# INTERGENERATIONAL LEARNING: LESSONS YOUNGER PEOPLE CAN DRAW FROM OLDER GENERATIONS

***Hamroyeva Sanobar Hasan qizi***
*Teacher of Asia International University,*
*Department of foreign languages*
*E-mail: hamroyevasanobar1@gmail.com*
***Baxshilloyeva Nozanin***
*Asia International University 1th-year Bachelor's student*
*Bukhara, Uzbekistan*
*E-mail: yunawerse@gmail.com*

**Abstract.**This paper examines how intergenerational learning contributes to the personal development of younger people and the preservation of cultural knowledge. Drawing on selected publications on family learning and intergenerational contact, it discusses three ways older adults can contribute to younger people's learning: sharing practical experience, modelling values such as perseverance and respect, and explaining the meaning of family and community traditions. The paper also considers how younger people can contribute to the exchange by sharing digital skills and contemporary perspectives. It identifies the main areas of intergenerational learning (respect, perseverance, family values, and cultural traditions) and argues that effective intergenerational communication is a condition for preserving social experience and for the sustainable development of society.

**Keywords:** intergenerational learning, older generation, social experience, cultural heritage, values, communication, lifelong learning.

Introduction. Each generation develops its own system of values, experiences, and worldviews shaped by its historical and socio-cultural context [3]. Older generations have accumulated significant life and professional experience, which is an

important resource for the personal development of young people and for social continuity. From the perspective of developmental psychology, the desire of older adults to pass their experience on to the next generation is a natural stage of personality development [7]. In the context of rapid technological change, the question of how this experience can be transferred and adapted is increasingly relevant. This paper asks what younger people can learn from older adults and what conditions make that learning reciprocal. The paper presents a thematic discussion based on two selected sources: UNESCO's guidelines on family and intergenerational learning and the World Health Organization's report on ageism. The discussion is organized around practical experience, cultural transmission, and reciprocal learning. Accounts of work, family responsibilities, and setbacks can show younger people how perseverance and patience influence decisions over time. For example, an older adult who describes how they recovered from a professional setback can help a younger person consider how to respond to a similar difficulty. The educational value lies in examining the circumstances, the choices available, and their consequences.

Intergenerational learning can be analyzed in three main dimensions. First, the moral and ethical dimension involves the formation of respect for parents, teachers, and other members of society. Older people's life stories demonstrate perseverance, responsibility, and persistence in overcoming difficulties. These qualities contribute to resilience and goal-oriented behavior among young people. Close ties and mutual support between generations in families strengthen these effects [5]. Second, the socio-cultural dimension concerns the preservation of family values, traditions, historical memory, and national identity. Older generations serve as carriers of cultural heritage and transmit practical knowledge about interpersonal relations, everyday problem-solving, and decision-making [1]. This process corresponds to the sociocultural view of learning, according to which knowledge is acquired through interaction with more experienced members of society [4]. Third, the reciprocal dimension means that

learning is not one-directional. Younger people, in turn, share knowledge of digital technologies and contemporary ideas with older people, which supports their social participation and active ageing [2]. Research shows that older people also make significant contributions to learning in intergenerational settings [6]. Mutual respect and open communication therefore form the basis of productive intergenerational dialogue. Hanemann et al. (2017) situate family learning within a broader understanding of literacy that includes language, culture, and oral communication. For instance, recording an older relative's account of a family celebration can preserve vocabulary, explain the origins of particular customs, and show how those customs have changed. Both generations can contribute to a shared activity. In an oral-history project, an older participant might explain the historical significance of a photograph, while a younger participant shows how to digitize and organize it. The World Health Organization (2021) identifies intergenerational contact as a strategy for reducing ageism and discusses the importance of contact quality and equal status. A shared task gives each participant a clear role and an opportunity to learn from the other.

Conclusion. Older generations are a significant source of knowledge, wisdom, and social experience. Values such as respect, patience, diligence, and commitment to family remain relevant in modern society. Young people should draw on this experience while developing independent and critical perspectives. Strengthening intergenerational ties promotes social cohesion and a more tolerant, understanding society.

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