intellectual development of future generations.

Sport plays a significant role in shaping national identity. In this process, sports activities serve as an important tool for helping youth understand national values, feel their place in society, and develop stable behavior. Therefore, the development of sports and its promotion among youth is crucial in shaping national identity.

### **Recommendations**

- Broadly incorporate national sports into the educational process.
- Organize special events to demonstrate national values in sports competitions.
- Promote team sports to foster a sense of teamwork among students.

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Through the social-pedagogical foundations presented in this article, the importance of using sport as a tool for shaping national identity in students can be further strengthened.

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