



International Conference on Education, Psychology and Humanities

Hosted Online from Moscow, Russia

Date: 28th September, 2026

Website: <https://econferencia.com>

THE ROLE OF SPIRITUAL AND MORAL VALUES IN DEVELOPING A LIBRARY CULTURE IN THE FAMILY

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Abstract:

This study analyzes the role of national values in enhancing the culture of reading within the family. Attention is focused on the initial duty of parents in developing a child's reading skills—specifically the necessity of selecting appropriate books—while taking into account the reader's spiritual level. The study posits that considering a child's age characteristics and psychological capabilities leads to their rational growth, whereas accounting for their spiritual level fosters intellectual development.

Keywords: family, reading culture, reading, culture, intellectuality, creativity, education, morality, value.

INTRODUCTION

The family is the foundational unit of society. Within this social sphere, distinct internal governance, living traditions, and moral-spiritual norms prevail. Desired outcomes in promoting reading culture can only be achieved through an in-depth study of the specific characteristics and familial traditions of each household. In a single neighborhood (mahalla), 550–600 families and even larger populations



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reside, each representing a unique environment. However, there are families that do not comprehend, nor can they conceptualize, the immense educational function of books.

LITERATURE ANALYSIS

The Uzbek people have historically been a reading nation. This was highlighted by the 19th-century Hungarian traveler and scholar Ármin Vámbéry in his work *History of Bukhara or Transoxiana* [6, p. 43]. He noted that during long winter nights in Bukhara, people gathered to recite the works of Navoi (navoiyxonlik) and Fuzuli (fuzuliyxonlik). In Tashkent, recitations of Bedil (bedilxonlik) were held regularly. Folk epics such as Kuntughmish, Shirin and Shakar, Malikai Ayyor, Alpamysh, and Gorogly were read in turns within families. In distant villages of our region, family members would compete and debate over thick, pillow-like volumes containing these epics. There were also storytellers of popular folk tales such as the Story of Ibrahim Adham and the Story of Shah Mashrab, who recited these narratives with great passion in public gatherings. History demonstrates that during the reign of Emperor Marcus Aurelius in Athens, private higher schools were established where similar subjects were taught. Since specialized schools for women did not exist in ancient times, girls received home education from female tutors (otins) in households, as well as in royal and khan palaces [3, p. 112]. It should be highlighted that reading, public speaking, expressive reading, accurate text interpretation, and mastering the art of poetry formed the core of these lessons. Enlighteners such as F. Khodjayev, Ibrat, Sofizoda, Behbudi, Abdulkadir Shakuri, Munawwar Qari Abdurashidkhanov, and Ismatulla Rahmatullayev made monumental contributions to the development of reading.



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Since the dawn of humanity, individuals have strived for perfection, enriching their worldview from childhood. Every person receives their initial upbringing—their primary spiritual nourishment—from parents in the family, followed by formal schooling where they learn social behavior. Reading books serves as a fundamental pathway toward gaining spiritual nourishment and attaining maturity as a well-rounded individual. Indeed, book reading is a rigorous process that demands diligence, patience, a strong memory, and high cognitive acuity. Yet, reading is immensely rewarding; through it, individuals deeply comprehend the laws of life, expand their horizon of knowledge, elevate their understanding and worldview, and advance spiritually. Were it not so gratifying, people would not continuously engage in reading. As Francis Bacon remarked, "Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man."

Fostering a love for reading in children and cultivating a culture of deep comprehension during reading is a crucial responsibility resting upon the intellectual stratum of society [2, p. 38].

Denis Diderot once stated, "When a person stops reading, they stop thinking." Indeed, reading expands the mind, refines speech, and shapes thought. The words of the Uzbek writer Oybek, "Reading is the wing of thought," resonate closely with Diderot's assertion.

When examining the lives of our poets and writers who adorned Uzbek literature with rare gems, the contributions of their parents, grandparents, and relatives proved vital to their acclaim. Cho'lpon's mother, Oysha Aya, was an insightful woman with a deep knowledge of oral folklore; Oybek's passion for literature was ignited by his mother, Shahodatbonu. Abdulla Qahhor's interest in science grew due to the literacy of his father, a humble blacksmith named Abduqahhor. The contribution of Ma'sumbek—a physician who loved literature and art and was interested in history and philosophy—was invaluable in fostering the literary



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passion of his son, Maqsud Shayxhzoda, who contributed significantly to Uzbek literature. Similarly, in the life of Hamid Olimjon, a love for knowledge was first awakened by his grandfather, Azimbobo. When the famous folk singer (bakhshi) Fozil Yuldash oglu stayed as a guest at Azimbobo's house and sang epics and verses (termas), the young poet listened intently beside his grandfather. Our beloved poetess Zulfiya wrote with emotion about her mother: "If I possess any talent, its spring is my mother. If I have presented a handful of poetic harvest to the literary community, its seeds were first sown in my heart by my mother" [4, p. 349]. This list can be extended further; Nagima Aitmatova played an indispensable role in the life of Chingiz Aitmatov, who holds a distinct place in world literature.

The initial duty of parents in cultivating a reading habit in a child is book selection. Promoting literature suitable for their comprehension level enables youth to become worthy citizens of society, mature and well-rounded individuals of our independent state, and beneficial to their families and society through high spirituality. Considering the reader's spiritual level during book selection is a somewhat complex factor. Relying on the child's spiritual level leads to their intellectual growth. While accounting for a child's age characteristics and psychological capacities leads to rational growth, considering their spiritual level fosters intellectual development, which is broader and more effective than rationality alone. Therefore, an atmosphere of reading must prevail throughout the family. In this context, the attitude toward books within the family—primarily that of the parents—serves as a critical factor. An environment of reading directly influences the child's psyche. As noted above, initial recommendations should begin with fiction, followed later by specialized literature.

Another major issue in families is book preservation and passing literature down to subsequent family members or others. In many families observed, attention is



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given to book selection and reading, yet there is indifference toward preserving books and cultivating care for them. Observations reveal instances of textbooks and numerous colorful children's books being torn, scribbled on, and discarded. Adults must set an example in teaching children that "a book is as precious as bread." According to researchers, an individual has the capacity to read approximately 2,000 books in a lifetime. Therefore, books read during childhood and adolescence inevitably leave bright, lifelong impressions.

Awakening a love for books primarily begins in the family circle. Particularly for young children, when parents read aloud works of children's fiction containing mythical and constructive characters, it exerts a stronger influence than independent reading. Reading various fairy tales and books to children before sleep enhances their interest in reading [7, p. 32]. For a child to love books, parents themselves must possess a strong devotion to reading. Having an abundance of books at home is highly beneficial. If books are brought home and read within the family, children will naturally continue this tradition. If a person does not form the habit of reading in childhood, developing an interest later in life becomes difficult. Therefore, our responsibility is to ignite a love for books in children's hearts. Reading culture must begin in our homes.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY. Methods of analysis and synthesis, logic and comparison, and historicism were employed in the research process.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

According to writer Isajon Sulton, within the pages of books, the secrets of science and technology lie on one side, while the magnificent human soul and its tribulations—which science has yet to fully reach—stand on the other. Our desire for our children to read books stems from our wish for them to grasp the essence of ancient wisdom deemed essential. Literary scholar Ibrohim Ghafurov notes



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that a person reads a book for themselves, as if the book concerns no one else. On the other hand, we speak of personal development, which directly impacts society as a whole. Publishing books and nurturing a reading culture define the general character, spiritual-cultural level, and status of society; it brings open eyes and open hearts into the world. It is difficult—if not impossible—to deceive, mislead, or stray an individual with an open mind and heart through hypocrisy and deceit [5, pp. 214–215].

The insights of our intellectuals regarding the benefits of reading can be further reinforced by scientifically proven evidence from psychologists. British scientists led by neurophysiologist David Lewis conducted experiments on factors that alleviate stress—one of the prominent ailments of the 21st century. Reading books emerged as the most effective remedy for stress. It was proven that within six minutes of starting to read, a person's heart rate normalizes. Reading is increasingly considered the finest treatment for melancholy; depressive episodes were found to decrease after patients engaged in reading. Reading untangles spiritual anxieties, brings solace to the heart, eliminates ignorance, and clears various unpleasant thoughts and obsessions from the mind. It enhances memory and improves cognitive reasoning. Each time a book is read, the brain works actively, creating new neural pathways to store incoming information. Individuals who read consistently possess higher reasoning abilities and a broader worldview. As one reads more, their knowledge increases, alongside their awareness across various domains [1, pp. 10–11].

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The perfection of children represents the maturity of society; fully developed individuals determine societal progress and maturity. The seeds of goodness sown today—nurturing children's reading culture—represent a strong and fruitful



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harvest for tomorrow. A child devoted to books today is the independently thinking citizen of our mature, independent Uzbekistan tomorrow. Therefore, public attention must be directed toward shaping the aesthetic taste and spiritual world of children and adolescents through reading.

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