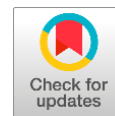


Critical strategies for strengthening the patriotic education framework for youth



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Abstract The study aims to analyse the strategic directions for the fundamentalisation of the system of patriotic education of youth in modern society. The article highlights the issues of the formation and development of civic competence among young people. Various approaches to the essence of the definition of patriotic education are identified. The specific factors influencing the transformation of these concepts in the current conditions of social progress are outlined. The goals, tasks, and organisational-legal foundations of patriotic education of youth are substantiated. It is established that during childhood and adolescence, an individual forms personal values and competencies, which, in synergy, will determine the individual's attitude towards themselves and the surrounding world, influencing their actions and behavioural reactions in the context of patriotism. The priorities of patriotic education of youth in the conditions of the Russian-Ukrainian war and the post-war period are characterised by national orientation, consolidation and integration, preservation of national identity, social harmony, personal reflection, constructive leadership, and continuity and succession. The main methodological approaches to implementing the process are highlighted particularly axiological, personality-oriented, activity-based, and competence-based approaches. The priority strategies for the fundamentalisation of the system of patriotic education of youth are substantiated, including spiritual identification and reflection, integration of youth into everyday patriotically oriented activities and projects, development of the inner value potential of patriotic action, fostering confidence in it, positioning a historical figure or contemporary as a role model, and appropriate independence. The concept of patriotic education is proven to be a scientific-applied problem that is a component of the theory of education, functioning as a harmoniously organised whole. It is clarified that in such a coordination status, the issue of patriotic education should apply the same methodological principles, methods, and approaches as the process of youth education in general.

Keywords: education system, patriotism, strategic directions, civic competence, methodological approaches, principles of patriotic education

1. Introduction

The definition of patriotic education's essence, goals, and potential unites moral-ethical, value, and spiritual orientations with the social conditions of development. The development of a competent, conscious future citizen within the concept of a civic-patriotic position has been highlighted by the full-scale military actions on the territory of Ukraine and the active European integration of the state.

In several state documents, including the laws of Ukraine “On the Foundations of National Resistance” (2024) and “On the Basic Principles of State Policy in the Sphere of Affirming Ukrainian National and Civic Identity” (2022), as well as in concepts and programmes aimed at organising national resistance in the country, the need to enhance the level of patriotic education of citizens is emphasised. Modern pedagogical trends in youth development require a deep analysis of the influence of the sociocultural environment on the formation and progress of value orientations, life competencies, and moral feelings. These trends must correspond to the systemic structural requirements for their practical implementation. In this context, the strategy of factor-based design for the fundamentalisation of the system of patriotic education of youth becomes increasingly relevant.

Numerous studies by contemporary scholars are dedicated to investigating the peculiarities of the formation and development of civic and social competence in children during their development, as well as the patriotic education of youth. Some researchers (Ostapenko et al., 2022; Tsipan, 2022; Kremen, 2020) emphasise that the level of effectiveness of the process directly determines the speed and quality of the formation of national and ethnic identity in the younger generation.



The general issues of the studied problem are thoroughly covered in the works of several modern scholars (Kosenchuk, 2022; Komashko & Shulha, 2023). Publications by Oresheta (2013) and Horban (2019), which focus on the essence of educating a worthy citizen and the ways and methods of effectively implementing this within the patriotic concept, are of significant importance in the process of shaping the phenomenon of citizenship in the context of modern socio-political transformations.

Representative studies for this research include the works of Dziubenko (2023), Matsenko (2020), Bobro (2024), Lebedyk (2020), and Bukhun (2021). Specifically, Dziubenko (2023) argues that the social and civic position of the younger generation should begin to develop in early childhood. The researcher identifies the strategic guidelines for forming civic consciousness in individuals, including the implementation of historical traditions, trends in free and humanistic education, and creating conditions for subject-subject interaction among participants in the educational process. According to the researcher, the awareness and purposefulness of civic development are reflected in goal-setting and forecasting activities, which form the foundation for developing the civic position and culture of students.

Issues related to civic education and the formation of civic consciousness have been explored by Matsenko (2020) and Bobro (2024), who pay special attention to the psychological justification of patriotic education. For instance, Matsenko (2020) defines the concept of "civic-mindedness," which encompasses five components: patriotism, law-abidingness, socially useful activities, teamwork, and personal growth. Meanwhile, Bobro (2024) examines the features of the digital transformation of educational systems as innovations (novelty and originality, attribution to a specific field, progressiveness, qualitative enhancement of the existing system, stabilisation of the current system, and safety of implementation), which are integral aspects of transforming the consciousness of modern youth.

Equally significant in the context of the research problem is the analysis of aspects related to the formation of value orientations and moral education. Specifically, in the publications of Lebedyk (2020), the need for assessing the democratic environment of educational institutions in a competitive context is discussed, along with the phenomenon of forming the civic culture of individuals through the quality of the institution's democratic environment.

The phenomenon of civil society and ethnic self-identification, as examined in the works of Bukhun (2021), positions value-based civic orientations not as generalised concepts but in relation to the psychophysical characteristics and moral qualities of individuals. The manifestation of certain civic qualities is seen as evidence of the effectiveness and level of organisational and educational work in a particular institution at various levels of continuous civic education.

At the same time, practical strategies for reinforcing the system of patriotic education for youth remain insufficiently explored and require further scholarly examination.

The aim of the study is to analyse the strategic directions for reinforcing the system of patriotic education for youth in modern society.

The scientific novelty of the obtained data lies in the modern approach to the theoretical substantiation of the principles of patriotic education for youth. The research focuses on the peculiarities of implementing key moral and value-based orientations of a conscious citizen into the educational system, as well as the integration of advanced technologies, including digital optimisation, to foster positive practical perceptions of the necessary norms for forming civic consciousness among the modern younger generation.

2. Materials and Methods

The research was conducted based on the principles of systematicity and comprehensiveness in scientific studies, which allowed the object of study to be examined within the concept of a system characterised by a set of interdependencies and interconnections. Methods of analysis and synthesis were employed to identify the essence, approaches, main methods, techniques, and tools of patriotic education of the youth, as well as influential factors. Induction was employed to outline the prognostic directions of the development of the studied process. The deduction was used to isolate the priority vectors for developing the definition of patriotic education, considering Ukraine's integration into the global community. A critical analysis of theoretical concepts was conducted, several scientific works and publications on the studied discourse were reviewed, and the main principles of theoretical definitions were systematised and outlined. Based on the critical analysis, it was possible to examine the support of thesis arguments by contemporary scholars concerning their views on specific issues within the outlined problem and to specify them in more detail regarding practical application.

3. Results and Discussion

In the development process, the individual becomes integrated into communication and relationships with the surrounding environment, developing civic and social activities. Cultural and national identification and spiritual values are shaped by the way of life and the environment, which influence in synergy with upbringing.

The formation of the socio-civic competence of the youth occurs directly through communicative activities. It is ensured by knowledge of the rules of communication and behavioural reactions, skills in focusing and overcoming difficulties, critical thinking, making decisions and demonstrating communication abilities, and teamwork (Matsenko, 2020; Bobro, 2024). The scientific discourse defines communication as a multifaceted process that encompasses the establishment and development

of interpersonal contacts, arising from the need for joint activities and information exchange, the formation of common strategies for interaction, as well as the perception and understanding of others (Ostapenko et al., 2022; Tsipan, 2022; Kremen, 2020). Effective communication is based on principles of mutual respect and awareness of the needs of the interlocutors, which is fundamental to organising joint activities. Successful communication involves establishing personal contact by creating a friendly atmosphere, critical to safe interaction. However, in the context of patriotic-educational influence in the communication process of the youth, there are challenges posed by certain personal qualities of the participants in the communication (Kosenchuk, 2022; Komashko & Shulha, 2023).

Achieving the goals of patriotic education is seen as possible through the implementation of the following educational tasks:

- Fundamentalisation of fundamental patriotic beliefs and values in the feelings and consciousness of the individual;
- Emphasising respect for the past in historical and cultural aspects;
- Developing respect for state symbols and the legislation of Ukraine;
- Intensifying the prestige of military service;
- Realising the interdependence between the concepts of individual freedom, citizens' rights, and their patriotic responsibilities;
- Acquiring practical patriotic experience by young people based on the skills of identifying the forms and methods of their role in the social process, the ability to communicate effectively with government bodies and social institutions, developing the capacity to adhere to current legislation, and readiness to accept responsibility;
- Forming tolerance towards other cultures, peoples, and traditions;
- Affirming the concept of humanistic morality and human-centredness to shape a democratic civil society;
- Cultivating the best indicators of national mentality—freedom, justice, diligence, kindness, honesty;
- Forming, developing, and improving speech culture;
- Motivating the younger generation to actively resist manifestations of immorality, separatism, Ukrainophobia, chauvinism, and fascism.

The process of patriotic formation of a young person takes place within the concept of a dual process: at the ideological level, patriotic views, ideas, consciousness, and beliefs are formed, and at the psychological level – habits, moods, perceptions, feelings, and aspirations are shaped. The spectrum of patriotic feelings reflects the individual's attitude towards the nation and the state, its present, past, and future. These include feelings of inseparability from one's people and state; a sense of pride in the state's successful progress; aversion to everything anti-Ukrainian; a sense of national dignity; admiration for historical feats; respect for culture, beliefs, and traditions; tolerance for the specifics of mentality; careful attitude towards native nature; and nostalgia for the Motherland in case of separation.

The societal and state needs for patriotic education of the individual require practical educational models. The formation and development of civic and social competence of the youth requires educators to carefully plan and implement it based on the specifics of the age group to ensure a deep understanding and application of the principles of patriotism (Lebedyk, 2020). The effectiveness of applying methodological principles to patriotic education of children and youth is based on modern scientific approaches: systemic, personality-oriented, axiological, activity-based, and competence-based (Ostapenko et al., 2022; Tsipan, 2022; Kremen, 2020).

The systemic approach focuses on the integration and integrity of educational influences, the educational process, and individual self-development. It allows for the coordinated assimilation of the professional efforts of all subjects involved in patriotic education.

The axiological approach is oriented towards forming the youth's priority values of patriotism, primarily the axiomatic and unconditional love for Ukraine, its people, and statehood. In acquiring this feeling, the growing individual must master related values – altruism, loyalty, and justice.

The activity-based approach promotes the active formation of the youth's readiness to defend Ukraine in educational, psychological, physical, social, moral, and spiritual aspects. Moreover, the approach involves the practical involvement of the youth in active patriotic activities, where patriotic values are directly tested.

The personality-oriented approach is characterised by considering the interests and abilities of the youth, their age characteristics, possibilities, and rights. The basis of the approach is the interconnection of the individual, the people, the nation, and the state, which opens the potential for realising a promising democratic model of patriotic education.

The competency-based approach ensures the practical application of acquired knowledge in solving specific practical tasks related to protection and resilience in peacetime and wartime. It allows children and youth to develop unprecedented personal experiences, enabling them to act skillfully in unconventional situations.

The "Rating" sociological group surveyed the Rating Online platform from August 16 to 20, 2023. The survey used the Computer-Assisted Web Interviewing (CAWI) method. The sample of respondents (6050) was random. Overall, the survey aimed to explore the position of Ukrainians regarding language, factors influencing the level of national unity, the state of emotions, and the conceptual vision of the country's future. Attention was also paid to the issue of patriotism (Figure 1).

Specifically, in response to the question of what respondents consider to be indicators of patriotism, most respondents answered – speaking Ukrainian (45%), donating and volunteering (46%), about a third – serving on the front line or staying and working during the war in Ukraine. More than 25% chose the option of studying the history of Ukraine. Around 9-11% limited themselves to consuming Ukrainian goods and content, and 14% of respondents engaged in public activities.

The fundamental principles of modern patriotic education of the youth include the cultivation of a Ukraine-centred way of thinking, worldview, and actions, and a readiness to defend Ukraine; the principle of derussification; a national orientation that preserves national identity; the principle of humanising the educational process, which positions spiritual and moral values and human-centredness as the foundation of patriotic education; the principle of consolidation, which focuses on national cohesion and strengthening collective resistance; constructive leadership, which embodies initiative, purposefulness, active civic engagement, interest in achieving results, the ability to take responsibility, and the ability to unite others for everyday activities; the principles of continuity and succession, which ensure the constant transmission of the awareness of national values that underlie patriotic education of the youth; the principle of integration, which defines the comprehensive nature of patriotic education for children and youth; cultural relevance, according to which patriotic education of the youth is realised based on the history, language, and culture of the Ukrainian people; the principle of social harmony, which involves aligning the content and methods of patriotic education with the actual political and socio-economic conditions of the educational process; the principle of personal reflection in the concept of criticality and self-sufficiency; educational optimism, which is determined by confidence in the strength and abilities of the younger generation, their capacity for high productivity; and pedagogical competence, which is seen in the correct targeted use of pedagogical forms, tools, and methods, and the selection of optimally functional content in the process of patriotic education (Bukhun, 2021; Tsipan, 2022; Kremen, 2020).

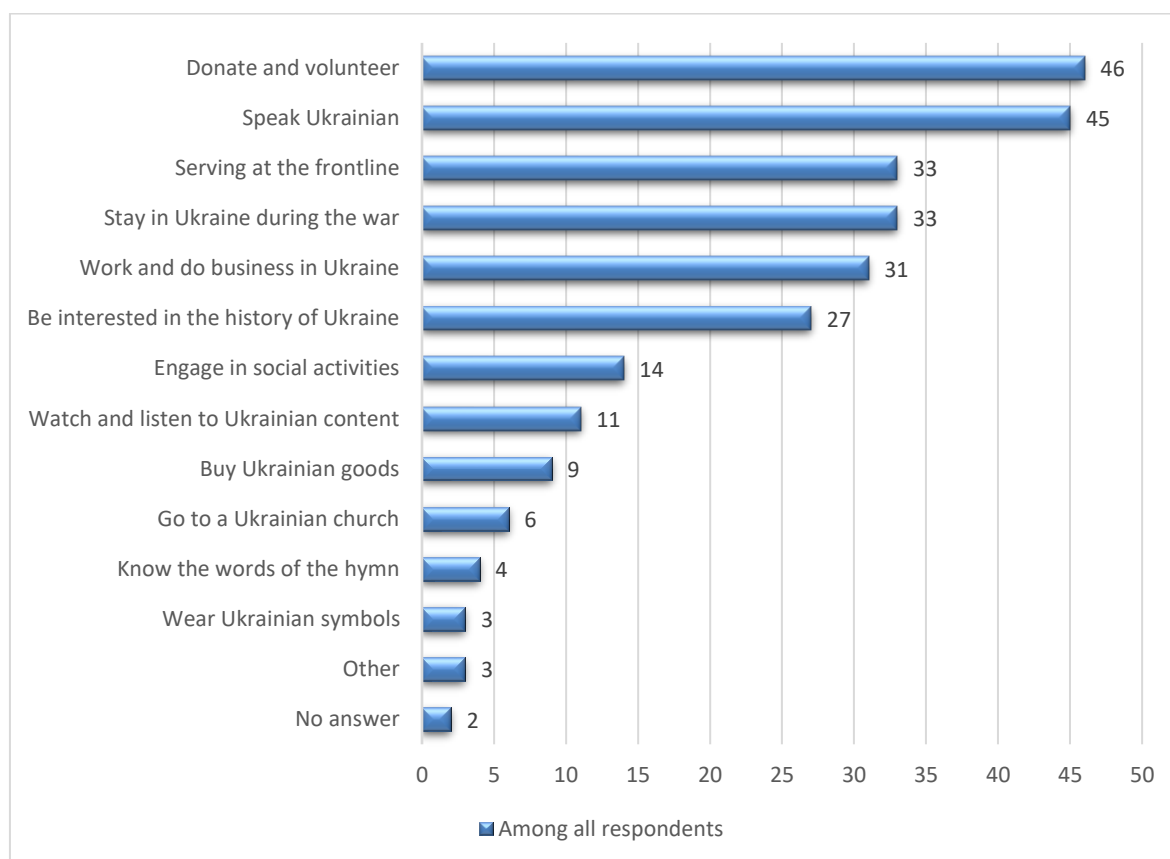


Figure 1 Question: “What do you consider to be signs of patriotism?”. *Source:* Rating Online (2023).

The sense of patriotism is positioned as the motivational foundation of patriotic education. The actively growing and developing individual must be educated creatively. The personal life experience of a young person should be filled with purposeful actions approved by their peers and adults (Kosenchuk, 2022; Komashko & Shulha, 2023). Such experience is positioned as the driving force for patriotic actions. Therefore, the strategy of patriotic education requires the successful realisation of these actions. This will support the positive self-esteem of the young person, stimulating and motivating them towards prospective activity in the specified direction.

The priority methods of cultivating patriotism include (Dziubenko, 2023; Komashko & Shulha, 2023; Horban, 2019):

1) *Spiritual identification* – by engaging with their people both historically and in real-time, the young person must not only check their values but also actively integrate those most inherent to the nation;

- 2) *Perception of a historical figure or contemporary as a role model in the aspect of patriotism* – the content of emulation is positioned as the young person's patriotic action and the patriotic actions of representative figures;
- 3) *Integration of youth into everyday patriotically oriented activities with their peers*, which will lead to the collective experience of participating in the realisation of aspirations;
- 4) *Spiritual reflection*, in which youth can conduct a practical critical analysis of their actions and motivations, thus forming an individual patriotic trajectory;
- 5) *Appropriate independence*, related to the value motivation of the individual's life activities, in which participants in the process of patriotic education should not interfere to prevent the process of alienation;
- 6) *Inner value potential of patriotic action*, which is based on the axiom that the growing individual acquires resilience skills when fulfilling the social role of a mentor to their peer;
- 7) *Nurturing confidence in one's patriotic actions* is an essential value factor for the growing individual, who must learn to perceive the truth about any fragment of their actions while maintaining originality.

The strategic directions for the fundamentalisation of the system of patriotic education of the youth are acquiring new characteristics today, driven by the active digitalisation of the educational environment. Innovative pedagogical strategies involve the extensive use of interactive tools, project-based educational technologies, social media, and software materials, which allow young people to represent themselves as creators of patriotic actions. In the online contact environment, a collective value effect and social position are formed, which positively affects the effectiveness of the educational process.

The education of the younger generation in the context of the formation of patriotism and socio-civic competence has been. It continues to be studied by several scholars and educators. The pedagogical foundational concepts of legal and moral education, as well as the primary means, principles, and methods of the formation and development of civic qualities in the individual under the current conditions, have been developed in the research of scholars (Mulska et al., 2022; Sobko et al., 2022; Malkoç & Öztürk, 2021), who consider patriotic education within the concept of fostering a sense of belonging to the nation, loyalty to the Motherland, and the prioritisation of public interests over personal ones. According to contemporary authors (Krawatzek, 2022; Kortukova et al., 2023; Borodai, 2020), civic feelings are built based on children's relationships with their immediate surroundings and are founded on the example set by adults. Scholars position the priority vectors of patriotic education as the formation of knowledge about national symbols and values, historical facts, traditions, customs, and the cultural characteristics of one's people.

Some scholars identify the senior preschool age as the most suitable and appropriate period for actively nurturing patriotic qualities. In particular, researchers (Hora al., 2023; Kanishevskaya & Malinoshevsky, 2023) emphasise the need to establish the foundations of socio-civic patriotic education precisely at the preschool age. In this case, the essential components are the cultivation of spiritual and value orientations within the framework of a personality-oriented approach. The results of the research of scientists (Hora al., 2023; Kanishevskaya & Malinoshevsky, 2023) have a consequential significance for the fundamentalisation of the system of patriotic education of young people in modern society. The conclusions of the above studies confirm the results of the current article in the context of priority strategies for fundamentalising the system of patriotic education of young people, including spiritual identification and reflection, integration of young people into everyday patriotic activities and projects, development of the internal value potential of patriotic action, fostering trust in it, positioning historical figures or contemporaries as role models.

In his scientific research, Van (2022) highlights the critical prerequisites for the successful patriotic education of youth, including social adaptation and orientation and the integration of an individual's social and personal experience. The results of Van's (2022) research confirm the conclusions of this article about the importance of forming personal values and competences in childhood and adolescence, which will synergistically determine the attitude of the individual to himself or herself and the world around him or her, influencing his or her actions and behavioural reactions in the context of patriotism.

According to the scholar Basir et al. (2020), a child's socio-civic competence is positioned as an integral characteristic of the individual, combining emotional-motivational features, social activity, and the humanistic orientation of personality development. We must agree with the authors that the concept of patriotic education is a scientific and applied problem that is part of the theory of education, functioning as a harmoniously organised whole.

The problems of forming social competence and patriotic education through interactive interaction and its connection with emotional intelligence were addressed by Saputra et al. (2023). The scholars reflect on the role of principles of effective communication, which are the foundation of social interaction. The conclusions of the scientists emphasise and explain, to some extent, the results of the current study in the context of the factors influencing the transformation of sectoral concepts in the current conditions of social progress, as well as the goals, objectives and organisational and legal framework of patriotic education of youth. There is a unified opinion that the issue of patriotic education should apply the same methodological principles, methods and approaches as the process of educating young people in general.

In particular, Akhmadiev (2021) emphasises the need to develop the humanistic, axiological, and ethical aspects of the digital transformation of educational systems. The researcher argues that the effectiveness of educational projects largely depends on the creative potential they contain and the unconventional solutions used, which, on the one hand, ensure

educational novelty and, on the other hand, are of interest to the participants in the educational process, significantly enhancing the effectiveness of the system of patriotic education of the younger generation. It is necessary to agree with the author and develop further the issues he studies in the context of the priorities of patriotic education of young people in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war and the post-war period, which are characterised by national orientation, consolidation and integration, preservation of national identity, social harmony, personal reflection, constructive leadership, continuity and succession.

4. Conclusion

Patriotic education of the youth represents a comprehensive, targeted, and systematic activity by government authorities, educational institutions, families, and other social institutions aimed at instilling in the younger generation a sense of love for the Motherland, loyalty to it, a high level of patriotic consciousness, and readiness to fulfil their civic and constitutional duty in defending Ukraine's national interests, and concern for the well-being of the people.

For the effective implementation of patriotic education for the youth, a set of tasks related to developing a methodology for patriotic education within Ukraine's educational system must be carried out both in the short and long term. The current dynamics of the social environment require applied research to create educational innovations in the patriotic education of youth. This process involves fostering the necessary moral and volitional qualities, national identity, civic consciousness, and essential competencies in the security field among children and youth.

Justifying the scientific-theoretical and methodological foundations of patriotic education of the youth highlights the need to consider the current experience of national resistance and conduct monitoring studies on the level of patriotic consciousness among students. Among the priority strategies for the fundamentalisation of the patriotic education system for youth are spiritual identification and reflection, integrating youth into everyday patriotically oriented activities and projects, developing the inner value potential of patriotic action and confidence in it, positioning historical figures or contemporaries as role models, and fostering appropriate independence.

Further scientific development is needed on issues such as differentiating strategies for patriotic education of children and youth of different age groups, patriotic education in extracurricular and artistic educational institutions, and the digitalisation of patriotic education.

Ethical Considerations

Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Funding

This research did not receive any financial support.

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