

**THE EXPRESSION OF EDUCATION, IDENTITY AND FAMILY CONFLICT IN
TARA WESTOVER'S "EDUCATED: A MEMOIR"**

Ernazarova Laylo Abdusaitovna

Assistant of Samarkand state

Pedagogical Institute

Eshimova Odina Tolmas qizi

Xalimova Ruxshona San'atjon qizi

Samarkand state Pedagogical

Institute 2nd stage students

Abstract: This article analyzes the impact of education on the human psyche, identity formation, and family conflicts, based on Tara Westover's memoir, *Educated*. Through the author's personal experience, the book illuminates the transformative power of education, the process of gaining independence, freedom, and self-discovery. The analysis examines how psychological, social, and pedagogical aspects are interconnected in Westover's journey.

Keywords: education, identity, Tara Westover, transformation, freedom, family conflict, memoir.

In contemporary society, education is one of the most crucial factors for personal development, consciousness formation, and social engagement. Tara Westover's *Educated* is dedicated precisely to this issue—how education influences the human psyche, scope of thinking, and life choices. The book, a memoir based on the author's real life, describes the process of transitioning from a closed, religiously grounded family environment to the international world of academia. The author first prepared for the ACT exam independently at the age of 17 and enrolled at Brigham Young University. She later pursued studies at Cambridge and Harvard. In this process, she acquired not only academic knowledge but also the capacity for critical thinking and the ability to independently analyze her own experience. The relevance of this topic lies in the fact that it demonstrates education as a means of spiritual and psychological liberation, not merely a professional one.

In modern pedagogy and psychology, education is viewed not only as a process of imparting knowledge and skills but also as a mechanism for self-discovery, broadening one's worldview, and redefining social roles. Tara Westover's *Educated: A Memoir*, published in 2018, vividly demonstrates these theoretical perspectives through a real-life example. The author grew up in a family living on Bucks Peak in Idaho, completely deprived of formal education and heavily influenced by her father's beliefs. School was forbidden in the family, and seeking medical

attention was considered a sin.

The work, genre-wise a memoir, reflects the author's life trajectory from a childhood in an isolated family in the Idaho mountains to obtaining a doctoral degree at Cambridge University. This strengthens the vital foundation of the artistic truth. The narrative is ideologically based on the recollection of past events from the perspective of the author's adulthood. This allows for the analysis of past difficulties through a mature lens.

The compositional structure is built upon cyclical motifs such as Tara's gradual separation from her family, her attempts to return to her roots after gaining knowledge, and finally, a definitive break to preserve herself. This enhances the dramatic power of the work.

The author often acknowledges that her recollections do not align with those of her other family members. This situation introduces the concepts of memory subjectivity and the complexity of truth into the literary analysis.

Tara Westover's language is simple yet descriptively rich. She vividly and movingly portrays the extremely harsh conditions of her childhood, as well as the intellectual and cultural conflicts she encountered upon receiving an education. Education is portrayed not merely as a degree, but as a process of self-awareness, identity formation, and connection with the world.

The article analyzes the complex correlation between education's transformative power, identity formation, and family conflicts using *Educated* as a case study.

Tara Westover portrays education as a force that liberates a person not from the external world, but from internal ignorance. Her family lived completely separate from the state system due to religious beliefs: the children did not attend school or use medical services. Under these circumstances, the author began to independently pursue an education on her own, subsequently enrolling at Brigham Young University and then Cambridge University.

This process became not just an acquisition of knowledge, but a stage of cognitive renewal and self-discovery. She writes, "Education didn't give me a new life, but it taught me to look at the life I had in a different way." This idea demonstrates that education helps a person achieve self-awareness and shape their worldview. Tara loves her family and is inclined to defend their worldview, but new knowledge reveals to her that this worldview is flawed.

The issue of memory and selfhood occupies a special place in the book. The varying interpretations of the same events within the Westover family are astonishing. According to the analysis by Litcharts, as the author re-writes her memories, she seeks an answer to the question, "Who am I?" Memory here is interpreted not merely as recall, but as a means of reconstructing the self. Through this, the work provides insight into the nature of human consciousness growth on the path to psychological development and self-understanding.

The ideological rigidity of Westover's father is pervasive in her family. This environment restricts the author not only physically but also psychologically. When family control becomes excessive, personal growth is hampered, and the formation of selfhood slows down. The author

sees education as the only way out of this conflict. It is clear from the memoir that for Westover, education is not an escape, but the primary path to self-knowledge.

Westover's process of self-transformation is based not only on knowledge but also on moral choice. Although she experiences the pain of breaking ties with her family, she chooses her own opinion, values, and truth. This work also illustrates education as a means of shaping moral consciousness. Westover's life demonstrates that personal freedom and knowledge are intrinsically linked. Educated highlights, from the perspective of modern pedagogy and psychology, that education is the most powerful tool for transforming human consciousness. The book illuminates the complex conflicts between personal development, freedom, choosing one's identity, and family values. Westover's story proves that through education, an individual can recreate their life path.

Tara Westover's memoir *Educated* is a rare document proving the power of education in fundamentally transforming personal identity. The book shows that education is not only a cognitive resource but also an opportunity for psychological liberation, moral change, and the reform of one's life.

Westover's experience offers a crucial lesson for modern pedagogy: if an individual is given the ability to think critically and independently interpret their experience, even under the most severe social and familial restrictions, they have the opportunity to change their destiny. In this sense, *Educated* is not only a personal story but a testament proving that education is the most potent tool for liberating a human being from internal servitude. The book not only transforms the author's life but allows the reader to feel the possibility of change and freedom. *Educated* encourages the reader to think, analyze their own past, and, most importantly, view education as a life-renewing force.

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