

**SOCIAL-PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS IN THE FORMATION OF
AN ACTIVE CIVIC POSITION AMONG YOUTH IN THE CONTEXT
OF NEW UZBEKISTAN**

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Abstract

The process of building New Uzbekistan has placed special emphasis on the spiritual, social, and psychological development of youth as the decisive force of modernization. In this context, the formation of an active civic position among young people depends not only on individual psychological characteristics but also on social-psychological factors, such as value orientations, group influence, leadership potential, and communication culture. These factors determine the extent to which youth can participate in socio-political processes and contribute to the country's development.

This article analyzes the social-psychological mechanisms that shape civic consciousness and initiative among the youth of Uzbekistan. Based on sociological and psychological studies, it is argued that the integration of national and universal values, the activation of social participation, and the improvement of interpersonal communication within educational and public institutions serve as the main drivers of civic engagement.

The research highlights that the social-psychological environment—especially social trust, a sense of responsibility, and the perception of social justice—plays a crucial role in strengthening civic identity. The creation of psychologically favorable conditions for self-expression and participation in social life ensures the sustainable development of youth activity and initiative.

Keywords:

New Uzbekistan, youth, civic position, social-psychological factors, responsibility, communication culture, initiative, civic identity.

Introduction

In the period of democratic reforms and modernization in New Uzbekistan, the education and socialization of youth as bearers of civic culture have become the cornerstone of national development. The “*Uzbekistan–2030*” Strategy and related policy documents emphasize that the future of the country depends not only on economic modernization but also on the moral, social, and psychological maturity of its citizens.

Civic position—understood as an individual’s awareness of their rights, duties, and responsibility toward society—is shaped through complex interactions between the person and their social environment. Social-psychological science views this process as the result of internalized social norms, communication practices, and shared value systems. In this sense, civic consciousness cannot emerge in isolation; it evolves through collective experience, social influence, and educational participation.

In modern Uzbekistan, youth represent both the driving force of innovation and the most sensitive group to social changes. Understanding the mechanisms that determine their civic behavior is therefore a strategic task for ensuring the sustainability of the nation’s development trajectory.

Theoretical Background (Expanded Version)

The formation of an active civic position among youth is a complex phenomenon that integrates principles from **social psychology, developmental psychology, and political sociology**. From a theoretical standpoint, this process can be interpreted through several key conceptual frameworks: **social identity theory, social learning theory, sociocultural theory, and the theory of planned behavior**. Each provides unique insights

into how social-psychological factors shape civic consciousness and engagement.

1. Social Identity and Civic Self-Concept

According to **Tajfel and Turner's Social Identity Theory (1986)**, individuals derive part of their self-concept from membership in social groups. This identity forms the foundation of collective responsibility, belonging, and loyalty to societal norms. Civic identity, therefore, emerges when young people begin to perceive themselves not only as private individuals but also as members of a community and citizens of a nation.

In the context of **New Uzbekistan**, the process of constructing civic identity involves harmonizing national heritage (*milliy qadriyatlar*) with modern democratic ideals. Youth develop a sense of pride and belonging through participation in cultural, educational, and volunteer initiatives. When young people identify themselves as contributors to social progress, their civic engagement becomes internalized and self-sustaining rather than externally imposed.

2. Social Learning and the Internalization of Civic Behavior

Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1986) emphasizes that behavior is learned through observation, imitation, and modeling. Youth absorb civic norms by observing socially approved behavior from family, educators, peers, and political leaders. Reward systems—such as social recognition or moral approval—reinforce these patterns.

In Uzbekistan, family institutions, *mahalla* communities, and educational organizations function as informal training grounds for civic learning. When youth witness examples of integrity, mutual assistance, and responsibility in their environment, they internalize these behaviors as part of their own value system. Thus, civic behavior evolves not merely through formal instruction but through **consistent social reinforcement and modeling of prosocial behavior**.

3. Sociocultural Mediation and Communication

Drawing on **Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (1978)**, it is argued that mental functions and social consciousness develop through communication and joint activity. The process of dialogue mediates the transition from external regulation to internal self-regulation. In civic education, this means that open communication and public discussion help youth construct personal meaning from social norms and laws.

Modern Uzbekistan's emphasis on **public dialogue** (*jamoatchilik muloqoti*) and **open governance** creates a sociocultural space where young people can articulate their opinions and engage in constructive debate. This not only strengthens cognitive understanding of civic principles but also develops emotional attachment to democratic participation. Communication thus acts as both a psychological mechanism and a social bridge between the individual and the community.

4. The Theory of Planned Behavior and Civic Intentions

According to **Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior (1991)**, behavior is guided by intentions that stem from three components: attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Civic engagement arises when individuals believe that participation is valuable (positive attitude), socially approved (normative influence), and achievable (self-efficacy).

This framework is particularly relevant to Uzbekistan's youth, who increasingly operate in hybrid social environments—combining traditional norms with digital communication and global values. Enhancing their perceived control over civic participation, for example through *youth councils*, *digital platforms*, and *volunteer networks*, significantly increases their motivation to act as active citizens.

5. Group Dynamics and Collective Efficacy

Another essential theoretical foundation comes from **Kurt Lewin's Field Theory (1951)** and subsequent research on **group dynamics**. Groups influence individuals through shared goals, norms, and emotional bonds.

When youth are integrated into cohesive peer or community groups, they experience collective efficacy—the belief that the group can effect social change.

Collective projects, such as environmental campaigns or student self-governance bodies, not only develop organizational skills but also provide psychological empowerment. Group belonging fosters empathy, mutual responsibility, and a sense of solidarity—core components of civic identity.

6. Contextualization in New Uzbekistan

The modernization processes in New Uzbekistan have given rise to new social spaces—educational forums, digital youth movements, innovation clusters—where civic identity and participation are continuously reshaped. The government’s emphasis on youth as “architects of the future” (*kelajak bunyodkori*) reflects a transition from paternalistic to participatory models of civic socialization.

In this context, the **social-psychological environment**—comprising communication norms, social trust, and participatory values—acts as the central determinant of civic development. The more democratic and dialogical the environment, the stronger the internalization of civic responsibility. Conversely, environments characterized by authoritarian communication or lack of social recognition tend to suppress youth initiative and participation.

7. Integrative Conceptual Model

Synthesizing the above theories allows us to conceptualize the formation of youth civic position as a multilevel system:

- Micro level: Personal identity, self-esteem, motivation, and moral reasoning.
- Meso level: Family, peer groups, educational institutions, and community participation.
- Macro level: State policy, media discourse, and cultural narratives that define national identity.

Each level interacts dynamically. Social-psychological factors serve as mediators that translate individual potential into civic behavior. Therefore, effective civic education must address not only individual cognition and emotion but also the broader communicative and institutional context in which youth live and interact.

Discussion

Empirical observations in the context of Uzbekistan's educational and social reforms show that civic consciousness grows where youth experience respect, trust, and recognition. Initiatives such as the *Youth Parliament*, *Youth Affairs Agency*, and volunteer movements under the *Yoshlar – kelajagimiz* program have become practical platforms for civic education and psychological empowerment.

Furthermore, digital transformation has opened new avenues for civic participation through online communities and social networks. However, this also brings challenges such as misinformation, cyberbullying, and digital alienation, which require psychological resilience and media literacy to overcome.

The article argues that promoting civic engagement requires not only institutional measures but also the psychological empowerment of youth—helping them feel capable of influencing their social environment. Developing self-efficacy, emotional intelligence, and participatory communication culture are essential components of this process.

Conclusion

The formation of an active civic position among youth in New Uzbekistan is a multifaceted social-psychological process that integrates personal motivation, group dynamics, and institutional influences. The success of this process depends on creating social conditions that nurture trust, dialogue, and responsibility.

Social-psychological factors—especially value orientation, social trust, and communication culture—are not supplementary, but central to the sustainable development of civic identity. As New Uzbekistan continues its modernization, attention to these factors will ensure the emergence of a generation that is socially responsible, psychologically resilient, and deeply committed to the ideals of justice, freedom, and national progress.

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