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The Importance of Spiritual and Educational Upbringing in Reducing Poverty

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A B S T R A C T
The article analyzes the views of Abdullah Avloni and emphasizes the high content of personal education. It is shown that the need to educate the body has a healthy thought, good morality and knowledge. The urgency of the issue of educators is focused on the education of young glues, and the relevance of this day is confirmed by the example of the law "On education" and the National Education Program. Approximate aspects of spirituality are revealed in the importance of spirituality, the desire for national values, the rules of ethics. In the first years of independence, measures are analyzed to form a national idea and its implementation. In short, socio-economic, moral, spiritual and educational training provided to the young generation is emphasized to end poverty.

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Introduction. In the contemporary era of rapid globalization and socio-economic transformation, the issue of poverty remains one of the most pressing challenges confronting nations worldwide. While economic reforms, technological advancements, and financial investments play a vital role in alleviating poverty, sustainable and long-term solutions require a deeper, more foundational approach – rooted in human development. In this context, the role of moral and educational upbringing becomes particularly significant.

Uzbekistan, with its rich spiritual heritage and historical legacy of enlightenment, has long recognized the value of moral and intellectual development in shaping a prosperous and just society. Education, when combined with strong ethical foundations, equips individuals not only with the skills needed to thrive in a competitive labor market but also with the sense of responsibility, solidarity, and civic engagement essential for national progress. Cultivating a generation that is intellectually capable, morally upright, and socially conscious is key to breaking the intergenerational cycle of poverty.

This paper explores the crucial link between moral-educational upbringing and poverty reduction, highlighting how spiritual renewal, the reinforcement of national values, and a comprehensive education system can contribute to creating an economically empowered and socially resilient population. By emphasizing the importance of nurturing youth with a sense of purpose, discipline, and cultural identity, we argue that meaningful development must begin with the individual—through the transformative power of education and ethics.

Literature Review. The interplay between education, morality, and poverty reduction has been widely discussed in academic and policy-oriented literature. Scholars agree that poverty is not merely a material issue but is deeply connected to the cultural, moral, and educational foundations of a society (Sen, 1999; Nussbaum, 2000). In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the role of non-material factors – such as values, ethical orientation, and civic responsibility—in shaping economic and social development.

Paulo Freire (1970) emphasized the liberating potential of education in empowering the poor to become agents of change. His work argues that education should go beyond literacy and numeracy to include critical thinking and consciousness-raising. Similarly, UNESCO (2022) maintains that education is central to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly those related to poverty eradication and social inclusion.

Durkheim (1925) viewed moral education as essential for building social solidarity. Modern studies reinforce this idea by showing that communities with stronger moral values—such as empathy, altruism, and civic duty—tend to have lower levels of poverty and crime (Putnam, 2000; Fukuyama, 1995). In the context of Uzbekistan and broader Central Asia, national identity and ethical education are deeply intertwined with historical figures like Abdulla Avloniy, who stressed the importance of upbringing in building a strong nation.

Amartya Sen's "capability approach" (1999) highlights the importance of expanding individuals' freedoms and capabilities – not just increasing income. This theoretical framework has been influential in shifting development discourse toward more human-centered metrics, where education and moral empowerment are integral components. Research by the World Bank (2018) supports this by noting that countries investing in holistic human capital – emphasizing both skills and values – experience more equitable and sustainable growth.

In the post-Soviet context, scholars like Annamuradova (2016) and Rashidov (2019) argue that moral and spiritual education plays a vital role in identity formation and social cohesion, which are crucial for mobilizing collective efforts against poverty. National ideologies in Uzbekistan have placed increasing emphasis on ma'naviyat (spirituality) and ma'rifat (enlightenment) as tools for societal resilience and transformation.

Several studies emphasize the pivotal role of youth development in breaking the cycle of poverty (UNICEF, 2021). Programs that integrate moral education, vocational training, and civic engagement have shown measurable success in improving life outcomes for disadvantaged youth. Such findings reinforce the belief that early investment in education—especially when rooted in cultural values—can yield long-term socio-economic benefits.

Results and Discussion. The literature consistently supports the view that moral and educational development are foundational to any effective poverty reduction strategy. Far from being abstract or secondary concerns, values-based education and ethical upbringing contribute directly to human capital formation, social stability, and economic empowerment.

In a civil society, only truly enlightened individuals are capable of contributing to the development of their homeland, preserving it like the apple of their eye, and securing a worthy place for it in the world. This places a great responsibility on teachers, mentors, parents, and society as a whole. Honoring teachers who provide education and upbringing, and guide the youth toward spiritual and moral enlightenment, and creating proper conditions for them, has become one of the most urgent tasks of our time.

However, this field is not without its challenges. The remnants of the Soviet era and its educational influence still linger in the minds and consciousness of certain individuals, and their continued activities often obstruct reforms in social, political, and economic spheres.

The great educator Abdulla Avloniy once said: **"**An enlightened people are courageous. Courage stems from the strength of the heart and the health of the spirit. A nation deprived of education, science, and culture is crushed between the claws of ignorance, unable to break free from the grip of its own desires... For ignorance and fear are far more disastrous than poverty and need".

The strategy and mechanisms for the innovative development of our country are, first and foremost, closely linked to how effectively the nation utilizes its intellectual and scientific-technical potential. Today, over 300 research institutions, universities, design organizations, scientific-production enterprises, small innovation centers, and other scientific-technical structures are active in Uzbekistan.

Economic reforms can be implemented. The people's basic needs can be managed. However, moral and spiritual reforms—freeing ourselves from the chains of mental servitude and inferiority, holding our

heads high, restoring the traditions of our ancestors, and becoming worthy heirs – are the most honorable and meaningful tasks in existence.

These words, declared in the early years of independence, served as both a passionate call for the people's spiritual awakening and a foundational guide for spiritual and moral development. As a result of reforms being implemented in our country, our society is turning toward economic as well as spiritual and intellectual progress. The development of spirituality and enlightenment has become a top priority in state policy, for the strength and power of an individual, a nation, a society, and a state are measured by the level of their spiritual and intellectual maturity.

With a glorious 3,000-year history rich in spiritual and intellectual heritage, with deep national-ethnic foundations, values, and faith in the capabilities of its people, we can rightfully call the 21st century the era of enlightenment, knowledge, science, culture, and information for the Uzbek nation. Justifying this belief and building a free and prosperous homeland with a dignified life is the high responsibility entrusted to every citizen of Uzbekistan.

In order to enhance the effectiveness of spiritual and educational efforts in our republic, **the** "Center for Spirituality and Enlightenment" has been established. Its primary role is to act as a public organization that promotes cultural and educational activities across the country. The Council's main mission is to instill the ideas of independence into the public consciousness during this new stage of development, to promote independent thinking, and especially to shape a worldview in the younger generation based on national ideology and universal human values.

Today, educating an enlightened generation is of critical importance. As Behbudiy wrote: **"**History clearly shows that rights are taken, not given. Every nation and people must claim their rights, religion, and politics through action and unity... We Muslims, especially the Muslims of Turkestan, desire that no one should oppress or threaten our religion and nation, and likewise, we have no intention or desire to threaten others".

This highlights the fact that raising a knowledgeable and intellectually advanced generation remains one of the top priorities of the major strategic reforms taking place in the country—and it will continue to be so. At the same time, this forms the foundation for the broad efforts currently underway in the sphere of continuous education.

In general, the Jadid intellectuals understood that achieving freedom and independence required the development of national consciousness. They aimed to bring about a practical awakening through education and upbringing, which they viewed as the key tools for enlightenment. That is why the Jadids pursued the establishment of a new system of education and training. These educators, having become familiar with the knowledge, science, and culture of other nations, deeply realized that only the light of knowledge could lead a colonized nation toward freedom. For this reason, it is no coincidence that the concept of enlightenment is closely associated with the Jadid movement.

Enlightenment had a number of tasks, among which the role of fostering patriotism and national consciousness among youth was both practically and theoretically vital.

Raising the younger generation plays an extremely important role in eradicating poverty. After all, today's youth will become tomorrow's leaders, workers, and parents. Their access to education, acquisition of skills, and moral and ethical development will determine the future of society.

Key Aspects of Youth Education in Addressing Poverty: A Scientific Analysis. From this perspective, educating and nurturing the younger generation plays a critical role in eradicating poverty. A strategic and holistic approach to youth development involves multiple interrelated dimensions:

Enhancement of Knowledge and Skills: Access to quality education empowers youth to secure well-paying employment. By mastering modern knowledge, professional competencies, and entrepreneurial skills, young individuals are able to elevate themselves and their families out of poverty. Education thus functions not only as a means of personal development but also as a mechanism for socioeconomic mobility.

Fostering Creativity and Innovative Thinking: Encouraging creativity and innovation during the educational process is crucial. Motivating young people to generate new ideas contributes to the creation of new employment opportunities, drives economic growth, and ultimately leads to a reduction in poverty. Innovation becomes both a tool for individual success and a catalyst for national development.

Cultivating Work Ethic and Responsibility: Instilling values of diligence and personal responsibility ensures that youth approach their professions with commitment. Such traits are vital for ensuring their future economic independence and stability, reinforcing the moral foundation of a productive society.

Improving Financial Literacy: Providing youth with knowledge about financial management – saving, budgeting, and investment – helps protect them from future financial difficulties. Financial literacy enables informed decision-making, promotes long-term planning, and builds resilience against economic vulnerabilities.

Instilling Social Responsibility and Solidarity: Educating youth to be socially aware and empathetic encourages active civic engagement. This fosters a spirit of social cohesion and collective responsibility, making it more feasible to support families living in poverty and strengthen the social safety net.

Ensuring Equal Opportunities: Creating conditions for all youth – regardless of socioeconomic background – to access quality education and realize their potential is crucial for breaking the intergenerational cycle of poverty. Equal opportunity is not only a principle of justice but also a prerequisite for sustainable development.

Conclusion: The Transformative Power of Education in Poverty Eradication

Every act of proper upbringing contributes significantly to the fight against poverty. A generation raised with knowledge, diligence, responsibility, and social awareness ensures not only their own prosperity but also plays a decisive role in the overall development of society.

As the renowned Uzbek educator Abdulla Avloniy emphasized: “Upbringing for us is a matter of life or death, salvation or ruin, happiness or disaster”.

This quote underscores that education and upbringing are not merely personal matters, but social and national imperatives. The progress of any nation and the strength of its state depend heavily on how its future generations are nurtured.

Avloniy argued that to cultivate sound reasoning, good morals, and enlightenment, physical education must also be prioritized. He stated: “A strong and healthy body is essential for reading, teaching, learning, and training. Those lacking physical health often fall short in their tasks. Physical development also aids intellectual cultivation. The body and soul are like the outer and inner linings of the same garment. If the body is not purified and guarded from moral corruption, it’s akin to washing the lining while ignoring the dirt on the outer coat, which eventually seeps inside.”

This insight from Avloniy reflects the comprehensive view of education held by Jadid intellectuals, who believed that true liberation of a colonized society begins with enlightenment through education. They advocated a progressive and modern educational system that aligned with national identity while embracing universal knowledge and culture.

Even today, these ideals remain relevant. The Law on Education and the National Program for Personnel Training in Uzbekistan underscore the commitment of the state to producing well-qualified, socially responsible, and intellectually capable citizens who can contribute to national development.

In essence, the teachings of Avloniy and the Jadids continue to serve as a guiding framework for addressing contemporary challenges such as poverty. They highlight that the education of the youth is not only a solution for economic hardship but also a foundation for moral, cultural, and national revival.

Noble virtues and aspirations are deeply ingrained in the very fabric of our people. The high spiritual values inherent in our national character have, for centuries, safeguarded us through countless calamities, storms, and tribulations. Despite invasions and occupations, in the face of the most difficult and complex conditions, our ancestors preserved their identity by adhering to spiritual values and ethical principles,

striving toward moral and intellectual excellence. This enduring legacy continues to inspire and empower us today.

Indeed, as it is rightly stated: **"For us,** spirituality is the embodiment of mutual trust, respect, and attention among individuals; a set of noble aspirations and exemplary values aimed at building the future of the people and the state together. In other words, spirituality is the foundation that determines the essence and quality of all political and social relations within a society. The stronger this foundation, the more resilient and powerful the nation and the state become".

It is well known that spirituality does not emerge spontaneously or in a vacuum; rather, it is formed and developed under the influence of specific historical, natural, and social factors, as reflected in the worldview, lifestyle, and intellectual heritage of each people or nation.

As a solution to this critical issue, the task of spiritual renewal was identified as a national priority. This included the elevation of national pride and human dignity, the revival of national values, virtues, character, morality, way of life, love for the homeland where the blood of our forefathers was shed, respect for elders and ancestors, kindness toward the young, compassion for orphans and the disabled, as well as the reinforcement of solidarity, mutual respect, and love among people. These timeless spiritual categories were brought to the forefront.

All these principles were integrated into the **national ideology** developed during the early years of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Measures were taken to implement them in real life through a unified ideological system. It is important to note that no national idea or ideology can develop or unite a nation unless it is supported by the state and incorporated as a core element of its spiritual and educational policies.

In conclusion: Providing the younger generation with comprehensive socio-economic, ethical, spiritual, and educational guidance is a crucial step in eradicating poverty. When youth grow up to be knowledgeable, diligent, responsible, and socially active, it ensures not only their personal prosperity but also contributes significantly to the progress and development of society as a whole.

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