

MILITARY-PATRIOTIC EDUCATION OF YOUTH: THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS AND PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION IN UZBEKISTAN**Kholmonov Mansur Narzullaevich**

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Abstract

Military-patriotic education constitutes a core component of state youth policy in post-Soviet transitioning societies, blending theoretical foundations of value formation with practical mechanisms for preparing youth for national defense and civic duty. This study explores the theoretical underpinnings and practical implementation of military-patriotic education (*harbiy-vatanparvarlik tarbiyasi*) among Uzbek youth, within the framework of the “New Uzbekistan” strategy and the Third Renaissance vision. Drawing on document analysis of key policies (e.g., Cabinet of Ministers Resolution No. 34 of January 28, 2026, and the 2023–2027 Concept) and a mixed-methods survey of 385 university and secondary-school students (aged 16–22; 51% male) from Tashkent and regional institutions, the research reveals strong alignment between theoretical models and state programs. Quantitative data indicate high participant satisfaction with “Schools of Courage” (*Jasorat maktablari*) initiatives ($M = 4.67/5.00$, $\alpha = .89$), with significant positive correlations between program participation and self-reported patriotic readiness ($r = .62$, $p < .001$). Qualitative thematic analysis highlights effective integration of historical heritage (e.g., Amir Temur’s legacy) and modern pre-conscription training, though gaps persist in rural outreach and digital engagement. Findings extend global pedagogical frameworks while underscoring Uzbekistan-specific adaptations amid geopolitical challenges. Policy recommendations include scaling digital modules and longitudinal impact evaluation to enhance effectiveness.

Keywords

military-patriotic education, youth, patriotism, pre-conscription training, “Schools of Courage,” Uzbekistan, civic-military readiness, state youth policy

1. Introduction

In Uzbekistan, where youth under 30 comprise over 60% of the population, military-patriotic education serves as a strategic pillar for national security, social cohesion, and human capital development. Rooted in the Constitution and the Law on State Youth Policy, this system aims to cultivate *vatanparvarlik* (patriotism) intertwined with readiness to defend the homeland. Recent legislative milestones—Presidential Decree of November 15, 2024, establishing “Schools of Courage” in every district, and Cabinet of Ministers Resolution No. 34 (January 28, 2026) approving the Program for Patriotic Education in Continuous Education—mark a new phase in systematic implementation.

Theoretically, military-patriotic education is defined as a multifaceted pedagogical process forming moral-ethical qualities, physical fitness, and practical skills for fulfilling constitutional military duty (Akbarov, 2024; Turgunbayev, 2024). Globally, it draws parallels with post-Soviet models (e.g., Russia’s *voenno-patrioticheskoe vospitanie*) while incorporating universal principles from positive youth development theory. This study addresses two central questions: (1) What are the theoretical foundations guiding military-patriotic education? (2) How effectively are these foundations translated into practice in contemporary Uzbekistan? By combining policy analysis with empirical youth perspectives, the paper contributes original data to Scopus-indexed discourse on civic-military education in Central Asia.

2. Theoretical Foundations

Military-patriotic education rests on three interconnected pillars: ideological, psychological, and pedagogical.

Ideologically, it is anchored in national values—loyalty to the homeland (*Vatan*), respect for historical heritage, and the indivisibility of “people and army” (*Xalq va armiya—bir tanu bir jon*). Uzbekistan’s approach integrates Islamic humanism, Timurid military traditions, and modern constitutionalism (Karimzhanov, 2020).

Psychologically, the process follows value internalization models (e.g., Rokeach’s value theory adapted in local pedagogy), progressing from awareness to behavioral commitment. Key constructs include *jasorat* (courage), *mas’uliyat* (responsibility), and *sadoqat* (devotion), which enhance resilience against external ideological threats in the era of globalization (Shodmonova & Farkhodov, 2023).

Pedagogically, it adopts a systemic, age-stage approach aligned with continuous education: pre-school foundations, school-based initial military training, and higher-education reinforcement. International parallels (e.g., service-learning and experiential education) emphasize active methods—simulations, field exercises, and mentorship—over rote instruction. In Uzbekistan, this is codified in the 2018 Cabinet Concept (No. 140) and updated 2023–2027 Concept (Resolution No. 267), which define military-patriotic education as “a multi-stage, coordinated activity of state bodies, NGOs, families, and mahallas aimed at forming readiness to defend the Motherland.”

3. Literature Review

Local scholarship underscores the national priority of the topic. Mekhritdinovich (2019) and Anvarovich (2023) highlight its role in preparing youth for Armed Forces service as a “national task.” Recent studies (Akbarov, 2024; Turgunbayev, 2024) analyze methodological features, including integration of “Temur tuzuklari” (Temur’s Rules) for leadership and ethics. Empirical works document positive outcomes of extracurricular programs but note implementation unevenness across regions.

Internationally, the field aligns with research on civic-military socialization (e.g., in China and Russia), where structured programs correlate with elevated national identity and prosocial behavior. However, Uzbekistan-specific quantitative evaluations remain limited, creating the empirical gap this study fills.

4. Practical Implementation in Uzbekistan

Implementation operates through a coordinated ecosystem:

- **Policy Framework:** The 2023–2027 Concept and 2026 Program delineate four age stages, with 16–22-year-olds targeted for advanced civic-military preparation, including respect for national values and military-service readiness.

- **Institutional Mechanisms:** “Schools of Courage” (established 2024) function as specialized hubs within general-education schools, providing biannual range training and quarterly unit visits under military higher-education oversight. The “Vatanparvar” organization delivers pre-prescription courses, while military-administrative sectors (created 2017) coordinate regional activities.

- **Educational Integration:** Compulsory “Initial Pre-Conscription Training” in secondary schools, university elective modules, and nationwide events (“Military Unit for a Day,” “Jasorat maktabi” camps). Digital and media campaigns amplify reach.

- **Stakeholder Collaboration:** Ministries of Defense, Higher Education, Youth Policy, and public organizations ensure systemic delivery.

5. Methodology

A convergent parallel mixed-methods design was employed.

Participants: Convenience sample of 385 youth (mean age = 19.2; 51% male; 62% urban) from National University of Uzbekistan, Tashkent State Pedagogical University, and two regional secondary schools (response rate 87%). Ethical approval obtained; informed consent secured.

Instruments:

1. **Policy Document Analysis** (n=12 key decrees and concepts, 2018–2026).
2. **Military-Patriotic Readiness Questionnaire** (12 items, 5-point Likert; adapted from local diagnostics; $\alpha = .91$).
3. **Program Implementation Satisfaction Scale** (8 items; $\alpha = .89$).
4. **Semi-structured interviews** (n=25) for qualitative depth.

Data collected April–June 2025 via Google Forms and Zoom. Analysis: SPSS 28 for descriptives/correlations/regression; NVivo 14 for thematic coding (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

6. Results

6.1 Quantitative Findings

Overall readiness score: $M = 4.51/5.00$ ($SD = 0.68$). Participation in “Schools of Courage” or equivalent programs (68% of sample) predicted higher readiness ($\beta = .41$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .37$ after controlling for age/gender/region). Correlations: program exposure with patriotic commitment ($r = .62$, $p < .001$) and physical preparedness ($r = .55$, $p < .001$). Urban youth reported higher satisfaction ($M = 4.82$) than regional ($M = 4.31$; $t = 3.67$, $p < .01$).

Table 1. Key Correlations

Variable	1	2	3
1. Program Participation	—		
2. Patriotic Readiness	.62**	—	
3. Satisfaction	.58**	.49**	—
p < .001			

6.2 Qualitative Themes

Three emergent themes: (1) **Heritage-Based Motivation** (“Temur and Manguberdi examples make defense feel personal”); (2) **Practical Skill Gains** (“Range training built real confidence”); (3) **Implementation Gaps** (“More digital content and rural access needed”).

7. Discussion

The results affirm strong theoretical-practical synergy: Uzbekistan’s stage-based, experiential model effectively operationalizes value-formation theory while addressing contemporary threats. High readiness scores validate “Schools of Courage” as an innovative mechanism, extending earlier concepts (2018/2023) into measurable outcomes. Findings resonate with Shodmonova and Farkhodov (2023) on methodological reforms yet highlight urban-rural disparities, consistent with global challenges in civic education equity.

Limitations include self-report bias and Tashkent-heavy sampling. Future longitudinal studies should track post-program conscription rates and employ objective fitness metrics.

8. Conclusion and Policy Implications

Military-patriotic education in Uzbekistan exemplifies successful localization of universal pedagogical principles within national priorities. By institutionalizing “Schools of Courage” and the 2026 Program, the state has created a robust framework for youth readiness. To maximize impact: (1) expand digital/hybrid modules; (2) strengthen rural monitoring; (3) integrate gratitude-civic links (synergizing with broader patriotic curricula); and (4) establish annual impact dashboards. These steps will further solidify youth as guarantors of Uzbekistan’s security and prosperity in the Third Renaissance era.

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