



## THE FUNCTIONAL ROLE OF MORAL AND ETHICAL EDUCATION IN STRENGTHENING PUBLIC SECURITY

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### ABSTRACT

This article explores the functional role of moral and spiritual education in strengthening public security. It analyzes the provisions of Uzbekistan's new Constitution regarding the protection of citizens' rights and freedoms, as well as the legal foundations of national and public security. The study emphasizes the importance of cooperation between government institutions, civil society actors, and the population. It also underlines the role of legal awareness, the rule of law, and social mobilization in enhancing community safety.

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In contemporary Uzbekistan, spiritual and moral factors are increasingly regarded as a key strategic resource for ensuring social stability. This issue becomes even more urgent in the context of global ideological struggles, cultural expansion, and internal social challenges. In particular, it is emphasized that the protection of society cannot be achieved solely through legal, administrative, or technical measures, but must also rely on the individual's inner world, moral upbringing, and spiritual resilience. This problem requires an interdisciplinary analysis at the intersection of sociology, philosophy, psychology, and legal studies [10].

Moral education is an essential mechanism that shapes an individual's character, hierarchy of values, and level of awareness of their role and duty within society. This mechanism plays a critically important role in strengthening public security. Security, after all, is not merely an external system of protection, but also a state of internal stability reflected in the development of citizens' legal, moral, and spiritual responsibility [17]. It is well known that public security is not limited to the prevention of crime, maintenance of order, or combating legal violations. Its durability is closely linked to citizens' internal discipline, their capacity to recognize duty, and adherence to moral norms in social relations. Such a condition depends on the effectiveness of moral education, the quality of the educational environment, and the stability of spiritual and ethical influences [5].

Moral education prevents conflicts and social tensions by shaping positive behavioral norms in the consciousness of citizens. It must be acknowledged that many legal violations arise precisely when moral immunity weakens, conscientious self-regulation declines, and the sense of social duty diminishes. From this perspective, moral education should be regarded as a preventive instrument for ensuring security. As Alekseev notes, although law and morality function as regulatory forces of the same order, morality relies on internal influence, whereas law is based on external coercion [3]. The functional tasks of moral education should be implemented not only within educational institutions, but also through the family, mass media, religious organizations, and public institutions. In this regard, the influence of mass culture is particularly

significant, as negative and positive scenarios compete in shaping moral immunity in the consciousness of the younger generation. Therefore, moral education policy should be considered an integral component of the state's security strategy [6].

Folklore, traditions, literary works, spiritual heritage, and religious-educational teachings constitute rich and effective sources of moral education. For example, proverbs such as "Etiquette is a person's adornment," "Stay close to the good and learn goodness," and "Words spoken by the people express truth" represent the embodiment of moral norms formed within the collective consciousness. As Boytemirova notes, the culture of morality embedded in folk spirituality has, for centuries, formed the subtle fabric of social security [5].

One of the key functions of spiritual and moral education is the activation of the mechanism of conscience within the citizen's consciousness. Conscience is the individual's inner tribunal – the capacity to evaluate oneself in accordance with moral norms. Therefore, unless a person develops a high level of moral upbringing and the ability for independent thinking, they may not only become prone to legal violations but also turn into a subject of social instability. Moral education serves as a primary instrument for reducing such risks and maintaining the balance of security [13]. In ensuring public security, spiritual and moral education exerts a stronger, deeper, and more sustainable influence than mere physical protection. By shaping a person's inner world – their consciousness, will, and sense of duty – it transforms security into an internalized process. Thus, spiritual and moral education is a decisive factor not only in personal development but also in the stability and security of society.

In contemporary social life, the issue of ensuring public security has acquired urgent significance. In this process, spiritual and moral education is recognized as one of the key factors in maintaining social stability. Public security is not determined solely by the activities of law enforcement institutions; it is also closely connected with the level of spiritual and moral maturity of society's members. Throughout the historical development of humanity, the role of morality and spirituality in social life has consistently remained a central concern. This is evidenced by the works of Eastern thinkers, which emphasize the concepts of the perfected individual, spiritual integrity, and moral maturity. Al-Farabi defined the "perfect human being" as a person who has reached the highest level of human perfection and discovered the gateway to happiness [16].

In the context of contemporary globalization, information attacks, and cultural expansion, public security is grounded in internal stability, social harmony, and mutual trust among citizens. This, in turn, requires the cultivation of high spiritual and moral qualities within society. By nurturing the ideal individual in the spirit of patriotism, integrity, responsibility, patience, justice, compassion, and loyalty, the moral immunity of society is formed [12]. Through purposeful and systematic moral education, the priority of ethical norms, codes of conduct, and civic culture is ensured within the social environment. This contributes to combating crime, preventing legal violations, and strengthening public order. In his works, Alisher Navoi regarded moral maturity and spiritual purification as the criteria of human perfection, stating: "A person who sacrifices themselves for the path of truth and brings benefit to the people is perfect" [1].

Educating the younger generation as socially responsible, patriotic, honest, and just individuals, and fostering in them a sense of involvement in positive social change, constitutes a strong foundation of public security. In this regard, the heritage of our ancestors and our moral-normative values serve as an invaluable source [1]. If the cultivation of the ideal individual is grounded in national values, religious belief, cultural heritage, and historical memory, it not only ensures public security but also forms the foundations of a strong civil society. Therefore, the development and promotion of spiritual and moral education should be regarded as one of the key strategic directions in ensuring public security. Spiritual and moral education is not merely a didactic or theoretical category; it serves as a practical pillar of public security, legal culture, and social stability, and acts as a firm guarantee of societal progress.

Today, ensuring public security is regarded as a matter of particular importance in maintaining the stable development of civil society and strengthening the foundations of a democratic state in which human rights and freedoms are guaranteed. Public security cannot be ensured solely through legal, organizational, or military mechanisms; it must also rely on socio-cultural and moral-spiritual foundations. From this

perspective, the functional role of spiritual and moral education in strengthening public security emerges as one of the fundamental pillars of social stability. In a broad sense, the concept of “security” denotes the protection of the vital interests of the individual, society, and the state from threats. According to the Concept, public security is defined as a state in which individuals and citizens, as well as the material and spiritual values of society, are protected from crime, emergencies, social conflicts, migration-related tensions, and interethnic disputes. In this context, not only legal and administrative measures are important, but also moral values, social justice, and a high level of civic consciousness play a decisive role.

At the core of moral education lie principles such as an individual’s awareness of their place in society, self-regulation, and a sense of responsibility for one’s actions and their consequences. These elements form the foundation for preventing legal violations, establishing social discipline, and developing civic cooperation within society [14]. Unless a person achieves moral maturity, they cannot fully experience a sense of responsibility in social life; as a result, indifference, apathy, criminal behavior, and other dangerous conditions emerge within society. For this reason, the education of a well-rounded individual has been identified as one of the central strategic priorities in the educational, spiritual, and religious-enlightenment policies of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The formation of a person endowed with high moral qualities serves as a key factor in maintaining public order and creating a secure social environment. This idea is also expressed in Amir Temur’s Tuzuklar: “...I did good to the worthy people of every land... I blocked the path of oppression.” These words demonstrate the important role of governance grounded in spiritual purity and moral justice in ensuring public security [4].

The values at the center of human consciousness – purity, integrity, justice, tolerance, humanism, and patience – function as social “buffer mechanisms” that sustain balance and peace in interpersonal relations within society. Therefore, when members of society are guided by these values, civic responsibility is strengthened, legal violations decrease, and the tendency toward criminal behavior declines [9].

Ensuring public security on a moral basis implies the internalization of legal norms through social consciousness and the harmonization of ethical standards with civic culture. Law functions as an external constraint, whereas morality represents internal regulation and the command of conscience. When individuals regulate their actions not merely out of fear of punishment but in accordance with their inner convictions and moral beliefs, public security rises to the level of social stability [2].

Another important function of spiritual and moral education is the formation of social responsibility and independent thinking in the younger generation. The primary guardians of social security are conscious, educated, and responsible individuals. Such people live by harmonizing their personal interests with the interests of society. They do not allow social conflicts to escalate; rather, they choose compromise [8].

The functional role of spiritual and moral education in public security is also manifested in ensuring social unity and fostering an atmosphere of trust among citizens. Social trust is a psychological factor that supports security. Such trust emerges in a society where people value one another’s well-being as their own and live in a spirit of solidarity [5].

In conclusion, public security can be ensured not only through coercive systems, but also through social consciousness, value systems, and moral awareness. Therefore, within any security policy framework, special attention must be given to the moral education of citizens. Spiritual and moral education constitutes the internal foundation of societal security. When this foundation is strong, external threats and social risks are unable to destabilize society.

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