

ANALYTICAL ASPECTS OF FORMING SPIRITUAL AND CULTURAL VALUES IN UKRAINIAN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Problem Statement. Amid globalization, technological revolution, war, and the socio-cultural transformations of contemporary Ukrainian society, higher education is experiencing a profound crisis of spiritual and cultural identity among youth. The formation of spiritual and cultural values in higher education is becoming increasingly relevant as a foundation for personal self-realization, civic responsibility, and social integration.

However, in the practice of higher education in Ukraine, systemic mechanisms for student axiogenesis remain underdeveloped: the axiological component of the educational process is often fragmented, declarative, or superficially embedded in the curriculum. In the context of secularization, the devaluation of traditional values, and the rise of consumerist attitudes, there is a pressing need to reconsider the place and role of spiritual and cultural values within the university educational environment.

The challenge of forming a holistic, axiocentric space in higher education is one that fosters students' moral, cultural, ethical, and spiritual self-awareness, remains unsolved and calls for in-depth analytical reflection.

The relevance of the topic is also determined by the need for a systematic approach to the cultivation of spiritual and cultural orientations. This involves the creation of axiocentric educational spaces, the integration of humanities, ethics, and religious studies courses into curricula, and the engagement of students in practices of moral reflection and social activity.

An analysis of contemporary scientific research reveals an insufficient development of comprehensive mechanisms for the formation of spiritual and cultural values in Ukrainian higher education institutions. This highlights the need for deep analytical understanding, conceptual substantiation, and the implementation of effective pedagogical strategies aimed at fostering the axiogenesis of student youth.

Analysis of Current Research. In the context of shaping the spiritual and cultural values of student youth, it is essential to consider European experience. Contemporary scientific research examines this issue in Ukrainian higher education through interdisciplinary axiological, cultural, and pedagogical lenses.

The theoretical and methodological foundations of student axiogenesis have been explored by scholars such as T. Antonenko, O. Bazaluk, I. Bekh, Yu. Pelekh, M. Roganova, O. Smolina, M. Chursin, G. Shevchenko, and O. Tsybulko. The research is devoted to the axiological approach to developing the content of higher education in the context of modern global trends and challenges.

There are also studies focusing on the integration of European values such as democracy, human rights, and tolerance into Ukrainian higher education (Spitsyn, Antonenko, Synkovska, Dzevytska, & Potapiuk, 2024); analyses of interdisciplinary methods for fostering students' spiritual and intellectual potential through a synthesis of pedagogy, psychology, and culture (Ordina & Yarmola, 2018); and research on the spiritual and moral dimensions of modern education and the need to embed these aspects into the learning process (Bazaluk & Blazhevych, 2013).

Thus, contemporary research reflects a shared understanding of the importance of systematically humanizing the educational space to effectively cultivate the spiritual and cultural values of student youth. However, the practical implementation of these theoretical frameworks remains unresolved and requires further comprehensive analytical exploration.

The purpose of the article is to provide a comprehensive analytical understanding of the process of forming the spiritual and cultural values of student youth in Ukrainian higher education in the context of globalization, socio-cultural transformations, and socio-political instability, with consideration of relevant European experience.

Methodology and research methods. The methodological foundation of the study lies in the interdisciplinary integration of humanitarian, pedagogical, cultural, and axiological approaches. The conceptual core is grounded in the post-neoclassical humanitarian paradigm, which views spiritual and cultural values not as normatively fixed constants, but as dynamic, meaning-generating structures that emerge through intersubjective experience, educational interaction, and reflective practice. The following methods were employed in the research process:

- hermeneutic analysis was used to interpret spiritual and cultural meanings embedded in philosophical, pedagogical, and cultural concepts;
- content analysis of international reports (Eurydice, EACEA, European Commission), which contain both quantitative and qualitative data on the integration of spiritual and moral components in European higher education, was conducted to identify key trends and axiogenetic strategies;
- critical discourse analysis was applied to official documents, political strategies, and academic narratives related to spirituality in education. This made it possible to uncover dominant value paradigms within contemporary educational discourse;
- the comparative pedagogical method was used to compare the Ukrainian context with the experiences of EU countries in institutionalizing the spiritual and cultural component in higher education systems;
- sociocultural analysis served to reveal the connections between the transformation of student spiritual identity and the challenges posed by war, secularization, and globalization;

- analytical modeling was employed to substantiate the need for creating an axiocentric educational environment that integrates intellectual development with the cultivation of moral autonomy and cultural reflection.

This combination of methods provided a holistic understanding of the research subject, enabled the identification of contradictions and prospects in the formation of spiritual and cultural values in higher education, and supported the development of practical recommendations for the institutional implementation of axiological approaches within the contemporary educational landscape of Ukraine.

Presentation of the main material. In the context of contemporary globalization challenges and the growing need to unite public efforts around the principles of sustainable development, the formation of spiritual and cultural values within the higher education system has become increasingly relevant.

The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2024 (The Sustainable Development Goals Report, 2024) highlights the priority of moral and ethical, humanistic, and integrative approaches in education, as well as the need to foster humanitarian capacities such as tolerance, solidarity, responsibility, and social cohesion. Quality education is viewed not merely as a tool for professional training, but as a key factor in socio-cultural development, encompassing civic responsibility, respect for human rights, environmental awareness, and the preservation of cultural identity.

Universities serve as centers for the formation of new value orientations and as active agents of social transformation. They contribute to the development of civic engagement, volunteerism, intercultural dialogue, and environmental responsibility. Cultivating such competencies is not only a pressing challenge but also a strategic imperative for modern Ukrainian higher education.

In the context of fostering students' spiritual and cultural values, it is important to consider the European experience in validating non-formal and informal learning within higher education. According to an analytical report by the European Commission (European Commission / EACEA / Eurydice,

2024b), recognizing students' experiences outside the formal educational framework has become a priority in creating axiocentric educational spaces.

The study revealed that in most European countries (30 out of 37), mechanisms exist that allow outcomes from professional activities, volunteering, or cultural engagement to be credited toward academic progress. However, it also noted that the integration of spiritual and cultural experiences – such as participation in civic or religious initiatives – into recognition practices remains limited.

The analysis highlights the importance of developing a system in Ukraine for assessing not only academic knowledge but also students' spiritual and cultural engagement as part of their educational trajectory. Such mechanisms would foster the development of moral autonomy, responsibility, humanistic orientations, and cultural identity among students.

An analysis of data from the European Education and Culture Executive Agency's report on structural indicators for monitoring education and training systems in Europe (European Education and Culture Executive Agency, 2023) reveals important trends in the development of higher education in Europe that are directly related to the issue of fostering spiritual and cultural values among student youth.

Among the key indicators highlighted is the growing emphasis on a competency-based approach: higher education systems are focusing not only on academic knowledge, but also on the development of personal competencies, including ethical, social, and cultural skills.

The integration of value-based components into curricula is another important trend: many countries have introduced mandatory courses on cultural heritage, ethics, and civic education. There is also active encouragement of volunteering as part of students' educational trajectories, contributing to the development of moral responsibility and social engagement. Support for internationalization through academic mobility and multicultural integration programs fosters tolerance, openness, and intercultural dialogue among young people. For

Ukraine, which is undergoing profound social transformations and facing the challenges of war, these trends are particularly relevant. They underscore the urgent need to create an axiocentric educational environment in which spiritual and cultural values are not incidental by-products of the educational process, but serve as its foundational components.

According to the European Commission's 2024 reports on the European Higher Education Area (European Commission / EACEA / Eurydice, 2024a), the system continues to face several challenges: an insufficient level of teacher training in the areas of spiritual ethics and cultural identity; limited institutional support for initiatives aimed at spiritual development; and the dominance of technocratic models of education over value-oriented approaches.

In response, it is necessary to:

- integrate spiritual and cultural studies into all educational programs as a mandatory component of interdisciplinary training;
- provide advanced professional development for educators in the field of spiritual and ethical education;
- support student initiatives focused on intercultural and interfaith dialogue;
- promote cooperation with religious educational institutions and civil society organizations experienced in spiritual education.

The Spirituality in Higher Education study, conducted by the Institute for Higher Education Research (Bertrand, 2013), was the first national longitudinal study of students' spiritual development in the United States. More than 14,500 students from 136 universities were surveyed. The study examined five spiritual and five religious characteristics. The greatest growth in spiritual qualities such as an ethic of caring, inner harmony, and openness to different worldviews was observed among students who actively engaged in reflection, meditation, and volunteering; in other words, those immersed in an axiocentric environment. Spiritual development was found to correlate positively with aca-

ademic performance, leadership skills, psychological well-being, intercultural competence, and satisfaction with the educational experience.

Among the key educational practices that contribute to the development of spiritual and cultural values are self-reflection, interdisciplinary courses, study abroad programs, and community service. These findings highlight the importance of a holistic approach to cultivating spiritual and cultural values in higher education. The educational process should involve not only the transmission of knowledge but also the support of personal growth through the creation of a reflective and ethical environment. UCLA's experience provides a scientifically grounded model that can be adapted to the Ukrainian context, particularly in light of the challenges posed by war and the crisis of spiritual identity.

Serhiy Londar and Natalia Pron emphasize that the challenges of the war have only accelerated the process of European integration and contributed to the reinforcement of humanistic and value-based principles within the educational environment. In the context of infrastructure destruction, the deportation of children, and the migration of teachers, educational initiatives aimed at preserving cultural identity, language, national dignity, and European values have taken on increased significance. Online learning platforms, international exchange programs, and EU support have become key instruments in this process. They not only ensure the continuity of education but also help shape civic consciousness, patriotism, tolerance, and intercultural dialogue. Significant attention has been devoted to the digitalization of education, which also contributes to the development of new cultural and professional orientations. Thus, higher education institutions in Ukraine today are becoming not only centers of knowledge, but also carriers of spiritual and cultural values in times of crisis (Londar & Pron, 2022).

O. Bazaluk and T. Blazhevych (2013) view spiritual and cultural values as a metaphysical matrix that determines the developmental trajectory of the so-called planetary-cosmic personality, an intellectually and spiritually mobilized subject capa-

ble of living in harmony with the Universe. Within this paradigm, the educational process is seen as an act of ontological awakening, through which an individual's inner potential is activated in the service of Intelligent Matter, conceived as the embodiment of a higher order of values.

Spiritual and cultural values are viewed as part of the evolution of the noosphere as transmission mechanisms that shape the subject of spiritual responsibility for the fate of humanity within the cosmogenetic continuum. In this context, education assumes the role of an epistemological and axiological bridge between personal self-realization and the ontology of the Universe, where spirituality functions as the energetic and semantic foundation for the sustainable mental evolution of the human being as a bearer of cosmic intelligence (Bazaluk & Blazhevych, 2013).

The logic of this problem formulation also resonates with the conclusions of T. Ordina and S. Yarmola, who interpret higher education as an axiocentric space capable of initiating processes of spiritual self-realization through the harmonization of motivational, ethical, and identity-related components of the personality structure (Ordina & Yarmola, 2018). In this context, spiritual and cultural values are not seen as secondary pedagogical categories, but rather as transcendentally motivated principles of educational interaction that define the horizon of social existence and existential self-determination.

Thus, the model of the university of the future is centered around an axiological paradigm in which spirituality is not merely a rhetorical element of humanitarian discourse, but the structural core of cultural identity, capable of self-reproduction under conditions of global complexity.

Within the framework of post-nonclassical humanitarian rationality, researchers view spiritual and cultural values as the axiological axis of higher education, shaping students' worldview identity. In particular, the religious component is seen not only as an object of knowledge, but also as a means of fostering ethical reflection and cultural self-awareness (Kondratieva et al., 2022). In this dimension, the educational process should function

as an axiological environment capable of cultivating tolerance, moral autonomy, and openness to cultural diversity.

M. Antonets, O. Silchuk, and K. Bozhko (2019) identify a profound axiogenic deficiency within the youth environment, where, despite the proclaimed importance of family values, the level of spiritual orientation remains low. The proposed model of axiocentric education involves the incorporation of biblical and ethical modules into courses in philosophy, ethics, and psychology, as well as the development of moral reflection and an awareness of personal vocation as a foundation for professional self-realization.

O. Varypaiev and A. Minosian (2024) apply an axiocentric model of the educational environment that opposes technocracy and the fragmentation of knowledge. Using historical-philosophical and axiological analysis, the authors present the concept of humanistic education as a methodological framework focused on integrating cultural reflection and spiritual meanings into the academic process. According to the researchers, educational discourse should be grounded in the values of dignity, freedom of conscience, pluralism, and a humanistic approach to the individual as a bearer of spiritual autonomy. This methodological perspective allows education to be conceptualized not only as a means of knowledge transmission but also as a mechanism of axiogenesis, that is the formation of a holistic, culturally responsible personality.

In the context of war and globalization, which undermine the spiritual foundations of society, a value-oriented (axiocentric) model of education is critically necessary. Education devoid of meaningful values loses both direction and purpose. Research confirms that the spiritual dimension determines the degree of societal development; therefore, pedagogical strategies must place values at the core. The axiocentric approach entails the implementation of socially significant values and the formation of the ideal of the individual as the highest value. Globalization and the information revolution are eroding spiritual reference points. In the midst of such a spiritual crisis, education must

compensate the lack of ideals. Thus, only through an axiocentric approach the integrity of both the individual and society can be restored.

In the future, the spiritual and cultural component of education will facilitate Ukraine's integration into the European educational space. Educational institutions are increasingly becoming centers for the dissemination of European values within society. Emphasizing shared European ideals such as democracy, freedom, and human rights within curricula will help strengthen civic consciousness and solidarity among Ukrainians.

Digital technologies are broadening the channels through which these values are transmitted. For example, the Digital University – Open Ukrainian Initiative (DigiUni), supported by Erasmus+, brings together Ukrainian and European universities to establish an open Ukrainian university, demonstrating how digital infrastructure can enhance the cohesion of educational values.

At the same time, emerging humanitarian challenges such as prolonged military conflict, migration, and climate change will demand greater ethical responsibility. Spiritual and cultural education will increasingly contribute to social cohesion by fostering critical thinking, commitment, and empathy among students.

Special attention should be given to preparing young people for life in multicultural societies. Intercultural education must develop the capacity for dialogue and tolerance toward diverse worldviews. In this way, the spiritual and value-based dimension of education will help shape responsible citizens endowed with a critical spirit and a strong sense of shared identity.

Although the prospects are encouraging, serious risks persist. First, the technocratization of education has shifted the focus toward technological skills and performance metrics, gradually marginalizing the humanities. This trend leads to dehumanization, eroding students' motivation for inner growth and spiritual self-development.

Second, the widespread destruction of both tangible and intangible elements of national culture continues amid wartime. Historians emphasize that

in times of war, the preservation of cultural heritage and national memory is crucial for fostering national unity. However, the ongoing devastation of monuments and the removal of historical context from educational curricula weaken the national code. This cultural trauma undermines the foundations of identity, diminishing the sense of belonging to one's own tradition.

Third, secularization and intensified global cultural exchange call the coherence of identity into question. While intercultural dialogue promotes tolerance, it can also pose a threat to national distinctiveness.

It is essential to implement teaching methods that foster critical thinking and self-awareness. In particular, organizing discussion-based seminars, philosophy clubs, and project-based work with an ethical dimension can be highly effective providing spaces where students reflect on diverse worldviews. Such practices contribute to the development of intellectual autonomy, tolerance, and empathy among young people. Reflective learning nurtures the capacity to consciously choose one's values and to take responsibility for them within broader social processes. It is also important to support student-led initiatives related to national history and culture for example, by organizing events that revive the memory of one's roots and cultural traditions.

Overall, only a systematic integration of spiritual and cultural education with innovative learning methods can foster an educational ecosystem in which students develop not only professional competence but also moral responsibility—becoming active contributors to the future of Ukrainian society.

Conclusions and Prospects for Further Research. The formation of spiritual and cultural values in Ukraine's higher education system requires a comprehensive educational strategy that combines national humanistic traditions with best practices from the European Higher Education Area. An analysis of theoretical literature, empirical studies, and education policy confirms that the effective integration of spiritual and cultural components is a prerequisite for the

sustainable development of students' personalities, their moral autonomy, civic responsibility, and intercultural competence.

European experience highlights the importance of: recognizing students' non-formal and informal spiritual experiences (such as volunteering, interreligious dialogue, and social service) as part of the educational trajectory; incorporating mandatory courses in ethics, cultural history, and civic education to foster value-based orientation; cultivating a multicultural environment within higher education institutions that promotes tolerance, pluralism, and respect for spiritual diversity; encouraging interdisciplinary engagement, where the humanities are integrated with practices of self-reflection, social responsibility, and cultural identity formation.

Ukrainian higher education, by adapting these approaches, should focus on developing axiocentric educational spaces that support not only professional training but also the spiritual and cultural self-realization of youth. This is especially crucial in the context of war, global uncertainty, and the erosion of spiritual reference points.

Further research should focus on developing criteria for assessing the spiritual and cultural dynamics within academic environments, evaluating the effectiveness of institutional models of axiogenesis, and conducting comparative analyses of spiritual education practices in EU countries to inform the development of a coherent educational policy in Ukraine.

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Сідаш Н. С. Аналітичні аспекти формування духовно-культурних цінностей у вищій освіті України

У статті здійснено аналітичне осмислення проблеми формування духовно-культурних цінностей у системі вищої освіти України в умовах війни, глобалізаційних трансформацій і ціннісної кризи. Обґрунтовано необхідність створення аксіоцентричного освітнього простору, що сприятиме гармонійному поєднанню академічної, етичної, культурної й духовної складових в освітньому процесі. Підкреслюється, що сучасні виклики вимагають від університетів нової ролі як інституцій моральної самореалізації, міжкультурного діалогу та суспільного згуртування.

Проаналізовано європейські звіти та освітню політику щодо валідації неформального духовного досвіду студентів, зокрема участі в релігійних, волонтерських і культурних ініціативах. Окрему увагу приділено структурним індикаторам розвитку вищої освіти, що демонструють поступову інтеграцію ціннісно-орієнтованих дисциплін у навчальні програми. Наведено емпіричні результати досліджень Європейської комісії у Європейському просторі вищої освіти у 2024 році, які підтверджують позитивний вплив духовних практик на академічну успішність, психологічне благополуччя та соціальну активність студентів.

Розкрито теоретичні концепції українських і зарубіжних авторів, які репрезентують духовність як структурний елемент культурної ідентичності, що реалізується через освіту. Висунуто пропозиції щодо інституалізації духовно-культурного компоненту у вищій освіті України через підтримку рефлексивних і морально-етичних практик, інтеграцію досвіду ЄС.

Ключові слова: духовно-культурні цінності, аксіоцентричне середовище, вища освіта, гуманізація освіти, ціннісна орієнтація, моральна автономія.

Sidash N.S. Analytical Aspects of Forming Spiritual and Cultural Values in Ukrainian Higher Education

This article presents a comprehensive analytical reflection on the formation of spiritual and cultural values in the higher education system of Ukraine amid war, globalization, and a broader value crisis. It substantiates the need to create an axiocentric educational space that harmoniously integrates academic, ethical, cultural, and spiritual components within the educational process. It is emphasized that modern challenges require universities to assume a new role as institutions of moral self-realization, intercultural dialogue, and societal cohesion.

European reports and education policies regarding the validation of students' non-formal spiritual experiences are examined, including engagement in religious, volunteer, and cultural activities. Special attention is given to structural indicators of higher education development that demonstrate gradual integration of value-oriented disciplines into curricula. Empirical results of the European Commission's research on the European Higher Education Area in 2024 are presented. That confirms the positive impact of spiritual practices on academic success, psychological well-being, and students' civic engagement.

Theoretical concepts by Ukrainian and international scholars are analyzed, positioning spirituality as a structural element of cultural identity realized through education. The paper proposes the institutionalization of spiritual and cultural dimensions in Ukrainian higher education through interdisciplinary courses, support for reflective and ethical practices, and the integration of EU experiences and post-nonclassical humanistic paradigms as a strategic response to the axiological crisis and fragmentation of moral orientations among student youth.

Keywords: spiritual and cultural values, axiocentric environment, higher education, humanization of education, value orientation, moral autonomy.

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