



Preservation of Kazakhstan's national identity and moral values

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Globalization has led to qualitative changes in contemporary Kazakhstan society and a transformation of the youth identity, resulting in internal differentiation and inconsistency of the younger generation. Two important dimensions of Kazakhstan's cultural/national identity building are *language* and *moral values*. Both seem crucial for young people in Kazakhstan and contribute to their sense of belonging. They are interconnected as the traditional knowledge of Kazakhs includes specific forms of oral traditions and expressions. Moreover, language plays a significant role in the national identity of Kazakh youth people. Survey data (Kuzembayeva et al., 2014) demonstrate the following most critical common identity values for young Kazakhs: language (about 55%), religion (38.4%), citizenship (13.1%), and country of origin (10%). The Government of Kazakhstan has initiated various reforms to promote the Kazakh language.

Today, many elements of traditional Kazakh food, clothing, and tribe identity occupy a visible place in daily and ceremonial life. Kazakhs regard the knowledge of traditions as one of the fundamental components of an individual's social status (Stasevich, 2018). “*Nagyǵ* (real) Kazakh” learn and follow the traditional values, as a mechanism of self-identification with an ethnic community in the globalized world.

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The emergence of new ritual forms relies on traditional ideas about the need for ritual practice in certain situations. As guardians of tradition, the older generation plays a crucial role in establishing the rules of conduct and traditional norms. However, the older generation grew up under the Soviet regime, limiting their moral impact on youth in the contemporary political and social environment. Informal ethnic leaders are often middle-aged and younger. They have specific knowledge of Kazakh traditions, but in many ways, their efforts focus on the Islamization of ethnic culture.

Quality education is a dominant trend in ongoing education reforms in Kazakhstan. It is crucial to ensure that this emphasis on academic achievement is balanced with the preservation of traditional values, thereby fostering a well-rounded education for the youth. Today's Kazakh culture is changing rapidly from the traditional society. However, there is an existing need for ritual benchmarking of the life cycle's main stages to support the revitalization of traditional practices and the design of new ones from traditional patterns. Ritual practice is essential in consolidation and everyday communication between families and relatives. It also promotes the transfer of religious experience and the preservation of a complex system of social ties within Kazakh society. Modern innovations, such as mobile communications, the Internet, and social networks, undoubtedly impact the process of ritual making. Rodrigues-Conde et al. (2011) found that conveying moral education through information and communication technologies (ICTs) increased the self-esteem of 12–16-year-old students in Spain. Their research highlights the benefits of moral education, although the nature of the content included in moral education curricula through ICT is not addressed.

There is a growing interest in traditional performing arts—music, dance, and singing. These creative or artistic disciplines are part of formal and additional curricula at colleges and universities. The nomadic culture is based on musical and poetic epics, emphasizing the ethical and moral principles of famous heroes (*bars*) or well-known historical personalities. Participation in festive events and traditional artistic competitions leads the young generation to learn and estimate traditional moral values. These activities are conducted closely with the Kazakhstan Federation of UNESCO Clubs (KazFUCA).

In 2022, the Kazakhstan National Committee for Intangible Cultural Heritage, a key institution in the preservation of traditional knowledge, initiated a project to introduce traditional folk culture in educating civic and moral values to schoolchildren (10-14

years) in selected rural areas of Kazakhstan, encapsulated by the slogans ‘love for family’ – ‘love for homeplace’ – ‘love for Motherland.’ This three-year project cooperates with local history museums and universities, which guide school teams and assist school teachers.

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