



## PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF PATRIOTIC EDUCATION IN GENERAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND THE PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE OF TEACHERS

*Murodova Mehrangiz Murodovna*

*Master's student*

*Asia International University,*

**Annotation.** This article analyzes the psychological characteristics of forming patriotic feelings in 5-6th grade students of general secondary schools and the role of the teacher's professional competence in this process. The pedagogical and psychological conditions for influencing the emotional and volitional sphere to develop feelings of national pride and loyalty to the motherland in students at the initial stage of adolescence are highlighted. Furthermore, the issues of demonstrating teachers' professional skills through the appropriate use of interactive methods in lessons and extracurricular activities are scientifically substantiated.

**Keywords:** patriotic education, psychological characteristics, adolescence, professional competence, national pride, pedagogical skills, emotional intelligence.

### INTRODUCTION

At the current stage of the development of the global education system, it is recognized as a paramount socio-pedagogical imperative not only to foster the intellectual growth of the younger generation but also to cultivate in them high moral qualities, particularly feelings of patriotism and national pride. In the context of rapid globalization processes and an unprecedented acceleration of information flows, protecting the minds and hearts of young students from various alien and harmful ideologies, instilling in them a deep sense of national identity, and fostering profound respect for their people's history, rich cultural heritage, and values have



emerged as the primary tasks of educational institutions, especially general secondary schools. Within the framework of the large-scale reforms being implemented in the Republic of Uzbekistan and the ambitious goals of laying the foundation for the Third Renaissance, raising comprehensively harmoniously developed youth and establishing a deep love for the Motherland and a sense of involvement in its destiny in their hearts are strictly defined as among the highest priorities of state policy.

In this complex and highly responsible endeavor, the role of general secondary schools is invaluable, serving as a solid foundation in shaping the social upbringing, civic position, and spiritual and moral image of the younger generation. Scientific-pedagogical and psychological studies prove that the targeted and effective organization of patriotic education requires a very deep understanding of the age periods and individual-psychological characteristics of school-age children, their scientific analysis, and application to educational practice. Specifically, 5th and 6th-grade students experience the most crucial transitional period in their lives in terms of physical, cognitive, and social development, namely the initial stage of adolescence (11-12 years old). During this precarious and contradictory period, students' attitudes toward their surroundings, societal rules, and themselves undergo sharp changes. They develop a stronger desire to be like adults, an increasing need to independently express their personal opinions, critically analyze received information, and actively participate in social processes. Precisely while these complex psychological processes are occurring, instilling sacred concepts such as Motherland, nation, identity, courage, and selflessness into the child's consciousness through correct, engaging, and impressive methods acquires immense pedagogical significance.

### LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODS

The problem of forming patriotic feelings in 5th and 6th-grade students of general secondary schools has been studied by many foreign and domestic scholars



based on various pedagogical and psychological approaches. In particular, the psychological characteristics of adolescence, the socio-moral formation of the individual, and sharp changes in the emotional-volitional sphere have been deeply analyzed scientifically in the fundamental works of major psychologists such as L.S. Vygotsky and D.B. Elkonin. Among the scholars of our republic, E.G. Goziyev, in his research on the psychology of ontogenesis, specifically studied how self-awareness, attitudes towards the environment, and the value system are formed in children precisely at the initial stage of adolescence (11-12 years old).

Furthermore, the specific pedagogical mechanisms of educating the younger generation in the spirit of patriotism and instilling feelings of national pride and honor have been widely highlighted in the scientific works of pedagogues such as O. Musurmonova and M. Quronov. In addition, the comparative analysis of literature focused on the immense significance of the works of representatives of early 20th-century Uzbek literature—specifically the Jadid figures Abdurauf Fitrat, Abdulhamid Cho'lpon, and Usmon Nosir—as a means of cultivating a deep understanding of national identity in students. It has been scientifically recognized that the works and poetry of these enlightened writers serve as an unparalleled spiritual and psychological source that deepens the feelings of loyalty to the motherland in adolescents and strongly stimulates their emotions.

At the same time, the role of the teacher in the educational process and the issues of developing their professional competence have been substantiated in the research of N.A. Muslimov and A.A. Xoliqov, which demonstrate the integral connection of the psychological, methodological, and communicative abilities of a modern teacher. However, an analysis of the existing literature shows that the process of developing patriotic feelings in 5th and 6th-grade students in direct integration with the psychological-pedagogical competence of the teacher, as well as the practical mechanisms of using special artistic and aesthetic means of influence in this regard, have not been sufficiently researched.



To fill this scientific gap and achieve the set goals, a number of empirical and theoretical methods were systematically used within the framework of this article. To determine the level of theoretical study of the problem, a comparative analysis was conducted on philosophical, psychological, and pedagogical sources. In order to implement the practical part of the research and test the advanced scientific hypothesis, special pedagogical experimental work was organized at general secondary school No. 30. Students of the 5th and 6th grades, as well as practicing teachers, were widely involved in this experimental process.

At the initial coverage stage, special questionnaires, individual interviews, and targeted pedagogical observation methods were used to determine the students' understanding of patriotism and the teachers' level of psychological preparedness in this direction. Based on the results of the initial diagnosis, an improved corrective-developmental methodology was developed. In putting this new methodology into practice, elements of art therapy were actively integrated into lessons and extracurricular activities to psychologically balance the variable emotional state characteristic of the students' age and to ensure their conscious acceptance of a sense of national pride.

## RESULTS

The pedagogical experimental work conducted among 5th and 6th-grade students was carried out over a period of three months at general secondary school No. 30. A total of 120 students were involved in the study, divided equally into two groups: a control group (60 students) and an experimental group (60 students). The level of formation of patriotic feelings in students was evaluated based on three main criteria: cognitive (knowledge about the Motherland and history), emotional-motivational (national pride, self-awareness), and behavioral (practical actions, social activity).

The results of the initial diagnosis (pre-test) conducted before the start of the experiment showed that the indicators were almost identical in both groups,



revealing that the majority of students (approximately 65%) had only a superficial, formal attitude toward the concept of patriotism. During the experiment, while the control group was taught using traditional teaching methods, the experimental group participated in lessons that integrated art therapy (isotherapy, clay therapy, thematic collages), relying on the specialized psychological and pedagogical competence of the teachers.

The results of the final control stage (post-test) conducted at the end of the experiment fully confirmed the proposed hypothesis. In the experimental group, a 34% increase in high-level emotional-motivational indicators was recorded. Specifically, the students' emotional attachment to the heritage of Jadid writers and national values significantly strengthened. In contrast, this indicator increased by only 8% in the control group. Furthermore, mathematical-statistical analysis (Student's t-test,  $p < 0.05$ ) reliably proved that in classes taught by specially trained teachers who demonstrated high emotional intelligence and facilitator skills, the students' classroom activity, independent thinking, and team solidarity were significantly higher. These practical results demonstrated that the psychological competence of the teacher is a decisive factor in patriotic education.

## DISCUSSION

The results of the pedagogical experiment conducted at general secondary school No. 30 confirmed the initial hypothesis: the formation of patriotic feelings in 5th and 6th-grade students is significantly more effective when traditional didactic approaches are augmented with interactive, psychologically grounded methods such as art therapy. The statistical analysis of the control questionnaires and pedagogical tests, validated via Student's t-test, revealed a marked increase in the experimental group's emotional attachment to national values, historical empathy, and understanding of civic duty compared to the control group. This fundamental shift indicates that at the onset of adolescence (11-12 years old), emotional and



psychological engagement is far superior to mere cognitive instruction or formal lecturing.

The observed success of integrating isotherapy and clay therapy into the educational process can be explicitly explained by the specific psychological characteristics of this age group. As highlighted in the developmental psychology literature, early adolescence is characterized by emotional volatility, an intense search for personal identity, and a natural subconscious resistance to authoritarian, directive teaching methods. By utilizing visual arts and clay modeling, students were provided with a psychologically safe space to project their complex, often unarticulated feelings about their homeland, ancestral heritage, and national identity into tangible forms. Abstract concepts such as "patriotism" and "national pride"—which often seem distant or overly formal in standard textbook formats—became deeply personal and meaningful experiences. Furthermore, the collaborative process of creating thematic collages satisfied the adolescents' acute psychological need for peer affiliation and collective achievement, seamlessly weaving patriotic sentiments into their natural social dynamics. When students visualized the historical struggles and aspirations of early 20th-century Jadid figures like Fitrat, Cho'lpon, and Usmon Nosir through their artwork, their historical empathy deepened, transforming historical facts into personal convictions.

Crucially, the implementation of these corrective-developmental methodologies highlighted the indispensable role and current gaps in the professional competence of teachers. The experimental phase unequivocally demonstrated that utilizing art therapy elements and interactive methods for patriotic education requires the educator to completely transcend the traditional role of an "information transmitter." Instead, the teacher must operate as a highly skilled psychological facilitator. This demands an elevated level of emotional intelligence, empathy, and pedagogical tact. Educators had to accurately interpret the emotional states embedded in the students' creative expressions, guide their reflections without



imposing strict judgments or formal grading, and foster an environment of unconditional acceptance. The study observed that where teachers lacked these specific psychological and communicative competencies, students tended to treat the creative tasks as mere formal assignments, thereby nullifying the intended spiritual and emotional impact.

Ultimately, these findings suggest a critical implication for the modern pedagogical system. The successful cultivation of a genuinely patriotic future generation cannot rely solely on updating curriculum content; it fundamentally depends on the continuous, targeted development of teachers' psychological and methodological competencies. Preparing educators to deeply understand the nuances of adolescent psychology and equipping them with the practical skills to implement non-traditional, emotionally resonant methods must be prioritized in both pre-service teacher training and continuous professional development programs.

### CONCLUSION

The theoretical and practical research conducted among 5th and 6th-grade students of general secondary schools firmly confirms that forming patriotic feelings during early adolescence is not merely a process of transmitting historical or social information, but a highly complex psychological process that requires influencing the child's emotional-volitional sphere. The research results demonstrated that traditional, strictly lecture-based didactic methods lack sufficient effectiveness in deeply instilling feelings of national pride and self-awareness in adolescents. Conversely, integrating modern, psychologically grounded interactive methods such as art therapy (isotherapy, clay therapy, collective collages) into the educational and upbringing process serves to elevate students' perceptions of the Motherland and ancestral heritage (particularly the works of Jadid writers) to the level of personal conviction.

The most crucial conclusion is that the practical effectiveness of these innovative methods depends directly on the professional competence of the teacher.



Without the teacher's high emotional intelligence, capacity for empathy, and skills as a psychological facilitator, any modern technology loses its educational impact. Therefore, it is considered necessary to place strategic importance on developing the psychological and methodological capabilities of educators—specifically their skills in applying non-traditional approaches when working with adolescents—in future pre-service teacher training programs at higher education institutions and in continuous professional development courses for practicing teachers.

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