

ФИЛОСОФИЯ

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YOUTH AND SOCIO-CULTURAL VALUES: CONTEMPORARY TRENDS AND TRANSFORMATIONS

Abstract. The article considers aspects of socio-philosophical analysis of the views and values of youth. Youth as a social group is studied as a barometer that determines the index of development of societies. The relevance of the topic of the article is the study of youth as a subject of social transformations and an object of state policy. Youth is a subject of creative activity, possessing unique values in the context of the values of the new generation. The article uses methods of comparative analysis of changes in the social behaviour of young people with the results of social research. The role of youth in the formation of work culture, types of modern youth trends is considered. It has been established that youth trends in modern Kazakhstan society and perceptions in the worldview of young people in the countries of Eastern Europe have two characters. The problem of state policy in youth issues, public opinion of the contingent of NEET-youth who do not want to interfere in any socio-political processes has been studied. According to the anthropological approach, youth as a new generation, a social individual is an empirical subject. This means that young people, although characterised by the search for new values in reproductive continuity, due to weak social practices, introduce ready-made forms of thinking with a consumerist approach. Therefore, the public mood of young people is characterised by positivity and most of them are characterised by skills of inability to construct knowledge, values, transcendental forms.

Keywords: Youth, Social Group, Values, Life and Ideological Trends, Social Data.

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Жастар және әлеуметтік-мәдени құндылықтар: қазіргі заманғы үрдістер мен өзгерістер

Андатпа. Мақалада жастардың көзқарастары мен құндылықтарын әлеуметтік-фило-

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софиялық талдау аспектілері қарастырылды. Жастар әлеуметтік топ ретінде қоғамдардың даму индексін анықтаушы барометр ретінде зерттелді. Мақала тақырыбының өзектілігін жастардың қоғамдық өзгерістің субъектісі және мемлекеттік саясаттың объектісі ретінде зерттеу құрайды. Жастар жаңа ұрпақ мағынасында өзіндік ерекшелікті құндылықтарға ие жасампаздық іс-әрекеттілік субъектісі болып табылады. Мақалада жастардың қоғамдық мінез-құлығындағы өзгерістерді әлеуметтік зерттеулердің нәтижелерімен салыстырмалы талдау әдістері қолданылды. Жастардың вок мәдениетін қалыптастырудағы ролі, қазіргі заманғы жастық трендтердің түрлері қарастырылды. Қазіргі қазақстандық қоғамдағы жастардың трендтері мен Шығыс Еуропа елдеріндегі жастардың дүниетанымындағы түйсіктердің екі түрлі сипаттарға ие екендігі анықталды. Мемлекеттік саясаттың жастар мәселесіндегі түйткілді нәрсе, ол ешандай әлеуметтік – саяси үдерістерге араласқысы келмейтін NEET – жастар контингентінің қоғамдық пікірлері зерттелді. Антропологиялық көзқарасқа сәйкес жастар жаңа ұрпақ, әлеуметтік индивид ретінде эмпирикалық және трансценденталды субъект болып саналады. Бұл жастардың ұрпақтық сабақтастықта жаңа құндылықтарға ізденісімен сипатталғанымен, олардың қоғамдық практикаларының әлсіздігі салдарынан дайын ойлау түрлерін тұтынушылық пайыммен қолданысқа енгізуін білдіреді. Дегенмен жастар әлеуметтік топ ретінде руханилық ізденістегі әлеуметтік субъект ретінде орнығады. Жастардың қоғамдық мінез-құлығына позитивтілік тән және олардың басым бөлігі білімдерді, құндылықтарды трансценденталды формаларды конструкциялау қабілеттеріне ие.

Кілт сөздер: жастар, әлеуметтік топ, құндылықтар, өмірлік және идеялық трендтер, әлеуметтік деректер, мінез-құлық, қоғамдық пікір.

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Молодёжь и социально-культурные ценности: современные тенденции и трансформации

Аннотация. В статье рассмотрены аспекты социально-философского анализа взглядов и ценностей молодежи. Молодежь как социальная группа изучена как барометр, определяющий индекс развития обществ. Актуальность темы статьи составляет исследование молодежи как субъекта общественных преобразований и объекта государственной политики. Молодежь является субъектом созидательной деятельности, обладающим уникальными ценностями в контексте значений нового поколения. В статье использованы методы сравнительного анализа изменений общественного поведения молодежи с результатами социальных исследований. Рассмотрена роль молодежи в формировании вок культуры, виды современных молодежных трендов. Установлено, что тренды молодежи в современном казахстанском обществе и восприятие в мировоззрении молодежи в странах Восточной Европы имеют два характера. Была изучена проблема государственной политики в вопросах молодежи, общественное мнение контингента NEET-молодежи, которые не хотят вмешиваться ни в какие социально-политические процессы. Согласно антропологическому подходу, молодежь как новое поколение, социальный индивид является эмпирическим субъектом. Это означает, что молодые люди, хотя и характеризуются поиском новых ценностей в репродуктивной преемственности, в силу слабой общественной практики внедряют готовые формы мышления с потребительским подходом. Поэтому общественное настроение молодежи характеризуется

позитивностью, и для большинства из них характерны навыки неспособности конструировать знания, ценности, трансцендентальные формы.

Ключевые слова: молодежь, социальная группа, ценности, жизненные и идейные тренды, социальные данные.

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Gençlik ve Sosyo-Kültürel Değerler: Günümüz Eğilimleri ve Dönüşümleri

Özet. Bu makale, gençlerin bakış açıları ve değerlerinin sosyo-felsefi analizine odaklanmaktadır. Gençlik, toplumların gelişim düzeyini belirleyen önemli bir gösterge olarak, sosyal bir grup çerçevesinde incelenmiştir. Makalenin güncelliği, gençliğin toplumsal dönüşümlerin öznesi ve devlet politikalarının nesnesi olarak değerlendirilmesine dayanmaktadır. Gençler, yeni neslin değerleri bağlamında kendine özgü kültürel ve toplumsal dinamiklere sahip yaratıcı bireyler olarak ele alınmaktadır. Çalışmada, gençlerin toplumsal davranışlarında gözlemlenen değişimlerin sosyal araştırmaların bulgularıyla karşılaştırmalı analizine yer verilmiştir. Gençlerin wok kültürünün oluşumundaki etkisi ve çağdaş gençlik eğilimlerinin türleri incelenmiştir. Araştırmalar, modern Kazakistan toplumundaki gençlik eğilimleri ile Doğu Avrupa ülkelerindeki gençlerin dünya görüşü algıları arasında iki farklı karakterin bulunduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Devlet politikalarının gençlik meselelerindeki rolü ve hiçbir sosyo-politik sürece katılmak istemeyen NEET gençlerinin kamuoyundaki yansımaları detaylı olarak ele alınmıştır. Antropolojik yaklaşıma göre gençlik, hem yeni nesli temsil eden bir grup hem de sosyal bir birey olarak ampirik bir özne olarak kabul edilmektedir. Bu bağlamda, gençler her ne kadar üreme sürekliliği içinde yeni değerler arayışında olsalar da, yetersiz sosyal deneyimler nedeniyle hazır düşünce kalıplarını tüketici bir bakış açısıyla benimsemektedirler. Bu durum, gençlerin toplumsal tutumlarının genel olarak olumlu bir seyir izlediğini, ancak çoğunun bilgi üretme, değer inşa etme ve aşkın düşünce biçimleri oluşturma becerilerinde yetersiz kaldığını göstermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Gençlik, Sosyal Grup, Değerler, Toplumsal Eğilimler, Dünya Görüşü, Sosyal Veriler.

Introduction

Young people as a social group represent the demographic and social quality of any society. In modern thinking, young people aged 14 to 35 years are known as the most active part of society. By February 03 th of 2025 the population of the Republic of Kazakhstan reached the number of 20 million 284 thousand people (Sariev, 2025). In the science of philosophy, the measure of the age of one generation is 30 years. This methodology was based on the age of the Plato profile of 50 young people who became mature and wise. Therefore, the concept of 50 years as the age of wisdom that was proposed by Plato has now become an electoral qualification for the leaders of countries. The years of growth of generations and adulthood of a person from 14 to 35 years are studied due to changes in modern trends of globalization, the needs of labor markets.

In the traditional and Muslim mindset of the Kazakh people, a maturity of a person is considered to be associated at the age of thirteen due to the becoming of an innkeeper of a family, which is known as social responsibility and ethical duty. According to the demographic distribution of the total population for July 2023, the number of young people aged 14-35 years was 5 million 700 thousand. This indicator represents 29% of the total population and determines that 50% of the demographic and age structure of Kazakhstan society are children, adolescents and young people aged from 1 to 35 (National Bureau of Statistics, 2023). The society of Kazakhstan

is counted as one of the future in terms of demographics. The necessity of determining the median age of offspring lies in the education of youth based on the progressive conditions of continuity from the grandfather and the older generation.

The relevance of the contemporary youth period is determined by examining their creative activities as a social subject. The change in youth values over time and the spirit of the era is characterized by dialectical contradictions from the perspective of modern multiculturalism, with national and global cultures divided into essential opposites. The aim of studying the characteristics of the contemporary youth period is to conduct a comparative analysis of trends in youth social behavior. The research objectives of the article are to consider youth as a subject of continuous value change, to examine current social problems of youth, intergenerational relationships in their activities, and new directions in state youth policy. According to theoretical research, young people are regarded as empirical subjects, and their views are defined as a statistical group in everyday life. Young people possess qualities of understanding the spirit of the times, but they often fail to transform it into an object of sacred philosophical understanding. Youth is considered a source of spiritual energy, alongside the consumption of experiences established by historical consciousness, as a source of new ideas in public service.

Young people transform opportunities into reality by synthesizing economic creativity and technocratic thinking in politically free societies. This social activity is characterized by the ability of young people to translate ideological, cultural, and material trends from the form of phenomena into self-awareness, existential meaning, and existential melancholy, with an interest in world culture, inner cultural energy, a free spirit, and existential excitement. However, social cohesion does not constitute a linear chain but is established through the blending of ethnic, political, religious, and generational identities. This will provoke an awakening effect characteristic of youth behavior.

Methods

The article employs methods of conceptual and comparative analysis as scientific research techniques. These research tools were utilized to highlight the forms and phenomenal characteristics of youth social behavior, as well as philosophical conclusions and opinions. The results of social studies examining public opinion of youth regarding social phenomena were used to identify changes and deviations in youth behavior. The analytical report on the sociological study “Social Attitudes of NEET Youth in Kazakhstan”, published by the Youth Research Center in 2022, served as empirical data in the study of the youth phenomenon. Additionally, the analytical report on the sociological study “Youth of Kazakhstan” which was published in 2023, and “Formation” which was published in 2021 under the guidance of UNICEF, were also used. The results of the analytical study “Sustaining Generation in Central Asia and Europe” were also utilized.

Results

The category of young generation is studied as a branch of Youth studies in social and philosophical science. Young people are studied philosophically as a new force, a new idea, a source of spirit and activity, a source of energy.

Wilhelm Windelband defines the values associated with the worldview of young people, people in general as “a modern person is a rejector by its nature” (Windelband, 1995: 139). This type of thinking is characterized by a conscious rejection of the general cultural assimilation, but it does not mean a rejection of the real, high ethical values of human life; on the contrary, it means a deeper understanding of the essence of the correspondence of old ethical values and life principles of a new life, a new society, and critical views.

According to the research of Wilhelm Windelband, each philosophical system conceives the spirit of its time with its historical and life moments. New generations can not accept steady states and forms that do not acknowledge the changes of the era. After all, each generation tends towards

an inner movement of life, creativity, they correspond to new content, tasks of modernity, and determine the movement and direction of traditions. He states “We cannot accept the past as unchanged, i.e. we ourselves have become different” (Windelband, 1995: 295). Intergenerational relations are marked by values such as wisdom, morality, life mastery, and practical knowledge acquisition, as well as the establishment of labor divisions. There is a shared human aspiration for peace, freedom, creativity, and the fight against injustice. Additionally, originality, the cultivation of willpower, the reinforcement of strengths, and the promotion of activity are integral aspects. These values underpin the cultivation of critical thinking regarding the significance of public service between older and younger generations within societal realms.

According to the opinion of Wilhelm Windelband, the greatest shortcoming of the younger generation is its tendency to overlook the importance of historical knowledge in contemporary education. In many cases, there is a lack of time and opportunity for reassessing the lessons of history. Individuals should be nurtured on the basis of historical thinking, which enables them to attain personal enrichment, tenderness, freedom, and independence in their inner lives, as well as uniqueness. This can be realized through historical collective thinking of humankind and generations. However, the characteristic awakening effect among youth leads to a reassessment of the dominance of historical consciousness, resisting the one-sidedness of comprehensive, deductive thinking.

According to Karl Jaspers, the aim of educating the younger generation is based on creating a unified spirit through intellect and knowledge. The education of the new generation serves as a means of shaping the personality of the future individual.

By the assessment of Karl Jaspers the role of young people in society, considering them as agents who define the future. The phenomenon of enantiodromia is characteristic of both individual and collective consciousness among the youth. This results from a misconception of values in the effort to fill voids in the spiritual needs of young people. From the perspective of juvenile studies, the social image of youth encompasses value differentiation and a tendency towards stigmatization. As a consequence of stigma formation, young individuals often find themselves influenced by deviant and delinquent environments, leading to confusion manifesting as irrational behavior. Enantiodromia in consciousness fosters socially positive, dynamic thinking through forms of civilized virtue and charity. In contrast, enantiodromia in the collective unconscious triggers the awakening of the “Oedipal teenager” consciousness (as described by A. Panarin), leading to the emergence of a criminal personality and associated feelings of hatred.

He emphasizes “Everyone clearly knows that whoever conquers the youth will be the master of the future. Education, born in the spirit of integrity, largely acknowledges that young people do not mature on their own. They respect, listen, believe, and hold no significance as young people; or young people are preparing for the future and new opportunities. In a state of decline, youth itself acquires intrinsic value. Thus, young people feel like a source” (Jaspers, 1994: 354). This is the reason why a maximalist attitude predominates among the young generation. In general, young people are understood and valued as a social group, which is represented by the archetype of the “fullness of the sun” by the theory of Carl Gustav Jung. “For the youth, the morning star seems like the birth of Cholpan, while for the older generation, it appears to be sinking into the swamp of habits” (Hegel, 1974: 108). Young people have always been counted as the main force of society. The Kazakh philosopher Sergey Kolchigin opines youth as “driven by a vision of the future, young minds are eager to accelerate progress. They continuously engage with reality to shape a world that aligns with their consciousness, demonstrating immense creative potential” (Kolchigin, 2020: 4).

At the same time, Sergey Kolchigin highlights that equivalence and relevance to existence is the primary quality of youth, and defines time as an idea, a form of judgment, and a point of view. If young people are deprived of the function of thinking about time as a social idea, its values may settle in a void and shape a generation that is weak, inactive, lethargic, with a carnival-like consciousness and reclusive variability. Therefore, the state, society, and culture should be

interested in synthesizing spirituality and experience within the collective consciousness of the youth.

Discussion

One of the foundational principles of the national, cultural, and youth policy of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan is the continuity of generations and the development of family values. This principle is established by the norms of the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan “On State Youth Policy”. This direction is articulated as one of the objectives of the state youth policy, as outlined in Paragraph 2, Article 3 of the law, which states “Continuity of generations and the priority of family education” (Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2015). To implement the corresponding principle of this law, the “Generations of Independence” project is currently being executed. The goal of this project is to provide grant funding for the achievements of active youth in Kazakhs society in the fields of science, culture, information technology, business, and the mass media. The amount of the financial grant is 3 million tenge.

To ensure continuity and security across generations, the National Development Plan of the Republic of Kazakhstan until 2025 incorporates the concepts of the creative, future, and younger generations. The future generation is defined as a cohort dedicated to fostering an innovative culture, stimulating scientific and technological endeavors, enhancing success, competitiveness, and creativity to advance human well-being and financial prosperity. According to this national plan, “the educational process for the younger generation encompasses elements such as a passion for learning, a healthy lifestyle, professional accomplishments, love for their land, village, region, homeland, culture, language, and a sensible upbringing approach” (President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2021). The advancement of intergenerational succession within Kazakh society in a positive and innovative trajectory is imperative in the contemporary global landscape.

The philosophy of youth examines evolving behavioral models and shifting values. To investigate transformations in the social identity of youth, the Youth Research Center conducts an annual social study titled “Youth of Kazakhstan” culminating in a national report. This social survey encompasses 2,000 respondents aged 14–35 years. According to the study, young people prioritize family (72.6%), friendship (32.3%), health (26.9%), faith and religion (18.7%), and peace of mind (17.5%) as key values (Akhantaeva et al, 2023: 54). The preference for intangible values among youth of Kazakhstan highlights a psychological continuity across generations. This phenomenon is attributed to the historically low levels of political engagement observed in the social behavior of the older generation. Consequently, conformist values, imparted by the preceding generation, exert a significant influence on the consciousness of the younger cohort.

This trend reflects the positive and virtuous influence of public opinion in the genesis of social time in this situation. While maintaining the influence of traditional values in managing the lives of young people is a positive development, it does result in limited time for personal growth. In this study, the public opinion of young people includes “profession (2.9%), public recognition (3.4%), having power (4%)” (Akhantaeva et al, 2023: 55), which characterizes the lack of enthusiasm in their activities. The value orientations of social, political and cultural knowledge of young people are significantly influenced by social institutions and the individual. In order to determine their cognitive orientation to the question “Whose opinion do you trust?” young people answered as follows: “representatives of authorities (30.4%), there are no such people (19.4%), leaders of political parties (10.3%), scientists (10 %), businessmen (9 %), doctors (9 %), winemakers (4.1 %), athletes (4.1 %) indicated that they believe” (Akhantaeva et al, 2023: 55). The presence of such an attitude in the minds of young people indicates that they accept a ready-made form of thinking and are not prepared for critical, cognitive, research activities.

A key area of research in the philosophy of youth is the development of their comprehensive humanitarian and technical knowledge in matters related to public, state, and national security. It is essential to enhance the proficiency of young individuals in scientific domains and economic

activities through the use of information media and television, as well as to raise the level of awareness and popularity regarding these subjects.

In the realm of socio-political behavior among youth, there exists a noteworthy phenomenon where a pessimistic disposition coexists with optimistic perspectives. This apparent contradiction stems from the adoption of youth values characterized by skepticism, activism, universality, and a pursuit of societal welfare and goodness. Consequently, they exhibit a skeptical stance towards impediments in the political landscape and disruptions in the operation of social mechanisms.

Researcher Botakoz Rakisheva, in her study among youth, identifies several factors influencing youth migration abroad. These factors include economic conditions, socio-psychological factors, conditions in the education sphere, as well as a cluster of political factors.

Simultaneously, youth emigration is attributed to factors such as “ineffective state governance, official irresponsibility, inclinations towards corruption; absence of opportunities for self-realization and career advancement, professional necessity; low levels of national development, retrogression; lack of confidence in the future for themselves and their offspring; unemployment, inadequate social safety nets, inferior healthcare and educational standards, frequent human rights infringements” (Rakisheva, 2020: 20). Social research findings reveal that older generations serve as a guiding influence in shaping the generational consciousness and values among youth.

Survey participants among young adults displayed a high level of religious affiliation, with 83% professing belief in religion, 8.9% adhering to daily religious rituals, and 38.1% observing religious ceremonies during specific holidays. Conversely, 36.1% abstained from religious practices entirely. The primary sources of religious knowledge for respondents were parents and relatives (41.8%), lifelong exposure (27.3%), specialized literature and the Internet (4.1%), and discussions with religious authorities (3.8%). Notably, 8.6% reported no specific influence, 6.4% attributed their religious identification to significant life events, and 4.7% remained undecided (Rakisheva, 2020: 58). This societal perspective highlights that the religious identity of youth often develops without formal religious education or structured guidance. The implications of this scenario are significant, especially concerning the rapid dissemination of extremist influences on the religious consciousness of young people in society.

New trends have emerged in the social construction of the contemporary youth worldview. These trends encompass concepts such as VUCA since 1985, and more recently, BANI, RUPT, TUNA since 2020, which denote generational features of worldview and economic culture. The overarching aim of these ideological trends is to facilitate individuals' adaptation to global changes and foster new leadership capacities commensurate with global transformations.

The concept of a VUCA worldview embodies the strategic imperative of managing leadership and decision-making in the present by evaluating them through the lenses of volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity.

Instability refers to the gradual rate of changes and challenging obstacles encountered in daily life. Uncertainty is marked by the complexity of predicting and measuring external events, as well as the variability of the social environment. Complexity is defined by the sheer volume of information that complicates its processing. Ambiguity is characterized by the difficulty in interpreting events and navigating conflicting interests.

A model reflecting changes in youth values is the BANI model. Jamais Cascio who is an author states: “We’re living in the age of chaos, the age that stubbornly rejects structures. It is not just instability, that is found as reality” (Cascio, 2024). The BANI model describes changes in the world through the values of brittleness, anxiety, non-linearity, and incomprehensibility.

Brittleness in the BANI model characterizes the world as inherently fragile and susceptible to systemic crises, highlighting the need for young people to prioritize values associated with resilience and stability. Danger and fear emphasize the criticality of decision-making moments, urging the youth to cultivate virtues of vigilance and courage. Non-linearity underscores the potential for profound consequences from erroneous decisions, where events may unfold swiftly

but their impacts unfold gradually, necessitating nuanced comprehension and adaptive responses from young individuals. Inaccessibility denotes the world unpredictability due to an overflow of information, thereby emphasizing the importance for youth to uphold values of intuition and openness to navigate uncertainties effectively.

The RUPT model is characterized by the values of speed, unpredictability, paradoxicality, and entanglement.

The TUNA model symbolizes a framework that captures the essence of passion, unpredictability, romanticism, and diversity in contemporary contexts.

“Financial independence (48.1%), remote work (26%), religiosity (14.4%), lack of authority figures (11.4%), freedom of participation (10.2%), fitness and diet, proper nutrition (5.9%), unity in values (5.1%)” (Akhantaeva et al, 2023: 87). Changes in youth social behavior are multifaceted and shaped by diverse circumstances. The predominant adoption of financial independence by a significant majority of youth as a contemporary trend signifies a pivotal resource for economic development.

The trend towards remote work underscores its efficacy within the Kazakhstan labor market and educational sector. This is primarily attributed to the efficient organization of work processes facilitated by information technologies, resulting in notable reductions in both financial costs and time expenditures.

The culture of youth participation in public processes remains nascent, particularly evident among urban dwellers, where it manifests sporadically through acts of activism.

Five key problematic directions have been identified regarding the worldview of youth and their social and economic needs:

- 1) Youth require financial support;
- 2) The issue of youth unemployment;
- 3) Youth migration from rural to urban areas, and from their home country to foreign countries;
- 4) Housing for youth;
- 5) Effective organization of youth leisure activities and support for education.

Therefore, state youth policy is implemented comprehensively, with programs such as “Back to the village with a Diploma”, “Green Country”, “Youth Practice”, “Youth Cadre Reserve”, “Recruitment of the Best Young Graduates into lower administrative positions in public service without competition”, and “Youth Housing”. This is because young people inherently face issues such as lack of confidence in the future, intolerance towards corruption, need for high-speed Internet access, difficulties in employment related to their profession and lack of work experience, as well as insufficient information about the labor market from employment centers.

UNICEF conducted a study aimed at identifying generational differences among young people in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. The research revealed distinct approaches to youth issues within the society of Kazakhstan. Specifically, youth in Eastern European countries are characterized by a focus on acquiring labor and entrepreneurial skills during school age and within educational institutions, adapting these skills to market demands, promoting inclusivity in education and communication, and addressing challenges related to green ecology and digital economy. Respondents participating in the study were asked if schools are preparing them for the future, yielding the following responses: “very little preparation” (39%), “not preparing at all” (17%), “preparing to some extent” (32.8%), and “fully preparing” (11%) (UNICEF & European Education Foundation, 2021: 5). This underscores one of the current challenges facing the education system in Kazakhstan. In the process of youth vocational education, there exists a gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, as well as practical knowledge.

In the mentioned UNICEF study, generational time is defined as the acquisition of new knowledge at all stages of life, mastering skills that are sustainable, professional, competitive, and socially just. Among the respondents, “critical thinking and problem-solving skills” (32.5%), foreign language proficiency (26.1%), creativity and entrepreneurship (12.6%), digital skills

(6.2%), group collaboration (5.7%), mathematical and scientific innovations (5.3%), and technical skills (4.8%) are deemed essential for their professional endeavors (UNICEF & European Education Foundation, 2021: 25). These competencies are considered valuable by the youth of Kazakhstan because in the modern world, the unrestricted flow of information places a premium on critical thinking skills to enhance human capabilities.

Critical thinking ensures inclusivity, human equality, and protects against discrimination. The significance of critical thinking in the minds of youth leads to flexibility in the job market, a deep understanding of the world, and the attainment of a high quality of life.

The disparity between theoretical knowledge and practical skills within the economic system of society contributes to the issue of NEET youth. NEET youth constitute a social group of young individuals who are neither employed nor engaged in education or training, often exhibiting low economic and political interest. This term was introduced by the International Labour Organization to address the elimination of youth unemployment.

The formula for determining NEET youth is expressed as follows:
$$\text{NEET (\%)} = \frac{(\text{Unemployed youth} + \text{Youth not in the labor force}) - (\text{Unemployed youth in education or training}) + (\text{Youth not in the labor force in education or vocational training})}{\text{Total youth population}} \times 100.$$

President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev stated this in his address at the closing ceremony of the Year of Youth on December 10, 2019. “Many generations of our ancestors dreamed that their successors would live in an independent, free, virtuous state and live happily. The number of children under 14 in the country has exceeded 5 million, but the number of NEET youth, who are not engaged in public life and are not employed, is increasing, with inactive individuals comprising 20% of the total youth population” (Tokayev, 2019).

The prevalence of NEET youth in society is primarily attributed to their delayed integration into professional activities and high unemployment rates. In Kazakhstan, for instance, “the NEET youth rate was 6.9%, varying between 4.4% to 3.5% in the well-developed industrial regions of Pavlodar, Petropavlovsk, Kostanay, and Abai districts, and reaching 12.6% in the newly established Ulytausky district, despite its smaller population” (Tokayev, 2019). The lower rates observed in Pavlodar, Petropavlovsk, and Kostanay regions can be explained by youth migration from border regions to the Russian Federation in pursuit of employment opportunities.

In 2022, the Youth Research Center conducted a mass survey and in-depth interviews with young people aged 14 to 28 to identify the characteristics of NEET youth in Kazakhstan, their interactions with state institutions, and their social image.

The study analyzed the reasons for the disengagement of youth from societal activities, including labor processes, political affairs, and cultural-creative engagement, and incorporated a sample of 2,000 respondents. At the time of the study, the values held by the NEET youth group included “establishing a strong family (47.1%), earning a higher income (37.9%), owning a home or apartment (37.9%), securing a good and interesting job (32.6%), maintaining good health (36.5%), receiving a good education among intangible values (30.1%), gaining a good and loyal friend (22.4%), helping others (12.7%), and starting their own business (11.6%)” (UNICEF & European Education Foundation, 2021, 8). From these values, we can observe that most contemporary young people aim to earn a substantial income and find an engaging job. However, due to behaviors such as laziness and idleness, there is a low level of self-assessment regarding their capabilities, risk-taking, and decision-making among young people. The lack of systematization in entrepreneurial behavior and skills among youth has resulted in the insufficient establishment of pragmatic and critical thinking values at their level. Overall, the conflict of critical thinking among NEET youth can be discerned through their perceptions of the future. According to the study, there is a balance in youth behavior between trust and hope for the country and their own future, as opposed to reflections on the future, indifference, and fear. Specifically, the attitudes of respondents towards the future included “not thinking about the future (11.1%), despair (2.5%), indifference (6.7%), anxiety and fear (18.6%), confidence (22.6%), and hope (35.6%)” (Akhantaeva et al, 2023: 20). Youth represent the most adaptable segment of society and can easily

and effectively undergo processes of professional and ideological retraining. They can be reoriented towards engineering education and vocational training in alignment with contemporary technological processes.

The NEET youth category should not be regarded as a manifestation of deviant behavior, as unlawful conduct and criminal activity do not emerge from the indifference and passivity exhibited by young individuals. However, the disengagement of youth from societal participation, leading to low wages, psychological stress, and arrogance, is deemed an unacceptable prospect for the future. Discrimination against youth based on age and gender, coupled with a tendency to exhibit skepticism towards the work ethic of young women, constitutes an inappropriate and unjustifiable attitude.

Personal and social markers characteristic of young generations:

- instead of scientific literature, there is a preference for light, non-classical works and fragmented thinking based on social media data;
- formation of a generation that perceives national traditions negatively due to religious beliefs;
- the increase in the number of young people who respect national traditions but do not actively practice them is reflected in the emergence of casual relationships during family formation, the rise of civil marriages, and women marrying later than 30 years old, which contrasts with traditional Eastern norms;
- the preservation of youth embracing national traditions as a way of life, even when young individuals do not know each other personally in familial relationships, often entering into marriages arranged by parents and matchmakers;
- the increasing tendency among youth to address socio-economic challenges through resorting to corruption;
- the persistence of Russian language dominance in both official and informal language usage, accompanied by an increase in the consumption and influence of Russian propaganda tools;
- the formation of youth capable of discerning false information and engaging in critical thinking;
- the increasing demand for the English language;
- although an economically literate generation has indeed materialized, the cultivation of a skeptical mindset is intricately tied to the disruption of social mobility structures.

In the country, there are currently 227 youth centers and 547 youth public organizations tasked with managing and regulating the social activities of youth. However, effective solutions for addressing the social challenges faced by rural youth and organizing their leisure activities remain underdeveloped. Consequently, many young people endeavor to alter their values by migrating to urban centers.

All respondents in the study spend their leisure time with friends (75.6%), family (51.8%), relatives (38.7%), virtual space (14.8%), hobbies, sports (6.8%), highlighting that they spend time with partners, acquaintances (14.4%) (Youth Research Center, 2022: 42). As a result of improperly organized leisure time among youth, there occurs a radicalization of their social behavior, emigration for work abroad, and addiction to drugs. Young people are inclined to be interested in new things, worry about them, and try them out.

From a philosophical perspective, contemporaries and the younger generation often view those who uncover a new type of truth as mad. Reason and intellect become tools of will, while youth's recognition of values becomes blurred. The recklessness of young people makes them prone to an easy life, diminishes the value of work and concern, and consequently transforms their lives into passion. These actions present a negative social image of youth in modern society. Particularly among youth, there is a rapid spread of drug addiction, the so-called “meth generation” and their involvement in gambling.

According to the report of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated March 14, 2023, “in our country, 90 thousand people are registered as alcoholics, and 18

thousand people are on the list of drug addicts, diseases, of which 1,500 are women, more than 100 are minors” (Akhmetzhanov, 2023). While drug addiction is a disease of the century, this social problem intensifies among youth and is a primary cause of the emergence and growth of criminal activity. Therefore, state regulation in this sphere should be comprehensive, guided by generational consciousness, thinking, and the characteristics specific to youth.

Paul Natorp states that the younger generation experiences a strong need for community, friendship, companionship, and a love for glory. “The younger generation has embraced the traditions of the industrial era, the most fashionable, a very large wave of life. They are fully devoted to life, not sensing its wrongness and danger. Therefore, young people try to justify their actions by achieving the truth of freedom” (Natorp, 2006: 200). As values for improving youth education, economic activity, freedom, independence, individuality, extracurricular education, and self-reliance are highlighted.

On March 28, 2023, the Government adopted a Resolution approving the concept of the state youth policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan for the years 2023-2029. The concept is structured around 7 main directions. It addresses pertinent integrative issues concerning youth policy development. Among these, notable initiatives include projects such as “First Task” and “Generational Contract”.

According to the first employment project, unemployed youth will be facilitated in securing employment for a duration of 24 months through state employment centers. They will receive subsidies equivalent to 30 monthly wage indicators in a lump sum disbursed by local akimats (administrative authorities).

The Generational Contract project envisages the replacement of citizens reaching retirement age with youth, thereby facilitating the employment of youth for a period of 18 months. Additionally, it proposes to subsidize the wages of young population for six consecutive months (Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2023). Overall, significant changes have occurred in the youth policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan. For instance, these include ensuring a youth quota in the elections of deputies to the majilis and maslikhats (30%), increasing the proportion of youth in the civil service sector (27.9%), providing grants to youth for education under the “Serpin” program, offering loans at preferential rates for youth entrepreneurship, and providing housing to families under 35 years of age.

Conclusion

Humanity is progressing towards the establishment of a post-industrial world characterized by advancements in knowledge and scientific technologies within a futuristic framework. The transition necessitates a societal shift towards prioritizing thought and creativity to emancipate itself from the constraints of industrialism. While the realization of a post-industrial future remains aspirational, it is increasingly materializing in developed nations such as the USA, Japan, South Korea, and China. These countries leverage achievements from the scientific and technological revolutions to develop water-powered vehicles, aircraft, and ergonomically designed smart cities. The surge in the value of digital currencies reflects their impact on the global market, highlighting the continued interdependence between industrial goods and financial assets. However, the primary aspiration of futurists for a post-industrial society centers on eliminating economic and gender inequalities. The integration of Henri Bergson's concept of consciousness encompassing time has become feasible through digital technologies, underscoring their transformative potential in shaping future societal frameworks.

The engagement of our generations in this process is realized through their adoption of a pragmatic understanding of technology and a recognition of social responsibility expressed through cultural and civilizational creativity. By transcending consumerism, a productive society can be cultivated through the gradual integration of technological tools into our societal fabric. This multifaceted process underscores the need for individuals, society, and the state to collaboratively establish a unified reality, harmonizing their efforts to transform societal dynamics.

There is a pressing need to integrate digital literacy and ethical skills into the values of contemporary youth. Young people and adolescents possess high levels of digital literacy, which, in turn, prompts them to intrude into the personal spaces of others and influence their psychological behaviors. Many young individuals confuse the status of digital nomads with the issue of internet usage at home and on smartphones. Consequently, numerous young people fall prey to criminal financial groups in the online realm and suffer consequences by investing money in virtual stock exchanges. State policies concerning security should oversee the activities of financial groups and establish legal norms to combat cyberattacks.

Youth represents the contemporary personality developed within the framework of modernity. The entelechy of youth in motion is defined as a social group characterized by features of disorientation and criticism of the experience of the older generation, non-acceptance, search for their own path, and wandering. The social image of youth is marked by the enantiodromia of consciousness, the search for their place in the division of labor, and creative activities. This is determined based on the conflict between global and local trends among youth. The significance of values such as human equality, inclusivity, green ecology, digital economy, foreign language study, entrepreneurship, creativity, and critical thinking has been identified as pivotal for global youth trends. The social image of the young generation of Kazakhstan is characterized by values of financial independence, freedom, interest in power, and an increase in religious faith due to unemployment.

This contradiction is characterized by the aspiration of the youth to work abroad. Global generational trends are changing, marked by the era of woke culture and digital nomadism. This shift is driven by a growing number of youth movements addressing social, gender equality, and societal issues. Therefore, it is imperative for the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan to transform the tasks outlined in the concept of state youth policy for the years 2023-2029 into a tangible state program. It is essential to establish governmental bodies capable of managing the needs and ideas of the entire youth of Kazakhstan from a single platform. Centralized management bodies should assume responsibility for youth social, cultural, and volunteer work.

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