THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS AND INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO ORGANIZING CHARACTER EDUCATION ACTIVITIES IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS BASED ON NATIONAL VALUES

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Abstract. This thesis examines the theoretical and methodological grounds for organizing character education activities in educational institutions on the basis of national values, and it outlines innovative approaches that make such work more effective in the context of globalization and digital transformation. National values are interpreted as a pedagogical resource that shapes learners' identity, civic responsibility, and moral behaviour. A four-stage organizational model and a set of criteria for assessing educational outcomes are proposed.

Keywords: national values, character education, upbringing, axiological approach, methodology, innovative technologies, school–family–mahalla partnership, moral development.

Rapid globalization, the expansion of digital media, and the intensive circulation of mass culture have made the problem of preserving cultural identity among young people particularly acute. In these conditions, the educational institution is no longer viewed merely as a place where knowledge is transmitted; it becomes a key social institution responsible for forming a morally mature, socially active, and patriotic personality. National legislation of Uzbekistan treats upbringing as an inseparable part of the educational process and declares the priority of national and universal values in education[1]. Consequently, the scientific substantiation of how value-oriented educational work should be organized is a pressing task of modern pedagogy.

From a theoretical standpoint, national values may be understood as a historically formed system of ideals, norms, and behavioural patterns that a people regard as significant and pass on from one generation to the next. In the Uzbek context, this system includes respect for parents and elders, the cohesion of family and mahalla, hospitality, diligence, kindness, tolerance, and love for the Motherland. The pedagogical heritage of Eastern thinkers – al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, Alisher Navoi, and the Jadid enlighteners – provides a rich foundation for this work. Abdulla Avloniy, for instance, regarded upbringing as a matter on which the very survival and prosperity of a nation depends[2]. This idea remains highly relevant, since a value system that is not consciously cultivated through education tends to be displaced by random and often destructive influences.

The methodological basis of value-oriented upbringing combines several complementary approaches. The axiological approach places values at the centre of educational goals and content; the culturological approach views the learner as a bearer and creator of culture; the personality-centred approach stresses the learner's individuality and inner motivation; and the activity-based approach assumes that values become personal convictions only through participation in meaningful joint activity. The latter rests on the sociocultural theory, according to which higher mental functions first emerge in

[1] Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Education" No. ZRU-637 of 23 September 2020 // National Database of Legislation of the Republic of Uzbekistan. – URL: https://lex.uz (accessed: 08.10.2026).

[2] Avloniy A. Turkiy guliston yoxud axloq [The Turkic Rose Garden, or Ethics]. – Tashkent, 1913.

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social interaction and are then internalized by the individual[3]. International scholarship offers a compatible framework: character is seen as an integration of moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action, so that effective upbringing must address the cognitive, emotional, and behavioural spheres simultaneously[4]. Research reviews also indicate that values are acquired not only through explicit instruction but also through the overall ethos of the school, the example of teachers, and the quality of relationships within the institution[5].

On this theoretical basis, a number of innovative approaches can be identified that enhance the effectiveness of educational activities. First, project-based and service learning allows pupils and students to implement socially useful projects in their mahalla, such as caring for the elderly, restoring local historical sites, or documenting family traditions. Second, experiential learning transforms values from abstract notions into lived experience: concrete experience, reflection, conceptualization, and active experimentation form a cycle through which moral attitudes become stable[6]. Third, digital technologies – virtual museums, digital storytelling, educational games, and multimedia projects about national crafts, holidays, and outstanding figures – make heritage attractive and accessible to the digital generation. Fourth, interactive methods such as case studies, moral dilemmas, debates, and problem situations develop critical thinking and the ability to make value-based choices. Finally, the revival of the traditional "ustoz–shogird" (mentor–apprentice) model in a modern form strengthens intergenerational continuity. Empirical syntheses of character education programmes confirm that such strategies produce the best results when they are implemented consistently and involve families and the community[7].

To ensure systematic implementation, the organization of educational activities may follow a four-stage model: (1) a diagnostic stage that identifies learners' value orientations and the educational potential of the family and community; (2) a design stage at which goals, content, and forms of work are aligned with national values and age characteristics; (3) an implementation stage based on the partnership of the educational institution, the family, and the mahalla; and (4) a reflective and evaluative stage. The effectiveness of the process can be measured by cognitive indicators (knowledge of national history, traditions, and moral norms), emotional and motivational indicators (respect for and pride in the national culture, empathy), and behavioural indicators (participation in socially significant activities and adherence to ethical norms in everyday life). This approach is consistent with the international vision of education as a shared social endeavour grounded in solidarity, cultural diversity, and respect for human dignity[8].

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[3] Vygotsky L.S. Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes. – Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978. – 159 p.

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[7] Berkowitz M.W., Bier M.C. What Works in Character Education: A Research-Driven Guide for Educators. – Washington, DC: Character Education Partnership, 2005. – 36 p.

[8] UNESCO. Reimagining Our Futures Together: A New Social Contract for Education. – Paris: UNESCO, 2021. – 186 p.

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In recent years, value-oriented upbringing has become a strategic priority of state policy in Uzbekistan. The Concept of Continuous Spiritual Education defines a coherent system of moral and spiritual education that accompanies a person from the family environment through preschool, school, and higher education[9]. Moreover, the introduction of the separate school subject "Tarbiya" (Upbringing) has given value education a clear curricular place and dedicated time in the timetable[10]. These documents shift the emphasis from occasional events to a continuous, purposeful, and measurable process in which national values are integrated into all subjects and extracurricular activities.

A further theoretical pillar concerns the psychology of moral development. Cognitive-developmental theory holds that moral judgement progresses through successive stages, from obedience to external authority to the autonomous acceptance of universal ethical principles[11]. For educators, this implies that discussions of moral dilemmas drawn from national literature, folk tales, and proverbs should be matched to the learners' level of development. At the same time, social learning theory reminds us that much of human behaviour is acquired by observing and imitating significant others[12]. Hence the personal example of the teacher – his or her speech culture, fairness, and respect for learners – is often a more powerful educational factor than any verbal instruction. The ethics of care adds that trusting, caring relationships between teacher and learner form the emotional soil in which values can take root[13].

The effectiveness of upbringing also depends on the coordination of the main educational institutions of society. The model of overlapping spheres of influence shows that learners achieve better results when the school, the family, and the community share common goals and act in concert[14]. In Uzbekistan, this model naturally takes the form of the school–family–mahalla triad, in which the mahalla serves as a unique social institution that preserves and transmits traditions of mutual help, respect for elders, and collective responsibility. Practical forms of such cooperation include parents' universities, joint celebrations of Navruz and Independence Day, meetings with respected elders, and community volunteer initiatives. At the same time, the school itself must become a form of community life in which moral and civic habits are practised rather than merely discussed[15].

Finally, the success of all the approaches described above rests on the professional readiness of teachers. Educators need not only knowledge of national history, culture, and pedagogical heritage but also skills in modern educational technologies, the diagnostics of value orientations, and the facilitation

[9] Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PQ-4307 of 3 May 2019 "On Measures for the Radical Improvement of the System of Spiritual and Educational Work" (Concept of Continuous Spiritual Education) // National Database of Legislation. – URL: https://lex.uz (accessed: 08.10.2026).

[10] Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PQ-4884 of 6 November 2020 "On Additional Measures to Further Improve the System of Education and Upbringing" // National Database of Legislation. – URL: https://lex.uz (accessed: 08.10.2026).

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of reflective dialogue[16]. Therefore, systematic professional development programmes, methodological seminars, and the exchange of best practices among educational institutions should be regarded as integral components of the organization of educational activities.

In conclusion, organizing character education activities on the basis of national values requires the integration of a sound theoretical foundation, a coherent methodology, and innovative pedagogical technologies. National values should not be presented as a static set of museum exhibits but as a living source of meaning that learners discover, experience, and apply in their own activity. The combination of the axiological, culturological, personality-centred, and activity-based approaches with project work, experiential learning, and digital tools makes it possible to bring up a generation that is open to the world while remaining firmly rooted in its own cultural heritage.

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