

NATIONAL WRESTLING

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Abstract: *This thesis explores the role and significance of national wrestling in the upbringing of the younger generation. National wrestling is viewed not only as a type of sport but also as a powerful means of promoting national pride and spiritual values. The research analyzes the impact of wrestling on strengthening physical fitness, developing willpower, and fostering discipline. Moreover, the thesis highlights the potential of national wrestling in cultivating a sense of patriotism and love for national traditions among youth.*

Keywords: *national wrestling, education, physical fitness, patriotism, national values, spiritual upbringing, sports schools, Uzbek athletes, international competitions, ancestral heritage, healthy lifestyle*

INTRODUCTION

The people of Uzbekistan have always taken pride in their national values, customs, and sports traditions. One of the ancient types of sport that embodies this heritage is national wrestling (kurash). Wrestling is an inseparable part of public life, symbolizing physical endurance, bravery, honesty, and pride. Our ancestors organized wrestling competitions during weddings, festivals, and public holidays to instill courage, patience, strength, and agility in the younger generation. Since gaining independence, national wrestling has been elevated to the level of state policy and has also gained international recognition. This ancient sport, inherited from our ancestors, not only contributes to physical well-being but also cultivates qualities such as willpower, perseverance, and respect in youth. Through this sport, the younger generation develops a deep affection for national traditions and strives to preserve them. Wrestling is considered one of the oldest sports in human history, with its roots tracing back to the era of ancient Turkestan. Scenes of wrestling have been found in archaeological discoveries, ancient illustrations, and written sources. Within the rich traditional culture of the Uzbek people, wrestling has long been revered as a means of testing the strength of young men and displaying their bravery. Beyond being a method of physical conditioning, wrestling also serves as a moral school. It fosters essential values such as honesty, respect, patience, resilience, and patriotism. Wrestling nurtures the younger generation to become healthy, courageous, strong-willed, and well-intentioned individuals.

In today's era of globalization, the preservation and development of national sports are closely tied to a nation's respect for its cultural heritage, historical memory,

and the desire to pass down a rich spiritual legacy to future generations. From this perspective, national wrestling is not merely a sport but also a cultural phenomenon that reflects the spiritual identity, national pride, and historical continuity of our people.

Although many countries around the world have their own styles of wrestling, Uzbek national kurash stands out for its unique techniques, distinctive rules, and deep moral-philosophical essence. In our country, the process of educating youth through wrestling emphasizes not only physical development but also moral and psychological strengthening. Observations show that students engaged in wrestling demonstrate high levels of psychological stability, positive self-esteem, and social activity. This confirms the positive influence of sports on the mental development of young people. Wrestling fosters qualities such as self-improvement, respect for opponents, diligence, and a sense of responsibility—traits that are valuable in any profession. In addition, wrestling holds great potential in the fields of tourism, international relations, and sports diplomacy. Promoting national kurash as a cultural brand of Uzbekistan in international competitions held in various countries is generating interest among foreign athletes and spectators. Therefore, developing kurash not only as a sport but also as a tool of cultural diplomacy is of critical importance today.

Wrestling is a school that strengthens the youth physically, spiritually, and morally. It teaches young people honesty, bravery, patience, and respectful conduct toward opponents. Today, wrestling clubs are active in sports schools, colleges, and higher education institutions throughout Uzbekistan. The interest in this sport is steadily increasing among youth. Wrestling plays an important role in promoting a healthy lifestyle and protecting the younger generation from harmful ideologies. Currently, significant attention is being paid to the development of national wrestling in Uzbekistan. The tradition of wrestling has existed in the region since ancient times. In classical literary sources—especially in epics such as *Alpomish* and *Gorogly*—wrestlers are portrayed as symbols of courage, strength, and manliness.

Our people have always valued wrestling not just as a competitive sport, but as a means of moral education. Wrestling has traditionally been an essential element of public festivities, Navruz celebrations, weddings, and other major events. The strongest athletes were awarded the honorary title of “Pahlavon”, which earned them great respect in society. Various competitions organized in schools, lyceums, and colleges are increasing the youth’s interest in healthy living. This promotes not only physical development but also enhances spiritual and moral education. Research shows that children involved in wrestling tend to demonstrate strong teamwork, responsibility, and discipline. They strive to live righteously by adhering to principles of justice and respect. Following Uzbekistan’s independence, there has been a significant increase in attention toward national values. In 1998, the International Kurash Association (IKA) was established, with over 120 member countries. This marked the entry of kurash into the global sports arena. Each year, “Kurash Day” is

celebrated, and national, Asian, and world championships are regularly held. After independence, considerable efforts were made to develop national sports.

The establishment of the International Kurash Association (IKA) in Tashkent in 1998 transformed kurash into an internationally recognized sport. Today, competitions are held at the national, continental, and global levels. Uzbek athletes proudly raise the national flag at world championships. The inclusion of kurash in the 2018 Asian Games was a significant milestone in sports history. One of the distinctive features of Uzbek kurash is that wrestlers attempt to throw their opponent to the ground by gripping a belt. Tripping with the legs or striking is strictly prohibited. Wrestlers wear special uniforms with blue and green belts. The scoring system includes categories such as “Halol,” “Yonbosh,” and “Chala.” Today, Uzbek wrestlers continue to achieve numerous victories on international stages, enhancing the prestige of our nation. Wrestling clubs operate in schools, colleges, and higher education institutions across the country.

Conclusion National wrestling plays an invaluable role in raising the younger generation to be physically healthy, spiritually mature, and patriotic. It serves as an essential tool for understanding national identity, preserving cultural values, and nurturing a generation worthy of contributing to the future of the nation.

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