

## SPIRITUAL EVOLUTION AS A DIRECTION FOR IMPROVING HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract: In light of the ongoing processes of civilizational progress and the impediments that impede its continued advancement, the matters concerning the establishment and reciprocal integration of the science and practice of spiritual evolution have gained heightened significance. This entails the scientific, theoretical, and methodological substantiation of spiritual development across multiple generations. Presently, our society is confronted with a state of global instability, which is evident in the form of political unrest and economic and political crises that exert influence over all aspects of public life. These phenomena are characterized by a decline in the prevalence of humanitarian values and the disregard for moral principles in the lives of individuals. The objective of this article is to elucidate the intricacies of spiritual evolution as a significant constituent of the human developmental process. Furthermore, it aims to underscore the trends observed in the examination of the spiritual aspect of societal development as documented in the scientific literature by researchers hailing from diverse countries. Methodology. Throughout the composition of this paper, various methods of data processing were employed, including induction, deduction, information synthesis, systemic analysis, structural analysis, comparative analysis, abstraction, and idealization. The study draws upon the findings of scientific research conducted within the domains of psychology, sociology, anthropology, and other relevant scientific disciplines. These research endeavors facilitated the establishment of connections between spirituality and human development. The study encompassed the identification of the primary and crucial theoretical aspects of the matters of spiritual evolution concerning its role in human development. Furthermore, it unveiled the principal trends observed in the research conducted by scientists worldwide concerning topics about spiritual development. The aim of the article was realized by analyzing peculiarities and the role of linguistic and cultural features of the concept of "war" in English and Ukrainian languages. The examined examples allowed the formulation of the following conclusions. First, mental representations may differ due to linguistic and cultural features. In a particular language and culture, the historical experience of its speakers is concentrated, and the mental representations of these speakers may differ from those of speakers of another language and culture. Secondly, the linguistic picture of the world is the leading research object in modern linguistics. It is a complex process, the study of which is dictated by both the development of linguistics and its specific directions, including linguoculturology. It has been proven that the concept serves as the central unit of this research, defining the historical component of the linguistic picture of the world and intending to explore the English language in conjunction with the culture and consciousness of the people. It is noted that in society, the linguistic and cultural concept of war plays a vital role as it occupies one of the central positions in the life of any nation. The historical-etymological and etymological analysis of words that appeared in the English language during the XXth century during armed conflicts allows identifying additional, previously unnoticed lexical-semantic features in the content of the key lexeme of the linguistic and cultural concept of war. The conclusion is drawn that the English language is undergoing another stage of development and enrichment with new words due to current armed conflicts. As this process still needs to be completed, it will continue attracting special attention from linguists to track changes in vocabulary in real time. Thus, the conceptual characteristics of the concept of war in Ukrainian and English language consciousness are a branching multitude of features, the central part of which is reflected with a significant degree of completeness in the definitions of explanatory dictionaries. Beyond these definitions, there remain characteristics of two types - etymological characteristics of concepts, on the one hand, and the most significant emotionally evaluative representations of war for the bearers of linguistic and cultural, on the other hand. The analysis of definitions in explanatory dictionaries, thesauri, and synonym dictionaries shows that the content of the conceptual component of the concept of war largely coincides with the mass and professional consciousness of Ukrainian and English speakers. The significant civilizational similarity between them can explain it. Differences are secondary and additional in nature, established in the associative field of concepts, and mainly come down to two points: the idea of eradicating the enemy in case of war in Ukrainian language consciousness (which is determined by the concentrated collective memory of the Ukrainian people regarding wars with ethnic groups that did not take prisoners of war, but exterminated them) and the idea of competitiveness as one of the characteristics of war in English consciousness (this understanding corresponds to the medieval knightly code of conduct).

Keywords: spiritual values, morality, spirituality, humanistic development, directions of spiritual renewal, cyclical nature of the spiritual needs of the individual

### 1 Introduction

The existence and normal development of society rely on the attainment of a suitable level of moral and spiritual principles. The formation and development of an individual's spiritual

values in the context of professional training necessitate the acknowledgment of specific conditions that can impede or foster the widespread adoption of moral and spiritual principles.

The theoretical section of this study provides a substantiation of the concept, essence, and significance of spiritual evolution as a pivotal domain for enhancing individual development.

The practical component of the study encompasses an evaluation of the foremost driving forces contributing to the humanization of contemporary society. It examines prominent trends in spiritual development that have recently gained momentum across a wide array of countries. Additionally, the practical part outlines areas for future research in the realm of human spiritual development that currently enjoy considerable effectiveness and popularity within both scientific and practical domains.

The study revealed that a prominent trend in the advancement of spirituality within contemporary society is the establishment of an environment characterized by interaction, mutual understanding, interethnic harmony, and the resolution of regional demographic challenges.

The objective of this study is to elucidate the intricacies surrounding the examination of the primary stages and trajectories of spiritual evolution as documented in the works of prominent global scholars.

### 2 Literature Review

The intricate composition of needs, motives, interests, goals, worldviews, ideals, and beliefs, which collectively shape an individual's orientation and manifest their attitude towards objective reality, serves as a socio-psychological and socio-pedagogical foundation for the process of human development. These elements also contribute to the formation of societal value orientations (Evans, 2023), (Liu, Tu, & He, 2023).

An individual is required to autonomously formulate and execute decisions, cultivate life plans, and construct their path in life. During spiritual development, individuals transition from perceiving and comprehending the world to actively engaging in its transformation. They commence actively asserting themselves within their professional endeavors (Balsa-Barreiro et al., 2019), (Hassan, 2023).

Spiritual activity is rooted in a specific theoretical and practical framework of knowledge encompassing the criteria necessary for effective problem-solving. It involves an ethical system of principles and values that govern interpersonal interactions with colleagues and various authorities. An individual's spirituality is inherently intertwined with humanistic and democratic ideals, and its values are founded upon the reverence for human beings and their inherent dignity (Btool et al., 2022).

The occupational requirements placed upon a professional necessitate a strong foundation in both general and specialized knowledge, an elevated sense of responsibility, the capacity for self-assessment and self-development, and adept interpersonal relationship management. The cultivation of spiritual values within an individual assumes a critical role in enhancing the psychological and pedagogical aspects of professional education. It engenders an environment conducive to fostering an active life stance, a sense of duty, courage, determination, and responsibility, as well as integrity and sincerity in interpersonal interactions. This entails the profound comprehension of the social significance of one's actions in any given situation (Mohamed et al., 2021), (Al-Kuwari, Al-Fagih & Koç, 2021).

In light of the foregoing, it is essential to underscore that the transition into adulthood within human society entails an individual's engagement in the acquisition of a comprehensive system of knowledge, norms, and skills. This process equips

individuals with the capacity to fulfill social roles, shoulder social responsibilities, and contribute to the creation of both material and spiritual values (Disli, Yilmaz & Mohamed, 2022). When assessing the role of spirituality in shaping the structure of an individual's personality, researchers contend that spiritual values embody humanity's most significant accomplishments. They represent purposeful ideals that foster the progressive development of both the individual and civilization as a whole. The psychological and educational dimensions of spiritual values encompass the personal attributes exhibited by individuals with heightened spirituality. These attributes serve as motivators and regulators of spiritually driven actions and behavior. Moreover, they serve as subjects of personal development and self-expression, while also preparing individuals for new advancements and achievements in the realm of humanity (Adshead et al., 2019).

Psychologists and sociologists delineate specific categories of spiritual values in their scholarly works, placing particular emphasis on ethical, aesthetic, heroic, humanistic, and altruistic values (Hayes & Hofmann, 2023), (Belisle, Dixon & Stanley, 2018).

An individual, functioning as a subject of spiritual development, and possessing a well-established system of values, assumes an active role as a bearer of moral norms. Other individuals can rely upon such individuals in resolving their own spiritual and practical dilemmas, as they possess an understanding of what holds general significance, stability, and perpetuity, as well as discernment regarding what lacks utility (Colbert et al., 2018). According to H.W. Wellman's research, the psychological mechanism underlying the formation of spiritual values can be perceived as a series of cognitive processes within the individual. This encompasses the development of elevated spiritual needs and motives, the exploration and absorption of pertinent spiritually significant information, the establishment of ideas, goals, plans, and programs for highly spiritual activities, behavior, actions, and deeds, as well as the attainment of emotional and psychological reinforcement through the consolidation of spiritual accomplishments (Wellman, 2018).

Francken et al. (2022) observe that a distinguishing attribute of a personality lies not in the mere assimilation, but in the progressive development of values encompassing universal significance, including spiritual values. Considering that spiritual qualities represent the pinnacle of human values, it is rational to postulate that the formation of spiritual values transpires solely at the individual level. It is imperative to recognize that spiritual values emerge initially at the subjective level of the individual, gradually evolving and acquiring an objective universal essence (Francken et al., 2022).

### 3 Materials and Methods

The study employed a content analysis methodology to scrutinize literary publications, including scientific articles, books, and other relevant sources on the research topic. This analytical approach facilitated an assessment of the current status of research on topics associated with spiritual development, enabling the identification of issues, trends, and the formulation of a comprehensive theoretical framework for further investigation.

### 4 Results

The scrutiny of scientific literature and periodical sources on the exploration of societal cultural trends facilitated the identification of prominent catalysts influencing the progression of the humanitarian component in recent years (Figure 1).

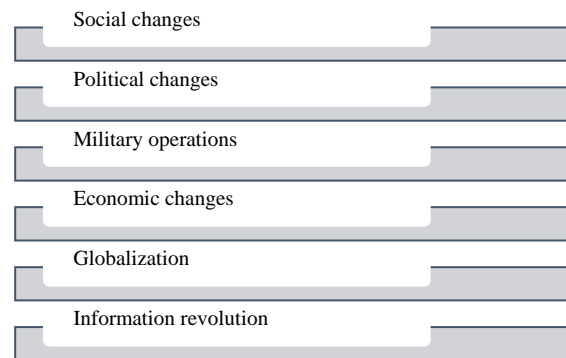


Figure 1. The main driving forces behind the development of the humanitarian component of modern society, %.

Source: compiled by the authors based on (Ginsburg & Jablonka, 2019), (Wellman, 2018).

As per scholarly discourse, the contemporary emphasis on human spiritual development is influenced significantly by socio-political changes and the information revolution.

This study identified a system of pivotal trends in spiritual development, which have witnessed escalating prominence across the majority of countries in recent times (Figure 2).

The analysis presented in Figure 2 illustrates that these trends primarily involve the establishment of an inclusive environment characterized by interaction, mutual understanding, and interethnic harmony across all ethnic constituents of society. These efforts foster the cultivation of spiritual and cultural unity among the populace and facilitate the resolution of regional demographic challenges.

Within the framework of this research endeavor, the authors have delineated areas warranting further exploration in the realm of societal spiritual development. These areas have been deemed as the most efficacious and sought-after within both the realms of scientific inquiry and practical application (Figure 3).

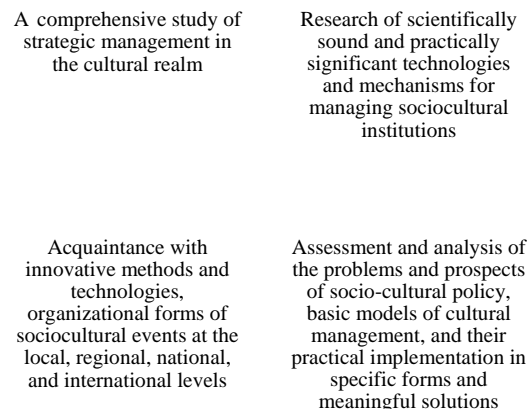


Figure 3. Directions of further research in the field of spiritual development of society, which are the most effective and in demand in scientific and practical activities, %.

Source: compiled by the authors (2023).

The comprehensive review and evaluation of current literature about spiritual development reveal several prominent areas warranting further investigation. These areas, widely recognized within the scientific community, encompass the examination of the efficacy of strategic management in the cultural domain, the exploration of technologies and mechanisms for governing sociocultural institutions, the exploration of innovative methods and technologies, the analysis of organizational structures within sociocultural events, as well as the assessment and analysis of challenges and prospects associated with sociocultural policies.

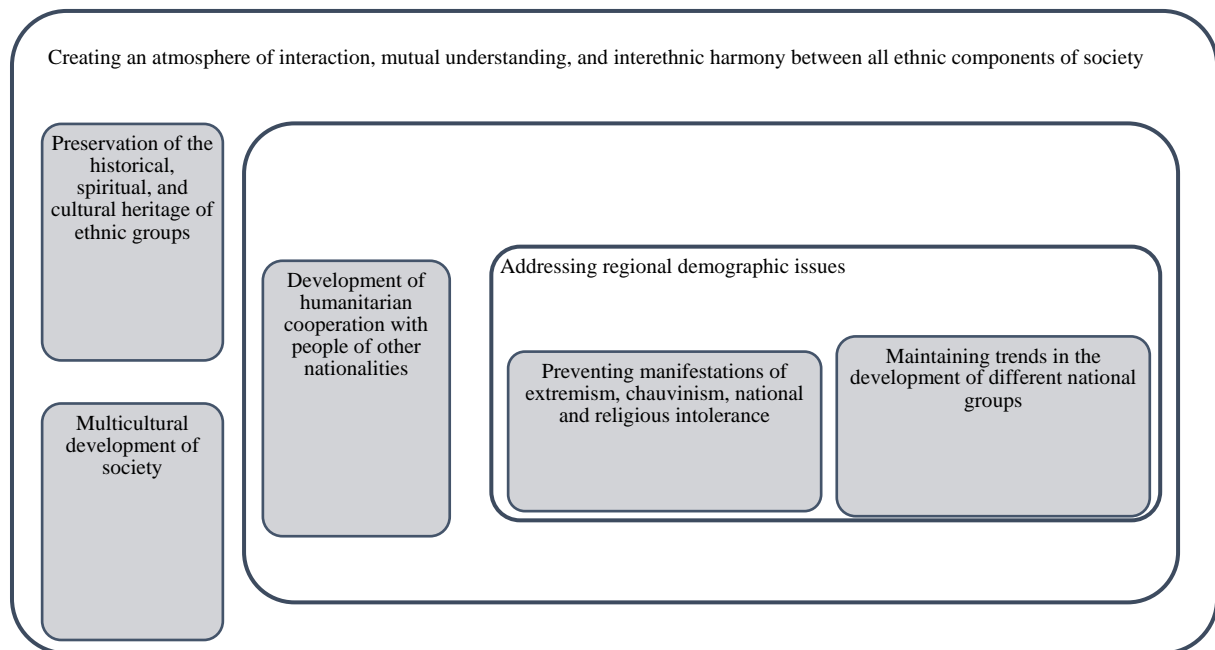


Figure 2. Key trends in spiritual development that have been intensifying recently in most countries of the world, %.  
Source: compiled by the authors based on (Hayes & Hofmann, 2023), (Belisle, Dixon & Stanley, 2018).

## 5 Discussion

In the current societal landscape, characterized by a global humanitarian crisis, the realm of spiritual knowledge is experiencing a notable elevation, accompanied by the acquisition of fresh significance. The level of individuals' spiritual consciousness, in conjunction with the state and social developmental stage, not only shapes the everyday experiences of society members but also holds implications for overall security, existential content, and the pursuit of meaning in both present and future contexts. Within the framework of humanitarian education, spiritual education assumes a crucial role in shaping the life trajectories and value orientations of modern individuals. On this subject matter, it is vital to acknowledge that spiritual education necessitates a proficient level of knowledge capable of fostering the formation of ecological consciousness, denoting an awareness of the spiritual interconnectedness of the world and a comprehension of the symbiotic relationship between humanity and nature. Analogous to any form of education, it is inconceivable without the acquisition of a requisite amount of knowledge, particularly pertaining to the fundamentals of ecological thinking (Hayes et al., 2020), (Gijsberts et al., 2020), (Houwer et al., 2022).

Environmental knowledge attains its true significance when it undergoes a transformative process, culminating in the development of spiritual beliefs through education. A society that emphasizes these concerns bears the responsibility for the environmental ramifications arising from scientific and technological advancements and endeavors to imbue this progression with a social and humanistic orientation through the dissemination of humanitarian knowledge, which is subsequently integrated into the fabric of spiritual education within the educational framework. It is important to note that humanitarian knowledge in isolation does not yield the desired outcomes; rather, it is the linkage between knowledge and education that is imperative. Knowledge imparts an understanding of the human psyche, spirituality, and their interplay, while education seeks to manifest spirituality within these interactions, ultimately aiming to fulfill humanitarian needs and foster an individual's attitude toward their soul. This holistic approach encompasses an appreciation of the ecological and moral dimensions inherent in the fabric of existence, founded upon a profound understanding of humanity as an

absolute value in life (Hayes et al., 2022), (Hayes et al., 2020), (Dabo et al., 2021).

According to numerous scholarly articles on spirituality, a prominent trend observed in global society's spiritual landscape is the resurgence and revitalization of the system of spiritual values. Concurrently, it is imperative to acknowledge the engagement of the general populace in the process of humanization, particularly given the prevalence of mass pop culture that often supplants genuine values with inferior pseudo-cultural products in the minds of the majority of individuals (Monson et al., 2022), (Graziano, 2022), (Best, Vivat & Gijsberts, 2023).

Contemporary beliefs highlight the notion that each era of revolution commences with a reevaluation of the past, encompassing its moral values and spiritual rejuvenation. However, renewal within society's cultural realm does not invariably fulfill the spiritual needs of individuals and often follows a cyclical historical pattern. Hence, it becomes crucial to safeguard and uphold values that have withstood the test of time and remain independent of the historical and cultural stage of societal development. Scholars in the field of culture have identified a distinct "cultural demand" in every historical epoch, arising as a response to the prevailing issues of the era and serving as a means to surmount them (Satin et al., 2021), (Ong et al., 2023).

## 6 Conclusion

Therefore, contemporary historians and scholars in the field of cultural studies observe that in the present era, there is a gradual revival of society's highest spiritual and moral knowledge, accompanied by a reassessment of values and a restoration within the educational sphere. These developments are inclined towards spirituality, humanization, and humanity. As a result, these trends influence the reform movement within the education sector, as the integration of spirituality in educational institutions establishes a robust foundation of spiritual values for society.

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#### Primary Paper Section: A

#### Secondary Paper Section: AA, AM