

SOCIAL CONSOLIDATION: THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS AND THE PRACTICE OF YOUTH WORK IN CONTEMPORARY UZBEKISTAN

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Abstract. This article examines social consolidation as a sociological phenomenon and clarifies its meaning, mechanisms of formation and specific features in the contemporary Uzbek context. Building on Durkheim's theory of solidarity, Tönnies's Gemeinschaft–Gesellschaft distinction and modern concepts of social cohesion and social capital, the article proposes a working definition of social consolidation and distinguishes it from related notions. The empirical basis of the study is a sociological survey of youth aged 18-29 (N = 420), conducted in 2025-2026 in four regions of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The state programmes that frame youth work and the foreign models discussed in the article, are treated as institutional and comparative context rather than as separate empirical procedures. The study documents the value orientations of the surveyed Uzbek youth, the leading role of digital channels in the transmission of spiritual-educational information, and a marked gap – at the level of aggregate distributions – between the high symbolic importance attributed to the mahalla and the comparatively low level of regular participation in its activities. On this basis, the article offers recommendations for adapting youth work to the digital environment and to interactive and volunteer-based formats at the mahalla level.

Keywords: social consolidation, social solidarity, social cohesion, values, youth, spiritual-educational work, mahalla, social capital, participation, Uzbekistan.

Introduction

According to the United Nations, as of 2024, some 56 per cent of the world's population lives in urban areas, and this share is projected to reach 68 per cent by 2050 (United Nations, 2024). Rapid urbanisation and migration may weaken traditional social ties and reinforce tendencies towards individualisation. It is under these conditions that social consolidation – the conscious unification of the members of a society around shared goals, values and interests – becomes a pressing research problem for sociology. A 2024 study by the Pew Research Center reports

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that, across 24 countries, 64 per cent of respondents believe that trust between people in their society has declined over the past twenty years (Pew Research Center, 2024), which further raises the significance of research on the internal bonds that hold societies together.

In Uzbekistan, strengthening social consolidation and shaping a spiritual-educational environment have been declared priority directions of state policy (Mirziyoyev, 2023b), and 2026 has been designated the «Year of Developing the Mahalla and Elevating Society» (Mirziyoyev, 2025). These orientations of state policy form the institutional context of the present study and are analysed as such, rather than treated as findings of the authors' own research.

The research problem consists in the contradiction between the persistently high symbolic significance of the mahalla and of traditional values for the youth of Uzbekistan and the comparatively low level of young people's practical participation in the activities of the mahalla. A further dimension of the problem is the shift of a substantial part of youth socialisation and value communication into the digital environment, to which the traditional forms of spiritual-educational work are not yet fully adapted.

The aim of the study is to identify the specific features of the value orientations and participation practices of youth in contemporary Uzbekistan, and to determine the place of the mahalla and of digital communication channels in the processes of social consolidation.

The study is guided by the following research questions:

- Which values occupy a priority place in the structure of orientations of contemporary Uzbek youth?
- Which institutions and information channels serve as the main sources of value-related and spiritual-educational information for young people?
- How do young people assess the role of the mahalla in their lives, and how actively do they participate in its activities?
- Which forms of youth work correspond most closely to the interests and communicative practices of young people?

Hypotheses. In line with the predominantly descriptive character of the data, three directly testable expectations are formulated:

1. A high subjective importance of the mahalla for young people is not necessarily accompanied by regular participation in its events.
2. Digital platforms more often serve as a source of spiritual-educational information for youth than traditional institutional channels.
3. Young people prefer interactive and volunteer-based formats to traditional lecture-type events.

Scientific contribution. The contribution of the study lies in the empirical description and interpretation of the gap between the symbolic recognition of the mahalla as a significant social institution and the actual participation of youth in its activities, and in clarifying the role of digital communication channels in the transformation of the mechanisms of social consolidation in contemporary Uzbekistan.

Following its working definition (Section 2), the study understands social consolidation not as a diffuse property of society as a whole but through a set of measurable manifestations: value agreement, sense of belonging, willingness for collective action, participation in the activities of the mahalla, and attitudes towards spiritual-educational programmes. The correspondence between these dimensions and the survey indicators is set out in Table 1.

Table 1. Dimensions of social consolidation and their empirical indicators in this study

Dimension of social consolidation	Empirical indicator used in this study
Value agreement	Prevalence of shared value orientations among youth (survey)
Sense of belonging	Subjective importance attributed to the mahalla (approximate proxy; see Section 2)
Willingness for collective action	Stated readiness to take part in volunteer and community activities

Actual participation	Regularity of participation in mahalla events
Attitudes towards spiritual-educational programmes	Prevalence of value orientations promoted by state spiritual-educational programmes (survey, Figure 3)

Theoretical Framework

Working definition. In this study, social consolidation is understood as a process and a resulting state in which the members of a community coordinate their value orientations, develop a sense of belonging and demonstrate a readiness for joint action within shared institutions. Defined in this way, consolidation is analytically distinct from a number of adjacent concepts. Social solidarity, in Durkheim's sense, refers to the type of bond (mechanical or organic) that holds a society together; social integration denotes the inclusion of individuals and groups into a common institutional order (Durkheim, 1996); social cohesion, in the sense of Chan, To and Chan (2006), is a state of horizontal and vertical relations characterised by trust, a sense of belonging and a willingness to participate; social stability refers to the persistence of social order over time; and social capital (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 2000) denotes the resources embedded in social networks and relations of trust. In the framework adopted here, shared values are treated as a condition and a component of consolidation rather than as its automatic result: value agreement makes coordinated action possible but does not by itself guarantee participation.

Two operational cautions follow from this framework. First, the prevalence of shared value orientations documented in the survey indicates which values are widely held among respondents, not the degree of homogeneity, consensus or explicit agreement between them; the corresponding indicator is accordingly labelled the prevalence of common value orientations rather than value agreement in a strict sense. Second, the subjective importance attributed to the mahalla is treated as an approximate, single-item proxy for a sense of belonging rather than a full measure of communal identification; and the reported sources of spiritual-educational information are treated as indicators of the channels and context of value communication rather than as an independent, direct measure of consolidation itself.

Rather than reviewing the history of the concept exhaustively, the article draws on three complementary approaches most relevant to its object. First, Durkheim's distinction between mechanical solidarity (based on shared beliefs and a strong collective consciousness) and organic solidarity (based on the division of labour and functional interdependence) frames the coexistence of traditional and modern bonds in a rapidly modernising society; his concept of anomie identifies the weakening of shared norms as the analytical opposite of consolidation (Durkheim, 1996). Second, Tönnies's distinction between *Gemeinschaft* (community founded on kinship, neighbourhood and shared values) and *Gesellschaft* (society founded on rational interests and contractual relations) provides the central lens of the article: the mahalla can be interpreted as a contemporary form of *Gemeinschaft*-type solidarity operating within a *Gesellschaft*-type society (Tönnies, 2002). Third, the theory of social capital and modern accounts of social cohesion connect these classical distinctions to measurable indicators – trust, belonging and participation.

The interpretation of the mahalla as a modern *Gemeinschaft*, however, should not be confined to its integrative potential. Recent scholarship emphasises that the same features that generate cohesion may also produce constraints: informal social control, age and gender hierarchies, pressure towards conformity with the majority, and the exclusion of individuals or groups who do not fit prevailing expectations (Sievers, 2002; Dadabaev, 2013; Urinboyev and Eraliev, 2022). Recognising these limits guards against a purely normative portrayal of traditional institutions as unconditionally consolidating and helps to interpret the gap between the symbolic importance of the mahalla and the level of youth participation.

As an illustration of the systemic place of these institutions, Parsons's (1951) AGIL scheme locates integration and the preservation of values among the functional imperatives of any social system. Figure 1 presents the authors' interpretation of this scheme, in which the integration function is related specifically to the mahalla; it is offered as an analytical illustration rather than as an empirical result.

A – Adaptation (economic system). Adaptation to the environment	G – Goal-attainment (political system). Attaining societal goals
L – Latency (spiritual-cultural system: family, education). Preservation and transmission of values	I – Integration (communal system: the mahalla). Ensuring the internal unity of society

Figure 1. Authors' interpretation of T. Parsons's AGIL model

Literature Review

Contemporary sociological research on what holds societies together has developed around the closely related notions of social cohesion and social capital. Putnam (2000) documented a decline in associational life and civic engagement and linked social capital to trust and participation, while Chan, To and Chan (2006) proposed an influential definition of social cohesion built on trust, sense of belonging and willingness to participate, distinguishing horizontal from vertical relations. Subsequent reviews and measurement studies have refined these dimensions and their indicators (Schiefer and van der Noll, 2017; Aruqaj, 2023). This literature provides the vocabulary in which the present study operationalises consolidation.

A distinct and directly relevant body of scholarship concerns the mahalla. Historical and ethnographic studies trace its transformation across the pre-Soviet, Soviet and post-Soviet periods (Geiss, 2001; Sievers, 2002), while later work analyses the mahalla as a form of social capital and as a hybrid institution positioned between state and society, shaped by both community attachment and state instrumentalisation (Dadabaev, 2013; Dadabaev, 2017). Urinboyev and Eraliev (2022) interpret mahallas as informal civil-society initiatives in a non-Western setting. Taken together, this literature cautions against treating the mahalla as an unambiguously consolidating institution and frames it instead as a contested and adaptive one.

A third strand addresses youth values, civic participation and digital socialisation in Central Asia. Regional analyses describe a shift among young people from conventional institutional participation towards digitally mediated forms of civic expression (UNDP, 2021). Broader overviews of the situation of youth in the region document the demographic weight of young people and the challenges they face in education, economic participation and civic engagement (UNESCO, 2021; Starr, 2024).

Research gap. Despite this rich literature, comparatively little peer-reviewed empirical work brings these strands together for Uzbekistan by jointly examining youth value orientations, attitudes to and participation in the mahalla, and the role of digital channels in the same study. In particular, in the literature reviewed by the authors, the gap between the symbolic recognition of the mahalla and the actual participation of young people appears to have received limited attention and has rarely been interpreted with survey data. The present study addresses this gap.

A limited number of national studies of youth values are also relevant here. Kholbekov (2018) and Zaitov (2025), for instance, discuss the interaction between traditional upbringing and the digital environment in shaping the value orientations of Uzbek youth, arguing that established pedagogical and spiritual-educational approaches need to be combined with digital media literacy rather than treated as alternatives to it – a perspective broadly consistent with the present study's finding on the leading role of digital channels.

Institutional Context of Social Consolidation and Youth Work in Uzbekistan

Contemporary youth work in Uzbekistan is carried out within a state policy oriented towards strengthening social stability, civic responsibility, patriotism and the participation of young people in the life of local communities. A special place in the realisation of these tasks is assigned to the institution of the mahalla and to the system of spiritual-educational work. To characterise the institutional context of the study, the principal state programmes, normative documents and official materials that define the aims and forms of engagement with youth were reviewed. This material is presented as an overview of the institutional and programmatic context, and not as the result of a formal content analysis.

Within this framework, the designation of 2026 as the «Year of Developing the Mahalla and Elevating Society» (Mirziyoyev, 2025) and the broader strategic priorities of the state (Mirziyoyev, 2023b) locate the mahalla at the centre of officially envisaged mechanisms for involving young people in community life.

The institutional and normative basis of youth work is set, in particular, by two documents. The Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan of 11 September 2023 No. UP-158 «On the «Uzbekistan-2030» Strategy» establishes the country's strategic priorities, including the development of human capital, education and support for young people, and thereby defines the broader goals within which spiritual-educational work is organised (Mirziyoyev, 2023a); its human-capital and education priorities bear directly on youth work insofar as they set explicit targets for young people's education, employment and civic participation. The Resolution of the President of 16 August 2022 No. PP-353 «On measures to strengthen the role of the mahalla institution in the life of society and to further expand its financial capacity» reinforces the mahalla as the principal community institution, its functions and its financial resources, and consolidates the legislative basis for implementing these tasks (Mirziyoyev, 2022); by expanding the mahalla's financial and organisational capacity, it directly underpins the material conditions for delivering spiritual-educational and youth-oriented programming at the community level. Taken together, these acts locate the mahalla and the system of ma'naviy-ma'rifiy work at the centre of officially envisaged mechanisms for engaging young people in community life.

Methodology

The empirical basis of the study is a quantitative sociological survey of young people aged 18-29, conducted in four regions of Uzbekistan (N = 420). The review of state documents characterises the national institutional context, and the discussion of foreign practices supports the practice-oriented part of the article; neither is treated as a separate empirical procedure.

The sociological survey that constituted the empirical basis of the study was conducted during 2025-2026 in four regions of the Republic of Uzbekistan – the city of Tashkent, Samarkand Region, Fergana Region and Kashkadarya Region. These regions were selected according to the following criteria:

geographic criterion – inclusion of regions located in different parts of the republic, so as to avoid reliance on a single area (the capital, Tashkent, together with the Samarkand, Fergana and Kashkadarya regions);

urbanisation criterion – inclusion of respondents from a major city (Tashkent), regional centres and rural areas;

demographic criterion – selection of regions differing in population size, age composition and ethnic-cultural characteristics;

economic criterion – coverage of regions with different levels of economic development.

Within each region, respondents were selected using random sampling. Access to respondents was arranged through the administrations of higher education institutions and, separately, through regional hokimiyats (local government administrations); following authorisation from the hokimiyats, further access to residents was arranged through district mahalla committees. Within each institutional access point, lists of students (at higher education institutions) and of residents (compiled with the assistance of the mahalla committees) were obtained, and specific respondents were then selected from these lists using a random-number generator; the random procedure was thus applied to individual selection within each institutional frame rather than to the frame itself. Interviews were conducted face-to-face, and the questionnaire was administered in Uzbek; it consisted of closed-ended questions of several types, including five-point Likert-scale items and a multiple-choice item on sources of information. Verbal consent to participate was obtained from each respondent before the interview began. Quantitative data processing was carried out using SPSS.

The sample amounted to 420 respondents aged 18-29. For a simple random sample of this size, the theoretically achievable margin of error at a 95% confidence level ($Z = 1.96$) and an assumed proportion of $p = 0.5$ is approximately $\pm 4.78\%$ (rounded to $\pm 4.8\%$), calculated using the standard formula:

$$n = Z^2 \cdot p \cdot (1-p) / e^2$$

where n is the sample size, Z is the confidence coefficient, p is the expected proportion and e is the margin of error. Solving for e at $n = 420$ gives $e \approx 0.0478$ ($\pm 4.78\%$). By comparison, achieving the narrower $\pm 2.8\%$ margin of error typical of large national surveys would require a minimum of 1,225 respondents; at the achieved sample size of 420, the theoretical margin of error under this simple-random-sample assumption is correspondingly wider, approximately $\pm 4.8\%$. This figure is an indicative benchmark for a sample of this size under ideal simple random sampling and should not be read as an exact measure of the actual precision or representativeness of the present, institutionally bounded sample (see the sampling procedure described above and the Limitations below).

Table 2. Territorial distribution of the survey respondents (N = 420, aged 18-29)

Region	Urban	Rural	Total	%
City of Tashkent	140	–	140	33.3
Samarkand Region	53	42	95	22.6
Fergana Region	53	45	98	23.3
Kashkadarya Region	42	45	87	20.7
Total	288	132	420	100

Because random sampling in this study was implemented through institutional access points (university administrations, hokimiyats and, following their authorisation, district mahalla committees) within four selected regions, rather than through a nationally stratified sampling frame, the results are best interpreted as characterising the surveyed young people in these four regions rather than the youth of Uzbekistan as a whole. This territorial and social boundedness is reflected throughout the wording of the Results and Discussion sections. Since part of the sample was recruited with the assistance of higher education institution administrations, it exhibits an overrepresentation of students and young people with access to higher education compared to the youth population of the four surveyed regions as a whole; this compositional characteristic, along with the lack of complete socio-demographic data on the sample, is discussed below in the “Study Limitations” section.

Limitations. The representativeness of the sample is bounded by its actual coverage. A detailed socio-demographic profile of the sample by sex, education and employment status was not systematically compiled during data collection and cannot be reconstructed after the fact; its absence is acknowledged as a limitation of the present study and a priority for future data collection and reporting. The association examined under the first hypothesis is documented at the level of aggregate distributions rather than through individual-level cross-tabulation of the two underlying survey items, so the reported gap should be read as a descriptive discrepancy rather than a formally tested association. Similarly, the third hypothesis is supported by qualitative and descriptive evidence rather than by a directly comparable quantitative item contrasting interactive and lecture-type formats. These limitations are taken into account in the formulation of the results and conclusions.

Results

The results are organised around the research questions and are confined to data obtained directly from the survey; their interpretation is presented separately in the Discussion section.

Value priorities of youth. Among the 420 respondents aged 18-29, the following value orientations predominate: family and family relationships – 81.3%; personal development and professional growth – 73.8%; love for the homeland and national pride – 69.4%; material well-being and economic independence – 67.2%; knowledge and enlightenment – 64.8%; friendship and social ties – 61.5%; and religious and moral values – 56.3% (Figure 2). These figures describe the surveyed sample of young people aged 18-29 ($n = 420$).

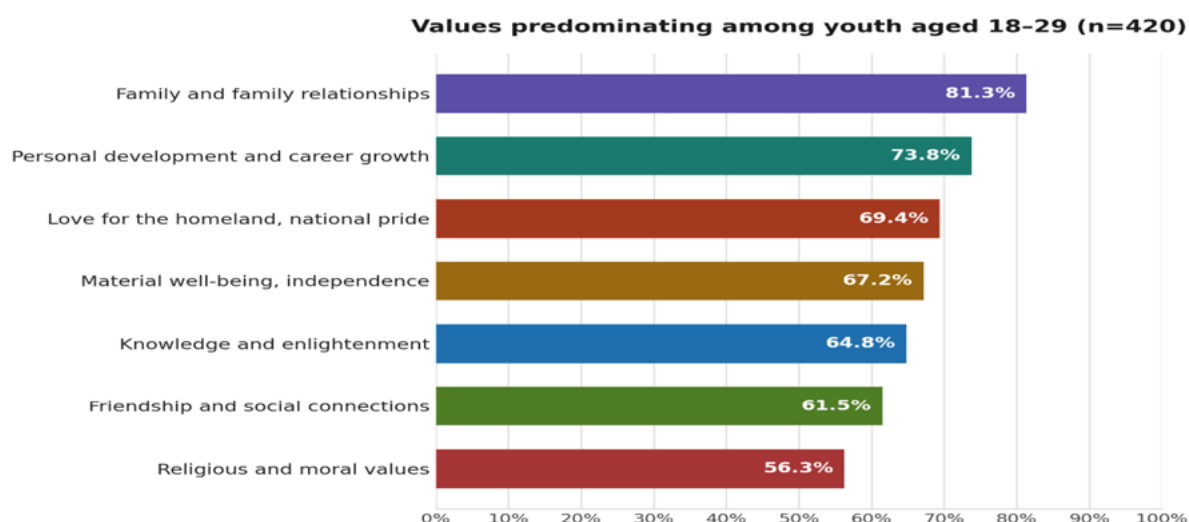


Figure 2. Value orientations of the surveyed youth aged 18-29 (n = 420, %)

Sources of spiritual-educational information. The reported sources of spiritual-educational information among respondents are shown in Table 3. Respondents could select more than one source (a multiple-response item), so the percentages do not sum to 100%. Social networks are the most frequently named source (78.4%), ahead of each individual institutional channel considered separately: educational institutions (58.7%), mahalla mentors for spiritual-educational work (41.5%), television and radio (38.9%) and religious institutions (28.1%).

Table 3. Sources of spiritual-educational information among young people (aged 18-29, n = 420)

Nº	Source of information	Share (%)
1	Social networks (Telegram, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube)	78.4
2	Family members and close relatives	63.2
3	Educational institutions (college, university)	58.7
4	Mahalla mentors for spiritual-educational work	41.5
5	Television and radio	38.9
6	Friends and peers	36.4
7	Religious institutions and imam-khatibs	28.1
8	Print media (newspapers, magazines)	12.7

Attitudes towards the mahalla and participation. Among the surveyed young people, the relationship with the mahalla is characterised by a marked discrepancy at the level of aggregate distributions. On the one hand, 64.8% of respondents agreed that «the mahalla occupies an important place in my life»; on the other, only 31.2% reported that they regularly take part in mahalla events. This gap between the subjective importance of the institution and the level of regular participation is the central empirical finding of the study; as noted in Section 5, individual-level cross-tabulation of the two items was not performed, so the gap is reported here as a descriptive discrepancy between two aggregate distributions rather than as a tested association between individuals' attitudes and their behaviour.

Preferred forms of youth work. Respondents' responses indicated a preference for interactive formats (debates, discussions, skills sessions, master-classes) over traditional lecture-type meetings. Combining spiritual-educational activities with sporting and creative competitions, and drawing on the example of successful young leaders, were also named as engaging formats. The questionnaire did not include a directly comparable quantitative item contrasting interactive and lecture-type formats; this finding is accordingly reported as a descriptive, qualitative pattern rather than a statistically tested comparison (see the Limitations section).

Readiness for volunteer and community activity. Two items in the questionnaire concern volunteering and are worded differently. In response to the item «I would like to join the volunteer activities in my mahalla», 64.8%

chose the affirmative option; in response to the separate item on general readiness to take part in volunteer activity, 58.7% confirmed such readiness. Because the two figures derive from differently worded questions, they are reported separately and are not treated as measures of the same quantity.

Value orientations associated with spiritual-educational programmes. The survey also recorded the prevalence of several value orientations that the state spiritual-educational programmes seek to strengthen: national identity and pride – 84.6%; learning and knowledge as a lifelong process – 82.7%; patriotism (love for the homeland as a core value) – 76.3%; labour and vocational values (honest labour as a condition of success) – 73.5%; and social responsibility (readiness to contribute to the development of society) – 64.2% (Figure 3). These figures describe the prevalence of the corresponding orientations among respondents ($n = 420$); the cross-sectional design does not permit the conclusion that they were formed specifically through the programmes. The data are consistent with the value orientations promoted by state programmes, but do not by themselves establish a causal effect.

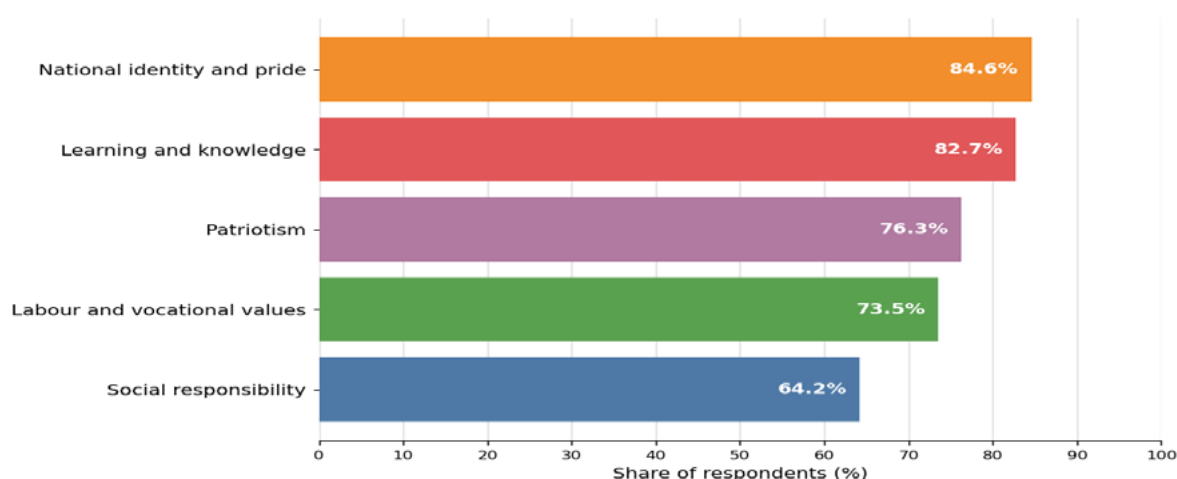


Figure 3. Prevalence of selected value orientations among the surveyed youth aged 18-29 ($n = 420$, %)

Discussion

The findings suggest that contemporary Uzbek youth combine traditional and modern value orientations: family and national values coexist with a strong emphasis on personal development, knowledge and material independence. In terms of the framework adopted here, this synthesis is consistent with the coexistence of Gemeinschaft-type and Gesellschaft-type bonds identified by Tönnies, and with Durkheim's expectation that, in a modernising society, consolidation rests less on the mechanical repetition of inherited norms than on the active integration of shared values into new conditions.

The central result – the gap between the high symbolic importance of the mahalla (64.8%) and the low level of regular participation (31.2%) – is consistent with the first hypothesis at the level of aggregate distributions, though the present data do not allow a formal test of this association at the individual level. Two non-exclusive explanations are plausible. First, the communicative practices of young people have shifted towards digital channels: social networks are the leading source of spiritual-educational information (78.4%), ahead of each individual institutional channel, which is broadly consistent with the second hypothesis and with regional findings on the digitally mediated civic engagement of Central Asian youth (UNDP, 2021). Second, the same features that give the mahalla its integrative capacity – informal control and age hierarchies – may reduce its attractiveness to younger residents, and the content of mahalla-level events is often described in the literature as oriented towards older generations (Dadabaev, 2013; Urinboyev and Eraliev, 2022). The descriptive preference for interactive and volunteer-based formats (the third hypothesis) is consistent with this interpretation, although, as noted in Section 6, it is based on qualitative rather than directly comparable quantitative evidence.

These interpretations should be read with the study's limitations in mind. The design is cross-sectional and the measures are based on self-reports; the sample's coverage bounds the generalisability of the findings; the

observed associations do not establish causal relationships; and the gap under the first hypothesis and the format preference under the third hypothesis are documented descriptively rather than through individual-level statistical tests. Alternative explanations – for instance, life-cycle effects whereby participation in mahalla affairs increases with age and family formation – cannot be excluded on the present data and warrant longitudinal investigation.

Foreign Practices of Youth Engagement: Opportunities and Limits for Uzbekistan

To inform possible directions for improving youth work, it is instructive to consider foreign programmes based on volunteering, civic participation and community activity. The practices of South Korea, Singapore and Japan are discussed here not as strictly comparable national cases but as individual examples of institutionalised forms of youth participation, elements of which may be relevant to Uzbekistan.

In South Korea, youth activity (cheongsongyeon hwaldong) is coordinated by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family within a statutory framework and is supported analytically by the National Youth Policy Institute; it targets adolescents and young adults and combines cultural, experiential and civic-participation activities, including youth participation councils that channel young people's views into policy (Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, no date; National Youth Policy Institute, no date). In Singapore, Youth Corps Singapore – launched in 2014 under the National Youth Council – engages young people aged 15-35 in sustained, project-based volunteering aimed at building active citizenship and a more cohesive society (National Youth Council Singapore, no date). In Japan, community-based youth activity is delivered through the National Institution for Youth Education, which runs a nationwide network of centres promoting youth self-reliance through experiential activities, within the policy framework set out in the Cabinet Office's National Youth Development Policy (Cabinet Office, 2008; National Institution for Youth Education, no date).

Several elements of these practices appear potentially relevant to Uzbekistan, alongside institutional and cultural differences that limit their direct transfer. South Korea's youth participation councils, which channel young people's views into policy within a statutory framework, illustrate a formalised mechanism for incorporating youth voice into local decision-making; adapting this element to Uzbekistan would require establishing a comparable consultative structure at the mahalla or district level, which is not currently part of the institutional framework described in the Institutional Context section, and would depend on the degree to which local self-government bodies are prepared to devolve a consultative role to young residents. Singapore's Youth Corps model, built on sustained, project-based volunteering, offers a template for converting the stated readiness for volunteer activity documented in the Results section (58.7-64.8%) into structured, ongoing engagement rather than one-off events; its transfer would depend on the availability of resourced coordination roles and of a project pipeline at the mahalla level, neither of which is addressed in the state documents reviewed in the Institutional Context section. Japan's network of youth education centres, which promotes self-reliance through experiential activities within a national policy framework, suggests a model for the interactive, skills-based formats that respondents in this study preferred to lecture-type events (Results section); its adaptation would require investment in dedicated facilities and trained facilitators, representing a substantially different resource commitment from the current mahalla-based spiritual-educational work. In all three cases, the relationship between the state and civil society, and the extent of local self-government autonomy, differ from the Uzbek context, so these examples are best treated as sources of specific design elements rather than as models for wholesale adoption.

Conclusion

The study set out to identify the value orientations and participation practices of youth in contemporary Uzbekistan and to determine the place of the mahalla and of digital channels in the processes of social consolidation. In answer to the research questions, the surveyed young people (n = 420) combine traditional and modern values, with family, personal development and national identity among their priorities; social networks are their leading source of spiritual-educational information, ahead of each individual institutional channel; the mahalla is widely regarded as important yet attracts regular participation from only a minority, at the level of aggregate distributions; and respondents' qualitative responses indicate a preference for interactive and volunteer-based formats over traditional lecture-type events, though this was not tested with a directly comparable quantitative item.

The most significant finding is the gap between the symbolic importance of the mahalla and the level of regular youth participation, documented descriptively within the surveyed four-region youth sample. Theoretically, this gap illustrates the coexistence of Gemeinschaft-type and Gesellschaft-type bonds and the limits of a purely normative view of traditional institutions as unconditionally consolidating. In practical terms, the results suggest that youth work could be strengthened by making wider use of interactive and digital formats, by disseminating meaningful content through social media, by engaging young people in volunteer activity, and by adapting mahalla-level events to the interests of the younger generation; relevant international experience, discussed in the Foreign Practices section, may inform specific design elements of these efforts but cannot be transferred wholesale.

These conclusions are subject to the limitations noted above: the sample's territorial and social coverage, the reliance on self-reported measures, the cross-sectional design, the absence of a detailed socio-demographic profile of the sample, the descriptive (rather than individually cross-tabulated) status of the gap under the first hypothesis and the format preference under the third hypothesis, and the impossibility of establishing a causal effect of state programmes on youth values. Future research could employ longitudinal and, where feasible, nationally representative designs, report a detailed socio-demographic profile of the sample, test the first-hypothesis association through individual-level cross-tabulation, include a directly comparable quantitative measure of format preference for the third hypothesis, combine survey data with systematic analysis of digital communication, and examine directly the conditions under which the symbolic importance of the mahalla translates into participation.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Authors' Contributions

F.M. Akhmedova – scientific supervision, formulation of the research concept, methodological guidance, editing in accordance with journal policy, and academic recommendations.

N.K. Shaumarova – theoretical review, literature review, development of the methodology, data analysis and interpretation of results.

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ӘЛЕУМЕТТИК КОНСОЛИДАЦИЯ: ЗАМАНАУИ ӨЗБЕКСТАНДА ЖАСТАРМЕН ЖҰМЫС ЖҮРГІЗУДІҢ ТЕОРИЯЛЫҚ НЕГІЗДЕРІ МЕН ТӘЖІРИБЕСІ

Аңдатпа. Мақалада әлеуметтік консолидация әлеуметтанулық құбылыс ретінде қарастырылады; оның мазмұны, қалыптасу тетіктері және қазіргі өзбекстандық контекстегі өзіндік ерекшеліктері нақтыланады. Э. Дюркгеймнің ынтымақтастық теориясына, Ф. Теннистің Gemeinschaft–Gesellschaft ажыратуына және әлеуметтік бірігу мен әлеуметтік капитал туралы қазіргі заманғы тұжырымдамаларға сүйене отырып,

авторлар әлеуметтік консолидацияның жұмыс анықтамасын ұсынады және оны туыстас ұғымдардан ажыратады. Зерттеудің эмпирикалық негізін 2025-2026 жылдары Өзбекстан Республикасының төрт өңірінде жүргізілген, жасы 18-29 аралығындағы жастар арасындағы әлеуметтанулық сауалнама құрайды (N = 420). Мақалада қарастырылатын, жастармен жұмыс істеу шеңберін белгілейтін мемлекеттік бағдарламалар мен шетелдік модельдер жеке эмпирикалық рәсімдер ретінде емес, институционалдық және салыстырмалы контекст ретінде қарастырылады. Зерттеуде сауалнамаға қатысқан өзбек жастарының құндылық бағдарлары, рухани-ағарту ақпаратын таратудағы цифрлық арналардың жетекші рөлі, сондай-ақ – жиынтық үлестірімдер деңгейінде – махалляға берілетін жоғары символдық маңыздылық пен оның қызметіне тұрақты қатысудың салыстырмалы төмен деңгейі арасындағы айқын алшақтық анықталды. Осының негізінде мақалада жастармен жұмысты цифрлық ортаға, сондай-ақ махалля деңгейіндегі интерактивті және ерікті (волонтерлік) қызмет форматтарына бейімдеу бойынша ұсыныстар беріледі.

Негізгі ұғымдар: әлеуметтік консолидация, әлеуметтік ынтымақтастық, әлеуметтік бірігу, құндылықтар, жастар, рухани-ағарту жұмысы, махалля, әлеуметтік капитал, қатысу, Өзбекстан.

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СОЦИАЛЬНАЯ КОНСОЛИДАЦИЯ: ТЕОРЕТИЧЕСКИЕ ОСНОВЫ И ПРАКТИКА РАБОТЫ С МОЛОДЁЖЬЮ В СОВРЕМЕННОМ УЗБЕКИСТАНЕ

Аннотация. В статье социальная консолидация рассматривается как социологический феномен; уточняются её содержание, механизмы формирования и специфические особенности в современном узбекистанском контексте. Опираясь на теорию солидарности Э.Дюркгейма, различие Gemeinschaft–Gesellschaft Ф.Тённиса и современные концепции социальной сплочённости и социального капитала, авторы предлагают рабочее определение социальной консолидации и отграничивают его от смежных понятий. Эмпирическую базу исследования составляет социологический опрос молодёжи в возрасте 18-29 лет (N = 420), проведённый в 2025-2026 годах в четырёх регионах Республики Узбекистан. Государственные программы, формирующие рамки работы с молодёжью, и рассматриваемые в статье зарубежные модели трактуются как институциональный и сравнительный контекст, а не как самостоятельные эмпирические процедуры. В исследовании документируются ценностные ориентации обследованной узбекской молодёжи, ведущая роль цифровых каналов в передаче духовно-просветительской информации, а также заметный – на уровне агрегированных распределений – разрыв между высокой символической значимостью, приписываемой махалле, и сравнительно низким уровнем регулярного участия в её деятельности. На этой основе в статье предлагаются рекомендации по адаптации работы с молодёжью к условиям цифровой среды, а также по внедрению интерактивных и волонтерских форматов на уровне махалли.

Ключевые слова: социальная консолидация, социальная солидарность, социальная сплочённость, ценности, молодёжь, духовно-просветительская работа, махалля, социальный капитал, участие, Узбекистан.

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