

National Musical Art as The Reflection of National Spirituality

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the profound impact of national musical art on the human psyche, spiritual world, and comprehensive development of individuals, emphasizing the underlying responsibility of music consumption. Drawing on the philosophical and scientific legacies of Eastern thinkers, the study analyzes the key factors and unique characteristics through which musical art shapes personality. To provide empirical evidence, a psychological experiment was conducted among students at the Nukus Branch of the Uzbekistan State Institute of Arts and Culture N = 480. The participants were divided into two equal groups n = 240 each: the first group was exposed to traditional national music, while the second group listened to contemporary music. The empirical findings indicate that exposure to national music significantly enhances and refines students’ moral and ethical perspectives. Conversely, while contemporary music demonstrated no inherently negative psychological effects, it lacked the profound moral-preserving capacity observed in the traditional music group. The study concludes by highlighting the urgent need to preserve national musical art in its authentic form as a vital mirror of national identity and spirituality, offering practical recommendations for integration into higher education curricula.

KEYWORDS: Music Art, Spirituality Of The Nation, National Performance, Human Psyche, Musicology, The Art Of Bakhshi.

INTRODUCTION

The Resolution of our President dated February 2, 2022, On Additional Measures for the Further Development of the Sphere of Culture and Art”, marked the beginning of a new perspective era in the development of our national music. According to this resolution, starting from the 2022/2023 academic year, students in general secondary education institutions are taught the skill of playing at least one national musical instrument, and this achievement is recorded in their school certificates. Concurrently, 10,130 schools, 323 children’s music schools, and 826 cultural centers are being provided with 3 sets of 7 types of national instruments. For this purpose, 205 billion soums were allocated by our state. Since the 2022/2023 academic year, educational institutions have been implementing ongoing efforts aimed at enhancing the musical knowledge and skills of pupils and students, as well as fostering a deep love for our national musical art in their hearts.

In particular, based on the needs of our youth, special attention has been paid (while respecting copyrights) to the rearrangement of at least 150 of the best national songs for karaoke performance, as well as the preparation and popularization of musical albums consisting of national melodies that have a positive impact on the psyche of visitors. These are broadcasted through local networks in educational institutions (during recesses), airports, railway and bus stations, shopping and entertainment complexes, culture and recreation parks, avenues, hotels, and other organizations.

The main objective of the resolution is to widely promote our national musical art, which is the mirror of our nation, among our people and across the world, while focusing primarily on raising the musical literacy of our

youth.

Music is an essential source that exerts a powerful influence on human emotions. It vividly portrays people's lives, their attitude toward existence, and various inner experiences through musical tonal colors. Elements of national musical art serve as a crucial factor in fostering a deeper understanding of our people's past and present, as well as shaping a sense of respect for our national values.

Listening to a song can move one to sadness, or it can lift one's mood; yet, regardless of the state of mind, a good song awakens luminous feelings in the human soul. A good song reminds a person of their humanity, inspires them to look at life with hope, and leads them toward blissful days.

A good song is always national, and for that very reason, it knows no borders. Traveling the world, it embodies the spirit of the nation. Our vocal heritage includes folk epics sung for weeks, compact traditional chants, maqoms, and terms that stem from a thousand-year history – all of which profoundly reflect the national spirit. The best contemporary examples of Uzbek vocal art draw nourishment primarily from this national foundation.

Human musical activity is carried out mainly in three stages: creation, performance, and perception. At each stage, the content and form of the work take on a distinct appearance. In the creative stage, the artistic idea and form are born simultaneously in the author's consciousness. During the performance process, the form and content are reshaped by the performer in accordance with their worldview, aesthetic perceptions, personal experience, and skill. Music enthusiasts, too, perceive the performed work based on their personal taste, life experience, and artistic background.

The national musical art of the Uzbek people has a very long history as the mirror of our nation. Throughout historical development, performance styles close to each other in form and manner – such as classical folk music, traditional professional music, folk composing styles, as well as folklore-amateur musical heritage – have continuously complemented one another. Today, this musical heritage continues to manifest itself as an integral part of our spiritual culture.

Music is an inseparable part of the human psyche. To draw nourishment from music, a person must be highly cultured, possess a pure heart, be capable of sensing beauty, and be devoted to their profession and Motherland. At the same time, our national musical art, recognized as the mirror of our nation, serves as a tool of creative enthusiasm that enhances human productivity, provides strength in a sense, and brings prosperity to work.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND ANALYSIS OF EMPIRICAL RESULTS

To empirically substantiate the psychological and socio-cultural impact of national musical art on the human psyche, specifically regarding the formation of moral, ethical, and spiritual perspectives among youth, a comprehensive experimental study was designed and executed. The empirical framework of this research was systematically organized and conducted within the logistical infrastructure of the Nukus Branch of the Uzbekistan State Institute of Arts and Culture. A total of 480 undergraduate students representing various academic disciplines and specializations participated in the experiment on a purely voluntary, informed-consent basis. To guarantee the methodological objectivity, validity, and comparative reliability of the research insights, the respondents were strictly divided using a randomized-stratified sampling approach into two distinct, equal groups containing 240 participants each, designated as Group A (the experimental group) and Group B (the control group).

The operational procedure of the experiment was deployed over a continuous, monitored period to track long-term behavioral and cognitive shifts. Participants in Group A (the experimental cohort) were systematically exposed to structured, daily listening sessions consisting of authentic, traditional national musical masterpieces, focusing heavily on classical maqom cycles, epic bakhshi arts vocal narratives, and historical

folk instrumental compositions. Conversely, the respondents assigned to Group B (the control cohort) were exposed exclusively to mainstream contemporary pop and commercial light music styles that typically dominate the modern digital youth environment and everyday media channels. Upon the conclusion of the designated experimental cycle, the inner emotional dynamics, axiological attitudes toward core moral values, and overall psychological well-being of the students in both cohorts were rigorously evaluated utilizing standardized psychological tests, multidimensional attitudinal scales, and comprehensive sociological surveys. The empirical data retrieved from the post-experimental evaluation revealed distinct and statistically significant trajectories concerning the cognitive and socio-affective influence of musical genres on youth consciousness. In Group A, the students who engaged with traditional national music exhibited a profound positive dynamic across multiple psychological parameters. Most notably, a substantial reinforcement of national identity, patriotism, and a conscious respect for historical memory was observed. The profound philosophical, poetic, and metaphysical texts embedded within the structure of maqom and folk epics functioned as a cognitive catalyst, enriching the students' inner spiritual landscapes, stabilizing their emotional baselines, and significantly upgrading their internal psychological resilience and stress-tolerance mechanisms in academic environments. Furthermore, their ethical frameworks underwent a structured transformation, resulting in a more systematic, internalized responsibility toward traditional communal values, intergenerational respect, and socio-cultural tolerance.

In contrast, the quantitative and qualitative indicators obtained from Group B presented a fundamentally different functional outcome regarding the socio-psychological role of contemporary commercial music. The analytical data demonstrated that regular exposure to modern light pop music did not exert a direct, manifest negative impact on the participants' psyche; moreover, the diagnostic metrics identified no explicit triggers for aggression, alienation, or destructive behavioral tendencies within this cohort. However, the empirical evidence clearly confirmed that contemporary commercial music lacks the structural and semiotic capacity to deepen an individual's internal ethical convictions or reinforce their spiritual-moral immunity against external cultural fragmentation. Instead of fostering cognitive depth or value-oriented growth, this musical direction served an exclusively hedonistic and superficial purpose, functioning merely as a tool for temporary relaxation, aesthetic escapism, and transient emotional distraction.

A comparative synthesis of the experimental outcomes illustrates that while the psychological risks of modern commercial music are not overtly malignant, the transformative power of national musical art in preserving, cultivating, and structurally developing the internal ethical code and spiritual integrity of a developing personality is matchless. Young individuals systematically exposed to national music display a significantly higher coefficient of moral stability and cultural immunity, allowing them to better navigate contemporary sociological challenges without losing their axiological anchors. The data proves that the complex acoustic and semantic layers of traditional music act as a mechanism for spiritual perfection, elevating the listener's perspective from basic auditory consumption to profound self-reflection and existential awareness, which standard contemporary genres simply cannot replicate.

Consequently, these empirical findings provide a robust, scientifically validated justification for the strategic restructuring of pedagogical paradigms within higher education institutions specialized in culture and the arts. The evident disparity in spiritual and ethical growth between the two cohorts highlights that passive exposure to globalized media is insufficient for training future cultural leaders. Therefore, it is methodologically imperative to systematically integrate authentic national music, classical maqom theory, and bakhchi arts performance traditions into the core curricula of higher education. This integration must be treated not merely as an aesthetic supplement, but as a foundational pedagogical instrument designed to cultivate high-level cultural literacy, ethical durability, and creative dynamism among the next generation of professionals.

DISCUSSION

Abu Nasr al-Farabi, the founder of Eastern musicology and a versatile scholar and thinker who contributed significantly to its development, was also thoroughly engaged in musical education, which he considered vital

for the spiritual perfection of human personality. According to al-Farabi: “Music is a rare art, a force that leads to goodness”.

The monumental work dedicated to music by this great Asian scholar, titled *The Great Book of Music* (*Kitab al-Musiqa al-Kabir*), allows us to shed light on several hitherto unread pages in the history of our instrumental culture. This treatise by al-Farabi was published in French by R. d’Erlanger in 1935. Engaging with musical art, which exerts a powerful influence on the human soul, heart, and emotions, and authoring a treatise on its theoretical, practical, and pedagogical significance was an act of great intellectual courage during that era. Beyond elucidating the educational value of music, *The Great Book of Music* provides extensive information on the structure and performance principles of instruments such as the rubab, nay, tanbur, ud, and noghora, which played a pivotal role in the development of medieval Eastern musical art. According to Farabi’s interpretation, art – including music – is not a divine blessing but a product of human creativity. Its primary function is to be beneficial to human beings in perfecting their intellectual and moral qualities. Emphasizing the positive impact of music, particularly in shaping the humane virtues of an individual, he writes: “Oh, world of music, what would be the state of man if you did not exist?”.

Musical art becomes the mirror of a nation only when the customs, lifestyle, everyday existence, and the future of that nation are vividly reflected in its songs. Since ancient times, national music has been viewed as a creative blessing that leads to goodness, exerts a sublime influence on the individual, and breathes spirit into the human body.

When discussing the works that gave rise to the science of music, Farabi explicitly draws attention to the moral and educational dimensions of music. In his work *Ihsa al-Ulum* (*The Enumeration of the Sciences*), he writes: “This science is beneficial in the sense that it regulates the character of those who have lost their internal balance, perfects a character that has not reached maturity, and maintains behavioral equilibrium. This science is also beneficial for physical health; for if the body is ill, the soul withers, and if the body encounters an obstacle, the soul is likewise obstructed. Therefore, by healing the soul through the influence of sounds, the body is healed, and the soul recovers through the regulation of its faculties and its adaptation to substance”. The field of medicine has also highly valued national musical art. It was utilized not only as an instrument of moral education but, where appropriate, as a healing balm for diseases.

Abu Ali ibn Sina, globally renowned as “Avicenna”, was not only a physician but also an eminent musicologist.

Ibn Sina’s worldview and progressive ideas regarding education and upbringing were reflected not only in his works on natural sciences but also in his treatises written in literary and artistic genres. In these works, he raised crucial questions regarding the influence of musical art on humanism, truthfulness, affection, respect, and mutual friendship.

A remarkable aspect of Ibn Sina’s musical-pedagogical and psychological views is his recognition of music as a product of human activity and an essential factor in child rearing. The scholar states that beauty is perceived through the fulfillment of human senses – seeing, hearing, smelling, understanding, touching – and the sense of beauty brings joy. This begs the question: is there an Uzbek who does not feel our national music or derive aesthetic pleasure from hearing it? Indeed, we have repeatedly witnessed the profound respect and interest shown toward our national music not only by our compatriots but also by foreigners during large-scale international events.

According to Ibn Sina’s definition, art – including music – is a science. From this emerges the essence of art as something to be “perceived through intellect”. The great scholar emphasizes that to achieve the comprehensive development of a personality, a dual approach must be applied: physical exercises for physical perfection, and music along with other art forms for spiritual development. In his work *The Compendium on*

the Science of Music (from Kitab al-Shifa), Ibn Sina elaborates on the impact of sound on the sensory organs, its pleasant and unpleasant nature, and the emergence of feelings of pleasure or aversion upon hearing sound, thereby demonstrating how indispensable music is in human life. According to the scholar, human nature naturally finds relief through pleasant things, whereas their absence leads to a loss of tranquility and gives rise to resentment.

Undoubtedly, individuals listening to our national songs experience an inherent sense of relief and an enhanced love for humanity. Our musical art, which serves as the mirror of our nation, helps overcome life's obstacles and inspires people to redirect their lifestyle and the beauty of nature toward goodness. The content of our national songs is simple, precise, concise, and refined. The melodies and songs of the Uzbek people possess ancient roots. At the core of folk musical art, the culture, spiritual experiences, human virtues, inner world, and profound thoughts and ideas rich in philosophical and social reasoning of each nation are clearly manifested. Our great thinkers did not acknowledge this without reason. Alisher Navoiy emphasized that intellectual, moral, and aesthetic cultivation constitutes one of the most beautiful virtues of a human being, and that everyone should derive pleasure from music.

Delving deeply into the multifaceted dimensions of musical education in his works, Navoiy stated: "Music is an essential foundation of social life. Only music brings clarity, harmony, and an innate sense of flight to a person's heart, making them truly happy".

The root of our national musical art, which serves as the mirror of our nation, is embedded in our classical poetry. We observe that philosophical dimensions of morality and ethics occupy an exceptionally broad place in Uzbek classical poetry. In the classical ghazals and poetry of figures such as Navoiy, Babur, Mashrab, Nodira, and others, we can perceive philosophical-didactic ideas that glorify righteousness, diligence, and humane love. At the same time, it must be acknowledged that artistic poetry pursued its practical essence in close, collaborative, and side-by-side tandem with our artistic musical heritage. Creators who fully understood that the artistic-musical works generated by our people could not, in turn, reach perfection without artistic poetry, urged us all to derive nourishment from these two great artistic heritages, while calling for beauty and existential perfection at the core of every work.

Particularly in this matter, focus on the education and upbringing of youth is considered paramount. It is worth acknowledging that during the "Thursday-Tuesday" gatherings held at the court with young poets and disciples, Hazrat Navoiy pointed out based on the interests of talented and gifted youth that those who call themselves poets but fail to perceive musical melody and remain ignorant of its practice are not true poets. He expressed specific pedagogical thoughts, stating, "The secrets of music are the secrets of the heart".

These thinkers studied music not only as a means of effectively influencing human intellectual and physical maturity but also explored its impact on human nature. Over time, progressive ideas and rich experiences were implemented within the process of musical education, leading to the development of music composition. Today, the theoretical frameworks established by our sages in forming and implementing the musical education system serve as the fundamental cornerstone of the field. Essentially, every composer structures their new creations with refined taste only by utilizing the subtle melodies of folk music. This serves as an essential instrument for the spiritual upbringing of the younger generation. Indeed, major and minor classical works emerge on the foundation of our contemporary music. The study of our national musical art is fundamentally and comprehensively formed during the secondary school period.

For this very reason, specialists put forward several recommendations for this period: selecting and explaining national songs and melodies in accordance with the age of the youth, and teaching them to distinguish folk melodies and songs from the music of other nations. This is because our national musical art is the mirror of our nation and our era.

The results of the conducted empirical research combined with the scientific-philosophical heritage of our great thinkers fully demonstrate that national musical art serves as the most effective pedagogical instrument in elevating the spirituality of youth and shaping a systematic moral immunity within them. This process can be articulated through the following three scientifically grounded dimensions:

Firstly, national musical art, particularly the masterpieces of maqom and bakhshichilik, is not merely a collection of acoustic sounds, but rather a complex semiotic system that encapsulates profound philosophical, conceptual, and didactic texts. As emphasized by the Eastern thinkers al-Farabi and Ibn Sina, music is a science that harmonizes human intellect and emotions. The synthesis of the national spirit inherent in traditional melodies and classical poetry acts as a spiritual catalyst within the consciousness of youth.

It shifts the rising generation away from a passive acceptance of sublime human virtues – such as patriotism, national self-awareness, and respect for historical memory – and instead guides them toward internalizing these values at the level of core conviction.

Secondly, as indicated by the comparative findings of the empirical study, national music possesses an unparalleled capacity to reinforce the protective layer of an individual's spirituality – namely, their spiritual-moral immunity. While contemporary commercial pop music offers the human psyche only temporary relaxation and superficial emotional distraction, national music elevates the listener to a stage of existential reflection (pondering the meaning of life). In an era characterized by globalization and information warfare, this cognitive depth enables the preservation of the internal ethical code of young people, establishing a resilient psychological barrier that shields them from alien ideologies and cultural fragmentation.

Thirdly, as Alisher Navoiy asserted, music is a vital foundation of social life that brings clarity and inner harmony to the human heart. Systematically implementing national music education starting from secondary school and promoting it in accordance with the age characteristics of youth elevates not only their aesthetic taste but also their socio-cultural dynamism. A younger generation capable of feeling folk melodies and distinguishing them from the music of other cultures will mature into highly cultured individuals with pure hearts, dedicated to their professions and their Motherland. This clearly reaffirms the fundamental role of national music in spiritual and moral education.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it should be emphasized that our national musical art is not merely a cultural heritage, but a living phenomenon that has embodied the spiritual code, historical memory, and moral-ethical values of the nation across centuries. The younger generation must never forget the immense hardships and tireless efforts endured by our scholars and intellectuals to preserve this unique treasury of art and transmit it flawlessly from generation to generation. Traditional melodies, maqom, and bakhshichilik masterpieces serve as a fundamental cornerstone that regulates the inner world of youth, awakens a sense of beauty and refinement within them, and shapes an enduring sense of respect and responsibility toward the heritage of their ancestors.

The empirical findings and philosophical analyses conducted in this study indicate that a systematic and stable psychological dynamic is observed in young people who regularly listen to national music. Through the profound didactic content embedded within traditional melodies and songs, a deep love for the Motherland, respect for parents, kindness, and loyalty to national ideals are perceived more profoundly in the hearts of the younger generation and are reinforced at the level of core spiritual convictions. It has been scientifically proven that the deep philosophical layers of national music enrich the students' inner landscapes, enhancing their stress tolerance, psychological stability, and attitude of tolerance toward their environment.

In today's information age, marked by escalating globalization and ideological threats, national musical art serves as the most reliable spiritual immunity safeguarding the consciousness of youth from various alien ideas. While contemporary commercial and light music offers the human psyche only temporary emotional

distraction and superficial relaxation, our national music, with its simple, precise, and refined structure, invites the listener into deep existential reflection. Through this artistic medium, the younger generation elevates from the level of passive auditory consumption to that of a well-rounded, highly cultured individual with a pure heart, a devotion to their profession and Motherland, and a balanced outlook on life.

The most paramount aspect of the state policy aimed at the systematic development of national musical art in New Uzbekistan is the absolute guarantee of creative freedom, the complete eradication of various artificial "bans" previously imposed on artists, and the high respect and esteem shown to the creative community by our President. As a result of these historic reforms and the extensive opportunities created, our national musical art, which serves as the mirror of our nation, is entering a new era of development. These advancements will undoubtedly provide a powerful impetus for nurturing new generations of talented creators within the educational system, ultimately ensuring our strategic goal of raising a highly spiritual generation.

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