

World Conference on Social Sciences, Law and Public Policy
Hosted Online from Toronto, Canada
Date: 26th November, 2026
Website: https://econferencia.com

FORMING A CULTURE OF RESPECT FOR THE CHILD IN UZBEK FAMILIES THROUGH THE HARMONY OF NATIONAL VALUES AND MODERN UPBRINGING METHODS

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Abstract
This paper provides a comprehensive analysis of the integration of Uzbek family upbringing traditions with modern psychological and pedagogical approaches. The study substantiates a methodology for harmonizing the principle of respect for elders, inherent in Eastern moral and ethical norms, with a culture of listening to the child's personal opinion, taking the child's emotional needs into account and recognizing the child's subjective rights. On the basis of the heritage of Eastern thinkers and the conclusions of modern developmental psychology, the paper reveals the psychological consequences of devaluing the child's opinion in the family and proposes five methodological directions for combining national values with modern communicative technologies. Practical mechanisms and pedagogical conditions for the transition from an authoritarian communication style to a constructive democratic dialogue within the family are highlighted.

Keywords: family upbringing, national values, modern pedagogy, active listening, respect for the child, subjective approach, communicative culture, emotional intelligence, authoritarian and democratic styles.



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Annotatsiya: O‘zbek oilaviy tarbiya an’analarining zamonaviy pedagogik-psixologik yondashuvlar bilan integratsiyalashuvi masalasini keng qamrovli tahlil qilamiz. Tadqiqotda sharqona odob-axloq me’yorlaridagi kattalarga hurmat tamoyilini bolaning shaxsiy fikrini tinglash, emotsional ehtiyojlarini inobatga olish va uning sub’ektiv huquqlarini e’tirof etish madaniyati bilan uyg‘unlashtirish metodikasi ilmiy asoslaymiz. Oilada avtoritar muloqot uslubidan konstruktiv-demokratik muloqotga o‘tishning amaliy mexanizmlari va pedagogik shart-sharoitlarini yoritib beraman.

Kalit so‘zlar: Oilaviy tarbiya, milliy qadriyatlar, zamonaviy pedagogika, faol tinglash, bolaga hurmat, sub’ektiv yondashuv, kommunikativ madaniyat, emotsional intellekt, avtoritar va demokratik uslublar.

Аннотация: Проводится комплексный анализ вопросов интеграции узбекских традиций семейного воспитания с современными психолого-педагогическими подходами. В исследовании научно обосновывается методика гармонизации принципа уважения к старшим, присущего восточным морально-этическим нормам, с культурой выслушивания личного мнения ребенка, учета его эмоциональных потребностей и признания его субъектных прав. Освещаются практические механизмы и педагогические условия перехода от авторитарного стиля общения в семье к конструктивно-демократическому диалогу.

Ключевые слова: Семейное воспитание, национальные ценности, современная педагогика, активное слушание, уважение к ребенку, субъектный подход, коммуникативная культура, эмоциональный интеллект, авторитарный и демократический стили.



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1. Introduction and Relevance of the Problem

In the context of globalization, a sharp increase in the flow of information and the transformation of social relations, one of the most strategic tasks facing the institution of the family is to raise a harmoniously developed person who thinks independently, is socially active and is aware of his or her own dignity, while preserving national identity and spiritual values. The family remains the primary environment in which the child acquires language, moral norms, models of behavior and the first experience of relationships with other people. It is in the family that the child first learns whether his or her voice matters, and this early experience largely determines the child's later attitude towards himself or herself and towards society.

Today, the protection of the family and of children's rights has become a priority direction of state policy in the Republic of Uzbekistan. The Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Guarantees of the Rights of the Child" and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child firmly guarantee the child's right to express his or her opinion freely, to state his or her views on all matters affecting the child and to have these views given serious consideration by adults [1; 11]. These legal provisions mean that respect for the child's opinion is not merely a matter of the personal choice of individual parents but a standard recognized by the state and by the international community.

However, modern sociological and psychological observations show that in many traditional families the process of upbringing is still carried out on the basis of a rigid authoritarian paradigm according to which "the elders are always right". In such an environment, high national values such as "respect for elders" and "andisha" (tact, modesty and consideration for others) are misinterpreted and turn into a mechanism for restricting the child's personal opinion, denying the child's feelings and demanding unconditional obedience. As a result, a communicative

gap, misunderstanding and sharp family conflicts in adolescence arise between parents and children who belong to the digital era (generations Alpha and Z).

The children of these generations grow up in an environment where information is available instantly and where they are constantly invited to express their opinions through comments, ratings and posts. When the same children find that at home their opinion is not taken into account, they experience an inner contradiction between the two worlds in which they live. Often they resolve this contradiction by withdrawing from family communication and transferring their trust to the online environment. This is why the problem of communication culture in the family acquires special urgency today.

Therefore, the scientific and methodological substantiation and practical implementation of a synthesis of the humanistic ideas of Uzbek folk pedagogy and the advanced upbringing methods of world psychology is an urgent pedagogical problem. The purpose of this paper is to substantiate theoretically the possibility and the ways of harmonizing national family values with modern methods of democratic communication. The study is based on the theoretical analysis of the works of Eastern thinkers and of psychological and pedagogical literature, on the comparative method and on the generalization of the scientific conclusions obtained by domestic and foreign researchers.

To achieve this purpose, the following tasks are set: to analyze the views of Eastern thinkers and the ideas of Uzbek folk pedagogy on respect for the child; to compare them with the main conclusions of modern developmental psychology; to reveal the psychological consequences of devaluing the child's opinion in the family; and to develop methodological directions and stages for harmonizing national values with modern methods of democratic communication.



The scientific novelty of the approach proposed in this paper lies in the fact that democratic family communication is considered not as a model borrowed from abroad but as a development of the humanistic content already present in Uzbek national values. Accordingly, the methodology is built so that each modern technique relies on a familiar cultural form, which reduces parents' resistance to change and makes the proposed recommendations acceptable for families with different levels of education and different degrees of adherence to tradition.

2. Theoretical, Scientific and Historical Foundations of the Topic

In Uzbek folk pedagogy and in the heritage of Eastern thinkers, high esteem for the child's personality, care not to hurt the child's heart and the free development of the child's intellectual potential have always occupied a leading place. Analysis shows that our national system of upbringing contains not a tradition of humiliating the child or suppressing the child's opinion but, on the contrary, a tradition of honoring the child as a person [5; 6]:

- **Abu Nasr al-Farabi**, in his work *"The Virtuous City"*, highly valued the role of free will and rational understanding in human perfection. He emphasized that the educator (the parent) should deeply study the child's natural abilities and interests and influence the child not through coercion but through persuasion and personal example [2]. In his other treatises, al-Farabi distinguished between two ways of education: the gentle way of conviction for those who are willing to learn and the strict way of compulsion only for those who resist any persuasion. In his view, the first way is the main one, and this idea fully corresponds to the modern understanding of upbringing as dialogue.
- In **Abu Ali ibn Sina's** treatise *"Tadbiri manzil"* (On the Management of the Household), special attention is paid to family upbringing. Taking into account the child's character and mental state and treating the child fairly, calmly and with

compassion are presented as the main factors in the formation of the personality. In his medical writings, Ibn Sina also emphasized the importance of protecting the child from strong negative emotions such as fear and anger, since, in his view, the emotional state of the child affects both the soul and the body.

• **Alisher Navoi**, in his work *"Mahbub ul-qulub"*, revealed the harmful consequences of rudeness, harshness and punishment in the process of upbringing and gave an artistic and scientific substantiation of the educational power of a kind word, gentleness and explanation [4]. Navoi's reflections on the "sweet word" are today read as an early formulation of the principle of nonviolent, respectful communication.

• **Abdulla Avloniy**, in his work *"Turkiy guliston yoxud axloq"* (The Turkic Rose Garden, or Ethics), stated that *"upbringing is for us a matter of life or death, of salvation or ruin, of happiness or disaster"* and compared the upbringing of a child to the care of a delicate sapling [3]. In his opinion, in order to broaden the child's range of thought (the "upbringing of thought"), it is necessary to create opportunities for the child to ask questions, to reason and to defend his or her views. Avloniy also stressed the role of the family as the first school, in which the child acquires not only knowledge but also the habit of thinking.

The same humanistic attitude is reflected in Uzbek folk proverbs, which have served for centuries as a concise code of family pedagogy. The proverb *"Bola aziz, odobi undan aziz"* (a child is dear, but the child's good manners are dearer still) shows that national upbringing has always combined love for the child with attention to moral education. The proverb *"Yaxshi so‘z jon ozig‘i"* (a kind word is nourishment for the soul) expresses the conviction that the word of the educator must support rather than wound. Such proverbs show that kindness and respect were regarded by the people not as a weakness of upbringing but as its essential condition.



The concept of **"izzat-ikrom"** (honor and respect) in Eastern educational philosophy does not mean one-sided submission but a dialectical unity based on mutual respect: the compassion and esteem of the elders towards the younger ones give rise to the respect of the younger ones towards the elders. In this understanding, respect is not demanded but earned and returned. An elder who treats a child with kindness, patience and attention receives sincere respect in return, while an elder who relies only on his or her status receives only outward obedience. It is precisely this original, reciprocal meaning of national values that should be restored in modern family upbringing.

Modern pedagogy and developmental psychology confirm these ideas through experimental research:

1. **L.S. Vygotsky's cultural-historical theory.** The child's personality is formed in the process of social communication with adults. The more equal and rich the communication, the more rapidly the child's higher mental functions (thinking, speech and self-awareness) develop [7]. Vygotsky's concept of the "zone of proximal development" shows that the child achieves the best results not when the adult does everything for him or her and not when the child is left alone, but in joint activity in which the adult supports the child's own efforts. This principle can be directly transferred to family communication: a parent who asks questions and helps the child reason develops the child's thinking much more effectively than a parent who simply gives ready-made answers.

2. **C. Rogers' person-centered approach.** Unconditional positive regard and empathic understanding strengthen the child's self-confidence and help the child realize his or her inner potential [8]. Rogers emphasized that acceptance of the person does not mean approval of every action. The parent can disagree with a specific behavior while still showing the child that he or she is loved and valued,

and it is this separation of the person from the act that forms a stable and healthy self-esteem.

3. **D. Baumrind's classification of parenting styles.** Research has shown that excessive strictness and demandingness of parents (**the authoritarian style**) produce fear and hypocrisy in the child or, on the contrary, aggressive rebelliousness. The most effective style is **the authoritative (democratic) style**, which combines great love and openness to communication with reasonable discipline [9]. E. Maccoby and J. Martin later described these styles through two dimensions, responsiveness and demandingness, and showed that it is their balance, rather than either of them alone, that ensures the child's favorable development [12].

Thus, both the heritage of Eastern thinkers and the conclusions of modern science point in the same direction: the child develops best in an atmosphere of respect, kindness and reasonable requirements, in which the adult guides the child through explanation and example. The convergence of these two sources creates a solid theoretical basis for harmonizing national values with modern methods of upbringing.

3. Devaluation (Invalidation) of the Child's Opinion in the Family and Its Psychological Consequences

In analyzing the culture of family communication, special attention should be paid to the problem of **emotional and cognitive invalidation**, that is, treating the child's opinions, feelings and experiences as insignificant. Emotional invalidation concerns the child's feelings ("there is nothing to be afraid of", "stop whining"), while cognitive invalidation concerns the child's thoughts and judgments ("you don't understand anything", "children have no say here"). Phrases often used by parents in everyday life, such as *"You are not clever enough"*, *"Don't interfere in*

the conversation of adults", *"Don't cry, it is shameful"* and *"It will be as I say"*, have the following negative effects on the child's psychological development:

- **Decrease in self-esteem.** A child whose opinion is regularly rejected begins to perceive himself or herself as an insignificant and incapable person who has no right to make mistakes. Over time, the child stops offering ideas even when he or she has something valuable to say, and this habit of silence may persist into adulthood, affecting the person's studies, career and relationships.
- **Fading of initiative and critical thinking.** A child who has no experience of making independent decisions turns in the future into a person who easily falls under the influence of others and avoids responsibility. Critical thinking develops only through practice in expressing, defending and revising one's own judgments, and a child who has been deprived of such practice in the family is left without this important skill.
- **Family alienation and closedness.** A child who was not listened to at an early age is forced, by adolescence, to share his or her problems, secrets and experiences not with the parents but with the street environment or with strangers on social networks. Such a situation deprives parents of the opportunity to support the child at the very moment when support is most needed and increases the risk of negative external influence.

In the Uzbek family context, invalidation often takes specific forms. One of the most common is comparing the child with other children ("look at the neighbor's son", "your cousin already does this"). Parents usually intend such comparisons as motivation, but the child perceives them as evidence that he or she is not good enough and that the parents' love depends on outperforming others. Another typical form is reprimanding the child in the presence of relatives or guests, which, in a culture where reputation and "what people will say" matter greatly, causes the child deep shame. A third form is ignoring the child's question or

request as unimportant when adults are busy with "serious" matters. Each of these forms, repeated regularly, conveys to the child the same message: that his or her inner world is of little value.

The consequences of invalidation become especially visible in adolescence. According to E. Erikson, the central task of this age is the formation of identity, that is, a coherent understanding of who one is, what one values and what place one occupies among other people [16]. A teenager solves this task by trying out opinions, comparing them with the views of adults and peers and gradually forming his or her own position. If the family responds to these attempts only with prohibitions and ridicule, the teenager either submits outwardly while hiding his or her real views or openly rebels, and in both cases the dialogue between generations is broken.

It should be emphasized that invalidation is rarely the result of parents' bad intentions. Most often parents dismiss the child's feelings in order to calm the child quickly, to protect him or her from "unnecessary" worries or simply because they themselves were raised in this way. J. Gottman describes such parents as "emotion dismissing" and shows that, despite their good intentions, their children learn to distrust their own feelings and have greater difficulty in regulating emotions [13]. Recognizing invalidating phrases in one's own speech is therefore the first and necessary step towards changing the style of family communication.

4. Methodology for Harmonizing National Values and Modern Methods

In order to form a culture of respect for the child in Uzbek families systematically, it is advisable to preserve the form of our national traditions while enriching their content with modern communicative technologies. This approach is based on the assumption that changes in family upbringing are accepted by parents most easily when they do not contradict familiar cultural norms but rely on them. Thus, the

traditional family gathering around the dastarkhan can become a form of the democratic family council, and the traditional caring inquiry about a person's feelings ("ko‘ngil so‘rash") can become the basis of emotional validation.

Each methodological direction proposed below therefore has two sources: a national value that gives it cultural legitimacy and a modern psychological and pedagogical technology that gives it concrete content and practical tools. The five main methodological mechanisms developed for practical implementation are presented in Table 1, together with the expected outcome of each of them for the child's development.

Table 1. Methodological mechanisms for harmonizing national values and modern upbringing methods

Methodological direction	Basis in national values	Modern psychological and pedagogical technology	Expected outcome
1. Family council and consultation	Gathering around the dastarkhan; the proverb "Maslahatli to‘y tarqamas" (an undertaking planned through consultation will not fall apart)	**Democratic decision-making:** giving the child an equal voice in family matters (recreation, expenses, plans)	The child develops a sense of belonging to the family, responsibility and social activity
2. Constructive communication	Eastern restraint, kind speech, thoughtfulness	**T. Gordon's "active listening" and "I-message" techniques:** describing one's feelings instead of blaming	The protective wall between parent and child disappears and mutual trust grows
3. Emotional support	Compassion, caring inquiry about feelings ("ko‘ngil so‘rash"), patience	**Emotional validation:** naming and accepting the child's fear, anger or sadness without denying them	The child develops emotional intelligence (EQ) and the skill of managing emotions

Methodological direction	Basis in national values	Modern psychological and pedagogical technology	Expected outcome
4. Choice and independence	The proverb "Knowledge acquired in youth is like a pattern carved in stone", diligence and self-reliance	**Age-appropriate autonomy:** offering the child alternatives in choosing the daily routine, clothes, clubs and books	Independent thinking, decision-making and responsibility for one's own choices are formed
5. Positive discipline	Setting an example, advice and explanation	**Natural and logical consequences instead of punishment:** analyzing the situation together without humiliating the child after a mistake	The child follows moral norms on the basis of conscious understanding rather than fear

As Table 1 shows, none of the proposed directions requires parents to abandon national traditions. On the contrary, each of them returns to the original humanistic meaning of a national value and supplements it with a modern technique. The family council develops the tradition of collective consultation, active listening and I-messages give practical form to Eastern restraint and kind speech [10], emotional validation continues the tradition of caring inquiry about a person's feelings [13], age-appropriate autonomy realizes the national idea of early education in diligence and self-reliance, and positive discipline gives new content to the role of personal example and explanation [14]. Research on the internalization of values confirms that children adopt parental norms more deeply when these norms are explained and perceived as fair rather than imposed through fear [15].

Two of the directions in Table 1 deserve additional explanation. Emotional validation means that the parent first acknowledges the child's feeling and only then discusses the behavior: *"I see that you are very angry because your brother*

broke your toy. That really is upsetting. Let us think together about what can be done now." Such a response does not approve of aggression, but it shows the child that his or her feelings are understood, which reduces tension and opens the way to a constructive solution. Positive discipline, in turn, replaces punishment with natural and logical consequences that are directly related to the child's action [14]. For example, if the child has scattered toys, the logical consequence is to put them away before the next game, rather than a prohibition on watching cartoons that has no connection with the act. In this way the child learns to see the link between actions and their results and to correct mistakes instead of fearing punishment.

Stages of implementing the methodological recommendations:

1. **Diagnostic stage.** Identifying the existing style of communication in the family by means of questionnaires for parents and projective techniques such as "My Family" drawings for children. At this stage it is important not to evaluate parents but to help them see their own habitual reactions and the way these reactions are perceived by the child. The results of diagnostics make it possible to choose the directions of work that are most relevant for a particular family.
2. **Educational and informational stage.** Organizing training sessions devoted to the harmony of national values and modern psychology within the "Parents' University" classes held at mahalla institutions, preschool educational organizations and general secondary schools. The content of such sessions should include examples from national literature and folk pedagogy, which make modern methods closer and more understandable to parents.
3. **Practical skills stage.** Teaching parents communicative algorithms for use in everyday life. One example is the culture of responding even when the parent does not agree with the child's opinion: *"Your opinion is important to me; let us also look at the other side of this issue."* Role play of typical family situations,

such as a conflict over homework, a request for a new gadget or a quarrel between siblings, allows parents to practice active listening and I-messages in a safe setting before applying them at home.

A special place in this methodology belongs to grandparents and other members of the extended family. In many Uzbek households, grandparents live together with their children and grandchildren or take an active part in their upbringing, and they are traditionally regarded as the custodians of family values. If parents begin to practice democratic communication while grandparents continue to demand unconditional obedience, the child receives contradictory messages. Therefore, it is advisable to involve grandparents in the discussion of new approaches, emphasizing that active listening and respect for the child do not contradict their life experience but continue the best traditions of national upbringing, in which elders have always been a source of wisdom and kindness for the younger generation.

The successful implementation of these stages depends on several pedagogical conditions: the voluntary participation and motivation of parents, the consistency of the requirements of all adult family members, the cooperation of the family with educational institutions and the mahalla, and the gradual nature of change. It is unrealistic to expect that a style of communication formed over many years will change in a few weeks, so it is important to support parents and to notice even small positive changes in family relationships.

5. Conclusion and Practical Proposals

In conclusion, developing a culture of respect for the child in Uzbek families does not require abandoning national values but rather enriching their original humanistic essence with modern psychological and pedagogical technologies. Respect for elders and recognition of the child's personal opinion are not opposing

concepts; on the contrary, they are complementary educational criteria. A child whose opinion is listened to and respected honors his or her parents not out of fear but out of genuine love and esteem.

The analysis has shown that the heritage of al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, Navoi and Avloniy and the conclusions of L.S. Vygotsky, C. Rogers and D. Baumrind converge on the same principle: the child develops best in an atmosphere of respect, warmth and reasonable, explained requirements. Devaluation of the child's opinion and feelings, on the contrary, lowers self-esteem, suppresses initiative and critical thinking and leads to alienation between parents and children. The five methodological directions proposed in this paper make it possible to combine national traditions with modern methods in such a way that the change is perceived by parents not as a break with culture but as its natural development.

It is also important to see the long-term, intergenerational meaning of this approach. Children who grow up in families where they are listened to and respected are more likely to reproduce the same style of communication when they become parents themselves. Thus, the culture of respect for the child formed today becomes a guarantee that national values will be passed on to future generations not as external rules maintained by fear but as internal convictions accepted with love and understanding.

The practical significance of the study lies in the possibility of using its conclusions in the work of school and preschool psychologists, in programs for parents organized by educational institutions and mahallas and in the self-education of parents themselves. The proposed approach does not require significant material resources; its main resource is the readiness of adults to reconsider their habitual way of communicating with children.



Based on the analysis, the following practical proposals are put forward:

• To include the module *"National Upbringing and Modern Communication"* in the programs of educational institutions for working with parents, covering active listening, I-messages, emotional validation and positive discipline with examples from national pedagogy.

• To restore the tradition of family libraries and joint reading, so that discussions of literary works develop the child's critical and independent thinking skills and give parents and children a shared space for dialogue.

• To organize, with the participation of school and mahalla psychologists, practical consultations and training sessions for parents in which communicative skills are practiced on the basis of typical family situations.

• To prepare short and accessible methodological guides for parents in the Uzbek language that explain the harmony of national values and modern methods of democratic communication.

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