

## THE NATIONAL IDEA AS THE BASIS OF EDUCATIONAL POLICY OF UKRAINE

**Olga Nezhyva**

Doctor of Philosophical Sciences, Associate Professor,  
National University of Food Technologies, Ukraine  
e-mail: nezhyva@gmail.com, orcid.org/0000-0003-4229-6754

### Summary

This paper examines the national idea as the basis of the educational policy of Ukraine. The author shows that one of the main factors, which are the basis of Ukrainian education, is the national idea around which this or that society consolidates, and which it recognizes as a reference point for its further development. The author notes that the national ideal is the next important element of the national idea. After all, it is the main spiritual force of progress, organization and purposefulness of efforts, and all the creative energy of the people for the establishment of state independence. The author has determined that progressive components of the Ukrainian national idea can become: the idea of integration and consolidation (both national values with universal ones, and actually Ukrainian national integration and consolidation); the idea of building a civil society, an open society with equal opportunities, and a legal state; the idea of sovereignty, collegiality, and state, political, economic, cultural, spiritual, moral freedom; the idea of democratic transformations; the idea of "positive" development, progressive progress.

**Key word:** national idea, Ukraine, education, educational policy, national identity.

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### 1. Introduction

The world does not stand still, but it is constantly in motion. Changes are in the world every second. These changes occur in everything that surrounds a person, and also, these changes occur in the person himself/ herself. Changes do not bypass education, since education is the source of the vast majority of changes in the world. Changes in education, or the transformation of education, greatly depend on society, and in particular on its monolithic nature.

In this context, the study of education, the development of projects of future possible ways of its reformation and development as a tool for building civil society becomes extremely relevant from a scientific point of view and extremely important from a praxeological point of view. Education is a necessary condition for the consolidation of all social institutions, the formation of new worldview and value orientations of the individual. It should be coordinated with the national idea. After all, the national idea is an important factor in education, socialization, and development of a harmonious spiritual personality as a bearer of national values, cultural heritage, and traditions of the people.

### 2. The aim of the study

The aim of the article is to conduct a study of the national idea as the basis of the educational policy of Ukraine.

### 3. Analysis of the latest research and publications

The study of the national idea is represented by a huge collection of works by domestic and foreign scientists. Despite this, the Ukrainian national idea has not been formed yet. According to O. Zabuzhko's statement, it is rare that an outstanding Ukrainian thinker did not turn to the problem of the national idea, but it still has not acquired a clear conceptual form as a certain theoretical and methodological system (*Zabuzhko, 2009*). According to analyzing the modern horizons of the existence of the Ukrainian national idea, O. Maiboroda in the book *Ukrainian national idea: integrative possibilities of virtuality* notes that in the despairing and significantly polarized society of modern Ukraine, the national idea is doomed to exist in an elusive, textually unformed, essentially virtual form (*Maiboroda, 2002*).

### 4. Results and Discussion

First of all, in order to develop an effective national educational policy, we must understand the logic behind the construction of modern educational technologies and understand their mechanism of action.

Therefore, let us focus on understanding the logic of building a futuristic educational policy project:

- in the first place should be the national idea, around which this or that society consolidates, and which it recognizes as a reference point for its further development;
- in second place is the state educational policy, which, based on the national idea and the desire of society to develop in the specified direction, develops a strategy for the development of national education.
- in the third place – the formation of the image of the future representative of society, to achieve which the educational process will be aimed.

We will try to apply this methodological approach to the construction of a futuristic project of the educational policy of Ukraine, for which, first of all, we will turn to the problem of the formation of the Ukrainian national idea. The working hypothesis of our research is the thesis that the image of the future Ukrainian in the educational policy of Ukraine should be consistent with the national idea and be based on the national cultural heritage. The national idea is a form of reflection of the nation on the essence and meaning of the existence of its community, reflects a set of axiological and teleological orientations of national existence. Moreover, the national idea is formed on the basis of socio-historical traditions, culture, mentality of the nation, and accordingly influences these factors itself, functioning as a kind of life-creating consciousness, the source of cultural and historical dynamics of national existence. The Ukrainian national idea is a reflexive reflection of the symbiosis of Ukrainian interests in the political, socio-economic, spiritual-cultural, and historical spheres. Its systematic, complex perception and balanced design as teleological priorities is an extremely complex worldview and interpretation problem, which for objective reasons turned out to be the most acute at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. It is the period of intensive formation of meaningful and value-targeted priorities of Ukrainian life (*Nezhyva, 2017*).

According to the well-known modern Israeli philosopher Pinchas Polonsky, the national idea is the meaning of the existence of this or that nation, state. This is what people are willing to sacrifice for. It is not necessary to sacrifice life, but rather time, money, invested efforts (*Nezhyva & Teslenko, 2022*). For example, the national idea of Switzerland is the idea of a union of free people; the national idea of the USA: self-made man – "a person who made himself";

the national idea of Israel is the creation of a state that lives peacefully with its neighbors and makes alliances with them;

Certain difficulties exist regarding the formulation of the essence of the national idea, its place and role in the life of society. This is explained by the fact that the very concept of *national idea* is multifaceted, polymorphic, and multidimensional. L. Nagorna singles out the following levels of existence of the national idea:

1. The level of everyday consciousness. Everyday consciousness contains this concept mainly a sense of shared historical fate, as well as the direct dependence of the fate of an individual on the nation and state, which he considers his own. L. Nagorna notes that at this everyday level, the national idea is the ideal of society that emerges in the public consciousness of the nation and reflects a generalized (often instinctive, subconscious) idea of its place in the surrounding world (Nagorna, 2003).

2. The level of politicized consciousness. At this level, L. Nagorna emphasizes that the politicized consciousness notices in the national idea, first of all, a system of symbols and a volitional impulse that acts as the spiritual basis of national movements and national self-identification, the core of national ideology, the political project of the nation's future.

3. The third level of generalization is theoretical. The national idea mainly looks like a starting point of view and methodological position in the theories of state formation, national security, national interest, etc.

4. The fourth level is cognitive. L. Nagorna underlines that this is an epistemological construction that reflects the views of prominent representatives of public opinion on the processes of nation-building, state-building, on the place and role of nationalism.

The complexity of the study of the Ukrainian national idea is also due to the polyphonic representation of this concept in scientific and journalistic literature.

What can the Ukrainian national idea be? According to P. Polonsky, European Orthodoxy could become a new national idea for Ukraine, and the country would become the guardian of Orthodoxy for the whole world, and its modernizer. According to the researcher A. Galchynskyi, the national idea is to build Ukraine in Ukraine. Our strategy should be guided by this. At first glance, the proposed thesis deserves attention. But upon closer examination, it is not entirely clear what the author means by the construction of "Ukraine in Ukraine"? According to the text of the interview, A. Galchynskyi does not decipher his thesis, because, like many others, it remains just a beautiful phrase without a meaningful load.

O. Hryniv in his work *Ukrainian national idea as a means of national self-awareness* has singled out several approaches to the interpretation of the Ukrainian national idea. The most biased for political and conjunctural reasons generally denies the Ukrainian national idea. Proponents of this approach claim that state-building processes should be carried out on the basis of a multinational idea, justifying this position by the fact that in the era of globalization, international integration, and post-industrial society, the national idea has lost its relevance, as it met the needs of the past era. This approach does not take into account the needs of the formation of the Ukrainian nation, rejects the Ukrainian national idea as the basis of the consolidation of society (Nezhyva, 2015).

All proposals and conclusions on solving the problem of the Ukrainian national idea can be divided into two main directions. These are such directions as:

1. The first one accumulates ideas and views, the essence of which boils down to the fact that in the conditions of globalization and multiculturalism. The Ukrainian national idea is a superstition that should not be wasted.

2. The second direction collects various attempts to solve this problematic issue – numerous formulations and definitions of the Ukrainian national idea. Representatives of the second trend believe that the Ukrainian national idea is like a coat of arms, a national flag, therefore it must be present.

O. Pashkova, researching the development of the topic of the Ukrainian national idea, notes that there are common points of view according to which the national idea is called (*Pashkova, 2008*):

- clearly formulated common interest of the absolute majority of citizens, which unites them on the way to a common goal;
- a fundamental idea, with the help of which unity of actions of different social groups is achieved;
- an integrative factor of the social life of the country;
- a common goal and long-term strategy for the development of society;
- spiritual orientation of social life;
- a specific pragmatic goal;
- the answer – what the nation was, what it is, and what it wants to be in the future;
- widely respected values and priorities in society, which are part of the characteristic features and mentality of the nation;
- a public contract between a citizen and the state on mutual obligations and guarantees, principles of personal and social life;
- an ethical platform that enables a person to realize himself as a member of a certain nation and to feel pride for this belonging, etc.

The special role of national identity as an aspect of the national idea is based on the ethnos (people). Furthermore, the ethnos rises to an understanding of its position and purpose in the world, its common interests and ideals, the need for joint struggle for their realization, awareness of the national-state community, and state sovereignty. Moreover, E. Smith in the book *National Identity* claims that national identity primarily characterizes a political community, and contains its most important features: 1) historical territory, or native land; 2) shared myths and historical memory; 3) common mass, public culture; 4) uniform legal rights and obligations for all members; 5) a joint economy with the ability to move within the national territory (*Nezhyva, 2015*).

Modern researchers distinguish five most important sources of national identity (identities of the nation). Let us turn to O. Udod about this, because she successfully separates them. Firstly, these include human beliefs. According to O. Udod, a nation exists as long as its members recognize each other as compatriots, recognize that their common characteristics are similar, and strive to continue coexistence (*Udod, 2011*). Secondly, O. Udod highlights the common historical past (and not only victorious moments, but also defeats), common responsibilities, and ideas about the common future. Thirdly, O. Udod considers common actions (decisions, achieving results) to be the most important sources of national identity, i.e. effective identity. Fourthly, as she notes that permanent residence in one country, common homeland, state. This is the territorial element that strengthens the connection between the nation and the state as a political institution that exercises legal power within a certain space also refers to the sources of national identity. Fifth, O. Udod singles out common characteristics that are united by the concept of "national character", common culture, common political principles (democracy, rule of law, etc.), which are directly included in the sources of national identity (identities of the nation) (*Udod, 2011*).

The next stage of the study of the national idea is the national vocation. If the national identity answers the question "Who are we?", then the national vocation answers another

question - "Why do we exist in this world?" The national vocation forms a people's idea of its purpose, role, and function in the world community, in the environment of other peoples. So, after self-awareness of one's "national self" and acceptance of one's national "self-concept" (national identity), distinguishing oneself among other peoples, that is, answering the question "Who is my nation" (and my "national self"). At the second level of self-knowledge, the national idea should answer the question: "Why does my nation exist, what is its purpose in the world and what the meaning of its existence is." On this basis, a national messianism is formed in many nations. According to B. Kuchta, a national messianism is a chosenness of this nation which from a certain point of views (*Nezhyva, 2017: 250*). Note that the hyperbolization of the national vocation transforms into national messianism, which can cause a false motivation to rule over other nations.

The national ideal is the next important element of the national idea. After all, it is the main spiritual force of progress, organization and purposefulness of efforts, and all the creative energy of the people for the establishment of state independence. A. Pashuk notes that the national ideal is not a temporary slogan, not a fad, not a shield to show off in front of *the world*, it is a great historical responsibility to the nation and to one's conscience.

The important stage of this study of the national idea is national values and priorities. According to A. Ruchka, the value priorities of the population of Ukraine identified the following five value syndromes (*Pashuk, 2005*):

1. The first value syndrome includes vital values i.e. health (4.74 points on a 5-point scale), family (4.72), children (4.67), well-being (4.67) (average score – 4.73).

2. The second value syndrome concerns social values i.e. creation of various opportunities in society for everyone, favorable moral and psychological climate in society, social equality (average score – 4.06).

3. The third value syndrome is traditionalist values: national and cultural revival, participation in religious life (average score – 3.47).

4. The fourth value syndrome is self-realization values i.e. interesting work (work), social recognition, raising the educational level, broadening the cultural horizons (average score – 3.70).

5. The fifth value syndrome covers political and civic values: state independence of the country, democratic development of the country, participation in the activities of political parties and public organizations, etc. (average score – 3.51).

The next element of the national idea is national interests. According to *Encyclopedia of Ethnocultural Studies*, the national interest is defined as a real reason for the actions of the nation and the state aimed at its survival, functioning, and development, or as a set of national goals and basic values that play an important role in strategy and tactics in the field of national security (*Encyclopedia, 2001: 421*). National interests are perceived needs, "cultured", and those that correspond to the system of values, on the basis of which the system of national interests is created in their certain hierarchical systematicity. National interests are not a mechanical collection of all the multifaceted public interests, it is a synthesis of the interests of the nation as an integrated community where separate individual and group interests are coordinated and reduced to a common denominator. A. Kolodiy defines national interests are interest in self-preservation and self-expression, to realization of one's socio-political and cultural potential, in a form peculiar to this nation (in other words, to the realization of the national idea). The core of national interests is the preservation and strengthening of national sovereignty, which means the power of the nation, its mastery of all opportunities to manage its own destiny (*Kolodiy, 1997*). Therefore, national interests should be a synthesis, and not a mechanical sum

of private and corporate interests. On this basis, a consensus is reached between the main social groups, between the ruling elite, and the whole society.

Let us try to define the main conceptual principles that will allow us to form the Ukrainian national idea. These are the main conceptual principles:

1. The first position, which, from our point of view, must be taken into account when conceptualizing the Ukrainian national idea is the understanding of the national idea as a dynamic phenomenon. The modern world is marked by trends of plasticity, variability and pluralism i.e. globalization, intensification of cross-cultural communications, information revolution, have affected the life of society, fundamentally changed ideas, values, interpersonal communications, moral norms, life goals, and strategies. These trends need to be taken into account in the process of conceptualizing the Ukrainian national idea.

2. The second important aspect of the conceptualization of the Ukrainian national idea is the understanding of the national idea as a multifunctional phenomenon, whose multiplier effect on society occurs due to the synergistic interaction of its functions. The national idea most fully manifests itself through the influence on political and generally social processes, in other words, through the following functions: nation-building and nation-genesis, methodological, worldview, ideological, prognostic, integration, mobilization, modernization, stabilization, functions of national education, and socialization.

3. The content of the methodological function of the national idea is the awareness of the community and its members of the surrounding world and the determination of the place of one's nation in it. As a result of this, theoretical concepts are formed that show the national unity of the people, culture, historical destiny, and common mentality; its individuality, uniqueness, uniqueness and difference from other peoples; as well as calling and role in the world process. On this basis, the nation creates its national identity and realizes its vocation in the world.

4. The worldview function of the national idea is a synthesis of theoretical knowledge and faith. Besides, it is based on the system of national values. A person, realizing the national idea as theoretical knowledge, passes it through the inner world.

5. Furthermore, the national idea has a state-building function, because it represents the basis of the ideology of state-building, shows the sovereignty of the nation over a certain territory, establishes mutual relations between the government and the people, legitimizing this government in society.

6. In addition, the national idea will perform a prognostic function. This means that with the help of this function, we can determine the development processes of society or nation based on the national ideal. It is in the national idea that the national dream turns into a national ideal.

7. The national idea implements an important integrative function, combining social and political groups of society (carriers of different, often opposing, interests) around the national ideal and national values, ensuring the consolidation of the community, its organization, and self-organization. The national idea unites both the elite and the masses, smooth out the contradictions between them, facilitates the coordination of their interests and forces them to subordinate their efforts to the achievement of a national goal.

8. The national idea also performs mobilization and modernization functions, between which there is a close connection. In the conditions of the destruction of the social structure, it is the nation as the most stable form of unity of a large group of people that is an indispensable prerequisite for the consolidation and mobilization of society in order to get out of the systemic crisis. The national idea in the context of these processes acts as one of the factors of mobilizing society in the processes of its modernization and qualitative transformations, provided that this idea reflects world processes and the place of one's nation in them. Under such conditions, there

is an outburst of passion, which determines the progress in national development, which gives the right to such a nation to take the main place in general civilizational processes.

9. The national idea plays an important role in ensuring stable development and promoting social balance in society, because it formulates national ideals, values, goals, and interests around which its citizens, social groups, classes, etc. unite. This contributes to overcoming opposition in society, reconciliation of conflicts, and the formation of national solidarity of different layers of the population for the purpose of fulfilling national interests, and realizing one's purpose in the world, which is marked by a national idea. On this basis, it is possible to achieve a balance of interests, and therefore to restore social balance, to ensure the stable and harmonious functioning of the national body.

10. The national idea is an important factor in the stabilization of international relations. By creating an international identity on the basis of its own national and cultural identity, the nation actually finds out the place, status and role of its own state in the system of international relations, as well as supports the balance of power and the formation of effective mechanisms for ensuring international security, which generally stabilizes the international system.

11. The national idea is an important factor in education, socialization, and development of a harmonious spiritual personality as a bearer of national values, cultural heritage, and traditions of the people.

Therefore, the conceptual basis of the formation of the Ukrainian national idea is the development of the content of the national idea on the basis of democracy, humanism, the development of a democratic society, and the development of an open society with equal opportunities. In this context, it is impossible not to agree with V. Bryukhovetskyi's opinion. He notes that in distinguishing and forming a national idea for Ukraine, it is necessary to look not only for those "pain points" that separate us, but also for "points of contact" that will unite us. After all, the most important task of the national idea for Ukraine is not only ensuring a dignified life for people (this is self-evident for any nation), but first of all, uniting the nation, which has been torn apart for quite a long time (*Bryukhovetskyi, 2007*).

From our point of view, modern world trends require the development of a Ukrainian national idea that will harmonize its own national ideal, national values, and national goals with universal ideals, values, and goals, and will try to optimally combine them.

In our opinion, productive components of the Ukrainian national idea should be:

- the idea of integration and consolidation (both national values with universal ones, and actually Ukrainian national integration and consolidation);
- the idea of building a civil society, an open society with equal opportunities, and a state governed by the rule of law;
- the idea of sovereignty, collegiality, and state, political, economic, cultural, spiritual, moral freedom;
- the idea of democratic transformations;
- the idea of "positive" development, progressive progress (moving away from the image of "suffering Ukraine" to the image of "happy Ukraine of the future").

## 5. Conclusions

So, we will conclude the analysis of the development of the national idea in its connection with educational policy with the following conclusion. One of the main factors, which are the basis of Ukrainian education, is the national idea around which this or that society consolidates, and which it recognizes as a reference point for its further development. In addition, progressive

components of the Ukrainian national idea can become: the idea of integration and consolidation (both national values with universal ones, and actually Ukrainian national integration and consolidation); the idea of building a civil society, an open society with equal opportunities, and a legal state; the idea of sovereignty, collegiality, and state, political, economic, cultural, spiritual, moral freedom; the idea of democratic transformations; the idea of "positive" development, progressive progress (moving away from the image of "suffering Ukraine" to the image of "happy Ukraine of the future").

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